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Franklin Tech Students Ready
to Test Drive their Models
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SHORT FILMS
Shot in Turners
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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 9 - NO. 21 also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell 75¢
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Public Health Nurse Works with Reduced Budget



LEE WICKS PHOTO
Billie Gammell, Montague's Public Health Nurse

BY LEE WICKS
MONTAGUE - Billie Gammell, Montague's public health nurse, carries on a long tradition of health care in Montague, and she's proud of it. In fact, one of the first things she'll tell you is that this town has had its own public health nurse since 1915, when town meeting first appropriated \$500 for "the express purpose of providing free health care to the

residents of the town." That care is still available, said Gammell, even though town meeting in 2007 reduced the hours for the public health nurse from 20 hours a week to five hours a week. The position was subsequently cut even further, to its current minimal level. Future proposed cuts could endanger some of the programs Gammell still offers, and see **NURSE** pg 14

Mass Unions Support Wisconsin Public Employees



DETMOLD PHOTO

More than 500 union members gathered on the steps of City Hall in Springfield on Tuesday to support the public employee unions in Wisconsin whose bargaining rights are at issue under a bill backed by the Republican governor and legislature.

BY DAVID DETMOLD
SPRINGFIELD - A boisterous crowd of more than 500 union members and their allies crowded the steps of City Hall in Springfield on Tuesday to

lend support to the public employees in Wisconsin, many of whom are locked in a bitter struggle to retain bargaining rights in the face of a bill backed by Republican governor Scott

Walker to strip teachers and other employees of the ability to bargain over anything but their wages, capped by the rate of inflation. Besides banning the right to bargain on pen-

sions and benefits, the bill would also prohibit the automatic contribution of union dues and force annual union elections from most public employees in see **UNION** pg 8

Pros and Cons Aired on Continued Operation of Vermont Yankee



FITZGERALD PHOTO
Vermont Yankee has run safely and efficiently for 39 years, Vernon selectboard chair Michael Courtemanche told the panel.

BY KATE FITZGERALD
VERNON, VT - Massachusetts residents turned out February 22nd at the Vernon Elementary School to participate in a Vermont State Nuclear Advisory Panel (V-SNAP) meeting regarding the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Plant.

In his address to the seven-member panel,

Randy Kehler, of Colrain, the Massachusetts coordinator of the Safe and Green Campaign observed, "There are more communities in Massachusetts within 20 miles of Vermont Yankee than in Vermont."

The first V-SNAP meeting since 2009 was led by recently appointed Commissioner of the Department of Public Health, see **VY** pg 3

Holyoke Activists Look to a Future without Mount Tom



DETMOLD PHOTOS / CLAUDIA WELLS COLLAGE

A coalition of environmental activists and neighborhood organizers gathered Wednesday to plan for a Greener Holyoke

BY DAVID DETMOLD
HOLYOKE - According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the incidence of pediatric asthma in Holyoke is 23.8%, more than double the state average of 10.8%, Shanna Cleveland, staff attorney

for the Conservation Law Foundation, told a group of more than 30 environmental activists and neighborhood organizers who gathered Wednesday at the Holyoke Library.

Cleveland drew a connection between the shocking incidence of asthma

among young children in Holyoke and the fact that the Mount Tom coal plant, according to the Environmental Protection Agency's Toxics Reporting Inventory, was the fourth largest source of toxic pollutants in the state in 2009. Mount Tom, a 146

megawatt coal fired plant built in 1967 and located a stone's throw over the Hampshire County line between I-91 and the Connecticut River in Holyoke is one of the infamous 'Filthy Five' power plants built before the envi- see **MT TOM** pg 16

PET OF THE WEEK

Lonely Tortie



Daiquiri

My name is Daiquiri and I'm a one-year-old female domestic short hair cat in need of a good home. They named me for a drink that's sweet, tasty and packs a little kick. Isn't that exactly what you want in a tortie cat: beauty, sweetness, and that little bit of edge? We're so smart, we tortie girls, and we can be feisty. The folks who love torties love us for it. We are cats for adults. Here's what I need in a forever home: no little kids for me (and no dogs, either). I'm a cat for adults and older kids who know how to work with a cat of my style.

For your understanding, a little training, patience, and love, I will reward you with my excellent company, significant beauty, high class style, and heart of gold. I have been at the adoption center for more than two months now so my adoption fee is half price. (That's what the Lonely Hearts Club is about). To find out more about adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email at info@dpvhs.org.

"A library is a fuelling station for your mind."

~ Steve Leveen

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ERVING LIBRARY NEWS

Friends of the Library Meet

The newly formed Friends of the Erving Library will meet on Thursday, March 3rd at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome. No registration is required.

Coming up: April Town Wide Tag Sale - Book Sale. The Library is now accepting donations for the Friends of the

Library Sale. Donations of books, DVDs, and CDs are encouraged for the annual sale. Please drop these off during open library hours - Sundays 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Mondays 1:00 to 7:00 p.m., Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Thursdays 1:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Hospice of Franklin County Offers Volunteer Training

BY JAYNE ALLEN

GREENFIELD - Hospice of Franklin County will hold a spring volunteer training beginning Wednesday, March 23rd. This nine-week training course will prepare interested individuals to serve hospice patients and their families through their life-limiting diagnosis. Trained volunteers assist by providing a range of services including respite care, supportive listening, companionship, running errands, assisting with meals and other duties as requested. People who find working behind the scenes more comfortable can help with fundraising, assisting with projects in the office or other tasks. Hospice is particularly interested

in volunteers with additional, certified skills to offer patients such as massage therapy and Reiki, as well as individuals who are fluent in a second language. There is a need for volunteers in the eastern towns of Franklin County, such as Orange, Wendell, Erving, and New Salem.

The training will be held at 329 Conway Street, Greenfield. Classes will run on nine consecutive Wednesdays, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. To schedule an interview, or for more information, please contact Jayne Allen, volunteer services coordinator, 413-774-2400 or jgallen@hospice-fc.org.

War Stories in Words and Student Art

BY SHEILA DAMKOEHLER

GREAT FALLS - Young readers will help the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA) explore the themes of this year's Big Read selection, *The Things They Carried* with approximately 75 portraits created by Northfield Elementary School art students on exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center during March.

The free exhibit can be seen on Fridays and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from March 4th through March 26th. The public is invited to a community reception on Saturday, March 5th, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Piper Pichette will play the harp, locally produced refreshments will be served. Veterans Education Project member Annie Diemand will speak. A

list of children's books about war recommended by the Eric Carle Museum will be available.

Speaking about his novel, *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien said, "In one sense, it's about the Vietnam War, but it's also about storytelling, how stories rule our lives, how they're told and retold as we look for an elusive truth."

Students in three grades were introduced to portraits created by artists as diverse as Modigliani, Picasso, Cezanne, Matisse, Van Gogh, Velasquez, and Rembrandt. They discussed how portrait painters create a likeness -

FACES & PLACES



Staying Up or Coming Down? The fate of the boiler building at the Usber Mill is under consideration by the Erving Selectboard. For more, see page 7.

Historic Bridge Facts

PROVIDED BY ED GREGORY, OF GREENFIELD - from documents relating to the original construction of the Gill-Montague Bridge in 1937-38.

- On the twentieth day of July, 1937: Thirty tons of steel girders are delivered and work begins to set them across the Montague abutment to pier one. This will provide a track for the 80-ton traveling crane.
- The construction for the foundations for the bulwark to support the projecting steel toward the center of the arc between piers three and four is underway.
- Steel workers from all over the county are showing up in Turners Falls seeking employment for the bridge construction project. Many hands will be needed to complete the work.

Help Poetry Flourish. Sponsor the Poetry Page in the Montague Reporter. Call 413-863-8666 to find out how.



A soldier's portrait by a Northfield Elementary School art student on display at the Great Hall

whether realistic or abstract - not a photograph. And that even in an abstract work, there are features that make the image

recognizable as a person, as the artist gives clues to who the person was and what he or she was like.

The students used an additive process for their portraits, beginning with charcoal, then adding pastels. Each grade also read a picture book focused on a different wartime-era: *Pink and Say* from the Civil War; *My Grandmother's Journey* from WWI and WWII; and *The Lotus Seed* from Vietnam.

The Hallmark Gallery in Turners Falls will host a compelling exhibit during April and May of David Turner's photographs of local veterans.

For more information about the Pioneer Valley Memorial Association, and other Big Read events, visit www.deerfield-ma.org or call (413) 774-7476 x 10.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES - February 28th - March 4th

GILL-MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11:00 a.m. The meal site manager is Kerry Togneri. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call (413) 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Please note that Wednesday afternoon Bingo has been cancelled until further notice.

Monday, February 28th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
AARP Tax Aid by appointment

Tuesday, March 1st
10:30 a.m. Yoga
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting
Wednesday, March 2nd
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
No Bingo
Thursday, March 3rd
No Tai Chi
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, March 4th
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For information and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Mealsite Manager is Jim Saracino. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Please call

the Senior Center at (413) 423-3308 to find out when the next blood pressure clinic will be held.

Monday, February 28th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
10:00 a.m. Osteo - Exercise
12:00 p.m. Pitch
Tuesday, March 1st
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Brown Bag
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, March 2nd
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing/Zumba
10:00 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
12:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, March 3rd
8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
Friday, March 4th
11:30 a.m. Lunch - Call the Center for details.

WENDELL Senior Center is located at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760 for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center if you need a ride.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6

Michelle Leh

Grade 7

Alexandra Vieira

Nevan Shattuck

Grade 8

Angelina Kosloski

THE SHADY GLEN



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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG - The town of **Leverett recreation commission** is offering yoga basics at the Leverett Elementary School on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m., starting March 2nd through April 13th. Space is limited so please register with Lisa Enzer, M.Ed., at enzer@earthlink.net or 413-367-2658.

The **Leverett Council on Aging** is starting a Sunday afternoon movie series on February 27th at 2:00 p.m. with a showing of *Mama Mia*. The movies will be for all ages and held in the community room of the Leverett Library.

Free Head Start preschool, free Head Start and Early Head Start home visiting programs and Child-Care in Franklin and Hampshire Counties are offered by the Parent-Child Development Center, which has been serving families with children from birth to kindergarten age and expectant women for over 40 years. Apply for these free services now! Call 413-475-

1405 for more information. Spanish speaking services available.

Trivia night at the **Gill Tavern** will support the lobbying work of Vermont Citizens Action Network to close Vermont Yankee on schedule. Sharpen your pencils and get a team together for facts and laughter! Teams of 4-5 people with space for only five teams; so get a team together early.

Charlie Edwards of Montague will host with plenty of questions from local, national and global sources at the Tavern on Main Road in Gill, across from town hall, on Thursday, March 3rd starting at 8:30 p.m.

The 3rd Annual Franklin County Tech School **Dodgeball Tournament** will be held on Friday, March 4th, to benefit the class of 2013 and a new gym floor. Five teams will face off in double elimination. The entry fee is \$25.00 per team and admission is \$1.00. The competition starts at 6:00 p.m. and continues until completion. Where can you have this much fun

watching dodgeball teams for a buck, but FCTS? For more information call 413-862-9561x233.

Parents of 6th to 12th grade students in the Gill-Montague schools are invited to a **free family spaghetti dinner** at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 3rd, in the Turners Falls High School cafeteria. Dr. Anthony Wolf will give a talk at 7:00 p.m. on, "What is adolescence? Why they act as they do and what you can do about it." Child care services (not for adolescents) and supervised activities will be provided from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Turners Falls makes the Boston Globe again, this time in the Food and Travel section of the February 9th edition. The article features **Holy Smokes BBQ** Delicatessen located at 52 Avenue A. Owners Lou and Leslie Ekus are said to be "serious about their smoking habit". Holy Smokes was previously located in Hadley, but a 2007 arson fire destroyed their well-loved BBQ House.

The Ekuses moved their operation to Avenue A in 2009 and have become a welcome addition to downtown Turners Falls.

Send items for local briefs to: reporter-local@montague-ma.net

Our Lady of Peace Seeks Volunteer to Distribute Food

BY JOHN FURBISH
TURNERS FALLS - For over a decade, parishioner Allan Adie, who lives in Riverside in Gill, has made a commitment to distribute the groceries that get dropped off every week at Our Lady of Peace Church by those attending weekend masses.

Adie divides the items into two batches, and delivers one for the Head Start program, at the Parent Child Development Center on G Street in the Patch, and brings the other to the Montague Catholic Social Ministries on 3rd Street.

Adie is 95 years young. But now, he has to stop this service commitment. It's not that he doesn't want to continue bringing the groceries to people who need them. It's mostly because he has had a valve installed in his heart recently, and has been advised not continue with strenuous exertions at this time.

Also it's rough for his daughter Bev Demars, who has been chauffeuring her dad, and its rough on her car. Sometimes it's her husband, Emil Demars, or son-in-law Guy Sibley, who helps Adie deliver the goods.

So now, for the good of the community, a new volunteer is needed to take over the weekly food distribution for Our Lady of Peace. Not to replace Adie, that would be impossible. But to follow in his footsteps, so to speak.

Father Stanley Aksamit accepted Adie's resignation from the food ministry with regret, noting that as the Lord's faithful servant he has done the parish food distribution task superbly for many years. Adie is always on time, and shows up even in the fiercest snows and rains. There was just one distribution site when he started. Adding the Parent Child Development Center was Adie's idea.

Adie said he intends to stay active in the parish. He serves as a lector for masses, as an altar server for funerals and masses, and does outreach for the church with communion or prayers for residents of all faiths at a local nursing home.

Allan Adie is quite a remarkable man. He retired as a radio



JOHN FURBISH PHOTO

The irreplaceable (and irrepressible) Allan Adie with food donations at Our Lady of Peace

dispatcher for Sandri Oil in 1980, and he has found that retirement is no time to sit idle.

Adie said he has never been bored during his 30 years of retirement. He stays active with family, the Gill-Montague senior center, and his parish. Ten years ago, he started keeping an autobiographical journal and hopes his grandson, Dr. Todd Sibley, a professor at Howard University, may write a biography of him some day.

Father Aksamit said the congregation donates more food each week for those in need, and someone has to be found to deliver it. If you are a dependable person who would like to help people by performing this weekly task, please contact the church secretary at the parish office, 863-2585. Thank you, Allan.

VY from page 1

Service and panel chair Elizabeth Miller. Outbursts from the crowd were ignored as Miller delivered on a promise that V-SNAP meetings will be "more collegial" under her watch than under that of former commissioner David O'Brien.

The Department of Public Service has been charged with providing regulatory oversight of the Vermont Yankee plant, which is scheduled to shut down in March of next year following a 2010 Vermont Senate vote not to re-license the facility. The plant has recently been experiencing operational issues, including the discovery of underground leaks of radioactive tritium.

"People are very concerned," Kehler said. "We are downwind and downriver," from Vermont Yankee. Kehler said he has heard from people who supported the plant for years, including some former Vermont Yankee employ-

ees, who are now wondering "How much longer can this go on?"

Mike Romeo, the Nuclear Safety Assurance director at Vermont Yankee, insisted the tritium leak, first discovered in a groundwater sample in 2009, poses no threat to the public.

"No detectable tritium levels have been found in drinking water," he said. "No detectable tritium levels have been found in the Connecticut River." He also noted that Vermont Yankee owner Entergy performed a risk assessment of possible trouble spots among pipes and wells at the plant.

"Entergy focuses on safe plant operations," he declared.

Despite the 26-4 Vermont Senate vote not to grant a certificate of public good for an extension of the nuclear plant's operating license, Entergy is pushing hard to keep the plant in operation for 20 more years. Many res-

idents of Vernon and its surrounding communities are also pushing for the plant to be re-licensed prior to the scheduled decommissioning next year.

Michael Courtemanche, the chairman of the Vernon selectboard, stated that the decommissioning and closure of Vermont Yankee will be detrimental to the economy of Vermont as a whole. "Eliminating 650 high paying jobs, as well as the thousands of other jobs that will be indirectly affected, will affect this state for many years to come," he said.

"The simple fact of the matter is Vermont Yankee has been safely and efficiently running for the past 39 years," said Courtemanche. "There is no reason why it should not be allowed to continue to run."

V-SNAP will hold a minimum of three public meetings each year under the direction of Commissioner Miller.



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A Military Budget on the Wrong Side of History

The U.S. should support the Egyptian miracle by cutting military aid and shifting it to support measures that actually help Egyptians improve their standard of living.

BY MIRIAM PEMBERTON
WASHINGTON DC - The Obama administration is scrambling to get on the right side of history. It has a lot of ground to make up. History is mostly judging the United States these days for launching, and now perpetuating, the longest wars in our history.

Initially sold as a war to protect us from (phantom) weapons of mass destruction, the Iraq War is now billed, by those still trying to defend it, as a war for democracy. The Egyptian people have, in a few short weeks, provided us an alternative model of democracy-building. Which one looks better: democracy by military force, or by a peaceful citizen movement?

Getting on the right side of history requires picking the right answer — the no-brainer — in actions as well as words. The Obama administration's budget proposal, its first concrete response to Egypt's revolution, fails on this score.

Yes, this budget includes less money for the Iraq War than we're currently spending. But the regular military budget — what we go on spending whether we're fighting wars or not — is four times larger than the war budget, and still growing. The Pentagon talks about cutting its own budget — \$78 billion over five years — and most reporting takes this at face value. It shouldn't. The Pentagon is following its tradition of planning ambitious increases, paring them back, and calling this a cut.

By any normal measure, it's not a cut. Let's agree on a defini-

tion: a cut means budgeting less money for next year than we are spending this year. The proposed figure of \$553 billion to be spent on the military in 2012, by contrast, is 5% higher than was budgeted for 2011. Higher in real terms than any budget of the Bush administration, or any budget since World War II.

Getting on the right side of history requires disinvesting in wars as the tools for democracy and investing in tools for peaceful democratic change instead. What are they? The budget for International Affairs is mostly where such tools — our diplomatic missions, cultural and educational exchanges, economic development aid, support for civil society — are funded. But the second-largest item in this budget funds military aid. And the second-largest recipient of this aid is Egypt.

Getting on the right side of history entails showing our support for the Egyptian miracle by cutting this military aid and shifting our support to initiatives that will actually help Egyptians improve their standard of living. And in keeping with our professed understanding that this is their revolution, not ours, it requires letting the Egyptians decide for themselves what path to economic and political development is right for them.

Miriam Pemberton is a research fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies. This article first appeared in Other Words



LIBYA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NMH Student Concert Raises \$1200 for Meals on Wheels

For the seventh year in a row, student musicians at Northfield Mount Hermon School in Gill offered a concert to Celebrate Elders. Two hundred attended this year's concert at the Rhodes Art Center on February 20th, and

\$1200 was raised for Meals on Wheels - an all time high!

Franklin County Home Care would like to thank the student musicians, maestri Steven Bathory-Peeler and Ron Smith, NMH School for venue and

refreshments and all those who attended and donated to support both our local students and our local Meals on Wheels program.

- Anna Viadero
Montague City

Star Crossed Puzzlers Please Apply

As a subscriber, I have enjoyed your paper. Have you given a thought about putting in a puzzle, maybe a Seek a Word, or a regular crossword? What about printing the horoscope for those who like to read them?

- A. Reader

The Editor Replies - We would love to feature regular puzzles, but syndicated puzzles do not come cheap, and our budget is limited. Instead, we have printed crosswords crafted locally, including some wonderful ones with local themes. But not in quite

some time. We would welcome any of our readers to try their hand at creating puzzles and sending some our way. Local astrologers have also contributed to the paper in years past. We cannot see the future, but we welcome such submissions.



Six Short Films shot in Turners will be Screened on March 5th

BY DAVID DETMOLD - On Saturday, March 5th, Carl South will present six short films shot in Turners Falls at the Hallmark Gallery, on Avenue A, at 7 p.m. The red carpet will be rolled out,

so dress in your finest, and stick around for the after party with the Heather Maloney band at the Voo.

South, a student at Bennington College, has been working on the film project all winter as a special class project. He shot the six films very quickly, the last four in just twelve weeks. Another Turners resident, Anna Burnham, has worked as assistant director; John Ancil has generously provided lights and cameras as needed, and all but one of the films have been set and shot in and around the downtown.

"There's a broad theme of relationship between a person and the town they live in," in all the original shorts, said South.

South has used local actors, young writers from the Brick House, wannabes who responded to casting calls on websites, as well as professional screenwriters from Boston to put the project together. "There have definitely been some fantastic discoveries, extremely talented people, and others who are passionately involved in filmmaking.

South, who turns 31 this week, is a former investment banker who returned to school to pursue a more creative path. He grew up in Kent, England, and says the brick buildings of Turners Falls remind him a bit of home, though a much more industrial part of England than the southeast coast he once called home.

"The reason I wanted to make films here, aesthetically, I think Turners Falls is a very beautiful town. Cinematically it looks very good on camera, with the wide streets, the trees, the brick buildings. Another thing, all the second and third generation Turners Falls families and now the new artists moving in, those two groups work very well together. Fifty people worked on the six films in some capacity. That's what it's about — people giving their time willingly and excited about being involved.

For more information go to: turnersfallsfilmproject.com.

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4439

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Wounded in Iraq **32,009**

Wounded in Afghanistan **9971**

OP ED Walmart - Detriment or Benefit?

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GILL - The opponents of a Big Box store have dire predictions for the fate of Greenfield.

They do have legitimate concerns about traffic flow, now that Greenfield has installed molasses powered traffic lights. Cars sometime back up on Federal Street from Silver Street to as far as the Magic Gasoline station, and nearly to Brown Motors in the other direction. Main Street traffic backs up from the lights, sometimes as far as the library or post office. That hardly makes shopping in downtown Greenfield attractive.

With those molasses powered lights, Walmart traffic could pose a serious problem.

Interestingly enough, when we had a power outage that killed traffic lights for several days, traffic flowed smoothly.

But Walmart won't kill downtown unless Greenfield allows it. We only need to look north to Brattleboro to see an example of a town that has thrived since Walmart appeared nearby.

Brattleboro has never been more vibrant. I asked the owner

of the Latchis Hotel and movie theater how that came about.

"It was a wake-up call. We decided Walmart could be a detriment or a benefit. We organized and began promoting the town, taking advantage of the traffic Walmart generated," he told me.

Business owners, the Chamber of Commerce and Building a Better Brattleboro responded with all manner of promotions, festivals and events. Brattleboro has a ski-jump as Greenfield has in East Greenfield, but Brattleboro does more than grow weeds with theirs, or tear it up with motorcycle climbs. They have a Winter Carnival built around ski-jumping. Brattleboro has event after event all year long. The Strolling of the Heifers attracts people by the busload from as far away as New York City. They have just organized a fundraiser for farmers whose barns collapsed in the winter snow. Brattleboro has held as many as three festivals all in the same week.

I recently received a catalog of events from the Brattleboro Chamber of Commerce. Strolling of the Heifers and Building a

Better Brattleboro also send out frequent emails listing coming events, year 'round. Brattleboro stores also place full page advertisements in the *Greenfield Recorder*. When have the Greenfield stores placed full page advertisements in the *Brattleboro Reformer*? When have they placed an ad in that paper, ever?

Walmart, just across the river in sales-tax-free New Hampshire, posed a far greater threat to Brattleboro than a Walmart in Mackin's sandpit poses for Greenfield. Sam's in Brattleboro did not close — they've expanded, and even opened another store in the Northampton area in the shadow of another Walmart. One of the many attractions to Sam's is the free pop-corn. Shoppers get a small bag of free freshly popped corn just for looking around. The aroma of pop-corn drifts about the store as people nibble while they browse. Sooner or later, they find something attractive and open their wallets. Brattleboro merchants keep the streets clean, fill planters with flowers in the summer, and show a little imagination in planning events and merchandising.

Keene has both Walmart and Target stores, but that town has hardly dried up and blown away. It anything, business has boomed too much. Downtown has never been more alive. Shaws grocery store, right next to Walmart, didn't fold up. They expanded.

What the purveyors of doom and gloom do not seem to grasp is the concept of an "anchor store." When building a shopping center, developers get a large store to locate there by offering an attractive low price. They know that smaller store owners will pay a premium to locate next to a store attracting a large volume of shoppers.

Orange may have had a different experience. They do not seem to have shakers and movers big on promotions like Bratteboro and Keene, but after seeing the results of the Rat Race, Orange may wake up some day.

What happened when Walmart moved into the "dead mall" in Hadley? The results were dramatic. There are no empty storefronts there now. The dead mall is anything but dead.

Business is booming. And it does not detract from the "new mall." It only attracts increased numbers of shoppers there as well.

The key to beneficial coexistence may be in that the Walmart stores I cited did not include full grocery stores with a complete line of fresh meat and produce.

In any case, no store can carry everything, which is why Sam's can compete favorably with clothing and shoes that may be similar but not identical. Not to mention the fresh popcorn.

Greenfield is on the right track by renovating empty buildings and filling the upper floors downtown, as Brattleboro did decades ago. They need to continue to follow Brattleboro's example, build a parking garage, find traffic lights other than the molasses variety, promote frequent festivals and other events, and provide the ample parking Walmart will soon provide free, instead of handing out parking tickets.

As Brattleboro, Keene and Orange have shown, Walmart can either be a detriment or a benefit.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Fraud, Illegal Dumping, Abandoned Auto

Tuesday, 2/15

11:54 p.m. Report of larceny at Hallmark Institute of Photography.

Wednesday, 2/16

3:11 a.m. Suspicious auto at Sirum's Equipment in Lake Pleasant. Investigated.

3:41 p.m. Suspicious auto at Great Falls Discovery Center parking lot. Services rendered.

4:31 p.m. Fraud, theft on Millers Falls Road. Advised civil action.

7:56 p.m. Suspicious auto on Lyman Street in Millers Falls. Vehicle impounded, stored.

Thursday, 2/17

3:10 a.m. Arrest of unwanted person [redacted] for a default warrant.

5:38 a.m. Arrest of [redacted] and [redacted] for use of another's commercial dumpster.

7:36 a.m. Assault on Bridge Street. Services rendered.

10:47 p.m. Loud noise disturbance on Fourth Street. Investigated.

Friday, 2/18

3:01 a.m. Suspicious person on Avenue A. Investigated.

3:05 a.m. Suspicious person on T Street. Investigated.

9:45 a.m. Abandoned auto at Great Falls Discovery Center. Referred to an officer.

6:46 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Millers Falls Road. Services rendered.

8:10 p.m. Suspicious other at Jay K's Liquor. Advised to contact police if repeated.

9:32 p.m. Suspicious auto on Migratory Way. Investigated.

10:49 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Third Street. Services rendered.

Saturday, 2/19

4:21 p.m. Domestic problems

on Park Street. Advised of options.

Sunday, 2/20

11:05 p.m. Missing person reported on Avenue A. No such person can be found.

Monday, 2/21

11:38 a.m. Report of fraud reported at Bank of America.

2:16 p.m. Threatening, harassment on Avenue A. Advised legal help.

4:22 p.m. Arrest of [redacted]

[redacted], for possession of a firearm without a license to carry, unlawful possession of ammunition, possession of a class B drug, disorderly conduct, carrying a firearm without a permit, and carrying a firearm while loaded without a permit.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Recommends 1.5% COLAs for Town Employees

Seeks Level Funded School Budget

BY KATIE NOLAN -

Level funding, rising gasoline costs, and state and federal mandates were the buzzwords at the budget hearings held before the selectboard on February 22nd.

Fire chief John Moruzzi said the town needs a new fire truck, and that will cost the town approximately \$375,000.

George Drake of the capital planning committee said the stabilization account has about \$240,000 set aside for the fire truck purchase. He said the committee had not met to discuss moving the purchase up from next year, when it had been scheduled, to this year, but he believed the committee would recommend the town borrow the remaining \$135,000.

Moruzzi told the selectboard the town might be able to find a demo (used) truck for \$330,000. He explained that a new truck would also increase maintenance costs, because the US Environmental Protection Agency had increased pollution control standards for new trucks, and the pollution control devices are costly to maintain.

The selectboard recommended asking for the full price for a new truck at town meeting, but buying a demo truck for the lower price if possible.

The town is moving to purchase a new fire truck a year earlier than planned due to mechanical and electrical problems on the 23-year-old Engine #3, which is nearing retirement.

Fire chief John Moruzzi presented a level funded fire department budget for FY'12, without salary requests, pending a determination of COLAs for town employees. D'Errico said the budget should include an increase for gasoline, because gas and oil prices are bound to rise, "unless peace breaks out."

Police chief Gary Billings presented a level-funded police department budget, also with no salaries shown, but told the selectboard, "Fuel prices are the wild card - that's the only thing that scares me."

However, he said, "I think we're pretty accurate, I wouldn't want to trim any more. I think we can make it through next year with level funding."

Billings said the department would be asking for a replacement cruiser and cited a quote of \$31,700 for a Ford Explorer.

Drake said funds for a new cruiser were available in the stabilization account.

Neil Brazeau presented the initial fiscal year 2012 budget for the transfer station, using similar amounts of expenditure to FY'11.

The line item for the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (\$4,712) is new because Leverett just joined the district last year.

Brazeau said he is hoping to save money on hauling recyclables, scrap metal, bulky wastes and trash by sending containers out less frequently. He said the transfer station scales will require maintenance. No salary requests were shown on the departmental budget, because a FY'12 cost of living increase (COLA) had not been determined.

A separate town meeting article will be presented to buy a porta-potty for the transfer station. Brazeau said the state inspector is now requiring the facility, which is open six hours per week, to have toilet facilities for workers.

Selectboard member Peter D'Errico asked, "Is this another unfunded mandate?" and continued, "I'm serious. We're up against something ludicrous."

Selectboard member Julie Shively suggested, "Why not an outhouse?"

Brazeau was asked to check with the board of health to find out if they could permit a privy at the transfer station, and also to find out what other area towns are doing for worker sanitation at their transfer stations.

see LEVERETT pg 13

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Future of Herrick Property at Issue

May Be the Oldest House in Town

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

The fate of one of the oldest houses in town - the former home of Marion Herrick on Wickett Pond Road - took a good part of the February 17th Wendell selectboard meeting. A number of groups and individuals came to make comments, showing widespread interest in the property, which is now owned by the town.

Wendell's new food coordinator was there, so was the conservation commission, a representative from the town's open space committee, another from the energy committee, and a representative from the Franklin County Land Trust, along with a number of interested citizens without official titles.

The property is on the north side of Wickett Pond Road. The house sits close to the road, on a north-south ridge, with a wetlands on both sides, one of which includes a tributary of the Millers River.

The area was heavily wooded until the 2006 tornado passed through and pretty much cleared all the trees. Remarkably, the 1780s-era house was spared.

It may be the oldest standing house in town, and although it needs some attention, the roof is sound and its overall condition is good. Marion Herrick moved there as a young bride, and lived there through widowhood and

old age. After she passed away, the property taxes were not paid, and the town has since taken ownership of the house and land.

A year ago, Jean Forward of the Wendell historic commission suggested turning the house into a museum of colonial American women, with an agricultural and food preserving component. But that idea failed to gain traction, possibly because the remote location is not conducive to many visitors. There is only one parking spot at the property, and Wickett Pond Road is unpaved, with room for oncoming cars to pass each other if the drivers cooperate.

The property is surrounded by state land, some of which was also cleared by the tornado. An aerial photograph taken after the tornado and before the cleanup showed the downed trees lying in a swirl, looking like a school of fish circling.

Ward Smith of the conservation commission opened the discussion, saying the conservation commission had not reached a consensus in their discussion about the property, except that their board does not want to see the entire acreage subdivided into individual house lots.

Mason Phelps said Marion Herrick had wanted a conservation restriction placed on the property, with hunting not allowed.

Selectboard member Dan Keller asked who would hold the conservation restriction, and Phelps suggested the conservation commission.

Open space committee chair Marianne Sundell said the OSC also has interest in the property, and conversation with Sam Lovejoy, an acquisition lawyer for the Department of Conservation and Recreation, gave her the impression DCR is interested in purchasing the property outright. Several land trusts also have interest in the property.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard said, "The state should talk with us."

Keller said he has a meeting scheduled with a state representative, and will report back to the selectboard at the next meeting. He said town meeting might be the place for an ultimate decision on the best use for the property.

With a Request for Proposals (RFP), as opposed to an auction of town owned property, the town can have some control over the outcome.

Answering Dennis Hudson's question, Keller said it is possible to view the outside of the house at any time, and the inside after making arrangements.

Allistair McMartin and Judy Hall also were interested in the property, with the idea of using Hall's see WENDELL pg 12

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Re-Use Committee Hopes to Save Usher Mill Boiler Building

BY KATIE NOLAN - "The building is undoubtedly a finer architectural specimen than the rest of the mill, and it would be nearly impossible to duplicate it today."

That was the message from Robert Leet, of Whetstone Engineering, about the boiler building at the Usher Mill complex on Arch Street in Erving Center, as the selectboard continue to deliberate about the clean-up and possible reuse of the abandoned property.

The Usher Mill reuse committee and selectboard met jointly on February 17th to consider the fate of the seven acre former mill site, still owned by Patriots Environmental, a salvage company from Worcester. Patriots has already removed salvageable material from the property, and has since defied orders from the county building inspector to clean up and secure the abandoned mill.

Patriots has not paid any taxes on the property since 2007. Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin reported that town treasurer Margaret Sullivan expects that the town will take possession of the property in mid-August.

Robert Leet of Whetstone Engineering, who had reported on the structural stability of the complex in January 2010, wrote the town that he had revisited the site specifically to address the feasibility of saving the boiler build-

ing. Leet, town administrator Tom Sharp, Justin Fellows, and reuse committee member Jeffrey Dubay had visited the site to inspect the building last week.

Leet wrote a letter to the board reporting that the walls of the 1000-square-foot brick structure built in 1918 appear to be in good condition, and the trusses appear sound, but the roof is leaking badly and would need to be removed and replaced.

"Although the building is not actually falling down at this point, it will not last long in its present state because of the roof failure," Leet wrote. He concluded, "It is likely that renovating this building would cost more than razing it and building an industrial building. It is my opinion that the only justification for attempting to save the structure is if for a high-end use which would incorporate its architectural beauty. In any case, I want to re-emphasize my conclusion from last year that the entire site in its current state is a public hazard."

Dubay told the selectboard, "Without the building as a core, redevelopment of the entire property isn't going to happen." He said the boiler building gives the site "authenticity" and said, "To demolish it is really crazy." He added, "It's not rocket science. Any responsible person could secure that building in a day."

Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin told the reuse committee members, "I agree. I'd want to save the building. It would be sad to see it go." But he said the former mill complex must be made safe. He said he was concerned, "Too much time will elapse going through the process," to restore the building while the entire site remains a safety hazard.

Reuse committee member Linda Downs-Bembury said the reuse committee has the expertise to "put forward a grant to save the building," citing her work as a grants manager and Sara Vega-Liros's research on other towns that have developed brownfields sites.

Vega-Liros concurred, saying, "Grants are available for finding new uses for old industrial sites."

Downs-Bembury commented, "I don't want to be the kind of community that tears down because it's cheaper today."

Vega-Liros said there is a three-part process to complete: publish a request for proposals to fix the safety issues, get bids on the proposal, work on making the site safe, and then take more time to decide about the boiler building. She said the committee hasn't been in existence enough time to research costs, but can work on that over time.

Goodwin told her, "We're short on time."

Selectboard member see **ERVING** pg 12



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

BY NEIL SERVEN

GREENFIELD - It just so happens that I am a serious Jeopardy! fan. I try to watch the show every night, and I have taken the test to try out for it five times, with mixed results. So when it was announced that IBM would be pitting its Watson supercomputer on the show against Jeopardy!'s top two all-time champions, Ken Jennings and Brad Rutter, half of me was intrigued. The other half was miffed that this wealthy corporation would be hijacking my favorite show for a publicity stunt that would last three days.

If you watch Jeopardy! regularly you know that most of the clues are steeped in puns and wordplay; in fact, there is usually at least one category on every board devoted solely to things like crossword clues, before-and-after-style puzzles (e.g., "Johnny Cash on Delivery"), or phrases linked by a common word. And many clues from other categories will rely on verbal tricks that you are expected to identify, such as a hint word in quotation marks. A ques-

The Rogue Editor

Watson's Grasp of Language: Not So Elementary

tion on travel, for example, might ask for the Hawaiian volcanic area that's a "jewel" of a destination for sightseers: Diamond Head.

Being able to answer a question depends on your ability to parse a string of information that doesn't follow a set pattern, teasing out what is critical from what is not. This seems to be the primary challenge that Watson's programmers set out to meet. For every clue, Watson, like any other player, has to make lightning-quick, minute decisions regarding which information is useful for what is being sought and which is not, and the nuances of language often shield this. Many Jeopardy! clues are written fill-in-the-blank style; often you'll see the word "this" somewhere in the clue (e.g., "This actress won an Oscar for...") which identifies the genus of thing they are looking for. A player knows to focus on actresses, narrow them down to those who won Oscars, then work from there. But other clues are not so straightforward, and that's where it gets interesting.

For example, a category called "Literary Character APB" had clues phrased to resemble police descriptions of villains in novels. The \$800 clue was a Daily Double that read, "Wanted for killing Sir Danvers Carew; appearance - pale and dwarfish; seems to have a split personality."

A person who has read

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde recently would know the answer, but what made it tricky for Watson was that, without the benefit of the indicator "this" in the clue, he had to determine a spatial relationship among the characters in the book in order to figure out what kind of information was being sought. A simple analysis of keywords was not going to help Watson here; he also needed a fluid understanding of relationships and narrative to come up with "Mr. Hyde" as the correct answer.

What were more revealing were the questions that Watson got wrong. When asked to identify the specific handicap of Olympic gymnast George Eyser, Watson could only respond, 'leg.' But this was a clue that required more than a fill-in-the-blank response: you had to identify that, of all possible handicaps a person could have, that Eyser was missing something, and then what that something was (Eyser did, in fact, only have one leg). Watson seemed to be unable to piece together that entire sequence of thought, hence his incomplete answer.

The tournament featured a heavy amount of wordplay clues, presumably on purpose as a way to test Watson's ability to identify words based on shared meanings. It was somewhat surprising to see Watson get shut out on a category called "Also on see **WATSON** pg 13

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Night at the Discovery Center



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

BY ANNE HARDING
G R E A T F A L L S - It has been rumored that late night goings on at the Discovery Center have been keeping the local police busy responding to false alarms set off by rampaging squirrels. No, these are not some sort of diorama display animals gone wild – these are real squirrels. And apparently they

are not alone – the goings on at night at the Discovery Center have been driving the staff nuts! This intrepid reporter decided it was time to take a closer look at the venue.

Like most people in town, I've visited the Discovery Center only during the day – until now – and enjoyed the wonderful dioramas showcasing more than 200 species in the various New England habitats. But when the lights go out, strange things start happening. The animals come to life and head over to the Great Hall (when it's not reserved for the monthly coffee house series).

This weekend there was an awesome soccer match. In spite of tremendous odds, Dino Dave managed to hold off a voracious team of velociraptors and score the winning goal in a closely fought match. Though slightly

wounded in the fracas, Dave noted his lucky sneakers came through once again. Sad to say, none of the dinosaurs in the match were local species. We'll be hearing more about the dinosaurs that once roamed our part of North America when 'Fossil Fuel for the Valley' kicks into high gear. Recently awarded an Adams grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and partners will focus on the wealth of dinosaur tracks in the region and promote science-based tourism.

Following the match it was time for 'Critters Gone Wild' the first annual pre-Mardi Gras ball. Featuring the rocking sounds of The Squirrel Nut Zippos, the hall was hopping until the wee hours. If you missed the dance, there is still a chance to visit during the

daylight hours. The Discovery Center will be open February 25th and 26th, Friday and Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

You can take in the last few days of James Roszel's exhibit which has been hanging in the Great Hall since January. A master of 'Fine Fish Art,' Roszel offers custom fish portraiture, scenic water colors and limited edition prints. Special programs this week include:

- Feb. 25th - Free Ice Fishing Clinic, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Feb. 25th - What Do Animals eat? Discovery Hunt, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Feb. 25th - Fourth Friday Young Childrens' Story Hour, 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- Feb. 26 - Snow Melt in the Watershed: Visit the Investigation Station at the Front Desk, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

UNION from pg 1

Wisconsin, other than the police and firefighter unions that backed Walker in his election victory last November, when Republicans swept to majorities in both houses of the Wisconsin state legislature.

But police and firefighters were out in force in Springfield on Tuesday, along with teachers and carpenters and many other union locals from around the area, as the crowd chanted, "We are One! We are Strong!"

"To cut someone off at the knees, without even talking about it, that's not how we do business here in Springfield, or in the Commonwealth, or in the United States of America," declared Springfield mayor Domenic Sarno, to resounding cheers. "When people are running out of the building, who are the people running into the building? Our police and firefighters, without question. And all teachers are working on the front lines, to cure the vicious cycle of poverty – education is the key."

Across the street, two dozen counter demonstrators held signs calling for Governor Walker to run for President, and an end to the molycoddling of public employees they claimed are bankrupting state and local governments across the country.

But Jordan LeMieux, vice president of District 5 Firefighters of Massachusetts, said, "We did not create this financial crisis. It was created by

corporate greed. Until we make the governor of Wisconsin understand this, we have to stay together."

Why does it matter to workers in Massachusetts what the governor of Wisconsin does with the contracts of public employees a thousand miles from here?

"This fight is about us," insisted LeMieux, referring to the tens of thousands of teachers and other public workers and their allies who have taken to the streets in Madison, WI for the last week and a half. "Walker's trying to take away the right for all of us to sit at the table. We earned that right. It is our right."

Springfield Education Association president Tim Collins, wearing a brown bowler hat and sporting a long white beard, gave a speech to warm the cockles of Samuel Gompers' heart.

"Brothers and sisters!" he cried. "We stand with our brothers and sisters in Wisconsin for what is right and just. The labor movement is about more than wages and benefits. It's about a 40 hour work week. It's about occupational safety laws. It's about the elimination of child labor. It's about civil rights and health insurance. We cannot let these greedy people turn back the clock."

Collins continued, "It's about every working person in this country. Every person in this country deserves a good job. The problems our country is facing



DETMOLD PHOTOS

Springfield Education Association President Tim Collins exhorted the crowd to "Stand and fight for the working people of this country!"

are completely due to the lack of living wage jobs. We stand on the shoulders of giants who bled in

the streets to give us good jobs. We can't let them turn back the clock. Stand and fight for the working people of this country."

Collins thundered, "Here in Massachusetts we are a Commonwealth! Tell the politicians to fight for the Common Good and the Common Wealth."

As the crowd roared and cheered and the counter-protesters jeered, Keith Burelle made his way up Main Street toward his car. An insurance agent whose company, American Life, is unionized, Burelle said he is a

conservative who leans to the right on most of the fiscal issues facing the country today. But he was holding a sign to support the workers of Wisconsin on Tuesday.

"The public employees of Wisconsin are willing to meet the governor's demands for financial givebacks," said Burelle. "But the governor wants to take away their bargaining rights. That's going too far."

Larry Hansen, a Mass Department of Environmental Protection employee was hurrying from work to join the rally, even as the last speaker wrapped up. "Public employees do a lot of good for people in the state," said Hansen. "Most people don't even know what we do. There's a lot of education and experience in the public employee unions. That's what it takes to get the job done."



Counterprotestors chanted "Pass the Bill!" and supported Scott Walker for President

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ROBOTs on the Go at FRANKLIN TECH



LESLIE BROWN PHOTO

Joshua LaBelle, left, and Josh Chapley at work on their robots in Bryna Diamond's class at Franklin Tech. A robot 'Road Race' will be held on Friday, March 3rd at 9:45 a.m. in the school's assembly hall.

BY LESLIE BROWN

TURNERS FALLS - There's a different buzz in this classroom. It's the mechanical whine of small motors and the intense exchange of students. The buzz is all about gear ratio and wheel size; about the computer program and the speed. It's Senior Robotics at Franklin Tech.

Twelve students hover in pairs over long tables covered with wheels of several sizes, plastic gears, and sections of metal that have been tooled with holes for screws, motors, battery packs, servos, remote controls and lap-

tops.

The goal is to build the fastest, least destructible robot. The final testing ground is a road race a mere eight classroom days away.

A somber guidance meeting is punctuated by the arrival of a whizzing robot. Peeks around the corner reveal two giggling students, one armed with a remote. The robot shows off its stuff, circling clockwise, then in the opposite direction. Everyone moves out to the hall to watch the high speed retreat.

Encumbered by a rotating schedule that alternates between

academics and vocational learning, some Tech students struggle to see these two types of learning as overlapping. Sometimes there is a surprising "aha" moment when a student says, "Hey, this is the same geometry thing we're doing in math!"

For the students in Robotics class, the two learning modes come together seamlessly in this opportunity for independent, challenging, trouble-shooting. The robots have been in design process, building and rebuilding since September. Each team has brought a special skill set to the

process. Matching an electrical student with one from automotive technology has created a duo of computer savvy and wiring techno with a young man who has three and a half years of experience sorting out the problems under the hood of a vehicle. Two young women, one from cosmetology and one from machine technology, benefit from the former's adept fine motor skills and sense of design and the latter's knowledge of CNC - computer numerical control - which pairs computer aided design with computer aided manufacturing

Teams argue about the best approach to increase robotic efficiency and speed as the teacher moves from group to group asking questions to provoke critical analysis: "What did you learn about choosing the largest wheels? What is your plan for dealing with the gear breakdown?"

Bryna Diamond came to Tech as a math teacher. Like the rest of the department she teaches the basics, like geometry and algebra. Her teaching style supports student participation in the learning process as the best reinforcer of skills. She encourages students to work in teams or pairs, and to ponder the different ways to reach solutions to mathematical problems.

Diamond's original degree however was in math and computer science. Now pursuing an advanced degree in math and science education, Diamond took a robotics class herself. She was so fired up by the experi-

ence that she called Superintendent Lane during a class break to talk about starting a robotics program at Franklin Tech.

Lane secured funding through a Perkins grant, with some additional federal monies for projects promoting cross learning in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. This funding now provides for a class of twelve seniors and a class of five juniors. Diamond also advises an after school robotics club, with an avid ninth grade participant.

Robotic students follow the BootCamp software and block program computer code which is downloaded to the robot's microcontroller. Robots can be autonomous like the vacuum cleaner on the market touted to clean while its owner is at work, a sort of domesticated R2D2. The current project is remote controlled for racing conditions like those used in a remote control car or plane.

Diamond finds that this complex learning challenges her students to apply their technical learning to focused project learning which requires math, computer, and scientific input. Participation in this class will provide students with another layer of problem solving skills to bring to their future learning or employment.

It's also just plain fun. The learning fun will culminate in a road race in the school's assembly hall on March 3rd from 9:45 to 11:10 a.m.

On your mark, get set, go!

Archaeological Sites in Short Supply for King Phillip's War

BY KATE PHILLIPS

LEVERETT - "One of the things that worries me a little bit about a program like this is that people start getting interested in the exact locations of archaeological sites and can do tremendous damage. They can literally ruin sites in a blink of an eye," cautioned Mitch Mulholland, director of UMass Amherst Archaeological Services (UMAS) at a talk February 16th at the Leverett Library, as part of the Read It, Leverett! program.

Mulholland spoke about the

archaeology of the great struggle that raged across the New England colonies in 1675, known as King Phillip's War - or Metacom's Rebellion - which exacted a higher



UMASS PHOTO

Mitch Mulholland, founding director of UMass Archaeological Services, spoke at the Leverett Library last week.

per capita casualty rate than any war America has fought since, with a sixth of the male colonists losing their lives in the conflict, and no reliable estimate of the regional tribes' extensive losses. This year's Book Connect choice is the book *King Philip's War*, by Eric B. Schultz and Michael J. Tougas.

But Mulholland said the war itself was too fleeting to leave much of a permanent archeological record.

Mulholland, who has spent the past 30 years doing archaeological research in the region, explained that the Connecticut River Valley is a hub of archaeological activity and evidence. Over the years, local archaeolo-

gists have unearthed an array of artifacts, including post molds left behind by deteriorated wooden stakes (used to secure wigwams and other styles of housing to the ground), a great variety of spear and dart heads, pots complete with food residue, and various other "features," or evidence of past human activity.

That evidence, based on 100 years of local research, represents 13,000 years of Native American occupation in the Valley. There are about 1,000 sites on record, with many more thousands that have not yet been discovered, or have otherwise been destroyed by development and construction, or curious individuals who

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

- William Carlos Williams

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design by Claudia Wells

Winter's First Bloom

The woodbine's red leaflet tunics peek from beneath their stole of fresh snow. The woods are hushed and still, bereft of the rustlings of autumn. A stream laced with ice slips past, dark and clear, colluding with sentinel trees. Their darkened torsos cast deepening shadows that spawn a tenebrous bloom; an encroaching shroud siphoning lonely sighs from wind on high. I, too, have stayed late. On the chilled cusp of dusk I retreat toward home, across an open clearing, resplendent in russet and gold.

—Gini Brown
Berkeley, CA

Having Sent A Vulgar Limerick To Ann, I Begin The Second Poem Of The Day

Snowed yesterday, I already mowed twice. Dirt roads are solid again, sugaring is over. Three daffodils bloom on the south lawn. Hauled the thick ice out of the lily pond, found a goldfish that survived the winter in less than a bathtub's worth of water.

On sunny mornings, earthworms leave the damp slope, crawl east toward the sandy roadside to dry and die. I pick them up and throw them back into the grass.

Cars are frosted in the morning, but motorcycles are on the road. The hardware is again open on Sundays, parkas are packed away.

Spring does not come to the north with sirens and a motorcade. Like bindweed or moles, it weaves slowly into what is already there.

—Roderick Bates
Vermont

Fourth of July

I don't suppose you remember that time. You were five or so. I must have been ten. We had ridden in the rear of the Pontiac, upholstery itchy on our bare legs. Dad driving, smoking his Camels. Mom humming *Stormy Weather*, smiling her sad smile, her voice the color of early morning rain.

We had driven to some broken down road-side stand in another state, where an old man and woman sold ice cold soda and fireworks: birch beer, coke-a-cola, cherry bombs, rockets and sparklers.

Restless, we chased across the dirt driveway into a meadow. Your voice behind me, a laughing bell. And just before dusk thought of itself, the summer sun fell flushed and ruddy, its glow caught in clots of foam on the grass. "Snake spit" we called it.

Fireflies appeared as we were leaving, shimmered like small galaxies drifting through our childhood. You whined, wanted to light the sparklers, settled for sucking your thumb. Dad turned on the radio, switched the knob till he found Jimmy Dorsey playing *So Rare*. You fell asleep and our parents spoke quietly as if I wasn't there.

—Paula Sayword
Leyden

Field Trip for an All-Girls School

Down Highway 51 the bus rides in its lane – rice waits and milo, the meaning of Missouri. Fields run the tape measure of road and alter slowly. Little rag weeds bend, milkweeds flower – trees once thickets turn to hedgerows – then to billboards where Mike asks us to drink hard lemonade, and we do – and think all drinking is hard in the parking lots of Illinois.

In cars below us profiles speak. They laugh and sleep past silos in Cairo, past railway beds in Carbondale. By nightfall the road is only sounds of seams and airbrakes in Decatur and Kankakee. We play with my little pony. The air is cold and fixed with color like a rubics cube, and the last of the peaches comes from a torn up paper sack.

It's strange, but not one of us notices the cores of peaches – their dark, bloodied pits, a curve of cervix – where things grow up from programmed darkness.

—Lisa Drnec Kerr
Ashfield

Mountain Brook


This 'life blood' of our lofty forest, Sprung from springs atop the rise, Born from storms that soak those slopes, A pulse of life from throbbing skies...

Like arteries, brooks flow their course Twisting, turning, splashing wealth Across the groves, the glades, the knolls To nourish nature's growth and health.

Ever in motion, gravity-drawn, Each waterway defines its land; Its rapids, eddies, cascades, bear Elixir that all life demands.

—Dave Peterson
Leverett

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Degrees of Home

Above New England's April—a mottled beige and pinkish face—I turn from the window. Descending hours later, I enter every shade of green—clusters, curls and strips of light-filled pigment. Driving to your house, honeysuckle lines the road and 88 degrees of home opens every flower. I inhale hungrily, remembering standing in your backyard as a child, picking the delicate, white trumpet off vines, snapping its end with a fingernail. I pulled the thread of stamen through stem until a clear, sweet bead glistened on its pedestal and I plucked it with my tongue. For that instant, I was safe and good. Now, I arrive at your door and go inside where we'll stay, windows locked tight. Your world has grown too dangerous to wander the yard—you too fragile for spring sun, the memory of a stray bullet or uneven ground beneath a newly mown carpet of grass. The girl in me longs to sit on your steps, staring into the yard, once an endless field without fence. I turn from the window to your astonishing aliveness—your open, lined face—mine in forty years. Tell me all your stories again.

—Chivas Sandage
Northampton

Galaxies of Skin

Cell after cell rises
shaping swirls
on tips of fingers
bubbling up a galaxy
knit from my hand
gliding over your hip

Skin touches skin
two infinities meet
stretch themselves
along that limit
of dark-edged space.

—Carolyn A. Cushing
Easthampton

Wingless, but Flying

We've surely gone off the map by now.
Matthew parks on the shoulder
near needled trees. He and Diane squeeze
out of the cab. Brian and I jump down
from the tailgate. They carry towels and lunch.
The clear sky forecasts nothing at all.

Matthew joins the men jumping into
the quarry's waters. "Try it, you'll love it!"

What an extraordinary hole in the ground—
and rain filled it up, just like that.

There are women giggling on the grass.
So glad I am not one of them yet.

Brian goes before me (I have to be coaxed
into everything). The fall is fast and slow
a wild rushing calm, until feet-waist-nose-head
hit the cold wet dark.

My body sinks but wants to rise. My feet
kick rock, then water. A pain rises with me
but when I surface I am bodiless:
only a wet, grinning face.

—Kat Good-Schiff
Easthampton



Sandbar Piano

MIAMI (AP) — A grand piano recently showed up on a sandbar in Miami's Biscayne Bay, about 200 yards from condominiums on the shore.

Perhaps jellyfish
will learn to play
Bach Cantatas,
or old Diver Dan's composition:
Seaweed Suite in C minor,
for squid trumpet, piano
and four octopus orchestra.

—Lori Desrosiers
Pioneer Valley

While Tying Shoes for Morning Walk

Migrating tree swallows hover by cabin door, their shadows
slant across my feet, the flutter of 2,000 wings
a curtain rippling in an off-sea breeze.
So gently they hover never bumping,
enough space for all of them, they reach their
feet forward only remembering how to land
then lift off in a flurry of black wings highlighted by sand
they have no fear of me sitting in this chair
follow they cast their wish, if you dare
the gentle fluff of 2,000 wings a surcease of care.

—Laura Rodley
Buckland

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

Roderick Bates is a Vermonter and Dartmouth graduate. He has published poems in *Naugatuck River Review*, *The Dark Horse* and *Rat's Ass Review*.

Paula Sayword divides her time between a small farm in Leyden, MA and a home in Ramah, NM. A chapbook titled *What Sleeps Inside* was published this summer by Slate Roof Press.

Lisa Drnec Kerr lives in Ashfield. Her work has appeared in *Green Mountains Review*, *Kalliope*, and *English*. She directs the composition program at Western New England College and teaches writing and poetry.

Lori Desrosiers' poetry book, *The Philosopher's Daughter* is forthcoming from Salmon Poetry in 2012. She is the publisher and managing editor of *Naugatuck River Review*, a journal of narrative poetry.

Laura Rodley is the author of the chapbooks *Your Left Front Wheel is Coming Loose* and *Rappelling Blue Light*. She teaches creative writing, works as a free lance writer and photographer.

Chivas Sandage teaches women's writing workshops and her poetry is forthcoming in *Morning Song: An Anthology of Poems for New Parents* and has appeared in *Manthology: Poems on the Male Experience*.

Kat Good-Schiff's poems and stories have been published in *Pank*, *Meat for Tea*, and *The Equinox*. She has worked as a gardener, tour guide, ice cream maker, and editor.

Carolyn Cushing is a poet obsessed with cells and the natural world. She created a series of poems inspired by the life and work of Rachel Carson.


D. W. Peterson lives in Leverett.

Suzette Snow-Cobb wrote this poem (and read it) for the *Montague Reporter's* Love Poetry Open Mic held at the Rendezvous, while wearing her slippers.

Gini Brown is a Berkeley mom watching life go by and kids grow up. Some moments feel like poetry.

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ERVING from page 7
James Hackett commented, "It's coming into another year and nothing done."

Gary Bennett of the reuse committee said that reusing the property as a park – one of the four plans provided by Conway School of Landscape Design student Karen Dunn for the site – wasn't a good idea because, "We're pretty well parked out." He told the selectboard, "I don't see you people or the finance committee making any bold moves, and I don't see my taxes going down. I would rather see the site used. We ought to be

making electricity down there." He said power was generated there in the 1830s to 1850s and, "The cycle is coming around again." He told the selectboard, "We need to do some progressive thinking."

The selectboard agreed to schedule a joint meeting with the Usher Plant reuse committee either on February 24th or March 3rd to continue the discussion.

Town administrator Tom Sharp reported MCMUSA, the contractor building the new senior center, is back at work after several weeks delay caused by

bad weather. Sharp reported the snow has been cleared from the site, and the slab has been poured.

The selectboard and planning board met jointly and appointed Betsy Sicard and Mike Shaeffer to fill vacant planning board positions, and Winifred Stone as an alternate planning board member. At the recommendation of the planning board, Stone was also appointed as the town's representative to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Planning board chair Bill Morris told the selectboard his

board was considering placing a town meeting article on the right to allow drive-through for all businesses in town. An article allowing drive-through businesses in the central business district failed by one vote when it was considered at the October 2009 special town meeting. Morris said that the October 2009 article applied to "basically the Semb property extended." He said allowing drive-through businesses would allow banks to locate a branch office in Erving.

The selectboard rescinded its February 10 vote to buy a \$4000 copier for the Erving Center

wastewater treatment plant, and asked Sharp to research whether a cheaper machine would be appropriate.

Erving firefighters worked on Saturday, February 12th to remove snow from Erving Elementary School roof. Selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo estimated the work took approximately 100 worker hours at a cost between \$1500 and \$1800.

Nominations for town offices in the upcoming town elections must be certified by the town clerk by March 14th.



WENDELL from pg 6
background in rural sociology to showcase small scale agriculture with raised beds and using McMartin's experience with solar energy to create a zero energy house on the site.

Heard said it is exciting to see so much interest in the house and land.

Solar Furnaces

Paul Costello of the energy committee stayed to hear about the Herrick property after reserving the town hall for a workshop on solar furnaces. The energy committee plans to put some available grant funds towards buying materials to build ten solar furnaces, and to hold the workshop May 14th so citizens and carpenters can build them.

A solar furnace is essentially a black box that gets warmed by

the sun, with a fan that blows that warmed air into the house through a hole in the wall. Estimated installation by a professional carpenter and electrician should cost \$300 to \$500, and requires an eight inch hole in an outside wall, with the necessary sealing and caulking, taking care to avoid hidden electric wires and studs.

Members of the energy committee hope to have these solar furnaces built, installed and working next winter – preferably on homes that receive fuel assistance and have a good southern exposure. The committee might help subsidize installation costs as needed.

The available grant money comes from Wendell citizens' participation in the Greener Watts program, in which some utility customers agreed to add 2% to their home electric bills to support renewable energy sources.

Sam Shearer opened the meeting by reserving the town hall for the centerpiece fundraiser for Good Neighbors and the Orange food pantry, an April 2nd yoga class with massage, healing touch and shiatsu. To waive the April 2nd fee, bring money or food to the library on Sundays in March.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser reported he had gotten two estimates to create a system to back up automatically all appropriate computer work done at the town office building. Both were from Robbie Heller. The more expensive system would cost \$1,800 for hardware; the other would cost \$690 for hardware, plus four hours at \$50 an hour for installation, and an annual maintenance fee. The proposal would allow for four hard drives

and a power backup system to provide enough electricity for computers to shut themselves off properly in the event of an interruption in electrical service.

Building Inspector Flex Hours

Residents have asked why the building inspector, Phil Delorey, no longer holds regular office hours, and the selectboard had forwarded the question to him.

Town administrative coordinator Nancy Aldrich read his response, in which he wrote that when he had office hours, he often spent the time alone in the office building with no one coming to consult. With the system he uses now, a person needing to consult with him can call and arrange a meeting time, and that time can be more flexible, fitting both parties' schedules. His answering machine is always on, and he returns messages within a few days. His files and computer records are at home, so he is better able to answer questions than he is in the office building.

Heard asked Aldrich to send a return letter thanking him for responding promptly and informatively.

Town Reserves over \$1 Mil

Doug Tanner, chair Michael Idoine, and Garret Sawyer of the finance committee met the selectboard to discuss the warrant for the next special town meeting, tentatively scheduled for March 9th. Article One would take \$50,000 from stabilization to pay for Wendell's share of a project manager and engineering repairs to the Swift River School roof and boiler.

The town has applied to the Massachusetts School Building

Authority (MSBA) for a Green Repair grant to help cover the expense of that project, but any grant is at the discretion of the MSBA, and the towns are responsible for any cost not covered by grant money.

Article Two would take \$22,538 from stabilization to pay for the difference between the Franklin County Technical School assessment and the payment authorized at the annual town meeting. Article Three would pay a bill of a prior year, \$1712.50 for a Swift River School capital project related to the public address system.

Idoine suggested the town office computer backup system, discussed earlier, could wait for the annual town meeting, but Heard said it is not that much money, and earlier installation could save a lot of grief.

Idoine said highway commissioner Harry Williston had lowered his request for a chipper to \$30,000, but Idoine said he is still not convinced.

The stabilization account stands at \$982,496, and the town's free cash account stands at \$249,544 before any of this spending.

Idoine said the town has been careful to allocate excess free cash into stabilization for many years, and that practice, along with payments a decade or more ago from the Diemand-Bennett dump receipts, and reimbursements from the Fleet Bank and former tax collector Judy Wilder to reimburse the town for about a quarter million in misappropriated tax dollars helped build up the town reserves. Idoine also credited current tax collector Penney Delorey for working hard to collect back taxes due to the town when she took over the post.

Wendell spent about \$1.3 million on recent building projects – the new town office building, the new library, and the center septic system – and has still been able to build town reserves up to over a million dollars in the last three years. Idoine said Wendell now maintains the highest percentage of reserves compared to the tax levy of any town in the state.

Consequently, Idoine said the finance committee is taking a fresh look "at whether we want our taxpayers supporting reserves at that level," considering present economic circumstances.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

Hazardous Roadways, Unwanted Persons

Tuesday, 1/18 8:05 a.m. One-car accident Mormon Hollow Road. No injuries. Verizon pole #24 down in road.	Sunday, 1/30 11:30 p.m. Disabled and stuck vehicle on Jennison Road. Towed.	Sunday, 2/6 8:15 p.m. Car abandoned on Morse Village Road. Called rental company and they removed it.
Sunday, 1/22 8:20 p.m. Car off road on Locke Hill. Towed.	Saturday, 2/5 8 p.m. Ice storm. Car stuck on Jennison Road. Sent sander.	Thursday, 2/17 11:30 p.m. Unwanted person at a Depot Road residence. Left before arrival.
Saturday, 1/29 9:05 p.m. Removed unwanted person from Farley Road residence.	10:06 p.m. Car stuck on Stone Road. Sent sander.	10:10 p.m. Car stuck on New Salem Road. Sent sander.

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Senior Suicide Pt. 2

of living at any age.

But, unrelenting depression is not normal. If you feel this way, you should seek medical attention. Most people get better if they treat their depression.

If you or someone close to you is having suicidal thoughts, you can call this toll-free number, available 24 hours a day, every day: 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You will reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, a service available to anyone. All calls are confidential.

More than 90 percent of people who kill themselves are suffering from a brain illness and substance abuse problems. Yes, that's right, a "brain illness." Many times we think that the personality is in the brain. But the truth is that the brain is just an

organ like the heart. When the brain becomes ill, it can make you depressed and anxious.

Suicide is often a last-ditch attempt to relieve the pains of depression. Depression can cause powerful feelings of despair and self-doubt. These feelings can create self-destructive thoughts that, if ignored, can lead to suicide.

If you are having these thoughts, seek help immediately. It is important to understand that suicidal thoughts are treatable. Don't let fear or embarrassment stop you from seeking help from your physician, therapist, family, or friends.

Avoid being alone when you feel horrible, and stay away from drugs and alcohol. Many suicides are caused by uncontrolled

impulses. Drugs and alcohol can make you more impulsive.

Make sure you do not have access to anything you could use to hurt yourself. Have someone hold onto your car keys when you are feeling suicidal. Throw away all unused medications.

How can you tell if someone is thinking about suicide? Here are some indications that should be considered seriously:

- Any mention of suicide.
- Writing or revising a will.
- Giving away sentimental possessions.
- Purchasing a gun or large quantities of medication.
- Cutting off social connections.
- Suddenly becoming calm and decisive after being without joy or hope.

The following are some suggestions from mental health professionals to assist someone who is suicidal:

• Stay calm and let the person know you are willing to listen.

• Remind the person that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem, and that there are better ways to handle the problem.

• Describe behavior you've observed and explain that you are concerned that it might indicate a potential suicide.

• Remind the person why his or her life makes your own life better.

• Don't try to handle the crisis alone.

• Encourage the person to get professional help.

• Someone who is suicidal may be ashamed. Remind the person that guilt is also a treatable symptom.

• Try to elicit the person's suicide plan.

If you have a question, please write to fred@healthygeezer.com

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - This is the second of two columns about suicide.

White men are at the highest risk of suicide, especially those over the age of 85; they have a rate of almost 50 suicide deaths per 100,000 persons

Depression is a condition usually associated with suicide in older adults. There are a lot of problems to face as you get older. There are losses of all kinds that can get you down. And feeling blue for a while is a normal part

WATSON from pg 7

Your Computer Keys," a category of words and phrases that also happen to appear on a computer keyboard. For "A loose-fitting dress hanging straight from the shoulders to below the waist," it would have seemed logical for Watson simply to cross-check a list of garment terms with a list of computer vocabulary to come up with the right answer. Instead he guessed "chemise," a word that has nothing to do with computers. (The correct answer, rather obscure in my opinion, was "shift.")

It was not the only time Watson forgot the category. The example that stood out the most

was the first Final Jeopardy!, in the category "U. S. Cities." The clue read, "Its largest airport is named for a World War II hero; its second largest, for a World War II battle." The correct answer was Chicago (the airports being O'Hare and Midway). Watson answered "What is Toronto?," followed by a string of question marks, which Alex Trebek explained was an indicator that the computer had little confidence in his guess. While Toronto is served primarily by two airports (Buttonville and Pearson, named respectively for a property owner and a Canadian prime minister), it is not, of course, an American city. Why

didn't Watson narrow down his answer to airports in the U.S.? Why didn't he see a connection between, say, "World War II battle" and "Midway"? These kinds of glitches, while humorous, showed that the system is not perfect.

No matter. Even with his mistakes, Watson clobbered his human competitors, who received pretty nice consolation prizes for the minor humiliation. More importantly for IBM, how-

ever, is the real possibility over the horizon that the language-interpreting technology that powers Watson will be used for information retrieval instead of game playing. We won't have to worry about a computer beating us then, because he'll be on our side.

Neil Serven is an Associate Editor for Merriam-Webster. He lives in Greenfield.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Break In, Phone Lines Down, Disabled Cars

Wednesday, 2/16
6:24 a.m. Report of breaking and entering in progress at River Street residence.
6:39 a.m. Arrested [redacted] for felony daytime breaking and entering, threat to commit the crime of murder, and felony malicious destruction of property.
8:20 p.m. Request for assistance with stray cat at Moore Street residence. Advised to take to shelter in the morning.

Friday, 2/18
7:50 a.m. Report of suspicious motor vehicle at the end of West High Street. Checked same. All set.
1:37 p.m. Loud music complaint on Mountain Road. Advised to call when music is playing.
1:55 p.m. Report of lines down on East Prospect Street. Found to be telephone line.

Saturday, 2/19
12:25 p.m. Report of line down at Pleasant Street. Verizon advised.

7:29 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle at elementary school on Route 63. Towed.

Sunday, 2/20
3:10 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on West Main Street. Motor vehicle found to be off road.

Monday, 2/21
6:35 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle at Mountain Road cemetery. Checked same. Male and female talking. Moved along.

LEVERETT from pg 6

The selectboard asked town administrator Marjorie McGinnis to inform elementary school committee chair Farshid Hajir and regional school representative Kip Fonsh that they want to see a level funded budget for the schools and an itemization of what it would take to achieve level funding for the elementary and regional schools.

Board of health members Mike Fair and John Hillman reported that the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) public health futures task force will be submitting a grant application to the state Department of Public Health (DPH) to create a two-tiered health district in Franklin County. Towns could decide to join either for community sanitation services (housing inspections, lead inspections, camp

inspections) or a comprehensive health district (all of the sanitation services, plus food inspections, septic system inspections and plan reviews, public health nursing, and animal inspections).

Fair said the task force had drafted an application for a \$30,000 grant for assessing needs and planning a shared district.

In September, if towns join the regional district, the district will apply for a DPH grant to fund the district program for three years.

According to Fair, DPH is saying that local boards of health and health departments will need to show they have "competent staff," and task force handouts indicate that providing this staff will be cheaper on a regional basis. However, he said for the board of health, "We're pretty

satisfied with our septic issues; we don't have a public health nurse - I don't know what needs the town has now."

D'Errico said, with the planning grant, "They're not going to study if we need it, they're going to work on governance, how to set it up."

The selectboard voted to thank Fair for attending the task force meetings and asked him to continue attending and reporting on its actions.

The selectboard unanimously approved the recommendations of the personnel board to set the COLA for town employees for FY'12 at 1.5%, to raise the library assistant hourly wage, to reduce the selectboard clerk's hours and raise her hourly rate, to raise the police sergeant one step on the step chart, and to raise the accountant's hourly rate.

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GO GREEN FAMILY

Episode 46: Leaks and Lies

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

MONTAGUE CENTER – Rita Tinker couldn't decide if she was more furious or depressed. Last month after she picked Alex up from the Holyoke police station, she'd pleaded with him not to take part in any more Rising Tides protests. When he'd told her he was already part of the action team for a planned protest against the Vermont Yardley nuclear power plant, she blew her lid. "Alex—you're ruining your future—and you're jeopardizing my political future. Getting arrested isn't going to change anything." But the more she argued, the more he dug in his

heels.

"You should be supporting nuclear power, not protesting it, Alex," she'd argued. "It's a solution to climate change. Look — Ron Wilson at Synturgy himself told me nuclear power plants don't use any greenhouse gas emissions to generate electricity. It's also cheaper than using coal or oil."

"Mom, that's all wrong. Believe it or not, I've been reading up. There's greenhouse gas emissions from digging out the uranium, plus you have to use diesel fuel or gasoline to crush the rocks and bake it and move it. They use fossil fuels to construct the building and all the equipment. And experts say supplies of the ore that's easy to mine will be gone in five years. The whole

process will get way dirtier when the low-grade ore is used. And it's not cheaper! If the fat cat corporations that own the nuclear plants ever have to pay the real cost of storing radioactive waste and keeping it safe, it will be the most expensive fuel, period," said Alex.

"But Alex, that plant supplies our electricity — and jobs for people we know!" Rita argued.

"Why aren't you thinking about how unsafe it is? That plant is leaking tritium into the Connecticut River, and people living nearby are going to get cancer. Aren't you even a little worried about that? We only live ten miles away!" Alex replied.



Soon afterwards, Alex was driving north on Route 91 with

Jayden, when Jayden's cell phone buzzed.

"It's a tweet from Maggie," Jayden announced. "It says 'meetup synturgy 2:30 for action. climbers 1st, Group 2 advnc to vestibule, group 3 stay in prkg lot.'"

"On our way," Jayden tweeted back.

When they arrived, Alex and the rest of his four-person team walked swiftly across the snow-covered lawn to the two story brick building housing Synturgy's executives and pulled out climbing ropes to begin their ascent of the building. One minute later, a second group of activists followed the walkway to let themselves into the building through the front glass vestibule. When they were inside, a third group began wrapping yellow crime scene tape around the brick facade of the building.

When the police officers

arrived at the scene, the first thing they saw was a giant banner, festooned with dozens of black helium balloons with images of pirate skulls and these words: Leaks & Lies — Children Die — Shut VT Yardley Down.

Noting the crime scene tape, they wondered if another squad car had already arrived. After seeing that the scene was attracting bystanders and someone was videotaping, they decided to remain in their squad car and wait for instructions.

Meanwhile, Synturgy spokesman Ron Wilson could hardly hear himself think over the rousing chorus of "Shake, Rattle and Roll" sung by activists who were occupying his office. His temples throbbled as he recognized Rita Tinker's son Alex. Why hadn't the police shown up yet, an hour after he'd called?

Continued next issue...

NURSE from pg 1

cut the state supply of flu vaccine by as much as 50 percent.

At present, you can find Billie Gammell at Montague's town hall on Thursdays between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m., and also at the Gill-Montague senior center on 5th Street on the fourth Wednesday of each month, from 10:30 a.m. until noon, for health screenings. No appointments are necessary and all the services are free. If you have a question, you can contact her at 863-3200 extension 107 or send an email to nurse@montague-ma.gov.

"I want people to know I'm here. It's a free service. Nurses can be very powerful in a community, and I'm very proud to be serving the people here," said Gammell, who grew up in Turners Falls and currently lives in Greenfield.

In her office at town hall she is available for blood pressure

checks and monitoring, and she'll fax your results to your doctor. She's there to administer flu vaccine, and no, she said adamantly, "It is not too late in the season for a flu shot. In fact," she said, remembering the recent outbreak of H1N1, otherwise known as Swine Flu, "some strains of flu appear in the spring."

Last year, Montague's health agent, Gina McNeely, wrote, "Though the nursing budget was cut, our elderly residents are once again getting services they so richly deserve and need. I was moved by the fact that people are coming back again for services they never should have lost. I don't believe enough of the public understands what it means to an elder to have human touch and a few moments of conversation."

Gammell can make referrals after listening to health concerns, distribute sharps containers, thereby providing a clean and

safe method of disposal for syringes, offer diet and nutrition counseling, test for TB, talk about smoking cessation, and work with your doctor to monitor ongoing conditions such as hypertension.

Gammell works with the nursing students at Greenfield Community College who assist at flu clinics and the health screenings at the senior center, and this becomes a win-win situation for the students and the community.

"The nurses learn in a real-life situation and the town benefits from the extra help," Gammell said.

"She's wonderful," said senior center director Roberta Potter, who added the monthly visits by the town nurse are a convenient way for seniors to get a basic health check up. "It's an appreciated and much needed service.

People come regularly to see her."

Fueled by her commitment to the community, her love for her work, and a great deal of energy — she has three sons and another part-time job at Franklin Medical Center — Gammell works hard to remain positive in a time of ever-increasing economic pressures. Proposed cuts could eliminate the collaboration with GCC, which would be a loss for the college and the town. A 50 percent reduction in state supplied flu vaccine would leave many people unvaccinated, increasing the health risk for individuals and also for the community, since "community immunity" is created through high rates of vaccination.

Gammell's office is a point of entry for people who do not know where to go with their health concerns, but Gammell's limited

hours also limit access. Despite these concerns, her first priority is to serve those in need and to do the very best she can in just under ten hours a month.

She said, "This job connects me to people. I feel very appreciated by those I serve, and want everyone to know I'm here."



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Assist Other Police, Residents, Dumpster Fire

Wednesday, 2/16

4:00 a.m. Resident complaint of a suspicious motor vehicle in their driveway.

6:50 a.m. Assisted Erving police department with an arrest.

10:40 a.m. Complaint of noise from the Barton Cove area.

Thursday, 2/17

7:30 a.m. Assisted a resident with a building check.

Friday, 2/18

8:30 a.m. Responded to complaint of loose cows on Main Road.

9:06 a.m. Responded to "low wires" complaint in Riverside Area

2:40 p.m. Tractor trailer unit stuck attempting to turn onto Gill Montague Bridge.

9:30 p.m. Tractor trailer unit stuck on the Gill Montague Bridge attempting to cross it.

Saturday, 2/19

10:10 p.m. Removed victim from home on Mountain Road. Charges to be filed on subject for violation of restraining order.

11:12 p.m. Assisted resident with disabled motor vehicle on Main Road.

Sunday, 2/20

2:20 p.m. Responded to dumpster fire on Main Road.

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Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls, 8 p.m. (Doors open at 7 p.m.). Tickets \$15 in advance, \$17 on show night at the box office. Tickets at World Eye Bookshop, 156 Main Street, Greenfield, or at www.SheaComedy.com. Contact the Shea Theater box office at (413) 863-2281.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHUN ILLUSTRATION

Cam Am Hotshots. All level contra dance, 7 to 10 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: Grooveshoes with Left Ear Trio, 9 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: Nexus, Harmonic Eclectic rock, 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Loose Change, 9:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Union Square Roundtable, comedy and music from Somerville, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Oscars on the Big Screen.*

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Jim Henry, Guy DeVito & Doug Plavin Experience*, Acoustic Trio, 8 to 10 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dada Dino* hosts Open Mic, 8 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *All Small Caps, A Night of Spoken Word*, special poetry night menu available, bring a friend and your appetite, doors open at 6:30 p.m., 7 to 10 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 3rd
Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Relics, Brian Mallet and Lefty Cullen* playing all your favorite oldies from the 50's & 60's, 8 to 10 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Fall Town String Band*, 7:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya's Coffee House & Espresso Bar, Shelburne Falls: *The Collected Poets Series* featuring Polina Barskova and Mike Young, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4th until SUNDAY, APRIL 3rd
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Told and Retold: Art Exhibit by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association/Memorial Hall Museum.* Art created by Northfield Elementary School students explores how we talk about war. Inspired by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's NEA-sponsored BIG READ of Tim O'Brien's novel, *The Things They Carried*. Meet the young artists on March 5th, 1 to 3 p.m. in the Great Hall.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4th until SUNDAY MARCH 27th
Barnes Gallery, Leverett: *Peace Talk: Art is the Children's Voice*, Exhibit of Iraqi Children's art. Reception on Sunday, March 6th 4 to 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 4th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*, Reggae Fantastico, 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Pressure Relief, 9:30 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Makaya McCraven*, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 5th
Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Earth Vibes*, 8 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Comedy at the Shea, Dirty Water TV Comedy* Host: Dave Russo, 8 p.m.

The Gallery At Hallmark & The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Turners Falls Community Film Project premiere of its first film series: 6Films.* A night celebrating local film, music, art and culture! First local music and art at The Gallery at Hallmark, where 6Films will be shown. Then the celebration continues at The Rendezvous featuring music by *The Heather Maloney Band*. There will be a red carpet (black tie optional). Small cover fee for both the screening and the after party. Buy tickets at <http://www.turnersfallsfilmproject.com/sixFilms/premiere.php>, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 10th
Deja Brew, Wendell: Free Range, Classic rock and dance music, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 11th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Coffeehouse with veteran musician Ronald Meck, who sings traditional Celtic and folk ballads in a soulful baritone while playing guitar, bouzouki, tenor banjo, and percussion. His son Adrian, an accomplished fiddler and symphonic violinist, joins him for toe-tapping jigs and reels, 7 to 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12th
Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Sweetback Sisters*, 9 p.m. Now Open Tuesday thru Sunday

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24th
Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: Debut concert of Lovely Red Vega, folk rock quintet, including Katie Sachs, Karen Werner, Tim Murphy, Liam McFarland, and Carolyn Walker, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Larry Kopp*, Country & City Blues Guitar and Vocals, 8 to 10 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bow Thayer & Perfect Trainwreck*, roots/rock, Free. 9:30 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Alan Evans from Soulive*, 9 p.m.

Athol Orange Community TV: VDay North Quabbin will present a two night benefit screening of VDay's documentary *Until The Violence Stops*. Raise funds and awareness to end violence against women and girls to Benefit NELCWIT, 7 p.m. Additional screening on Sunday, February 27th at 2 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24th until SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26th
Northfield Mount Hermon, Rhodes Arts Center: *Little Women*, a musical, 7:30 p.m. on each night. Additional Saturday matinee performance at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY nights FEBRUARY 25, 26, & MARCH 4, 5
JaDuke Black Box Theater, Turners Falls, *Baby with the Bathwater*, 8 p.m. Also matinees at 2 p.m. on Sunday

February 27 & March 6.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25th Through SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27th
The Shea Theater, Turners Falls: New Renaissance Players present, *The Jungle Book*, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m., Feb 26 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Feb 27th at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Ice Fishing Clinic, Join Jim Lagacy*, for a free ice fishing clinic. The program will start in the Great Hall and then move to Barton Cove (1 mile away) for hands-on experience. Call 413-863-3221 for reservations, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Fourth Friday Young Childrens' Story Hour*, especially for children ages 3-6, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Join Conte Refuge staff as we read the children's story *Stellaluna*, about a baby bat. Immediately following the story, children can decorate their own egg-carton bats to take home.

Wendell Public Library: Narragansett Tribal Preservation Officer Doug Harris and filmmaker Ted Rimreck *Hidden Landscapes: New Investigations into Ancient Stone Ruins of New England*, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Blame It On Tina*, Folk Rock with Jen Spingla, Bob Rosser, Klondike Koehler, and of course... Tina Horn, 9 to 11 p.m.

Arts Block Café, Greenfield: *Becca and the Big Wig*, 8 p.m. and then *Rocky Roberts & Friends* at 9 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *St Mix*, 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rumba Psicolica*, funk-rock w. DJs Andujar, Bongohead, and Studebaker Hawk, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Arthur Holmes Blues Band*, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26th
Montague Grange: *Gender role-free Contra*, caller David Kaynor, music by



Mike Young reads at Mocha May on March 3rd

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SITES from page 9

may not have realized that they were causing extensive damage to historical sites.

The period of European contact, beginning in the 1600s, is one of the most interesting time periods in Valley history, and yet, in terms of archaeological evidence, one of the most elusive. King Philip's War, an intense struggle between English colonists and allied Native American tribes, consumed the area from 1675 to 1677. Despite that fact, it is very poorly represented by the evidence that has been collected. According to Mulholland, this is, unfortunately, predictable.

"The reason is the short time frame. Some time periods are three thousand years long. You can leave a lot of stuff around in three thousand years. But if you're just looking at King Philip's War, it's just a year or

two, and people weren't staying in any place for a long period of time."

In fact, people were chasing each other across the region. This poses a challenge in uncovering meaningful artifacts and other evidence, and also in trying to pinpoint exact locations. The firsthand accounts of what happened during the war were mostly written well after the fact, and like any firsthand account, inaccuracies are expected.

"If you read all of the accounts of the various skirmishes and battles and attacks, you realize that people were running in about 15 different directions at once," Mulholland said. "Think about it: how do you document something like that and get it down to a specific place on the ground, and then try to find it archaeologically?"

The truth is that professional

archaeologists today do have better tools at their disposal to locate exact sites. Expensive GPS systems use satellites to aid in locating areas of interest. Devices have been invented that can thaw the frozen ground without compromising the integrity of a fragile archaeological site. Once artifacts have been discovered, modern labs can process and document the information for use by present day and future researchers.

While today's archaeological technology is a vast improvement over the methods used 100 years ago, the priorities of researchers in a world marked by development have shifted considerably. Archaeologists today aren't simply going out to discover new sites; they have to be more concerned with preservation than discovery. The cornerstone of work for UMAS is to "conduct archaeological surveys

in advance of federally and state permitted destructive practices," Mulholland explained. "If a highway is being widened, and it's going through an area that has archaeological sites, we get hired."

If UMAS is then unable to work with a developer to preserve a site, they turn their attention toward data recovery. They process a sample of a site, (to process an entire site would cost millions of dollars), and they document as much information as they can.

"We call what we do 'public archaeology,'" Mulholland said. "The whole reason the government is interested in having archaeologists do work ahead of these sites that are being destroyed under their watch is that there's useful, public information, and it should be kept for the public."

Many of the sites associated

with King Philip's War have likely been destroyed by such development. The sites that are intact (sites associated with the Battle of Bloody Brook in Deerfield, and the Battle of Beer's Plain in Northfield, as well as others) are not a large cache of archaeological finds. Mulholland made it clear that there still may be sites out there associated with King Philip's War, and they may yet be discovered.

Copies of *King Philip's War* are available to borrow at the Leverett Library.

The Read It, Leverett! series continues on Friday, February 25th at 7:00 p.m., with "Hidden Landscapes: New Investigations into Ancient Stone Ruins of New England", a talk by Narragansett Tribal Preservation Officer Doug Harris, and Filmmaker Ted Timreck, at the Wendell Public Library.

**MT TOM** from pg 1

mental regulations of the Clean Air Act came into force. These five power plants were allowed to operate for decades exempt from the emission standards of that law, until environmentalists successfully petitioned Governor Mitt Romney to phase in tighter regulations on their emissions a decade ago.

Those regulations have gradually been coming into force. In 2012, for example, Mount Tom will be required to capture 95% of the mercury that goes up its stack each year, capturing roughly a pound of mercury more than the 85% contained today. In 2004, when the tightened regulations began to go into effect, Mount Tom was allowed to release 33% of its mercury emissions. But some mercury will still be released into the air around Holyoke each year.

Mercury is a neuro-toxin that can cause developmental impairment in young children, among other health effects.

Cleveland said it is unclear whether Mount Tom will be able to meet the tightened mercury emission standard next year, even after a \$55 million Turbosorp scrubber was installed in the stack in 2009.

Coal plants across the country have been shutting down or converted in recent years, as utilities seek to avoid the costs of tightening environmental regulations, or to take advantage of cheaper and

now plentiful supplies of natural gas. But Mount Tom's location on the Connecticut River flood plain would make it difficult or impossible to permit for a conversion to natural gas, activists said Wednesday.

Mount Tom is owned by GFD Suez, the owner of the Northfield Mountain pumped hydro storage facility, and arguably the largest utility conglomerate in the world.

Other emissions impacted by the tightened regulations at Mount Tom are nitrous oxide and sulfur dioxide. Cleveland said regulations for tightening carbon monoxide and particulate emissions at Mount Tom and the other remaining filthy five power plants (the Somerset 120 megawatt plant is now closed, and Salem Harbor, a 745 megawatt plant, will close in 2014) have not been written yet.

Cleveland said Mount Tom is also emitting 180 pounds of ammonia into the air of the Pioneer Valley each year, an element that contributes to the production of ozone.

Meanwhile, the Conservation Law Foundation is suing to shut down Mount Tom over 2442 'self-reported' violations of the Clean Air Act in the last five years.

What sort of violations were these? "Soot," said Cleveland, matter-of-factly.

Mount Tom, like the other grandfathered oil and coal plants in Massachusetts are remarkably

inefficient by modern standards, typically wasting about 70% of the fuel burned. Cleveland said that on a per megawatt basis, Mount Tom is emitting more CO2 than the largest of the five grandfathered plants in Massachusetts — the 743 megawatt plant in Salem Harbor.

Cleveland said the Mount Tom coal plant is emitting five times more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than a plant built to modern standards would now be allowed to emit.

"This past year," she said, "the plant operated at 66% capacity, and emitted 595,000 tons of CO2. If they were operating at their typical 97% capacity, they would be emitting more than a million tons of CO2 a year."

Carbon dioxide is widely regarded by climate scientists as a main driver of global warming.

Mount Tom is also producing about 60 steady jobs for local workers in the IBEW, and around \$1.5 million in property taxes for the city of Holyoke. Activists in the room made it clear these are byproducts of the generating plant they do not take lightly as they embark on a campaign of grassroots education to build momentum to replace the power produced at Mount Tom with local Green energy jobs in wind, solar, and geothermal energy.

As Giovanna DiChiro, of Nuestras Raices, said, "We don't want to trade off health for jobs. We want healthy jobs."

Meanwhile, Amherst's Mary Wentworth asked whether tax revenues should be measured in light of increased medical bills for downwind residents.

Due to prevailing winds and weather patterns, people up and down the Pioneer Valley are all breathing much the same air anyway.

As Montague health board member Jay di Pucchio commented in a phone interview following the meeting, "I don't think it's any stretch to conclude that one of the Filthy Five in our Valley, which has some of the highest rates of pollution in the Commonwealth, is something we need to examine," in regard to our own incidence of respiratory ailments. local incidence of respiratory ailments.

Citing the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, DiPucchio wrote last year, "In the Pioneer Valley region of Western Massachusetts, temperature inversions can result in higher particle pollution levels than otherwise would be expected." He asked, "What is the effect of particulates on regional incidence of pulmonary disease?"

"I'd rather have a whole lot fewer lights on in my house and be able to breathe the air. That's the calculus we need to make," said DiPucchio.

The meeting broke up with a call for more research, and plans to involve the mayor, the city council, the DEP, and the IBEW

in future roundtable discussions on Mount Tom.

The activists, who combined to represent groups with decades of organizing experience in environmental causes and neighborhood empowerment, seemed cheered by each other's commitment to the cause of helping Holyoke live up to its recently acquired Green Community status.

"People all over the globe are making decisions about their lives and communities. This could be a great moment for Holyoke," said Rick Purcell.

The meeting took place on the second floor of the neoclassical Holyoke Public Library, in a large, airy room with windows along two sides lighting huge framed portraits on the back wall. One showed the city's power canals in their heyday. The other depicted the skyline of Holyoke as it once appeared, with church spires vying for prominence with the smoking chimneys of the paper mills and factories that once employed thousands. The canal system is still very much intact, and the town has a huge inventory of vacant industrial space waiting for willing tenants.

It has another asset, too — cheap, plentiful municipal power provided by Holyoke Gas and Electric, the city owned utility, which provides 75% of its power needs from the city-owned 43 megawatt hydro dam on the Connecticut River.



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