



Land Trust Interview
with John Davis & Kirby White
Page 12



Happy Leap Year!



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YEAR 6 - NO. 21

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 28, 2008

GILL AMENDS AGREEMENT ON SCHOOL CLOSING

ALEX GOTTSCHALK
A controversial school committee proposal to amend the procedure by which the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee will be able to close a district school carried in Gill by a margin of 26 to 22 on Monday night, February 25th, at a special town meeting. The town of Montague approved the same proposal at a special town meeting on January 23rd.

Prior to Monday, the school committee needed the affirmative vote of 8 out of 9 of its members to close a school. The amendment states that a district school can now be closed with six out of nine affirmative votes on the school committee, along with the approval of a majority of voters at a town meeting in the town where the school targeted for closing is located. Now that the school committee and both towns in the regional school district have approved the proposal, the new procedure for

closing district schools will go into effect.

While attendance was sparser than at prior town meetings in Gill on

school related issues - more than half the chairs in town hall were empty - those who did attend see **GILL** pg 14

Public Hearing Scheduled on Montague's '09 Deficit

BY DAVID DETMOLD
Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the town of Montague is facing a \$1.5 million bud-

get deficit in the run-up to Fiscal '09, and he wants the public to tell him what to do about it. On Monday, February 25th,

Abbondanzio announced a public hearing on the budget, to be held during the selectboard meeting of March 17th, at 7 p.m., on the second floor meeting room of town hall. A live call-in feature for the meeting - which will be videotaped and broadcast live on MCTV Channel 17 - is also being arranged.

"We're looking at a sizable deficit, at this point, somewhere around \$1.5 million. The public hearing will look at how we got to be where we are, budget cuts we might make, sources of new revenues - including possible overrides - and consequences, including cutting staff and reducing services... how we will get out of the woods. We encourage townspeople to come and tell us what services they feel are important."

Selectboard member Allen Ross elaborated. "The budget crunch is going to be probably more intensely painful than in previous years. We're

see **BUDGET** pg 11



The Shipping News

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

TURNERS FALLS - On Thursday, February 21st, the first set of rear wheels of a Diamond Freight Distribution trailer from Rockaway, NJ made it over a concrete barrier wall at Southworth Paper Company. The second set did not, leaving the truck caught like a rabbit in a leg-hold trap. The driver, who would prefer to remain anonymous, looked on in dismay as a Rose Ledge employee jacked up the rear wheels so that smooth surfaces laced with oil could be slid underneath the tires, to enable the wrecker winch to pull the trailer sideways to extricate it from the barrier. Onlookers wondered why Rose Ledge did not jack up the rear wheels enough to go up over the barrier. The winch operator said, "It would have to be jacked too high. Pulling it sideways is the only way out." Traffic to and from Greenfield on the White Bridge detoured for hours while the obstacle was cleared.

PHOTO BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

Mass Aeronautics Comes to Town

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS - The executive director of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission (MAC), Robert Welch, with his chief legal counsel Wayne Kerchner in tow, came to Montague on Monday afternoon, February 25th, to meet with the selectboard, and answer questions about the make-up of the town's airport commission, and about certain rules of operation Turners Falls airport manager Mike Sweeney has instituted at the municipal airport. In attendance were members

of the airport commission, and members of an ad-hoc pilots group called Save the Airport. Those two groups have been at loggerheads over Sweeney's rule setting, which the pilots claim is arbitrary and dictatorial, and over such matters as lease fees for hangars that Sweeney and the commission have set and enforced, which the pilots' group claims are higher than at other municipal airports in the area. The pilots, who gathered petition signatures from more than 160 airport users seeking

Sweeney's ouster at this time last year, claim changes at the airport under Sweeney's tenure have led to a decline in use of the airport. An atmosphere of contentiousness appears to prevail between manager and users, according to comments made at open selectboard meetings.

Sweeney has countered the pilots' complaints by saying all rules he has set or enforced at the airport are in compliance with MAC regulations, and the rise in rents for hangar space are need-

see **AIRPORT** pg 16

Leaking Heating System and Plugged Drains Devil Wendell Town Offices

JOSH HEINEMANN - On February 16th, town clerk Annie Hartjens, assessor Paul Sullivan, and tax collector Penny Delorey drove through the icy slush and rain to hold their normal Wednesday evening office hours at the new town office building. The building was warmer than outside, but the heating system was not working, and in the clerk's office a puddle of antifreeze from the heating system had collected

on the floor. The greasy feel of the antifreeze made a simple mop up of the puddle impossible, and Hartjens was not sure whom to call to take care of the leak. She called selectboard members, the fire chief, and eventually the town custodian, Larry Ramsdell. Ramsdell came with a plumber from Whittier Plumbing, and together they were able to isolate the leak from the rest of the heating system. But the building stayed

unheated overnight.

Delorey's response to the cooling building was to end her office hours early, and go home before her typing fingers lost their mobility. Hartjens stayed through her office hours to monitor the repairs, while Sullivan worked in his office wearing his jacket fully zipped.

On Thursday the leaks were repaired on warranty by the system's original installer, Royal see **LEAKS** pg 9

PET OF THE WEEK
Mellow & Smart



Barbara

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



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MILLERS FALLS LIBRARY NEWS
Music & Movement

BY LINDA HICKMAN
MILLERS FALLS - The weekly Music and Movement series with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson will be held at the Millers Falls Library on Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. from March through June. Young children of all ages and

their families or caregivers are invited to the free programs. Registration is not required. The program is cosponsored by the Gill-Montague Council of the Family Network. For more information, please call 863-3214.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS
Preschool Story Hour

TURNERS FALLS - Preschool story hour at the Carnegie Library is held on Wednesday mornings at 10:15 a.m. Young children and their families are invited to come and enjoy stories, crafts, music, activities and snacks with artist Ruth O'Mara. On Wednesday, March 5th the theme will be hats. On March 12th we will be reading wind

stories. On March 19th, the theme will be rainbows and leprechauns. On March 26th we will be reading stories about birds. The weekly free series is designed for ages 3 to 5 and their parents, grandparents, and other caregivers. Siblings of any age are welcome. For more information, please call 863-3214.

Parent MCAS Workshop at Sheffield School

BY BRIDGET SWEET
TURNERS FALLS - March Madness is upon us with snow melting, birds chirping, longer days and MCAS testing.

Parents and guardians prepare! What better way than to attend a free MCAS workshop on March 6th?

The workshop, sponsored by the Title I program of the Gill-Montague Regional Schools, invites parents and guardians of students in all five villages of Montague to attend.

Childcare and refreshments, also free of charge, will be available.

Staff from the Massachusetts Parent Information and Resource

Center will present this question and answer workshop at the Sheffield Elementary School library, from 6 to 8 p.m. Real MCAS test questions and reports will be displayed.

Goals for the workshop include: ways to help the student prepare for MCAS, how students can utilize their MCAS test to succeed, and how to read and understand the report card.

For more information, contact Sheffield School reading specialist Laurel Rollins at 413-863-9326, or by email at lrollins@gmrds.org.

Pre-registration is recommended.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- March 3-7

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

Monday, 3rd
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
Tuesday, 4th
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
Wednesday, 5th
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 6th
1:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 7th
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 413-422-2584.

Monday, 3rd
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch
Tuesday, 4th
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, 5th
9:00 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Weight Loss Group



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GREAT FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE WEEK

Grade 6:
Hayley Westfall
Grade 7:
Olivia Tardie, Sean Howard
Grade 8:
Todd Richardson

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JOE GRAVELINE

Sengalese Dancer Develops Local Following

BY SHAWN WOOLSEY

SUNDERLAND - The Sunderland Elementary School has played host for the last few months to Senegalese dancer Abdou Sarr, who has come once a week to teach students tribal dances. Sarr was accompanied by Wendell drum teacher Karen Copeland, who provided drum lessons for the students. Copeland has been playing drums for over 20 years, working in the traditional Senegalese, Afro-Cuban and Latin jazz idioms.

Sarr, too, lives in Wendell, with his wife Clara and their son Alione. Since coming to America in 2000, Sarr has taught traditional African dance at many local schools and colleges. Every year he takes students to Senegal to learn about the culture, with a focus on traditional dance, drumming and singing. Sarr has given classes at Smith College, UMass, Mount Holyoke, and GCC, along with numerous area elementary schools.

Sarr learned the dances of Senegal from his mother, who also taught him the folk songs of his people. He said, "My mom was my best teacher. She taught me everything I dance and sing."

Sarr got his start in the US when he was approached by Tony Vacca, the world



From left to right, back row: Emma Mae Cummings, Owen Boucher, drum instructor Karen Copeland, Evan Bourque, Neal Sabol, Aaron Rosewarne, Brandon Svenor, Caleb Gannon, front row: Kaelina Lancaster, Jaynise Burton, Kai Nieto Gonzalez, Annika Voorbeis, Grace Randall, Abby Zeoli, Nina Devine, Tayah Meatley, Olivia McCulloch

SHAWN WOOLSEY PHOTO

renowned percussionist who developed Tony Vacca's World Rhythms production. Vacca invited Sarr to come to America to share his offering of Senegalese culture.

Copeland said, "We are blessed to have his talent right here in Franklin County, so we can share this with the local children."

Every year Sarr travels back to Senegal to see his family and to work. This

weekend, he will travel back, but he promises to return again soon with more to share.

Tuesday was Sarr's last class for the year in Sunderland, and his students came prepared with surprises for him. One was a song beat out by the drums of Copeland and the students, accompanied by a song thanking Sarr for teaching them and wishing him a safe journey back

to Africa. The second was a song and dance performed by Olivia McCulloch and her friend Tayah Meatley called, "The Secret for Abdou."

McCulloch said, "We worked in our free time in school and at home writing this song for our teacher. We thought this would be a nice thing to do because he taught us, and now he is going away. It was a lot of fun to make." Her partner Meatley added,

"At first we were a little shy, but then we got it done."

Sarr has taught in twenty-nine states, and anticipates working in more. On his travels back to Senegal, he continues to teach in West Africa. He will be back in Wendell in about two months.

Abdou Sarr can be reached for performances and instruction at: (978) 544-9849.

Hospice Offers 'Jane's Day' Workshop

Hospice of Franklin County will offer the first 'Jane's Day' educational event on March 19th, at Deerfield Academy. Nationally known author and speaker, Doug Smith, will present, "It Takes a Village to Say Goodbye," a workshop for professionals and non-professionals to discover the network of support a community can provide for its members facing terminal illness.

Hospice of Franklin County director Terry Gaberson explains, "Coping with life-threatening illness can be overwhelming and most people don't know where to turn for help. Hospice brings expert medical, emotional, and spiritual care to those with terminal illness, but we certainly don't work in a vacuum. Many threads of support within communities collaborate to create a fabric of

compassionate and dignified end-of-life care."

All interested community members are welcomed to attend this 8:30 - 4:00 workshop, with lunch provided. Scholarships are available by contacting the Hospice of Franklin County.

The Jane's Day presentation will become a bi-annual community education event by Hospice of Franklin County and is named in honor of Jane Gilman. Jane, who was instrumental in the planning of this workshop, was a long time community member, educator, and hospice social worker in Franklin County who died of cancer this past December.

Contact Hospice of Franklin County at 413-774-2400 or visit their website www.hospicefc.org for a brochure or more information.

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Safe and Green Montague

As the charade of regulatory oversight of Entergy Vermont Yankee's request to extend its operating license for another 20 years unfolds, residents who live downwind of this aging nuclear reactor are expected to resign their fate to the proper authorities. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, a federal agency that has never been able to shed its original identity confusion as both promoter and regulator of the domestic nuclear power industry in America, has never turned down a request by a nuclear utility to uprate power capacity or extend a nuclear plant's license to operate. Why should a rubber stamp agency like the NRC change course with a nuke so old and poorly maintained that its cooling towers are collapsing, its valves get unexpectedly stuck in place, (*a la* Three Mile Island) causing emergency shutdowns, its workers complain publicly of unsafe management practices "threatening global disaster," where nuclear waste goes missing, transformers catch fire, evacuation plans fail all rational tests, and enough high level waste to wipe out all of New England piles higher in a metal roofed seventh story swimming pool. Pigs would sooner fly.

Well, get your head out of the sand. If there was ever a time to organize in defense of your home, health, and property it is now. If that nuclear plant in Vernon, 15 miles from Montague as the radiation flies, bursts a gasket and melts down, no one in any state or federal agency will protect you. If you are fortunate enough to get out of town with your children and your elders before the radiation reaches you on the wind, no one will pay you for your losses: the federal government protects private utilities that operate nuclear plants from all liability in the event of a nuclear accident. You will lose everything.

Every day Vermont Yankee operates normally, it emits ioniz-

ing radiation into our air and water, degrading the health of our communities and leading to the probable increase of cancer and birth defects in future generations.

Towns throughout the 20-mile zone around Vermont Yankee are mobilizing to place articles on their annual town meeting warrants this spring, calling for a shutdown of the plant, employment for the workers in decontaminating the site, and a shift to conservation and safe, green forms of renewable energy to replace the electricity Vermont Yankee produces. All of these goals are within our power.

The state legislature of Vermont, alone among the 50 states, has enacted legislation taking back the veto proof power to determine whether an extension to the license of the only nuclear plant operating within its borders should be granted. Montague needs to join with other towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire to send a message to the citizen legislators in Montpelier. They may not represent us in the same way they represent their own communities, but we are the ones directly in harm's way of the Vernon nuke.

Come to a presentation by Safe and Green Campaign organizers on Thursday, March 6th, at the MCTV studios at 34 2nd Street in Turners Falls, 7 p.m. and find out what you can do to help end the threat of a catastrophic nuclear accident on the banks of New England's longest river, and the cumulative impact of low-level radiation emissions from Vermont Yankee. Hear about steps you can take to create a safe energy future for our community. Montague residents have already gathered the necessary signatures to place an article calling for the decommissioning of Vermont Yankee on the May 3rd town meeting warrant. We should speak with one voice to protect our homes and families, and pass this measure resoundingly.

WINTER IS FOR THE BIRDS



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for Rapid Response

At the last meeting of the Gill selectboard, Peter and Patricia Conway of Riverside had wonderful things to say about Gill's emergency workers. In December, Peter had to call the ambulance for Patty, who was unconscious at the time. The Conways expressed

gratitude and awe at how quickly the fire department responded, more quickly than the ambulance service, how a plow cleared the driveway so the emergency workers could get in, and how an off-duty police officer also assisted. The selectboard would like

to add their thanks to Gill emergency responders for their hard work and dedication to the citizens of Gill. Keep up the good work!

- Tracy Rogers
Administrative Assistant
Gill

Spring Begins at Smith College with Annual Bulb Show

A spectacular array of blossoming crocus, hyacinths, narcissi, irises, lilies and tulips and unusual bulbs from South Africa will provide an early glimpse of spring at Smith College's annual spring bulb show, from Saturday, March 1st, to Sunday, March 16th, at Lyman Conservatory on College Lane.

Author William Mathis will kick off the show Friday, February 29th with a talk, "The Best Kept Secret in the Gardening World: Hardy Terrestrial Orchids." at 7:30 p.m. in the Carroll Room, Campus Center, followed by a reception and preview of the

bulb show in the illuminated Lyman Conservatory. Both Mathis' talk and the bulb show are open to the public.

The spring bulb show is a long-standing tradition of Smith College's Botanic Garden, dating back over 100 years.

The Smith College Botanic Garden is open to the public daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

There is a suggested donation of \$1. Special parking rules during the two weeks of the Bulb Show allows for parking on College Lane, which ordinarily is not permitted. For more information, call the Botanic Garden at (413) 585-2740.



CAMILLA FOX PHOTO

SAFE & GREEN MEETING IN WENDELL

A Safe and Green organizing meeting, aimed at shutting down the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant and replacing its power with

clean, safe forms of renewable energy, will be held in Wendell, on Tuesday, March 11th, at 7 p.m., at the Wendell Free Library. Call Parker Cleveland for more information at: 978-544-2668.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Swept Under the Rug

BY PAUL RICH

WENDELL - I have been a 100% disabled veteran for most of my life. The Veterans Administration has had an influence on my life which for the most part I would like to forget. Most of my association with the V.A. was centered around the Leeds V.A. Hospital in Northampton, but by no means exclusively.

The disabled veteran's typical journey is from the home to the military and then to the V.A. system. From the beginning, the family teaches the child to respect and exercise obedience towards adults. Then the young adult joins the military, where he is further conditioned to give up his own initiative and blindly follow orders. If a veteran leaves the military and enters the V.A. because he is hurt, he is in for a big surprise. The V.A. hospitals take full advantage of his previous conditioning to quickly put him on the bottom and themselves on the top. Veterans health care consists of too little, too late, or none at all.

The veteran often suffers serious psychological problems, which supersede his other maladies. How many times have I seen veterans drugged with powerful psychotropics to the point of insensibility. Where is the advocate for the veteran here?

Even the pursuit of care for something as minor as a failing tooth can result in trauma. The dentist I saw in Leeds promised to facilitate a root canal procedure in the private sector when I returned in two weeks, if the tooth wasn't better. The two weeks turned into two

months, and still no progress. If they hold up care long enough, I will lose the tooth.

What is the difference between an old veteran, and an old toothless one? I would think it makes very little difference to others, so perhaps I should forget about it. It is just that it has been over three months now that I have been trying to save my tooth, and it will be the second tooth I will have lost in the same way, not to mention it makes it more difficult to eat when you have fewer teeth.

Where the veterans initial malleability was viewed as an asset to manage him, there soon evolves for the patient a loss of his sense of self. His lack of identity renders him incapable of measuring things outside himself. The V.A. staff soon come to view him as a groveling, directionless problem whom they resent and hold in contempt. The seeds for sadism lie here, and the climate is right.

Several years ago, a nurse committed multiple murders at the Northampton V.A. by injecting veterans with a metabolic exciter, causing their hearts to implode as they lay helplessly in their beds. This nurse probably would not have been stopped when she was, had it not been for the relatives of the victims complaining. Were conditions investigated here? If they were, the investigation yielded little if any meaningful results. After all, it was only about already damaged veterans, so why go digging around and take the chance of finding countrywide problems. They just swept it under the rug.

Montague Dems to Caucus

~April 10th~

Montague Democrats will hold their caucus to select candidates for town office elections on Thursday, April 10th, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the second floor meeting room of town hall, 1 Avenue A, in Turners Falls. Successful candidates will receive the party nomination to appear on the May 19th town election ballot. Voting is by paper ballot. Only registered Democrats may run in the caucus, which amounts to a primary election for local offices.

Democrats who wish to run in the caucus must deliver their intention in writing to Democratic Town Committee chair Jay DiPucchio by 5:00 p.m., Saturday, April 5th. Notice may be by mail, email or in hand. Verbal declaration cannot be documented and is not acceptable. Individuals choosing to run without Democratic party nomination should check rules with the town clerk. Occasionally, candidates for the caucus nomination also gather

signatures for nomination through the town clerk process so they are guaranteed a spot on the ballot regardless of the caucus results.

By the Democratic Town Committee's vote following the 2003 caucus, registered unenrolled voters also may vote in the Democratic caucus. No absentee balloting is allowed. As of February 24th, no incumbents have formally declared to the chair their intentions. Below are listed term expirations.

OFFICE	TERM	INCUMBENT	PARTY
Selectman	3	Patricia A. Allen	Dem.
Assessor	3	Paul J. Emery	Dem.
Board of Health	3	Michael M. Nelson	Dem.
Library Trustee (3)	3	Sharon E. Cottrell	Dem.
	3	Alice J. Armen	Dem.
	3	Veronica Phaneuf	Unenrolled
Parks & Recreation (3)	3	Dennis L. Grader	Dem.
Soldiers Memorial Trustees (2): Veteran	3	Arthur E. Gilmore	Dem.
Non-Vet.	3	Christopher Boutwell	Dem.
Montague Housing Authority	3	Edward J. Zewinski	Dem.

The second floor meeting room of the town hall is wheelchair accessible by elevator entrance at the rear of the building. Direct questions or letters of intent to: Jay DiPucchio, 35 Central Street, Turners Falls, 01376. 413-863-8656 home, here.now@verizon.net.

NOTES FROM THE GILL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Additional Articles

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

In addition to the school closing article, (reported on page 1) the following articles were discussed at the Gill special town meeting on Monday, February 25th:

Article I, to increase the amount of money appropriated by town meeting on June 11th, 2007 to fund the Gill-Montague schools (GMRSD) by \$19,835 for a total GMRSD assessment,

including debt, of \$1,303,738. Finance committee chair Paul Nowill said the additional appropriation was required. The article passed unanimously.

Article III, approved unanimously, provided for the town to release funds from the GMRSD Debt Reserve to offset Fiscal Year 2008. The sum in question was \$9,400.

Articles IV and V, voted in unanimously, approved the cre-

ation of a proposed Priority Development Site in the town of Gill, at the Mariamante property on Main Road and West Gill Road.

Article VI, passed over and postponed until further notice: a motion for the town to add a bylaw to create a Capital Improvement Committee.

Article VII creating a quarterly billing system for town taxes carried by majority vote.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Stolen Car involved in Accident

February 19th
8:00 a.m. Report of stolen motor vehicle from Lester Street. Vehicle recovered in Montague, involved in one car motor vehicle accident.

8:50 a.m. Report of a man slumped over wheel of truck on Route. 2 at Route. 63. Gone on arrival.

February 20th
1:30 p.m. Report of disorderly person on Ridge Road. Male subject pumping fists in the direction of children. Gone on arrival.

February 21st
6:45 p.m. Arrested [redacted], on a straight warrant.

February 22nd
10:15 a.m. Report of car fire on Route 2 at Route 63. Erving fire department on scene.

10:30 a.m. Two car motor vehicle accident at Forest and Prospect Streets.

1:55 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for disturbing the peace and disorderly conduct.
5:10 p.m. Report of water from

neighbor's house freezing in driveway at Highland Avenue.
6:43 p.m. Reports of several vehicles impeding snow removal on several different streets.
10:49 p.m. Medical emergency on Mechanic Street. Subject transported to hospital.
February 24th
6:43 p.m. Mutual aid to Northfield for domestic situation.
February 25th
9:46 a.m. One car accident with injury on Route. 2 in Farley Flats area.
2:20 p.m. Assisted subjects with hay spill on Route. 2 East bypass.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Traffic Hazard by Southworth Paper

February 20th
12:28 p.m. One report of many this week of accident with property damage.

February 21st
3:43 a.m. Medical emergency at Turners Falls Road with subject removed to hospital.

1:00 p.m. Report of traffic hazard at Southworth Paper, Turners Falls. (See photo on page 1)

February 22nd
12:31 p.m. Report of burglary, breaking and entering at Turners Falls Road address. Under investigation.
4:37 p.m. Unwanted person at Bank

of America, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
11:39 p.m. Report of neighbor disturbance from Seventh Street address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.

February 23rd
5:39 p.m. Report of assault at St. Stanislaus Society, K Street, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

February 24th
12:59 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]. Charged with speeding, OUI liquor (3rd offense), operating to endanger, failure to notify RMV of change of

address and possession of class D substance, subsequent offense.
1:20 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]. Charged with failure to stop and failure to use signal.
11:50 a.m. Report of vandalism at Central Street School, Central Street, Turners Falls.
7:16 p.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]. Charged with marked lanes violation and operating a motor vehicle with suspended license.



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GUEST EDITORIALS



Community Land Trusts: Been There, Done That

BY MARK LATTANZI
MONTAGUE CENTER - It was with some bemusement that I read your editorial regarding a Community Land Trust in Turners Falls (MR VI #19). Does it need one? It had one!

In September 1988 I was a recent college graduate relocating to western Massachusetts to work in a village called Turners Falls. I was a VISTA volunteer - part of a federal program that placed volunteers in community projects around the country. VISTA volunteers received a modest stipend (quite modest; I qualified for and received food stamps at the time) and health insurance, and were set to work on projects to benefit the community. My project was to work for the (now-defunct) Greenfield Area Community

Land Trust (GACLT) to help low income tenants in Turners Falls purchase multi-family housing and turn it into tenant-owned cooperatives.

It was GACLT's belief - and that of some community members - that Turners Falls was "about to become gentrified." Our mission: to locate suitable properties for rehabilitation, secure funding for the project and find the tenants who would live in them and become cooperative owners before the whole village was overtaken by artists and yuppies! Our accomplishments: nothing. Not a single building during my 2½ years on the project was purchased and rehabilitated. And this was 20 years ago, when 98% of the residential property in the village was absentee owned (I should know, I counted them all

in the assessor's office) and the real estate market was in a slump.

So why did this project fail? Several factors combined to make it impossible to create affordable, tenant-owned housing, despite the somewhat favorable real estate market and the energy and expertise of an entire organization of staff and volunteers:

The Commonwealth's stringent lead paint abatement regulations pushed the estimated rehab costs to over \$35,000 per unit - too high for an affordable final mortgage payment for a low income housing cooperative when acquisition costs, operating expenses, reserves, taxes and insurance were figured in. For very low income renters, it was simply easier and cheaper to stay a tenant.

Absentee landlords saw the project as having 'deep pockets' and wanted to gouge the GACLT on the purchase price. Or they simply had a very unrealistic expectation of the worth of their buildings - some of which, like the Beehive on L Street, were subsequently condemned and torn down!

There weren't many tenants

in Turners Falls motivated to participate in this project. Limited equity cooperatives - where the housing is made affordable in perpetuity by tenants willing to give up any market appreciation - were simply not attractive when at the time a single-family home did not cost that much more. Tenants would rather dream about getting that house that was just out of reach than commit to the time consuming, highly complex process of joint ownership of property. And besides, cooperative ownership was a little too lefty-sounding for a lot of potential residents to swallow. They were used to barely tolerating some of their neighbors - the idea of living with them for many years, and having to make joint decisions on the care and maintenance of their building was simply too "out there."

CLT's are legally and technically complex, highly labor-intensive property ownership projects. Too often the non-profits working to promote them got consumed with doing spreadsheets, lobbying for funding, and fantasizing about construction projects to realistically assess

whether it is the right place, right time for the concept.

Is it the right place and right time in Turners today? Maybe. The cost of single-family homes in the area is certainly much farther out of the reach of many renters in Turners. That might create some incentive for them to consider this model.

However, the rising prices of real estate significantly affect costs for a CLT today. I know real estate investors who now think that rental properties in Turners are too high priced to be a reasonable investment. Are there state programs that will offer subsidies to tenant cooperatives to offset this higher value? In a state where the governor is looking to casinos to 'solve' a deepening fiscal crisis?

But most importantly, are there tenants that are ready to invest a lot of time, sweat and money into this project? If there is no clear answer to this final question, then don't even get started. There are just too many 'cooperative' projects that limp along for years without any significant results - largely because there is an abundance of idealism but little commitment from the people the project is supposed to help.

Another View of the Greenfield Area Community Land Trust

BY SCOTT REED

SUNDERLAND - I was a volunteer working for GACLT at the time Mark Lattanzi joined us. I was on the board of directors of the trust for several years, and I accept responsibility for some of the mistakes he describes. I fully agree with him that one of our mistakes was identifying a problem (lack of affordable housing) and developing a solution (federally funded, perpetually affordable housing units) without getting the potential beneficiaries of the program on board from the start. I strongly recommend that those considering the development of affordable housing in Turners Falls make the enlistment of tenants from the community their number one priority, and that any solutions to affordable housing be developed organically from that participation.

While Lattanzi may have left GACLT before the rehab work and legal processes had been completed, I recall that GACLT was able to develop around two dozen housing units, some of

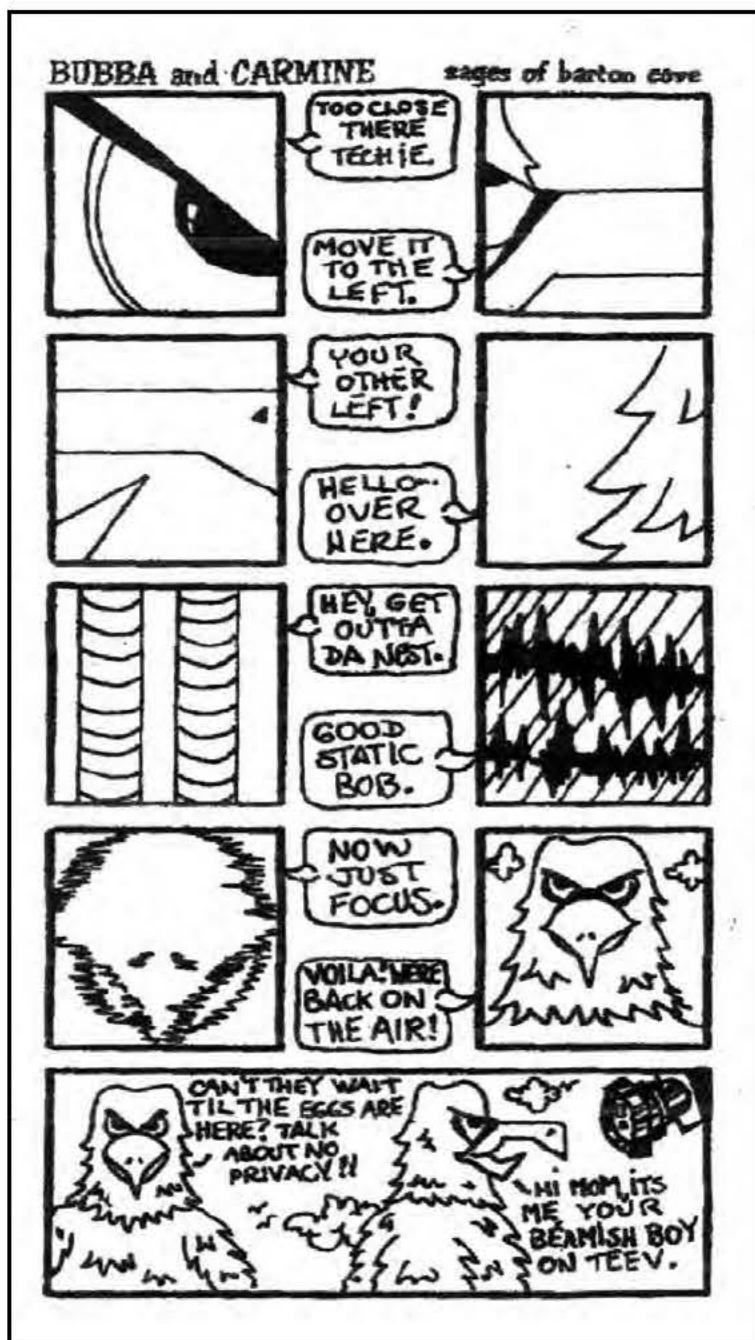
which are located in Turners Falls. To keep the costs of each unit down, most of these units were in duplexes, which were owned cooperatively by the two resident households. This complex legal arrangement created significant problems, as Lattanzi describes. Eventually all the units were converted to one large coop (Pioneer Cooperative of Franklin County, www.pioneercoop.org) which is much more manageable and has been a stable institution offering affordable home ownership to lower income households for over 15 years.

I have been involved with community land trusts for many years. Even before helping start up the GACLT, I was involved with the Valley Community Land Trust, which continues to provide affordable housing and access to land to a dozen households in Franklin County. Since our early experiment with GACLT, the CLT model has been refined and is the basis for thousands of affordable housing projects all over the USA. CLTs are recognized as

an established, viable approach for affordable housing projects by HUD and Fanny Mae.

A community land trust is a legal structure for locking in affordable access to land and real estate forever. Without a structure like a CLT, real estate prices usually go up faster than incomes, and this makes real estate less and less affordable as time goes on. Once a CLT acquires the real estate and takes it off the market, that process is reversed, and it can become more and more affordable as time goes on. The use of cooperatives and other ownership models for the buildings on the land trust are secondary to the following fundamental community land trust principal: the trust owns the land and leases it to home owners at affordable rates with restrictions on the resale price of the buildings.

If tenants in Turners Falls choose to organize themselves to develop long term affordable housing, then I think they may find the community land trust model helpful in that effort.



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A Third View on Third Sector Housing

In the community land trust movement, we have learned many lessons over the last 25 years. Some of the best lessons were learned through our failures. I can't speak directly to the failure of Greenfield Area Community Land Trust, though I can say one lesson learned is that it is almost impossible to create small housing cooperatives, for all the reasons Mark Lattanzi has described. And I would say the failure of the GACLT had more to do with the type of housing model used than with the community land trust structure

itself.

A community land trust can be used to do many things - provide opportunities for single family homeownership, protect rental housing units, protect affordable farmland and create affordable spaces for business development. What interests me so much more about the community land trust model itself is that it provides a tool for a community, after it decides what it values most about itself, to implement a strategic plan to protect these values for future generations.

A town makes any number of decisions about how it invests the taxpayers' money. The success of Ristorante Dipaolo in developing an "urban homesteading" property, turned over for a dollar to a new owner willing to invest in its rehabilitation, and take a risk to create jobs and new tax revenue is an example of innovative thinking.

I agree with Lattanzi's point that in this real estate market, protecting properties to guarantee opportunities for all town residents requires subsidy.

A community land trust that makes a one-time investment of subsidy to make opportunities possible and then keeps these opportunities affordable through successive owners makes the best use of limited subsidy dollars. And better yet, a community land trust creates a venue for residents in town to discuss and play an active role in creating the kind of community we all long for.

- Ellie Kastanapolous
Equity Trust
Turners Falls

Watershed Group Promotes Low Impact Development Measures

BY IVAN USSACH

ATHOL - After more than a year of promoting low impact development (LID) ideas, the Millers River Watershed Council (MRWC), a non-profit organization based in Athol, is wading in more deeply. The MRWC has joined the newly-formed LID bylaw committee in Winchendon, where the two main branches of the Millers River meet at Whitney Pond before flowing south and east to the Connecticut River.

"Winchendon is doing what our local towns need to do," said David Brule, MRWC president, "putting a framework in place to help ensure that development projects coming down the pike do not destroy remaining open space or degrade local waterways."

A low impact development approach to designing residential and other construction projects includes practical, cost-effective techniques to protect open space and reduce the pollutant, sediment and stormwater loads found in runoff from conventionally built projects.

The Winchendon Planning Board is the lead local agency in the LID bylaw initiative. The board has signed a technical assistance agreement with the Leominster-based Massachusetts Watershed Coalition (MWC). The LID bylaw committee also includes business people and other town officials. The town has one of the largest populations in the largely rural watershed, with a population of around 1100 people in 2005.

The MWC is spearheading

the effort through a grant from the Mass Environmental Trust, and has worked with several towns to successfully develop and adopt LID or similar bylaws. At the committee's February kick-off meeting, MWC project manager Debbie Shriver presented statistics showing that site runoff typically increases from 10 percent of total rainfall before development to 55 percent afterwards, with a correspondingly large drop in the amount of rainfall that infiltrates into the ground to recharge groundwater.


The Millers River Watershed Council was instrumental in

directing available funds to the town, due to its close working relationship with the MWC. "Reducing non-point sources of pollution, like what's found in stormwater runoff, has become a priority for our organization, and for watershed groups across the country," said Brule. The Council hopes to learn enough in Winchendon to do similar outreach in some of the watershed's other 16 towns.

On March 20th, The MWC is hosting a Sustainable Watersheds Workshop at the Doyle Conservation Center in Leominster that will provide plenty of nuts and bolts LID guidance. The Millers River

group is currently promoting the workshop among planning boards and conservation commissions - the local officials who typically deal with construction project applications.

LID presentations were also the highlight of the Millers River Watershed Council's last two annual meetings. Last October's meeting showcased the state-of-the-art LID features at the new Riverfront Park in Orange. The attractive park, situated along a formerly abandoned stretch of the Millers River, will once again become a popular destination for people to enjoy boating and other activities.



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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Donelan to Attend Erving Meeting

BY NICHOLE CLAYTON - Representative Chris Donelan (D-Orange) will be sitting in on the next selectboard meeting, on Monday, March 3rd, during which the board will meet with both the finance committee, to go over preliminary numbers for the fiscal '09 budget, and the assessors. According to Sharp, the assessors are involved in the important revaluation of the town's pre-eminent parcel of commercial property, the Northfield Mountain pumped storage facility. The last time this facility, which provides the lion's share of the town's tax base, was examined, during the last triennial reval,

its value dropped by about \$30,000,000 after an assessment performed for the town by Mainstream Associates. After an adjustment in the fall of 2005, the net worth of the portion of the facility that falls on the Erving side of the town line with Northfield was valued at \$455,577,000. The town is concerned that the new valuation may reflect another sharp drop in the facility's net worth, and wanted to bring Donelan "into the loop" on the issue, which has ramifications for the tax rate of all other property owners in town.

The board also plans to talk about plans for a new senior

center on March 3rd, and to thank Donelan for his help on moving that project forward. The meeting, which begins at 6:30 p.m., is open to the public, and residents are encouraged to attend.

The Erving Elementary School's two month read-a-thon will come to a smashing end next week, on March 3rd, with a command performance by town administrative assistant Tom Sharp, along with other adults and town officials, reading from the works of Dr. Seuss! The presentation is timed to coincide with the 104th birthday of Theodore Gisel (Dr. Seuss) born on Howard Street in Springfield, MA in 1904. Sharp could not say whether he would be reading *Yurtle the Turtle* or *the 500*

Hats of Bartholemew Cubbins, but whatever title he picks, it's guaranteed to be a madcap ride, so hold onto your cats.

As he does each year, Erving Paper baron Charles Housen has offered the students at Erving Elementary a penny a page for every book they read in the month of January and February. The students took up the challenge, reading 128,661 pages as of Friday, February 22nd, and still have a week to go. That's a lot of pennies for new library materials!

The town hall will be receiving a copy of the Civil War plaque which is mounted in Veterans Park in Erving, honoring the citizens of Erving lost in that war. Sharp said the replica was ordered to correct

misspellings on some of the veterans' names, since the original plaque could not be removed from the base to which it is mounted. The plaque with the corrected names, in the shape of an American Flag, will hang in the foyer to town hall.

The recycling results are in for Erving, and the results for 2007 came in at 32.5%, just a little below the district average of 33.7%.

The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District also sent a check to the town of Erving for the value of recyclables collected by the town from July to December, 2007. The amount of the check may encourage residents to recycle more in the future: \$3712. Re-use it; don't lose it!

Cultural Council Grants Awarded

MONTAGUE - The Montague Cultural Council has awarded 13 grants totaling \$4,100 for cultural, science, and arts programs. The grants were awarded from a pool of funds distributed to Montague by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency that supports public programs and educational activities in the arts, sciences and humanities. The program is the largest, most decentralized of its kind in the United States. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which then allocates funds to each local council. Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers.

The Montague Cultural

Council will seek applications again in the fall. Information, guidelines and application forms are available at www.mass-culture.org and are due October 15th. This year's grants in the town of Montague are as follows:

Grants Awarded:

- Brick House Community Resource Center for Great Falls Art Fest, \$500
- Community Action/Franklin County Family Network: Mad Science, \$408
- Connecticut River Watershed Council, Inc., Living Along the River: a Connecticut River Song project \$358
- el ch ra design: Sensational Seasons: workshops at the Discovery Center, \$440
- Girl Scouts of Western Massachusetts: Childrens

Theatre Workshop, \$75

- Henry Lappen: Juggling Show for recreation department Easter Event, \$257
- Montague Community Band: 2008 season, \$258
- Montague Public Libraries: Manga and Anime for teens workshop, \$300
- John Root: Wildflowers of the Northeast - lecture, \$207
- Sheffield School: Shea Theater's Performance for Young People, \$415
- Janice Sorenson: Learning By Heart - Giving Back to Us, \$300
- The Equinox Lend Me Your Ears! Open Mic for wordsmiths: \$125
- Rose Whitcomb-Detmold: Dancing to West Africa Photography Exhibit, \$257

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LEAKS

continued from pg 1

Steam Heat of Gardner.

At the February 20th selectboard meeting, building issues were an early and extended part of the discussion. Selectboard member Dan Keller reported that on Saturday, February 16th a block

in the town office building's drainpipe backed wastewater through the drains onto the building's floor. He arrived just as Ramsdell and his wife were finishing the clean up. Peter Diemand from Whittier Plumbing ran a snake 104 feet to break up the obstruction. He said it might have developed from an improperly pitched

pipe, or even a sag that developed from earth compacting underneath the pipe.

Keller said Davenport Trucking, the septic system's installer, was ready to come back to Wendell and repair it right away, but it would be good to learn as much as possible about the block from Whittier Plumbing first, and any digging would be easier and less disruptive if it is delayed until mud season has passed.

Keller said he was unable to get to the second heating system leak in the hallway because the access door that was listed on the plans was not, in fact, there.

Selectboard member Christine Heard called these difficulties with the new town building frustrating. She asked what report the town had given to the state Department of Capital Asset Management about Handford Construction, the building's contractor. Keller answered that the report was essentially a D; any lower rating would have caused the town trouble if any difficulties came up, which they have. Handford has not gone bankrupt. But town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said the company's sixth project manager for the new library and town office buildings, who was able to see the work through to completion, has since left Handford.

Keller thought it might be a

good idea to replace the glycol in the building's heating system with plain water; glycol is there to protect the system from freezing in an electric power failure, but the system has other safety features, like no pipes in outside walls, and the glycol does nothing to protect the drinking water system. He said there should be a list of people to call when problems in the building are identified.

A building walk-through with contractors and the project manager was scheduled for Thursday, February 21st.

Selectboard members signed a memorandum of understanding from the Franklin County Council of Governments for the Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Plan. The role of communities is to consider recommendations in the document, and Heard said that, at least in the new buildings, Wendell had already done that.

Two bids came in for blown-in insulation for the renovation of the old library, which is being converted to a senior center. The selectboard accepted Eastern Weatherization of Montague's lower bid of \$3191.76 for insulating the walls and ceiling.

Aldrich reported that the town hall floor refinishing was complete.

The Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife Department notified the town that there is a certified

vernal pool near Montague Road; it is protected by the wetlands act, the surface water act, and the woodcutting act. No listed or endangered species are known to live there, and no action is required of the town.

Patty Scutari asked the selectboard if the Deja Brew Pub could put up signs directing people to the pub, as the Diemand Egg Farm has done for their business. Keller thought the Diemand Egg Farm signs were located on telephone poles, not on town property, and suggested that Scutari should contact the Diemands to find out how they went about it.

The town received a letter from state senator Stan Rosenberg saying the state would reimburse Wendell \$177,266 for expenses incurred during the tornado cleanup of July 2006, and \$36,726 to reimburse towns that offered mutual aid for that event.

Aldrich reported that she and selectboard chair Ted Lewis have ordered the bronze plaque for the war memorials. The mold is made, and after one more check that the names are all there and spelled correctly, the plaque can be cast and ready mounted on the granite wheel by the gazebo on Memorial Day.

Board chair Ted Lewis was not at the meeting, as he was recovering from surgery.



MCTV Schedule: Channel 17
February 29 through March 6

Eagle Cam:
 Friday 1230P-530P
 Saturday 1230P-530P
 Sunday 1230P-530P
 Monday 1230P-530P
 Tuesday 12P-530P
 Wednesday 1130A-530P
 Thursday 1230P-530P
 If We Have a Signal You Will Have a Picture

Friday, February 29
 8:00 am Western Mass Democrat: Chris Forgey
 9:00 am Montague Select Board (2/19/08)
 10:30 am Elder Law
 11:30 am Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony
 6:00 pm Montague Update: John Ancil
 7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (1/29/08)
 9:00 pm Chronicles of Czesochowa: Mass for Mary Machaiek
 10:00 pm Music for Mankind
 10:30 pm EatonDoRyu #1
Saturday, March 1
 8:00 am Montague Update: John Ancil
 9:00 am GMRSD Meeting (1/29/08)
 11:00 am Chronicles of Czesochowa: Mass for Mary Machaiek
 12:00 am Music for Mankind
 6:00 pm Independent Voices 38
 7:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Happiness is the Way
 8:00 pm Common Man: Denise Grendon
 9:00 pm Bernanke
 10:00 pm Flu what you can do
 10:30 pm Montague Machine
Sunday, March 2
 8:00 am Independent Voices 38
 8:30 am Carlos W. Anderson: Happiness is the way
 9:30 am Common Man: Denise Grendon
 10:30 am Bernanke
 11:30 am Flu what you can do
 6:00 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Lt. Gov. Tim Murray
 6:30 pm Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks
 7:30 pm Senses of Place
 9:00 pm Montague Update: David Detmold
 10:00 pm Independent Voices 42
 10:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: If all God had ever done
Monday, March 3
 8:00 am The Western Mass Democrat: Lt. Gov. Tim Murray
 8:30 am Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks
 9:30 am Senses of Place

11:00 am Montague Update: David Detmold
 12:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: If all God had ever done
 6:00 pm Chronicles of Czesochowa: Gorzke Zale Part 3
 6:30 pm Power Canal Draw Down
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)
 9:00 pm Montague Update: John Ancil
 10:00 pm Music for Mankind
 10:30 pm Over the Falls: Community owned Retail
Tuesday, March 4
 8:00 am Chronicles of Czesochowa: Gorzke Zale Part 3
 8:30 am Power Canal Draw Down
 9:00 am Montague Update: John Ancil
 10:00 am Music for Mankind
 10:30 am Over the Falls: Community owned Retail
 6:00 pm Mik TV
 6:30 pm Mind Control
 7:00 pm GMRSD
 9:00 pm Western Mass Democrat: Lt. Gov. Tim Murray
 9:30 pm Windchanger: Ansley
 10:30 pm Refusal
Wednesday, March 5
 8:00 am Mik TV
 8:30 am Mind Control
 9:00 am Western Mass Democrat: Lt. Gov. Tim Murray
 9:30 am Windchanger: Ansley
 10:30 am Refusal
 6:00 pm Wisdom Way Solar Village
 7:00 pm On the Ridge: Youth Pheasant Hunts
 7:30 pm Physician Focus: Pathology and the Patient
 8:00 pm Common Man: Eric Goodchild
 9:00 pm Discovery Center: Woodpeckers
 10:00 pm Senses of Place
Thursday, March 6
 8:00 am Wisdom Way Solar Village
 9:00 am On the Ridge: Youth Pheasant Hunts
 9:30 am Physician Focus: Pathology and the Patient
 10:00 am Common Man: Eric Goodchild
 11:00 am Senses of Place
 6:00 pm MCTV Video Camp
 6:30 pm Flight
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board (3/3/08)
 9:00 pm Montague Update: John Ancil
 10:00 pm Independent Voices 41
 10:30 pm The Underground Railroad Concert

Turners Residents Featured on Underground Concert on MCTV

The Road to Freedom in Song & Story: The Underground Railroad Concert, a chaptered DVD filmed and edited by Turners Falls documentary filmmaker Carlyn Saltman is being aired again this week on MCTV, Channel 17. The concert was performed a year ago by the Amandla Chorus and students of the Underground Railroad Afterschool Program of

Greenfield Middle School.

Two Turners Falls residents, Lawanza Lett-Brewington and Juanita Nelson from Woolman Hill, who is spending the winter in Turners, related stories in breaks between songs. Lett-Brewington recreated stories from the life of a slave named Sarah, and Nelson shared a story from her own life.

The URR Project highlighted the role of Greenfield and area

residents in the underground railroad and other anti-slavery activities through history classes, workshops for teachers, special after school program offerings, and art exhibits. The project raised money to finally place a gravestone on the unmarked graves of Greenfield's famous fiddler, John Putman, and his wife through the sale of T-shirts designed by Louise Minks.

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Great Falls Middle School District Second Quarter Honor Roll

Grade 6
First Honors:
 Alissa Ames
 Shayna Aubrey
 Teagan Felton
 Linnell
 Chase Fuller
 Jessica Fuller
 Kolbe Martineau
 Katri Mizula
 Morgan Ozdarski
 Tyler Peters
 Jonathan Rawls
 Hayley Westfall

Grade 7
First Honors:
 Meredith Brown
 Katelyn Dodge
 Kayla Drumgool
 Shawn
 Englehardt
 Emilee Felton
 Summer Forest-Bulley
 Shannon Hersey
 Jayna Kelly
 Rylen Kelly
 Troy Langknecht
 Brandon Lenois
 Brooke
 Martineau
 Timothy Meyer
 Nicolas Royer
 Abigail Rubin
 Christian
 Tyler Richardson
 Katerina
 Sankova
 Nicholas Wells

Second Honors:
 Kathryn Austin
 Danielle Bassett
 Meghan Casey
 Heather
 McKenna
 Kaineeca Pabon
 Samantha
 Peabody
 Tyler Richardson
 Katerina
 Sankova
 Nicholas Wells

Third Honors:
 Benjamin
 Bocharnikov
 Elyssa Carner
 Lauren Grimard
 Meaghan Horan
 Austin Hurlley
 Emma Johnson
 Marcel Ortiz
 Ashley Patnode

Second Honors:
 Breanna Breault
 Carolyn
 Campbell
 Ceara Dolhenty
 Nicholas Fisher
 Summer Forcier
 Riley Howe
 Bethany Laramie

Grade 8
First Honors:
 Casey Banning
 Jolina Rose Blier
 Jane Booth
 Anthony
 Brunette
 Daniel Colton
 Haley Fiske
 Megan Foster
 Matthew Fowler

Grade 8
Second Honors:
 Daniel
 McCormack
 John Ollari
 Connor Roberge
 Nala Vaughn
 Tyler Whipple
 Kelsey Yolish
 Irving Zayas

Third Honors:
 Wyatt Bourbeau
 Katie Brunell
 Abigail
 Cichanowicz
 Wayne Conant
 Jasmine Farr-Marcum
 Sean Howard
 Alexander
 Interlande
 Haylee Keene
 Mitarho Kelly
 Michaela Loynd
 Lindsay Luippold
 Jonathan
 Marguet
 Amanda Sicard

Grade 9
First Honors:
 Stacy French
 Colton Hallett
 Victoria Kyser
 Haley Laramie
 Samuel Letcher
 Patrick Moretti

Second Honors:
 Brandyn Boroski
 Samantha
 Caouette
 Jenna Costa
 Taylor Croteau
 Quincy Ortiz
 Angelica Renaud
 Todd Richardson
 Thomas Sanders
 Caroline Sena
 Kaleb Warren

Third Honors:
 Stephanie
 French
 Christopher
 Gordon
 Mark Hudyma
 Lily Kane
 Jesse
 Langknecht
 Jeremy
 Mankowsky
 Alyssa Nicotra
 Malik Odeh
 Haley Ozdarski
 Iancu Placinta
 Emily Pollard
 Cameron
 Savinski

Turners Basketball Program Raffle Winners



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE ELLIS

BY DIANE ELLIS
TURNERS FALLS - The Turners Falls Boys 5th and 6th grade Suburban Basketball Program wishes to recognize our fundraising raffle winners and thank area businesses and community members for their support. Our program offers youth from Montague, Gill, and Erving the opportunity to play basketball in a highly competitive environment against youth from across Franklin and Hampshire counties, developing their skills, self-confidence, and understanding of the effort and discipline required to succeed both in athletics and in life. Our suburban program, with generous sponsorship by the Montague Elks' Lodge #2521, is in its second year of operation under the direction of head coach Steven Ellis.

We wish to congratulate our raffle winners as follows:

- Grand Prize - Brenda Cocco of Turners Falls, a free lawn ser-

vice courtesy of Turn's Lawn Care, Montague, MA

- First Prize - Morgan Buchanan Gauthier, of Turners Falls a four pack of tickets to a UMASS Men's basketball game
- Second Prize: Kelly Markol of Turners Falls, a raffle basket
- Third Prize: Tom Burns of Gill, a case of POWERade

We also wish to express our appreciation to the following businesses:

- Turn's Lawn Care Service,

Montague, MA

- UMASS Athletic Ticket Office
- Stop & Shop, Greenfield
- Food City, Turners Falls

We offer our many thanks to our parents, family members, friends, neighbors, and community members. It is a beautiful thing to witness the caring commitment and generous community spirit that is so alive and well within Franklin County. Our raffle was a wonderful success as we far surpassed our fundraising goal. Monies raised by the team, as well as sponsorship by the Montague Elks, help defray some our operational costs as well as support player development.

Once again, we extend our thanks and appreciation to all who played a part in supporting the Turners Falls Boys 5th and 6th Grade Suburban Basketball Program.

It was a great season!

Gill-Montague Regional School District Second Quarter Honor Roll

Grade 12
First Honors:
 Alix Ackerman
 Frida Alexandersen
 Christopher Broga
 Katie Christenson
 Abbey Daniel-Green
 Nicole Duncanson
 Katherine Eddy
 Samuel Johnson
 Stephanie Joly
 Shayna Langknecht
 Colby Lavin
 Corey Leveille
 Melony Lucas
 Brittany Mazor
 Kayla Pecor
 Molly Perry
 Alexander Tufano
 Alice Urban
 Gina Varuzzo
 Erica Zajac

Second Honors:
 Lara Ames
 Briant Deruiter
 Krystal Ducharme
 Walter Fitzpatrick
 Jennifer Jason
 Kellie Lastowski
 Julio Ruiz
 Mercedes St. Marie
 Danielle Sullivan

Third Honors:
 Aliza Broga
 Amanda Golembeski
 Amanda Hebert
 Evan Jobst
 Carissa Lee
 Zachary Little
 Amber Marion
 Amanda Messer
 Dawn Miner
 Stephanie Ollari
 Michael Radzuik

Grade 11
First Honors:
 Amy Baxter
 Theodore Dunbar
 Joshua Gammon
 Kimberly Nelson
 Nicholas Skarzynski
 Lindsey Wilson

Second Honors:
 Kimberly Arsenault
 David Bennett
 Samuel Colton
 Benjamin Foster
 Kelsey Kane
 Sara Pease

Third Honors:
 Joseph Auger

Grade 10
First Honors:
 Jill Bernard
 Kayla Breor
 Danielle Dolhenty
 Cassandra Kazar
 Jeremy Nicoll
 Olivia Nicotra
 Sergiu Placinta
 Evan Pleasant
 Kathleen Rinaldi
 Dustin Rivard

Second Honors:
 Christopher Shattuck
 Sarah Underwood

Second Honors:
 Juliana Aprileo
 Ashley Bailey
 Chelsea Bailey
 Nataliya Buhakova
 Daniel Cruz
 Lucas Foley
 Mackae Freeland
 Ryley Harriman
 Justin Pacheco
 Elena Rushford
 Alex Westfall
 Heather Willor

Third Honors:
 Tyler Anderson
 Tia Demers
 Lauren Flynn
 Matthew Garber
 Ashley Gibson

Grade 9
First Honors:
 McKenna Brunell
 Erin Casey
 Nina Dodge
 Makayla Dolhenty
 Kristy Dunbar
 Sarah Foster
 Nicole Fuller
 Brooke Hastings
 Krysten Hawkins
 Julie Howard
 Thompson
 Taylor Howe

Second Honors:
 Rachel Ariel
 Zhanna Bochamkova
 Sarah Crowell
 Jacob Eugin
 Uriah Forest-Bulley
 David Garcia
 Vance Herzig
 Aubryana Hyson
 Victoria Kissell
 Kelsey O'Brien
 Elysia Ollari
 Katarina Palso
 Anthony Reed
 Yelena Sherstyukov

Third Honors:
 Nichole Baxter
 Emily Mailloux
 Ryan Pelis
 Brittany Yolish

...and on the Northfield Mount Hermon School Honor Roll:
 Academic High Honors
 Harriet Booth of Gill

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talking about more snow on the roads, less police on the beat, less secretarial help. The schools are going to come with a very strong request, some of which is mandated by the state. People have to feel how tight it's going to be. It's going to affect all of us."

Members of the finance committee, who were present at the selectboard meeting Monday, encouraged the public to attend, and also to email: townadmin@montague.net or write in to Town Administrator at 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, 01376 with questions or suggestions for the budget hearing.

Singleton Awarded Contract

The selectboard approved a \$6,200 contract for finance committee member Jeff Singleton and Brick House business manager Michael Bosworth to prepare an analysis of the town of Montague and the Gill-Montague Regional School District's revenues and expenses, along with a five-year budget plan for the town and the schools. Singleton had been the sole bidder on the Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the town of Montague, after Montague town meeting approved the proposal to allocate \$10,000 to fund a five-year budget plan on October 11th, 2007, on a motion prepared and introduced by Singleton.

The oversight committee, made up of town and school officials, that issued the budget plan RFP, interviewed Singleton on Wednesday, February 20th, after a dozen or so consultants and consulting firms around the state which the committee had solicited declined to bid on the contract. In addition to the work he

planned to do reviewing data, preparing a narrative, and working with outside experts on school and town finances, Singleton proposed allocating \$500 for Bosworth to review spreadsheet data, and \$3,800 for an expert on Massachusetts Chapter 70 school financing, Mark Abrahams of Framingham, to provide an analysis of the state aid formula for schools and to project school spending for the G-M school district for the next five years.

During the interview, the committee accepted the counsel of Gill-Montague school superintendent Ken Rocke, who argued for saving \$3800 by eliminating the use of Abrahams to prepare the analysis of Chapter 70 state aid. Rocke said he himself was an expert on Chapter 70 state aid for schools, and would be happy to provide an analysis of that aspect of the town and school budget at no extra charge.

At the selectboard meeting on Monday, board member Patricia Pruitt, who sat on the RFP committee that interviewed Singleton, said, "After much back and forth, the committee voted five, 'Yes' and two, 'Abstain' to award the contract to Jeff Singleton and Mike Bosworth."

Committee member Marje Levenson, who also serves on the finance committee, spoke in favor of the proposal. "This plan hopefully will have towns and schools working together better as a team, and give us as citizens a better understanding that the budgets are intertwined. Lots of time, it's a continual war about how the pie is divided. It's my hope this report will end the strife between schools and town."

Selectboard member Ross

said a lot of people, like the town administrator and the school superintendent, along with members of the finance committee, were already providing budget analyses as part of their regular jobs. "I don't see this as providing us with a definitive answer. I'm not ready to sign off on it. I'm not sure this will provide us with what we want."

Board chair Pat Allen said she felt the town meeting had voted "to get some outside input on this." By hiring a member of the town finance committee to do the budget analysis, Allen said, "It's not getting somebody from somewhere else confirming what's going on. It's still the same people."

Singleton responded that the study was not designed to provide definitive answers to the town's budget problems. "It's a road map," which will provide "a case study at the local level," for how town and school finances are impacted by state aid. By doing the study, Singleton said Montague would be "ahead of the curve" in defining the problems that beset municipalities statewide, and would develop a unique lobbying tool to address those problem with state legislators.

Reluctant to veto the work of the RFP committee, Allen and Ross sided with Pruitt to approve the reduced contract.

Singleton said, "I hope the committee still thinks this is a good idea and is enthusiastic about it."

Closing the Warrant

Precinct 1 town meeting member John Reynolds took issue with the closing date for the annual town meeting warrant. This year, the selectboard set the

cutoff date for submission of warrant articles for the May 3rd annual town meeting on February 15th, more than two and a half months before the meeting.

"We've done it this way for years," said Reynolds. "But if we want to get people involved," Rerynolds urged the board to allow for petitioned articles to come in closer to the date of the annual meeting. "This is another way we could demonstrate openness."

The board voted to reopen the warrant for petitioned articles until March 15th.


Strathmore Update

On the plus side, the electricians have finished work on the alarm system at the Strathmore complex, and "the roof's progressing fairly well," said Abbondanzio, in a report to the board on repairs to the fire damaged mill. On the minus side, a break or malfunction has been identified in the piping of the sprinkler system, which has undergone extensive retrofitting to allow it to function as a dry release system, and one of the compressors powering the system is malfunctioning, according to building inspector David Jensen. On Wednesday, Jensen said the remaining issues in the sprinklers would be addressed this week, and both the sprinklers and alarm systems should be tested early in March. He recommended both systems be "babysat for a week of close monitoring," to make sure the kinks are entirely worked out.

Meanwhile, a few change orders for the roof on Building #1 have cropped up, Jensen said, including the need to replace the roof on the ruined elevator shaft,

and the need to demolish and replace "five layers of old roofing that is leaking above a 10 by 12 foot 'cricket' behind the east facing stair tower."

The town is now planning to spend about \$2,400 on reinforced UV resistant plastic coverings for about a dozen windows that were blown out during the May 26th, 2007 fire. Additionally, the town is opening bids to remove the ten foot high stacked paper - much of it thoroughly waterlogged - that former mill owner Jerry Jones had warehoused on the fourth floor of Building #1, back in the days when the freight elevator in that building was still working. There is an open shaft down which the stacked paper can be lowered to the ground floor, but getting it into position may involve winching a forklift to the upper floor, and other neat tricks of creative engineering, which Jensen would not speculate on until final bids were opened.

On the plus side, Jones has continued to slowly but surely ship truckloads of baled paper out from the disputed loading dock on the side of the mill abutting the former Indeck plant. The eighth such tractor trailer load left last week, with perhaps twice as many still remaining to be shipped. On the minus side, Jones remains - technically - the owner of the mill, while Montague awaits the final decree of the Boston land court, which reportedly found for the town in a tax taking proceeding contested by the Montague Energy Group on November 8th, 2007. Until the decree is issued, Abbondanzio said, the town cannot issue a Request for Proposals to redevelop the mill complex. 

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DETMOLD PHOTO

Community Land Trust organizers John Davis, left, Ellie Kastanapolous, director of Equity Trust, and Kirby White, talk shop at 177 Avenue A on Tuesday

• An Interview with Community Land Trust organizers John Davis and Kirby White •

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - As wet snow covered the brick walks and potholed streets of Turners Falls on Tuesday, I spent a warm hour tucked into a back room of the former Hot Spot Teen Center, across from the post office at 177 Avenue A. That building now houses the office of Equity Trust, a small but vital non-profit agency which assists in the development of land trusts nationwide, as it works, according to its website, "to change the way people think about and hold property."

There I interviewed two of the leaders of the movement to form Community Land Trusts (CLTs), sometimes described as third sector housing, or shared equity homeownership, in cities and towns across America.

Kirby White is a founder of the Capital District Community Loan Fund, the Affordable Housing Partnership and the Albany Community Land Trust in New York. He worked for many years at the Institute for Community Economics, writing and editing manuals and providing technical assistance to land trusts across the country. John Davis is the former housing director for the city of Burlington, VT, and a founder of Burlington Associates, a consulting firm that has provided technical assistance and help in the startup of more than 80 CLTs throughout the United States.

While CLTs have only been around for about 30 years, there are now 172 CLTs actively operating within the U.S., which have produced over 6,000 units of permanently affordable housing. Another 44 are in the process of forming and acquiring land.

Some of the early start-ups like the nearby Greenfield Area CLT failed for a variety of reasons. Others, like the Brattleboro CLT, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Roxbury, MA, and the Burlington CLT in Vermont, have thrived.

White and Davis look back on lessons learned and point the way forward as the CLT movement stands poised for "exponential growth" in years to come.

Talking about the development of the Community Land Trust model of housing, both Davis and White pinned their involvement to their meeting - circa 1981 - with Chuck Matthei, a charismatic organizer who had recently moved with his organization, the Institute for Community Economic (ICE), to a ramshackle three-story building on Montague City Road in Greenfield. But before Matthei, there was Bob Swann, the founder of ICE, who studied land tenure systems in Israel and India, and worked with a cousin of Martin Luther King, Jr., Slater King, and organizers like Charles Sherrod to

establish perhaps the first working model of a community land trust in America in 1969: New Communities, Inc.

In 1969, New Communities purchased nearly 6000 acres near rural Albany, GA, with the intention of establishing a CLT where African-American farmers could live and work the land. But the effort failed after two decades, due to the high debt service costs of the initial land purchase. As Sherrod said, "Nobody's come to our aid to help us finance this land in such a way that we can put part of the money that we make into promotion and development of the land. We haven't been able to do any development. We haven't been able to pay any consultants to do any planning. We can't get the fellows in government to help us... We got the people; we got contacts all over south Georgia, people who'd be willing to live on this land, people who'd be willing to hook up with our kind of idea - cause it's good economics to them. We got the facilities here that a good number of farmers could use."

By 1980, Sherrod said the farmers at New Communities were clearing \$100,000 a year in profit from working the land, but paying \$200,000 a year on debt service for the mortgage. First they sold off 1,348 acres. A decade later, the experiment had failed.

But not before Swann, a resident of South Egremont, MA

(who collaborated with the economist Ralph Borsodi, and founded the E.F. Schumacher Society) published a book entitled: *The Community Land Trust, A Guide to the New Use of Land*, in 1972. Swann explored the ground lease concept used by some 'intentional communities' being founded around the country in those days, and expanded the concept to allow for the creation of a land trust to serve the interests of the wider community.

According to White, it was Swann who developed what has come to be known as the 'classic CLT' model, defined as "a membership organization with open membership, in two categories: those who live on land owned by the organization, and those who live in the community but not on CLT land." In a 'classic CLT' the board of directors is made up of one third elected members of the leasehold residents, one third of representatives of non-leasehold members, and one-third elected from people representing the broader public interest.

"Bob put the 'C' in CLTs," said Davis. "He opened the structure to the larger community."

Swann inspired Matthei, who took his ideas to the next level with a national effort of community organizing based on the community land trust model. With the help of Davis and White, among a dozen authors who researched and edited *The*

Community Land Trust Handbook, published by Rodale in 1982, Matthei touched off a round of workshops and brought together activists from inner city neighborhoods, organized religion and government to rethink how public subsidies were being spent to create housing options and develop long-term opportunities for affordable, secure home ownership nationwide.

Nearly three decades later, with both Matthei and Swann deceased, White acknowledged that the early idealism of the CLT movement had fallen short of some of its goals. "It's been a struggle for inner city neighborhoods, where CLTs were launched as a way of dealing with disinvestment, absentee ownership, and government neglect. In its purest form, the CLT model looked like a way to give low-income communities a vehicle to control the way land was owned and developed. But they had to deal with all the problems that beset these neighborhoods, including crime."

Here in the Commonwealth, in the Dudley Street neighborhood of Roxbury, what had been a notorious high crime slum with a high percentage of absentee ownership has been successfully transformed by a high profile CLT initiative that now serves as a model for the Boston City Council's effort to duplicate that success in other parts of the city. But the success

see TRUST pg 13

TRUST from page 12

came only after community activists, who had been talking about getting Roxbury to secede from Boston during the time when Ray Flynn was running for mayor, were able to secure several million dollars in grants from the Reilly Foundation and the Ford Foundation to pay staff members to go door to door organizing the neighborhood to get behind the CLT model. Public monies and regulatory changes from the city of Boston followed, which have allowed the CLT to flourish.

"There was a lot of redevelopment of inner city neighborhoods going on, not to benefit the low income people who lived in them, but to get the people out of there: gentrification," said Davis. "That was the fear in the Dudley Street neighborhood as well, as the relocation of the Orange Line brought massive redevelopment money into the area."

Davis, who cut his teeth as an organizer in east Tennessee, where coal and timber corporations had the legal power to sweep away people and homes to get at the mineral or timber rights they owned, moved to Burlington, VT to help establish what has become perhaps the most successful CLT in the country. He moved there at a time when political forces in the statehouse in Montpelier and in city hall were aligning favorably to the benefit of this new model of land tenure and homeownership.

"In 1981, Bernie Sanders was elected mayor of Burlington," by ten votes, upending the entrenched Democratic machine and reforming city politics, recalled Davis, who dubbed Sanders, now Vermont's independent senator, a "sort-of Socialist." In that same election, two progressives were elected to the board of aldermen, and in successive years, more progressive aldermen joined the board, enabling Sanders to begin passing his reform agenda.

A previous effort to pass rent control in the city had failed to pass, 3 to 1, and reforming the city housing authority was proving a difficult task. In 1982, Matthei, Davis, and other members of Greenfield-based ICE traveled up to Burlington to

meet with the mayor, who intoned (here Davis offered a fair approximation of Sanders' guttural Bronx) "I need some new ideas."

Davis said, "We pitched CLT."

Burlington's new treasurer, Jonathan Leopold, who had been busy finding ways to save the city significant expenses, came up with \$200,000 Sanders was able to use as seed money, and the Burlington CLT was off and running.

In the fall of 1984, the newly incorporated CLT purchased its first house. Twenty-four years later, the CLT has leaseholds for 400 owner-occupied homes, along with 120 units of limited equity coop housing, as well as single room (transitional) occupancy housing. Additionally, its portfolio includes 1500 units of rental properties, maintained in conjunction with the non-profit Champlain Housing Corporation, with which it recently merged. The BCLT maintains the classic CLT model of democratic control, with one third of its board elected from residents, one third from non-residents, and one third from public officials in northwestern Vermont.

Davis said, "In the beginning, we focused on the oldest low-income neighborhood, the Old North End, where some of the oldest housing stock in New England is located. We've been very, very successful at new development and preserving a mix of affordable housing. In the Old North End, we've done a community health center, a multi-generational center, with a child care center and a senior center located next to each other in different halves of the building, community gardens, vest pocket parks, and a community technology center," (where residents can access computers and computer training). We have taken some of the worst sites, some of the brownfield sites, and rehabilitated them without displacing the people who live nearby."

Davis said the BCLT posed the question that confronts many responsible municipal planners: "How do you revitalize a low income, aging neighborhood without displacing people? We have been successful in the Old

North End."

White pointed out Vermont's housing policies and funding priorities, combined with a progressive city government in Burlington, went a long way towards making this possible, and Davis agreed. "The land trust needed the resources of the city government to acquire the property and have that much impact." But, he added, "The city government needed a non-profit that would take the resources and do what it wanted to do without displacement. It needed a partner that was accountable to the community and committed to long-term affordability."

Davis co-authored a study of the BCLT's performance in 2003, where he found "The average BCLT home was affordable to a household earning 62% of area medium income on initial sale. On resale, it was affordable to a household earning 57% of area medium income." Additionally, the study noted, "All of the households served by the BCLT earned less than median income." And, "When reselling their BCLT homes," despite the limited equity resale formula conditioned by the lease, "Most homeowners walked away with more wealth than they possessed when first buying a BCLT home. Their equity gains were modest when compared to what they might have realized for the resale of an unrestricted, market-rate home, had they been able to afford such a house, but BCLT homeowners still earned a respectable return on their initial investment." The study found, "Their annualized rate of return, across 97 resales, averaged 17%. The average BCLT homeowner, reselling after five years, recouped her original downpayment and then realized a net gain in equity of \$6,184."

Given the recent subprime lending crisis gripping the nation's capital markets, with the downward spiral of housing prices and wave of home foreclosures - particularly affecting moderate and lower income minority homebuyers brought into the home buying market by federal policy in recent years - it is instructive to look at the performance of the BCLT in a down real estate market.

Davis is upbeat. "We've gone through disinvestment, reinvestment, and now disinvestment again. The land trust acts at both ends of the cycle. We've had only two foreclosures (in 24 years of lending to lower income

home buyers) and we didn't lose the house in either case. It's not only permanent affordability" the BCLT provides, "it's permanent responsibility."

But White is less sanguine about the performance of a number of smaller CLTs, many of which are struggling with a lack of resources, turnover of staff, and the departure of founders who brought the zealotry of recent converts to the original purchase of housing which may have been overpriced, too distressed to affordably rehabilitate, or otherwise unsuitable for the population the non-profit intended to serve. Of the 120 or so CLTs formed nationwide in the 80s or 90s, a dozen or more have dissolved, and perhaps as many more are struggling to maintain their current holdings, a situation Sherrod would have recognized in Albany, GA.

Yet, "There was very little harm to the homeowners," in the failed CLTs, said White, "because some other non-profit organization typically acquired the properties." For example, the Greenfield Area Community Land Trust, one of the earliest CLTs to be set up, eventually

dissolved, but its properties were acquired by the Pioneer Cooperative of Franklin County, which has "been a stable institution offering affordable home ownership to lower income households for over 15 years," according to Scott Reed, an early GACLT volunteer.

White said the GACLT failed because it was poorly structured. "It was set up as two-unit coops, financed with share loans. The structure was unworkable." (For more views on the GACLT, see letters from Reed and a former GACLT organizer, Mark Lattanzi, on page 6.)

White said the GACLT, formed in an era when organizers were convinced market conditions were leading to gentrification, with rapidly rising home prices and rents, decided to "get in fast and make owners out of these people. But later in the 80s, there was a major retrenchment (in the housing market) with prices collapsing. They were inexperienced. Without much, if any, public subsidy going into these projects," the leaseholds could not be easily resold when the original owners left, and the GACLT was forced back to the banks that had pro-

see TRUST pg 14



BONNIE ACKER GRAPHICS

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TRUST from pg 13

vided lending to seek a restructuring of the mortgages.

In that process, White admits the banks that invested in the GACLT got hurt. "We were good at bullying the banks," using the federal Community Reinvestment Act, he said. As a result, those local banks are less likely to look favorably on the formation of a local CLT now.

Looking back, Davis said, "The combination of the inexperience of the people and their fragility, the structure of the financing,

and the change in the market climate," combined to spell the end of the Greenfield Area Community Land Trust. "Real estate development is a risky business, especially when you're trying to serve the most uneconomical people in the market, with the most uneconomical buildings." But he insisted, "There is nothing wrong with the land trust model."

Still, even the early focus on homeownership in the Burlington Community Land Trust has been tempered by experience, Davis admits. "We had to start doing rental housing," to take advantage of federal low income housing tax credits, the only readily available source of public subsidies during the last Republican administrations in Washington and Montpelier. "We found we couldn't make homeowners of everybody in the old North End."

Asked if he thought Senator Sanders would look back favorably on the "new ideas" ICE brought to Burlington in the early 80s, Davis laughed. "Bernie takes enormous credit for the successes of the BCLT. He has been a stalwart supporter of CLTs in general. He

sponsored a change in federal law," defining the classic CLT model. "Without a doubt Bernie is very pleased and surprised at how successful the model has been."

But, Davis said, "Convincing Bernie there should be long term affordability controls was a tougher sell." Slipping back into his best Bronx accent and pounding an imaginary desk, Davis said, "How come a little guy can't make a big killing, same as a big guy?"

In his normal, persuasive tone, Davis admonished his sort-of Socialist interlocuter, "Because the little guy is doing very well getting into a homeownership situation he'd never get into without the subsidies of a land trust."

The idea that a land trust stands behind the deal finally persuaded Sanders. "Bernie understands social security. He understands the safety net," Davis said. "It's not just what we're taking away at the back end. It's what we're giving him at the front end of the deal. And we will be there when the little guy gets in trouble. He got it."

For any community considering setting up a CLT now, Davis and White had these words of advice: "Take your time putting it together. Put as much effort into cultivating sources of free money as you do in cultivating the community. You have to do both. To create a durable, effective CLT, you have to have the resources, and that means public money."

And how would Chuck Matthei look at the CLT movement now, as it is poised for what both White and Davis agree is a period of "exponential

expansion," with cities from Irvine, CA to Chicago to Boston jumping onto the CLT bandwagon. (Irvine is planning for 10,000 CLT units, in a city-sponsored but city-controlled CLT effort, which Davis and Kirby say runs counter to the classic CLT model of true democratic control.) Would Matthei agree with White's assessment that it is very difficult to work with low-income people who are used to being renters, renters in a culture that has existed for generations, in some areas, on government housing subsidies and welfare, and retrain them as homeowners in the community land trust model?

White reflected, "It's really hard to make it happen, especially in inner city minority neighborhoods where people have been tenants all their lives, and in the absence of public resources and personnel. Amazing things have happened that were driven by key individuals, but what was created was extremely vulnerable."

Recalling the man who inspired him to first get involved in the CLT movement, Kirby quoted Matthei's aphorism: "Poor people are poor not because they lack income. They're poor because the system is draining their resources."

But right up to his death in 2002, Matthei continued to exhort the CLT movement: "As we redefine ourselves and our definition of community, we need to do a few simple things,

and some that are not so simple. We need to lift our heads and look around us and recognize the property issues that are at play. We need to listen to the people involved and affected, learn their language, hear their values, their hopes and fears in

their own words and learn how to talk with them. Find the words that will help people re-conceive property, not as a

construct of law or a calculation of the market, but as a web of relationships."



Chuck Matthei inspired a nationwide movement to provide permanent, affordable housing for low-income communities through the community land trust model

"As we redefine ourselves and our definition of community, we need to do a few simple things, and some that are not so simple. We need to lift our heads and look around us and recognize the property issues that are at play. We need to listen to the people involved and affected, learn their language, hear their values, their hopes and fears in their own words and learn how to talk with them.

Find the words that will help people re-conceive property, not as a construct of law or a calculation of the market, but as a web of relationships."

- Chuck Matthei

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GILL from pg 1

defended their positions passionately.

School committee chair Mary Kociela opened the discussion with a strong statement in favor of the amendment. "At times [the 8 out of 9 vote requirement] has been a barrier to making a decision. The events of last year led to a deep divide between residents of Gill and Montague. Anything we do needs to be done with thought and clarity for future decision makers. We want to be able to retain schools if possible. This is not an effort to close a certain school. This is an amendment so that a reasonable bar can be set. It would still be difficult to close a school, but not so difficult it would cause divisiveness and duress."

Countering this, Gill resident and former school committee

member Sally Shaw read a statement from school committee member Ted Santos, who was unable to attend the meeting. In his statement, Santos called the proposed amendment, "Bad for Gill, bad for the district and in a stark contrast to the spirit of compromise. It is not good leadership and it is an attempt to run an agenda." Santos' letter also said that the 8 out of 9 vote requirement was not "unreasonably high" for a such an important decision as closing a school.

The central concern of Gill residents was the fear that lowering the bar on school closing might someday lead to Gill Elementary being closed. "If this amendment passes, that would be very easy to do," said Tupper Brown.

But school superintendent

Ken Rocke told those assembled it would take a further change in the regional school agreement, which provides that the children of each member town shall attend elementary school within the borders of their town, before the district could close the elementary school in Gill. The town meeting of Gill would have to approve that added change, he added.

"We are protected, in a certain way, from Gill Elementary being closed, but I'm looking around here and I see about sixty people in this hall. That's not very representative of the town," said Peter Conway.

In her statement, Shaw opined, "I oppose this motion. It is unwise and does not take the long view. The high number of votes needed to close a school is not there to make it hard; it's there to make it thorough." In an

allusion that may apply equally to any of the district elementary schools, she added, "Everyone should be able to enjoy a vibrant elementary school at the center of their community."

With sentiment appearing to swing against the proposal, finance committee chair Paul Nowill spoke up. "By voting against this, we are effectively disenfranchising Montague, and that is a very bad idea." Montague is facing the possible closure of Hillcrest and Montague Center this year, and had favored the amendment 45 - 21, but the amendment would have failed without Gill's approval.

"This is not a vote to close a school, but a vote for compromise," added Gill sixth grade teacher Joanne Rabideau.

Asked about the ongoing debate in Montague about

closing the Montague Center School, Kociela replied, "The fact is that it's been around for years and years. The reason it got more painful and more divisive is that it took so long to get the 8 out of 9 votes. It was excruciating, and at times felt like an impossible threshold."

Rocke, who had pioneered the amendment shortly after being hired as interim school superintendent last year, said, "I'm making an appeal for you to pass this. This will not hurt Gill. This will help Gill. I've spent fifty or sixty percent of my time on this issue... Please let's not spend another month or two months on this, so that we can devote time and resources to other issues."

After nearly an hour of discussion, the amendment carried by four votes.



Spy-Gate, Spector and Ringo

BY DENIS BORDEAUX

BRATTLEBORO - It's amazing that scandals or controversies are still followed by 'gate,' in reference, of course, to Watergate. We got Iran Contra-gate, Monica-gate, Whitewater-gate, how the hell did we get into Iraq-gate, and so forth. What's amazing is this catch-all suffix for the most heinous scandal of the moment was perpetrated by a guy who walked, or was pardoned, or whatever! Nixon spying at Watergate, and now the Pats scandal or spying called Spy-gate, kinda brings it all full circle, doesn't it?

In the 60s, the Minnesota Vikings were prepared to play the Lombardi-coached mighty Green Bay Packers, when an observant Minnesota coach noticed something about the Packer's center, Jim Ringo's (you thought Ringo Starr, right?) hiking style. Watching film, the coach noticed that when the Packers ran the ball, Ringo hiked with two hands, but only one when Starr (Bart, not the Beatle) was going to pass. Whoa! Besides being in the opponents' huddle, I can't think of any greater advantage than knowing run or pass every play. Did the Vikings call up Lombardi and tell him Ringo (Jim, not Starr) was giving away every play? Would Lombardi have turned over the same info to the Vikes? E-yah!

The Vikings were about to play the greatest defensive game ever played against those awesome Packers. The Packers came to the line for the first play of the game, with Minny ready

to have a defensive field day. Then, an overly excited rookie Viking linebacker hollered loudly to his teammates, "One hand; it's pass!"

Future Hall-of-Famer Ringo (Football Hall, not Rock-n-Roll Hall) instantly realized what even he hadn't noticed before,

Then there's the spitters, so diabolical they too have their own ERA. Slimeballs, wet balls, dust balls, grease balls, skuff balls, sliced balls, loaded balls, clear balls, and yes, even snot balls. Baltimore fans called those 'booger balls' for obvious reasons. But there they are at Cooperstown every spring laughing about how Gaylord Perry admitted during his career that he had basically thrown all of the aforementioned illegal pitches past his fellow Hall-of-Famers.

I remember TV announcers chuckling on air when Perry was obviously juicing every pitch. Oy-vey! The children. He was caught many times, but his stats have never been asterisked. Hmmm. Colorful Hall-of-Famer, or admitted cheat?

Bronson Doyle, of poker fame, when playing high stakes Texas Hold'em, noticed that his neighbor was showing his hole cards every hand. Did he tap him and tell him? Would you? Observing is a huge part of poker, but was this simply cheating? Remember, like cards, all big league sports are high stakes.

Fifty fans on the Patriots 50 yard line with 50 camcorders could zoom in on opposing defensive signals and mail them to the Patriots, and that would not be illegal. But one employee with one camera on the bench, that's illegal. You would think that with such an ambiguous rule there would be spying and chaos everywhere. But, and this is *the* but, the reason it doesn't happen is because teams hide their signals. Been doing it for many years in many ways. Why does a catcher give four or five signals for one pitch, hidden between his legs? Why does a

third base coach have enough signals to stymie ENIAC?

If a manager catches an opponent's bunt sign and signals his pitcher to throw one around the batter's eyeballs, is he a sharp, observant manager or a cheat? The San Diego Chargers defensive captains wear plastic wrist menus like the QBs use on offense. As an extra precaution, they switch those menus after every quarter of every game: simple, yet impossible to pick up. Most teams do similar stuff to disguise what they're doing on offense, which brings us to the few, the dull, the whiners, and Arlen Spector.

Senator Spector (R-PA) is an Eagles fan, and since he's a two-faced pol, he recently said he's also a Steelers fan. I was going to say something here about his lack of football knowledge, and mainly his sour grapes about his Beagles (dogs) getting beat by the Pats. But if you saw Congress in 'action' a few weeks ago at the steroid hearings, you saw what I saw. Congress is made up almost entirely of bumbling boobs, who make you doubt the sanity of their constituents. Our man Arlen is considered 'big' in Congress, so 'nuff said.

The Eagles, Steelers, Colts, Rams, and Chargers all have whined about asterisks, Spygate, and 'We Wuz Robbed', all because they've been beat in big games on a regular basis by the Pats. I don't

know if other coaches are letting Belichick twist in the wind a little for past thumpings, but Bill's defense isn't that everybody else does it, which they do. The other non-whining coaches should come forward and tell the Arlen Spector's of the world that there is no useful information you could glean from signals filmed during a game. None! But if you're a team that doesn't mix your signals up every week, then you better beware of the observant.

Finally, the League itself could end all of this folderol by putting radio communication in defensive helmets like it does with QB's on offense. Duh! When they do that, there will be Belichick at the mic, after being caught stealing radio signals through a Navy satellite, saying, "Hey, they put it out there for us to intercept! There they were, floating 40 miles over New York, so we thought it was OK."

Man, I love our coach, and so would Lombardi (the coach, not the trophy)

In sports, as in the real world, everybody wants everybody else to be the Eagle Scout. But in America, a little skull-duggery is always welcome. Personally, if I knew my signals were being stolen: Why tell? What an opportunity to shovel so much misinformation at your enemy that he becomes totally unsure of what you're doing next. In football, that's game, set, match!

BORDEAUX WHINE

by denis bordeaux



and hiked the ball with two hands for the rest of his career. A golden opportunity missed, or was it cheating foiled?

When fences in baseball parks were literally just fences and not the solid walls they are today, home team owners and managers would move the fences out 30 feet or so when the homer-hitting Yankees and Red Sox came to town, and then moved them way in if the Phillies or Cubs were in. (Yeah, they couldn't hit then either.) Cheating, or creative home-field advantage?

A team in the 50s had an historic season mainly because they were stealing signals with a binocular man in the center-field bleachers. Even with their spying revealed, they are still considered a great team, and their players are still proud of what they call a great, fun season. What, no asterisk?

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

No Wheels Allowed

February 3rd
Report of unregistered older car vandalized at a Depot Road residence.

February 4th
Unwanted person at Lockes Village Road residence. Left without incident when spoken to by officer.

February 10
Car with two teens reported stuck on Brook Road in State Forest. Officer Maselli helped unstick vehicle and

advised that no "wheeled" vehicles are allowed on the unplowed roads in the State Forest in winter time.

February 12th
One car accident on New Salem Road. No injuries.

February 13th
Disabled vehicle removed from roadway on Farley Road at request of Road Boss for plowing purposes.

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AIRPORT from pg.1

ed to meet the town of Montague's budgetary goals for the airport. Those goals have not changed for years: the selectboard has consistently urged the airport commission and manager to find a way to stop running the airport at a deficit.

The idea of inviting the MAC director out to Montague to answer some direct questions came from a series of joint meetings held between the airport commission and the pilots' group, with selectboard member Allen Ross sitting in.

Giving the nod to both groups, selectboard chair Pat Allen welcomed Welch and Kerchner and said, "Everybody who's in this room wants the airport. Not everybody in town wants the airport, but everybody who's in this room wants the airport."

Welch proceeded to tick through a list of prepared questions. The first addressed the issue of whether the selectboard could add two new members to the five member airport commission, as they voted to do on December 3rd of last year, without running afoul of MAC's grant assurance stipulation that prohibits the town from "reforming" the commission in the middle of the ongoing runway expansion and airport safety improvement project. The town has embarked on a 1200-foot, \$5 million extension of the airport runway, a portion of which (5%) is to be paid for by a grant from the MAC, (the rest to be paid for by the Federal Aviation Administration).

Welch said the town, with prior notification to the MAC (as had been given), was free to expand the size of the commission. But Kerchner warned against appointing new members who might be prohibited "by local rules" from voting on fiscal matters pertaining to the airport.

"If your local rules don't allow someone from outside your community to vote on financial issues, you could box yourself in to not having a quorum to be able to vote on anything," Welch said.

Welch said the only legal stip-

ulation pertaining to the makeup of airport commissions is that one member must have aeronautic experience. He added that to his knowledge the only airport commissions in Massachusetts that have members from multiple municipalities are those in communities where the airport

percentage declines to nothing over 20 years, he said.

Welch backed up Sweeney's stance on insisting on the use of security badges for airport users, which the pilots' group had protested. Even construction workers and supervisors would need to be escorted onto the air-

Transportation Safety Authority, they want armed guards every twelve feet with high powered rifles, and that's coming." But in the meanwhile, many small municipal airports in Massachusetts content themselves with signage restricting access.



HYRUM H. HUSKEY PHOTO

Turners Falls Airport

stretches across town lines.

He warned, "We sometimes find the towns want to take control of the airports. That's in violation of state law. The airport commission is appointed by the selectboard, and then they have the right to run the airport."

Referring to Montague's past practice of restricting out of towners who might serve on the airport commission from voting on financial matters pertaining to the airport, coupled with restrictions against pilots voting on matters that might affect their own financial interest as tenants of the airport, Kerchner said, "If the same restriction apply and you add new members [who fall into those categories], you get yourself into an instant non-voting quorum situation."

Welch summed up, "You have a significantly large project upcoming here, and we'd really like to see that happen. We don't want to find ourselves with more of the same."

Kerchner said the MAC issues grant assurance documents to protect the taxpayers' interest in making sure money spent on construction projects is spent appropriately. And, "If the airport is no longer open for public use, or the money isn't used as intended," the MAC retains legal recourse to claim a percentage of the grant money back. That per-

port property by someone wearing a properly issued security badge, Welch said. He indicated managers retained a certain degree of individual discretion in how this policy was applied, but emphasized, "You can't lend your badge to anyone," so the implied wiggle room seemed fairly slim. Kerchner spoke of "some latitude to local authorities," in the matter of security badges.

Confusion reigned on the subject of a 50-foot access road between Pioneer Aviation, which abuts the airport on private land, and the airport itself. The pilots' group claims Sweeney arbitrarily blocked off this convenient road, which they used frequently to avail themselves of Pioneer Aviation's services, with a pile of railroad ties. Now, a trip from one of their hangars to Pioneer requires a round trip of more than a mile. They pointed out that most of the airport is not even fenced.

The MAC had investigated this complaint, but apparently had focused on a road leading to the airport from the nearby trailer park, rather than the road the pilots were concerned about. Welch promised to follow up on this issue in writing, with a copy of his findings to all concerned.

He went on to say, "The folks we deal with at the (federal)

"Most rural airports cannot afford to fence them," said Welch. "We have established levels of security based on number of flights, type of operations, and financial ability. Turners Falls does not have the level of security to have a six foot fence with concertina wire," around the perimeter, he said.

Welch weighed in on the side of pilots regarding the use of hangars for such items as chairs and television sets, in addition to housing their planes. "I don't see that as contraband. Those are things people have in their lockers." The pilots group had complained that Sweeney was being a stickler in enforcing the regulation that requires hangars to be used only for housing aircraft. Sweeney had apparently declared a folding bicycle that Richard Kulis, of Gill, kept in his hangar to be a violation of MAC regulations, and therefore a violation of Kulis' lease.


Welch seemed to side with the pilots on their complaint about Sweeney restricting flight instructors from other airports from coming on the airport. "Regulations on 'through the fence operations' are not inclusive of flight instructors." And "I think in some cases it's a good idea [to allow outside flight instructors in] because they don't have the capabilities at the air-

port." Welch said resolution of this issue was a local matter, but took a common sense approach to the question of how to encourage the availability of more flight instruction and mechanical help at the Turners airport. "Pioneer Aviation has been around for a long time, same family, hard-working people."

Kip Miskinis, a pilot with a hangar at Turners Falls Airport, said in order to comply with FAA regulations that mandate a biennial flight review, pilots at Turners Falls now have to fly to another airport, pick up a flight instructor, conduct the review, but not land back at Turners Falls with the instructor on board. "It's ridiculous. No other airport in the United States does that." Before Sweeney came on board, pilots at Turners Falls were able to avail themselves of instructors who took office space at next door Pioneer Aviation, now considered "off airport instructors" under Sweeney.

Welch said he had requested examples of ground lease rates from a number of Western Massachusetts airports, to provide some comparison for the dispute about lease rates at Turners Falls. "Most seem to be in the range of \$225 to \$400 a month for a T-hangar," he said.

Miskinis said most municipal airports in Western Mass provide hangars for pilots, who then have ground leases, but at Turners Falls, the pilots have to build their own hangars (at a cost in the \$40 to \$50,000 range), plus pay a real estate (pilot) tax, plus pay a 75 cent a square foot lease fee for non-commercial pilots, or \$4.02 per square foot for commercial pilots. He said these costs had escalated steeply under Sweeney's tenure, and totaled together equaled a cost prohibitive rate structure when compared to fees at other local airports.

But in closing, Welch said, "It's tough to go from a small airport that's home-grown, everything's local. We have to turn a profit here or at least break even so the airport succeeds." 

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ILLUSTRATION BY ANJA SCHUTZ

THIS WILD PLACE: Measuring Life by Sound

BY KARL MEYER

GREENFIELD - It's possible to measure your life by sound. I was reminded of this as I headed out on a cold, spectacularly clear January morning. My trail began on sidewalks and ended on a ridge above the Connecticut and Deerfield rivers.

What first struck me was the sound: the relative quiet of side streets on a crisp, winter day; the rhythmic clicking of frozen soles on pavement; the undeniable roar a pick-up makes as it blunders to a stop sign and then rumbles away, shattering several minutes of ambient, neighborhood peace.

The other thing that struck me was laundry. Though it was just 15 degrees, someone had a double-strung line full of colorful clothes drying in the January air. It was a work of art set against banked snow. Quiet, bright, it would ultimately dry and be folded into the household exact-

ly like its machine-dried counterpart in most homes. But this winter mural would use no electrics or gas in the process. It would not fill up a room with noise or heat up a frenetic planet. Whoever had strung this tapestry had the gift of quiet contemplation in return for their simple work.

This theme of quiet, and measuring life against a warming planet, continued as I walked. It's something I do often. You can measure your life in lights: how many are left on; how many blink in the night; how few you use. You can measure your life in fossil fuel: how many trips in the car; how many days it sits quietly in the driveway; how many efficient tasks you bundle into a one trip. There are always simple and satisfying changes you can make.

So this day I added sound to my measure of how to fit in with the planet. In walking, I'm reminded how all the material clatter and background noise stops us from hearing the Earth.

A simple walk offers a clear path to the wonder of natural sound, something the clutter of a whining TV, humming computer, or babbling cell-technology doesn't allow. It's no wonder we seldom experience a complete thought. We can't hear a thing.

My walk continues, with that slow recognition of its focus on footsteps, breathing, and beating heart. I'm aware of chickadees in the background woods, and the slightly deeper rasps of titmice in near trees. I hear the prickle of studded tires clearly as a luxury car bundles past. When I reach the ridge and step into the woods I pass into another world.

Here is the hushed quiet of trees, snow, and moving air. The human thrum drops away to an echo. The wind is up today, teasing across the hemlock and pine on this ridge. Silky curtains of snow dance off the trees, tickling my face and threatening to scoot down my neck. I pull on my hood and the sound of my breathing sharpens. Sound is now reflected toward me from

straight ahead, into my makeshift audio cowl. The peace of this place is echoed in footsteps, and, again, chickadees in the pine tops. Clumps of airy, wind-tossed snow make soft splats in the path ahead.

The great find of the morning in the day's surprising peace turns out to be a sighting. My presence here is a temporary intrusion into the habitat of others. And in the cold, my hard soles make a slap in the places where compressed ice covers this rocky ridge. I slip and I catch myself - exclaiming out loud in the process - a desperate plea to the air to help me catch my slide and offer balance. The syllables, sent out to myself and a seemingly indifferent universe, receive a startling response. My prayer's been heard.

As I slip around a little hemlock bend, chest high and fifteen feet away, the hurried strokes of a pileated woodpecker cut across the path. What's shocking is the absolute quiet of

this crow-sized wood-borer. I hear its wing beats but not the usual "Ba, ba, ba, ba!" that echoes during its big-bird retreat. What's beautifully striking is the deep orange-red of its pointed crown, now pressed smooth against an extended neck. What are also stunning are the deep, graceful strokes of its surprisingly long wings, something I would normally miss glimpsing this species at a distance. They are exactly the curved wings that artists paint.

This bird, this day, has chosen silence as it moves through its habitat. I head down the ridge passing an oak, where scattered wood chips tell me the woodpecker has been at work. Listening to the crunch of my footsteps on snow, I decide I'll choose silence too. I'll match the humility of this day's peace with my own. I can live without starting a car today, and there is laundry, and a rack to dry it on.

Karl Meyer can be reached at karlmeyerwriting.com.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Epilepsy

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - *Q. A friend of mine said you can get epilepsy when you get old. I always thought this was something that came on when you were a kid. What's the story?*

Epilepsy, which is sometimes called a seizure disorder, can strike at any age, but it usually starts during childhood and after age 65.

People with epilepsy suffer from abnormal signals in the brain that can affect the senses and emotions. These faulty signals can also generate convulsions, muscle spasms and loss of consciousness.

The common image of epilepsy is of someone on the floor, unconscious and suffering wild convulsions. This is only one sce-

nario created by epilepsy. Doctors have described more than 30 different types of seizures. An epileptic seizure can also create less intense symptoms such as confusion, a staring spell, lapse of awareness, and jerking movements by the limbs.

More than two million people in the United States have been diagnosed with epilepsy or had an unprovoked seizure. You must have two or more seizures to be diagnosed with epilepsy. Seizures can be controlled with drugs and surgery in about 80 percent of cases of epilepsy.

There are seizures that may not be associated with epilepsy. Many people have a single seizure without a sequel. Children sometimes have a seizure with a high fever.

Eclampsia, which can develop in pregnant women, produces sudden elevations of blood pressure and seizures. Then there are pseudoseizures that produce no evidence in the brain.

There's no cure yet for epilepsy. However, in some cases, epilepsy just goes away.

The likelihood of becoming seizure-free spontaneously is better for children than adults.

The onset of epilepsy is often traced to a head trauma, disease or stroke - something that injures your brain or deprives it of oxygen. About one-third of all cases of newly developed epilepsy in the elderly appears to be caused by disease that reduces the supply of oxygen to brain cells.

Many types of epilepsy tend to run in families. However, epilep-

sy has no identifiable cause in about half the cases.

The following are some instructions if you see someone having a seizure:

First, call immediately for medical help.

Roll the person on his or her side to prevent choking on any fluids.

Cushion the person's head.

Loosen any tight clothing around the neck.

Do not put anything into the person's mouth, especially your fingers. It's a myth that people are in danger of swallowing their tongues during a seizure.

Keep the person's airway open. If necessary, grip the person's jaw gently and tilt his or her head back.

Don't try to restrain or wake someone having a seizure.

If the person is moving, clear away dangerous objects.

Stay with the person until medical personnel arrive. If pos-



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

sible, observe the person closely so that you can provide details on what happened.

Look for a medical alert bracelet. The bracelet should have an emergency contact and names of medications the person uses.

After the seizure ends, the person will probably be groggy and tired. He or she also may have a headache and be confused or embarrassed.

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

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

Montague Parks & Recreation Family Fun Nights, 6:30 - 8 p.m. Unity Park Fieldhouse, Turners Falls. Ping-pong, board games, music, and raffles! Snacks. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Free. Drop-in, also March 28th.

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

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Blame It On Tina* - Folk rock, no cover. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1st
Art Opening Celebration: *Nature of the Northeast* at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 2 to 4 p.m. Artists, Steve and Linda Hamlin display work throughout March in the Great Hall.

Outdoor Tracking Workshop with David Brown interpreting signs of wildlife. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. 9 a.m. (Weather date is Sunday, March 2)

Northfield Mountain Fairy Fun pro-

gram 1 to 3 p.m., for ages 4 and older. Pre-registration required. Call (800) 859-2960. Story, adventure in the late winter woods playing games that fairies would like and fairy house building.

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

Concert at the Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Honeychurch* plus *The Accident that Led Me to the World*, 8:30 p.m.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Deja Jazz* - Jazz standards, no cover. 9 to 11 p.m.

Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett Town hall, Leverett. Pat and Tex LaMountain will perform in concert with their band Root Cellar, 7:30 p.m. \$12/\$10 seniors. Info: (413) 773-5388 or www.patandtex.com

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

Hallmark Institute of Photography, Turners Falls Open House for prospective students. Tour facilities, meet staff from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Dead of Winter Film Series at the Montague Bookmill, Montague



PHOTO BY BARRY HIGGINS

Pat & Tex LaMountain join with Celtic singer/pianist Daphne Bye, singer/guitarist Jennie McAvo, and cellist/bassist Mark Fraser to form Root Cellar. Vocal harmonies, well-crafted acoustic guitar arrangements, lyrical piano and exciting cello interpretations of Americana, Celtic, folk, country, swing and uplifting originals: at the Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett on Saturday, March 1st, 7:30 p.m.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Adam Bergeron* - Classical piano improv, no cover 7 to 9 p.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 3rd
Montague Center Library, Evening Sing-a-Long, 6:30 p.m. Childrens Librarian Linda Hickman, plays guitar and banjo and performs a variety of children's music. Info: call the Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week, or the Montague Center Library, 367-2852, on Monday evenings.

Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, *Clay Jazz Duo*, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet*, progressive electric jazz trio with guests, 8 p.m., no cover.

TUESDAY, MARCH 4th
Community Land Trusts and How They Can Help: open forum, held at the Montague Town Hall, Turners Falls, 7 p.m. Info., call 863-9038.

FRIDAY, MARCH 7th
The Greenfield Community College Chorus concert performance of songs and choruses from opera and musical theater, 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. in the Music Room, S-358, at Greenfield Community College. This is a preview of a longer performance by the GCC Chorus to be given at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 11th in GCC's Sloan Theater.

Open Swim at Turners Falls High School Pool. Family Swim 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Adult Lap Swim 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MARCH 7th & 8th
Artspace's Pottery & More Seconds Sale, Friday, 6 - 9 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Greenfield High School, Greenfield. Thirty-six artisans participating.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: TBA: Rock & Roll covers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8th
Comedy at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Hyperbole, hyperbole, hyperbole! Jimmy Dunn with Kelly MacFarland, 8 p.m. www.sheacomedy.com

The Montague Bookmill and the Lady Killigrew Cafe present: Music at the Mill: *Bright Hearts Brigade*, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: TBA: Rock & Roll covers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

St James Coffeehouse, Greenfield: *Lui Collins*, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. www.luicollins.com

TUESDAYS, MARCH 11th TO JUNE 10th
Accessible Birding with Joe Superchi. Visit local sites 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. Open to birders of all abilities. Call ahead for wheelchair van access (978)248-9491.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13th
The Plow that Broke the Plains, Historic documentary (made in 1934) depicts the social and economic history of the Great Plains from the settlement of the prairies by cattlemen and farmers through the WWI boom to drought and Depression; 30 min., 7 p.m. at the New Salem Public Library.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15th
Echo Lake Coffee House: Singer/songwriter and political activist, *Colleen Kattau* with her band, *Nice Guys*, Leverett Town Hall, 7:30 p.m., \$10. Info: (413) 548-9394.

SUNDAY, MARCH 16th
Free, mini-Zero Balancing body work sessions from 1 to 4 p.m. to kick off Zero Balancing Awareness Week, March 16 - 22. Held in the upstairs meeting room of Green Fields Market, Greenfield.

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

THROUGH MARCH 20th
"Blank Slate/Clean Slate" an exhibition by Turners Falls sculptor Tim de Christopher, LaFontaine Fine Arts Ctr, Mt. Wachusett Community College, Gardner.

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4. JUMPER PG13
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5. FOOL'S GOLD PG13
DAILY 6:45 9:15
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6. VANTAGE POINT PG13
DAILY 7:00 9:30 in DTS sound
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THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

Start Seeds Indoors to Hasten Spring

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY - There's not much real about Florida. Even the beaches are manmade.

When we first started making an annual trek to Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, the sand was fine and white. Now it is the ordinary tan of a child's sandbox. It is also manicured daily by a machine that leaves its caterpillar tread behind. What the ocean takes away with the tide is replaced regularly.

There are advantages. You can walk into the water for yards treading on the softness of sandy bottom. You can perch on your deck chair several feet above the tide's reach. In fact, you could nod off through the cycle of the outgoing and incoming tide and never get wet.

The weather is also unreal. Day after day in late winter the sun shines. Enormous piles of towering white clouds laced with gray and black may chase you off the beach, but likely as not you won't get wet. If it does rain, it comes down hard briefly and then rapidly burns off with the return of the sun and the heavy moist air.

I flew out of Hartford in the cold, penetrating rain of New England winter a few days ago, and returned in the last plane to land at Bradley before the airport closed for plows to remove a five inch snowfall, still coming down as the plane landed.

A few days of unreality can be a pleasant tonic for the dreary mid-winter blues: four days of warm, light-clothed, outdoor living with no greater stress than the necessary decision of where or what to eat. Just as my system adjusted to the somnambulant temperatures, it was time to return.

As the plane began its descent into reality, the pilot announced our return to

Hartford with the weather report of snow and temperatures of twenty-nine degrees. A collective groan rose from the plane's cabin. Then we were on the ground. The drive home from the airport took two and a half hours.

Now the beach of snow swells in the yard, covering the garden so deeply it is hard to imagine kneeling out there to dig and press new plants and seeds into the warm soil. It's time for the New England gardener's tonic. It's time to start seeds for the earliest plants.

W a y back in January, when the pictures of improbably fabulous fruits and vegetables arrived in the mail, I began to plan for the next garden season and made out orders for seeds. They have come in. Today I will start the leeks and onions.

The rule of thumb is to plant anything you would like to start from seed about six to eight weeks before it will be safe to put the new plants into your garden soil. Leeks and onions are hardy and can take a light frost, so I will be planning to plant them in mid to late April once the garden has dried out enough.

This early start gets a jump on the growing time for these season-long vegetables. It's also a good time to start seedlings of lettuce and spinach. Starting these seeds now will give you a wonderful early crop of tasty greens long before most gardeners would expect to be harvesting.

To start your own seeds,

hard shell of the seed to open quickly and will allow for strong root development. Heavier soils will inhibit the growth of long, sturdy roots and defeat the whole purpose of starting seeds early.

Last year, I started leek and onion seed in plastic flats. This resulted in a rectangle of growing plants that needed much thinning out in order to prevent the roots from one plant entangling with its neighbor. I lost a number of plants as I broke up this earthy, plant-filled rectangle in order to place individual plants in the garden.

This year, I'm trying some flats that are already sectioned. I'll put two or three seeds in each two and a quarter inch cell, and thin to the two strongest plants. When planting time comes, the leeks and onions can be removed by pushing up on the bottom of the planter, thus releasing the plants with minimal root damage.

Leek and onion seed are about the size of the head of a straight pin. Plan to plant seeds as small as these down about a quarter inch only. The point of a pencil makes a good dibble. Cover the seeds lightly, then press the soil down firmly so there is good contact between the seed and the growing medi-

um. If you start with a dampened (not soggy) starter mix, you won't need to water right away.

Watering should be done from the bottom of the plant container. Use a clear plastic container as a lid over your seed bed, and it will self moisten with natural humidity. More plants are killed by over watering than from drying out. Put your seed trays in a warm place and cover at night only. You can use the top of the refrigerator for warmth. Your plantings do not need to be put in the sunlight until the seeds have germinated. After that, use the sunniest windowsill you have. A warming mat will accelerate germination and plant growth. Turn your plants occasionally, so the stems will grow straight and strong.

Once your plants are showing their true leaves, you should start to feed them. I like to use a weak mixture of liquid seaweed that can be found in most garden stores. You can also make manure 'tea' by putting well-composted manure in water. Again, keep the 'tea' light. Seeds come with their own built in food supply. Once the plant has developed, it will be greener and healthier for a little snack, but the key is to keep it light.

Starting plants from seed is not for everyone. It's tedious and picky work and sometimes, often for unknown reasons, the results are disappointing. You can wait until the Farmers Market opens in early May and buy plants ready to put out, and start with a ready-made garden. But if you're like me, you are eager to get your hands in the soil and to get started on the garden even while the snow is thick on the ground. It seems to shorten those extra six weeks of winter still ahead.



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

you'll need plant containers. Small plastic ones work well. If you are recycling food containers, be sure to punch some drain holes in the bottoms first. Then you'll need some type of under liner to keep the dampness off the surface on which you place your seed containers.

The soil you use is the most critical choice. Ordinary potting dirt is much too heavy for starting seed. You want a light mix that is mostly peat moss lightened further with vermiculite or perlite. The goal is to provide a medium that will encourage the

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