



STANDING ROOM ONLY
for Stand-Up at the Shea
Page 7

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!**



HALL-SCOTT ENGINES
A Brief History, from a Gill
Perspective Page 11

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 13

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 3, 2008

NEW DIRECTORS TAKE THE REINS IN TURNERS FALLS

-- at the Shea Theater

BY DAVID DETMOLD-
He's done a little bit of everything in show business, including shepherding a group of 35 Amherst students and community members to Japan, where they put on a performance of *Anne of Green Gables* - in which he appeared as a singing farmer - to booking Natalie Cole for \$50 to sing at the lounge of Webster House at UMass Amherst, when he was head of residence there in the 70s. Now, Steve Stoia, of Northfield, who



Steve Stoia

served Amherst for 13 years as education director of the town's leisure services program, is assuming his new duties

see SHEA pg 10

-- at the Montague Catholic Social Ministries



Sharron Denman

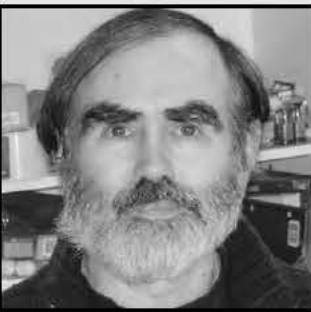
BY ANNE HARDING
Wrapping up her second month as the new executive director of the Montague Catholic Social Ministries in

Turners Falls, Sharron Denman snatched a few moments to talk about her new position. Denman finds it quite remarkable that a 12-year-old organization has already established such an extensive array of programs and offerings, and feels she is just beginning to know the breadth of their work. The tapestry of services MCSM offers includes a women's resource center

see MCSM pg 12

-- at the Brick House

BY KATHY LITCHFIELD
Enhancing community partnerships, strengthening the local economy and creating diverse opportunities for Montague's youth and children are among the new year's goals of Prakash Laufer, new executive director of the Brick House Community Resource Center.



Prakash Laufer

daughters in the Valley. He brings a colorful background combining decades of successful entrepreneurship with

see BRICK pg 12

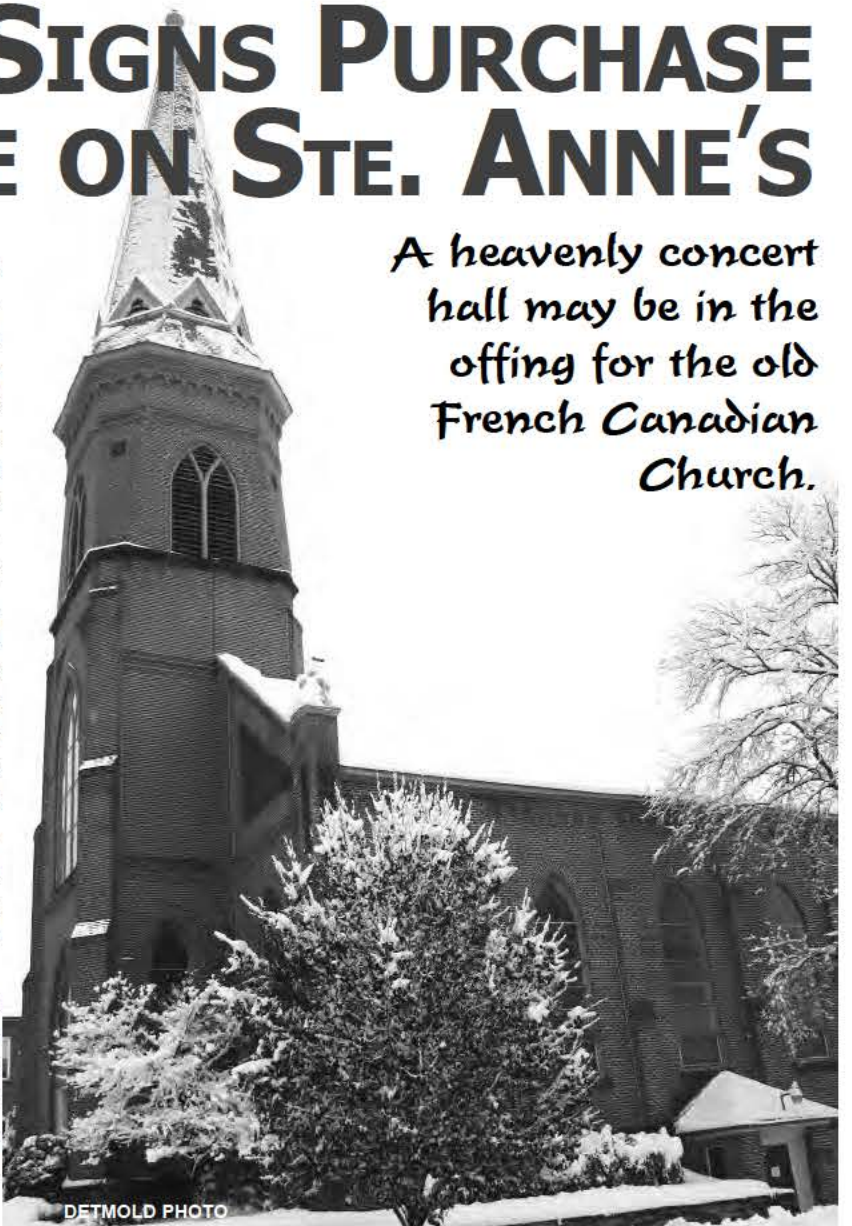
ANCTIL SIGNS PURCHASE AND SALE ON STE. ANNE'S

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - John Anctil, of Burlington, MA, one of the principals of the Swift River Group, a film and television production company that has continued to express interest in buying the Strathmore Mill for a future site for a film and television school, said on Wednesday that he has signed a purchase and sale agreement with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield to buy Ste. Anne's Church. Anctil said he hoped to complete arrangements to buy the church - which has been listed for sale through Colebrook Realty Services of Springfield since September of 2006 - by the end of the January. The church closed permanently after a farewell mass on January 8th, 2006, when the former parish merged with St. Mary's to form Our Lady of Peace.

Anctil said he planned to establish a concert venue, "mostly catering to folk music, blues and jazz," at the former church. "Nothing that would send a lot of beer drinkers out into the street afterward," he added.

see CHURCH pg 9



DETMOLD PHOTO

A heavenly concert hall may be in the offing for the old French Canadian Church.

Wendell Faces School Regionalization

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

In an hour-long sitting, Wendell voters approved the entire warrant of December 19th's special town meeting with only one dissenting vote. That vote came on the final article, which authorized the Mahar school committee to study a range of K through 12 regionalization alternatives, including a four-town K through 12 district with New Salem, Petersham, and Orange.

Attendance at the beginning barely reached the quorum of ten, not counting town officials, but grew to over 20 by meeting's end. Except for the school vote, discussion was limited.

But discussion became lively for Article 8, to allow the Mahar school committee to include the possibility of forming a four-town K through 12



HEINEMANN PHOTO

Wendell and New Salem send their elementary students to the Swift River School, and they are happy with that arrangement. But enrolment has declined, and a K-12 regionalization plan with Mahar is now on the table.

district in their regionalization discussions. Jim Slavas, who serves on both the finance committee and the school committee, emphasized the article did not necessarily show approval of that possible arrangement, which both Wendell and New Salem have opposed, but would only allow the town's represen-

tatives to include that option in their discussions with the rest of the Mahar regionalization subcommittee. The decision would require approval at town meetings by the four towns involved.

Early in the regionalization discussions, a hybrid region was proposed, with Swift River School staying in Union

28 with Shutesbury, Leverett and Erving. But in an October letter, the state Department of Education indicated they would oppose that hybrid option, and instead, along with the Patrick administration, would push for a four-town region, K through 12, for Wendell, New Salem, Petersham and Orange. The resulting regional school committee would be dominated by representatives from Orange.

Wendell's representatives in the regionalization discussions feel it is still possible to create a hybrid district, but it will be harder to achieve now because of the DOE's opposition. Creating a hybrid district would require an act of the legislature; a similar act was necessary to create the Wendell - New Salem see WENDELL pg 3

PET OF THE WEEK

New Year Hound



Hunter

My name is Hunter, and I'm an 11-month-old neutered male boxer mix. You can see from the smile on my face that I am just the happiest guy on earth. I may be a little big to be a lap dog, but every now and then even a big dog needs a cuddle, don't you think? I've got a great attitude, and it makes life grand! I've been on a big adventure for the past few months--I'm up from Alabama for my first winter, and oh boy, this snow is so exciting! Oh well, we are having loads of fun! Kids: 12+, Cats: No, Dogs: Rough & Tumble Dogs Only! For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dphvs.org.

MONTAGUE LIBRARIES NEWS

Mother Goose on the Loose

MONTAGUE - Mother Goose on the Loose will be held Saturday morning, January 5th, at the Carnegie Library, at 10:30 a.m. The program is an interactive mix of guitar and banjo music, rhymes, stories, puppets, and other visuals. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers, and are performed by children's librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix. The monthly

Saturday programs will be held on the first Saturday of each month through spring. Hickman also performs the programs solo on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. weekly at the Carnegie Library. The programs are supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.



LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

MONTAGUE - Laurie Davidson and Tom Carroll of Montague have been performing Music and Movement at the Montague Center Library to a very full house weekly since September. They will be performing at the Carnegie Library on Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. during January - February. The program is designed for infants - preschoolers and is sponsored by Family Network.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6
Rayanne Mercure

Grade 8
Todd Richardson
Corban Mailloux

Grade 7
Katelyn Dodge

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES January 7th-11th

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, 7th**
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
- Tuesday, 8th**
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 9th**
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 10th**
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Friday, 11th**
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old

Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

- Monday, 7th**
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch
- Tuesday, 8th**
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
- Wednesday, 9th**
9:00 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Weight Loss Group
- Thursday, 10th**
12 Noon Bingo
9 a.m. Aerobics
10:15 a.m. Pool

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

FACES & PLACES



DETMOLD PHOTO

Ringling in the New Year!

At the till of the Rendezvous -- Emily Brewster, with a packed house on her hands -- in the midnite hour.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

New DVDs for 2008

BY LINDA HICKMAN - The Montague Public Libraries have recently acquired a wide variety of new DVDs for the New Year. Titles include Sicko, Amazing Grace, Bourne Ultimatum, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Waitress, Arctic Tale, Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End,

Shattered, Underdog, and Nanny Diaries. Television series include Band of Brothers, Happy Days Season One, and Meerkat Manor Season One. Other titles include Steve Alves' series Where We Live and the Crossroads Guitar Festival 2007 featuring Eric Clapton.

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WENDELL

continued from pg 1

Swift River School region. The financial impact on Wendell of creating a four-town K through 12 region is uncertain, but one impact would be to raise teacher salaries at Swift River School. They are now the lowest in the four towns.

What would happen to the other three towns in Union 28 is another unanswered question. The Union 28 agreement requires every town in the district to vote to approve a school leaving the district.

Michael Idoine, of the finance committee, said this is a good time for people to get involved in the process. In the school regionalization discussions, Idoine said he has gotten the feeling "the

ground is moving out from under [the town of Wendell]."

In other business, voters allowed the volunteer Good Neighbors food pantry to use the town hall for storage and distribution of surplus food, and authorized the transfer of \$3,200 from the senior center renovation account to the town hall renovation account for modifications to the town hall kitchen and former conservation commission office, to meet Good Neighbors' needs.

Kate Nolan asked what could be done to protect Rhea Ormond's town common painting, that is now leaning against a side wall of the town hall stage, where it might be in jeopardy once the kitchen is getting regular use. Selectboard member Dan Keller said the board had discussed the painting, which is

large, and needs to be framed and hung at an as yet undetermined location.

Voters authorized the transfer of \$1,800 from the town office construction account to the town building maintenance account, to be used for the construction of a tool shed for the new buildings' landscaping, and the community garden.

Voters authorized taking \$600 from free cash to buy new folding tables for the town hall, transferred \$2,500 from free cash to the reserve fund account for unexpected expenses, and \$1,500 from free cash to the town hall maintenance account to pay for refinishing the town hall floor. Selectboard chair Ted Lewis said the floor has needed refinishing every three years, but the town is considering a new

finish with a six-year expected life.

The remaining free cash, \$263,648, was put into the stabilization account, as recommended by the finance committee. Selectboard member Dan Keller

gave thanks to the town's money management team for the size of this year's free cash account, from tax collections of prior years, interest, excise taxes and money appropriated but not spent



"After Innocence" on January 4th

A documentary film called "After Innocence," about wrongfully accused prisoners exonerated by DNA evidence, will be shown at the Turners

Falls High School auditorium on Friday, January 4th, at 5 p.m. The film will be followed by a talk by one such 'exoneree', Dennis Maher, from Lowell, freed from prison after serving 19 years for crimes he did not commit. No charge for the program, but donations will be

accepted for the Innocence Project.

On Thursday, January 10th, Heather Bachelor's government class at Turners Falls High School will present an exhibit about the genocides in Rwanda and Sudan, at the TFHS library, from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Gill Cheesemaking Workshop

Cheesemaking workshops will be offered at Upinngil, January 12th and 19th. The January 12th workshop is a beginners course. Soft cheeses will be featured that can be made with minimal equipment and ordinary kitchen implements. The January 19th work-

shop is on the dipped curd cheeses (Italian and Swiss cheeses). Both courses will cover the specifics and fundamentals of cheesemaking and curing.

These are hands-on workshops: the participants will make and take home product. Space is limited to ten participants and pre-registration is required. As always participants are invited to bring milk

from their own animals and may make a specific cheese of their choice if desired.

These workshops are in advance of the NOFA practical skills workshops that will be offered in March and May of 2008 at Upinngil. For details and registration contact Clifford Hatch at 413-863-2297 or email pickens@crocker.com, or visit Upinngil, 411 Main Road, Gill.

Band and Chorus Booster Raffle

The Turners Falls High School Band and Chorus Boosters are holding a raffle, starting this week, with the drawing to be held on February 14th.

First prize is an official Major League Baseball photograph of Manny Delcarmen, a relief pitcher for our beloved Red Sox, provided by the Red Sox Community Relations office. In addition, the photo-

graph and the official letter from the Red Sox has been conservation framed and donated by Couture Bros. in Turners Falls.

Second Prize is Official Topps 2006 NFL Football Cards: a sealed set of 385 NFL cards, plus five New England Patriots Rookie cards donated by Baseball Treasures and Baseball Memorabilia in Greenfield. Includes players Randy Moss, Tom Brady, and Tedy Bruschi.

Tickets on sale at Pipione's,

101 Avenue A in Turners Falls, Baseball Treasures and Baseball Memorabilia, 355 Main Street in Greenfield, and at Food City in Turners Falls on January 12th and 26th only. Or call Stacey Langknecht at 367-9418, or Barb Kuklewicz at 863-2023, or ask any of our talented band or chorus students for tickets.

As always, thank you to our wonderful local community for their continuing support of our students' extracurricular activities!



Timothy Tierney Jr.

will be flying out of Iraq at the end of December and going to Fort Carson. He will be coming home to Erving on leave, Saturday, January 12th, after serving in Iraq for a long 15 months. It would be wonderful if his home town could give him a big Thank You! We thought it would be great if Franklin County area businesses and residents could put out signs all over town to welcome Tim home. He will be home for about two and a half weeks so please leave any signs up so he will get to see them during those weeks.

Thank you!
The Tierney Family

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Assistant Editor
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Circulation
Jean Hebdon
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Layout & Design
Kathleen Litchfield
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Photography
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"The Voice of the Villages"

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August, 2002

Village in a Snow Globe

BY DAVID BRULE

ERVINGSIDE - The time between Christmas and New Year's Day is always the occasion for visits, parties, winter walks, and especially a chance to pause and reflect on the past year. For many of us, our lives are still regulated by a rural, agricultural calendar that designates the 12 days or so between Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, and Old Christmas on the sixth of January, as different from the rest of the year, as time set aside.

Schools, with their winter theme cutouts still decorating the windows, await the returning pupils. Most of the seasonal farm chores up in Gill or over in Montague Center are done,

brief pangs of wistful homesickness to our smug exiles and expatriots in Florida, Texas or California, or at least, we hope so!

This December has been one of the old-fashioned kind, with snow swirling in the air daily and nightly, the white blanket obliterating the severe bareness of November. A drive up Taylor Hill Road in Montague is like an excursion through the Russian countryside, a trip to see Ron Croteau in his new job at the Lake Pleasant Post Office like a winter scene worthy of Norman Rockwell.

The Connecticut River from the dam to the French King was earlier covered in a sheet of ice,

Sandbank at the end of Crocker Avenue. Hardy souls are skiing the new bike path, counters are counting birds along the canal below the Patch. We have a real New England winter on our

celebrations, both pagan and religious, have once again managed to encourage the sun to come back, and the darkest nights of the year are already giving way to more light, one minute at a time.

Some townspeople, like our own George Bush, are planning their annual migration to the sunny South, leaving the rest of us hardy souls to face the frigid temperatures of January.

At this year's end, we've had a respite for two days. Warming temperatures permit reviewing our early winter situation; thawing has loosened the icy grip on driveways and gutters; it has melted ice dams on the roof, and given us a chance to restock the woodpile near the back door.

Those of us who feed the birds are blessed with throngs of blue jays, brash, loud and full of confidence in the snowscape. Their muffled cries reach inside the kitchen into the circle of morning lamplight on open book and coffee cup. Give us this day our daily jays and a flash of cardinal for spice and accent. Up at the Waidlich Farm, above the French King Gorge at the mouth of the Millers, horses gallop, wheel and play in the new snow and icy air.

So this is how we keep the days and nights of the winter season, with life in the villages and surrounding countryside, on winter schedule. In the fading light, the library reading rooms are bright, warm, and calm. The re-dedicated veterans' monument stands sentinel in the dark

at the edge of town, the newly-burnished names of the town's sons and daughters who served engraved for all the ages to come. Snow plows on their familiar rounds thunder down roads and streets, their flashing lights briefly brightening up the ceilings in the darkening villages. The snow swirls again to end the year and welcome in the new.

*"Bold Christmas is past,
Twelfth night is the last,
We bid you adieu,
And great joy to the new."*



Rooftops in Snow, Turners Falls

although the daily chores keep farmers busy from dawn to dusk and beyond, as always. Teachers take a break, the postman gets relief in the season between Christmas cards and seed catalogues. The garagemen up at Benny Rubin's or over at Rau's seem more convivial than ever, the Shady Glen is warm and welcoming, the Rendez-vous is packed with regulars every night throughout this season! And the world outside is beautiful enough that it would even give

although a break in the weather has opened it up from time to time. The ice fishermen have been out on Barton Cove since early December; the guys up at the Schutzen Verein, their season of clambakes over, have hunkered down at the Clubhouse for the winter to cheer on the Patriots, curse the Colts, and generally, to winter over 'til spring.

The kids are out sliding at Unity Park, and others still try the trails on part of the

hands. This could get interesting!

By December 27th this year, a curious familiar change starts taking place again. As we all recover from the frenzy of wrapping paper, those endless carols boring into our eardrums, the over-indulging in food and drink, out of doors the brief thaw causes the snowfields and sidewalks to become icy. The wild creatures are a bit more desperate in their search for food. But luckily, the Solstice

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

Hunters Lost?

12/9 Mailbox on Depot Road vandalize - - Knocked off post.

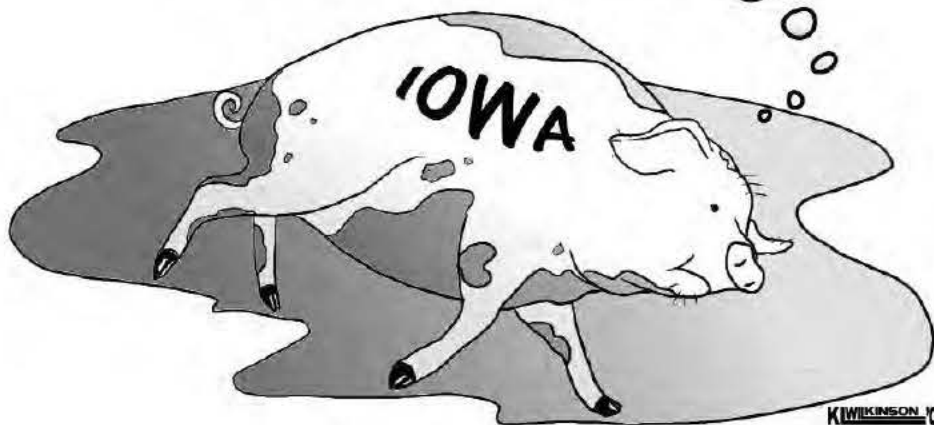
12/13 Possible hunter lost or in trouble on Thompson Road.

No one found after extensive search.

12/26 Possible lost hunter on Kentfield Road. Located, and all OK.

"That's Some Pig!"

WHAT? ARE THEY FINALLY VOTING? I WAS JUST GETTING USED TO ALL OF THE ATTENTION.



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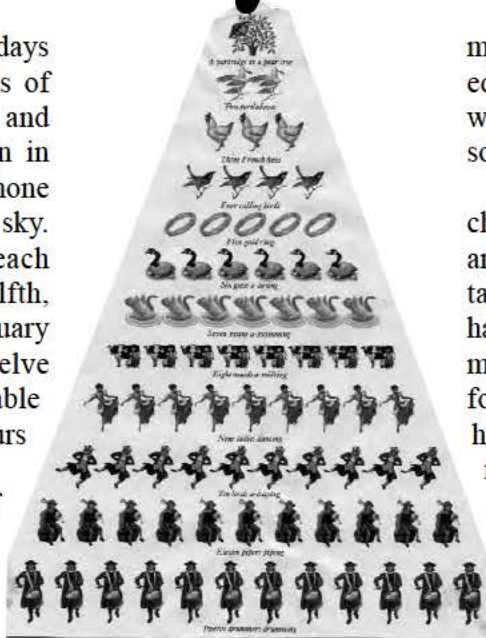
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The Twelve Days of Christmas

BY FRAN HEMOND
MONTAGUE CENTER - This is the ninth day after Christmas and "my true love" in Old England remembers his chosen lady handsomely with gifts. The new gifts this ninth day are nine ladies dancing, along with repetition of the gifts from days one to eight. (Written down, these old traditionals vary; some ladies received nine drummers drumming on this day, and had to wait for the ladies until the twelfth. The 'wise men from the

East' journeyed twelve days by camel with their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh for the child born in the manger, whose star shone bright in their western sky. And they would reach Bethlehem on the twelfth, now Epiphany, on January 6th. These are the twelve days, after the memorable birth, that the troubadours sing of in Old England. With the return of light after the winter solstice in these northern lands, bonfires and



merry traditions were adapted to the Christmas story, which came to their island some centuries later. The bards copied and changed and mixed the new and the old, and with entertainment the object, may have offered the "true love" many other ridiculous gifts for her apparently large homestead. Twelve drummers drumming, eleven pipers piping, ten lords a' leaping, nine ladies dancing, eight swans a' swimming, six geese a' laying,

five golden rings, four calling birds, three French hens, two turtle doves, and a partridge in a pear tree, join Thomas Nast's 1850s jolly old St. Nicholas, Clement Moore's reindeer sleigh on the housetops, Johnny Mark's "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (circa 1950), and Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" as the secular accompaniment to a religious holiday which has inspired great music and art, celebrated in the deep mid-winter.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Plagiarized Poem

I had a sinking feeling reading Tatjana Mileski's "My Poem," published in the 12/20/07 Reporter. It was immediately familiar to me as part of a poem by Cuban nationalist poet Jose Marti (1853-1895), which was used as verses in the song "Guatanamera." Marti's verses can be translated to English thus:

*I am a sincere man
 From where the palm tree
 grows
 And before dying I want
 To share the verses of my
 soul.*

*My verse is light green
 And it is flaming crimson
 My verse is a wounded
 deer
 Who seeks refuge on the
 mountain.*

*With the poor people of the
 earth
 I want to share my good*

*fortune
 The brook of the mountains
 Gives me more pleasure
 than the sea.*

That's the translation given in Wikipedia. I know it just slightly differently from the translation done by Pete Seeger, but Pete's translation is, if anything, even closer to Mileski's poem.

While I'm rather charmed by "...flaming charisma!..." (Mileski version), on the whole it is dismaying to find plagiarized material submitted to and published on the poetry page.

- Susan Conger
 Montague Center

Poetry Editors Reply: The editors of the poetry page thank Ms. Conger for calling this matter to our attention. Had we realized the close similarity between the poems, we would not have published Ms. Mileski's verse.

The Kids are Alright

Bravo to David Detmold for humanizing the "hooligans" in "Local Band Gets a Job" (MR VI #12). I have an affinity for these young people who color outside the lines. When I have walked through their number on the way for coffee, or a chat with Seth and Eva, I have been met with kind, sweet greetings, and a good quick conversation over an interesting guitar.

Some of them are going to number among their generation's innovators, musicians, and successes in whatever they end up doing.

In the early 70s, I had taken a break from a playwriting major at a midwest college, and had come back east to think about changing my major to music. My cousin Charlie and I moved to southern New Hampshire with the dream of putting together a rock band. We found Albert, a fairly competent drummer and guitarist and were on our way. We were struggling to find enough money to survive doing odd jobs and busking.

I'm sure our long hair (what I would give to grow hair like that again!), ad-hoc clothing

styles, music, and hanging out around town to jam made the New Hampshire old timers very nervous.

One day Don, the town hall manager came to us and offered us all jobs. The town had just got a grant of CETA training money, and was looking for ways to spend it. I think Don saw a little bit of himself in our scruffy band, because as we got to know him, we found out that his youthful passion was hanging with his friends and racing Indian Motorcycles semi-professionally.

Don put Charlie and Albert to work fixing up town hall, learning carpentry and painting skills. I went to work with the road agent, learning to care for the old army deuce-and-a-half that served as the town truck, getting skilled enough with a chain saw to drop a tree right where I wanted it to go, and managing a small road crew.

These skills, and the invaluable education of managing a working band, have served us well in life. It's pretty handy to be able to drop a tree in a tight spot.

Albert is now a chef, with a

new eatery in the DC area, after Katrina washed out his New Orleans business. He also plays with a Christian band.

Charlie is a lawyer, who has co-written a Supreme Court brief. He has performed nationally with the Moser/Nix Duo, and performs with the New England Mandolin Quartet upon occasion. He still has a passion for the electric bass and is proud of his Over Easy Blues Band.

I've had a job as a college professor, managed an arts non-profit, but mostly I have stuck to playing music for a living and done pretty well. I still like to color outside the lines.

It takes people like Jack Nelson and Eileen Dowd to recognize and trust the potential in the scruffy youth on the town bench. For me the most telling bit in the article was the answer to the question, "Who's reliable?"

I like to believe it is as the Who sang, "The kids are alright."

- Michael Nix
 Greenfield

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MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: Jan. 4th-10th

Friday, January 4
 8:00 am Montague Update: Susan Shilliday
 9:00 am Montague Select Board (12/17/07)
 10:30 am Carlos W. Anderson: A House Divided
 11:30 am Common Man Concerts: Denise Grendon
 12:30 pm Flu What You Can Do
 1:00 pm Prevailing Winds in Denmark
 6:00 pm On The Ridge: Christmas Show
 7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (12/11/07)
 9:30 pm Our Lady of Czestochowa: Christmas Midnight Mass
 11:00 pm Independent Voices #39

Freedom
 6:30 pm Independent Voices 37
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)
 9:00 pm Our Lady of Czestochowa: Christmas Midnight Mass
 10:30 pm Mik TV
 11:00 pm Discovery Center: Emu's

Saturday, January 5
 8:00 am On The Ridge: Christmas Show
 9:00 am GMRSD Meeting (12/11/07)
 11:30 am Our Lady of Czestochowa: Christmas Midnight Mass
 1:00 pm Independent Voices #39
 6:00 pm Falls Table: Jane Dunning & Michael Collins
 7:00 pm Elder Law
 9:00 pm Preachin The Blues
 10:00 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa
 11:00 pm Sustainable Energy

Tuesday, January 8
 8:00 am Independent Voices 37
 8:30 am Our Lady of Czestochowa: Christmas Midnight Mass
 10:00 am Mik TV
 10:30 am Discovery Center: Emu's
 6:00 pm Montague Update
 7:00 pm GMRSD (Live)
 9:30 pm Seabrook 1977
 11:00 pm Encore Body Art: Helga & Crabby

Sunday, January 6
 8:00 am Falls Table: Jane Dunning & Michael Collins
 9:00 am Elder Law
 11:00 am Preachin The Blues
 12:00 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa
 1:00 pm Sustainable Energy
 6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 6:30 pm Physician Focus: Radiology
 7:00 pm Coffee House Series: Jeff Martell
 8:30 pm Discovery Center: Birds of Prey
 10:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Cost of Freedom

Wednesday, January 9
 8:00 am Montague Update
 9:00 am Seabrook 1977
 11:00 am Encore Body Art: Helga & Crabby
 6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 6:30 pm Falls Table: Jane Dunning & Michael Collins
 7:00 pm Physician Focus: Radiology
 7:30 pm Sheffield Play: Mighty Minds
 8:30 pm Coffee House: Taft Mountain Toppers
 10:30 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa

Monday, January 7
 8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 8:30 am Physician Focus: Radiology
 9:00 am Coffee House Series: Jeff Martell
 10:30 am Discovery Center: Birds of Prey
 12:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Cost of Freedom

Thursday, January 10
 8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 8:30 am Falls Table: Jane Dunning & Michael Collins
 9:00 am Physician Focus: Radiology
 9:30 am Sheffield Play: Mighty Minds
 10:00 am Coffee House: Taft Mountain Toppers
 12:00 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa
 6:00 pm Montague Update: Susan Shilliday
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (1/7/08)
 8:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Cost of Freedom
 10:30 pm Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

A Few Larcenies

Monday 12-24
 8:33 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

Wednesday 12-26
 10:35 a.m. Report of a larceny from Carroll's Market. Someone had written a bad check. Advised of court options.

Thursday 12-27
 8:35 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle theft from a J Street address. Caller states husband left with motor vehicle and has not returned. Report taken.
 9:35 p.m. Report of a larceny from a Chestnut Lane address. A big screen TV was missing. Report taken.

Friday 12-28
 9:37 a.m. Request for an officer at Seth & Eva's on Avenue A. Extra patrols were requested to check people hanging around out front.
 8:19 p.m. Request for an officer at a 5th Street address. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

Saturday 12-29
 5:42 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at a Wendell Road address. Damage was done. Unknown if anything was taken. Under investigation.
 10:53 p.m. Report of a loud noise disturbance at a 3rd Street address. Person with a loud radio. Advised to turn it down.

Sunday 12-30
 8:15 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at the Elks Club. A car in the parking lot had been entered and a cell phone taken. Report taken.
 10:29 p.m. Report of an alarm sounding at Exxon on 3rd Street. [redacted] was arrested and charged with trespass and disorderly conduct. [redacted] was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.

Monday 12-31
 9:31 a.m. Report of a breaking and entering at the Elks Club. A motor vehicle in parking lot was entered and CD's were taken. Report taken.

Tuesday 1-1
 1:22 a.m. Report of a suspicious person in the middle of the bridge on Bridge Street. No problem found.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Coyote Season

Wednesday 12-19
 8:15 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted], for operation of a motor vehicle with a suspended license and no front plate and no seat belt.
 12:30 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Route 2 in Farley. Motor vehicle towed.

Thursday 12-20
 4:50 p.m. Assisted Gill Police with motor vehicle stop on Gill Road.
 10:50 p.m. Assisted Montague police with a vehicle into a tree on Route 63. Vehicle located on Lester Street in Erving after it had been removed from snow bank by passerby. No problem found.

Friday 12-21
 5:03 p.m. Report of a verbal altercation on west Main Street.
 8:40 p.m. Medical call Warner Street. Assisted EMTs. BHA transported.
 9:15 p.m. Trespass order served at High Street residence.

Saturday 12-22
 5:30 p.m. Report of disabled motor vehicle in climbing lane on Route 2 with hazard lights on. Unable to locate.
 6:40 p.m. Report of gunshots in area of Old State Road. Control advised coyote season. Spoke with reporting party.

Sunday 12-23
 8:00 p.m. Montague Police reported receiving call reporting loud noise in the area of Millers Falls or the paper mill area. Checked area with Montague Police. Everything seemed OK.

Monday 12-24
 5:30 a.m. 911 hang up from Pratt Street. Subjects appear to be fine.
 4:25 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Tuesday 12-25
 10:45 . Medical call from Pratt Street.
 1:20 p.m. Check the welfare at Central Street residence. Neighbor believes resident is with relative. Left message.

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Standing Room Only for Stand-Up at the Shea

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - It was great to see the new director at the Shea presiding over a full house at his First Night at the Turners Falls theater, for the New Year's Eve Comedy at the Shea. Produced by Boston-area impresario Dave Rattigan, who is making the Shea the place to be to laugh the old year away, the comedy show gave newly hired director Steve Stoia a chance to see the old vaudeville house in its prime: packed to the rafters, standing room only, with bankers, school teachers and bike mechanics rubbing elbows in the lobby and everyone enjoying themselves thoroughly. Here's hoping for many more such nights to come, during Stoia's tenure.

As usual, Rattigan brought some of the finest stand-up talent in Beantown to Turners on Monday, with Bill Campbell, Joe Wong and Myq Kaplan joining Bear Country's own Jennifer Myszkowski. Rather than fight the crowd at the box office, we repaired to a nearby bar to begin our celebrating early, and so missed most of Myszkowski's act, but did catch her post-intermission warm-up, where she provided ribald repartee and introduced the traveling comedians. The headliner, Bill Campbell, who looked a little bit like Andy Griffith on Dexedrine, or Paul Lynde on Metamucil, underwhelmed with his tinny regionalisms and well-worn parenting jokes. But by then it no longer mattered, because people had laughed so hard at Wong and Kaplan that their diaphragms had contracted and they were fighting for breath, collapsed in their chairs, giggling helplessly.

Wong started out his routine by admitting the obvious. "So - I'm Irish."

But then he came clean. "My dad always told me, you should be proud that your are Asian. But why? The only person who should be proud of his race is Michael Jackson. He turned into a white lady all by himself."

Like many drivers in the past few weeks, Wong could claim, "I was involved in a car accident. It was a 20-car pile-up. I was the twentieth car. I almost didn't make it."

While he was on the subject, Wong admitted that he fell for a recent telemarketer's pitch. "I got a call from Triple A. They asked me if I wanted to be upgraded to Gold Membership. You get 250 miles of free towing. I said, 'Yes, sign me up. I always wanted to go to New York.'"

Returning to the immigrant theme that kept sneaking into his monologue all night, Wong philosophized about the Columbus story. "Columbus. He came to America and thought he had reached India. I could never understand this until I came to United States and I went to a convenience store..."

Studying for his citizenship test, he stumbled on some of the American history questions. "What is Roe v. Wade? Two ways of coming to the United States." Wong again.

Chinese, American, or Chinese-American, Wong demonstrated a deft touch when it came to certain universal truths of the human condition. "I'm married now," he said softly, almost sadly. "Before I was married, life sucked and I didn't know why."

"Now you do," yelled someone from the crowd.

"Right!" said Wong.

And with no intended disrespect to the folks in Lake Pleasant, he provided the definition that has eluded so many practitioners of the ancient Chinese art of placing objects in harmony with their environment. "Feng Shui. That's basically a Chinese word for bullshit."

Capping an analysis of the complex barriers faced by new immigrants to America with an



DAVOL PHOTO

Illegal Puzzler

*"What is Roe v. Wade? Two ways of coming to the United States." - Joe Wong
Comedy at the Shea • New Year's Eve*

example from his own life, Wong spoke of the revelation he experienced the moment he held his firstborn son in his arms. "I said to myself, 'Wow! He was just born. And he's already a U.S. citizen... So, basically, in this country, two wrongs don't make a right. But two illegals can make a legal.'"

Speaking for another ethnic

group, myopic Jewish vegans, Myq Kaplan kept up a rapid-fire schtick delivered in an affectless, muttering mumble that barely left time for the crowd to recover from one outburst of hilarity before bowling them over again. And again.

Here's Kaplan, on the decline of the Hollywood myth-making machine: "Snakes on a Plane. Don't spoil it for yourself, like I did, by reading the title."

On family: "My grandmother, she's a little racist. By which I mean, she's a racist, but she's little."

And, "Kids say some funny things sometimes. Like, 'Who are you? Where's my Mom? Where are we going?'"

Not pausing for breath, not needing much breath for a delivery so monotone, Kaplan revealed, "I didn't work in stand-up all my life. I used to work as a police sketch artist's model."

"My wife and I, we have an open relationship.... It's a divorce, basically." But that's not unusual, he maintained, because, "Fifty percent of marriages end in divorce. That's one out of every two

people. So... it's either you or your wife...."

Speaking of marriage, Kaplan wondered why opponents of gay marriage in Massachusetts argued that if gays were allowed to marry, people would be marrying animals next.

He stared at the audience for a while, as if wondering why they would laugh at an observation like that. Then he said, "You guys all eat animals, right? What's next? You're eating a gay person." He harked back to the 19th Amendment. "So now women can vote. Who's gonna vote next? Furniture? Or other things I own?!"

But political progress has never come easy in this country. Take the 18th Amendment, for example. Prohibition. Men looked at each other after the 18th Amendment passed, and said, "Guys, we're not drinking. So, you think women should have the right to vote?" And as soon as the 19th Amendment passed, they said, "Now that women have the right to vote, guys, you think we should start drinking again?"

So maybe it'll be like that with gay marriage.

Check back at the next Comedy Night, at the Shea Theater, and find out everything you need to know about America, in two hours or less. They'll leave you laughing when you go.



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Mercantile Begins Shareholder Drive

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK GREENFIELD - On the night of December 18th, approximately 60 curious citizens of Greenfield and surrounding towns packed themselves into the banquet room at Famous Bill's Restaurant on Federal Street to hear a sales pitch presented by board members of the proposed Mercantile community-owned department store.

An extensive PowerPoint presentation was followed by a question and answer session, presided over by Mercantile board members John Waite and Bob Rottenberg. Board chair Becky Caplice was also present

and opened the meeting with a friendly challenge to those gathered: "Let's take control and do it ourselves, rather than waiting for outside forces." By this, Caplice may have been referring to the looming possibility of a 'big box' store like Wal-Mart locating on the French King Highway in Greenfield.

The proponents of the Mercantile hope to open a community-owned department store in downtown Greenfield that would both give local residents a place to buy affordable basics, while also drawing business to downtown stores like Wilson's or the

Outlet Store. Board member John Thompson commented, "I'm hoping [the Mercantile] will have the same effect that Wilson's or the Green Fields Market has. It will give people more reason to come downtown. It will help everyone out." The Mercantile will be geared toward Franklin County residents who make forty thousand dollars a year or less.

In recent years, the future of downtown Greenfield has been the subject of much debate and speculation, while many locals travel outside the city to suit their consumer needs. The proposed site of the store is at the current Greenfield Furniture building on the corner of Fiske Avenue and Miles Street. Ann Hamilton of the Greenfield Chamber of Commerce was in attendance, and told those gathered that the Chamber had voted favorably on the plan for the Mercantile community-owned department store.

Shares in the store were on sale that night, at the rate of \$100 a share, with a "bundle" of five shares being the minimum sold. (Several investors can invest together in one bundle). Rottenberg explained that all the money invested would be held in escrow until the board decides to go ahead with the plan to open the 8,000 - 10,000 square foot store. If the board does not raise enough money to open the store, or if the board decides the plans cannot proceed for other

reasons, all money will be returned to the investors. Investors have to be Massachusetts residents, and no single investor can own more than 3% of shares in the store.

According to Rottenberg, more than fifty thousand dollars has been raised for the store to date. The board is hoping to raise at least six hundred thousand dollars before going ahead and opening the store. Shares will be on sale for the next six months; the projected opening date of the store is Spring of 2008.

Rottenberg said the Mercantile would be the first of its kind in New England, although community-owned department stores are in the beginning stages of development in Middlebury, VT, Stafford Springs, CT, and Saranac, NY. Half a dozen community owned department stores are operating in the West, he said. Those stores order goods jointly, and the Mercantile would hope to work cooperatively on purchasing with the other community stores planned in New York and New England, Rottenberg said.

Rottenberg said the store would plan to stock "affordable clothing for men, women and children, light appliances housewares, jewelry" and related items.

He said people in Montague, Erving, Gill and Wendell have a stake in creating a strong regional economy, and, "Greenfield, for better or worse, has always been seen as

the center of the regional economy. If Greenfield's economy is strong, it will have a ripple effect on the surrounding towns. If people don't have to drive so far to get the necessities of life, that will also help."

Board member Mark Wisnewski said people who buy shares in the Mercantile, "Will get a store that's really a part of the community." They will be investors, and if the store is successful "they can see a return on their investment in a few years, equal to the rate of a bank CD." Besides which, Wisnewski said, "Stock can always be sold and transferred." He said the board has "goals to be a progressive employer in the area, in terms of wages and benefits. But the first goal is to make our store profitable."

Toward that end, Rottenberg said, the board is determined to raise the capital needed upfront, rather than try to pay debt service for start-up costs.

Wisnewski added that investors will get something more than just a modest return on their investment if they buy shares in the Mercantile. "They will ensure that they can get good products at a reasonable price, in a store that won't divest and leave the community, a store that will be responsive to the community's needs."

For more information, the Mercantile has a website available at : www.greenfieldmercantile.com

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

No Good News

“There’s no good news anywhere,” said Gill selectboard member Ann Banash, returning from a fiscal collaboration meeting with the town of Montague and the Gill-Montague Regional School District on Wednesday night. That meeting was held to put heads together about next year’s school budget, but the town of Gill has still not settled on a way to pay for *this* year’s school budget, or a way to fund town departments for the remainder of fiscal ‘07.

Gill is at least \$93,000 shy of funding departments for fiscal ‘07; an override seems to be the town’s only hope for doing so, but over the last few months the selectboard has repeatedly

delayed scheduling an override vote, hoping the state Department of Revenue would finally certify Gill’s property values, following the town’s triennial revaluation in 2007.

As of yesterday, the state had still not come through with those figures, so the town has still not set a tax rate, even though it is now more than halfway through the ‘07 budget year.

For now, the board has scheduled a \$93,000 override vote for the date of the presidential primary, February 5th. The figure may be adjusted, if the DOR releases the certified values by then, with possible new growth lowering or perhaps even eliminating the need for an

override. But if the \$93,000 override figure makes it to the ballot, and if the voters were to vote it down this late in the budget cycle, the town cannot legally renege on the Gill-Montague school assessment approved at the special district meeting of July 31st, 2007. With less than five months of the ‘07 budget year remaining, the only alternative Gill would have in that case would be to lay off staff. Selectboard members have estimated as many as four fulltime town staff would lose their jobs, in that eventuality.

At the last selectboard meeting, on December 21st, Banash asked forlornly, “We don’t have a tax rate yet?”

The answer was still no. “We’re exactly at the same place we were before,” Banash said. “We can’t have an override until people know what the tax

rate is.” (And what the impact on their tax bills would be.)

Banash suggested that a special town meeting should be scheduled just prior to February 5th, to discuss the town’s fiscal dilemma with the voters in an open forum.

Board member Nancy Griswold observed, “People think the schools are running along just fine.”

“That’s because they have a budget. We don’t,” replied Banash.

The board vetoed the suggestion that a separate override for \$25,000 for a new truck for the highway department be included on the February 5th warrant. The voters had turned the same proposal down at the ballot box last year, but Banash said, “If we’re talking about a \$93,000 override and a \$25,000 truck, they might decide to go for

the truck.”

But board chair Lee Stevens warned the needs of the town were being put off for too long. “That truck has got to be replaced. That truck ain’t going to last much longer without putting big money into it.”

“The town has needs, too,” said Griswold. “We can’t run the town 100% just to subsidize the schools.”

Banash said, “I agree. But we have to have good schools, too.”

In other news, the board appointed Ray Purrington as a ZBA alternate, and read a letter from the Department of Conservation and Recreation notifying the town of the state’s intent to place 75 acres of land owned by the Jenkins family and 25 acres of land owned by the Brown family, near the French King Gorge, under a permanent conservation restriction.

CHURCH from pg 1

the street afterward,” he added. Ancil estimated the seating capacity at St. Anne’s at “725 upstairs, 325 down.” He said the main floor would need to be made handicapped accessible, a sprinkler system installed, and a structural engineer brought in to look at the property.

Father Stanley Aksamit, speaking on Wednesday of the possibility of the sale of St. Anne’s to Ancil’s group said, “Until I have a check in hand, I don’t believe it. I thought we had Sacred Heart (Church in Greenfield) sold twice. I do know they need to get a loan.”

But hope springs eternal, even in the midst of winter. Ancil said his group has been working steadily on their plans to establish a school and facility for video and television production at the Strathmore, undeterred by the fire

that destroyed Building #10 and severely damaged surrounding buildings in that complex on May 26th of last year. Two months ago, the town of Montague acquired the 244,482-square-foot mill for back taxes from former owner Jerry Jones, and has been moving forward to temporarily repair the fire damaged roofs of buildings #1 and #11, and to retrofit the sprinklers from a wet to a dry system to prevent them from freezing this winter. Both those efforts have met with intermittent setbacks, as has the attempt to get Jones to move out an estimated 20 - 40 tractor trailer loads of baled and rolled recycled paper from the mill, to clear the premises of fire load and make it more attractive for a potential buyer. But the New Year has brought better news.

“Five loads of baled paper have been removed,” recently,

said Montague building inspector David Jensen, who said part of the hold-up on getting the rest of the paper out of the mill is due to recent turmoil in Pakistan, where the paper is destined for eventual re-use. Also, Jensen said bids have gone out for temporary roof repairs. The dry sprinkler system will be completed, and tested this week.

More good news arrived in the middle of December, when town planner Dan Laroche was successful in persuading the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development to grant the town \$100,000 for technical assistance to study ways of improving pedestrian access to the Strathmore via the (presently condemned) footbridge from Canal Street.

In December, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said

the town would prepare a Request for Proposals on the Strathmore “by the first of the year.”

Ancil said his decision to make an offer on St. Anne’s is intended to create “a base camp” and an extension of his planned campus at the Strathmore. “It’s a great property. It gives us a great presence in town. We really want to find a venue that complements Ristorante Dipaolo, the Rendezvous, the Shea, for high end national touring acts.”

Ed Shipley, the realtor who has been showing the property, confirmed that a purchase and sale had been signed on St. Anne’s between Ancil’s group and the Diocese of Springfield, and said the property, which includes the rectory on 6th Street had initially been offered in the range of \$565,000, but declined to name the current asking price.

He said St. Anne’s, like all diocesan property for sale in Western Massachusetts, came with a permanent deed restriction attached to the land, as follows: “In no event shall the premises be put to any use that is inconsistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church as determined by the sole discretion of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield.”

Aksamit said that restriction was interpreted on a case by case basis. “We would not want the church to be used as an abortion clinic,” he said. Ancil said the deed restriction would not interfere with his plans to use the church as a performing arts center. He said, “If Father Stan (Aksamit) would like to use the hall for a benefit fundraiser for the homeless,” for example, “we would donate the facility for that kind of purpose.”



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SHEA from 1

as executive director of the Shea Theater in Turners Falls on January 1st, as Debra J'Anthony steps down after 16 years in that role. He brings with him decades of experience promoting family theater at venues throughout Western Massachusetts, and an excitement to be part of what he calls "the renaissance going on in Turners Falls."

Stoia sees the Shea Theater being a vital part of that renaissance. "We need to work together to create economic development in Turners Falls. This is an opportunity to demonstrate how the arts can help aid the economic development of an area."

For the last four years, Stoia and his wife Joan have run the Centennial bed and breakfast on Main Street in Northfield, and in that context have watched the renewal of Turners as a destination point for tourism with more than passing interest. "We have a tourism perspective. We've sent quite a few folks who stay at our B&B to have dinner at DiPaolo's. We're all intertwined." He credits the RiverCulture program, the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, and even the Brick House teen center, which has fostered young musicians in town, as "important ingredients to making Turners happen."

Clearly, the Shea Theater has been a cornerstone of that revival. Established as a movie house by Denis Shea in 1927, with "Spanish-style" stucco walls, wrought iron wall fixtures, and a made-in-Madrid lantern in the lobby, the Shea thrived in an era of five cent matinees as silent films gave way to talkies. According to the theater's website, (www.theshea.org) it was also, from its early days, home to amateur theatricals presented by community groups like the American Legion Auxiliary, the Rotary Club, and the Turners Falls High School, in the days before the high school had an auditorium of its own.

After its founder died in 1945, the Shea had various owners, until its stage went dark in 1964. In 1973, the theater enjoyed a

different type of renaissance, when the Renaissance Community purchased the Shea and the neighboring Colle Opera House for a rock and roll recording studio and a New Age church of sorts. After a brief heyday in downtown Turners featuring a natural foods restaurant, grocery store, Zapmia Pizza, a t-shirt factory, greeting card business and rock band touring bus company, the Renaissance commune moved back to the land in Gill, leaving the central buildings of Turners abandoned in disrepair.

In 1984, the Franklin County Community Development Corporation purchased the Shea Theater, and transferred title to the town of Montague, which rents the venue to the non-profit Shea Community Theater for \$1 a year. A \$200,000 fund drive, with patrons purchasing individual chairs, paid for the theater's renovation, and the Shea reopened its doors in 1990 with the Country Players' production of *Butterflies Are Free*.

The Country Players remain one of the mainstays of the Shea, along with the other resident companies that have been with the community theater since 1990: Ja'Duke Productions and the Arena Civic Theater. Additionally, the theater has since seen numerous productions from the Shea Young Theater Company, and original one-acts produced by J'Anthony, along with one-off performances from traveling companies offering Shakespeare, Irish tenors, and Tuvan throat singers, not to mention local punk rock and thrash metal bands renting out the hall for slam dances and benefits.

"The Shea has done yeoman service in the community," said Stoia. "It's important that the Shea takes its rightful place in the renaissance," of downtown.

While Stoia was hesitant to stake out too much new ground in his forecast for what the new year may bring to the Shea's stage, he did note that it had originally been built as a moviehouse, and "We'd only need a screen and a projector," to show movies there again. Shelburne Falls has seen notable success in the multi-use combination of movies, community

theater, and live music at 425-seat Memorial Hall, complementing a thriving dining and art gallery scene along Bridge Street, despite the recent fire.

The Shea board of directors has been forced to come to the Montague selectboard hat in hand on several recent occasions, seeking infusions of program income money to offset rising utility costs and renovation expenses at the town-owned theater. And while Stoia said he planned on bringing "original programming" to the Shea to augment the revenue stream, it is unlikely he will steer it far from its original mission. "The beauty of the Shea," Stoia said, "is that its mission is unusual. The mission calls for the Shea to be a civic center for the region. It says so right in the bylaws."

Stoia continued, "I have some ideas I want to make happen there, but I expect we're going to be reaching out and saying, 'This is a blank palette. Make it happen.'" And though they may not be the best moneymakers available for a 360-seat theater, Stoia said, "Community groups can come in and create art. That's what the mission is."

But, in addition to the resident companies and community groups who will continue to provide the majority of programming, Stoia said, "We will have to bring in folks from outside," the immediate area, "to keep the lights on, so when people pass it they know it's a theater."

Along these lines, Stoia emphatically endorsed the board of directors previously announced plan to put up a marquee, a missing element on the theater's plain brick facade, as soon as sufficient funds can be raised. "It will happen," said Stoia, confidently.

If his background serves as a template, it would not be surprising if Stoia accomplishes the goals he sets. When he took over the job of providing community theater for the town of Amherst in 1993, he produced, "all the standards, *Peter Pan*, *the Wizard of Oz*, *Annie...*" and quickly outgrew the middle school auditorium leisure services had been using to stage productions. Graduating to Bowker

Auditorium at UMass, where Stoia put on shows during January break, ticket sales climbed to stratospheric proportions. In 2005, two weekend performances of *the Wizard of Oz* netted \$50,577 at the door, topping the previous year's peak of \$48,083.

With the town's approval, Stoia entered into a cooperative relationship with the Valley Light Opera, doing publicity and selling tickets for the Amherst-based troupe, who put on major productions of works by Gilbert and Sullivan at the high school each year. "It was an exciting model," said Stoia. "Amherst recognized the value of the arts" to attract people to town, where they would also spend money in local stores and eateries.

Stoia is clearly proud of his work on community theater productions, for their own merits. He said the possibility of taking *Anne of Green Gables* to Japan came about in 1999 due to Amherst's sister city relationship with Kanegasaki, a city of 16,000 located northeast of Tokyo, and due to the Japanese fascination with the Anne Shirley series. He took a cast of 35 with him on that trip, and a similar sized troupe to the theater festival in Dundalk, Ireland in 2004, where his production of *the Secret Garden* won honors for community theater production. His work in Amherst began and ended with productions of *Oliver*, in 1993 and again in 2006.

"I hired the directors, the choreographers, the music directors; I was the producer. I was closely involved with every aspect of the productions."

Before working for Amherst, Stoia had a long career as an independent producer in the Valley with the non-profit company he founded, New England Puppetry and Family Theater. In this role, he brought companies from around New England, the country, and the world to local stages from the Mohawk Theater in North Adams to the Paramount in Springfield, and the Fine Arts Center at UMass, (where he had served for four years in the 70s as head of residence at one of the dormitories,

back when Julius Erving was shooting hoops in the courts outside and Natalie Cole was crooning in the lounge.) He pursued his role as independent impresario, bringing adult level and kid pleasing puppetry shows and theater to the Valley until "the bottom dropped out of the Massachusetts Miracle" in the early 90s, and state arts council funding dropped from "\$30 plus million to \$3 million overnight." During one of those earlier years, he brought *Peter and the Wolf* to the Shea Theater, performed first by the Bob Brown Marionettes and then by the Amherst Ballet, showing children dance and theater interpretations of the same classic musical.


Now, Stoia is both realistic and optimistic as he sizes up the scale of the job ahead. The Shea Theater is a bit worse for the wear, after its "yeoman's service," and eight decades of existence as a community center in one form or another. The Spanish stucco is gone, along with the ironwork fixtures and the Madrid lantern. But the red felt curtain waits at the wings for the footlights to go up on another season's work. And Stoia will be there to guide it, along with the community groups, producers and directors, young musicians, seasoned stagehands, stand up comics, and thespians who will continue to tread its boards.

Stoia has this message for the community. "We will use all the help we can get. There are opportunities to get an experience in theater tech, arts administration, and theater in general, along with community organizing," at the Shea. So whether your specialty is putting up posters, building a set, staffing an intermission bake sale or perhaps mounting a production of your own, get in touch with Stoia at 863-2281, and help keep the Shea Theater front and civic center of the latest downtown renaissance of Turners Falls.

You can meet Steve Stoia and help out the Shea at a benefit beer, wine, cheese and cello party, Thursday, January 10th, from 6 to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and can be reserved by calling 863-2281.



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A Brief History of Hall-Scott Engines

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL - Two talented young Californians, Elbert J. Hall and Bert C. Scott founded the legendary Hall-Scott engine company. They began by producing gasoline powered rail cars, went on to build motor cars from 1910 to 1921, then aircraft and marine engines. Their greatest success was in aircraft engine design and production.

In WWI they produced a family of engines for the "Liberty Motor" program. The engines shared the same cylinder dimensions in 4, 6, 8 and 12 cylinder configurations, with interchangeable parts, designed to be mass-produced. No matter the size, these low-RPM engines were reliable and light, producing a very favorable power to weight ratio.

The legendary Hall-Scott engines were among the best known in aviation history. The 12 cylinder A-8 aircraft engine of 1917 had aluminum pistons, hemi head cylinders, and an overhead camshaft, 5-inch bore and 7-inch stroke. The long stroke gave Scott-Hall engines great torque at low rpm.

After WWI, Hall-Scott left their leadership role in the aviation market to turn to producing engines for trucks, buses, boats and power units. American Car and Foundry bought Hall-Scott in 1925. ACF used Hall-Scott's fame to advertise their buses as being Hall-Scott powered. AFC refused to sell engines to others, but made an exception for International trucks. The Internationals sported Hall-Scott engines in the 1920s and early 1930s. The engines ran vertically or horizontally, on LPG or gasoline.

In 1940, Hall-Scott began selling the Model 400 engines as original equipment, as well as for re-powering trucks. D.M.O. Construction's Hall-Scott powered Mack shown at the Antique truck show in South Deerfield sports a Hall-Scott engine as original equipment. The 1,090.6 cubic inch displacement engine produces 865 foot pounds of torque at 1,200 r.p.m and 286 horsepower at 1,800 r.p.m., running on either LPG or gasoline. Hall-Scott advertised the 400 as "the Most Powerful Truck Engine Built." The Mack engine, model 707 (707 cubic inches), used about the same amount of



PARZYCH PHOTO

Fred Chase (shown reflected in Mack radiator), renowned Mack Truck mechanic, recently was entrusted to tune up a Scott-Hall powered 16-speed 1951 Mack tractor at his shop in Gill. Owner DMO Construction, of Amherst, found the truck in Texas. DMO restored it as a show truck. The three miles per gallon mileage prohibits using the truck for useful work. When gasoline was cheap, these Scott-Hall powered trucks were once prized for their ability to haul freight up over the steep grades of mountain highways of the western states, in the years before the interstate highway system evened out the grades.

Dual ignition on the 400 engine may have been a feature copied from Scott-Hall aircraft engine designs. But, instead of having two magnetos or a battery ignition/magneto combination, this model uses two battery ignition coils feeding two spark plugs per cylinder through a 12-port ignition cap.

gasoline as the Hall-Scott model 400 engine, but the 707 had nowhere near the power.

The number of Hall-Scott engine models shrank after Hercules Motors Corporation bought the engine division in 1958. The more economical diesel engines coming onto the scene spelled the end of Hall-Scott. Drivers reported that the durable engines produced tremendous power and ran smoothly, often for over a million miles, but were able to pass anything but a gasoline station. Diesel engines' lower fuel consumption spelled doom

for the gasoline engine market for heavy trucks and equipment, regardless of manufacturer.

Hall-Scott did not weather the transition to diesel. They made one diesel model that left a lot to be desired. The company had another diesel design on the drawing board in 1970 when the last Hall-Scott engine rolled off the Ohio assembly line, ending the era of the legendary Hall-Scott engines.

Ironically, Hercules also made gasoline engines that had good lugging power at low rpm's, but experienced engine

failure when run at higher rpm's. Their gasoline engines were popular in Cle-trac bulldozers where they were governed at low rpm, but the engines did not do as well in other applications needing higher rpm.

Hercules produced both gasoline and diesel engines for military applications but somehow failed to utilize the Scott-Hall engine building expertise to turn out diesel engines, as they did with the famous Scott-Hall gasoline and LPG engines.

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MCSM from pg 1

with free writing, art, music, computer literacy, auto repair and self-defense classes, usually with free child care provided; a free after school program for children, and family support services. In particular, Denman is impressed by the number of collaborations with other agencies, and the true spirit of cooperation between groups trying to find the best ways to serve their clients. She said she has never seen such a depth of partnerships in her many years and varied positions within the social services network.

Denman was raised in Gloucestershire, England, finishing high school at age 16, the norm in England, followed by a two-year social work certification at a local community college. A strong urge to travel was not quelled by touring Europe, so it wasn't long before she found a position caring for two preschoolers in Annapolis, MD. Thus began an odyssey of work

and education, involving several transatlantic journeys.

When the first year was up, Denman gave up the nanny position and returned to England, until she was accepted into an undergraduate program at Oakwood College in Huntsville, AL. Graduating with a bachelor's degree in social work in 1993, Denman went back to England, where she worked with the Children's Services Division of the local county government. For three years she learned the ins and outs of their interconnected systems, including child abuse and neglect investigations, the juvenile court system, as well as fostering and adoption programs.

Crossing the Atlantic again in 1996, Denman attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, graduating with a master's degree in social work. Offered a state job in Birmingham, AL, she spent the next nine years working in children's rehabilitation, focusing on children aged 5 - 21 with physical

special needs. Over the years, her role evolved from social worker to administrator, then program specialist and finally district supervisor.


In 2006, Denman moved north to Tennessee, and took a short-term position in the Nashville area working with adults with physical and developmental disabilities. Although she visited this area twice before accepting the top post at MCSM, she only moved to Erving on October 20th, just three days before reporting to work in Turners Falls. There wasn't much time to enjoy the splendor of the fall foliage season, but at least she arrived in time for winter!

Denman said she is "extremely grateful that the police got the funding they needed," to build a new police station in Turners Falls, but that go-ahead comes with an unintended cost for MCSM, which will be left off Montague's application for Community Development Block Grant funding in 2008, as the

town hopes to devote most of that grant toward defraying the price tag of the new safety complex on Turnpike Road. Denman said she is on the look-out for new funding sources to expand MCSM's offerings to include a daytime drop-in center for parents who "need a safe place to leave their children while they attend medical or court appointments." She said an expanding holiday drop-in center would also be appreciated by parents looking for something for their children to do while school is not in session.

Modest to a fault, Denman said the main strength she brings to her new role is that of a supportive 'listening ear.' "MCSM will continue to be community driven," she added. "It would not work for me to come in and say, 'This is what I want to do here.' We have a really good relationship with the participants in our programs. They guide what we do."

It is a far cry from downtown Birmingham to downtown

Turners Falls, but Denman seems to already be an enthusiastic convert to New England small town living. While she enjoyed the city life and its seeming advantages, Denman said she is thrilled to reduce her commute from more than 30 miles to less than ten, and loves the fact that she works in a walkable downtown area, noting all the basic necessities can be found within a few blocks of her office: a grocery store, post office, several restaurants, a hardware store, a pharmacy, and a theater (not to mention a doctor, lawyer and medical center). Denman said she is enjoying the natural beauty of the river in the downtown area; but most importantly, she finds the community incredibly welcoming and friendly. She said the fact that people stop and chat on the street is a decided improvement to urban living. So when you see her on the Avenue, be sure to say hello, and welcome her to the area and to the Montague Catholic Social Ministries. 

BRICK from pg 1

with arts and dance, and believes strongly in investing in the local community.

Eighteen years ago, Laufer and Wright founded Motherwear, the Northampton-based catalogue business for nursing mothers. What began as a small home business now employs 65 staff and draws \$11 million in annual sales, he said.

Thirty years ago, Laufer completed graduate work in dance therapy at Antioch New England in Keene, N.H. and now performs with the Dance Generators, a modern and improvisational, intergenerational dance company. He also helped found DanceSpirit, a community dance that happens Sunday mornings upstairs from Fitzwilly's in downtown Northampton.

Following a head-on collision in June of 2004 which left him unable to walk for three months, Laufer said he found dance and movement incredibly healing. He founded a concert series through Highland Valley Elder Services that continues today. He has hosted film series, and

presently hosts open mic concerts in Florence through the "Do-Gooders Club." The proceeds of each concert, which combine dance, music and theater, benefit a local community organization, he said.

Laufer is also a board member and treasurer of United for a Fair Economy, a national non-profit organization focusing on economic justice. Years ago, he published the "New England Prout Journal," about economic decentralization. He also helped to found the "Valley Balle," or the Pioneer Valley Business Alliance for Local Living Economies, a chapter of a national organization working to strengthen local economies. He's now a member of the steering committee for the newly revived Montague Business Association.

"It's my value system - it's always been about supporting economic democracy, local ownership, cooperative structures," Laufer said, "as well as the role arts play in local economies."

Among Laufer's goals for 2008 are to expand the Great Falls Art Fest to take place twice a year instead of once. This year, Laufer said, the Art Fest will be

held the third week in May and also the second week in October, he said, in conjunction with the "Arts & Blooms" and "Arts & Leaves" open studio tours downtown. He also plans to expand the art sale that takes place in December during the "Arts & Icicles" tour, downstairs at the Brick House, to nine days rather than two, increasing artists' opportunities for sales and better capitalizing on the hard work put into organizing the sale.

Laufer plans to partner with artists and local businesses to create more murals in downtown Turners, following up on the success of the beautiful mural created under the guidance of Kerry Kazokas with area youth outside the Teen Center. He also plans to host concerts in the performance space at the Brick House every other month, in addition to the Youth Open Mics that happen on the fourth Fridays of each month. The first concert was held Saturday, December 15th, featured several local bands, and gave youth a chance to promote the event, collect tickets and grow both musically and professionally, Laufer said. Revenues from these concerts will be split

evenly between the Brick House and the performers, creating a win-win situation for all involved.


Some of the funds raised by these concerts will be used to upgrade the sound and recording equipment in the concert facilities, he said, to teach youth how to use equipment they're likely to encounter in real-world gigs, and also to improve the aesthetics of the concert space, making it that much more welcoming and open to the community. Taking a tour of the teen center and performance space, newly hired Shea Theater director Steve Stoia commented last week, "That's the best equipped teen center I've ever seen!"


Otherwise, the Brick House plans to continue its ongoing collaboration with Montague Catholic Social Ministries to offer the Montague Institute for New Directions (MIND), a non-traditional job training program for women; further partner with the Department of Social Services to better meet the needs of children in foster care and their families; and also further its relationship with the Gill-Montague Community School

Partnership and the Regional Employment Board to maintain the Transitioning to Success drop-out prevention program, working to build teens' self-esteem and teach practical job skills.

"We are a small organization with six staff people . . . and our mission is much broader. In order to be successful and to meet the needs of the community, we must partner with other groups. It's also the most efficient way to get things done," Laufer said, echoing a theme sounded by Sharron Denman, the newly hired director at the neighboring Montague Catholic Social Ministries. "The principles of cooperation, that you have much greater resources when you combine with others: there's a synergy . . . we can accomplish so much more working together than we could separately," he said.

He said he is excited to "partner with people who have a vision of revitalizing the community through the arts and local businesses, and working with youth and families."


Laufer can be reached at 413-863-9576. 



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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ - Q: I get indigestion often and can't figure out why. How can I find what is causing it?

Indigestion, or an upset stomach, is a general term for discomfort in your upper abdomen. This discomfort can take the form of burning stomach pain, nausea, heartburn, bloating, burping and vomiting.

If, in addition to your upset stomach, you experience sweat-

ing, shortness of breath or pain radiating to the jaw, neck or arm, get medical attention immediately; you could be having a heart attack.

We all get indigestion occasionally; about one in four of us gets an upset stomach at some time. But, if you are suffering from this condition regularly, you should see a doctor. Indigestion - also known as "dyspepsia" - can be the result of something more serious than stuffing down a hot dog on the run.

Indigestion can be a symptom of acid reflux disease, an ulcer, gallbladder disease or appendicitis. It can also be a warning sign for stomach cancer, although this is rare. Some

medicines can give you indigestion. Occasionally, persistent indigestion is caused by a problem in the way food moves through the digestive tract.

Seeing a doctor is especially important if you are older than 50. Some other red flags are a mass in your stomach, difficulty swallowing, vomiting, unexplained weight loss, black stools.

One of the best tips I have found to determine what causes occasional indigestion is keeping a diary of the foods you eat. A friend of mine tried this. By analyzing what he ate and how he reacted, he figured out that he was lactose intolerant. If you want to avoid indigestion, here are some no-no's.

Don't:

- Pack in large meals. Take food in smaller doses.
- Gobble food. Put your fork down until you've finished chewing a mouthful and have swallowed it.
- Drink caffeinated beverages. Caffeine makes the stomach produce more acid.
- Overindulge in alcohol. Alcohol can irritate the stomach lining.
- Smoke. Smoking can irritate the stomach lining, too.
- Eat highly acidic, fatty or spicy foods.
- Don't let stress overwhelm you. Easy to say, but learning relaxation techniques will reduce stress and indigestion.
- Exercise or lie down immediately after eating.

diately after eating.

- Eat two hours before you go to sleep.
- Take a lot of anti-inflammatory medicines such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Switch to acetaminophen.
- Chew with your mouth open.

Indigestion can be treated successfully with medicines. Some block the formation of acid. Others are antibiotics. If a medicine you're taking for some other condition gives you an upset stomach, you might have to switch to another medicine.

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

ON THE BEATEN TRACK: The Muse of Millers Falls

BY FLORE

MILLERS FALLS - Were you aware this small rural library is located on the busy highway, Route 63? Can you hear the sound of cars and trucks applying their squeaky brakes as they approach the intersection of this much-traveled road? Shhh! This is a library!

Perhaps, in its fervent heart, this modest red brick building might wish to be located elsewhere, perhaps on a more exotic Western byway, like Route 66?

Or even better, it might wish to be placed earlier in history. Say, right by the banks of the Euphrates River? Where, to the best of our knowledge, the whole idea of recording archives may have started...

It was then, brace yourself, as early as 3000 BC... People were already using a cuneiform alphabet. Each letter of their script was impressed on clay tablets with a sharpened stylus, preserving the records of their civilization on the earliest of hard drives. Numerous of these tablets have been found in repositories, or what we would refer to today as libraries, collating the daily activities of these people, the Sumerians. These caches revealed their profound dedication to literature, humanist identity, religious quests, and philosophical concerns. Beside myths, epic poems were discovered, along with judicial decisions, and taxes imposed. Sound familiar? Here also were found records of when their parliament met, and what political reforms were enacted; (5000 years later, we hope they will enact some more!) In short, here was the cradle of archives, in Iraq, the cradle of civilization!

These impressive collections of data have now become references accessible as mankind

struggles to pass knowledge on to future generations.

Our contemporary libraries have remained just such exciting places. They still function as a stimulating environment, bringing new citizens, children, adults and seniors into the ever widening circle of knowledge and discoveries, all free of charge.

A whole community exchanges there, as the reading needs of young and old are catered to. A small library, such as the one in Millers Falls, offers even more of a challenge. Besides being opened sparingly twice a week, the librarian has to closely ascertain the need of its readers.

Anna Ferrazzani Greene is the new circulation assistant librarian working at the Millers Falls library, since last September.

Remember, you have met Anna, several years ago, just as I did! Need to refresh your memory?

She was the librarian at the Montague Center Library. Though she "abandoned" that post, it was a legitimate choice, in order to attend and graduate from Simmons College with a degree in Archival Management.

She says, "My interest is on the preservation of paper, conservation, to prevent the decay



FLORE PHOTO

Anna Ferrazzani Greene is the new circulation assistant at the Millers Falls Library. She was formerly the librarian at the Montague Center Library

that naturally occurs in books."

Perhaps those Sumerians were onto something, with those clay tablets.

Soft spoken, Anna is a whiz at finding for you, the unfindable - like discovering a gem - in any form of literature. She advises readers on history books, periodicals, films, travel books; just name it and it will be in your hand, delivered, after much search, the following week, plus handed to you with a smile. Time to brave the snow. It's worth a visit!

The Millers Falls Library is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Children's

hours take place on Monday afternoon, with Linda Hickman traveling over from the Carnegie library in Turners Falls to do the honors. By the way, how many public libraries do you suppose the hard-working immigrant

Andrew Carnegie endowed in America, for future generations of immigrants to learn from? Answer: 1940; and 871 more worldwide!

Despite the rapid inroads of the Library of Congress cataloging system, the Dewey Decimal Classification, known as DDC, is still the main one in use at public libraries in America.

Invented by a pioneer spirit, Melville Dewey, born in 1851. At 21, he was a student assistant at... Amherst College!

Just a few miles down Route 63 from Millers Falls, right on the beaten track.

NELCWIT'S 32nd ANNUAL BOWLATHON FUNDRAISER

Supporters of the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition will go bowling to raise funds victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Held on Jan. 26th at the French King Entertainment Center in Millers Falls. How does bowling raise money for NELCWIT? Each bowler commits to raise at least \$50-\$100 by asking acquaintances for contributions. Teams of 5 members can sign up together, or individual bowlers can share an alley to form an impromptu team. NELCWIT pays for bowling shoe rentals, pizza, and soda for each bowler.

For more info: 772-0871, x 116 or www.nelcwit.org

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

ABANDONED

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL - After they left me at the park, I went to another tavern, not far away, thinking my parents might have gone there. The booths were crowded with people talking and laughing. The men were red-faced and sweaty. The

women's hair looked frazzled. The place smelled of stale beer; the air was thick with cigarette smoke. I went from booth to booth, hoping to find my parents. People stared at me, glassy-eyed.

I couldn't believe my father had just driven off and left me, knowing I was sick. They probably went to get me some

medicine at the drug store, or at a grocery store a few streets away. I hurried there. But the stores were dark - closed - every one.

It was getting dark outside. I tried to think of what to do. The streets were deserted. Lights began coming on in apartments. Everyone seemed to have gone home for supper. I wished that I were home, too.

The night air began to turn chilly. Shadows formed in alleyways, making them dark and scary. A shiver went down my back. I don't know if it was because I was cold, sick, or hungry, but I shook all over.

Trying to keep warm, I kept walking. Pretty soon, I saw a square-backed car in the distance. It looked something like the Essex. I hurried closer.

I knew right away it wasn't the right car. But maybe, with it

getting dark and all, I just wasn't seeing right. The car was more rounded in back, more like a Buick, but I walked toward it anyway, just to be sure. I prayed it would be our car. But it turned out not to be.

Maybe Pa was mad at me for embarrassing him by running to the toilet in the café in front of all his friends. If he would only come back to get me I would promise to be better, and not be so much trouble.

I walked back to the cafe and sat on the curb to wait under the streetlight. The light hummed, and bugs clustered around it. Away from the circle of light there were shadows where bad guys could easily hide. My older sisters had warned me about bad guys. "Don't talk to strangers." But what do you do if a bad person jumps out of the dark and grabs

you? I tried not to think about that, and wished I were home in my bed.

At last, I saw car headlights coming. I didn't dare hope it was Pa. I didn't want to be disappointed. The car lights drew nearer, blinding me. Then, the rear door opened and there was my sister, Irene.

"I bet you were plenty scared we not come get you, weren't you?" Pa said. He laughed.

"I wasn't scared," I said, blinking back the tears, happy to be with my sisters and brother, but sad, knowing that Pa had so little regard for me, or my safety.

Irene told me they had gone home to eat supper and do the milking. She said she worried about me.

-Continued Next Week

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4TH ANNUAL DUOPALOOZA CONCERT Benefit for local nonprofit Class Action. January 18th, 2008, 8:00 p.m. All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, Greenfield. www.classism.org

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CARTOONISTS Wanted for discussion group. Amateur or pro. Call 659-5339 or email klwilkinson@comcast.net.

FOSTER PARENTS WANTED: Since 1964, Dare Family Services has provided foster care for abused and neglected children who are not able to live with their biological families. We are looking for foster parents in Franklin County for our

So. Deerfield Office. Please join us in enhancing the lives of children in need. Dare offers training, ongoing support and a daily \$50 tax-exempt stipend. For more details, call Krista Harrington at 413-684-2222 or 800-244-DARE. Also ask about our \$300 referral bonus!

GENTLE YOGA - Wednesdays 12-1:30PM, January 9th - February 13th, Soothing pace to support health and happiness. Living Room Yoga on Chestnut Hill, Montague. 413-367-2658 www.livingroomyoga.net; enzer@earthlink.net.

MASONRY - Stephen Cahill Masonry. Brick and stonework fireplaces, chimneys, patios, walkways, steps, repointing, foundation repairs. Insured. Free estimates: 413-824-9717 doosel9@yahoo.com.

YOGA FOR RELAXATION Classes will be held at several locations in Greenfield starting January 7th. New students are welcome to try a class for free. All classes offer individualized instruction in gentle stretches and yogic breathing. Beginners are most welcome. To find out specific times and locations, please contact Jean Erlbaum at 413-773-9744 or je88@comcast.net.

Special Offer for Reporter Subscribers!

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

BEER, WINE, CHEESE AND CELLOS AT THE SHEA THEATER

A Wine and Beer Tasting hosted by noted wine expert Paul DeLabotier of the Shelburne Falls Wine Merchant with live music to enhance the ambience and the opportunity to meet Steve Stoia, the Shea's

new Executive Director. Thursday Evening, January 10th, 2008; 6 - 9 p.m. at the Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls

Tickets \$25.00 per person, available at World Eye

Bookshop, Greenfield, or reserve by calling 413-863-2281

All proceeds benefit the Shea Theater. For more information about the historic Shea Theater, visit www.theshea.org

WORLD HYPNOTISM DAY AT POTHOLE PICTURES

On Friday and Saturday, January 4th and 5th, Pothole Pictures will join with the Western Mass Chapter of the National Guild of Hypnotists to celebrate World Hypnotism Day (which falls on January 4th) for a showing of the 1931 black and white John Barrymore classic film *Svengali*, accompanied by a discussion led by the Hypnotists Guild about hypnosis fact vs. fiction.

Svengali is a harrowing tale of unrequited love as a run-down music teacher in Paris falls in love with a woman who becomes a singing sensation while under his hypnotic spell. Featuring bizarre Parisian sets, memorable visual effects, an enthralling performance by Barrymore, and an unexpected shocker of an ending, this seldom-seen expressionistic

masterpiece is the film that initiated the mythological image of the evil hypnotist in the movies.

Deborah Yaffee, president of



the Western Mass Chapter, will introduce the film both evenings and conduct a question and answer session after the film. As

an added bonus, Tom Nicoli, founder of World Hypnotism Day, who has taught students and faculty at Harvard Medical School about the mind/body healing connection, will speak at Saturday's show.

The discussion and film begin at 7:30 p.m. both nights, but there will be live music on stage by the classic jazz band the Illiterati starting at 7:00 p.m.

Absolutely no barking or clucking will be tolerated in the theater for this event.

Pothole Pictures is an all-volunteer-run, non-profit, 420-seat community movie house, with a big screen, located at 51 Bridge Street in Shelburne Falls. The theater is heated and handicapped accessible.

For further info, call 413-625-2896.

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JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4TH
Open Swim at the Turners Falls High School Pool. Family Swim 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Adult Lap Swim 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. Fees: Residents: •Youth - \$1.25; Adults (18+) - \$2.50; Senior Citizens (65+) - \$1.25. Non Residents: •Youth - \$2.50; Adults (18+) - \$3.50; Senior Citizens (65+) - \$2.50. •Youths under 12 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, open swim will be re-scheduled.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Bang Box 80s party-rock covers**, 9:30 p.m. (413) 659-3384.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JANUARY 4TH & 5TH
Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: John Barrymore in the 1931 *Svengali* with discussion by National Guild of Hypnotists, 7:30 p.m. Music before the movie at 7 p.m., *the Illiterati* - jazz.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5TH
All Out Adventure Winter Outdoor Recreation Programs: Wendell State Forest, Wendell. Every Saturday: January 5th - February 23rd. Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, kicksledding, ice skating, sled hockey and snowmobile rides as weather and conditions permit. Pre-registration is required. (413) 527-8980 or visit www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_acce ss

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **YARN** 9:30 p.m. Check out www.yarnmusic.net.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Fashion People** - odd, danceable, oddly dancable, rock music, 9 p.m. \$3 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Clay Jazz Band**, no cover. 9 to 11 p.m.

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SUNDAY, JANUARY 6TH
The Dead of Winter Film Series at The Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Wicker Man* (1973) The original pagan musical-mystery! Singing, sacrifice, and Britt Ekland's butt. Free Films for the Frozen, 7 p.m.

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

MONDAY, JANUARY 7TH
Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, **John Wayne Lovich Duo**, John Wayne Lovich-piano & Mark Dunlap-bass, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10TH
At the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. **Beer, Wine, Cheese and Cellos**. A Wine and Beer Tasting hosted by noted wine expert Paul DeLabotier of the Shelburne Falls Wine Merchant, with live music to enhance the ambience, and the opportunity to meet Steve Stoia, the Shea's new Executive Director. 6 to 9 p.m. Tickets \$25 per person, available at World Eye Bookshop, or call 863-2281

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Free Range**- Rock, no cover. 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11TH
Great Falls Discovery Center Coffee House: Open Mic 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Turners Falls. Contact the Friends 863-3221 x 3

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Sugar House - Rock & roll covers; come to dance, 9:30 p.m. (413) 659-3384.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Ruxt Knuckle Raptor & Falltown String Band** - local heroes of roots come together for a multi-generational jamboree, 9 p.m., \$3.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12TH.
Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest - Youth ages 10 - 14 compete separately to make as many free throws as possible. Competition is also separated by age category. Winners advance to regional competition. Participation is FREE! The Montague Parks & Recreation Department Unity Park Fieldhouse. Mondays - Fridays; 8:30 a.m. 4:30 p.m.; www.montague.net; 863-3216.



PHOTO BY LINDA HICKMAN

The Charm Snakers from our last Open Mic. The Great Falls Coffeehouse Open Mic on Friday, January 11 at 7 p.m. If you sing or play an instrument, here's your chance to perform in the beautiful setting of the Great Hall of the Discovery Center, Turners Falls where the acoustics are wonderful. Enjoy a cozy evening eating tasty homemade baked goods and listening to local folks perform. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; free admission, any donations will benefit the work of the Discovery Center.

St James Coffeehouse presents Jeff Foucaul, 7 p.m. in Greenfield.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Love Bomb**- rock & roll. come to dance! 9:30 p.m. (413) 659-3384.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13TH
Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Second Sunday Comedy Show, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Three Comics for \$5. www.LaughAtDave.com/SecondSunday.html for more information.

The Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: **Grey Gardens** (1975) Maysles Brothers' riveting docu-portrait of Little Edie and Big Edie Bouvier, eccentric cousins of Jackie Bouvier Kennedy. Free Films for the Frozen, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, JANUARY 14TH
Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, **Michele Feldheim Duo**. Michele Feldheim - piano, Wayne Roberts - bass.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17TH
Film Showing: *An Inconvenient Truth* presented at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Museum opens at 6:30 p.m.; program starts at 7 p.m., with one intermission. www.greatfallsma.org

Free gentle Yoga class 8 - 9 a.m. at the Maezumi Institute, 177 Ripley Road in Montague. Info. and registration, contact Jean Erlbaum 773-9744 or je88@comcast.net.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19TH
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography: Paul Taylor *Themes and Variations* Reception 1 to 5 p.m. at Gallery 85, Turners Falls Artist Talk - 7:30 p.m. Photographs on display January 17th to March 16th. Susan kae Grant *Night Journeys* Reception at Gallery 52 and Gallery 56, Turners Falls, 1 to 5 p.m.

Mike Agranoff, comedic singer/songwriter, will perform at the Echo Lake Coffee House in the Town Hall, Leverett on Saturday, January 19th at 7:30 p.m. Admission: \$12/\$10 seniors. (413) 548-9394. Mike Agranoff plays a fingerstyle guitar in idioms ranging from ancient harp tunes to obscure Tin-Pan-Alley compositions.

THRU JANUARY
Handhooked Wool Rugs and Hot Coffee at the Village Co-op, Leverett. Rich textures and patterns of handhooked wool rugs by Margaret Arraj. Margaret designs each rug from historic and ethnic inspirations, then hand hooks and sometimes even special dyes the wool for each one. We feel warmer just looking at them! 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

AUDITIONS
Open auditions held for the Renaissance Center Theater Company's April 2008 production of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* on Tuesday, January 8th and Wednesday, January 9th at the

HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER
MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3 - 6 p.m.
TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 - 6 p.m.
THURS - Drop-in, 3 - 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 - 8 p.m.
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips.
Info: Jared at 863-9559.
Hot Spot Teen Center is in The Brick House
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Upcoming at the Great Falls Discovery Center
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Friday & Saturday and by special arrangement (413) 863-3221

SATURDAY JANUARY 5TH
Winter Birds: Join refuge staff on this adventure along the river and canal as we look for winter birds. Field guides and binoculars will be provided. Dress for the weather. Meet inside the main door of the Discovery Center, 9 to 10 a.m.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 11TH
Friends Coffeehouse: Open Mic Night. 7 to 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12TH
Rocking with the Fossils. Dinosaur footprints were first studied right here in the Connecticut River Valley. Step back in time to discover what people thought about these "mystery footprints." Simulate a fossil dig and put the pieces together. Join Gini Traub of DCR for these hands-on activities that help show how and where fossils are created, 1 to 2 p.m.

Renaissance Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., or by appointment with the director. Casting is open to all. Info. to make an appointment (413) 577-3600, renaissance@english.umass.edu.

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
Friday & Saturday
January 4th & 5th at 7:30 p.m.
SVENGALI
John Barrymore in the 1931 *SVENGALI* with discussion by National Guild of Hypnotists both nights. Directed by Archie Mayo. 1931. NR. 81 min. B & W.
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2. **NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS** PG in dts sound DAILY 6:30 9:00
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3. **THE WATER HORSE** PG DAILY 6:30 9:00
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
4. **CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR R** DAILY 6:45 9:15
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5. **ALIEN VS. PREDATOR - REQUIEM R** DAILY 6:45 9:15
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6. **ALVIN & THE CHIPMUNKS** PG in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30
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BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY - The end of December produced a six-inch storm of heavy, wet snow that made for picturesque views and slippery driving on the final day of 2007. Now, on the first day of the new year, it is storming again.

The snowfall started late morning with huge flakes, one here, one there, and rapidly developed into a heavy fall, like the inside of a snow globe. Now, in the early afternoon, the snowfall continues heavily, but the flakes are finer and closer together. The birds huddle at the feeder and the ground feeders chase each other and the seeds and corn I have thrown out onto the rapidly piling snow.

Happily, over Christmas I used my new plastic toboggan to haul wood from the roadside pile to the cellar bulkhead. So even though I have been fooled by the 'real' winter this season, and have neglected to move my wood pile to the back of the garage in time, the stove in the cellar throws off good heat, warming the floors, the rooms and the spirit.

And I am thinking about the garden season ahead. The seed catalogues are arriving; it's time

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION: SNOW DREAMS

to plan next year's garden even as the patch is buried in snow so deep you can no longer make out the raised beds.

The seed companies are smart. Even while you are separating the first class mail from the proliferation of Christmas catalogues, the glossy pictures of future vegetables and flowers start to fill the mailbox. They are so beautiful it would be easy to order one of everything. So how to choose?

The Brown bookcase displays three shelves of books on gardening. From the very specific of books on growing azaleas to books on diseases of tomatoes and many generalists on home gardening, the collection is beautiful, full of undoubtedly useful information and often unread. Some have likely never even been opened.

Here is a fine book Woody brought back from a Master Gardener's workshop: *Vegetable Gardening* compiled by Callaway Gardens. This looks to be a great guide. The bulk of the book is the 'plant selector' which describes every crop from artichoke to turnip, giving the botanical and Latin names, a general description, plant requirements and diseases, tips for planting and harvesting and some suggested varieties. As far as I know, this book, like many of its shelf companions, was never consulted.

So why have so many books if you never read them and thus never follow the gardening advice? First, Woody was an

inveterate collector of books, and much of the pleasure was in the collecting. Secondly, I've decided that gardeners are like good teachers, born not trained. Otherwise, why would you take on the back-breaking, plant babysitting work of gardening if not for the sheer love of it? I also notice that among my colleagues at work, those of us who love to garden like to talk with other gardeners. We enjoy swapping information about how successful if difficult crops have been raised, diseases and pests vanquished, and what varieties are favored.

That being said, there are a few books that have gotten regular use over the 30-plus years of the Brown garden. One is the *Reader's Digest Illustrated Guide to Gardening*. As a self-acknowledged biblio-snob, I have to laugh about how well-worn this volume is. A few years ago there was an advertisement on TV for classical music tapes with all of your favorites and "none of the boring bits." This is what the *Reader's Digest* has always meant to me, books with all the boring bits edited out.

This book, however, is a great gardener's reference. From trees and shrubs, perennials and annual flowers and plants to vegetables, each section describes the growing requirements, normal habitat and care of anything you'd like to grow or wish you could. For each plant you can get advice on how to grow, what can go wrong, and recommended

varieties.

Another well-thumbed volume is Nancy Bubel's *The New Seed Starters Handbook*. This is a serious yet practical treatise on growing just about anything you like from seed, with all you need to know about light, soil preparation, hardening off, pests and saving and storing of seeds.

Over the time we have gardened here, I've kept a log of weather, dates of planting, times of harvest and crop yield. This is an extraordinarily local collection of information, because here by the Connecticut River, growing seasons, frosts and soil quality are very different from those of gardens a bit north, south or west of us. This volume helps to keep me on track for seed starting and planting times. It is also a curb towards the New Englander's propensity for weather exaggeration, as it's easy to look back over a similar pattern of temperature ranges over a decade, for instance.

So armed with my notes and recollections of last season's garden, I'll plan a seed order that will help to rein me in despite the bounty and color of this year's catalogues. Since shipping costs are not low, I'll try to concentrate my orders from two favorite seed companies: Pinetree Seeds from New Gloucester, Maine and Totally Tomatoes from Randolph, Wisconsin.

Seeds I seem to order every year are: Ailsa Craig Exhibition Onion, a sweet, large, early onion

that everyone I share with enjoys; also a variety of sweet leaf lettuces often available as a mix, English peas, bush green beans, and winter squash. Last year I grew a bush type butternut with very sweet, nutty flavor from Burpee and the traditional Table Ace acorn squash. I got both of these seed packets from our local seed store, thus avoiding shipping fees for two packages only.

Last year, I grew such favorite tomatoes as Gardener's Delight, to my mind the best cherry going, Bush Celebrity, a reliable early tangy tomato of medium size and Brandywine Red, a juicy, large producer with acidic tomato flavor. These three will definitely be on this year's order. A beefsteak variety I tried out last year, Believe It Or Not, is worth growing again because it really is so meaty that one slice fills a sandwich. I'll pass on two other experimentals: Arkansas Traveler and Box Car Willie. Although these two plants produced huge, meaty fruit, their flavor was quite bland.

Totally Tomatoes is not totally what it says. They also offer a wide range of colors of sweet peppers I'll be growing again, just for the beauty on the plate.

It may seem like winter denial or fanciful daydreaming to think of gardening now, but if you want to grow your own onion or leeks from seed, it's time to get that order in the mail soon. It's only a few weeks until planting time!

Happy gardening.

THIS WILD PLACE: WINTER COUNT

BY KARL MEYER

AMHERST - It is a cold, snow-covered December morning. I pull on mittens and exit the car, binoculars in hand. Darkness is lifting across the woods and fields. The first sound drifting in is the shrieking pump of a robin, then another. Soon, I hear the squeak of a white-breasted nuthatch; then the spishings of tufted titmice and a chickadee. I make a mental note of these, and continue walking a quiet Amherst road in the chill, careful to remember the blue jay darting into a crabapple tree.

It's Christmas Bird Count Day, and I'll be at this for hours. My usual partner, whom I've shared this ritual with for over two decades, could not make it. Due to snow, the date was changed, last minute. Once I've scanned another field for wild turkey, I turn back toward the car, noting a crow and four mourning doves huddled in a maple tree. I also note the hunter, in full camouflage, preparing to enter the woods.

I drive a third of a mile and walk another stretch, hoping, as I do each year, for a winter wren near a hemlock-shrouded culvert. It's never there. I drive again, get out, scan, and note more crows and robins. Two red squirrels rocket up and down pine trunks. My next stop is woods and a

broad stretch of farmland set against the Pelham hills. The sun is now up. A dozen starlings career across the road. Moments later I get a crisp look at a red-tailed hawk flapping hard, then gliding above me, one talon extended. As it lands I see it is holding a mouse.

I squeeze my car to the shoulder and strap on snowshoes in the icy breeze, heading into the woods and fields. The snow is fluffy, deep. Since it's shotgun season, I work the field side of this tract, walking the edge of thick woods. It is slow going, but brilliant. In a clump of red cedars there are more robins, titmice, and two eastern bluebirds; their lovely russet browns and summer blues show regally. A mockingbird rasps.

When nature calls I'm driven to the woods. In that interlude I look up to see a hawk shoot through the trees, alighting at the forest edge. There is a brief impulse to sprint for a glimpse, but in this cold the idea of bolting anywhere holding up binoculars, pants and long johns, is ludicrous. I may miss this one. I intersect deer trails, squeeze under barbed wire, and examine the wanderings of foraging coyotes; then double back. In perfect snow-reflected light I now see the mystery raptor. It's a Cooper's hawk, in a long,

low flight and glide over acres of unbroken snow. The streaks of its reddish flanks warm my morning.

My next stop is a walk to scan these fields from the roadway openings between houses and farms. The usual pigeons are not atop the old silos. But there are house sparrows and cardinals, and mourning doves nearby. When I next turn around a police car is at my back, an officer staring up at me from an open window. "Sir, can you tell me what you're doing here with binoculars?" Someone called in: suspicious activity. I explain the obvious, in a brief, cordial exchange. But when he asks my name, a line has been crossed. Standing in the open, with my shock of white hair, wool pants, mittens, snow boots, in a blaze-yellow anorak, I say, "You're going to have to talk to a lawyer. This is a public way; these are binoculars." Happily, the interaction goes no further. A dozen snow buntings waver above the fields.

It's afternoon; I've already snowshoed into Amythest Brook to tally a single golden-crowned kinglet; then a pileated woodpecker. My friend Sid is standing in his driveway as a red-bellied woodpecker swings into view. I convince him to join me. He'll see the rarer birds of this day. We start with a run of horned larks at the



ILLUSTRATION BY ANJA SCHUTZ

old Amherst landfill. Next it's a woody intersection where two purple finches sit preening in mid-afternoon sun. Three common redpolls, hardly common from year to year, nibble seeds - upside down - in a birch. A dark-streaked woodpecker shoots to the trunk of a hickory, its throat blood-red-orange: a yellow-bellied sapsucker, another winter anomaly.

My day ends much as it began, on a solo walk in low light along fields near the Fort River. My snowshoes make quiet "humphs" crossing the drifts. I offer a wide berth to a red-tailed hawk perched over the river, and tally the lills of tree sparrows and the rasp of one late-day mockingbird. As I turn back I offer a few owl calls to the darkening woods and fields. All is quiet.

Cooling thought: On damp winter roads, leave more space between you and the next vehicle. You'll use less wiper-wash, which contains chemicals harmful to wildlife.

Karl Meyer can be reached at: karlm@crocker.com

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