



SKIING THE BIKE PATH

Happy Trails
Page 5



COLOSSUS OF ROADS

Snow Sculpture in Montague Ctr.
Page 16

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 14

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 10, 2008

Clean Energy for Montague

DAVID DETMOLD - The Grange has a long, proud history in America of supporting agriculture, and advancing initiatives that would help rural communities, like electrification.

Now the Montague Grange #141, established in 1884 on the second floor of the old

year, the Montague Grange voted to support a project of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) that would provide funding for large wind turbines in New England, while at the same time creating an annual line item - through MTC's



DETMOLD PHOTO

Chris Mason, left and Tim Van Egmond, members of the Montague Grange, want to create a renewable energy line item for Montague while funding wind power throughout New England

town hall in Montague Clean Energy Choice Center, is updating the organization's historical advocacy of rural electrification for a warmer century. In spring of last

program - for the town of Montague to purchase renewable energy systems. **see ENERGY pg 11**

SEWER WORK CONTINUES



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

Kevin Maynard, field engineer for Geo Technical Services of Goffstown, NH stands by a Hyundai excavator that will soon be excavating for a new wet weather chlorine tank at the Montague Wastewater Treatment Plant.

BY DAVID DETMOLD & SARA CAMPBELL
MONTAGUE CITY - Penta Corporation of Moultonboro, NH has been contracted for the two million dollar upgrade of the Montague wastewater treatment plant on Greenfield Road. This project is the second phase of the upgrade project designed by engineers Camp Dresser and McKee, following the

construction of new pipelines in Avenue A and Seventh Street last winter. The work is being paid for from the \$5.7 million borrowing authorized by town meeting in 2005; 40% of that sum derives from a property tax hike approved by a \$2.2 million debt exclusion vote on August 1st of that year, the remainder will be paid by sewer users via rate increases in coming years.

The most visible change will be the construction of a new chlorine contact tank at the treatment plant on Greenfield Road. Work began in December to prepare the site for construction, including removing pavement and relocating an on-site water line. In order to construct the concrete tank, a large excavation must be opened up and

Phase II of the Combined Sewer Overflow got under way this week at the Montague City site. The new chlorine tank will be used to treat overflow from the plant during severe rainstorms. This phase of the work will cost an estimated \$2,061,900.

see SEWER pg 11

AFTER INNOCENCE

EXONEREE DENNIS MAHER SPEAKS



COLBY LAVIN PHOTO

Left to right: TFHS government student Sam Stafford, teacher Heather Batchelor, exoneree Dennis Maher, and students Katie Christenson and Erica Zajac

ALEX GOTTSCHALK
TURNERS FALLS - With gruff candor and an amazing lack of bitterness, recent exoneree Dennis Maher spoke to a

small - but enthralled - audience at Turners Falls High School on Friday, January 4th. Maher, a native of Lowell and an army vet-

eran, spent nineteen of his forty-seven years in prison, convicted for committing two rapes and **see MAHER pg 10**

BLUE ROOM BOUTIQUE OFFERS WOMEN'S CLOTHING

BY KATHY LITCHFIELD

TURNERS FALLS - From cool sportswear and classy careerwear to dressy blouses and funky blazers, the new Blue Room Boutique at Seth & Eva's at 115 Avenue A surely offers something for every woman.

Keeping dollars in the local economy is very important to owner Eva Licata, who began purchasing brand name women's clothing to fill a need she saw in the community.

"I think women in our community want something that is career wear, or just jeans and a nice shirt. They don't want to go to the Salvation Army all the time, or to Hadley for Wal-Mart or another big store. I think they want to support the community and stay local

see EVA pg 9



Eva and Seth Licata have added a line of new women's clothing to their specialty store at 115 Avenue A.

LITCHFIELD PHOTO

PET OF THE WEEK

Southern Gal



Jackie

My name is Jackie, and I'm a precious little two-year-old beagle/terrier mix gal from the South. I can be a little serious, but that's because I'm always thinkin' bout something—places to hide bones, interesting scents, the home I would like to have some day... I am a lap dog and I would be very happy to find a family who would let me climb up in their laps to snuggle. I like to give people kisses too. Is that okay with you? All I want is for people to come along that will love me forever. Would you like a little love-bug like me? Kids- 5+, Dogs- no, cats- yes. For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

MONTAGUE LIBRARIES NEWS

New Library DVD's

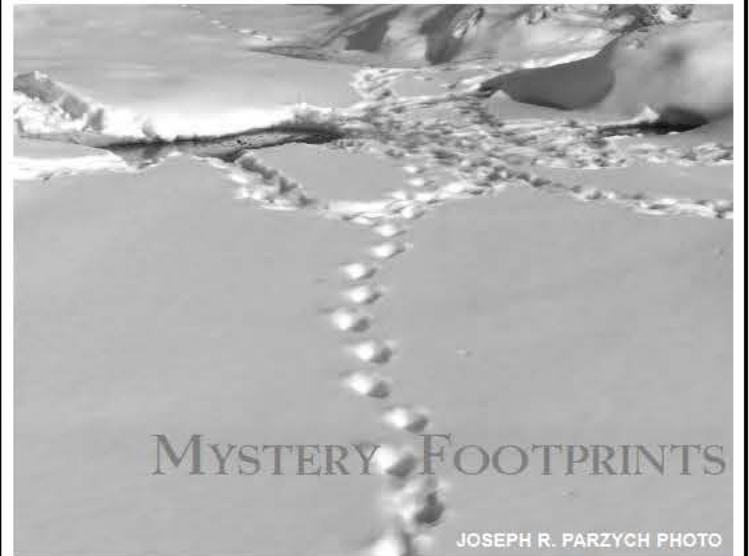
BY LINDA HICKMAN

The Montague public libraries have recently acquired a wide variety of new DVDs. New release movies include *Amazing Grace*, *Bourne Ultimatum*, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, *Waitress*, *Arctic Tale*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, *Shattered*, *Sicko*, *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. Other new movies will be arriving at the Montague Libraries as

they are released on DVD.

Many other titles are available on the shelves and a huge selection can be ordered from other libraries. Numerous videotapes are also available for borrowing. Movies circulate for seven days at a time. The Carnegie Library in Turners Falls is open Monday - Wednesday, 1 - 8 p.m., Thursday 1 - 5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The Montague Center Library is open Monday and Wednesday, 2 - 5 and 6 - 8 p.m. The Millers Falls Library is open on Tuesday and Thursday 2 - 5 and 6 - 8 p.m. For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

FACES & PLACES



MYSTERY FOOTPRINTS

JOSEPH R. PARZYCH PHOTO

Gill - The warm weather has opened a rectangle of the beaver pond on the brook at Jep's Place. Do the beavers think it is spring? They don't hibernate, but rather hole up in the beaver lodge to munch on stored tree branches they retrieve from under the ice. Could these footprints be from other animals coming to drink from the open water? Maybe some naturalist can tell us. In the meantime, they are Mystery Footprints in the Snow.



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Montague Briefs

MONTAGUE VOTER REGISTRATION

Wednesday, January 16th, is the last day to register to vote, or to change your party affiliation, for the upcoming February 5th presidential primary. Registration will be held at the town clerk's office for all Montague residents who will be 18 years old on or before February 5th, 2008. Office hours will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Registered voters who belong to any one of the four official parties in

Massachusetts: Republican, Democrat, Green-Rainbow or Working Families, must vote their party affiliation. Unenrolled registered voters can choose any one of the four party ballots. The town clerk's office is located at the town hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls. For more information call 863-3200, ext 203.

BENCHMARKS

Following the recent winter storm, the bench in front of the former VFW building

at 109 Avenue A was demolished. This bench has been the focus of some controversy since Richard Mascavage, owner of Pipione's Sport Shop next door at 101 Avenue A, asked the selectboard to have it removed, to discourage young people from congregating near it. The selectboard decided in November to have a second bench installed, nearer the Avenue A coffeehouse, in hopes of moving the center of activity a bit closer to that store, at 111 Avenue A. That bench has since been installed, and with the onset of winter, the presence of young people on the Avenue has generally declined.

DPW chief Tom Bergeron speculated that the bench in front of the VFW may have been hit by one of his men plowing the sidewalk last week. He said come warmer weather, the DPW would either repair or replace the bench, which has been reduced to a pile of broken slats.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK-UP

The Montague DPW will be picking up Christmas trees curbside until Friday, January 25th. Trees in plastic bags will not be picked up. Residents may also bring their trees to the recycle center on Wednesdays or Saturdays during normal business hours at no charge.

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- January 14th-18th

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.

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
 11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

Thursday, 17th
 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.

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 local gossip, news & business listings

Monday, 14th
 10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
 11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
Tuesday, 15th
 9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
Wednesday, 16th
 10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
 12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 17th
 9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
Friday, 18th

Monday, 14th
 9:30 a.m. Exercise
 9:45 a.m. Library
 12 Noon Pitch
Tuesday, 15th
 9 a.m. Aerobics
 12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, 16th
 9:00 a.m. Line Dancing
 10 a.m. Weight Loss Group
 12 Noon Bingo

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Recovery is a Group Activity

BY JOE KWIECINSKI

GREENFIELD - "My mother died of a heroin overdose when I was 25 years old. When I found out, I fell on my knees, screaming and crying. She had been clean and sober for five years, but had gone back to using heroin for two weeks, and it killed her."

The speaker is 27-year-old 'Rebecca.' She herself has been 'straight' for just over a year now. A reflective, pretty young woman, Rebecca is intense and speaks sincerely. After struggling with alcoholism and smoking marijuana since the age of 18, she has started the difficult journey back to sobriety. And she credited the Recover Project on 68 Federal Street in Greenfield with providing her the tools to begin her restoration to a purposeful life.

"This program has been a major part of my ongoing recovery," Rebecca said. "I've learned so much since I started coming here. This place is like a family to me now. I've learned some responsibility and respect for others. I had been very greedy and self-centered, but now I'm learning how to be supportive. I'll do anything to help others with their sobriety."

On a recent day, with the wind blowing and more than a bit of the chill in the air, the atmosphere at the center was friendly, the conversation relaxed. Hot coffee was waiting just a few steps away. In one area, a recovery community meeting was going on. Posters were on the wall, listing upcoming activities; sign-up sheets invited members to join a new committee. One member was on a computer, conducting a job search. There was a quiet space to the side where people could just be themselves.

Just what is the Recover Project? "We're a peer volunteer resource center," said director Jessica Grasmere, who has been with the organization since

its founding in 2003. "We define peers as those who are in recovery from substance and alcohol addiction, as well as their families and concerned others. Volunteers quite simply are at the core of what we do. Without them, there would be no Recover Project."

"We follow a participatory model that relies on the sharing and cooperation of people in recovery and community members at all stages of program implementation. The participants define what we do, how we will do it, and then they go out and do it."

The Recover Project is currently funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, through June 30th. The program has applied for new grant money "to carry us past that date," according to Grasmere.

Many people in Franklin County benefit from the project in various ways. For example, there are about 100 active members and 75 active peer volunteers; some 2500 receive the quarterly newsletter. In addition, "We've engaged more than 500 people through community events, such as the yearly Recover Jam (a fall outdoor event with top area bands) and other social activities,"



Volunteers and staff of the Recover Project pose in front of their new location: 68 Federal Street in Greenfield. Left to right: Volunteer Johnny Walden of Greenfield, administrative assistant Nantricia Chapman of Greenfield, volunteer coordinator Dale Jones of Belchertown, DeCarlo Holmes of Springfield, director Jessica Grasmere of Granby, volunteer Jennifer Downs of Greenfield, holding 7-month-old Molly the mascot dog, volunteer Marie Peoples of Greenfield and Jim Garbiel of Greenfield.

Grasmere noted.

Another significant contribution is the use of Recover Project space for meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-anon, and SMART Recovery. The latter is a rational approach to recovery that Grasmere considers especially effective for young adults.

"We don't align ourselves with any of these organizations," Grasmere said. "Rather we recognize that people recover in a variety of ways. That's why we open our doors to 12-step programs, rational-based endeavors, along with wellness approaches such as yoga, meditation, Reiki, fitness, and nutrition."

The Recover Project also conducts daily peer-led activities, including an art group, DVD movies, and board games. In addition, there are sober dances and open-mic nights where participants read poetry, play musical instruments, sing, and do standup comedy. For

more information on these events, call 413-774-5489.

These free, wide-ranging activities are part of the project's success, according to Rebecca. "I feel part of things bigger than myself," she observed. "For one thing, I'm involved with running the new crochet class. You know, at first I was very nervous about coming to this place; then after a

while I started speaking up at Thursday's community meetings; then I pitched in and helped with the cleaning on an ongoing basis. The Recover Project has allowed me to slowly build up my confidence. I'm even going to write some poetry for our newsletter and do some layout work."

But, above all, Rebecca sees the fruits of her labors in her own personal growth. "This place has helped me become more compassionate. I can relate to others' struggles now. When I was at my lowest point, I was too alone and scared to reach out. Now I want to pass the message on to other people. I just want them to know they're not alone."

Meanwhile, Grasmere, though aware of the difference the Recover Project has made in many people's lives, stresses that the organization primarily provides the backdrop for recovery through the volunteers and members' involvement, sense of purpose, and the fact their voices are heard. "We're not in the business of changing people or fixing them," Grasmere said. "Instead, we create the conditions for people to grow, heal, regain trust, find wellness, become leaders, and realize their dreams."

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Tears in New Hampshire

In 1972, a putative tear or two doomed the candidacy of Maine senator Edmund Muskie, standing hatless in the snow in front of the offices of the Manchester *Union Leader* on the eve of the New Hampshire primary, denouncing, in a voice choked with emotion, a scurrilous editorial attacking the behavior of his wife. An editorial like that could be written with a great deal more validity about the behavior of the spouse of the current senator from New York, Hillary Clinton, who reprised a Muskie moment in a Portsmouth diner the other day, on the eve of her shot at winning New Hampshire's first in the nation primary. But it wasn't a potshot at Bill that caused Hillary to finally express something resembling genuine emotion. It was a question about how she managed to bear up under the pressure of running a campaign when the chips were down, following her loss to Barack Obama in Iowa, and with the polls in the Granite State showing her heading to defeat on Tuesday.

Well, the polls were wrong, and Hillary's display of feeling - unlike Edmund Muskie's - is widely credited with enabling her to connect with the Democratic women who ultimately propelled her to an 11th hour victory over the suave young orator from Illinois.

Are we ready now for a president who can cry, instead of one

who drives us to tears?

But history offers a more substantial parallel between Muskie's defeat and Clinton's narrow victory in New Hampshire, more substantial than a passing tear over personal matters. Here is Harold Meyerson comparing Muskie to Clinton eleven months ago in the *Washington Post*:

"Today, Hillary Clinton seems almost uncannily positioned to become the Ed Muskie of 2008. She opposes the U.S. military presence in Iraq but not with the specificity, fervor or bona fides of her leading Democratic rivals. As Muskie did with Vietnam, she supported the legislation enabling the U.S. invasion of Iraq, and she has been slower and more inconstant than her party rivals in coming around to opposing the continued U.S. occupation."

Whether her inconstancy on the most crucial question facing the presidential candidates, and the voters, of 2008: to continue sacrificing America's young men and women in the vain pursuit of the present administration's dream of strategic dominance over a resource rich corner of the globe, to continue fighting a war based on lies, a war whose mission, if it had ever been defined, has long ago been lost and whose sole purpose now is to avoid 'dishonoring' those who have already been sacrificed to its brutal prosecution, or to bring our troops home now; whether her inconstancy on this preeminent concern will cost her her party's nomination is now anybody's guess.

If you want to take a hand in determining the answer, your chance is coming, in Massachusetts' primary on February 5th.

We Welcome Your Letters!
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GUEST EDITORIALS

Catch 22

We are advised by everyone to shred documents to safeguard our identity. That's a great idea. We are also encouraged to recycle (within the guidelines) paper, etc. That's also a great idea. However, when it comes to recycling the shredded paper, it cannot be done. A call to the DPW department

advises that the recycling facility does not accept shredded paper. What a waste. Seems to make no sense whatever to me. Now I have to put the shredded paper that should be recyclable into a plastic garbage bag, and thus stress out whatever landfill it is going to. Not only that, but I will have to pay

another three dollars for that bag.

It would be interesting to find out what the recycling company's reasoning is for this rule. Whatever their reasons, it still remains a colossal waste in my opinion.

- Nancy Selover
Turners Falls

Recycling Shredding Paper

Dear Nancy,

Thanks for recycling, and for writing! You, and the editor of this newspaper, gave me the perfect opportunity to clarify a sometimes confusing issue. First off, watch for news of a Franklin County shredding event to be held on Saturday, April 19th. Residents can drop off their paper at the special shredding truck, and it will be shredded on site. All of the paper from this event will be recycled.

Shredded paper can be recycled in Montague, but not with curbside recycling. You can take it to the Montague transfer station and put it in the mixed paper container there.

The main reason you can't put it out at the curb is litter. Shredded paper can blow out of your recycling bin, and paper bags full of shredded paper can get wet and break. Plastic bags are not the solution; they are not accepted at recycling facilities because they can get caught in the sorting equipment and cause safety hazards. There is also an issue with shredded paper blowing out of the large recycling container at the Greenfield transfer station,

where Montague's curbside paper recycling is dropped off and stored before being taken to the Fitchburg paper mill.

Montague transfer station's paper recycling container is smaller and more protected from the elements, so your shredded paper is less likely to blow away there. Put it in a sturdy paper grocery or shopping bag. There are other items that residents should recycle at the transfer station, so you could consolidate your trip. The list includes:

- Christmas trees (still accepted curbside until January 25th; please remove all tinsel)
- fluorescent light bulbs, including compact fluorescents
- rechargeable batteries, cell phones and their batteries, power tool batteries, electric toothbrush handles, and laptop batteries (all free)
- TVs and monitors
- tires
- motor oil

The Montague transfer station is located off Turnpike Road, behind Judd Wire, and is open Wednesdays from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For more on the transfer station, and a

complete list of hazardous materials and recyclables collected there, see http://www.montague.net/content/departments/hd_recycling.html, or call the Solid Waste District at 772-2438.

Gill and Erving residents may recycle these items at the Greenfield transfer station, and Wendell has its own recycling station. Fees may apply. For more information, call 772-1528.

- Amy Donovan,
program director
Franklin County Solid Waste District
Greenfield

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 1/09/08

US FORCES Casualties in Iraq as of this date	3,921
Afghanistan	478
Wounded in Action	28,822

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

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Bike Path in Winter

BY PAT CARLISLE

GREAT FALLS - The tracks tell a story. There are tracks of snowshoes, skis, and winter boots, accompanied by many paw prints of varying sizes. Birds too have left a trail beside the canal.

My cross-country skis glide along, beneath the towering pine trees. Their sighing song is punc-

tuated with the voices of chickadees, sparrows, and doves; pigeons and gulls chime in. The surprise is a pair of shy cardinals among the grape, bittersweet and bur cucumber vines that grow along the fence.

The bike path, in winter, is a safe and easy place to practice on cross-country skis. Do yourself a

favor, and come out for an hour or two of wonderful winter exercise and adventure!

Our local eagle parents are already spending time in the nest area around Barton Cove, and can often be spotted beyond the end of bike path at Unity Park. We hope the latest maintenance to the solar panel powering the camera above their eagle's nest will soon give us a view on local access TV Channel 17. We expect the first egg to be laid in the nest in early March. But it seems the date keeps getting earlier and earlier each year, so stay tuned to MCTV and future issues of the *Montague Reporter* for more news from Eagle Island.

Until then, get your skis or snowshoes out of the garage and experience the beauty of our bend of the river first hand. Rejuvenate yourself! Make tracks to the bike path this winter.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Pat Carlisle enjoys cross country skiing on the bike path in Turners Falls.

Village Center Polling Station Supported

To the Montague Selectboard:

On December 17th, 2007, the Montague selectboard voted to move the Precinct 1 polling station from its current location at the Montague Center Library to the fire station on Old Sunderland Road. This action was taken in response to complaints that there was a lack of space at the library, particularly due to the recent installation of a handicapped access voting machine. Concerns were also expressed about the fact that the library was often open during polling hours.

We have no doubt that these concerns were legitimate. However, the decision was made with virtually no community input and no serious consideration of the negative consequences of the move. The current location is a highly visible, frequently-used space in the center of the village. Potential voters are reminded of an election when visiting the library or driv-

ing or walking by on voting day. The proposed location, although more spacious, is a quarter of a mile down from the village center and the main road. This location will require virtually everyone in the precinct to drive to vote.

The selectboard voted to move the location but monitor for a potential "decline in voter turnout." However, there was no indication of how this decline would be evaluated. Evaluating the impact would be extremely difficult because of the very large percentage swings in vote totals from year to year. A loss of, say, 40 voters due to the new location (potentially an average decline of over 10%) could be very hard to detect.

We are also concerned that this item appeared on the selectboard agenda with virtually no notice to the community affected. Until an objection was raised from the floor, there seemed to be no thought given to potential negative consequences. In short,

the whole decision does not seem to have been carefully thought out.

We urge the selectboard to rescind its motion and continue voting in the current location for this election cycle (the spring town election). This will give the community and town government the opportunity to better understand the gravity of the space concerns and search for creative solutions that do not potentially undermine voter turnout.

- Alice Armen
- Cynthia Tarail
- Dean Garvin
- Stacey Langknecht
- Mark Lattanzi
- Kathy Lynch
- Brenda O'Gara
- Jaye Pope
- Jeff Singleton
- Peter Wise
- Ferd Wulkan
- all of
- Montague Center

Retirement Planning for Women in Agriculture

CISA's Women in Agriculture Network Workshop on Planning for Retirement will take place Tuesday, January 8th, from 6:30-9 p.m. John Rebmann, an independent financial advisor with Financial Counselors in West Springfield, will present. Rebmann has an extensive background in risk management and planning for businesses of all sizes, and formerly owned an organic vegetable farm.

Women in agriculture, come think through what you want out

of retirement, financially and personally, and learn how you can achieve it. Even if you don't plan to ever really retire, this is a great opportunity to ponder and plan for your later years.

Dinner will be served, suggested donation of \$8, at the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, 97 North Hatfield Road, Hatfield. To register for dinner, contact Claire at CISA by January 7th at 413-665-7100 or via email at claire@buy-localfood.com.

Walk For A New Spring



LEVERETT - The Leverett Peace Pagoda's Walk for a New Spring from Boston to Washington, DC, began Sunday, January 6th, in Leverett with a five-mile procession from the Peace Pagoda to the Leverett Congregational Church, past the Leverett Elementary School with its sign, "All we are saying is give peace a chance," from the John Lennon song.

Participants in Sunday's

walk include, from left, front, Hattie Nestel of Athol, John Namura and Tim Bullock of Leverett, Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri of New Salem, Tadoka Ichikawa of Washington, DC, Betty Wolfson of Easthampton, and Tim van Eglund of Montague; rear, Gail Kuhn, Clare Carter, Toby Keyes, Jonathan Sherril, and Thomas Heineman of Leverett; Bob Jennings of Winchendon, and Sunny Miller of Greenfield

Compassionate Touch, Empowered Parents

An interactive workshop for parents and caregivers will be offered at the Shutesbury Elementary School on Mondays, January 28th to February 4th, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. The course is designed to help you understand some of the mechanisms of healing, and how the healing process may be facilitat-

ed through the inherent knowledge of your hands.

Charles Gilliam, practitioner of Upledger Cranio-Sacral Therapy, facilitates. To pre-register for the free course, call 413-423-3337 to speak with Nan Mohamen, family network coordinator for School Union #28. Childcare and supper will be provided.

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MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: Jan. 11th-17th

Friday, January 11
 8:00 am Montague Update: Susan Shilliday
 9:00 am Montague Select Board (1/7/08)
 10:30 am Carlos W. Anderson: Cost of Freedom
 12:30 pm Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall
 12:30 pm Flu What You Can Do
 6:00 pm On The Ridge: Scents & Sensibility
 7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (1/8/08)
 9:30 pm Our Lady of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 10:00 pm Independent Voices #35
 10:30 pm Montague Update: Lisa Enzer
 11:00 pm Mind Control

Saturday, January 12
 8:00 am On The Ridge: Scents & Sensibility
 8:30 am GMRSD Meeting (1/8/08)
 11:00 am Our Lady of Czestochowa: Volume 6
 11:30 am Independent Voices #35
 12:00 pm Montague Update: Lisa Enzer
 12:30 pm Mind Control
 6:00 pm Montague Update: Stephen Kulik
 6:30 pm Teachers at Sea
 7:00 pm Child & Family: Children's Mental Health
 8:00 pm Coffee House Series: Fabulous Maurice
 9:00 pm Windchanger: Water Vessel
 9:30 pm Art Fest 2007
 11:00 pm Flu: What you can do

Sunday, January 13
 8:00 am Montague Update: Stephen Kulik
 8:30 am Teachers at Sea
 9:00 am Child & Family: Children's Mental Health
 9:30 am Coffee House Series: Fabulous Maurice
 10:30 am Windchanger: Water Vessel
 11:00 am Art Fest 2007
 12:30 pm Flu: What you can do
 6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: St. Jude Mass
 7:00 pm Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient
 7:30 pm Coffee House Series: Taft Mountain Toppers
 9:30 pm Discovery Center: Open Mic Night
 11:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: So What

Monday, January 14
 8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: St. Jude Mass
 9:00am Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient

9:30 am Coffee House Series: Taft Mountain Toppers
 11:00 am Discovery Center: Open Mic Night
 12:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: So What
 6:30 pm Independent Voices 36
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)
 9:00 pm Our Lady of Czestochowa: Latin Tridentine Mass
 10:00 pm Montague Update: Cris Mason
 11:00 pm Seabrook 1977

Tuesday, January 15
 8:00 am Independent Voices 36
 8:30 am Our Lady of Czestochowa: Latin Tridentine Mass
 9:30 am Montague Update: Cris Mason
 10:30 am Seabrook 1977
 6:00 pm Montague Update: Josh Goldman
 6:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks
 7:00 pm GMRSD (1/8/08)
 9:30 pm Road to Recovery: Financial Benefits of Treatment
 10:30 pm Encore Body Art: Mermaid in a Net

Wednesday, January 16
 8:00 am Montague Update: Josh Goldman
 8:30 am GMRSD (1/8/08)
 11:00 am Road to Recovery: Financial Benefits of Treatment
 12:00 pm Encore Body Art: Mermaid in a Net
 6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 2
 6:30 pm Falls Table: Elder Law
 7:00 pm Physician Focus: Weight Loss Surgery
 7:30 pm Power Canal Draw Down
 8:00 pm Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall
 9:30 pm Enjoy the Ride
 10:00 pm Montague Machine

Thursday, January 17
 8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 2
 8:30 am Physician Focus: Weight Loss Surgery
 9:00 am Power Canal Draw Down
 9:30 am Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall
 10:30 am Enjoy the Ride
 11:00 am Montague Machine
 6:00 pm Montague Update: Stephen Kulik
 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (1/14/08)
 8:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Shekinah
 9:30 pm Preachin the Blues
 10:30 pm Road to Recovery: Addiction Treatment

Report on Franklin Hampshire Career Center Activities for Dec. 2007

BY DEBORAH RADWAY GREENFIELD - At the three offices of the Franklin Hampshire Career Center, in the month of December, the Career Center served a total of 783 customers. Of these, 84 entered employment, at an average hire wage of \$13.50 per hour. Our year to date hire rate is \$12.55, so the recent increase is good news for job seekers.

The Career Center also provided 85 employer services during the month, and served 529 unemployment claimants. December is always a big month for UI, as the construction industry mothballs for the winter. For the year to date, 351 businesses have been served by the Career Center, with 233 of them posting job openings.

The Orange office served 50 customers, and had 8 enter employment, at an average

wage of \$10.97 per hour, a decrease from November when 76 customers were served, with 14 entering employment, at an average wage of \$11.18 per hour. Snow forced office closure on a couple of days in December.

The Greenfield office served 405 customers, and had 34 enter employment, at an average wage of \$12.28 per hour, a drop from November when 464 were served, with 47 entering employment. The average wage increased marginally, from \$12.20 the previous month.

The Northampton office served 372 customers, and had 64 enter employment, at an average wage of \$14.51. This is positive news from November, when 60 of the 414 customers found employment at an average wage of \$12.56.

In comparison to 2006, the total number of customers served by all three offices has risen from 3323 to 3505 in 2007, an increase of 5%. Of these, the number who have entered employment has dropped by 23%, from 690 to 531. Their average hire wage has risen 2.2% over the same period, from \$12.30 to \$12.55. The number of employers listing jobs has remained fairly constant since 2006, rising slightly from 223, to 233.

Although we do see roughly the same number of employers listing job orders with the Career Center, they may have fewer job openings. It looks like it is getting harder to find a job.

Deborah Radway is the operations manager of the Franklin Hampshire Career Center.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Motor Vehicle Accidents

Wednesday, Jan. 2nd

6:00AM - Motor Vehicle accident West Gill Road - Officer responded. Report on file.

Thursday, Jan. 3rd

3:30PM - Motor Vehicle Accident - Route 2 - Officer responded. Report is on file. No injuries.

Saturday Jan. 5th

3:00PM - Assist Northfield Police with an operating under the influence arrest in area of Main Road and Rte 10.

11:00PM - Report of Motor Vehicle Accident from prior evening. Officer took report.

Sunday Jan. 6th

10:23AM - Report of loud snowmobilers in area of West Gill Road. Officer referred report to the Environmental Police.

1:20PM - Confirmed 911 misdial from Northfield Mount Hermon campus. No officer sent - security on site dealt with the issue.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Plan for Group Home Discussed

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK
GILL - Plans for a group home in Gill, to be located next to the Gill Elementary School on West Gill Road, to house adults with developmental disabilities, was the focus of conversation at the Gill selectboard on Monday, January 7th.

Selectboard member Nancy Griswold told Gail Brown and Tom Perkins, representing the Association for Community Living (ACL) and the Corporation for Independent Living, (CIL) respectively, "We would like an overview of what is going on." The two had agreed to meet with the board, and Gill resident Ken Sprinkle, who had raised concerns about locating the group home near the school at a meeting on December 10th.

"The Corporation for Independent Living is a non-profit developer of homes for people with disabilities," said Perkins. "We do developing, seek out suitable property, engage contractors, engineers and then lease out the property to Association for Community Living. After that, we are out of the picture."

Perkins, director of housing for CIL, said, "I know there is a lot of confusion and concern when the term 'group home' is used, but there really is no need for it. I understand these concerns; there are always unknowns and fear that a neighborhood could be disrupted."

For her part, ACL's division director Brown said, "Let me give a little background as to what we are about, since we understand the concerns people in a community might have. Our organization started in 1952, helping citizens with developmental delays. We are recognized nationally as a well run, well respected non-profit. We are fully accountable to the Department of Mental Retardation."

Perkins and Brown discussed the plans for the residence with those present. The current plan is to move adults with developmental disabilities into a five bedroom, single family home in Gill. The foundation is already in, as well as the septic system and well. "We are looking at late spring to move our clients in," said Perkins. The

residence would be long term for those living there, and there would be twenty-four hour staff support. Staff would accompany residents when they are in the community.

While the tone of the meeting was both relaxed and civil, Brown did remind those present that her clients were protected by such laws as the Dover Amendment (which allows educational facilities, broadly defined, to be exempted from most local zoning requirements in Massachusetts) and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sprinkle commented, "I appreciate this; it's been very helpful. I like hearing about the history of the organization. Initially, I think myself and some other people thought there might be issues around drug abuse or criminal behaviors. But I get the sense this is not going to be the case."

"I think you'll find they will be superb neighbors," said Brown.

"Everyone deserves to have a home of their own," stated Griswold at the end of the discussion.

The selectboard also reviewed current sewer regulations and questions on water abatements for homeowners with swimming pools, and means of resolving ongoing issues around water meter reading.

Meanwhile, the town is still waiting on the state Department of Revenue to certify property values and set a tax rate for the current fiscal year.

"We are working as quickly as we can to get new growth approved. I am going to speak again with Mayflower [the company hired by Gill to assist with last year's revaluation of all town property] and stress the urgency of this," stated Griswold.

The board has put off a vote on a \$93,000 Proposition 2½ override until February 5th, the date of the Massachusetts presidential primary, hoping the state will at long last certify values, and allow the town to set a tax rate by then.

"Let's assume the worst, and assume we don't have it," said selectboard member Ann Banash. "I think we should have an informational meeting for all

townspeople," prior to the override vote. Indeed, the board proposed two dates to hold informational meetings: Saturday, January 26th at 10:00 a.m. and Monday, January 28th at 7 p.m. at town hall. The board also discussed a mass mailing to Gill residents to inform them of the meetings.

"It ain't gonna be pretty, no two ways about it," said board chair Leland Stevens, at the end of the discussion.

Despite Gill's financial position, the agenda item of issuing a town credit card, proposed by Sergeant Redmond of the Gill police force, met with approval by the board. "I've talked with other town clerks," said administrative assistant Tracy Rogers, "and most advise against it, but Sergeant Redmond currently has to pay for items out of his own pocket, and then apply for reimbursements."

The board agreed that Rogers would apply for a town credit card, which would be held at the town offices.

"Otherwise these things can get really out of hand," opined Stevens.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Multiple Medical Emergencies

Wednesday 1-2

6:50 a.m. Response to medical emergency call to Fourth Street, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

8:29 a.m. Warrant arrest at Turners Falls High School of subject under 17.

1:31 p.m. Response to medical emergency call to Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

3:04 p.m. Fight reported on Fifth Street. Peace restored.

5:38 p.m. Arrest at Powertown Apartments of subject under 17.

8:33 p.m. Officer wanted at Powertown Apartments. Subject taken into protective custody.

Thursday 1-3

2:26 a.m. Officer wanted at Powertown Apartments. Peace restored.

11:40 a.m. Breaking and entering reported at Bookmill, Montague Center. Under investigation.

3:53 p.m. Report of accident with property damage on Park Street, Turners Falls.

4:12 p.m. Officer wanted at Avenue A Cafe, Turners Falls. Subject taken

into protective custody.

4:26 p.m. Officer wanted at Turners Falls Pizza House. Services rendered.

5:48 p.m. Report of larceny on L Street, Turners Falls.

11:20 p.m. Report of medical emergency on Billings Road, Montague. Subject removed to hospital.

Friday 1-4

10:31 a.m. Report of medical emergency on Seventh Street, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

10:48 a.m. Report of medical emergency on East Main Street, Millers Falls. Subject removed to

hospital.

12:10 p.m. Well being check at Keith Apartments, Canal Street, Turners Falls.

12:49 p.m. Walk-in report of accident with property damage on First Street, Turners Falls. Under investigation.

2:08 p.m. Arrest at Turners Falls High School of subject under 17.

2:17 p.m. Assistance to motorist on Turners Falls Road, Montague.

11:06 p.m. Report of breaking and entering on Fourth Street, Turners Falls. Under investigation.

11:14 p.m. Report of fight at St. Kazimierz on Avenue A, Turners Falls.

Saturday 1-5

2:24 a.m. Report of domestic disturbance on Eleventh Street, Turners Falls. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] charged with breaking and entering, intent to commit a felony, assault and battery (domestic), assault and battery with a weapon (glass), vandalize property (3 counts), larceny under \$250 and disorderly conduct.

11:28 a.m. Report of suicide threat at undisclosed bridge. Unable to locate.

3:46 p.m. Report of trespassing at railroad crossing, Lake Pleasant. Under investigation.

Sunday 1-6

1:47 a.m. Well being check on South High Street, Turners Falls.

8:10 a.m. Report of breaking and entering on Third Street, Turners Falls.

4:56 p.m. Report of accident with property damage at Cumberland Farms, Montague City Road, Turners Falls.

Monday 1-7

10:44 a.m. Report of assault on Oakman Street, Turners Falls.

8:21 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance on Second Street, Turners Falls. Peace restored.

Tuesday 1-8

4:49 a.m. Response to medical emergency at Farren Care Center, Montague City Road, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

2:43 p.m. Walk-in report of vandalism of Franklin Street, Millers Falls.

2:59 p.m. Weapons violation at Great Falls Middle School. Report taken.

6:10 p.m. Response to medical emergency on Wentworth Avenue, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital



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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Promotes Taylor; Schedules Meeting with Library Trustees

BY NICHOLE CLAYTON - The Erving selectboard met on Monday, January 7th, after a two week break for the holidays, and opened the meeting with a discussion of how to fill the vacancy at the Erving wastewater treatment plant, left when former plant operator Mike Pierce resigned in November. Art Pace, the town's newly hired environmental supervisor, who was supposed to be overseeing the operation of the water treatment facilities in all three villages of town, has been running the Erving plant since then with the help of longtime employee Calvin Taylor.

results, that has been drawing some flak recently from the EPA. Pace said three of the four missing Erving wastewater lab test reports have been recovered and sent in to the EPA, but they are unable to find the fourth one. Board chair Andy Tessier asked Pace to send a letter to the EPA stating that those results cannot be recovered.



The Erving Wastewater Treatment Plant

On Monday, Pace recommended that Taylor be promoted to the position of chief operator, to fill Pierce's old post, and that the junior position be filled with "new blood". Pace stated, "Calvin has always been there for what I needed him for, and he has even gone over and above what is expected of him."

Taylor has been assisting Pace in developing a new database program that will help to simplify and clarify lab work, and make the monthly reporting process much more efficient.

The board voted unanimously to promote Taylor to the position of chief operator at Erving, and they will begin advertising the new treatment plant opening next week.

While they had him there, the board went over the case of the missing wastewater plant test

The cable access advisory committee was next on the agenda, and George Bohrer was there to speak for the committee. He reminded the selectboard that August 15th is the deadline for negotiating a new cable contract with Comcast, the town's cable television provider. The committee is going to use the occasion to press Comcast to extend cable access from Erving east to the village of Farley, if not to Erving Center. These two villages currently do not enjoy the option of accessing cable television lines. Bohrer said, "It is important that the community let the cable company know that this is important to them, not only the citizens that don't have it, but all the members of the community."

The committee would also like the new contract to include

local cable access programming, like Gill and Montague enjoy. "I feel that our senior citizens and our teenagers would get great use out of a local channel, as well as other community members."

There will be an open meeting on Monday, February 4th, at the Erving Elementary School cafeteria at 6:30 p.m. with Comcast representatives to discuss the new contract. A second meeting will be held at the town hall on February 11th, at 6:30 p.m. to give another opportunity for residents and town officials to state their opinions on cable access for

the proposed new senior center to Catlan Architecture.

At the next board meeting, on January 14th, the library trustees will again meet with the board to present their plan for hiring a library director. The library in Erving has greatly expanded circulation under the guidance of the three trustees - Beth Bazler, Marcia Barnard, and Marion Overgaard - who run the library during its hours of operation and are paid stipends for their work. Erving is apparently the only town in the state where the library is run by the board of library trustees.

Since the trustees gained

Erving. Bohrer closed with a reminder, "It is really important that the town make a showing at these meetings."

town meeting approval in 2003 to consolidate Erving's two library collections at the Erving Center library (formerly located in the town hall basement, but little used), circulation in Erving has increased steadily. Since 2004, the number of borrowers has climbed from 158 to 709, and total number of items borrowed has risen from 2130 to 9089. The library is now open 18 hours a week.

A second public hearing on Erving's '08 Community Development Block Grant application will be held at the town hall on January 28th, at 7:00 p.m. The town intends to apply for zero interest housing rehab funds for income eligible residents, and also plans to ask for design funding for the proposed new senior center.

The board appointed Elizabeth Braccia as Erving's new assistant treasurer, taking the place of Bev Stone, who retired at the end of last year. Treasurer Margaret Sullivan said she felt Braccia would be a great asset to the office and the town.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Erratic Drivers

Thursday, 1-3
5:10 p.m. Loose dog at Central Street, located owner and returned.
Friday, 1-4
1:00 p.m. Response to medical emergency on Swamp Road. Assisted EMTs and ambulance.
Saturday, 1-5

2:30 a.m. Suspicious subject middle of Route 2, Farley. Located and identified same.
2:58 p.m. Assisted Gill and Northfield police responding to 911 call of vehicle hitting snowbanks on Main Road, Gill. Vehicle located at intersection with Route 10,

Northfield. Assisted arrest of [redacted] for OUI Liquor.
Sunday, 1-6
7:30 Report of vehicle off road and into ditch on North Street near town line with Northfield. Vehicle towed and criminal application issued to [redacted] for marked lane violations and operating after suspension of license.

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Advertisement for Upper Hand Home Defense, specializing in civilian firearms and training for home defense.

Advertisement for About Face Computer Solutions, offering PC sales, software support, and network services.

Advertisement for Shanahan Construction Supply Co., providing masonry supplies and quality products for home heating.

Advertisement for Liebenow Auto Body, offering insurance collision repairs and auto glass replacements.

Advertisement for Fretted Instrument Workshop, specializing in fine instruments bought and sold, repaired and restored.

Advertisement for Dolan & Dolan Attorneys at Law, providing personal injury, wills, and estates services.

NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

New Educational Programs Highlighted

BY LISA MERKEL AND DAVID DETMOLD - In their first gathering since the calendar turned, the G-M school committee moved beyond the divisive subject of elementary configuration, to deal with educational programs. But looming in the wings was the impending budget cycle, with all its joys and pitfalls. Interim superintendent Ken Roche promised "a comprehensive review of all expenditures and revenue streams," in advance of presenting a preliminary budget by February 1st. He spoke both of "level services in fiscal '09," but also, and in the same breath, of "educational improvements, new programs, and services cut that need to be restored."

Before the meeting adjourned, the announcement was made that preliminary estimates provided by the state, on which the present year's budget was formulated, were off by \$118,000 for school choice students coming in and leaving the district. The state estimated 75 students would choose into G-M schools this year, but in actuality only 66 chose to do so. The state estimated 150 students would choose out of the G-M schools this year; in actuality

157 chose to do so.

After the meeting, Roche said the district appears to have saved around \$12,000 in charter school tuition, and said he was still examining special education costs, to see whether savings might be found there for this year's budget. In regard to the losses in school choice aid, Roche said, "We're guardedly optimistic we will be able to handle this hit."

Earlier in the meeting, upper school principal Jeff Kenney introduced a new program called Math Expressions, created by Karen Fuson, M.Ed. "Our district began implementation in the spring of last year," explained Kenney. The program is meant to serve students in kindergarten through the fifth grade, districtwide, and is based on the work of Douglas Reed at Harvard, on the concept of "power standards." The purpose of the program is to reduce the "multitude of area standards" to only those found to be essential, that show endurance across grade levels.

Kenney reported the planning stage is going well. Fuson herself met with G-M teachers last spring for half a day to review the program.

"We're one meeting away from finishing that (planning) work," Kenney said.

In June of 2008, co-developer Dr. Steven Smith is scheduled to give a workshop to teachers. He also plans to stay in the area for five days to attend classes, and participate and assist teachers and students, with an emphasis on helping those students who are especially struggling with math. The curriculum will be written in "child-friendly language."

Roche expressed his appreciation for the innovative work and said, "This is the kind of program that will help us take our students to the next level."

Karl Dziura, 12th grade English teacher, and Anna-Stina Ohlson, assistant principal for instruction and curriculum at the upper school, announced an \$8,000 secondary school reading grant to fund a much needed literacy program for older students. Joan Sedita, M.Ed. creator of the curriculum, offered a day-long training for teachers and librarian. The curriculum, based on the Key 3 program, provides all teachers with the same methods for developing reading comprehension skills and

improving the skills of those students who have fallen behind.

Dziura stated that a lot of students in our district are "below par" in reading comprehension, and went on to say, "We've come to find out it is a nationwide problem."

Two literacy teams have been formed, one for the middle school, and another for the high school. The program is expected to reduce student frustration and increase their ability to comprehend content faster and therefore inspire more interest in reading and learning. School committee chair Mary Kociela commented, "This is something we've needed for a long time."

Montague Center PTO member David Leh put the committee on notice that he would be acting as a spokesperson for a second community group that is forming to examine the possibility of keeping the Montague Center School open past August of this year, the date the committee set for its closing at their December 12th meeting. At that meeting, Montague Center PTO member Sue Dresser notified the committee that she a dozen other people

had formed a community group to also study possible ways to keep that school open.

After the January 8th meeting, Dresser said her group had met twice already, and is exploring four options for keeping Montague Center open: as a Commonwealth charter school, as a Horace Mann school, a school organized on the Boston area Pilot School model, or, finally, keeping it open as a school within the district with some form of independent governance "forgoing certain services and replacing them with volunteerism."

Dresser said the news this week that more students are choosing out of district schools and fewer choosing in gives added impetus to the effort to maintain the Montague Center as a school with a strong environmental curriculum, that could act as a magnet school for the district.

She said she was surprised to hear of the formation of a second community group interested in Montague Center School's future. "It's the first I've heard of it."

After the meeting, Leh said see **FUTURE** pg 10

EVA'S from pg 1

instead of having their dollars funneled out of the country," she said, showing off an attractive pink flowered, flowy skirt and a funky black patterned blazer.

"People here want to see the community come together, and they want to help each other out," she said.

The Blue Room Boutique, named for its brightly blue painted walls, is full of fashionable brand name women's clothing in sizes from petite to 22W, and it is bursting with color and design.

A portable dressing room

provides privacy for women to try on the eclectic fashions, and not everything is available in more than one size," so women can find something unique that no one else will be wearing, "the way a boutique should be," she said.

Since she began selling women's clothing on January 5th, most of the Blue Room Boutique customers have been local women, as well as a couple of local guys buying fashions for their girlfriends.

"We've had a really good response so far," she said, "and I think it will continue."

Eva, a native of Greenfield, and her husband Seth Licata, a

native of Montague, opened Seth & Eva's in May of 2007. Inside their retail shop they sell a variety of new and used musical instruments and local arts and crafts.

They are official Jay Turser dealers, selling an array of quality, affordable guitars, as well as amps, mikes, tuners and pedals.

The work of local artists and craftspeople is abundant at Seth & Eva's, and includes: hand blown glass and framed pencil drawings by Jeremy Young of Northfield, the funky creative, multi-media artwork of Nina Rossi of Turners Falls, handmade furniture of Ben

Sylvia of Wendell, the handmade paper and journals of Madison Cripps of Northampton, the sculpture and bread loaves of Tim de Christopher of Turners Falls, stained glass by Al Holmes of Gill and photography by Brad Peters of Erving.

Seth and Evas also features vintage belt buckles -- the western ones are very popular, said Seth -- along with handmade and vintage jewelry.

Seth & Eva's will be open on Mondays throughout the month of January. Regular hours are Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For

more information call 413-863-0150.



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MAHER from pg 1

an assault, incidents which occurred in Ayer and Lowell. Maher was misidentified at a line-up and convicted, although there was no physical evidence linking him to the crimes.

In March of 1984, Maher was sentenced to life imprisonment.

With help from the Innocence Project and DNA testing, Maher was freed in 2003.

He came to Turners Falls High to speak following a showing of the movie *After Innocence*, a film that described his case and a half dozen others, in often painful detail. The movie also provided an overview of the work of the Innocence Project, while raising serious questions about the United States justice system.

After the film, Maher took questions from the audience, which included local politicians and high school students. When asked how he came to be wrongfully convicted, Maher answered levelly, "How did it happen? Well, I was walking down the street in Lowell. I was stopped with a half an ounce of marijuana on me, and then charged with both that and the rapes. It was wrongful identifi-

cation, plain and simple".

Asked how society at large could repay its debt to those who are wrongfully imprisoned, Maher responded, "Accept them. Understand that we've gone through something terrible and we may need mental, physical or emotional help."

Although Maher has received some financial compensation from the state, he told the audience "...no exoneree probably ever feels fully compensated."

Speaking about his frame of mind while serving nineteen years in prison, Maher stated, "I did it one day at a time. I'd made peace with the idea I was going to die in prison, unless I got DNA tested."

Maheer spent some of his sentence in Walpole State Prison, where he was witness to beatings and rapes. Maher himself was cut with a razor on one occasion, a wound that required fourteen stitches. To the younger members of the audience, Maher pulled no punches when describing both the monotony and terror of prison life. "Prison is hell; that's as simple as I can put it."

One student asked Maher if he felt that prison rehabilitated inmates. He responded, "No; it's just a warehouse. You can thank your last two governors for that.

When I was first in, there were college courses, possible vocational opportunities. Now it's gone to punishment."

Maheer was asked if it was possible to forgive those who put him in jail for so long. He answered matter-of-factly. "I forgave the D.A. who prosecuted me. I don't blame the victims; they went through something terrible and I hope they can get on with their lives. But the system needs to be fixed, and things like the Innocence Project help."

Asked by one student if police scared him, Maher opined, "Younger cops scare the s--t out of me. Because they're gung-ho; they want to make a name for themselves. The older ones, they've been around; they're more careful and they don't want to make mistakes."

While acknowledging he still had "bad days," it was clear from the Q and A session that brooding over his horrific ordeal had little place in Maher's current life. "Most of the time I was in prison I was angry and bitter," he told the audience. "And I do still have some anger at the cop who arrested me and the judge who sentenced me. But when I got out, I realized that if I continued to be angry and bitter I wouldn't be able to do the things in life I wanted to do."

Now living in Tewksbury, Maher is a diesel mechanic for a national company. He is married

and the father to a son, Joshua, and a daughter, Liza. He told those gathered that his credo is: "Embrace life; live life; love life."

Maheer was at Turners High on invitation from Heather Batchelor's honors government class. The students who organized the event were Sam Stafford, Erica Zajac and Katie Christenson. They had watched *After Innocence* in their class, and subsequently contacted Maher to ask him to appear at their school.

Batchelor said, "In my government course, we discuss a controversial issue. We'd been talking about both the 8th Amendment [banning cruel and unusual punishment] and the death penalty. So I showed the movie as part of that."

Asked if the movie affected her students in terms of their view of the death penalty, Batchelor said, "It had a huge impact. We discussed it and I think it really touched a lot of students. The more who see it, the more it impacts, because the stories in it are about people just like them."

Batchelor asks her students to do something that will change people or their community. "Obviously, that's an open ended assignment. But it's a great way to have kids do tangible things that show they can change the world."

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FUTURE from 9

his group wanted to focus on the possibility of keeping Montague Center School open as a district school. "If they make the ADA improvements to Montague Center, it will be cheaper in the long run than putting [all Montague] K-5 in Sheffield," he asserted. Leh, who served on the capital needs assessment committee for the Montague elementary schools last year, said, "Sheffield needs basically the same ADA upgrades as Montague Center, but on a larger scale, since it's a bigger school. I definitely believe it will be cheaper to obtain the K-5 configuration the

school committee unanimously voted for all district schools by keeping Montague Center open."

Leh said his mother used to work at the Montague Center School, and his wife works there now. Leh, who works for the Mass Municipal Wholesale Electric Company in Ludlow, said he attended Montague Center School when he was in elementary school; his daughter is a third grader there now. He said, "Everybody in the village would be heartbroken if the school closed. There's a lot of local support for the school."

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ENERGY from 1

tems for town buildings, or for energy efficiency improvements.

On Monday, January 7th, Grange members Tim von Egmond and Chris Mason, both of Montague Center, (where the Grange is now located in the former Unitarian Church, across the common from the Grange's original quarters) met with the selectboard to make them aware of the project, and to enlist their support. They explained that under the Clean Energy Choice program, businesses or individuals who choose to contribute a monthly fee of \$5 or who make a one-time gift \$100 to the New England Wind Fund (see www.NewEnglandWind.org) will see their contribution matched by the MTC in renewable energy grants to the town. Additionally, if 3% of the households in town (roughly 124 households) sign up for the program within a year, Montague will receive an extra \$50 annual bonus for each household that contributes to these minimum levels. Those bonuses increase if a 6% threshold is reached, or a 9% threshold, and so on.

In Wendell, librarian Rose Heidkamp said, 15% of households signed up for a similar MTC program called the Green Start program, generating funds for MTC's Renewable Energy Trust and \$9,000 of matching funds for the town of Wendell, in the first three years. "We had the highest percentage of households [sign up] in the state," bragged Heidkamp.

Wendell used their renewable energy funds to help purchase a 6.8 kW photovoltaic array for the roof of their new town library. "For the first three months we've been open, we showed zero kilowatt usage," said Heidkamp. "Our electric bills have been around \$40," (for the monthly service fee, which gets charged regardless of usage) but for December, Heidkamp said, the library just received a \$200 electricity bill.

She speculated that the photovoltaic panels had been covered by snow, although with the recent thaw they are now clear.

By comparison, she said the new town office building across the common, with no photovoltaic panels on the roof, has been receiving a \$150 electric bill each month. "We're saving a lot of money," Heidkamp said the solar panels cost \$50,000 to install, but the town wrote two additional grants which, combined with the MTC funds, paid for the entire cost of installation.

In Montague, van Egmond said a \$500 pool of money has already built up at the MTC for the town to use for renewable energy projects, and the Grange has yet to gear up to promote the fund. "We're hoping to rally everybody and let them know about the program," said van Egmond. To that end, the Grange intends to sponsor a drive for local businesses to put up raffle prizes as a further incentive for households to sign up for the program.

"How quickly can we get this going?" asked selectboard chair Pat Allen. "We want to put photovoltaics on the roof of the new police station."

People interested in getting involved in the Clean Energy Choice program or the business raffle, may contact van Egmond at 367-9304 or Mason at 367-9923.

License Request Delayed

In other news, the selectboard delayed the hearing on F.L. Roberts' request for an off premises beer and wine license at the Exxon station at the corner of 3rd and L Street. The hearing was continued until March 3rd board. The delay was granted, the board said, to allow time for F.L. Roberts' management to discuss concerns the chief of police had raised about the license request.

Jones Promises: Paper Will Go

Jerry Jones, the former owner of the Strathmore Mill, see ENERGY pg 12

SEWER from 1

stabilized.

This week, workers from the Leslie Roberts company are driving a sheet pile cofferdam 30 feet through the frozen ground, using a vibratory pile driver. Well points are being installed to keep the excavation dry adjacent to the Connecticut River. Seismographs are measuring the vibrations to determine any potential impacts on adjacent structures, which wastewater treatment plant supervisor Bob Trombley warned the Montague selectboard on Monday, January 7th, are more than 40 years old, and already exhibiting signs of foundational cracking.

Roberge Associates land surveyors of Greenfield was on site Tuesday to establish the monitoring points, which will be measured daily to check for movement. Trombley said Wednesday the work driving the sheet piling is going fairly well, "some going in easier, some rather slow," and he hoped to see this aspect of construction wrapped up next week. He said the new wet weather chlorine tank would be utilized to handle runoff of clarified sewage from the plant at a

predetermined level during major rainstorms, chlorinating the run-off before discharging it to the Connecticut River. Trombley cautioned that even with the new chlorine tank, some untreated run-off to the river from combined sewer overflow locations in town would still result from major storms. But, he estimated the level of untreated sewage reaching the Connecticut will drop by more than 80% from previous levels, after the work is completed, and he said the Department of Environmental Protection had approved those expected levels.

Work will continue through 2008, with additional improvements to the processes and instrumentation inside the existing buildings, and modifications to the inflow manhole in Greenfield Road.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said, after cost estimates on the second phase of combined sewer overflow and wastewater treatment plant upgrades ballooned by 80% in the spring of 2006, the town had asked Camp Dresser McKee to scale back plans to bring the work in at the \$5.7 million level. Since then, favorable construc-

tion bids have kept the total cost of Phase I (\$1,285,929) and the estimated cost of Phase II (2,061,900), along with related contingencies, traffic control costs, money spent on peer review, and private land work to a total still approximately \$900,000 below the \$5.7 million borrowing ceiling authorized by the town. Also, the town has received \$853,000 in additional USDA grant funding to be applied to upgrade costs, Trombley said. He also pointed out that town meeting had approved an additional \$400,000 in borrowing for sludge handling and dewatering equipment "five or six years ago," money authorized but never spent.

Abbondanzio and Trombley both said that a \$1 - \$1.5 million sludge handling upgrade is the key element they would like to see added back to Phase II, if actual costs come in close to estimates. They warned that electrical and fire code issues could be triggered by upgrading the sludge handling facility, driving the cost estimate higher, but both agreed "significant cost savings" for sewer users would result if new dewatering equipment were installed.





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ENERGY from pg 11

was called in front of the selectboard to answer questions about the slow pace of removal of baled and rolled paper warehoused at the mill.

Last year, the town took possession of the Strathmore, in lieu of back taxes Jones owed totaling nearly \$200,000. During his five-year tenure at the mill, Jones never paid a dime in taxes to the town.

Contrary to an account in last week's *Reporter*, Jones told the selectboard that only three truckloads of recycled paper had been removed from the mill in recent weeks, instead of the reported five.

But he said, these would be followed by three more tractor trailer loads this week, and three more next week, with cargo bound eventually for Czechoslovakia, and more shipments of recycled paper eventually heading to India. "We think 10 or 11 or 12 more..." Jones said.

He also said that much of the paper housed on the fourth floor of Building #1 had been soaked by a recent pipe break, and was probably unusable, indicating that this would become the town's problem as far as eventual removal. He estimated 12% of the total paper warehoused in the mill was located on the fourth floor of that building. Various estimates of the total amount of paper remaining in the mill have been given, but 20 tractor trailer loads would seem to be a conservative figure.

Selectboard member Al Ross told Jones, "I would support whatever aggressive stance the town can muster to get it all out." Jones promised to report back in two weeks.

The board agreed to hold the annual town meeting on Saturday, May 3rd, this year, with petitioned articles due 45 days prior. And the board set a date for an 11-item special town meeting on Wednesday, January 23rd. That meeting will deal with articles ranging from adding \$12,000 to the \$25,000 already expended to send two Montague students to an animal husbandry course at

Smith Vocational, to allocating \$48,000 for the police department to buy three new defibrillators, to replace worn out units. An additional \$25,000 is requested for the veterans benefits line item. Demand for veterans benefits is rising with the return of more Iraq war veterans.

Also on the warrant is an article to appropriate \$21,664 to replace sections of the boiler at Hillcrest School, that was recently, and perhaps improperly, installed.

Another question asks voters to approve \$100,000 for a mower for the Turners Falls Airport, with 80% of that amount reimbursable and the remaining money to come from "the airport enterprise fund," according to town administrator Frank Abbondanzio. No word on who would be hired to do the mowing.

One article would pave the way for town retirees to be eligible to join the Group Insurance Commission, another would lower the threshold of votes needed to close a district school and grant town meeting a say in the process of school closing, and the final articles will speed the process of taking easements for the replacement of the Prospect Street bridge in Turners Falls, which has suddenly moved to the fast track of Mass Highway's schedule.

Ups and Downs of 2007

by **Bette Black**

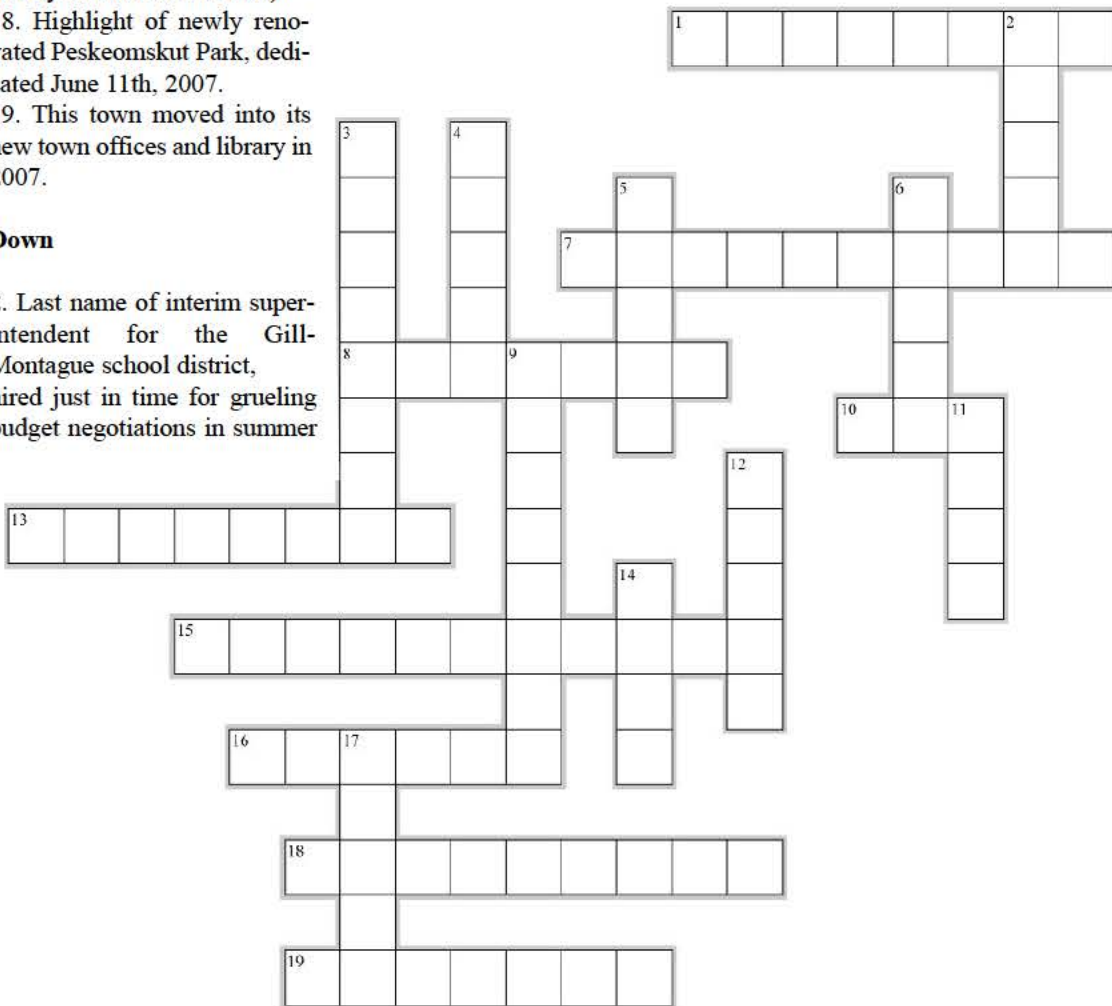
Across

- 1. Museum of contemporary photography expanding on Avenue A in Turners Falls.
- 7. Comic strip by Karen Wilkinson featured in the *Montague Reporter*.
- 8. Slabs cut from the original World War I memorial in Montague were recycled to form these, in the new veterans park.
- 10. Whose *Place* Gill author Joseph A. Parzych wrote about.
- 13. Montague Center establishment that changed hands in 2007.
- 15. She's been on the loose at Montague libraries on Saturdays since last September.
- 16. Erving hermitage occupied by retired Scottish actor, John Smith, from the 1860s to the 1890s. (Every man's home is one.)
- 18. Highlight of newly renovated Peskeomskut Park, dedicated June 11th, 2007.
- 19. This town moved into its new town offices and library in 2007.

Down

- 2. Last name of interim superintendent for the Gill-Montague school district, hired just in time for grueling budget negotiations in summer

- of 2007.
- 3. Sport that Turners Falls High School girls excel at.
- 4. Animal shelter offering Pets of the Week.
- 5. Starring and contiguous feature of exhibited habitats at Great Falls Discovery Center (also a local radio station: *The _____*).
- 6. Off the Beaten Track columnist.
- 9. Scottish-born industrialist and philanthropist who donated millions to build public libraries.
- 11. Canal-side bike _____ opened for recreation and transportation last year.
- 12. This mill in Erving Center burned in 2007 under suspicious circumstances.
- 14. Last name of Lake Pleasant postmaster who retired last year after 24 years of service.
- 17. Gill's library.



- answers next week



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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ — *Q. I've been having some difficulty swallowing food for the past few weeks. Is this something to worry about, or is it just another one of those age things?*

You shouldn't worry about occasional difficulty swallowing. Persistent swallowing problems, though, can be a symptom of a serious condition, so it is something to be concerned about. I'd get it checked out by a physician as soon as possible.

And, yes, difficulty swallowing - called "dysphagia" - is yet again one of those age things.

As we get older, the esophagus, the tube that connects your throat to your stomach, loses its ability to move food downward. So, while difficulty swallowing can happen to anyone, it is most common in older adults.

Swallowing is a three-step process that involves dozens of muscles and nerves to work properly.

Step 1 - The tongue gathers the food in your mouth.

Step 2 - The tongue pushes the food to the back of the mouth. A swallowing reflex moves the food through the pharynx, a canal linking the mouth and esophagus.

Step 3 - The food enters the esophagus. It then takes the esophagus about three seconds for the food to be pushed into the stomach.

There are a variety of causes for dysphagia. Probably the

most common causes for occasional problems are chewing improperly or gobbling food. Here are others:

- The muscle at the base of the esophagus doesn't let food enter your stomach.
- Narrowing of the esophagus.
- Tumors in the esophagus.
- Food or foreign objects stuck in your throat.
- Stomach acid backing up causing the esophagus to spasm or form scar tissue that narrows this canal. This condition is known as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).
- The formation of a small pouch that collects food particles in your throat. This happens more often in older people.
- Weakened throat muscles caused by disease, stroke or spinal-cord injury.
- Improperly coordinated

contractions of the esophagus.

Dysphagia can impede nutrition and hydration. And, if food or drinks get into your windpipe when you're trying to swallow, you can suffer from respiratory problems, including pneumonia.

Occasional dysphagia can be prevented by chewing thoroughly and slowing down when you eat. Treating GERD can reduce swallowing problems caused by the narrowing of the esophagus.

There are a variety of tests for dysphagia. They include: an X-ray of a barium-coated esophagus; direct examination of the esophagus with an endoscope, a lighted instrument; a test with a pressure recorder to measure muscle contractions of the esophagus; video fluoroscopy and ultrasound, two forms of imaging that record patients swallowing.

Treatments include: exercises

to help coordinate swallowing muscles or stimulate nerves responsible for the swallowing reflex; expanding the esophagus with an endoscope and balloon attachment; surgery to remove tumors; drugs to reduce stomach acid; liquid diets or feeding tubes for severe cases.

Some people are taught a different way to eat. For example, they may have to eat with their head turned to one side.

Preparing food differently may help others. People with problems swallowing liquids may need thickeners for their drinks.

Avoiding some foods - such as very hot or very cold foods - can help some dysphagia victims.

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

HUSBANDER'S JOURNAL

HOW TO MAKE YOGURT

BY CLIFFORD HATCH

GILL - Yogurt must be made from non-homogenized milk. Homogenization bursts the fat molecules of the milk so that a proper set or even coagulation cannot occur. The milk may be whole, skimmed or any ratio thereof. Skimmed milk will give a uniform product; fat milk will have a cream layer on top. If a custard-type yogurt is desired, heating the milk to 195 F is required to destroy enzymes in the milk, which will otherwise act to break down the set. Also, in some traditions, the milk is thickened by evaporation before cooling and culturing. (This method requires long attention.)

Heat the milk to the temperature for your needs, and cool to 108 - 110 F. Add either pure dairy culture or yogurt from a previous batch. If using yogurt, add one tablespoon for each quart of milk. Thoroughly blend culture and milk. Pour into containers and set in a warm place, without disturbing, for four to six hours.

For some people, the warm place is near their wood stoves. Others use an electric blanket or heating pad. A cooler with a hot water bottle works well too. It is important that the temperature is

warm and even, not hot.

Tart yogurt is cultured longer; mild yogurt is made by shortened culturing time. If there is excessive wheying-off at the end of culturing before refrigerating, either the culturing time or the amount of heat is excessive.

Flavored yogurts can be made by scalding the milk with vanilla bean or nutmeg. Sweeteners may be added before culturing, but the culturing time needs to be gauged to the chosen sweetener. Synthetic sweeteners should have no effect on culturing.

Once the culturing time is complete, remove to refrigeration. Yogurt should keep in refrigeration for up to 30 days, especially if the milk was heated to 195 F.

Yogurt

Few products enjoy the image of health and purity that yogurt embodies. A fine yogurt is simply made by culturing milk with acidophillus bacteria for four to six hours. It is generally accepted that yogurt was utilized by people living in warm climates as a way of preserving milk.

Acidophillus (acid loving/creating) bacteria convert milk

sugar (lactose) to lactic acid, creating an acid environment in which most pathogenic bacteria cannot survive or multiply. The conversion of



lactose to lactic acid makes yogurt more readily digestible, since the conversion that generally takes place in the gut has already taken place. It is also generally accepted that it is beneficial to inoculate our guts with these microbes, since they will aid digestive processes, help break down complex foods, generate more beneficial enzymes, and so forth.

Unfortunately, because

yogurt is also the most profitable "Grade A" product on the market, the industrial food system has adopted many practices that make most commercial yogurts a vehicle for recycling dairy waste from other processes. If you read a yogurt container's list of ingredients there are very few that read: milk and culture. The drive for thickness as a sign of quality, and the stability needed for shipping and rough handling, has led to addition of ingredients that are unnecessary and unhealthy. For a truly fine yogurt, you either have to make it yourself or seek out some rather expensive products. The "milk solids" added to most yogurts are retrieved from whey and it is anyone's guess where the pectin or inulin or guar gum come from. Any food product with high-fructose corn syrup should not be consumed (this sugar does not stimulate the production of letin by the pancreas, which signals you to stop eating). With the takeover of most popular yogurt brands by large food companies, it is very important to read the label.

Yoghurt, yoghurt, yogurt, yohourt are the various words for preparations of milk fermented with acidophilus bacillus, lactobacillus bulgaricus, or streptococcus lacti. These bacteria separately or in combination will yield a yogurt that has a custard

to a kefir-like consistency. Acidophillus yields a custard-type coagulation and bulgaric cultures a thick cream set.

In the Caucasus, where yogurt and kefir are believed to have originated, yogurt is more often drunk than spooned. It is often thinned with water; chopped herbs such as dill, cilantro, tarragon, or parsley are added, then it is drunk before a meal. Dolma are generally served with a sauce of yogurt and chopped garlic. In my career as Chef de Cuisine, one of my most sought recipes was Cold Cucumber Soup. I perfected this recipe during my tenure at the Deerfield Inn:

Cold Cucumber Soup

- 4-6 cucumbers, peeled
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1T fresh or 1t dried dill weed chopped
- 1T olive oil
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2-4 cups yogurt (bulgaric)

Chop some of the cucumber into fine dice and reserve. Put cucumber, garlic and dill in food processor and pulse until pureed, add walnuts, diced cucumber and oil. Season with salt and pepper. Chill for several hours. Add an equal amount (more or less) of yogurt and combine well, prior to serving.

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

BAD TIMES

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GILL - After the abandonment incident at the park, Pa was laid off yet again. We were grocery shopping one evening when Pa stopped at the Polish Club. He heard about a call-back at the paper mill, and drove over to the superintendent's house. The super's wife told Pa he was at his club.

At the club, the bartender said the super had just gone out the back door. The bartender told Pa where the super was headed. When Pa got to that destination, he was again told that the super had just left.

"Just missed him, again," Pa said. "I run after him and holler but he no can hear me; just drive away, very fast."

I wished Pa didn't have to chase after the super and pester him for a job. Pa spotted the super's car and tailed him to his

home. We caught bits and snatches of the conversation.

"For chrissakes... no money... kids to feed..."

The super relented and Pa was jubilant to be working again.

Sometimes when Pa was working steady, he'd buy us a treat. A big neon sign hung outside the tiny shop - McCann's Ice Cream, 10 cents a pint.

Most of the time, it seemed that Pa was either laid off when he was well, or sick when there was work. Meanwhile, other Polish families who settled in Gill seemed to be prospering. Many of them kept dairy cattle, sold milk, and raised tobacco, in addition to having the income of the father working in a shop. Most of these families paid their kids a share of the tobacco check for working on the farm.

Pa ridiculed the families who paid their own kids to work. He

said the kids should be paying the family for raising them. He figured he, too, should have been well off with all the free labor he had.

"Fate just wasn't with me," he said. "Besides, when I show Stanley and Walter how to graft apple trees, they are looking at the neighbor plowing with a new farm tractor. They don't want to work by hand. They want to do everything by the machine, quick and easy. Layzors - that's what."

Pa was still angry with

Stanley and Walter for deserting him. And though Johnny wasn't his son, Pa felt he'd betrayed him by helping Studer succeed on the tobacco land.

With all his free labor gone, Pa no longer talked of prospering and buying up all the surrounding farms. Those dreams were dead. He scowled a lot and was quick with the strap. That Christmas, he hit bottom.

-Continued Next Week

Gifts for G-M Teachers

TURNERS FALLS—Members of the Gill-Montague Education Fund board were in district schools just before the holidays to present classroom teachers with gifts of appreciation. One hundred and seven Staples gift certificates were handed out, thanks to the success of the Dec. 9th Christmas concert, co-sponsored by radio station WIZZ-AM 1520, starring Elisabeth von Trapp, accompanied by cellist Erich Kory. A portion of the proceeds from the concert and monies earned from the Greenfield Savings Bank Civic Action Program were used for the teachers' gifts. In this way, the GMEF celebrated teachers' professionalism and commitment to the students of Gill-Montague, while cutting down on their out of pocket expenses for classroom supplies. For more information, go to www.thegmef.org.

Mount Grace Protects 2000 Acres in 2007

AROUND THE QUABBIN — Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust finished its work for 2007 with a flurry of activity, completing five conservation restrictions (CRs) to protect a total of 746 acres in the last week of 2007. The five parcels protected at year's end include a working organic farm and the forest around it, part of the headwaters of the east branch of the Swift River, land next to a scenic Northfield waterfall, and two properties abutting protected state lands in New Salem.

The year saw a large increase in conservation restrictions due to an enhanced federal tax break for land conservation, which expired at year's end, but may be extended in the next year. In total, Mount Grace closed 17 separate deals in 2007, protecting 2010 acres in 11 towns around the region. This was a jump above the Trust's

historic average of 1000 acres per year, which Mount Grace executive director Leigh Youngblood attributed to an expansion of the Trust's staff.

In Petersham a total of 687 acres was protected in the last week, consisting of land owned by Frederick Day and by David and Karen Davis. Both landowners donated CRs on their land. Both gifts are part of a larger ongoing strategy of conservation, the Quabbin Corridor Connection, which envisions protecting corridors of forested land to allow wildlife to move between the protected woodlands and wetlands around the Quabbin Reservoir and the Popple Camp, Prince River, and Phillipston Wildlife Management Areas. By project's end, the Quabbin Corridor Connection will create an interconnected network of 80,000 acres of protected habitat interlaced among the rural homes and farms of Petersham, Phillipston, Barre, and southeast Athol.

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust (www.mountgrace.org) is a regional land trust that serves 23 towns in Franklin and Worcester counties and is supported by memberships and private, state and federal grants. It protects significant natural, agricultural and scenic areas and encourages land stewardship in north-central and western Massachusetts for the benefit of the environment, the economy and future generations. In 21 years, through collaborations and partnerships, Mount Grace has protected 21,000 acres, more than 10% of the protected land in the region.

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GENTLE YOGA - Wednesdays 12-1:30PM, January 9th - February 13th, Soothing pace to support health and happiness. Living Room Yoga on Chestnut Hill, Montague. 4 1 3 - 3 6 7 - 2 6 5 8 www.livingroomyoga.net; enzer@earthlink.net.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 11TH
Great Falls Discovery Center Coffee House: Open Mic 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. 2 Avenue A 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: **Rust Knuckle Raptor & Falltown String Band** - local heroes of roots - multi-generational jamboree, 9 p.m., \$3.

Open Swim at Turners Falls High School Pool. Family Swim 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Adult Lap Swim 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. 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 or guardian. If school is cancelled, open swim will be re-scheduled. Continues 2/8 and 3/7.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12TH. Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest - Youth ages 10 - 14. Winners advance to regional competition. FREE! Call the Montague Parks & Recreation Department Unity Park Fieldhouse. Mondays - Fridays; 8:30 a.m. 4:30 p.m.; www.montague.net; 863-3216.

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.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Latin Dance Party**, 9 p.m., \$3 cover.

All Out Adventure Winter Outdoor Recreation Programs: Wendell State Forest. **Every Saturday till February 23rd.** Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, kicksledding, ice skating, sled hockey & snowmobile rides. Pre-registration please. (413) 527-8980, www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access.

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.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: TNT Karaoke! 8 p.m. Sing Free. 863-2866.

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

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

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.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18TH
Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust Benefit Concert and Silent Auction, Sweeney Concert Hall, Smith College, 7:30 p.m. features a solo piano performance by Emmy-award winning composer and pianist Steven Schoenberg of New Salem. Silent auction features works donated by nationally recognized illustrator and print maker Barry Moser and Pioneer Valley landscape painter Jamie Young. Tickets: \$20, or \$50 which includes post-concert reception with Schoenberg and Moser, available through the Northampton Box Office and at the door.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Lost In The Grove** - rock & roll covers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Ray Mason & Company** make their Voo Debut, 9 p.m. \$5.



Mike Agranoff, comedic singer/songwriter performs at The Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett Town Hall, Leverett at 7:30 p.m.

The Fourth Annual Duopalooza Concert Benefit for Class Action held at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, Greenfield. Charlie King and Karen Brandow will host with Claudia Schmidt and Sally Rogers. Class Action is dedicated to ending class bias or classism. 8 p.m. Tickets: \$18 at the door. \$15 advance. Call (413) 585-9709 or info@classism.org.

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 - 5 p.m.

Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett: Mike Agranoff, comedic singer/songwriter, 7:30 p.m. \$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.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Outerspace Band**, 9 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

Rockit Queer 4, the valley's best dance party, 9 p.m. 863-2866.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20TH
Scandinavian Dance, Third Sundays at the Montague Grange, Montague Center. Music for traditional couples dancing, instruction provided. \$8 donation suggested. Info (413) 253-0525.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25TH
Montague Parks & Recreation Family Fun Nights, Friday evenings 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. Unity Park Fieldhouse, Turners Falls. Ping-pong, board games, music, and raffles! Snacks. Children must be accompanied by an adult. FREE Registration not required, drop-in program, also Feb. 29, & March 28.

Introduction to Snowshoeing for Seniors. 9 - 11:30 a.m. For ages 50 and older. \$5 per person, \$17 with snowshoe rentals. Pre-registration required. 800-859-2960. Learn to snowshoe, observe animals' life stories in the snow.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Lady Elvis and Fletcher & Manzi, 9 p.m., \$3 cover.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26TH
6th Annual Anti-Racism Film Festival at All Souls Unitarian-Universalist Church, Greenfield 1 - 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27TH
Quabbin Valley Pro Musica concert held at Central Congregational Church, Orange at 4 p.m. Charles Heffernan, former conductor of the Keene Chorale for twenty years, will take the podium for his inaugural Quabbin Valley Pro Musica concert "Laudate Dominum". Tickets are \$10 each at the door. Also available online at www.1794meet-inghouse.org.

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH
Montague Parks & Recreation Berkshire East Day, 12:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Enjoy skiing, snowboarding, or their NEW Tubing Hill! Information and fee schedules www.montague.net or 863-3216.

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5. THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP Except Sat No eve shows DAILY 6:45 9:15 PG
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6. JUNO PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30
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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.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 18TH
Exhibit Explorations: *Who Lives Here?* Join Refuge staff for this tour designed for families with young children. Discover the stories behind the animals and plants you have wondered about. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 25TH
Nature Prose and Poetry Readings. Join Friends of Great Falls Discovery Center for this evening of readings and discussion. 6:30 to 9 p.m.
JANUARY 26TH 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Discussion of Lester Brown's new publication, PLAN B 3.0, that builds from our November discussion of Climate Change and Economic Sustainability in PLAN B 2.0. Books available for sale in Museum Store.
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OFF THE BEATEN TRACK: The Colossus of Roads

BY FLORE

MONTAGUE CENTER - I was heading for the post office in Montague Center, after doing what we call on Taylor Hill the 'Loop Walk', (from Ferry Road to Greenfield Road to Meadow Road and back again). If, as on that day, you are lucky enough to have good weather, without a snarling wind, you can actually take in the open landscape, the fields, the sun and the sky at the same time.

The Loop Walk is highly recommended for those who welcome such beaming light, but the truth is, in addition to this energizing input, I was hoping the Garbiel Farms would have some leftover snowpeople!

Have you realized, this year, there have been no signs of snowmen or snowwomen in these parts? They were my last hope!

The Garbiels are so terrific at displaying each year their incredible fierce scarecrows. But no signs of snowpeople, there either...

Then, as I was nearing the intersection of Court Square, School Street and Main, BANG! It was standing there,

as if my wish had been heard! This huge character, as tall, practically as the two-story home behind them! Holding a Finnish flag for no other reason, I was told, than the blue color, which matched the heraldic color of the Coltons' school! There it was, it had even withstood the thaw, the daily traffic, waiting peacefully until someone got excited at



RICH COLTON PHOTO

the sight of it enough to wonder what was the story behind its fabulous construction?

During the holidays, four kids decided to built a gigantic snow figure...

When asked, was there a particular idea, a political statement, behind the Colossus? The eldest son, Sam Colton, stepping just timely out of the school bus, answered: "To plain

have fun building it! Just to see how high we could get it to stand." The emeritus builders include his daring young brother Daniel and their close buddies Nick and Daniel Skarzynski.

I walked all around it, watching out to tamp down my excitement with proper French manners. I was not going to hum: "C'est la lutte finale, etc."

Know, its days are numbered. Quick, travel over there to see it, before it disappears with this Bahamas weather... Or, the Colossus might be thinking of asking for a ride, who knows, to Florida?

Left to right: Sam Colton, Dan Colton, Dan Skarzynski and Nicholas Scarzynski built a snow tower at 22 Main Street, Montague Center, following the last big snowstorm. The tower was built-up using a large plastic tube to form blocks. It can support the boys standing on it as seen in the photo. It stands something like ten feet high. Or at least it did....

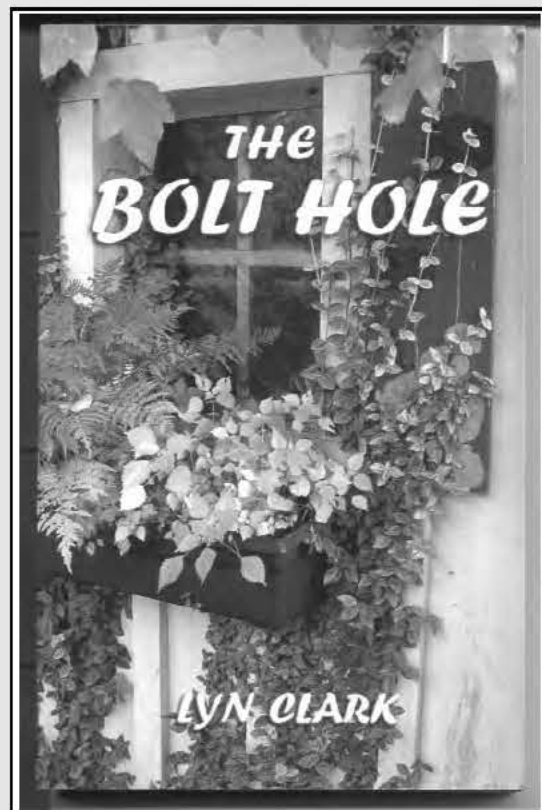
BOOK REVIEW: The Bolt Hole By Lyn Clark

REVIEWED BY
JEN AUDLEY

TURNERS FALLS - I read *The Bolt Hole* while traveling this past holiday season, which may have led me to enjoy Turners Falls author Lyn Clark's novel all the more. When you're on the road, it's a special treat to read fiction set in a place you know, and *The Bolt Hole*, a page turner that takes place over three days in the steamy depths of August 2007 in Summer Village, an imaginary enclave at the foot of the Berkshires on Route 2, is packed with real-life references and local details. I got a kick out of episodes that took place in Greenfield and descriptions of other familiar scenery. I may also have been willing to keep track of a cavalcade of characters that includes an emotionally reserved but restless fifty-five year old spinster-by-choice, a precocious eleven-year-old girl exiled from the Louisiana bayou, an equally bright tween boy with a weight problem and an encyclopedic command of Robert Frost, a Vietnamese former refugee gardener-cum-spiritual advisor, and a hunky, sensitive state cop, because I can vouch for the fact that such people actually do live here.

Clark, who wrote a touching and informative two part

series on autism for the *Reporter* in 2007, builds the action of the novel around a situation that would be a nightmare for anyone who cares for a special needs child - a five year old autistic boy, Sam, is orphaned and left without a legal guardian. A



distant relative agrees to take responsibility but conceals his plan to commit the child to an institution. Then, to make things even worse, while en route from Newburyport to his new accommodations, the child goes missing, having

apparently clambered into the back of a stranger's pick-up truck at a gas station near Haverill.

Miles later, at a gas station at the foot of the mountains, Sam disembarks from his hitched ride under cover of darkness and hikes uphill, ending up in the back yard of the self-possessed spinster, Annalee McKenna where he is discovered by Dutch DuValle, the precocious Louisiana girl-child. Luckily for Sam, Dutch has preternaturally fine maternal instincts. Unfortunately, she also decides to keep his existence a secret from the adults in her

life.

Of course, even a very self-sufficient gifted and talented eleven-year-old can't keep a secret so big for too long. On the way to things getting sorted out, Clark packs quite a lot of plot into 356 pages. Part

mystery, part romance, and part meditation on love, loss, and aging, *The Bolt Hole* is comedic, melodramatic, and filled with unexpected twists and turns. In the end, it is a sort of fairy tale. Secrets are revealed, and a mind-boggling number of loose ends are tied up. Bad guys are punished, but not too severely, and all of our heroes end up better off than when they started.

The Bolt Hole isn't perfect. An editor might have convinced Clark to cut back on the subplots and get rid of a few extraneous characters. This self-published novel has some rough spots, including a heavy-handed reliance on letters as a device for packing in background information, and a child character who, though endearing, ultimately comes across as too good to be true. Annalee, the fifty-five year old who shares the bulk of the narration with Dutch, is both more original and more interesting. When the story is told from Annalee's perspective, it goes beyond being a straightforward thriller and becomes something more unique: a suspenseful, engaging novel of ideas.

You can pick up a copy for yourself at World Eye Books in Greenfield, Boswell Books in Shelburne Falls, or by ordering direct from Amazon.com.

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Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship Local Competition

Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship. The local competition will be held January 12th from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sheffield School Gym in Turners Falls.

All contestants on the local level are recognized for their participation in the event. Participants are required to furnish proof of age and written parental consent. For entry forms or additional info contact Stephan Smith at (413) 863-4373 ext. 106.

The Free Throw Championship is sponsored annually with winners progressing through local, district and state competition. International champions are announced by the Knights of Columbus headquarters based on scores from the state level competitions.

Last year, nearly 219,000 sharpshooters participated in 3,497 local competitions.