



**USHER MILL**  
on Erving's 'To Do' List / Page 12



**ON DISPLAY**  
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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 14

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 11, 2007

## G-M School Committee Moves Forward on Reconfiguration

BY DAVID DETMOLD

Trying to martial disparate forces in the community - and the school committee - chair Mary Kociela began Tuesday night's (1/9) discussion on implementing the committee's December 19th 5-4 decision to reconfigure Montague elementary schools by expanding Montague Center School and all but closing Hillcrest Elementary, by telling a room packed with Hillcrest parents and supporters, "I know this has been very difficult for everyone. I have spoken with many parents in the district (since the vote)... It would have been difficult no matter which decision was taken, or if no decision was taken at all. I will do what I can to move us forward."

The committee first considered the issue of opening the remaining district elementary schools to intra-district choice, so students could, by parental choice and the agreement of school principals and the superintendent, attend any elemen-

tary school with an opening in Gill or Montague. Presently, the regional agreement between Gill and Montague stipulates elementary students must be educated in the town in which they live.

If the school committee decides to pursue this option, it will require an affirmative vote of the majority of the school committee, followed by a simple majority of voters at town meetings in both towns. Superintendent Gee recommended pushing for town meeting votes on intra-district choice to be held by the end of February.

The proposed amendment will require parents opting for intra-district choice to indicate their school preference by a specific date, so that slots left open at G-M schools can then be made available to students who may want to choice into the district from surrounding communities.

Openings for intra-district choice will be assigned to G-M students on either a first come, see **SCHOOL** pg 7

## Strengthening the Social Conscience of the Nation

Wendell Minister Reflects on Civil Rights Movement

BY DAVID DETMOLD

On Monday, the nation pauses to honor the living legacy of its great saint of nonviolence, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. The national holiday has particular significance for many who worked with King in the struggle to achieve a measure of civil rights for the black citizens of America, particularly in the deep South. One who worked with him in that cause is retired Unitarian minister Adele Smith-Penniman, who recently spent a quiet hour reminiscing about her days registering African American voters in South Carolina with King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

Sipping a cup of tea by the wood stove of her cozy home on the corner of Wickett Pond Road in Wendell, where she has



DETMOLD PHOTO

*Adele Smith Penniman spent the summer of 1965 working with Dr. Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, primarily doing voter registration in the charged atmosphere of Kershaw County, South Carolina.*

lived for the last four years, Smith-Penniman said, "I worked with Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference while I was still in college, in the summer of 1965. Our focus was on voter registration, first in

Columbia, the capital, and later in rural Kershaw County, primarily around the town of Camden."

This was by no means a safe thing for a young black woman from Boston to do in the summer of 1965. The previ-

ous summer, two young Jewish men from New York City, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, each got a .38 caliber bullet in the heart the day after meeting up with Andrew Goodman, a 20-year old black man from Meridian, in preparation for a voter registration drive in Philadelphia, Mississippi. Goodman was beaten severely, before he, too, was shot and killed.

The discovery of their decomposing bodies buried under an earthen dam 44 days later prompted national - and international - outrage. On March 7th, 1965, the unprovoked attack by Alabama state troopers and local police against peaceful marchers crossing the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma, on

see **KING** pg 9

## Rendezvous to Reopen UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP



DETMOLD PHOTO

BY DAVID DETMOLD  
**TURNERS FALLS** - At the beginning of November, Yesterdays closed, following a noise ordinance violation hearing that resulted in a one-month suspension of the Third Street bar's entertainment license. On Friday, January 5th, three neighbors - Chris Janke, Emily Brewster and Jaime Berger - purchased the bar at a foreclosure auction, along with their business partner Mark Wisnewski.

Berger said the neighborhood could expect a quieter, but still quite a lively gathering place, at the revived Rendezvous.

"We're talking about a place where people can talk see **BAR** pg 11

## Railroad Salvage Building Heading for Litigation

BY ERIC WASILESKI  
**THE PATCH** - At their January 8th meeting, building inspector David Jensen updated the Montague selectboard on the status of the former Railroad Salvage building on Power Street in the Patch. On January 5th, Jensen met with the building's owner, Gary Kosuda, who flew up from Ft. Lauderdale, FL to discuss his "hopes, plans and dreams for the building," before the

matter went to mediation at Housing Court in Greenfield.

Jensen said their pre-arbitration meeting seemed positive, with four options presented to Kosuda, whose derelict building has partially collapsed, causing the town to barricade Power Street for the last year to protect motorists from falling bricks. The options discussed included Kosuda moving ahead with his

see **SELECT** pg 8

Whether you want panini, poetry or just the ol' hair of the dog, you'll find it at the new Rendezvous, when it reopens later this year. (l-r): Chris Janke, Bo, Jaime Berger



**PET OF THE WEEK****Mr. Personality****Sharkie**

Sharkie is a 7-year-old male black and white shorthair cat in need of a good home. Sharkie is the head butt king and just loves to be petted and brushed! He is an indoor only cat who gets along well with other cats as well as with dogs. For more information on adopting Sharkie, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

**Gill History Museum Hours for January**

The Gill Historic Museum at the Riverside municipal building on the French King Highway (Route 2) will be open on Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. during the month of January. For further information, please call (413) 863-8103.

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**ERVING LIBRARY NEWS****Pastel Painting Workshop**

Escape winter to a world of color with award winning pastel artist Gregory John Maichack at the Erving Public Library. On Tuesday, January 23rd, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Maichack will offer an Introduction to Pastel Painting Workshop for ages 13 and up. Please call the library at (413) 423-3348 to pre-register for this free class. All supplies provided; bring a photo to work from.

Participants will receive an engaging hands-on experience of basic pastel painting, as well as advanced techniques. All will try their hand at starting a pastel painting and will receive help tailored to their projects, whether landscape, still life or portraiture.

Maichack will demonstrate the essentials of painting with pastels, and will display original pastel artwork to illustrate his

talk. A demo of expressive pastel painting will detail achieving luminous color, volume, structuring and engaging composition, and tips on creating impact.

Holyoke resident Gregory John Maichack, is a teacher, portraitist and painter whose work is represented by galleries from Kennebunkport to San Francisco.

The workshop is supported in part by a grant from the Erving Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. The Erving Public Library is located on Route 63 just south of Route 2. Library hours are Mondays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5 to 8 p.m., Tuesdays 3 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays 1 to 4 p.m., and Thursdays 5 to 8 p.m.



Two members of the As Yun String Quartet (l-r, Anna Wetberby and Jeong Hee Kim) attack Beethoven's Opus 18 #4 at the Full Moon Follies at Wendell Town Hall, Saturday January 6th, 2007.

**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS****Mother Goose on the Loose**

BY LINDA HICKMAN, TURNERS FALLS- Two sessions of "Mother Goose on the Loose" will be held at the Carnegie Library on Saturday January 20th and on Tuesday, January 23rd, both at 10 a.m. The programs will feature a mix of music, rhymes and stories for babies through preschoolers and their parents or care givers. Children's Librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix of Greenfield are running the very interactive sessions. For more information contact the Carnegie Library, 201 Ave. A, Turners Falls, 863-3214.

**Five Rivers Council Monthly Gathering**

The monthly gathering of the Five Rivers Council will take place on Saturday, January 20th, from 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at the Four Rivers Charter School, 248 Colrain Road in Greenfield.

The Five Rivers Council was created to bring together individuals and groups in our region that are striving to build a healthy, equitable, and sustainable community. For further information, please go to [www.fiveriverscouncil.org](http://www.fiveriverscouncil.org) or call (413) 367-9673

**SLATE LIBRARY NEWS****Story Hour**

GILL - Slate library's story hour is up and running on Tuesday mornings in the center of Gill. The story hour begins at 10 a.m. at the library, and provides an opportunity for families with young children to meet, while listening to stories, sharing a healthy snack and creating an art project.

Themes for upcoming weeks include: Jan.16th - Birds; Jan. 23rd - Winter Sun; Jan.30th - Dreams; Feb. 6th - Fairy Tales; Feb. 13th - In the Kitchen; Feb. 20th - Animal Friends; Feb. 27th - Shapes in Nature.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES January 13-21, 2007**

**MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth St., Turners Falls, is open Mon. - Fri. from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Make meal reservations a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on the machine when the center is closed (863-9357). Mealsite manager is Chris Richer. The center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. Transportation to the center can be provided. Special trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip.

**Monday, 15th**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics  
1:00 p.m. Canasta  
**Tuesday, 16th**

9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi  
**Wednesday, 17th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 18th**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, 19th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. PACE 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 med-

ical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

**Monday, 15th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch  
**Tuesday, 16th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, 17th**  
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing  
12 Noon Bingo  
**Thursday, 18th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Shopping

**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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## Government Class Takes on Community Projects

BY ALI URBAN

While many students are busy studying for finals by skimming textbooks, memorizing term cards and reviewing worksheets, members of Heather Batchelor's senior government class at Turners Falls High School are working to develop service projects to address important local, national and global issues.

"So often, kids see school as an isolated experience," Batchelor said. "They come to school, do their work and leave. I think it is my responsibility as an educator to help kids interact in the world as democratic citizens, and this project aims at helping them achieve that goal."

More than 30 students sought to address issues of their choice, incorporating an educational component. With the help of at least one organization, agency or group, students developed and implemented their projects throughout December and the beginning of January.

Among the projects, students chose to address concerns within the community such as putting leftover cafeteria food to better use and organizing a blood drive at TFHS later this winter. Some plan to volunteer at Hillcrest and Sheffield schools' after school programs, while others developed their own program, where they will help sixth graders prepare for the transition to middle school. Others raised funds to support cancer research, the Fallen Firefighter's Fund or organized support for soldiers serving in Iraq.

Mitch Guevin and Bobby Croteau developed a video game tournament to raise money for Dial/Self, a Greenfield-based organization whose mission is to create opportunities, services and programs that promote the health and positive development of youth in Western Massachusetts.

"We're going to set up video game systems over the classroom projectors," Guevin said. Participants will pay a \$2 entry fee to compete in the tournament to determine the top gamers.

Guevin said the project will give students a chance to do something they enjoy while

helping others. "This is important because some teens aren't as fortunate and don't have supportive families, so I hope I can help them to get that support. People can have fun and do a good deed."

Addressing the student issue of school identification cards, Joe Reed has investigated student and faculty opinion on rules regarding the IDs. He asked students about their perception whether the student IDs contributed to school safety, and their response to punishment for not wearing one and how strictly rules about IDs are enforced.

"I hope to find out what the IDs are really meant to do, and how effective they are," Reed said. He thinks that being forced to wear IDs violates students' rights, and feels the reasoning for issuing student IDs is flawed. "I have talked with the administration about these issues, and I have researched other schools to learn about their policies on IDs," he added. He contends other schools' policies are less strict.

At the completion of their projects, students will submit a written report describing their projects, the actions they took, and the final results of their efforts.



## Just In Case it Ever Snows: Snowshoeing Workshops at Northfield Mountain

### Intro to Snowshoeing for Seniors

Friday, January 19th; 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

For ages 50 and older

There is a small fee for the program, and pre-registration is required; call (413) 659-4461.

Learn to snowshoe with other active seniors and observe the animals' life stories written in the snow. New lightweight snowshoes are the perfect tools for gaining grip on snowy or icy terrain and using ski poles gives extra contact points to further increase stability in a variety of winter conditions. After an indoor introduction to equipment, participants will practice techniques on flat terrain and gentle hills. With our new skills we'll visit wildlife spots to look for signs of porcupine, fox, or deer. Hot drinks, snacks and handouts on snowshoeing and tracking will round out this morning with naturalist Beth Bazler. Wear wind pants or gaiters if you have them, and dress in warm layers that can be shed as we get moving.

### Intro to Snowshoeing Workshop

Saturday, January 20th; 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

For ages 10 and older

There will be a small fee for this program; pre-registration is required, call (413) 659-4461.

After an indoor introduction to snowshoe designs and functions, we'll put on snowshoes and practice skills like going up and down hill, traversing slopes, crossing logs, etc. Armed with our new skills, we'll visit wildlife 'hot-spots' on the mountain to look for signs of porcupine, fox, or deer. Hot drinks, snacks, and handouts on snowshoeing and tracking will round out this afternoon on the snow with naturalist Beth Bazler. Wear wind pants or gaiters if you have them, and dress in warm layers that can be shed as we get moving.

## Psychic Fair

**LAKE PLEASANT** - The National Spiritual Alliance will sponsor a Psychic Fair Saturday (January 27) from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Thompson Temple across from the Post Office in Lake Pleasant. Divination methods include astrology, I-Ching, hand reading, vibration connection, and tarot cards. Consultation is with a medium of choice. Healing services will also be available.

TNSA evolved from the New England Spiritualist Campmeeting Association formed in 1874. Lake Pleasant is the oldest continuously-existing Spiritualist community in the United States.

## Discussions on Safe Sex for Parents and Teens

The Brick House will be hosting two sessions with registered nurse Anne Pease on January 22nd and 29th, from 7 to 9 p.m. The first session, "Helping Your Teen Stay Safe with Sex," will give parents the opportunity to gain trustworthy up-to-date information and insight regarding safe sex and how they can help their teens stay protected and informed. The second session, "Sex and How to Protect Yourself," will give teens the same opportunity to learn. Both discussions will take place in a relaxed and comfortable environment.

These sessions are free and will be presented at the Brick House at 24 Third Street, Turners Falls. For more information regarding these events, or any Brick House programs, please call Karen Stinchfield at (413) 863-9576 or Jared Libby at 863-9559.

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# The Montague Reporter

24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, Mass. 01376

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## Lament on a Mild, Snowless Winter

BY SHARON HORTON

**TURNERS FALLS** - When I returned to Turners Falls in the fall of 2001 after nine years of mediocre winters, I looked forward to enjoying some good ol' New England winters of bitter cold and deep snow. Alas, this year's winter season has been mild and virtually snowless.

I miss the patriotic look of Turners Falls' white snow on red brick under a blue sky. I miss people coming out of their downtown apartments after a snowstorm, cheerful and glad to see each other. A

out my car, and hope against hope for a smooth start. We are all in it together; borrowing shovels from each other, and teaming up to get someone's car unstuck, usually mine, the biggest in the lot.

I call this year's season an 'open winter'. That's a term I picked up in the Midwest, meaning a winter with no snow, but just as cold. This one would qualify, except for the mild temperatures. Still, being able to call it *something* somehow makes it better.

I miss the cold as much as I miss the snow. I miss hearing

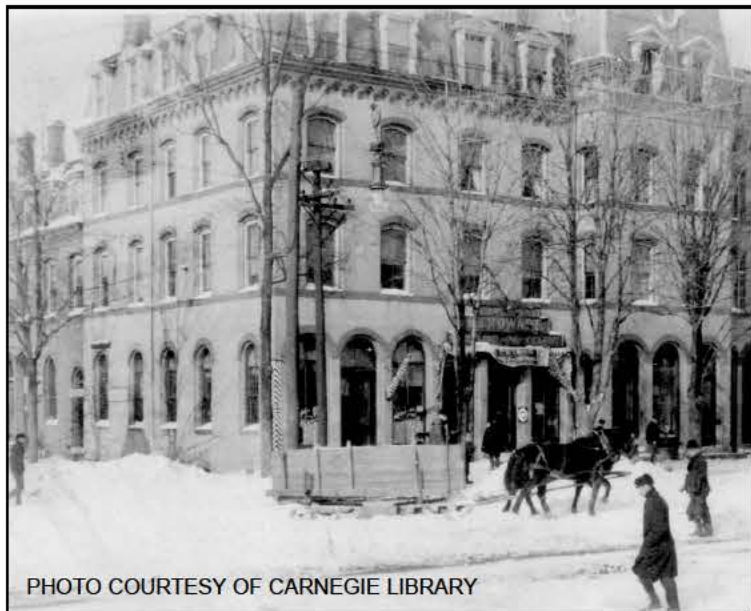


PHOTO COURTESY OF CARNEGIE LIBRARY

The Grand Trunk Hotel in snowier days of yore, on Avenue A and 2nd Street

hard winter's day is the best excuse for good-natured complaining.

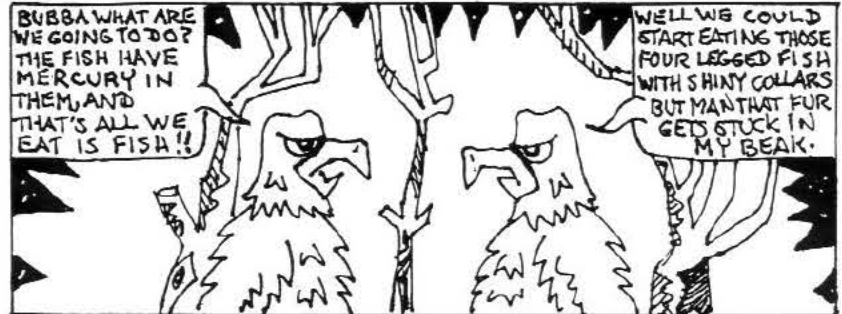
I miss the camaraderie of neighbors digging out their cars to clear the parking lot for plowing. Bundled so warm I could barely move, I'd scrape my windows, shovel

conversations on basic survival, such as someone's heat being shut off, or another person's broken car thermostat's preventing him or her from traveling out of town. Hearing stories like these did my heart good because it reminded me, during winter, a time when we all need reminding of this, that we all count on each other.

Traditional, cold, snowy, Western Massachusetts winter, please return. Come back, and renew my sense of community once again.

We welcome your letters.  
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SAGES OF BARTON COVE

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### School Closing Arguments, cont.

BY JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - At Tuesday's school committee meeting a number of critics derided the decision to partially close Hillcrest School, basing their criticisms on the cost of renovating Montague Center School. This is an issue on which reasonable people can disagree, but the critics claimed the decision should have been a "no brainer," and were outraged it did not go the other way.

The school committee and the configuration committee have been discussing this issue for over two years. While they thought the condition of the buildings was an important issue, there were other concerns in the mix, including educational goals. This was clear in the configuration committee report and in the committee's meetings with state facilitator, Glen Couture. To be outraged after the fact that the decision was not based on the condition of the buildings alone seems off base to me.

Secondly, there was a tendency last night to mix the prob-

lem of the ongoing school budget "gap" with the need to make capital improvements to school buildings. The difference between closing Montague Center as opposed to Hillcrest in the annual budget is in fact only about \$20,000 a year, and this figure does not take into consideration school choice losses. You can disagree with the logic, but let's not distort the numbers and claim the school committee is out of touch with reality.

Third, the critics seem to assume there would be no school capital expenses if Montague Center were closed. In fact, we have always assumed there would be a capital project at the elementary schools, whatever the outcome of the debate. This reality was partly what drove the process to conclusion: the Montague capital improvements committee did not want to approve more ad hoc capital requests without first considering the need for a full-scale project for the elementary schools.

Fourth, the critics also com-

pletely ignored the proposal to use Hillcrest for other town needs. This could potentially balance the cost of renovating Montague Center School, but unfortunately discussion of this idea now seems to have been put off for two months, until a public hearing on the proposal to build a new community center downtown takes place.

Again, one can certainly disagree with the logic and the final decision. There are two sides to every issue. But the outrage and charges of political manipulation and "elitism" are unfair to the school committee. They are also not supported by the facts! I wish the critics would at least consider that this is potentially a positive 'win-win' solution to the perennial elementary school debate. We need to move on and address the core budget issues.

- Jeff Singleton is the chair of the Montague finance committee. The opinions expressed here are his own, and do not represent the views of the committee.

## MCTV PEG Access Forum

BY DEAN GARVIN

**TURNERS FALLS** - MCTV will host an open forum at the town hall selectboard room on Tuesday, January 23rd, at 7:00 p.m., to discuss current and possible future uses of Montague's two PEG access channels: 15 and 17. The meeting will be recorded and broadcast the following evening.

At the top of the agenda will be a discussion about what could change regarding the programming on channels 15 and 17: should it stay the same, should we put the schools and town hall programming on one channel and everything else on the other? MCTV is seeking community feedback.

In addition to the open forum, MCTV will also have its annual review with the cable advisory committee on the 23rd.

You can visit MCTV Monday through Friday, from 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. MCTV is always looking for producers and volunteers. Get involved in your local media! For more information please visit [www.MontagueTV.org](http://www.MontagueTV.org)

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# EARTH TALK

## GREEN LAWNS

By the Editors of E - the Environmental Magazine  
 Dear EarthTalk: I'm sick of having to maintain my lawn, and I'm sure all the chemicals I'm using are no good for the environment. What alternatives can I explore that will save time and money while keeping the property looking nice?

- Sarah, Bethesda, MD

Grass lawns first appeared in Europe in medieval times, status symbols for the rich that had to be kept trimmed by fairly labor-intensive methods, often by grazing livestock and certainly not by polluting lawn mowers and poisonous weed killers. Lawns actually did not become popular in North America until the middle of the 20th century, but are now as common as the middle class suburban homes



they surround.

Besides hogging public water supplies - over 50 percent of U.S. residential water usage goes to irrigating lawns - a 2002 Harris Survey found that American households spend \$1,200 per year on residential lawn care. Indeed, the booming lawn care industry is more than eager to convince us that our

grass can be greener - and then sell us all the synthetic fertilizers, toxic pesticides and leaky lawnmowers to make it so.

According to Eartheasy.com, which offers online insights on a host of environmental issues alongside books and green products for sale, there are many alternatives to a carpet of monochromatic grass for one's property. They recommend groundcover plants and clover, which spread out and grow horizontally and require no cutting. Some varieties of groundcover are Alyssum, Bishops Weed and Juniper. Common clovers

include Yellow Blossom, Red Clover and Dutch White, the best suited of the three for lawn use. Groundcover plants and clovers naturally fight weeds, act as mulch and add beneficial nitrogen to the soil.

Eartheasy also recommends flower and shrub beds, which can be "strategically located to add color and interest while expanding the low maintenance areas of your yard," and planting ornamental grasses. Ornamental grasses, many of which flower, have numerous benefits over conventional grasses, including low maintenance, little need for fertilizer, minimal pest and disease problems and resistance to drought.

According to David Beaulieu's *Guide to Landscaping*, moss plants should also be considered, especially if your yard is shady: "Because they are low-growing and can form dense mats, moss plants can be considered an alternative ground cover for landscaping and planted as 'shade gardens in lieu of traditional lawns.'" Moss plants do not possess true roots, he points out, instead deriving their nutrients and moisture from the air. As such they like wet surroundings and also soil with a pH that is acidic.

In all fairness, lawns do have a few pluses. They make great

recreational spaces, prevent soil erosion, filter contaminants from rainwater and absorb many kinds of airborne pollutants. So you might still keep a short section of lawn, one that can be mowed with a few easy strokes. If you do, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends avoiding traditional synthetic fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides. A number of all-natural alternatives are now widely available at nurseries. Natural lawn care advocates also advise mowing high and often so that grass can out-compete any nascent weeds. Also, leaving clippings where they land - so they can serve as natural mulch - also helps prevent weeds from getting a foothold.

Got an environmental question? Email: [earthtalk@emagazine.com](mailto:earthtalk@emagazine.com). Read past columns at: [www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php](http://www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php).



### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

## Canadian Check Scam Investigated

#### Wednesday 1-3

3:31 p.m. Requested to check residence in town for a possible runaway from Montague. Unable to locate.

5:01 p.m. Report of suspicious person near the Gill-Montague Bridge. Subject located, no problem found, assisted with a transport to Montague.

#### Thursday 1-4

2:15 p.m. Report of a vehicle operating erratically on West Gill Road. Checked area, unable to locate.

#### Friday 1-05

3:10 p.m. Motor vehicle crash at intersection of Main Road and West Gill Road. No injury, report taken.

#### Saturday 1-6

12:50 a.m. Assisted Montague police with a reported fight on Avenue A. Assisted with arrest.

5:40 p.m. Report of a suspicious person

near the French King Bridge. Responded with Erving officer, unable to locate subject.

9:50 p.m. Report of two loose horses on North Cross Road.

#### Sunday 1-7

2:45 p.m. Assisted subject locked out of a vehicle on Route 10. Entry gained.

#### Monday 1-8

6:22 p.m. Report of a suspicious person on the Northfield Mount Hermon campus. Checked area with security, unable to locate subject.

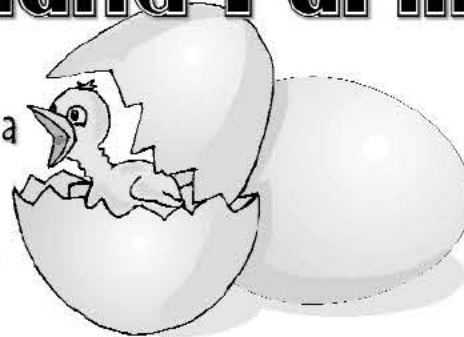
#### Tuesday 1-9

10:29 a.m. Report taken of a larceny by check from a Main Road resident. Situation involved a scam from Canada resulting in a \$1,500 theft.

7:05 p.m. Report of a gas drive-off from a French King highway business. Under investigation.

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### PUBLIC HEARING

Erving Community  
 Development Strategy

Erving's Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on January 29th, 2007 at 7:15 p.m., Town Hall, 12 E. Main Street to discuss and solicit public response to the update of the Town's Community Development Strategy (CDS) and to prioritize the projects and activities the Town plans to undertake in the next 3 - 5 years.

Residents are encouraged to attend the Hearing where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity. The CDS and list of projects are available at the Selectmen's office in Town Hall.

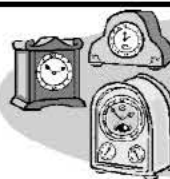
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## MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: January 12 through January 18

### Friday, January 12

8:00 am Montague Update: Clark & Martha Edwards  
9:00 am Montague Selectboard 1/8  
11:30 am Iraq War Vigil  
12:00 am Villages of Montague  
1:00 pm Family Friends  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #26  
6:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review  
7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting 1/9  
10:00 pm Montague Update: Lorraine York-Edberg  
11:00 pm On the Ridge: Coyote Hunting

### Saturday, January 13

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #26  
8:30 am TFHS Weekly Review  
9:00 am GMRSD Meeting 1/9  
12:00 pm Montague Update-Lorraine York-Edberg  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:00 pm The Well Being: Sky Awareness  
7:00 pm Montague Update: Habitat for Humanity  
8:00 pm Discovery Center: Curious About Creatures  
9:00 pm Montague Music Train  
10:30 pm The Price of Freedom

### Sunday, January 14

8:00 am The Well Being: Sky Awareness  
9:00 am Montague Update: Habitat for Humanity  
10:00 am Discovery Center: Curious About Creatures  
11:00 am Montague Music Train  
12:30 pm The Price of Freedom  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:00 pm Iraq Vigil  
6:30 pm Villages of Montague  
7:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review  
8:30 pm On the Ridge: Coyote Hunting  
9:30 pm This is Montague: Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club

### Monday, January 15

8:00 am Iraq Vigil  
8:30 am Villages of Montague  
9:30 am TFHS Weekly Review

10:30 am On the Ridge: Coyote Hunting  
11:30 am This is Montague: Millers Falls Rod & Gun Club  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:00 pm Montague Community Band  
7:00 pm Montague Selectboard 1/8  
10:00 pm Montague Update: Lorraine York-Edberg  
11:00 pm Surviving the Vernon Reactor #2

### Tuesday, January 16

8:00 am Montague Community Band  
9:00 am Montague Selectboard 1/8  
11:30 am Montague Update: Lorraine York-Edberg  
1:00 pm Surviving the Vernon Reactor #2  
6:00 pm Iraq War Vigil  
6:30 pm TFHS Weekly Review  
7:00 pm Block Grant Meeting LIVE  
10:00 pm GED Connection #25  
10:30 pm Villages of Montague

### Wednesday, January 17

8:00 am Iraq War Vigil  
8:30 am TFHS Weekly Review  
9:00 am GMRSD Meeting 1/9  
9:00 am GED Connection #25  
9:30 am Villages of Montague  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #26  
7:00 pm GED Connection #25  
7:30 pm The Well Being: Sky Awareness  
8:30 pm Montague Music Train  
10:00 pm Prevailing Winds of Denmark

### Thursday, January 18

8:30 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #26  
9:00 am GED Connection #25  
9:30 am The Well Being: Sky Awareness  
10:30 am Montague Music Train  
12:00 pm Prevailing Winds of Denmark  
2:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
3:00 pm Bulletin Board  
4:00 pm Barton Cove Eagles  
5:00 pm Bulletin Board  
6:00 pm Montague Update: Lorraine York-Edberg  
7:00 pm Montague Selectboard 1/8  
10:00 pm Iraq War Vigil  
10:30 pm Family Friends

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL SELECT BOARD

# Maddern on Medical Leave

BY DAVID DETMOLD

The Gill selectboard met Monday, January 8th, with Phil Maddern absent. Maddern, 68, is on an extended medical leave from his selectboard post, after taking ill over the holidays. Maddern is in the third year of his fifth term as selectman; he first joined the board in 1992.

His colleagues expressed wishes for his speedy recovery, and suggested cards and well wishes could be sent care of town hall.

### MARIAMANTE RFP

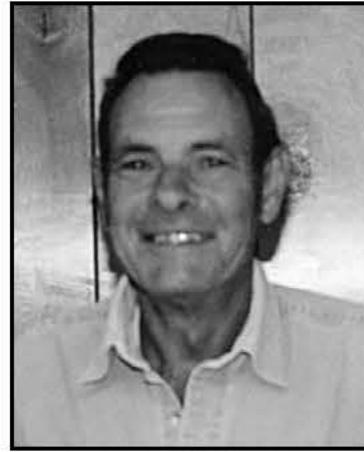
The board pushed back the deadline for proposals for a Request for Proposals (RFP) on the former Mariamante property on the corner of Main and West Gill Road from February 12th to March 15th. The town is seeking bids on ten acres of the twelve-acre parcel, which is considered ideally situated for commercial or industrial development. The town, which had a conservation easement on the property, exercised its right of first refusal and purchased the acreage two and a half years ago for \$239,000, to ward off a housing developer's bid to put up a large number of condos on the land. Since then, the cost of short-term borrowing has increased the town's investment in the property.

The RFP will be advertised in the Massachusetts Central Register and the local papers next week. Gill's initial RFP advertisement for the parcel was criticized by the Inspector General's office as ambiguously worded. But Gill administrative assistant Deb Roussel objected to the IG's office for after-the-fact criticism.

"We asked them for their help with the RFP before we advertised it, and they said they didn't have the resources to help us. How come they found the money to review the RFP after the fact?" asked Roussel.

The new advertisement will

include clearer wording on how the town intends to dispose of the property, which is "for sale to the bidder who successfully meets the terms of the RFP in



Phil Maddern

their development proposal," Roussel said.

### COLAS TO BE DISCUSSED

As the '08 budget making process begins, the board proposes to meet with the finance committee on January 22nd, to talk over the process of establishing cost of living increases (COLA) for town employees. The matter was a subject of dispute at last year's town meeting, when the finance committee opposed the selectboard's proposed 3½% COLA for employees. Town meeting adopted the 2½% figure proposed by the finance committee instead.

Speaking of cost of living increases, the board received notice from the town's cable service provider, ComCast, that the cost of basic cable television service for Gill residents (as for the residents of other county towns) will increase from \$48.90 a month to \$51.55 a month this year.

On the bright side, the town received a check for \$1542.84 from ComCast to develop a cable bulletin board, to be operated out of town hall. Roussel said now that the town hall was wired up to provide the

bulletin board, the town was only waiting for a meeting between IT committee member Don Kruger, of Starstruck Design, who hosts the town's website, and a technician from ComCast. Roussel said that meeting should take place soon, and that NMH students had also expressed a willingness to help with updating the bulletin board.

The board has been working on developing a cable bulleting board for nearly a year.

### BUDGET OUTLOOK

Gill is sending three less students to the Franklin County Tech School this year, eight students total, down from eleven last year, which should spell a drop in Gill's Tech School assessment, if all else remains equal.

Board chair Banash said she expects the town will receive "less than double digit" increases in the cost of health insurance for employees in '08, which, for some reason, struck the board as good news, at least in comparison to recent years.

The board decided to withhold \$672 from a recent bill for engineering on the Main Road reconstruction project from Greenman Pedersen, Inc. The withheld amount signifies the sum needed to redesign a subdrain, which the board felt should have been included in the original plans.

"It was their oversight," said Banash.

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# SCHOOLS

continued from pg 1

first served basis, as determined by a stamped and dated application form, or perhaps by lottery, if demand is great enough.

Committee member Mike Langknecht said, "I think it's crazy that [Montague] students can choose to Frontier, but they can't choose to Gill."

Montague town meeting member Steve Ellis said, "Any town meeting would be concerned - perhaps Gill more than Montague would be concerned - about the direction or intent of the policy." He wondered if a move toward intra-district choice would be motivated by a desire to equalize class sizes throughout the district, or to equalize demographics. Speaking for himself, Ellis said he tended to favor the idea of intra-district choice.

Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton said he favored a lottery system to assign open slots.

G-M teacher association president Nancy Daniel-Green said she did not want to see a system set up whereby principals could, for example, refuse to accept a student into their school due to low test scores.

Gill sixth grade teacher Joanne Rabideau said consideration should be given to the possible negatives of intra-district choice. "I have a fear intra-district choice will create some kind of segregation we don't want to see in our district. Will there be an exodus from certain schools?"

Committee member Ted Castro-Santos said he wanted parents to have some role in determining whether students are placed in schools with open slots, rather than leaving the decision entirely to the principals.

Committee member Valeria Smith said she introduced the

idea of intra-district choice in hopes of "just trying to equalize our classes. I could see many benefits. One of my greatest heartbreaks is the combined class in Gill. If we could get more students there, we could eliminate that."

Mike Langknecht spoke against the paragraph in the proposed amendment which stipulates parents shall be responsible for providing transportation for intra-district choice students. He said that clause could lead to "economic segregation, which we don't want either."

Castro-Santos said the amendment should specify that students have the right to attend the elementary school in their town or nearest their residence.

Sheffield principal Chip Wood said there was a "huge assumption on the table" about how students would be assigned to elementary schools, which would have ramifications for equity in education for district students.

Others reminded the committee if a student is allowed to choose into a school, their siblings should be allowed to follow.

The matter of intra-district choice was referred to the policy subcommittee for further work prior to the January 23rd meeting of the entire school committee.

Next, the committee turned their attention to the proposal of sending 6th graders to the middle school, and on this topic there seemed to be broad agreement that such a move would be to the students' advantage.

Upper school principal Jeff Kenney spoke first.

"I am a strong believer that 6th graders belong at the middle school," where he said "content and curriculum" is more appropriate for this age group, "when students' physical, emotional and educational needs" begin to change. That is

when they need staff trained to deal with their changing needs, Kenney said.

Besides offering the advantages of a "specialized environment," Kenney said the middle school community would experience fewer transitions if expanded to grades 6 - 8. "Now, we've got kids transitioning in to the 7th grade, and kids transitioning out of the eighth grade. It makes it very difficult to have that kind of transitioning happen in a very short period of time." If the 6th grade is added, "It gives us three years to work with them and their parents. I see educational benefits for the 6th graders," Kenney said.

He continued, "We have ample space at the middle school. We have room for four full teams (of teachers and students); we currently have two.

Sixth graders could "participate in all-school programs if appropriate." He said questions like whether 6th graders should participate in middle school sports or attend middle school dances remain to be answered. "We'd have to look at that."

He cited another educational advantage: "Sixth grade teachers would be provided with planning time, and would be in close proximity to subject specialists at the high school and middle school."

He concluded, "We are ready to take the challenge. I think we have a facility and program that is ready to handle these sixth graders."

Sixth grade teacher Janet Diani said when students come into sixth grade, "Developmentally and

emotionally, these kids aren't ready to go into a middle school setting. We think self-contained classrooms are the best thing for them. But by January or February, when their hormones are raging," they are ready to become middle schoolers. In the beginning of the year,

"They thrive when there is one person there to help them;" by the middle of the year "they are ready for switching" classrooms.

Wood said, "The important thing is that this not be a delayed vote. We could have a middle school study committee for the next two years." He continued, "We would mourn the loss of 6th graders in Sheffield. I watch them tutor our third graders...." But he said, under the mandates of the No Child Left Behind law, "The curriculum has been microwaved. A more relaxed, inquiry-based approach to learning, the way these teachers have taught," has become the exception, rather than the rule, Wood said. "If there is going to be an attempt by the district to meet adequate yearly progress benchmarks - a huge challenge with no resources - I think moving the 6th graders to the middle school is the right decision."

Rabideau urged the committee to put aside any hesitation about including Gill sixth graders in the contemplated move. "Consider what is best for us. I am in my third year of wishing my kids had technology. My kids are working in shifts on computers... I've worked in the middle school, and I like that system very much. I wish Gill could jump in and make that decision with you."

Langknecht said, "We need to

make that decision as a district." The committee agreed to consider wording for an additional amendment to the district agreement to allow sixth graders from Gill to move to the middle school, which would require a vote by both Gill and Montague town meetings.

At the beginning and the end of the meeting, numerous parents and teachers sharply criticized the committee's vote of December 19th to keep Montague Center School open and all but close Hillcrest, except for a pre-K center there. Gee provided an action plan for accomplishing the move of students from Hillcrest to Sheffield, and to expand the early childhood education center at Hillcrest. The plan would seek state funding for a building renovation or expansion at Montague Center, and seek a tenant for the empty half of Hillcrest. The superintendent will establish task forces "to focus quickly on the short term tasks," under her supervision.

Sheffield community council co-chair Ellis asked for a clear plan for the move of students to Sheffield, or for the committee to consider delaying the implementation of the reconfiguration until a plan could be worked out.

Parent Russell Dean told the committee they had made a mistake, that it was a "no-brainer" to close Montague Center School, with its extensive renovation needs. "I would have felt the committee would have made a decision based on the facts, rather than on selfish motives," he said.

Sheffield teacher Donna Klaiber echoed his remarks. "I don't see the savings," she said, pointing to the need to renovate Sheffield bathrooms to accommodate smaller children. "I see this costing the town of Montague a lot more money."

As Castro-Santos argued, "The difference between closing half of Hillcrest and Montague Center is \$20,000 a year," savings that would be more than eclipsed by the flight of school choice students from the district if the school at the southern end of the town were closed, a number of voices were raised from the back of the room, prepared to engage the debate anew. Kociela gavelled this part of the meeting to a close, saying, "We have to move forward."

At that, a large group of parents walked out into the hall, where a vociferous dispute continued to rage for twenty minutes, prompting the school committee to close the door to continue their meeting.

*"Consider what is best for us. I've worked in the middle school, and I like that system very much. I wish Gill could jump in and make that decision with you."*  
- Joanne Rabideau, 6th Grade Teacher, Gill Elementary, speaking of a possible move of sixth graders to the Great Falls Middle School

We could easily identify one entire wing for 6th graders: three classrooms plus a science room. They wouldn't be overcrowded in the least.

"We have up-to-date technology ready and available for them: computers in all classrooms, laptops, mobile labs, a full library system, everything they could take advantage of."

Kenney acknowledged, "Parents are anxious about their kids going to a huge building, but all their child's classrooms would be in one wing, with doors that open onto each other, and lots of communication between their teachers."

He said responsive classroom features like morning meeting would be carried over to 6th grade classes at the middle

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Fallout from a Paintball Incident

#### Thursday 1-4

7:30 a.m. Officer assisted EMTs at a Lillians Way address with medical emergency.

10:00 a.m. Officer picked up loose dog at French King Motel room #2. Dog is a male shepherd. Dropped off at the kennel.

#### Monday 1-8

1:46 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Route 2, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor, failure to inspect, and a marked lanes violation.

#### Friday 1-5

3:52 p.m. Criminal citation issued to [redacted] for obstructed license plate and unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

1:20 p.m. Report of threats made at a Forrest Street address. Spoke with involved parties. This incident stems from January 4th paintball gun incident. Words were exchanged, but no crime committed. Told subject to steer clear of this residence.

6:50 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at a North Street address. [redacted] arrested and charged with trespassing.

#### Saturday 1-6



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## SELECT

continued from pg 1

plans for the building, clean up the site, stabilize the building, or lastly he could sell the building.

However, Jensen said, during arbitration, negotiations broke down when the issue of a timeline came up. "The timeline was unacceptable to Mr. Kosuda," Jensen said. Jensen said the one positive to come from the mediation session was Kosuda's agreement to seek an appraisal of the property.

At the close of arbitration, the mediator recommended that Kosuda get a lawyer, and urged the town to do likewise, saying the issues seemed too complicated to be sorted out in mediation. Jensen concluded

his report with the news that the matter will go to trial on February 9th.

Board member Pat Allen responded, in a firm voice, "It's litigation."

Jensen noted Kosuda's development consultant had failed to show up for planned meetings and admitted the owner's "follow through has been disappointing." Residents of the Patch, limited to the 11th Street bridge as the sole means of accessing their neighborhood, might agree.

Board member Allen Ross said, "My sense is, given his inability to do anything to stabilize the property, our only choice is to be aggressive to force the sale or get control of the property."

The board also reviewed a



The renovation at Peskeomskut Park has created several problem areas in terms of accessibility including the pea stone walkways and wood chipped play area.

letter from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board regarding work recently done at Peskeomskut Park in Turners Falls, citing the town for non-compliance with Americans with Disability Act requirements. The complaint cited the use of 3/8th inch pea stone on walkways in the park as a barrier to wheelchair accessibility, and threatened the possibility of \$1000 a day fines if the town does not move to resolve the issue quickly.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said he had met recently with the project's engineer, Weston & Sampson, and a representative from the Massachusetts Office of Disabilities regarding the problem, and three other issues of concern at the newly renovated park. The other issues include the need for van accessibility and parking, the question of whether wood chips in the swing set and play area could be considered an appropriate surface from an accessibility standpoint, and the third was the need for additional seating or surface requirements for audience members with disabilities in the area around the bandstand.

Massachusetts law requires "changes in level not greater than a quarter of an inch" in walkways, and Abbondanzio noted a recent lawsuit in another Massachusetts community found the use of pea stone on

walkways to violate ADA requirements. Abbondanzio said once the pea stone walkways were swept he was confident they would meet the state's requirements. He said "maintenance" of the wood chips under the play structure could enable that material to qualify with ADA requirements. He said a hard packed area or perhaps a paved area in front of the band shell would be included to provide additional seating for people with disabilities and band concerts.

The town is requesting extra time to complete a review of the issues raised, and Abbondanzio said the walkways might be closed off until sping.

In other news, the board approved the hiring of Kathryn Perroult of Gill for 34 hours per week at \$12.82 per hour as the new clerk of the board of health and the planning board.

The board held a hearing on a dog complaint stemming from a December 8th, 2006 incident at 478 Turners Falls Road between three golden retrievers and one Jack Russell terrier. The terrier was bitten by the neighboring dogs, owned by Linda Johnson. The hearing concluded with the board ordering the golden retrievers to be kept in a kennel in Johnson's back yard during the day and inside at night (due to noise). When complainant Todd Byrnes asked what he

law.

Water treatment plant superintendent Bob Trombley reported the first phase of the Combined Sewer Overflow project is complete, having gone \$128,000 over the estimated price tag, due to difficulty getting through ledge in that area. Allen jokingly commented, "I kind of miss the obstacle course," on Avenue A.

Camp Dresser McKee project manager Paul Gilbert said his firm had reduced engineering fees for the second phase of the work by \$200,000. Bids for Phase II should go out this summer; work at the Montague City end of the CSO abatement project should reach completion in 2008, Gilbert said.

The board approved police chief Ray Zukowski's request to put staff sergeant Chris Williams on 111-F (convalescent) status due to a knee injury he received in the line of duty. He was approved for six weeks leave backdated to January 3rd.

Zukowski also requested and received permission to hire four part time and two full time police dispatchers to fill vacancies in the dispatch department, since the planned merger with the Greenfield dispatch center fell through a few months back. Montague dispatchers start at \$12.50 an hour, up from \$9.50 an hour, Zukowski said.



# GCC



## SPRING REGISTRATION

Tuesday, January 23  
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# KING

continued from pg 1

their way to the state capital in Montgomery to demand voting rights, galvanized Washington into action. Midway through the summer of 1965, Congress passed and President Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act, outlawing literacy tests and, eventually, poll taxes and other obstacles to the right of black citizens to vote.

Smith-Penniman recalled, "In those days, people were barred from going to the polls. If they got inside, the sheriff determined whether you could pass a literacy test," which required potential voters to read and understand sections of the state constitution, for example, before qualifying to vote. The law was interpreted loosely for white registrants, who could qualify even if illiterate, if white registrars deemed they could understand a section of the constitution read aloud to them.

Other means of discriminating against potential black voters included the 'grandfather clause,' which granted voting rights to anyone whose forefathers had been eligible to vote prior to 1867, thereby excluding blacks. Poll taxes were equally discriminatory against the poor throughout the south, whether black or white.

Smith-Penniman credited her father with giving her the moral foundation and courage to participate in the difficult and dangerous work of registering black voters in the Jim Crow South. "He was born and raised in Haiti; he was used to a country run by blacks, and had not experienced white racism," before moving to Boston. "He believed anything you wanted to do, you could do."

The seeds of her social conscience were planted early, Smith-Penniman said, when she took part in vigils organized by Boston-area Quakers against the Vietnam war, "on Fridays at the Park Street Common, in the early 60s, long before anyone else" had thought of protesting that war.

She attended school in Newton, after her parents moved there in 1954 from the mixed-race neighborhood of Roxbury. ("At the time Roxbury was one third Irish, one third black, one third Jewish.") Her father defied the real estate agents in Newton, who turned him down every time he looked at a house there. When he finally

found a house he could buy in that white suburb, neighbors got up a petition asking their family to move out, and real estate agents began advising folks to "get out fast, blacks are moving in."

*“ He believed anything you wanted to do, you could do. ”*

Smith-Penniman began volunteering with the Boston office of the Congress for Racial Equality after school. When she felt the call to throw in her lot with the burgeoning Civil Rights movement in the South, her mother worried about her traveling there, but her father, who had attended the March on Washington with Martin Luther King in 1963, signed her permission form.

Eighteen years old, Smith-Penniman journeyed to Clark

challenge the apartheid system of discrimination and segregation in the Jim Crow South.

SCOPE was a project conceived and organized by Hosea Williams, who had risen to prominence in Savannah, GA, where he spearheaded the first successful desegregation effort of a Southern passenger train, the Nancy Hanks, that ran from Savannah to Atlanta, and led the integration of Tybee Beach, the first public beach to accommodate both races in the South.

In Howell Raines' first person compendium of interviews with American Civil Rights movement leaders, *My Soul is Rested*, he quotes Williams recalling his upbringing and early influences:

"I was born in poverty... and reared up in Decatur County, Georgia. That's southwest Georgia, and the racism and segregation was so prevalent, until it was something that you had to notice... We used to walk two and a half miles to school. The white kids always had a bus. No black kids were allowed to ride the bus, and it looked to me like every day, probably just my imagination, those white kids would spit on us and throw rocks at us, holler, and call us 'niggers,'... and I just knew that was not right.

I remember one time after I bought this new home and new car... you know, I was a social climbin', middle class Negro. I guess I was the first black person in Savannah to have a zoysia lawn. I remember buying this grass from Sears & Roebuck, and had sodded my lawn, and I was out there one day tryin' to water it, and my hose would not stretch to sprinkle across the whole lawn. I had a big lot there. And I went back up to this new drugstore... gonna buy some hose connectors, an extension to a hose... And I carried my two sons with me. They wasn't but about six and seven, and as we walked into this drugstore, it had a long lunch counter and these white kids were sittin' on these stools, spinnin' around, eatin' hot dogs and drinkin' Coca-Cola.

"And my boys started askin' me, 'Daddy, let's get a sand-

wich and a Coke.' But I always will believe what they wanted to do was play on those stools, and I said, 'Naw, you cain't have a Coke and sandwich.' And one of 'em started cryin'. And I said, 'Well, you know, I'm gonna take you back home and Momma'll fix you a hot dog and give you a Coke,' and then both of 'em started cryin'. And both of 'em just fell out in the floor, which was very unusual for my kids to do me like that. And I remember stoopin' down and I started cryin', because I realized I couldn't tell them the truth.

"The truth was they was black and they didn't 'low black people to use them lunch counters. So I picked the two kids up and went back to the car and I guess I made 'em a promise that I'd bring 'em back someday. So that really got me involved."

Smith-Penniman recalled, "Doing the trainings, we were there, white and black, North and South. And to meet people of such stature was a thrilling experience. They were very strong thinkers, people with such compassion. There was just a brilliance about people like Bayard Rustin and Martin Luther King."

Raines quotes Rustin recalling how he came to be associated with King, at the time of the

Montgomery bus boycott in 1956:

"My meeting with Dr. King came about because I at that time worked for an organization called the Fellowship of Reconciliation. It was a pacifist organization. I got a telegram [from Lillian Smith, the writer

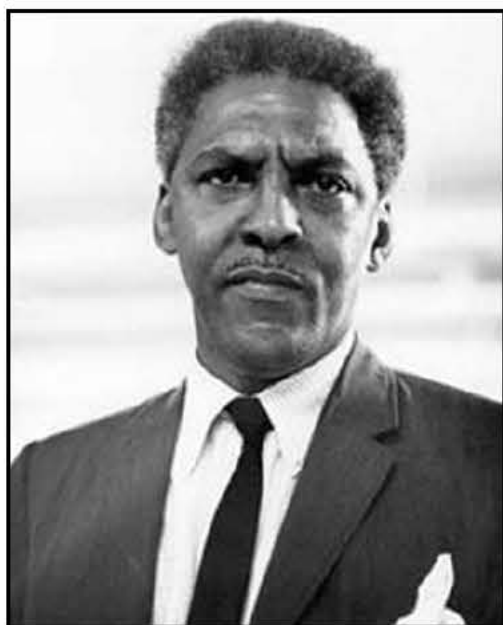


Hosea Williams

from Georgia] saying that she felt I had worked with the Gandhi movement in India, that it would be a good idea for me to go to see Dr. King [then 26 years old, and recently elected the head of the Montgomery Improvement Association] because he was a young man and he had not had great experience in handling nonviolent tactics...

"Now, contrary to what many people think, Dr. King was not a confirmed believer in nonvio-

continued next page



Bayard Rustin

Atlanta University, a historically black college, to receive a coordinated weeklong training with people like Hosea Williams, Bayard Rustin, and Martin Luther King. Five hundred college student volunteers from around the country attended, black and white, to take part in the Summer Community Organization and Political Education (SCOPE) project, developing voter registration drives in 15 'black belts' throughout five Southern states.

Smith-Penniman recalled, "They were predominantly white northern students," who had traveled south, inspired by the work the SCLC was doing to

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## MLK Vigil and Speak-out

On Saturday, January 13th, at 11 a.m., a vigil and speak-out will be held on the Greenfield town common to honor the human rights and anti-war activism of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The event is planned in conjunction with international actions calling for the closure of the U.S. prison at Guantánamo and justice for the detainees there, whose illegal and inhumane treatment by the U.S. government violates everything Dr. King stood for. Sponsored by the Greenfield Weekly Peace Vigil and the Connecticut Valley Coalition for Women's Lives. For more information, contact: Susan Dorazio at (413) 367-9356.

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## KING

continued from previous

lence, totally, at the time that the boycott began. On my second visit there, the house was still being protected by armed guards. In fact, when I went in, I went in with a chap whose name was Bill Worthy... As Bill went to sit down in the King living room, I said, 'Hey, Bill, wait!' I said, 'There's a gun in that chair.' And he might have sat on it. But it was gradually over several weeks that Dr. King continuously deepened his commitment to nonviolence, and within six weeks, he had demanded that there be no armed guards and no effort associating himself in any form with violence...

"I take no credit for Dr. King's development, but I think the fact that Dr. King had someone around recommending certain readings and discussing these things with him was helpful to bring up in him what was already obviously there..."

"It's a very curious thing, and I very seldom would dare to say such a thing, but when I got to know Martin well, I said to him one day, 'Martin, I have a feeling that you had better prepare yourself for martyrdom, because I don't see how you can make the challenge that you are making here without a very real possibility of your being murdered, and I wonder if you have made your peace with that.' And I also told him that I could feel something in him that was akin to what one felt in the Gandhi circle. There was a... well, I quoted a Negro spiritual and I said, 'I have the feeling the Lord has laid his hands on you and that is a dangerous, dangerous thing.'"

"Our days began early," recalled Smith-Penniman. "We would get up and knock on every door and listen (to what the people in Kershaw County had to say), and we would encourage people to register to vote. We would hold mass meetings in the church, where the ministers would be in the leadership. It was very powerful.

"Every few weeks we would get in our cars and gather people up and drive them to the polling place. One thing that struck me was the sacrifice people would make to register to vote. People were risking their jobs, their lives, to vote."

She said, "Religion and faith were such a strong part of the movement. One meeting in the church someone came in and said, 'They're burning a cross out there.' We just sang even

louder."

Smith-Penniman said during the course of her work in Camden, SC, "Over 150 new people registered to vote, where maybe only a dozen were registered before I got there."

The changes that come to a community when it organizes and gains political power are reflected in many ways, Smith-Penniman said. "The faces of who we see as mayor or as our state legislators more truly represent us. And on a material level... if you worked as a domestic, you were able to earn maybe \$25 a week. There was a black middle class of teachers and ministers, but if you weren't in the middle class, you had very few avenues open to you to put food on the table. The basic necessities weren't there."

She said racism affected every aspect of life in the South at the time she worked there. She spoke of a fair-skinned man who went into the hospital in Columbia for surgery, and was placed in a white ward until his family came to visit, at which point he was placed on a gurney and wheeled across the yard in a rainstorm to the black ward. She talked of people living in one or two room shacks with no electricity or running water in the Black Bottom neighborhood in Columbia, within sight of the capital dome.

While she was in Kershaw County, knocking on doors to register people, a neighbor told her, "There's a baby down the road who is starving to death." When she found the family, the 7-month-old weighed only nine pounds: the mother had nothing to feed her with. But the doctor at the local hospital would not admit the child. He told her, "If we admitted every baby in the county who is hungry there wouldn't be any room for other needs."

Later, civil rights workers brought the mother, whose name was Clayvon, back to the hospital, where her baby, Sylvia, was admitted by a Quaker doctor. But the first physician discharged the infant when he came on shift again a few days later.

When she returned north, Smith-Penniman stayed in touch with Clayvon, and followed her progress, hoping Sylvia would recover. But then one day her letters went unanswered. "I'll never know what happened, but I'm afraid the baby died. She was already brain damaged," from severe malnourishment, she said.

"These people had no resources. No food stamps, no

Medicaid, there was nothing to save this baby."

Generalizing from her experience, Smith-Penniman said the civil rights movement "Strengthened our social conscience, so we could have things like WIC and Medicaid. The houses on Black Bottom probably have electricity now; the dirt road is paved."

Smith-Penniman continued working with the civil rights movement in New York City, where she helped the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee with fundraising for

Boston area, working with women who were homeless, in prison, or illegal immigrants with a group called Women for Economic Justice and with the Women's Theological Center.

Now retired from the ministry, Smith-Penniman has divided her time between daily Buddhist meditation, occasional guest sermons, and completing her Doctorate of Ministry. "I try to stay active in Peace and Social Justice work," she said. She serves on the board of the Western Massachusetts American Friends Service

things can change. It is tremendously hard work; there are so many obstacles. But we have to try and try again, that's what is needed."

Smith-Penniman moved to Wendell after her children began taking African dance lessons there. Though she herself has never been to Africa, she is looking forward to finally have the chance to do so this summer, when she will be attending a gathering of the African Diaspora at one of the old slave markets in Ghana.

A student of poetry during her

### Elegy For Martin Luther King (IV of V)

(for jazz orchestra)

It was the fourth of April, nineteen hundred and sixty-eight,  
A spring evening in a grey neighborhood, a district smelling  
Of garbage mud where children played in the streets in Spring,  
And Spring blossomed in the dark courtyards where blue murmuring  
Streams played, a song of nightingales in the ghetto night of hearts.  
Martin Luther King chose them, the motel, the district,  
The garbage and the street sweepers, with the eyes of his heart in those  
Spring days, those days of passion wherever the mud of flesh  
Would have been glorified in the light of Christ.  
It was the evening when light is clearest and air sweetest,  
Dusk at the heart's hour, and its flowering of secrets  
Mouth to mouth, of organ and of hymns and incense.  
On the balcony now haloed in crimson where the air  
Is more limpid, Martin Luther stands speaking pastor to pastor:  
"My Brother, do not forget to praise Christ in his resurrection  
And let his name be praised!"  
And now opposite him, in a house of prostitution, profanation,  
And perdition, yes, in the Lorraine Motel - Ah, Lorraine, ah  
Joan, the white and blue woman, let our mouths purify you  
Like rising incense! - In that evil house of tomcats and pimps  
A man stands up, a Remington rifle in his hands.  
James Earl Ray sees the Reverend Martin Luther King,  
Through his telescopic sight, sees the death of Christ: "My brother,  
Do not forget to magnify Christ in his resurrection this evening!"  
Sent by Judas, he watches him, for we have made the poor into wolves  
Of the poor. He looks through his telescopic sight, sees only the tender  
Neck so black and beautiful. He hates that golden voice modulating  
The angels' flutes, the voice of bronze trombone that thunders on terrible  
Sodom and on Adama. Martin looks ahead at the house in front, he sees  
The skyscrapers of light and glass, He sees curly, blond heads, dark,  
Kinky heads full of dreams like mysterious orchids, and the blue lips  
And the roses sing in a chorus like a harmonious organ.  
The white man looks hard and precise as steel. James Earl aims  
And hits the mark, shoots Martin, who withers like a fragrant flower  
And falls. "My brother, praise His Name clearly, may our bones  
Exult in the Resurrection!"

- By Leopold Senghor

the movement, counseling black men about draft deferments and conscientious refusal during the Vietnam War, working to achieve non-governmental organization status for African Americans at the United Nations, and organizing solidarity for black liberation movements in African nations emerging from colonialism.

In between raising a family of three children, Smith-Penniman was ordained as a Unitarian Minister, leading to a career at parishes in Concord and Petersham. She also found time for community ministry in the

Committee, and also the New England Regional AFSC board.

Reflecting on the relevance of the Civil Rights movement for modern day America, she said if Reverend King were alive today, "He'd be horrified. Clearly he'd be speaking out against the war. Three thousand soldiers killed is 3,000 too many, not to mention the tens of thousands of Iraqis."

And, "He'd be terribly concerned about the growing divide between the rich and the poor."

Smith-Penniman said the message of the civil rights movement is one of "Hope and persistence. It is critical to believe

college years, Smith-Penniman said she dreamed of lying on the beach in Senegal this summer and having someone read the poems of Leopold Senghor or Aimee Cesaire to her.

Maybe *Elegy for Martin Luther King, IV* reproduced above, from Leopold Sedar Senghor (1906 - 2001), poet, teacher, and president of Senegal from 1960 - 1981. Senghor coined the term 'negritude' which refers to identifying with one's 'blackness' without reference to culture, language, or geography.

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# - Winter Programs - Montague Parks & Recreation Department

The Montague parks and recreation department is still taking registrations for the following winter programs:

**Youth Programs:** Tae Kwon Do; January 22nd - March 19th; ages 7 and up. No experience necessary. American Red Cross Babysitting Course; Monday, January 29th and February 5th (two-night course); ages 11 - 15.

**Family Programs:**

UMass Men's Hockey Bus Trip; Saturday, February 10th versus Providence College. Montague residents: \$14.00 a person, non-residents: \$16.00 a person. All programs are first come, first served; registration deadlines and enrollment limits apply. Contact the MPRD office to receive additional registration information and a Winter Program Flier at 863-3216.

## BAR from page 1

and drink, but we want to add a cultural thing, too. Maybe knitting groups, poetry readings, acoustic music, comedy, board games, cards, you name it. We're going to have a pingpong table and a pool table. We're going to be open in the afternoon. People can come in and have a cup of coffee, and we will have light bar fare: soups, sandwiches, salads, maybe a little fingerfood.

Janke, who worked his way up from dishwasher to executive chef at the Old Yarmouth Inn in Yarmouthport, said, "We want to coordinate easy spreads before and after Shea Theater events."

Berger said, "We're going to have a TV, but we'll probably have the volume off a lot of the time."

"Except for the Red Sox playoffs," Janke added. "We'll bring the wide screen in for those."

And the renovations might be complete by then. The partners say they have a "broad opening date" of May to August, by which time they hope to have a new roof put on, the old clapboards replaced, a new deck, alter the bar, install a small kitchen, put in café tables, booths, and lounge seating, and build a new back bar. Also, they plan to redo the façade, and install full-length windows in front, to create a more inviting look.

"We want to appeal to writers and musicians," said Berger, "and get the bar known outside the area, but we want it to be just a place for regular guys to come for a break. We want to be a neighborhood bar."

Janke and Brewster live two doors down from the bar, which the partners intend to renovate and reopen under its old name, the Rendezvous, later this year. Berger lives on L Street, and had extensive bartending experience in San Francisco, his for-

mer home, as does Wisnewski, of Greenfield, who tends bar at the People's Pint.

In an informal interview in the back of Janke's laundromat, Suzee's Third Street Laundry earlier this week, Janke said, "We were the high bidders on the property. We'd worked hard to try to avoid going to auction. But we had not been able to get a purchase and sale agreement in time." Janke said there were at least three registered bidders among the crowd of nearly a dozen who showed up for the auction on Friday.

He said he became interested in purchasing the bar once Morrow put it up for sale, shortly before moving to Florida in November.

"When Fran Carne put the Rendezvous up for sale three years ago, I was excited when I heard the new owner would be offering live music. I thought that was something Turners definitely needed. People need a place they can go to hear live music."

But Janke, who was directly involved in a group of 20 or more neighbors pressing the selectboard to enforce the town's noise ordinance at Yesterdays last fall, said efforts to work out a solution to ongoing noise complaints with Morrow failed. "Metallica had become the soundtrack in my living room."

"I'm sorry she felt she had to close the bar. I felt the town suspending her entertainment license for a month gave her an opportunity to work with the neighborhood to improve the quality of life," Janke said soundproofing the bar was the obvious solution, and asking the bands to turn the noise down.

But once Morrow put the bar up for sale, Janke said he felt he had to act.

"The bar is next door. What happens there affects my life greatly. It is the defining business in my neighborhood."

Janke thanked Michael Davies and the Greenfield

Cooperative Bank for working with the partners in developing their business plan and insuring funding would be there for the project. "They are very supportive of the project. They really believe in Turners Falls."

Brewster said all the workers would receive safety ID training; Janke plans to run the kitchen and manage the business end, Berger and Wisnewski will keep the taps flowing.

The partners have applied to the town and the state for a liquor license, which returned to the town's control when Yesterdays closed. A hearing on their application has yet to be scheduled.

Oh, and the noise issue is also being dealt with. "We plan to soundproof the bar significantly" said Janke.

"And we're going to stick to acoustic music, 90% of the time," Berger added.



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### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Loud Noise on Chestnut Hill

**Thursday 1-4**  
7:35 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on 5th Street, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license and a motor vehicle lights violation.

**Friday 1-5**  
8:55 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on West Main Street, in Millers Falls, [redacted] was arrested and charged with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and speeding.

9:33 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Millers Falls Road at Carlisle Avenue, [redacted] was arrested

ed and charged with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and failure to wear a seat belt.

**Saturday 1-6**  
1:13 a.m. Report of a loud noise disturbance at a Chestnut Hill Loop address. [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor, speeding, marked lanes violation, and possession of a class D drug.

**Monday 1-8**  
12:49 a.m. Report of an assault at a Rastallis Street address. Caller stated he did not know who assaulted him, and wanted no medical assistance. Report taken.

### HANDS ALL AROUND

#### XI Quilt Show

Hands Across the Valley Quilters Guild of Amherst is proud to announce its eleventh biennial quilt exhibition at the LeFrak and the Cage Gymnasiums at Amherst College, Route. 116 (S.Pleasant Street), Amherst, on March 24th and 25th, 10 a.m - 4 p.m.

Approximately 400 quilts and quilted items will be exhibited, featuring works by local and northeastern regional quilt artists and guild members. Event also includes auctions both days, two appraisers, raffle quilt, antique quilts, 21 vendors, free shuttle bus for parking, demonstrations, luncheon and snack bar.

Montague resident, author and artist Ann Feitelson and her contemporary inspired quilts are featured in a special booth at the show where she will give periodic lectures on both days.

For more info about the guild and about the event visit [www.handsacrossthevalley.org](http://www.handsacrossthevalley.org).

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## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# Community Development Priorities Outlined

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - The town of Erving will conduct a public hearing on January 29th on a draft Community Development Strategy, prepared by town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp for the selectboard. The plan, which prioritizes public works, infrastructure, environmental, and economic development projects, will help the town qualify for continued community development block grant funding.

But Sharp hopes it will do more than that. "I hope it will spur all town boards to give formal thought to capital projects for the next five years." Among the top priorities listed is a new senior center, and a small senior housing complex near the Erving Elementary School. Also high on the list is a renovation of the Usher Mill complex on Arch Street, on the bank of the Millers

River in Erving Center. "The board recognizes this property is a gem, but we can't take the money out of our pocket-book," to renovate it, Sharp said.

Also on the list is resurfacing Gunn Street and River Road, expanding the sewer line in Erving Center, adding town water at that end of town, upgrading the water treatment facilities in Farley and Erving, and purchasing a stretch of riverfront land along the Connecticut, on Dorsey Road, for conservation and recreation purposes.

The board took the draft document under advisement, and will discuss it at their January 22nd meeting.



CORI URBAN PHOTO

A view of the Usher Mill

In other business, at their January 8th meeting, the board conducted performance reviews for police chief Chris Blair, highway superintendent Paul Prest, and wastewater treatment plant chief of operations Mike Pierce. All reviews were satisfactory.

Renovations are being carried out on several fronts at town hall: where new 'Erving Blue'

carpeting is being installed over the next few weeks, and a fresh coat of paint applied to walls and ceilings. Across the street, where a "Welcome to Erving" sign stood sentry so long it finally rotted away, Sharp said the Erving Improvement Council, working with the town highway department, will soon install a new welcome sign, incorporating the winning slogan from last year's townwide contest. The winning slogan, "Erving: It's a Great Place to Live," was entered by first grader Sydney Upham.

In other news, the board signed a right of entry agreement with MassHighway, to store equipment for the safety improvements near the Route 2

intersection with River Road. The equipment will be stored on the southwest corner of that intersection, near the access road to wastewater treatment plant #1.

The board received a scope of work report from engineers Tighe and Bond regarding the condition of the Farley wastewater treatment facility. In order to gauge the need for repair or replacement of the 10,000-gallon-a-day twin septic tank and sand filter facility, Tighe and Bond engineers said \$6,000 would be needed to evaluate the condition of the facility, and \$4100 would be needed to conduct a study on the cost of replacing the facility, if need be.

The board took this report under advisement. Town meeting will have to be consulted before appropriating money for further study.

## Montague Audit Turns Up \$1.7 Million Excess

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**

At the selectboard meeting of January 8th, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio reviewed a report from the audit of town financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2006, prepared by Melanson Heath and Co. of Greenfield. The so-called Management Letter outlined 12 areas of concern, largely relating to internal controls meant to provide "reasonable, but not absolute, assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, and that transactions are executed in accordance with required authorization and recorded properly to permit the preparation of financial statements, in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices."

Though most items dealt with the details of financial accounting on the departmental level, the first issue zeroed in on the \$2,079,578 balance in the town's overlay accounts, which are held in reserve to cover anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions, and uncollected taxes. The auditor estimated \$1.7 million of that balance was being held in excess of potential liabilities, and recommended the board of assessors transfer that amount into an overlay reserve account, to make it available for other town needs.

Abbondanzio said this money had been set aside to handle tax abatement claims from the former Indeck plant, but those claims have since been settled favorably. Director of assessing Joanne Greenleaf said the assessors continued to hold the money in the overlay account in case the Montague Energy Group, which purchased the Indeck plant in 2004, failed to settle a back tax bill of \$1,109,250.24, but that sum was paid in full in September of 2006.

Town accountant Carolyn Olsen said a committee of town officials met on Tuesday, January 9th, to propose a method of dealing with an excess in the overlay account. She said the committee proposed transferring any certified free cash in excess of \$500,000 and any amount the assessors might place in an overlay reserve account to the town's stabilization fund. Olsen said the town presently has \$260,000 in free cash. She said it is up to the assessors to move funds they determine to be in excess in the overlay account into an overlay reserve account.

Greenleaf said the assessors were busy with abatements at the present time, but she saw no outstanding issues that would prevent them from moving the excess funds identified in the

audit to the overlay reserve. "Certainly the assessors will cooperate with the town," she said.

Other issues raised in the report included the failure of some departments to stamp checks for deposit: "Town of Montague, for Deposit Only." The auditor recommended all personnel who handle cash receipts be "bonded in some manner to protect the town in the event of a misappropriation of town assets," which Abbondanzio said is now the case.

The auditor recommended the town come up with a plan for paying for what Abbondanzio called "unfunded health benefits and pension liabilities for retirees." He said the town had formerly used a pay as you go system for dealing with these steadily rising costs, but that method has gotten many a municipality into serious financial arrears or near bankruptcy in recent years.

Abbondanzio said the town has begun budgeting for these retirement costs, and said "the system would be fully funded by 2015."

The report again criticized financial procedures in the building inspector's office, as it did last year as well. The auditor

said, "In response to a prior year (2004) management letter, the building inspector's office successfully implemented a receipt log which was reconciled to the town's general ledger. Our follow up in the current year of the continued maintenance of the log revealed it was not being maintained in a timely manner. As of our fieldwork in early August, the log had only been completed and reconciled to the town's general ledger through February 2006."

Building inspector David Jensen, present at the meeting, said, "This is apparently true." He defended his office's performance by saying fewer personnel hours and more work translated to a need to prioritize tasks. "We fell behind."

Board member Allen Ross said, "We should have better feedback from your office on financial management and permitting. This has come up a number of times over the years."

The auditor noted "the following common weaknesses" among departments that handle cash receipts: Duties are generally not adequately segregated to minimize the risk of fraud (embezzlement). Prenumbered receipts are not always issued to customers. Checks are not always stamped upon receipt

"For Deposit Only - Town of Montague." Departmental receipt records are generally not reconciled to monthly general ledger revenue reports. Not all departments maintain a formal log of departmental receipts. Licenses and permits are not always prenumbered prior to issuance nor held in a secure location; and receipts are not always held in a secure location.

The report noted weaknesses in internal controls at the DPW including: failure to maintain a continuous receipt log to track receipts, failure to regularly reconcile receipt activity to the town's general ledger, checks not stamped "For Deposit Only - Town of Montague," and the same person handling receipts who maintains the receipt log and prepares turnover to the treasurer. "These weaknesses result in inadequate internal control over receipts and increase the risk that errors or irregularities could occur and go undetected."

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

## Outhouse Disaster

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - After dark, the outhouse was another story. Even after I'd started grammar school, and slept outdoors when visitors were given our beds, I'd sometimes ask Ma to go out to the outhouse with me at night. I think it was from my earlier experience of falling through the hole. Or it could have been just to get her undivided attention. It never failed to amaze me that Ma would take time from her bustling about, light the lantern, and go out to sit with me to wait patiently. There wasn't much conversation, but I felt close to her and cherished our time together. To have her to myself even for those few minutes presented me with the illusion that she loved me despite my flaws. It never dawned on me that she might have regarded this time as a respite from her unending chores, rather than the mildly

annoying sacrifice and the act of love that I imagined. But the time together, sharing the comforting glow of the lantern seemed to signify that she did love me, after all; though she never seemed to be able to ever bring herself to tell me that, even once in her lifetime.

The disaster of falling through the hole began one Sunday afternoon when I'd begged my older sisters to read me the comics. They didn't want to be bothered. But Helen, arriving home for a visit, took pity on me. She sat next to me on the running board of the Essex, reading me the funnies. It was Pa's first Essex that we sat on, the emerald beauty that we later played in as the "old green car," out behind the barn.

Helen showered me with affection, kissing and hugging me when she arrived. I think it was because Pa had given Helen the honor of naming me. She chose to name me after Pa, the

most important person in her life, not knowing Pa had once had another son named "Joseph" who no one in the family knew about. In a way, it was just as well I didn't know. The sheer number of kids in the family was already confusing enough. Someone had once tried explaining the relationships in our combined family, with brothers and sisters, half brothers and half sisters, and step-brothers and stepsisters, but it only confused me more. Years later, when I discovered the other Joseph, I wondered if Pa was especially hard on me because I reminded him of his first-born, who had died in infancy.

Helen and the older kids flitting in and out of our lives seemed quite natural. It didn't seem at all strange that Helen should suddenly appear one day to read me the funnies. She read the balloons over each character's head, patiently explaining

what was taking place as she read. When she'd finished narrating the funnies on that memorable day, I went to the outhouse by myself to show her how grown-up I was. Curiosity got the best of me, and since I was grown up enough to go to the outhouse alone, I decided to try out the big adult hole. Down I went, like Alice in Wonderland. It wasn't very far to fall - three or four feet, at most - but it seemed a lot more. The landing was soft and dark. But it stunk, and the outside world was now high above me like two holes in the night sky. Panic gripped me. Some unnamed horror was sure to get me in that foul smelling pit. I sensed something stirring. There was no telling what lurked in the dark. Bugs and rats, maybe, or even snakes posed to strike. I cried out for help, and then cried some more when no help came. At last, Helen, hearing my cries, called to my sisters.

"Joey's fallen through the hole. Come and get him out. I'm all dressed up."

"Well, we're dressed up, too," was the answer.

Helen went to the back of the outhouse, opened the clean-out door, and pulled me out. The outside world, that had seemed such an impossible distance away, suddenly looked safe in the bright sunshine. I was grateful for Helen's rescue, holding her in high regard from that day forward, even though she'd held me out as far away from herself as she could. Fortunately, I was considered too young to go to church and Ma later told me that I was not wearing Sunday best clothes. Ma later explained that usually only the kids able to dress themselves went to church on Sunday, and that she had enough to do without that. Helen washed me up in the brook and dressed me in clean clothes.

*continued next week*

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# Color Blindness

**BY FRED CICETTI**

**LEONIA, NJ** - *Q. Do people who are color blind see everything in black and white?*

"Color blindness" is the common term used to describe color vision deficiency. The term is misleading, because total color blindness that turns the world into shades of gray is rare.

The most common type of color blindness makes it difficult for people to discriminate between red and green. The next most common form of the deficiency affects the perception of blues and yellows. Those with blue-yellow blindness almost always have red-green blindness, too.

Many people with color blindness don't know they have



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

it. What some of them call green may actually be yellow. They can go through life thinking yellow is green.

So, for example, they are

taught at an early age that grass is green. They look at lawns and see yellow grass. Subsequently, if you ask them what color the grass is, they will tell you it's green. (Please don't ask me how they handle shopping for bananas.)

Color blindness affects about ten percent of men, but only one percent of women. Most people

with color blindness inherited it. There is no treatment to correct inherited color blindness. However, there are specially tinted eyeglasses that can help people with deficiencies to discriminate between colors.

Another cause of color blindness is simple aging, which gradually diminishes our ability to see colors.

Diseases can affect your color vision, too. Usually, diseases affect the perception of blue and yellow. Some conditions that can cause color blindness are diabetes, glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, leukemia and sickle cell anemia.

Some drugs can alter color perception, too. These include drugs for heart problems, high blood pressure, rheumatoid

arthritis, nervous disorders and psychological problems.

Exposure to certain chemicals can cause color blindness. These include carbon disulfide, fertilizers, styrene and mercury.

The eye is like a camera. There's a lens in the front that focuses images on the retina in the back. The retina contains nerve cells that react to light and transmit information to your brain. If the cells responsible for color don't work properly, you

suffer from color blindness.

If you think you are having a color-vision problem, see an eye doctor. You'll be asked to look at a book containing several multicolored dot patterns. If you have a color vision deficiency, you won't be able to pick out numbers and shapes from within the dot patterns.

*If you have a question, please write to fredcicetti@gmail.com*

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**THE GILL GOURMET**

**Well-Seasoned Cream of Broccoli Soup**

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

**Ingredients:**

- 4 cups of uncooked broccoli, diced in small pieces
- 1 tennis ball size potato, quartered.
- 4 baby carrots, sliced thickly
- 4 cups of water
- 1 garlic clove, or more, depending on your social commitments.
- 2 packets of boullion, chicken or beef
- 4 crushed peppercorns
- 1 cup of sour cream
- Salt to taste



Put all the ingredients but the sour cream into a pot to boil for about 15 minutes. Cool slightly. Remove a cup of the cooked broccoli and blend the rest of the contents in a blender or food processor.

Now, here is the wormhole in the potato. Refrigerate the blended ingredients for a few hours, or even days. At this point you might say, "forget it" and decide to eat out or phone for pizza. But this step is crucial and well worth it. Left alone in the dark of the refrigerator to compost, the flavors will marry or at least fool around a little, if I may be so bold as to say so in a family newspaper.

When I was growing up on our farm, Jep's Place, my mother often had us carry a pot of soup down to place on the cellar floor to season. The soup always tasted much better after a day or two. The fact that we didn't have all that much to eat in the meantime may have enhanced the flavor. In this case, it may help as well.

After the seasoning process, add the reserved cup of unblended broccoli and the sour cream. Stir well, as you reheat. Gamish with chopped parsley or chives, and serve.

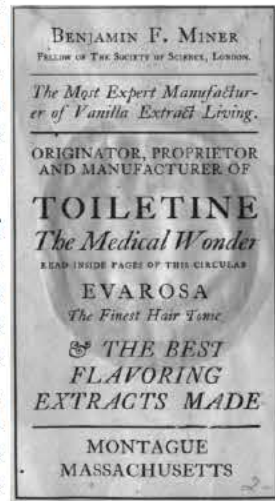
**Snake Oil Manufacturer Comes to Town**

BY EDWIN POTTER

**TURNERS FALLS** - Benjamin Franklin Miner, a fast talking medicine man, came to Montague Center from Hoosick Falls, NY, in 1893. He set up his business on Swamp Road, not far from the railroad station. Many four-ounce bottles can still be found bearing the embossed letters Toiletine.

My collection of B. F. Miner bottles even has one from Hoosick Falls. He advertised Toiletine as a special lotion, "the best all around cure-all on the market." He became a successful manufacturer and peddler of many products such as food flavorings, Witch Hazel Shampoo, Piano Polish, Talcum Powder, Toilet Waters, Glycerine, Bay Rum, Spirit of Camphor, along with Toiletine.

In one advertisement, Miner advocates, "Miner's Pure Vanilla Extract" as being one of the best Medicinal Tonics, to be taken before a meal to help digest food, to relieve distress and headaches after eating.



The town of Montague census lists B.F. Miner as a retired manufacturer at the age of 70 in 1910.

Miner's understudy, William Ulrich, purchased the business and moved it to 143 Hope Street in Greenfield. After Ulrich's death in 1932, he was succeeded by his son

Charles F. Ulrich, carrying on the business at the same Greenfield address. The younger Ulrich continued to handle the manufacture and sales of products by himself until retiring in 1953, when the business ceased.

**Ja'Duke Birthday Celebration**

**A free gala celebration** - Ten years of Ja'Duke performances at the Shea Theater, Saturday, January 27th, at 7 p.m. Reserve your tickets at [www.jaduke.com](http://www.jaduke.com)

or by calling (413) 863-2281, x2. For one and all, come mark a milestone of ten years of local theater with an event that will bring together video tributes of past productions, excerpts from Ja'Duke's current production of Peter Pan, and theatrical glimpses of future Ja'Duke productions.

On the evening's program will be: Ja'Duke's Finest Moments, the Impersonators, Trade Secrets, Ja'Duke's World Premiers, an Audience Sing-A-Long, Ja'Duke's Firsts, What's in a Name, and the announcing of Ja'Duke's 10th Anniversary Season. There will be surprises galore and a night filled with fun.

The evening will also include an overview of the plans for the new Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts educational facility in Turners Falls, which includes a 100-seat black box theater. If what has been accomplished over the past ten years is any indication, the future will continue to hold exceptional theater and dance performances in store.



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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 12TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Love Bomb*. 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13TH**  
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Celebrate the First Year Anniversary with *Face to Face: Portraits from Fifty Years*, photographs by Douglas Kirkland. 1-7 p.m. Reception, exhibition, live music and *hors d'oeuvres*. Artist's talk & refreshments. 7:15-8:45 p.m. Book signing from 1 to 5 p.m. and following the evening talk. Douglas Kirkland's work will be displayed January 11th to March 18th.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Lonesome Brothers* and *Angry Johnny & The Killbillies*. 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 14TH**  
Scandinavian Dancing at the Montague Grange. Hambro, polska, schottis, waltz, and the delights of the hardanger fiddle! Dancers with all levels of experience are welcome. No partner necessary. \$8.00. For info contact andrea: fiddler-larson@aol.com or Alice at 774-7771. 3 to 6 p.m.

The Montague Bookmill Presents: *The Dead of Winter*, Free Films for the Frozen: *Grizzly Man*, 2006. Werner Herzog's disturbing documentary portrait of a late naturalist. 7 p.m.

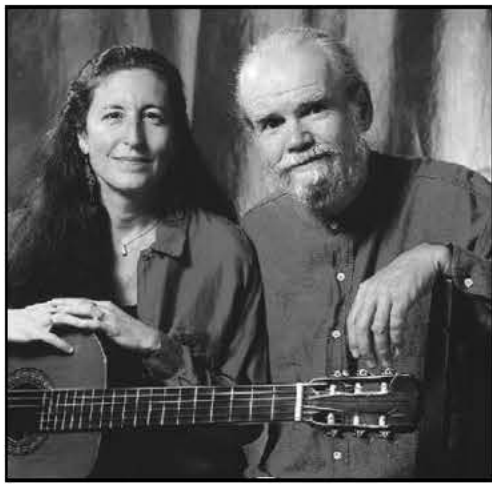
**TUESDAY JANUARY 16TH**  
MCTV Producers Group Meeting. Everyone interested in either producing their own show or participating in someone else's please come by. At the studio: 34 2nd Street, Turners Falls, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17TH**  
Open Mic Fiddle Tune Swap at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10 p.m. For more info. 978-544-BREW.

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 18TH**  
Blues by Dave Robinson & Tommy Filault at Deja Brew, Wendell. 8 to 10 p.m., no cover.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 19TH**  
Charlie King & Karen Brandow and The Prince Myshkins (Rick Burkhardt & Andy Gricevich)

perform at All Souls Unitarian-Universalist Church, Greenfield. Doors open at 7 p.m. These two social justice musical duos are teaming up for a "duopalooza" - an event that's twice as good as a



Karen Brandow & Charlie King along with The Prince Myshkins perform at All Souls U.U. Church, Greenfield on Friday, January 19th, 7:30 p.m.

Duo-palooza! "Something outstanding or unusual!" Tickets at the door are \$17 per person and \$30 for two people. Tickets in advance: Boswell's Books, Broadside Bookshop, Food for Thought Books, Odyssey Bookshop, World Eye Bookshop or wmwjw@wmwjw.org. \$15 per



The Bard Insurgent, Tom Neilson performs Saturday, January 20, 7:30 p.m., Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett Town Hall.

person or \$25 for two. Proceeds will benefit the Western Mass coalition of Jobs with Justice. 7:30 p.m.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Curly Fingers Dupree Band*. Full band and horns. 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH**  
Shea Theater Charitable Concert featuring *Final Hour*. Proceeds to benefit The Brick House

Community Center. Also featuring *King Rex*, *There Was Change* and *The Mystery Tramps*. Doors open 7 p.m. and showtime is 7:30 p.m. 863-2281. Advanced tickets available at World Eye Book Shop, Greenfield or at The Shea.

Echo Lake Coffee House presents the award winning Bard Insurgent, Tom Neilson. Local to the valley, Tom has been writing and singing folk songs with social/political import for 40 years. Tom specializes in political satire, parody and social commentary. 7:30 p.m., Leverett Town Hall. Opening for Tom are the equally outrageous *Raging Grannies* of Western Mass. Admission is \$12/\$10 for seniors. For more info, call (413) 548-9394.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Outerspace Band*. 40th anniversary show, tickets on sale now! 9:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 21ST**  
The Montague Bookmill Presents: *The Dead of Winter* Free Films for the Frozen: *City Lights*, 1931, One of Charlie Chaplin's greatest films - a slapstick weeper. All Films are Free (with a passed hat). Food & Drink available at the Lady Killigrew Pub or The Night Kitchen Restaurant. 7 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 27TH**  
Ja'Duke's 10th Anniversary Party at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Celebrate the past, present and future, free and open to all. Sign up on line at www.jaduke.com or call the Shea 863-2281 to reserve tickets. Limited seating! 7 p.m.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 28TH**  
Montague Family Dance with caller Jim Fownes Family-style contra dancing for all ages. Montague Grange, 34 Main Street, Montague Center. 4:00-5:30 p.m.

**SEEKING ENTRIES**  
The Brick House Young Movie Makers Festival, May 5th, 2007. Entries due by March 1st. Youth and youth groups from the region are eligible. The videos of all

finalists will be shown the day of the festival. The Brick House is most interested in videos portraying something about the Connecticut River or any of its tributaries. This can include environmental aspects but might instead concentrate on the (real life or fictitious) people and communities living alongside or near the river. This emphasis on the Connecticut River is part of the Turners Falls RiverCulture initiative. There will also be a wide open category to cover any submissions not related to the Connecticut River. Information www.thebrickhouseinc.org. Or call Jared or Nate at 863-9559.

Sunday at 7  
**THE DEAD OF WINTER**  
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MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 2:15 4:30  
2. DREAMGIRLS PG13 DAILY 7:00 9:30 in DTS sound  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 2:15 4:30  
3. CHARLOTTE'S WEB G MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 2:15 4:30  
3. BABEL R DAILY 7:00 9:30  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 2:15 4:30  
4. HAPPILY N'EVER AFTER PG DAILY 6:45 9:15  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:15 3:15  
5. THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS DAILY 6:45 9:15 PG13  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:15 3:15  
6. THE GOOD SHEPHERD R DAILY 7:15 R DTS sound  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:30 3:45  
7. FREEDOM WRITERS PG13 in DTS sound  
DAILY 6:30 9:20  
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:30 3:30

Memorial Hall Theater  
**POTHOLE PICTURES**  
JANUARY 12 & 13 7:30 p.m.  
*SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE*  
A clever and enchanting all-star speculation on how a love affair may have inspired Shakespeare to write Romeo and Juliet. Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow, Geoffrey Rush, Judi Dench. Directed by John Madden. 1998. R. 122 min. color.  
Music before movie 7 p.m. Fri. Radio Free Earth, eclectic roots  
Sat. The Ambiguities, rock  
51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls 625-2896

**Upcoming at the Discovery Center**  
Open Friday & Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Groups by Special Arrangement, Tuesday-Thursday

**ON DISPLAY JANUARY 2ND-31ST**  
Daniel Goettel - Landscape Photographs. Human & natural landscapes in black and white photography. A sample of his work on the web www.danielgoettel.com  
**SATURDAY, JANUARY 13TH**  
Bird ID Walk along Power Canal: Although many birds migrate south, there are some resident species that stick it out through the winter in Massachusetts. Geared towards all ages. 9 a.m.  
**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17TH**  
6 - 8:30 p.m. FREE Ice Fishing Class with expert angler, Jim Lagacy. Equipment basics, techniques, fish identification, and angler ethics. Field instruction portion will be held on Saturday the 20th. Participants must complete class in order to partake in field portion of the course. Pre-registration required; space is limited.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH**  
Pre-School Expo! Visit the Historic Great Hall and enroll your child for Fall 2007 preschool. An opportunity to learn about local childcare providers. Local providers will have table top displays and information at the Expo. Activities for children, and light refreshments available. For more information, contact Emily Koester 863-3280. 1 - 3:30 p.m.  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 25TH**  
Listen to the River - Trust for Public Land Public Meeting. Contact Stella.Lensing@tpl.org for more information. 6 - 9 p.m.  
**SATURDAY, JANUARY 27TH**  
What's Happening with the Eagles? Join Refuge staff to view the LIVE Bald eagle cam at the Center & learn about where they are in the nesting process. Program includes interactive eagle trivia game! 10:30 a.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls  
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## OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

# What is There for a Jetsetter to Do in Montague?



FLORE PHOTO

Torii on Mijima Island. Estia, visiting from Japan last week, said "A torii is a gate. If you walk through it, it gives you good luck."

## BY ESTIA RYAN

Hello, my name is Estia. Always people ask, where does my name come from? What does it mean? I answer: the name comes from the Greek mythology. Estia is the oldest sister of Zeus. She is responsible for keeping the flame of fire in the home. I am eight years old.

For the first time, I have flown here without my parents. If you do so, you will be escorted by an airline hostess until you land, and then, until your grandparents meet you. It took 14 hours for me to fly from Tokyo to New York.

What is there to do here in Montague? Plenty of things: eat, watch a video, sleep, play with the toys I brought in my backpack. Read books and do drawings. I live in Tokyo, and go to the International School there. I speak French, English,

and am starting to learn the Kanji. This is the Japanese language that has at least a thousand symbols.

This is my first time coming to Montague. Everything is so different! I noticed first, there were no temples here. But lots of hills and little houses. Lots of trees and rivers. The way people dress: you don't meet anyone in kimonos. Their skin, their eyes, their way of moving, are so different! So are the clothes American people wear. School children all wear uniforms in Japan. They walk, take the subway or the bus to school. The outdoor facilities are greater here. For instance, I skated in Boston, and went horseback riding over at Robin Crest Stables in Montague. And I took long walks with my grandmother.

Now I am about to leave. The cherry trees are almost in

bloom, back in Tokyo!

While I was here, I found a friend, Miette. (It means crumb in French.) We are going to be pen-pals. She will tell me, when finally the snow will appear, and share news. This is one reason I came to Montague, to cross-country ski. No sled-ride, this time, or snow angels, to leave my body's imprint on the ground.

So, until I return, *au revoir* oreo cookie cows, on Route 47. The daring fat squirrels playing on the house deck, eating their share of sunflower seeds. Bouncing over the feeders, like they were trapeze circus performers. Even tapping at the glass doors, for more! The empty birdhouses. The painted wooden houses and barns, nesting on the hills. The Canada Geese not knowing which way to go, as they take the pulse of the Earth's global warming! The golden waffles, my grandmother served along with a cascade of local maple syrup. The almost walking woodstove, swallowing log after log. But most of all, farewell singing piano, where I learned to play ragtime with Richard.



MULLER PHOTO

Miette and Estia

# Discovery Center a Must See for Visitors



DETMOLD PHOTO

## BY FRAN HEMOND

**GREAT FALLS** - An all season, all weather, always relevant destination for you and your Friday or Saturday visitors is the Discovery Center, across from town hall and bordering the power canal, on Avenue A. The Discovery Center is open on Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Recreational director Sue Cloutier and the staff of the Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge welcome all comers and introduce them to a self-guided tour. The museum is simple and sophisticated. Its state of the art design, basic content and modern message has something for everyone, big and little.

Some folks may have never located themselves along the great river of New England. For them, the diorama of the Valley, 410 miles from the Connecticut Lakes to Long Island Sound, is a revelation. Push the labeled button and many locations are identified by a little light, inviting you to read the guides and find favorite spots along the river. Viewers are involved, and the geography is put into perspective.

Hurry your guests along to the exhibits. The water birds properly greet the onlookers. Gulls and osprey do not fly off when they are in sight. The merganser welcomes close inspection. A black duck swims in a

pool of light.

The woodland scenes are complete with trees and flowers, animals big and little. They have well-labeled guides that help you recognize old friends and new. The moose that dominates the woodland scene suggests he is not a creature to meet unawares in the forest, while the little vole that leaves holes and bumps seems too small to accomplish his trail of busy work in the meadow.

"This is good for children," remarked one guest, as she diligently searched for an oriole in a shadbush in one display. The label assured her it was there. Her feeling of accomplishment in firming up some half-known facts about the natural world made this visit the highlight of her day.

The museum store offers the visitor a chance to take home a concrete memory of the tour. Among the many fascinating items store manager Willie Tate has to offer is a collection of Audubon birds in proper plumage that call out their song when squeezed. One lady whose bird knowledge is rudimentary loved the song of the thrush, and wished he were dressed more gaily.

Despite his modest attire, the thrush went back to Florida with her, an icon of the New England hills and woodlands we call home.

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