



The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

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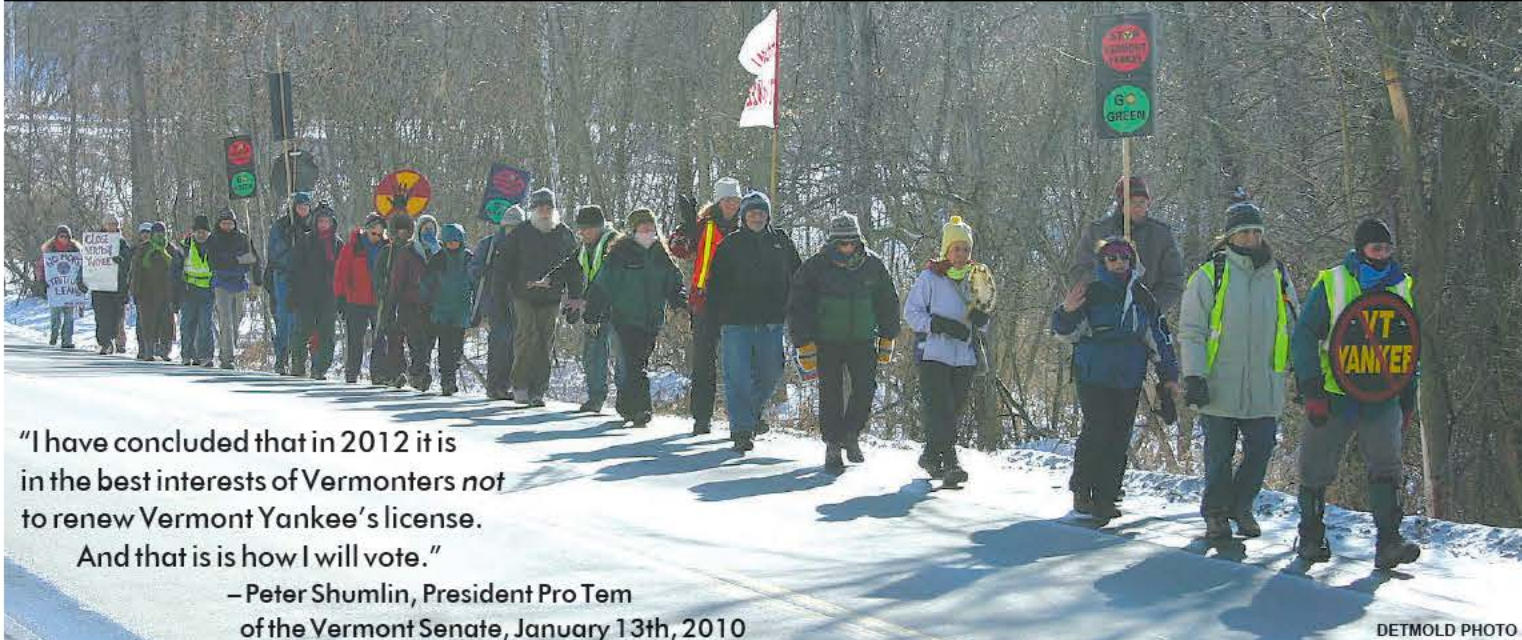
From the Editor:

Plagued by a transformer fire, the repeated collapse of cooling towers, reports of workers showing up under the influence of drugs and alcohol, increases in fenceline radiation levels, cracked components, stuck valves leading to emergency shutdowns, and excess radiation exposure of workers, the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant is now engaged in damage control over the latest news: On January 7th, VY spokesman Rob Williams released data on elevated levels of a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, found in a test well on the Vernon reactor site, that show a plume of tritium has been leaking into the groundwater around the plant and is now migrating toward the Connecticut River.

"There is no danger to the public," assured Williams last week, but people living near the reactor are fed up with the blandishments of public relations flaks. They want the Vermont state legislature to reject a bid by Vermont Yankee for a 20-year license extension at the accident prone plant, and they walked 125 miles through the dead of winter to Montpelier with one demand.

Shut Down Vermont Yankee

VT Senate President Peter Shumlin: "I Will Vote Against Relicensing"



"I have concluded that in 2012 it is in the best interests of Vermonters not to renew Vermont Yankee's license. And that is how I will vote."

- Peter Shumlin, President Pro Tem of the Vermont Senate, January 13th, 2010

People from the evacuation zone of the reactor were joined by local residents on the road from Sharon to South Royalton Saturday, January 9th.

Montpelier. The walkers have the hollow-eyed stare of people who have been squinting against the sun and bitter cold over miles of frozen countryside. Few of them are young and rosy cheeked. Most are in their fifties or sixties.

They have the absorbed look of people who have been focusing on conserving their body heat for many days. Even in the evening, seated in a circle in a heated community hall, they wear heavy coats and wool hats. They seem to be staring at a

point on some horizon, over the distance perhaps towards the golden dome of the statehouse in Montpelier, 120 miles from the Stone Church in Brattleboro where they first set out on a Saturday morning two days into the new year, and 37 years into

the operating life of the nuclear power plant in nearby Vernon.

The walkers, organized by the Safe and Green Campaign, are protesting the bid by Entergy, the Louisiana-based

see MONTPELIER pg 8

LONGO TAPPED for T.F. AIRPORT MANAGER

BY LYN CLARK
TURNERS FALLS - Attorney Michael (Mickey) Longo of Greenfield has accepted the position of manager of the Turners Falls Municipal Airport after the seven-member board of airport commissioners completed interviews with three finalists. Although the finalists were all highly qualified for the part-time (11 to 15 hours per week), non-benefited position, Longo in particular impressed the commissioners with his depth of research and preparation, and his ability to identify several opportunities for marketing the general-aviation airport and encouraging broader community involvement. His legal background and experience that included, in his words, "negotiating settlements, resolving differences, finding common ground, and areas of consensus and compromise" were seen by the commissioners as valuable assets in the airport manager's dealings with agencies, tenants, pilots and the public.

Longo received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Williams College and his law degree in 1989 from Suffolk Law School in Boston where he was Chairman of the Student Bar Association. A member of the Bar of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts since 1992, he has been a sole practitioner in the general practice of law since 1993 with Supreme Court, District Court, and Juvenile Court experience. He has also been an independent contractor with the Committee for Public Counsel Services representing

see AIRPORT pg 16

Beauchesne Property to Be Cleaned Up for Recreation Land

BY DAVID DETMOLD
MONTAGUE CENTER - The 7.8 acre property formally owned by Rodney Beauchesne, of Main Street in Montague Center, is being purchased for \$95,000 and cleaned up by the Franklin Land Trust, for eventual resale to the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game. "In the end, it will be returned to its natural state," said Alain Peteroy, director of land conservation for the Franklin Trust.

That should come as something of a relief to the people of Montague, where the property has been a particular thorn in the side of the building and health departments for many years.

Beauchesne, a bit of an



The Franklin Country Land Trust will clean up the Beauchesne property

eccentric who would ride his horse to get a drink at bars from Turners Falls to Belchertown, was in the salvage business, and in later years used the Main

Street property, which sits on 1000 feet of floodplain of the Sawmill River, and across the street from the village's drinking water well, as a scrap yard,

where salvaged doors and windows and building materials were piled in sheds and scattered in heaps across the property.

Beauchesne died of cancer on October 14th, 2007.

Peteroy said Beauchesne's family has already removed much of the debris and recycled whatever materials still had value. Now the Land Trust is paying for removal of much of what is left, before the Montague Center Volunteer Fire Department eventually uses the uniquely constructed multi-level house as a controlled burn site.

According to records at the Montague town hall, town meeting approved the sale of a nearby 0.95 acre parcel of land to the Fish and Game depart-

ment in December of 2008. There is one small lot privately owned by Nancy Lund that will separate this long thin parcel between Main Street and the Sawmill River from the Beauchesne parcel, which also fronts on South Street. But, when the sale is finalized, the Fish and Game department will soon own, and permanently conserve for recreational purposes, almost the entire frontage on the west side of Sawmill River from the town's southern border to South Street. The Sawmill is a cold water trout fishing stream.

Peteroy said an informational meeting on the future of the Beauchesne property will be held at the Montague Grange on Thursday, January 21st, at 7 p.m. The public is invited to

PET OF THE WEEK
Secrets Safe With Me



Kelly

My name is Kelly and I'm a 5-year-old shorthair cat in need of a good home. I have a special secret. When you first look at me you might think you are looking at a black cat, but if you take the time to come and talk with me and pet me you will see that it is only the tip of my fur that is black and that underneath is a smoky gray. Now isn't that very special, and beautiful! I'm very charming, though a bit shy... Just at first. I like to be petted and I also like it when you talk to me. Share your secrets with me. I won't tell. For more information on adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

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WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Two Films Showing on Movie Night Saturday

Kids Movie Night at the Wendell Free Library, Saturday, January 16th is the film *Shorts*. In the community of Black Falls everyone works for Black Box Industries, makers of the do-it-all gadget that's sweeping the nation. But during a freak storm, a mysterious Rainbow Rock, which grants wishes to anyone who finds it, falls from the sky and as the object ricochets from kid to kid the wishes coming true quickly turn the neighborhood upside down as a series of mythical misadventures are set into motion. The film starts promptly at 6:30 p.m. This film is rated PG. Bring your own popcorn.

The second film, starting at 8:15 p.m. for grown-ups in the monthly series of Science Fiction and Horror movies on or near the

new moon at the Wendell Free Library is the film *28 Days Later*. A mysterious plague hits London that reduces its victims to raging psychopaths bent on killing. Four weeks after he landed in a coma prior to the outbreak, Jim awakens to find London quiet, its streets abandoned. He soon learns the horror of the outbreak and bands with a few fellow survivors as they make their way to a military installation in Manchester, only to find the virus isn't the only thing to fear. This film is rated R. Admission is free but seating is limited.

For more information about the Wendell Free Library and its programs visit the web page at www.wendellmass.us/wendell-free-library or call (978) 544-3559.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Snow Globes at Carnegie

BY LINDA HICKMAN
TURNERS FALLS – On Saturday, January 22nd at 10:30 a.m., children of all ages can make a snow globe at the Carnegie Library. Participants will make a wintry scene out of a small jar, glitter, small figurines and their imaginations. Parents and other caregivers are encouraged to help create a special snow globe. The program is free, and the materials will be supplied.



LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

Poetry Readings Resume

Poetry readings resume after the busy month of December at the library on Tuesday, January 19th, 7 to 8 p.m. Mark Clinton and Alice Scheffey will read their poems. Another poetry reading is scheduled for February 16th. Anyone interested in reading their poetry is encouraged to contact the Leverett Library at 75 Montague Road, P.O. Box 250, Leverett, MA 01054 or call (413) 548-9220.

Martin Luther King Day Events

At the Brick House Community Center, Third Street in Turners Falls on Saturday, January 16th beginning at 7:30 p.m. enjoy an evening of music and spoken word for families honoring the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King. The vocal duo Moonlight and Morning Star and their son, jazz pianist Miro Sprague will offer the community and evening of music and poetry for all ages. This program is supported in part by the



PAM LESTER PHOTO

(Above, l-r) Kaitlyn Miner, age 7; Emma Miner, age 9, and Christopher Miner, age 5 join Santa at the Montague Elks Lodge #2521, in Turners Falls held a childrens Christmas Party for 53 children of lodge members on Saturday, December 12th.

Many parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles also attended to fill the lodge room. Santa Claus and his elf helpers handed out gifts to all the children. Ice cream and cookies were served.



AMY DONOVAN PHOTO

(Left photo, left to right) Karra Beauchesne, Katarose Lenois, and Marissa Sierakoski, students at the Great Falls Middle School, help to kick off the container recycling program there. Here's hoping everyone pitches in!

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week
Grade 6
Mitchell Mailloux
Alison Ovalle
Grade 7
Andrew Renaud
Grade 8
Katri Mizula

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – Jan 18th to Jan 22nd

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at Noon unless otherwise listed. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Meal site Manager is Becky Cobb. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For information or to make meal reservations, call 863-9357. Feel free to call the senior center for information on any programs.

Monday, January 18th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
12:00 noon Pot Luck Lunch
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, January 19th
Senior Center Closed

Special Senatorial Election
Wednesday, January 20th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, January 21st
10:00 a.m. Tai Chi
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, January 22nd
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

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

for information on the Flu Clinic and Pneumonia shots.

Monday, January 18th
Senior Center Closed MLK Day
Tuesday, January 19th
9:00 a.m. Exercise
10:15 a.m. Senior Business Meeting
12:30 a.m. Painting
Wednesday, January 20th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
12:00 noon Bingo
Thursday, January 21st
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
Friday, January 22nd
9:00 a.m. Bowling
11:30 a.m. Lunch – Turkey Dinner

WENDELL Senior Center is located at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Kathy Swaim at (978) 544-2020 for hours and upcoming programs.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG

– Join the Marine Corps League, Oak Ridge Detachment of Gill, for breakfast on Sunday, January 17th from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the **Bernardston Veterans Club** on 16 Hartwell St (across from the old Streeter's Store) in Bernardston. They will be serving French toast, pancakes, eggs, sausage, toast, maple syrup, coffee, and juice. Donation: \$7 and children \$3. All proceeds benefit the Marine Corps League's charities which include Warm the Children, Toys for Tots, and local community organizations.

Montague Center volunteer firefighters flooded the pond by the Montague Center School Sunday night, January 10th. The community really appreciates it! They are looking forward to a great time of **ice-skating**.

NELCWIT will host its 34th annual **Bowlathon** on Saturday, January 30, 2010, at the French King Entertainment Center in Erving. The Bowlathon won't just be fun – it will be one of NELCWIT's most important fundraisers. The 2009 bowlers raised almost \$10,000 for services to individuals and families who have experienced or witnessed domestic violence, rape, or abuse. This year they need to reach their goal of \$15,000 to continue funding NELCWIT's life-saving programs. If you want to bowl, organize a team, or be a sponsor for the event, please contact: info@nelcwit.org or (413) 772-0871 x116.

Lacey Jobst, age 13, and her father **Kurt Jobst** have been picking, harvesting and then delivering fresh locally grown produce to the South Deerfield

Senior Center and the Franklin Area Survival Center food pantry for more than five years. During peak harvest seasons, the Jobsts are contacted by local farms and orchards to come out and help clear the fields. After many years of providing this community service, the Jobst's have built up support from local producers that have provided **thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables** to the senior center and food pantry. Their effort and good will during 2008 and 2009 resulted in more than 20,000 lbs of food. You guys rock!

On Saturday, January 16, at 10 am Greenfield Garden Cinemas will be showing **Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel**, with proceeds going to the Northfield Mount Hermon Upward Bound scholarship program.

On January 1st, 2010, the **Sawmill River Run Race** saw a profit of approximately \$1,500 with all proceeds going to the Montague Parks and Recreation Scholarship Fund. The parks and recreation would again like to thank all the volunteers and participants.

I appreciate **Jamie Berger's** comment in the January 7th issue of the *Montague Reporter* that the undergarments hanging from the clothes line above are in fact not briefs but boxers. In the spirit of good taste, the *Montague Reporter* and I choose not to print images of more form-fitting undergarments. After all, boxers are quite brief enough.

Send items for local briefs to reporter-local@montaguema.net

H1N1 Clinic Serves Hundreds

BY PAT ALLEN

TURNERS FALLS – The four-town (Gill, Wendell, Erving, and Montague) H1N1 flu clinic was held at Sheffield School on Saturday, January 9th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Three hundred and sixty-six residents received 430 vaccinations, including 69 nasal spray, 297 H1N1, and 64 seasonal flu shots.

Joan Pillsbury, clinical coordinator, and Billie Gammell, Montague health nurse, agreed the clinic was a success both in the numbers of citizens served and the quality of care given by the clinical staff. Bob Escott, incident commander, noted these clinics require the cooperation and coordination of many organizations including towns, schools, public health, fire and police,

medical reserve corps, the community emergency response team, and the media in order to succeed.

Jay DiPucchio, chair of the emergency dispensing site committee, stated, "We were fortunate to have more than 60 trained volunteers helping to make this clinic run smoothly. Not only did we have local residents supporting this effort, but many staff from the four towns came forward as well. I am continually amazed how many people in our community generously volunteer their time, especially on a weekend."

DiPucchio noted the clinic was held at the second designated emergency dispensing site (EDS) and confirmed the Sheffield School is well suited for this pur-

pose. The Turners Falls High School was tested as a clinic site last year. DiPucchio said a future clinic will test the third site, the Franklin County Tech School.

Although it was a sunny day, Saturday was cold and windy and the GMRSD facilities staff spread salt on the sidewalk to protect participants as well as the volunteers monitoring the parking lots. Steve Roberto, the district's facilities manager, and his crew were instrumental in preparing the school for the clinic with tables, chairs and other equipment as the need arose.

The Saturday event was one of a series of H1N1 clinics occurring in Franklin County throughout this fall and winter sponsored by MAPHCO (Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition) and the FRCOG (Franklin Council of Governments).

Taking Local Tastes Home

BY STEVE DAMON

GILL – The Gill agricultural commission and Gill Elementary School PTO threw its first winter farmers market on Saturday, January 9th. A large crowd of consumers was welcomed to the school by fresh vegetables, herbs, meat, cheese, maple products, apples, seeds, mohair products, soap, jam, and dried fruit. Just about every agricultural product grown in these parts was represented – even wheat flour!

The out-of-town farmers were asked to make a donation to the Gill PTO, which they did. This event was not meant as a fundraiser, rather a good way to meet local farmers and spend a cold January morning. Nine local farms were represented: Laughing Dog Farm, NMH School, Turkey Ridge, Upinngil, Girard's Valley View, all from Gill; Coyote Hill, from Bernardston; Stockbridge, from South Deerfield; Keldaby, from

Colrain; and High Winds from Royalston.

Samples were in abundance: cider syrup, cookies, flour, bread, squash, apple pancakes, lavender, and potatoes. Kindergartner Isaac Damon especially enjoyed the cookie samples made of Upinngil Farm's flour. He said his family should buy some in order to make pancakes.

When the produce was sold, and friends had been made, there stood Gill 1st grader Lily van Baaren, grinding wheat berries into flour at the Upinngil Farm table. Farmer Sorrel Hatch told Lily to take the just-ground flour home with her.

Lily bounced out the door with her mom Margaret, and exclaimed, "I get to take it home, too!"

Steve Damon is the chair of the Gill agricultural commission.

Third and L Street Band to Play in Benefit Concert

TURNERS FALLS – The 3rd and L Street band will play a benefit at St. Kaziemerz Hall, 197 Avenue A, in Turners Falls on Saturday, January 30th. The 3rd and L Street band has been together for many years; the members have grown up together since kids, and perform many different musical styles, from country to oldies, with some in between.

Proceeds will benefit the oncology unit at the local hospital. Tickets will be available at the door on the 30th from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. for \$10.00, which will include full smorgasbord, and many raffles including a 50/50 raffle and a silent auction. For more info, call: Dave at (413) 863-4173.

Community Service Awards Celebration

Gill-Montague Community School Partnership invites anyone who lives or works in the community to a special event on Thursday, January 21st, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A free lasagna dinner, music, and presentation of Youth and Community Awards will take place at St. Kaziemerz Hall, 97 Avenue A in Turners

Falls in celebration of our community. Advance tickets are required and are free. For tickets email Kara McLaughlin at karamclaughlin@gmrtd.org, call her at (413) 863-7310, or stop by the Turners Falls High School main office. (Snow date is February 4th, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

Mariamante Meeting

BY RAY PURINGTON

GILL – All are welcome to attend a special meeting of the selectboard on Tuesday, January 26th at 6:00 p.m. upstairs in the town hall. Doria Kutrubes, of Radar Solutions International, will present preliminary findings from the ground-penetrating radar study conducted at the Mariamante property last October. Representatives of regional Native American tribes will be in attendance.

Food As Healing Medicine

WENDELL DEPOT – The Wendell Baha'i Community will hold a healing circle on Sunday, January 17th from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the home of Charles and Shay Cooper, 71 Kentfield Road, in Wendell Depot. A light brunch will be served. The topic of discussion will be "An investigation of food as healing medicine, from the book *Healing with Whole Foods*, by Paul Pitchford." This will also be a time to gather in respect for the universal spirit that binds us all as one people. For more information, call (978) 544-2190.

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WALK TO FREEDOM

On June 23rd, 1963, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. marched down Woodward Avenue in Detroit with 125,000 people, demanding an end to segregation and the passage of the Civil Rights Bill. It was hailed by the Detroit Free Press as the largest civil rights demonstration in the nation's history at that time.

At Cobo Hall, King gave a speech where he first promulgated the refrain, "I have a dream," to be imbued forever in the nation's consciousness two months later from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Here are excerpts from his Detroit speech:

"Almost one hundred and one years ago, on September the 22nd, 1862, to be exact, a great and noble American, Abraham Lincoln, signed an executive order, which was to take effect on January the first, 1863. This executive order was called the Emancipation Proclamation and it served to free the Negro from the bondage of physical slavery. But one hundred years later, the Negro in the United States of America still isn't free.

But now more than ever before, America is forced to grapple with this problem, for the shape of the world today does not afford us the luxury of an anemic democracy. The price that this nation must pay for the continued oppression and exploitation of the Negro or any other minority group is the price of its own destruction. For the hour is late. The clock of destiny is ticking out, and we must act now before it is too late....

...Then there is another cry. They say, "Why don't you do it in a gradual manner?" Well, gradualism is little more than escapism and do-nothingism, which ends up in stand-stillism. We know that our brothers and sisters in Africa and Asia are moving with jet-like speed toward the goal of political independence. And in some

communities we are still moving at horse-and-buggy pace toward the gaining of a hamburger and a cup of coffee at a lunch counter.

And so we must say, now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to transform this pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our nation. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of racial justice. Now is the time to get rid of segregation and discrimination. Now is the time.

And so this social revolution taking place can be summarized in three little words. They are not big words. One does not need an extensive vocabulary to understand them. They are the words "all," "here," and "now." We want all of our rights, we want them here, and we want them now.

Now the other thing that we must see about this struggle is that by and large it has been a nonviolent struggle. Let nobody make you feel that those who are engaged in the demonstrations in communities all across the South are resorting to violence; these are few in number. For we've come to see the power of nonviolence. We've come to see that this method is not a weak method, for it's the strong man who can stand up amid opposition, who can stand up amid violence being inflicted upon him and not retaliate with violence.

You see, this method has a way of disarming the opponent. It exposes his moral defenses. It weakens his morale, and at the same time it works on his conscience, and he just doesn't know what to do. If he doesn't beat you, wonderful. If he beats you, you develop the quiet courage of accepting blows without retaliating.

If he doesn't put you in jail, wonderful. Nobody with any sense likes to go to jail. But if he

puts you in jail, you go in that jail and transform it from a dungeon of shame to a haven of freedom and human dignity.

And even if he tries to kill you, you'll develop the inner conviction that there are some things so dear, some things so precious, some things so eternally true, that they are worth dying for. And I submit to you that if a man has not discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live.

This method has wrought wonders. As a result of the non-violent Freedom Ride movement, segregation in public transportation has almost passed away absolutely in the South. As a result of the sit-in movement at lunch counters, more than 285 cities have now integrated their lunch counters in the South. I say to you, there is power in this method.

And I think by following this approach it will also help us to go into the new age that is emerging with the right attitude. For nonviolence not only calls upon its adherents to avoid external physical violence, but it calls upon them to avoid internal violence of spirit. It calls on them to engage in that something called love. And I know it is difficult sometimes. When I say "love" at this point, I'm not talking about an affectionate emotion. It's nonsense to urge people, oppressed people, to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense. I'm talking about something much deeper. I'm talking about a sort of understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill for all men.

We are coming to see now, the psychiatrists are saying to us, that many of the strange things that happen in the subconscious, many of the inner conflicts, are rooted in hate. And so they are saying, "Love or perish." But Jesus told us this a long time ago. And I can still hear that voice crying through the vista of time, saying, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; pray for them that despitefully use you." And there is still a voice saying to every potential Peter, "Put up your sword."

History is replete with the bleached bones of nations, history is cluttered with the wreckage of communities that failed to follow this command. And isn't it marvelous to have a method of struggle where it is possible to stand up against an unjust system, fight it with all of your might, never accept it, and yet not stoop to violence and hatred in the process? This is what we have....

Now there is a magnificent new militancy within the Negro community all across this nation. And I welcome this as a marvelous development.... We've been pushed around so long; we've been the victims of lynching mobs so long; we've been the victims of economic injustice so long - still the last hired and the first fired all over this nation. And I know the temptation. I can understand



Martin Luther King, Jr. and former Michigan governor John Swainson in an undated photo probably taken at the Detroit Freedom March

from a psychological point of view why some caught up in the clutches of the injustices surrounding them almost respond with bitterness and come to the conclusion that the problem can't be solved within, and they talk about getting away from it in terms of racial separation. But even though I can understand it psychologically, I must say to you this afternoon that this isn't the way. Black supremacy is as dangerous as white supremacy. No, I hope you will allow me to say to you this afternoon that God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men and brown men and yellow men. God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race. And I believe that with this philosophy and this determined struggle we will be able to go on in the days ahead and transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood....

...And so I go back to the South not in despair. I go back to the South not with a feeling that we are caught in a dark dungeon that will never lead to a way out. I go back believing that the new day is coming. And so this afternoon, I have a dream. (Go ahead) It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day, right down in Georgia and Mississippi and Alabama, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to live together as brothers.

I have a dream this afternoon (I have a dream) that one day, [Applause] one day little white children and little Negro children will be able to join hands as brothers and sisters.

I have a dream this afternoon that one day, [Applause] that one day men will no longer burn down houses and the church of God simply because people want to be free.

I have a dream this afternoon (I have a dream) that there will be a day that we will no longer face the atrocities that Emmett Till had to face or Medgar Evers had to face; that all men can live with dignity.

I have a dream this afternoon (Yeah) that my four little children, that my four little children will not come up in the same young days that I came up within, but they will be judged on the basis of the content of their character, not the color of their skin. [Applause]

I have a dream this afternoon that one day right here in Detroit, Negroes will be able to buy a house or rent a house anywhere that their money will carry them and they will be able to get a job. [Applause] (That's right)

Yes, I have a dream this afternoon that one day in this land the words of Amos will become real and "justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

I have a dream this evening that one day we will recognize the words of Jefferson that "All men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." I have a dream this afternoon. [Applause]

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill shall be made low; the crooked places shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." [Applause]

I have a dream this afternoon that the brotherhood of man will become a reality in this day.

And with this faith I will go out and carve a tunnel of hope through the mountain of despair. With this faith, I will go out with you and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. With this faith, we will be able to achieve this new day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing with the Negroes in the spiritual of old:

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

King Phillips Abyss

I enjoyed reading David Brule's article about the Deep Hole in the Connecticut River (*MR VIII #14 Talking with Buddha at the Deep Hole*). Indeed there is a very deep cave-like hole at the point just south of where the Millers River flows into the Connecticut. The hole is more than 127 feet – that's as deep as biologist Ed Klekowski and his scuba team dared to dive. Since the team never reached bottom, Klekowski dubbed the hole an abyss and named it after King Phillip, the Wampanoag leader who led the New England tribes in an attempt to stop the expansion of English settlements in the 1670s.

The dive down this vertical hole is included in a documentary film I made, entitled *Beneath the River*, which is shown often on our local public television station WGBY. The King Phillips Abyss, as it turns

out, is a significant discovery since it provides evidence of the geologic origins of our valley. Two hundred million years ago when the earth was one giant continent, known as Pangaea, the land started to split apart. The King Phillips Abyss is the place where a split occurred in the earth's crust. A much larger split occurred 90 miles to the east, separating North America from Africa. Ours created a rift valley where a long and narrow river would flow through and make a habitable environment for a wide variety of creatures. The good fortune of one of those species is the ability to stand near the edge of the Connecticut River and wonder about such things. Thanks, Mr. Brule, for reminding us to do that and for connecting us with our past.

– Steve Alves
Turners Falls

Please Go Vote in Tuesday's Special Election for U.S. Senate

I am writing to urge everyone to vote in the special election to choose a replacement for Ted Kennedy as senator from Massachusetts. The election is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19th.

I had been assuming that the 'real' election had happened in December, when Martha Coakley was nominated the Democratic candidate, assuming that Coakley would win the general election in this heavily

Democratic state. I was shocked to hear that a recent poll put Scott Brown even with Coakley among the voters polled who say they are "extremely interested" in the race. I also heard that Brown has been very successful in fundraising.

I would guess that a lot of money has been coming in from out of state in contributions for Brown from conservatives, and I would bet that the Republican Party will be working hard to get conservative voters to the polls. The ultra-conservatives would love to see Kennedy's seat go to a fellow conservative!

Turnout tends to be low for special elections, so it is vital that everyone go vote. Please go vote yourself, whatever your political outlook, and encourage everyone you know to vote as well.

– Kate O'Kane
Wendell

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American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 1/7/10

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Afghanistan 956
Wounded in Action 31,613
MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

GUEST EDITORIALS

How Will We Measure

the Long-term Health Impacts of Biomass?

BY JAY DIPUCCHIO
TURNERS FALLS – Time is money. The Commonwealth's "Fast Track" permitting of certain development reflects a weighted value. Madera Energy's written business plan to start construction of a 47-megawatt biomass generating plant in Greenfield in the first quarter of 2010 demonstrates speed is a factor for them as well.

As chair of the Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, I value the drive for jobs and tax revenue. But while the plant's construction jobs are important to the region, in this case they're like "low introductory rates" that turn out to be not such a great deal when the regular terms kick in. There won't be many operating jobs when the plant is complete. And, though a

case can be made that what is good for Greenfield is good for the region, it remains a stretch to tie tax revenue benefits to the rest of us.

The Montague board of health, to which I'm elected, has jurisdiction "to regulate atmospheric pollution, including emission of smoke, particulate matter [PM], soot, cinders, ashes, ... industrial odors and dusts as may arise within its bounds and which constitute a nuisance, a danger to the public health, or impair the public comfort and convenience." Yet the board has no authority to regulate beyond town borders.

Montague, particularly Turners Falls, is immediately downwind of the proposed plant, where the proponent's own study found the worst PM impacts would occur. Do federal and state regulations really guar-

antee sufficient protection from health risks? How current are the rules? How seriously are they taken? If an elected public health body has to rely on others' authority to protect the public health in its own community, the guidelines should be unassailable.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's website states that, "In the Pioneer Valley region of Western Massachusetts, temperature inversions can result in higher particle pollution levels than otherwise would be expected." How many times annually on average are there temperature inversions in the upper valley? How long do they last? What are the typical concentrations of these pollutants in our air now? What is the effect of particulates on regional incidence of pul-

see **BIOMASS** pg 6

Ladd Supports Memo on Race to the Top Funding

BY CARL LADD
GILL-MONTAGUE – I am recommending and urging that both the school committee and the Gill Montague Education Association sign the Race to the Top (RTTT) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state of Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. While there remain many questions yet to be answered, it seems shortsighted not to fully engage as proactively with the state as we can on all fronts – fiscal as well as educational.

The chief concerns raised by RTTT critics is that this is somehow a device for the state to "take over" school districts. I would submit that the pending Ed Reform legislation is much more likely to be the catalyst for that possibility than this MOU.

As you are aware, the Gill-Montague school district was determined to be underperform-

ing in 2005 by the state Board of Education. According to associate DESE commissioner Lynda Foisy, "As an already-identified underperforming district, G-M will be placed as a district at Level 4 [underperforming]."

The DESE's office of accountability is planning to conduct a comprehensive review of our district in May 2010, using the new district standards. According to Foisy, "The review will also require the review team to respond to a set of questions regarding your district's progress in achieving the goals set out in your DESE-approved turnaround plan. The results of this review will impact your district's status. G-M might remain at Level 4, could be moved to Level 3, or could be assigned the more serious accountability status of Level 5 [chronically underperforming]."

At one of the DESE webinars*, I asked deputy commission-

er Karla Baehr whether districts that were identified as Level 4 were going to have the provisions of the MOU implemented even if they did not sign. She replied the MOU was for districts to be able to participate in the funding that would come with the RTTT program. So in essence, if the DESE determines our district will remain categorized at Level 4 status, and if Ed Reform legislation is passed (a likelihood), then we would be held accountable under the legislation whether we participated in the RTTT program or not. If we don't sign the MOU, however, we would not be eligible for RTTT funds that would be available.

If we sign on to this initiative, Gill-Montague would see – at an absolute minimum – a 15% increase in its Title I funding, approximately \$45,000. In addition, there would be Title I-g supplementary funds – at a minimum we would be guaranteed an additional 15% of our regular allocation to supplement current activities, which are already aligned with what the state is

see **SIGN** pg 6

Combined Cost of Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan Tops the Trillion Dollar Mark

NORTHAMPTON – Congress has appropriated an additional \$136.8 billion for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan for the 2010 fiscal year. The nonprofit National Priorities Project, based in Northampton, estimates that for this fiscal year, \$64.5 billion is directed to Iraq and \$72.3 billion to Afghanistan.

These new appropriations bring total war-related spending for Iraq to \$747.3 billion and for Afghanistan to \$299 billion, with total war costs of \$1.05 trillion.

These current year appropriations do not include funds to support the "surge" of 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan

proposed by the Obama administration on December 1st, 2009. Conservative estimates suggest that it will cost approximately \$30 billion to fund this surge. Supplemental appropriations for this funding are expected later this year.

For more information, go to www.nationalpriorities.org.

*Usage note from 'the Rogue Editor': The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines 'webinar' as a live online educational presentation during which participating viewers can submit questions and comments.

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Unity Park Improvement Plans Move Forward

BY JEN AUDLEY & DAWN MONTAGUE

TURNERS FALLS – Montague has hired Walter Ramsey, a graduate student at UMass, as the new part-time planning assistant, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said this morning. The temporary appointment will be for 19 hours per week, at \$14.28 per hour, with no benefits or holidays.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio, who was empowered to make the hire by a two - one vote (Mark Fairbrother dissented), explained the committee would decide whether to make the position full-time by April, and that if they were to do so, a formal search process would ensue.

Selectboard members and those attending the meeting also heard from Frank Abbondanzio, Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Regional

Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and others, about progress to date on the FY 2009 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) project and planned requests for CDBG funding for FY 2010. Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development CDBG grants are awarded annually through the states to towns in a competitive bidding process. Projects funded by these grants are intended to benefit low- and moderate-income residents and usually require a financial contribution from the town and any partner organizations.

CDBG funding for FY 2009 has been used for the design phase of the Unity Park improvement project in Turners Falls, for social service programs sited at Montague Catholic Social Ministries (MCSM) and the Brick House Community Resource Center, and for housing rehabilitation

programs targeted at low- to moderate-income residents in Millers Falls and Turners Falls.

The selectboard voted to request CDBG funding for FY 2010 for the construction phase of Unity Park improvements, housing rehabilitation support (such as grants for lead abatement) for five units in Montague Center, and a new program at MCSM that will include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and bilingual ServSafe Certification courses.

CDBG funds requested by the town of Montague for FY 2009 and FY 2010 total about \$1,000,000. More than half of that will go for Unity Park improvements, which are to include updated playground equipment, bike racks, benches, signage and trash containers; better access for the elderly and those with physical disabilities, landscape engineering to improve drainage, and a perma-

nent home for the Turners Falls Sk8 Park. Bruce Hunter said that bid-ready plans and specifications for the construction phase of this project will be completed by January 22nd, 2010.

In other business, the selectboard transferred the liquor license for Carroll's Market in Millers Falls from Jai Ambe, Inc. to Sahirat, LLC.

Also, the police station building committee reported that Commonwealth Solar may come through with funding for solar panels after all on the roof of the new police station – though only with enough funding for 34 kilowatts of solar photovoltaics, rather than the hoped-for 50, due to trees shading the site.

The selectboard also heard from assessor Barbara Miller, and got word that property tax rates for FY 2010 might go down slightly, mainly as a result of a \$20 million increase

in the assessed value of FirstLight Power Resources hydro facilities along the canal.

The selectboard also voted to use \$65,000 from program income funds for two purposes: \$40,000 as a local match for the 2010 CDBG grant to be used for the Unity Park improvements, and \$25,000 to be deposited in the unsafe and unhealthy buildings account.

These funds are derived from the payback of loans made under previous block grant programs.

Selectboard member Pat Allen commended the town on a successful H1N1 clinic on Saturday, January 8th. With the help of over 60 volunteers, including a number of town employees, 366 people received vaccinations.

Selectman Mark Fairbrother proposed that the town re-open Power Street at the highway department's earliest convenience, and the selectboard approved his proposal unanimously.

from BIOMASS pg 5

monary disease? Or don't we know, and we're just choosing to live with that as a basis for decision making?

What we do know is that setting aside all other issues and focusing on the project's estimated particulate matter emissions alone, particulate matter measured in micrometers of diameter known as PM 2.5 (micrometers) and PM 10 (micrometers) are actually close to or exceed "significant impact levels" (SILs) determined by EPA. We're told by Madera that SILs are but fractions of the higher-threshold National Ambient Air Quality Standards, so not to worry. Are we suddenly in Oz, told to ignore the man behind the curtain? A regulated pollutant is still a pollutant. How current and reliable is the public health science reflected in the SILs standards and monitoring benchmarks?

A 1980 EPA regulation exempts preconstruction monitoring of ambient air quality if projected impact is less than "significant monitoring concentrations." 1980? Haven't we learned anything new about air quality and public health since then? That seems so last century. The proponent used EPA's "AERMOD" air quality modeling protocol to assess impacts. They used the "rural dispersion model" based on land use around the site. A mile and a half across the river, isn't Turners Falls more like a densely populated urban center?

The proponents' Comprehensive Air Permit filing notes that "DEP guidance specifies use of the latest three years of monitoring data within 10km (6.2 mi) of the site". The

nearest sampling station for PM 2.5 is at Chicopee... 47 km away. The other nearest monitors are in Ware, Pittsfield, Albany, Keene and Bennington. If guidance calls for one thing and practice is nearly five times greater, we could all drive 175 mph down High Street, except perhaps when the effluent pipeline is under construction. Again, we're told not to worry.

The questions around PM impact alone are enough to hit the brakes on this development. Considering the elastic definitions and unknown public health impacts, there needs to be at least a 12 month baseline analysis of ambient air quality for all pollutants using on-site and Turners Falls monitors. Without knowing where we started, we can only guess at the actual deterioration in air quality we are being asked to accept. Certainly microclimates resulting from the tortuous topography between the site and Turners Falls are a very different matter for particulates emission than above the flood plain at Chicopee.

The business side of the project is quantifiable and would have value to others than the owner. Yet, if we weigh the public health impact of a major project against the economic returns of jobs, energy and tax revenue, we should at least know quantifiably what the long-term costs to our health will be. After all, time is money.

Jay DiPucchio is a member of the Montague Board of Health. The opinions stated here are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of other members of the board.



from SIGN pg 5

requesting as part of our turnaround plan. That could mean – at a minimum – an additional \$90,000 a year for four years to help us continue our work to turn around our lower performing schools. We are already starting to make tremendous gains in many areas, and any extra help from the state or federal governments would make those gains more sustainable. There would also be the opportunity to apply for competitive grants to continue our efforts – those we can decide together if we have the capacity or the desire to participate in.

If we want to engage the state and have meaningful conversations with them, it is important to be at the table. We can't impact the development of the initiatives outlined in the MOU or in the reform legislation if we are not there. If we want to affect the outcome of the game then we need to be in it – cheering or criticizing from the sidelines isn't going to benefit us either in the short or the long term.

I would much rather send the signal to the state that we want to work with them in good faith rather than be seen as obstructionists. The letters being sent out by the towns and the school district are all saying that we want to work proactively with the state and that we want to engage them as partners – what better way

to send that message than to sign on to this RTTT initiative?

Signing this MOU is a signal of intent; that we intend to work with the state toward developing initiatives around the four core areas:

- Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance
- Ensuring effective teachers and leaders in every school and classroom
- For districts with Level 4 & 5 schools, turning around the lowest achieving schools
- Using data to improve instruction

It does not say how those initiatives are to be implemented. The MOU only states the broad goals and parameters of the RTTT program. The RTTT program provides us with a unique opportunity to look at the delivery of education in a different way and to work with the state and federal Department of Education in developing those methods of delivery.

Are there any iron-clad guarantees that we are going to like everything that is going to come out of this and that we are going to agree with the final product? No. However, if we are not at the table we are not going to have any impact on the outcomes at all.

To that end, there have also been assurances by the Massachusetts Secretary of Education and the

Commissioner of the DESE that we can back out of the program if we don't like the outcomes. For example, if the pay for performance core area that is developed is not feasible for our district or not fiscally sustainable, then we do not have to continue and we will not be penalized. Again, according to Associate Commissioner Foisy, "...if for some reason the district concluded after one, two, or three years that participation in RTTT is no longer advisable, G-M can withdraw with no penalty (of course, G-M would not continue to receive its RTTT grant)." As was requested during the webinar by several superintendents, I have this assurance in writing.

With the ability for us to "escape" if we are unable or unwilling to sign on to some of the aspects of the RTTT Initiative after it has been fleshed out further, it would seem appropriate to engage the state in whatever way we can that will help us meet our goals for long-term sustainability, stabilizing enrollment, and achieving academic excellence. I respectfully request and recommend that the school committee and the GMEA sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

Carl Ladd is the superintendent of the Gill-Montague Regional School District



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD Town Hall Rental's a Hot Commodity

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – Five different groups came to the January 6th selectboard meeting to reserve the newly insulated Wendell town hall for programs going into the spring.

First on the agenda was Kathleen Leonard who, with Mez Ziemba, wants to hold the first of a series of community meals at the town hall. Leonard asked what the capacity of the town hall is (96 seated, 145 standing), whether the board of health needs to approve any part of the process, and whether hot and cold water are available in the kitchen. Water to the town hall kitchen is turned off for the winter because the pipes run through the unheated crawl space under the building. Leonard decided to schedule the first community meal for May 1st, 2010 to avoid the problem of using the unheated water pipes.

Selectboard member Dan Keller recalled the town hall used to house community meals, and he thought the whole kitchen is functional. The selectboard liked the idea. Keller suggested a consultation with the board of

health might avoid unnecessary complications, and a call to the Full Moon Coffeehouse Committee might help steer the process of providing food.

Grace Harris reserved the town hall for Monday evenings, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. starting on January 11th, for a series of Capoeira classes to be taught by Wendell resident Matthew Williams. Capoeira is an African-inspired Brazilian martial art.

Harris also rented the town hall for Serena Stone to teach African-inspired dance on Friday nights, also from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Stone lives in Leverett now, and regulations say only a Wendell resident can rent the hall, so Harris took responsibility for the rental.

On Saturday, January 9th the town hall hosted the first of a series of monthly contra dances with a live band and a live caller. Donations at the door raised \$278 toward the restoration the Wendell Meetinghouse.

Because librarian Rose Heidkamp was unable to attend this selectboard meeting, selectboard chair Christine Heard

spoke for her and reserved the town hall every Sunday from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. for the newly formed community chorus, a project organized by the Friends of the Wendell Free Library. The chorus was originally intended to meet in the library meeting room, but 44 or 45 people signed up or showed interest. The library meeting room is too small for that many voices, so Heidkamp decided to move the chorus to the town hall instead, where it will meet on Sunday evenings for the next 11 weeks.

Larry Hess came to the meeting for Lola Bedaw and rented the town hall for February 6th to hold a bridal shower.

He added as an aside that people at Sunday's Good Neighbors food pantry noticed the town hall kitchen was much warmer than they were used to.

Heard reported that an Amerigas representative informed the town the gas tanks for the library's emergency generator have to be located away from any opening window. Amerigas gave an estimate of \$742 to put in an above-ground gas pipe connecting the tanks to the generator, but added that if the town dug a trench, a less expensive underground pipe would save the town \$250, and keep the expense within the

budget allocated for the generators.

Keller said he would ask Harry Williston of the highway commission, and with luck, try to get the job completed before snow and frozen ground postpone the work until spring.

Whittier Plumbing gave an estimate of \$6,618 to install two double-walled oil tanks for the two furnaces in the town hall. One furnace provides hot air to the main hall; the other provides baseboard heat for the bathrooms.

Bob Harris of Orange Oil has said double-walled oil tanks are a waste of money, but Keller said double-walled tanks might be a start in improving relations with a town hall neighbor and worth the extra cost. The town is still waiting for an estimate from Orange Oil.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser suggested both furnaces could be fed from a single tank, and that maybe with insulation in the town hall walls and ceiling, the fill up schedule would not be very different from before.

The selectboard took no action because not all the requested estimates are in.

The United States Census bureau sent an announcement that they will hold tests for

potential census takers at the Orange town hall at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays in January. Most positions are part time and all are temporary. To arrange scheduling for a test call Dee Dee Mares at (866) 861-2010. Tests will also be given in New Salem on February 3rd and February 20th. For more information about the New Salem tests call Nancy Aldrich at the Wendell Town office (978) 544-3395 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Information is available at www.2010censusjobs.gov.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich has sent requests for the annual report to all town departments. Reports are due February 15th.

Pooser mentioned that it is time for Wendell to update its Community Development Strategy so that the town will be eligible for the next Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application, that will offer 0% interest loans to homeowners to bring their homes up to code. The loans do not have to be repaid until the property changes hands, and Pooser said the money may provide employment for local workers.

The open meeting ended early for the selectboard to go into executive session to discuss possible litigation.

NOTES FROM THE GILL MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Gill-Montague Signs onto Race to the Top

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE – The tone at the Gill-Montague Regional school committee meeting was subdued Tuesday night. The discussion and vote on whether to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, which will commit the district to guidelines set forth in the federal Race To The Top (RTTT) grant competition occurred rapidly, with all members but Jeff Singleton voting in favor.

Singleton said he couldn't vote to support it because he objected to so many of its basic concepts, but he agreed the memo needed to be signed by the

school committee.

The only issue that seemed to spark debate was about the district's ability to opt out of the Race to the Top Initiative, if they subsequently chose to do so. Sandra Brown, the committee's vice chair, said she had received assurance the district could opt out if they wished.

Superintendent Carl Ladd thanked the school committee for voting in support of the MOU. He said there would be a side agreement drawn up between the district and the Gill-Montague Education Association to codify the escape clause, saying either party can withdraw from the RTTT initiative at any time.

Ladd said the teachers' associ-



School committee members Mike Langknecht, Sandra Brown, Emily Monosson, Kristin Boyle and Jeff Singleton.

ation concern was that the Race to the Top funding might come with a heavy emphasis on pay for performance.

Karl Dziura, president of the

education association, said his membership had voted to give him the authority to sign the memorandum, but only after the school committee signed an

agreement with the GMEA. Ladd confirmed that all three parties, superintendent Ladd, school

see RACE page 13

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MONTPELIER from pg 1

corporate owner of Vermont Yankee, to extend the nuke's operating license, due to expire in 2012, by another 20 years, by walking to the state capital, far from their Windham County, Vermont, Cheshire County,

because, "I am 61. I won't always be able to do a walk like this. I want to be able to say to myself, 'I did try to do what I could for my community, and my family, and my friends. I didn't want to get to the end of my life without doing something I care about. Nuclear is so

dollars in profits from its Northeast nuclear ventures and spin off Vermont Yankee to a shell corporation - Enexus - that would be saddled with \$4.2 billion in corporate debt and hold no assets other than six aging nuclear reactors.

It will only take one house of Vermont's bicameral legislature to vote No to stop Entergy's 20-year license extension for Vermont Yankee, and the way the Act-160 legislation is written, Republican governor Jim Douglas, a lame duck and major supporter of Vermont Yankee, will not be allowed a veto.

Vermont is the only state in the nation where the legislature has given itself the power to decide whether or not to allow the relicensing of a nuclear power plant operating within its borders. Whatever action the legislature takes on the future of Vermont Yankee - a vote is expected before the end of May - will be precedent setting and historic.

Sixteen state senators would need to be found from among the Democratic majority for Peter Shumlin (D-Putney), senate president *pro tem*, to call for the vote to happen first in the 30-seat Senate. Lobbyists working with the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG) and the Vermont Citizens Action Network (VCAN) - anti-nuclear groups working to defeat the license extension with an extensive multi-year door to door canvass of the state - have long believed their best chance to do so lies in the 150-seat House, where Democrats led by Shap Smith (D-Morristown) now hold a super majority.

But Smith has been hedging on the timing of the vote, seeking polling data on Vermonters' reaction to a possible shutdown of Vermont Yankee, and lately Shumlin, who is running for governor with an anti-VY plank, is sending signals he may call the vote in his chamber first.

On Wednesday, at a press conference after the walkers arrived at the statehouse, Shumlin left no doubt about his own position.

"I have concluded that in 2012 it is in the best interests of Vermonters not to renew Vermont Yankee's license, and that is how I will vote." In the crowded statehouse press conference, hundreds of anti-nuclear activists erupted in euphoric cheers and sustained applause.

Shap Smith spoke next and threw cold water on their jubilation.

"Let me tell you, this will not be an easy decision," he said. "It will not be an easy process." Smith called for Entergy to fully fund the plant's decommissioning, and denounced Entergy's plan to set up a heavily indebted limited liability corporation to own its aging Northeast nuclear plants. And he offered this bromide: "The future of Vermont is not going to be the generation of nuclear power at Vermont Yankee. Renewable energy, that will be the way forward."

But he made no commitment to oppose the relicensing of Vermont Yankee, or to schedule a vote on relicensing for his membership.

VPIRG lobbyist James Moore looked after Smith as he walked away and said, "We have more work to do there."

On the road to Montpelier, temperatures hovered in the single digits in the morning, rising to the twenties in the afternoon, as the walkers trudged slowly north. News came Thursday, while they were gathered at a community potluck with the town energy committee in White River Junction, that a plume of radioactive tritium, a weak beta emitter and carcinogenic isotope of hydrogen with a lifespan of 120 years, was leaking from a below ground pipe or storage tank at Vermont Yankee and moving toward the Connecticut River.

At least 60,000 gallons of tritium have leaked at Vermont Yankee over the last six months, according to the calculations of former nuclear executive turned industry watchdog Arnie Gunderson, of Burlington, VT, who now serves on Vermont's nuclear oversight panel.

Gunderson suspects the leak will be found in the reactor's

condensate storage tank, which would necessitate a plant shut down to repair. He estimated it would cost at least \$5 to \$10 million, possibly up to \$100 million, to clean up the tritium spill, which was announced by Vermont Yankee plant spokesperson Rob Williams on Thursday, following a spike in tritium levels at one of the reactor's on site test wells.

"They picked it up in November, and it was 20 times higher in January," said Gunderson, who was the executive vice president of Nuclear Energy Services before turning whistleblower and testifying about safety concerns within the industry before Congress.

The tritium leak was the talk of the legislature on Friday, lobbyists working with the anti-nuclear groups said.

More than one million pounds of spent fuel waste has piled up at the Vernon site, most of it in a continuously cooled seventh story swimming pool protected only by a metal roof. Some of it is now stored in concrete bunkers that are situated on a concrete pad in the 500-year flood plain of New England's longest river. Their longevity is untested.

A loss of coolant accident at the fuel pool or in the reactor core could release enough radiation to render a large area of New England permanently uninhabitable.

Rob Ralston, a wiry man of indeterminate age who lives six miles south of the reactor, said he had been unaware of the issues surrounding Vermont Yankee and its relicensing bid until he moved to Bernardston a year and a half ago.

"I got a signal radio when I moved here. Come to find out from the neighbors, we're in the evacuation zone. The trouble is, by the time we get the signal and become mobile, it's too late."

At a stop in South Royalton, at the Vermont Law School, where later in the evening a total of 45 people gathered for a potluck with the walkers on Saturday night, Ralston said the slow pace of travel had given him plenty of time for personal thought on the road north.

"Somebody has to stand up and speak for the issue," he said. "It's a legacy we're all going to leave for our kids and grandkids. The thing about nuclear contamination is: it doesn't go away. It affects generations through the gene pool. How are future generations going to look at us for letting that happen?"

Saturday had proved to be an easy hike, but a very cold one, for about 31 walkers, moving along the shoulder single file, see MONTPELIER pg 9



VT House Speaker Shap Smith (D-Morristown) temporizes Wednesday, as Safe & Green's Betsy Williams (Westminster West) looks on.

New Hampshire and Franklin County, Massachusetts homes.

The center of Vermont's political power is in the north. But the center of the nuclear power plant's evacuation zone is just south of Brattleboro. Downwinders in New Hampshire (where one quarter of the people within 20 miles of Vermont Yankee reside) and Massachusetts (where one half of the evacuation zone population lives) say they are suffering 'Radiation without Representation,' and they too want their voices heard in Montpelier.

Woody Bernhardt, of Marlboro, VT, a thin man with a long grey beard, said he was walking to the statehouse

wrong."

The walkers, who mostly come from towns in the 20-mile zone, arrived at the statehouse Wednesday as debate begins in earnest on whether to allow Entergy's license extension to go forward. That bid is tied to a power purchase offer to Vermont utilities (upping the cost of power from Vermont Yankee to 6.1 cents a kilowatt hour, from the current sweetheart deal at 4.3 cents per kWh, with an annual 3% escalator, and cutting the amount of Vermont Yankee power to be sold within the state from 250 MW to 180 MW). That offer is coupled to Entergy's plan to cash out hundreds of millions of



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MONTPELIER from pg 8 facing traffic on Route 14, with the sun gleaming off the piled up ice of the White River to their left. The Safe and Green Campaign organizers were excessively cautious about safety *en route*.

On Saturday, Peter Cooper, of Brattleboro, and Betsy Williams, of Westminster West, each carried bright red warning flags on ten foot poles at either end of the file of walkers. Williams stayed 20 yards back from the main group, Cooper 20 yards ahead, to warn traffic in both directions to slow down. Walkers were asked to stay in line, talk with each other only by speaking over their shoulders, and avoid any movement towards the lane of travel.

Many of the drivers passing by seemed to recognize the walkers from news articles and radio reports, even before they came close enough to read their signs calling for Vermont Yankee to be shut down. For every thumbs down sign, or extended middle finger, there were many others who cheered and waved, and honked in obvious support.

Chris Martin, a carpenter from Shelburne Falls, said reactions from passing cars had been running "ten to one," in support; others on the walk agreed with that estimate.

"This walk is democracy in action," said Williams, a mediation trainer, relaxing on the seventh day of the walk. "It's really expressing ourselves in the way we can, with our bodies, our connections to people, even with people who are neutral or negative. Anyone we interact with is likely to come away with the impression, 'They were OK people doing something they believe in.'"

"Most people aren't used to people walking long distances in public," she added. "It's unique. We're out there expressing ourselves without any protective armor."

None of the folks who turned out for the potluck (there were 40 in the room that night) at the Seven Stars Community Center in Sharon on Friday were neutral on the topic of closing down Vermont Yankee. Many were 30-year-veterans of the effort to retire Vermont's lone nuclear plant, including 90-year-old Bob Nichols, of Thetford Hill, who with his wife Grace Paley, now deceased, had marched against VY in the mid-'80s. Or Nina Swaim, whose mother, Eleanor, also now deceased, a proper Vermont ladies' clothing store proprietor and naturalist who at 72 took up the cause and was arrested for blocking the gates to Vermont Yankee, where a photo was taken of her in 1980 surrounded by Vermont state troopers, who tower above her in an

iconic image that practically put the civil in civil disobedience.

Nina Swaim, a retired family mediator from Sharon, marched with the walkers to South Royalton on Saturday, and returned on Wednesday morning to make the final hike from Barre to the statehouse.

"Eleanor would have

down the Connecticut River.

Also at that meeting, Chris Williams of VCAN explained the risks associated with the recent tritium leak at the reactor.

"Tritium is something the nuclear industry wants to cover up and not talk about. It affects people or animals or plants the way that water does. It can get

leaks at other reactors, such as Connecticut Yankee near Hartford, had added up to half a billion dollars to the eventual reactor clean-up and decommissioning costs.

Entergy has added nothing to the \$380 million decommissioning fund that came with the reactor when Entergy purchased the plant from a consortium led by two Vermont utilities in 2002, Williams said. Now, Vermont Yankee is considered a "merchant plant," and like other Entergy owned nukes in the Northeast, it is unknown who would be held liable for funding the remaining costs of eventually decommissioning the plant if it is permanently shut down on schedule in 2012.

Williams said the decommissioning fund for Vermont Yankee is at least \$600 million short of what would realistically be required to return the reactor site to a "green field," not counting further revelations about the extent of radiation contamination of the soil or groundwater around the reactor.

Entergy has recently pledged \$40 million in "guarantees" toward the decommissioning fund, which has risen in value with this year's stock market recovery to about \$428 million.

"I feel overwhelmed," said Swaim, after Williams and Nestel finished speaking. "You don't get this kind of information anywhere else."

As the walkers moved closer to Montpelier, community support never flagged. Each night, large gatherings of supporters met them at community halls, and divided up the walkers to individual homes for rest and showers.

By Tuesday night in Barre, well over 100 people had gathered in a large natural foods market to serve a hot meal to their footsore guests from the south. Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance (a grassroots group based in the northern part of the state that has been working to shut down Vermont Yankee since the late 1970s) spokesperson Debra Stoleroff told the walkers, "You have managed to unite the corridor between Brattleboro and Montpelier against the plant in a way that has never been done before."

The Raging Grannies serenaded them, and Court Dorsey, of Wendell, in character as snide corporate shill Will Nukem, carried on an educational and hilarious debate with Deb Katz to please the crowd and not incidentally fill them in on details they would need to lobby legislators on the morrow.

"How do you like living your conservation kind of lifestyle?" sneered Nukem. "That's what

these 250 megawatts of power is all about. It's about staying chilly at home. If that's what you're selling to the people of Vermont, good luck to you. You've walked through Vermont in the middle of January. Are you chilly?"

But Katz responded, "We who live downwind of Yankee, we pay our electric bills in the hospital."

She said in the Deerfield Valley where she lives, downstream from the former Yankee Rowe plant, "There are ten-fold increases in children with Down's Syndrome, and statistically significant increases in Hodgkins disease, and multiple myeloma, a rare blood disease. We have had over 11 cases in our valley, where we have a population of about 6,000 to 7,000 people. We shouldn't have statistical significance of any disease in a population that size. We are suffering the human sacrifice of the nuclear industry."

She added, "In our community, there are people missing from every dinner table. There are people missing who will never return, who paid their electric bill at the hospital."

Nukem countered, "I'm imagining most people in this part of the state will go for keeping Vermont Yankee running. But if they don't... We'll see you in the Supreme Court. You better be ready to take this little movement national. If the Supreme Court rules against you, you're going to be hurting the states' rights movement you're supporting now. So take my advice. If you really want to exercise democracy, you better think twice before you exercise it."

After all the miles they'd walked, this remark seemed to get the crowd pretty exercised.

One hundred and fourteen walkers left the granite halls of Barre in the five degree chill on Wednesday for the last seven mile hike to Montpelier. Nelia Sargent, of Claremont, NH, who is blind, walked among them, her cane tapping the side of the road.

Their numbers swelled to 200 by the time they reached the capital, where Betsy Williams took the microphone at the lunchtime press conference.

"I am speaking on behalf of walkers who today completed a 126 mile, 11 day walk that began in Brattleboro on January 2nd. Some of us were able to take time off from work and family schedules to walk the whole way. Hundreds more participated, from toddlers to people in their 80s.

"We don't have the backing of a major out-of-state corporation behind us, splashing full page ads across the newspapers and TVs and radios. We have our feet, our voices, our hearts, our see MONTPELIER pg 12



PHOTO BY MICHAEL McDERMOTT, BRATTLEBORO REFORMER

Eleanor Swaim blocking the Vermont Yankee gates in October of 1980. Her daughter Nina carried this photo to the statehouse on Wednesday.

approved," she said, as she walked along the side of Route 14 in South Royalton.

On Friday, Swaim was among those who listened carefully as walker Hattie Nestel, of Athol, MA, talked about the danger of storing high level nuclear waste in concrete storage casks near the plant on a neck of land extending into the Connecticut River.

"Those casks are in the 500-year flood plain. If heavy rains lead to a flood, that land could be inundated with mud or swept away. Anything that blocks the ventilation to those casks could lead to a fire and a catastrophic release of radiation," Nestel asserted.

She said Professor Michael Wilson, a PhD in geology at SUNY-Fredonia, was hired by the state to review the data by which Entergy determined the riverbank site was suitable for long term storage of high level wastes. He concluded last fall, in a report to the state of Vermont's Public Service Board, that "insufficient data," had been presented to the board before they issued a certificate of public good allowing dry cask storage on the reactor site. Wilson said more test borings should have been conducted, along with a broader analysis of heavy rain events dating back to the 1936 flood, which caused extensive damage and landslides up and

inside single cells, and when something radioactive gets inside single cells you can create a cancer which grows.

Vermont Yankee has had a tritium problem for some time, but it's just now coming to the forefront that there is a migrating plume of tritium around the reactor."

He said the VCAN lobbyist at the statehouse had just been complaining to him earlier last week that at the start of last year's legislative session, "Vermont Yankee had three leaks, and two of them were radioactive."

But when the tritium leak at VY was announced on Thursday, as grim as that news was for people living near the plant, (where the well supplying the elementary school 350 yards from the plant gates in Vernon measures so high in beta emitters that children at the school have been "on bottled water for years," as Gunderson put it in a Saturday phone interview), Williams said news of the tritium leak had VCAN's anti-nuclear lobbyist in Montpelier "walking on air. It's the buzz of the statehouse. Entergy is doing total damage control. I believe we're going to have the state Department of Public Health take over and look at what's contaminating the well at the elementary school."

Williams also said tritium

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MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BOSTON PHOTO

The Boat Model: The Djehutynakhts were particularly well-equipped for their voyage to eternity. Their fleet of fifty-eight boats is the largest ever discovered in an Egyptian tomb. The vessels include transport, military, kitchen, hunting, funerary, and pilgrimage boats. In the Djehutynakhts' time, the Egyptians placed wooden boat models in the subterranean burial chambers of their tombs in order to provide symbolic transportation in the afterlife.

RICHARD ANDERSEN & DIANE LYN BOSTON

Imagine. You're planning a trip. It's very long, and you're not sure where it will end, but you know you'll never return. What do you pack?

You've got a big trunk: eight feet long, four feet wide, and four feet deep. But it's got to hold you and your wife and all you might ever need in a place you've never been.

These thoughts ran through the mind of Governor Djehutynakht (pronounced je-hooty-nacht) in 2000 BCE. The 250 objects the governor chose to put in the tomb that would carry him and Lady Djehutynakht from this world into the next is currently on display at the Museum of Fine Arts, but it's clear from the exhibit that never in their wildest dreams did the Djehutynakhts envision arriving in a place called Boston.

The Djehutynakhts' tomb was discovered in 1915. It had survived fires, water damage, robberies, and the effects of four thousand years

underground. All their gold jewelry and semi-precious stones were stolen, but what the thieves left behind now comprises the biggest known collection of wooden models ever assembled from ancient Egypt. These models represent in miniature form many of the important activities that took place on the Djehutynakhts' estate. The most impressive is the 26-inch long Procession of Offering Bearers featuring a priest carrying a jug of ceremonial wine, followed by three women carrying food and more wine. The Djehutynakhts apparently liked to drink. Along with the models are food vessels, walking sticks, and sealed beer jars – one of which will be opened at the MFA between now and May 16th.

You see, the Djehutynakhts were preparing for a comfortable life after they died. They believed that once they passed into the life after the one they knew in Egypt, the people represented in the wooden

models would come to life and take care of them. That there are over a hundred, including farmers with oxen, carpenters with tools, sailors with boats, bakers with ovens, and brewers with kegs, gives you some idea of the life the Djehutynakhts wanted to take with them.

Because robbers threw the wooden models about the Djehutynakhts' tomb in their search for treasure, archeologists found many of the structures in pieces. It took conservators at the Museum of Fine Arts almost a hundred years and more than 10,000 hours to sort, match, and attach thousands of fragments to their original models. These models now appear fully assembled for the first time since they were buried four millennia ago. The ways they are carved and painted make them the finest of their kind in the world.

Ensuring safe passage to the next world meant putting each of the Djehutynakhts' mummified bodies in three increasingly larger coffins

and protecting them with 575 spells. The mummies were placed on their left sides, and they were given a pair of *wedjat* eyes

painted on the inside and outside of their coffins so the Djehutynakhts could view their journey. They even had maps that reveal

how much easier it is to navigate in the afterlife than through the streets of Boston.

When archeologists discovered the Djehutynakhts' vandalized tomb, they saw a linen-wrapped head looking at them from the top of one of the coffins. Parts of the mummy's skin had separated from the linen, and the bottom part of a black, leather-like ear protruded from the skull. Research indicates that the brain was taken out of the skull through its nose as part of the embalming process used by the ancient Egyptians. Whether the skull belongs to Governor or Lady Djehutynakht is being determined by neurologists working with DNA evidence at Massachusetts General Hospital. While waiting to learn whether the mummy is the he or she, visitors to the exhibit can view a digital

see TOMB pg 14

FURBISHING THE AVENUE

Walking Through a Wintery Rockscape



JOHN FURBISH PHOTO

Rock scoured by a passing glacier can be seen next to the stairs to Our Lady of Czestochowa

BY JOHN FURBISH

TURNERS FALLS – After such a long, warm and pleasant fall, our New England winter began with snow in early December. One cold but not freezing sunny day, I laboriously dressed in layers and headed downtown, putting my camera and additional batteries into my back-

pack.

In front of Ristorante DiPaolo patio I noticed a frozen loaf of bread sticking out of the snow. In this wintry season, Tim De Christopher's sculpture "Bread Loaf Rock" looks like it has just been taken

see FURBISHING pg 14

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From the Sidelines

Excerpts from Neil L. Perry's coverage of Turners Falls High School Football, 1965-1981

BY WID PERRY

(TFHS CLASS OF '75)

TURNERS FALLS – My father (the late Neil L. Perry) joined the *Greenfield Recorder-Gazette* as the Turners Falls beat reporter in 1962, the same year Jack Bassett was named Head Football Coach at TFHS. Like many beat reporters, Neil moonlighted by covering Franklin County High School football games, and he liked roaming the Turners Falls High School football sidelines the best.

The first Turners game Neil covered was on the second Saturday in November 1963 when the Northampton Devils downed Turners, 22-8. Quarterback Rich Wondoloski hit end John O'Riley on a 12-yard touchdown pass for the only TF score that day. It wasn't until 1965 that Neil began consistently covering the Turners squad.

My father would sit at our dining room table on the morning of a game mapping out a football field on four pieces of graph paper (one for each quarter). During the game, he'd sketch the play with lines and jersey numbers, using one of those fat multi-colored pens with the red, green, blue and black levers on top to distinguish the different teams.

An excerpt from the Turkey

Day game of 1968 gives readers a flavor of Neil's colorful coverage:

"The impossible dream came true to Franklin County Thursday morning and when it was over thousands of joyous fans took Cloud Nine back to heavenly Turners Falls, fondly clutching a never to be forgotten 26-12 football win over arch rival Greenfield."

He continued, "The stunning victory, so convincingly attained, was the third for [Turners] in the past four Thanksgiving Day outings, and ended once and for all the myth of Greenfield football superiority."

"A delirious Charlie Galvin stood transfixed muttering, 'I can't believe it. I just can't believe it,' as the Turners fans erupted from the stands to engulf 38 laughing, weeping, hysterically happy blue clad football players at the final whistle."

Freezing rain, drizzle, mist and rain coated the field with a thin layer of ice and it was 25 degrees at kickoff, but that didn't stop Mark Barber, Mark Galvis, and Artie Burke. Neil saluted Jack Bassett and line coach John Zywna who "had the boys up for this one."

Turners finished 4-5 on the season, but big wins against Pittsfield, Northampton and

especially Greenfield took away some of that sting.

Or consider this reporting gem from 1969:

"If Turners Falls Head Coach Jack Bassett is seen wandering the halls in Turners Falls High School this week desperately looking into lockers and broom closets, don't be alarmed. He's probably trying to find his football team's ground game, which disappeared a little over two weeks ago."

That was Neil's lead after Athol stopped Turners Falls 12-7 in Athol. The Blue had minus six yards rushing for the game and "this put added pressure on Art Burke (14 of 23 for 147 yards) and his corps of pass receivers, who rose to the occasion but not enough to overtake the strong Red Raiders." Burke hit Bob Suprenant for the TF touchdown.

In 1970, line coach John Zywna took over head coaching responsibilities for Turners, after Bassett's eight year reign.

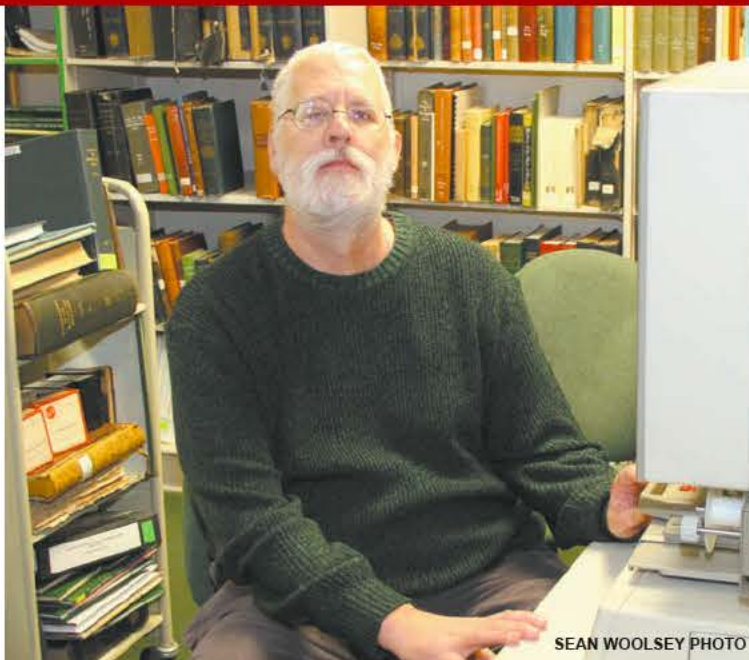
After his six years as head coach ended in 1976, Neil saluted Zywna in a September *Perryscope* column, remembering, "the tall hawk-faced guy pacing the sidelines in shirt sleeves on cold fall Saturday afternoons [as] one of the most dedicated sportsmen and teachers," with an "enthusiasm and spirit that he brought to the game and engendered to those who played for and against him;" a man who "practices discipline, hard work and self-sacrifice."

Concluded Neil, "John Zywna did not build just winners – he built men."

Coach Z finished with a winning record of 33-21 (32-13 if you toss out '70) with two Turkey Day wins, and was lauded as among the best.

Who could forget this gem from 1979?

"It's an ill wind that bloweth no man to God.' They teach it in English Literature classes at Turners Falls High School, but the lesson was driven home in particularly cruel fashion to head coach John O'Riley and his emotionally-charged football players on the playing field this weekend," Neil wrote. The "near gale that swept across the Montague Plains Saturday afternoon" held up a Lew Collins valiant 39-yard field goal attempt and held back Fran Welcome's punt that result-



Wid Perry spent many hours in the microfilm catalogue at the Greenfield Public Library reviewing his father's columns to prepare *From the Sidelines*.

Neil L. Perry Made a Difference

Wid Perry said his father, Neil L. Perry, was first and foremost "A community, local writer. He knew the area; he knew the people.

Neil L. Perry edited the weekly *Turners Falls Observer* in 1963.

"For several years between 1964 and 1968, he was the Turners Falls beat reporter for the *Recorder*. He lived in Turners Falls. He knew Turners Falls. As he worked his way up from beat reporter to columnist to associate editor, he always remained loyal to Turners Falls.

"He covered the state house in Boston, with a Franklin County focus. He was always interested in the local angle, no matter what he was covering.

"I used to take trips with him, and sit in the press gallery in Boston and watch the debates unfold, and watch the inner workings. It was pretty fascinating for a kid in high school."

Wid Perry graduated from Turners Falls High in 1975. He is now retired from the Navy and works for the state as a

Department of Mental Health administrator.

Wid said he wrote 'From the Sidelines,' for the *Turners Falls Alumni Newsletter*, which may publish it soon in serial form.

"I was trying to think of a theme or subject for an upcoming newsletter and realized that the football angle might be an interesting walk down memory lane. I tried to mention every name my father mentioned in his write-ups. I didn't realize it would take so much time researching, going through all the microfiche at the Greenfield Library, and I was surprised at how long it ended up. But once I got started I didn't want to slight anybody or short-change any particular season."

Neil L. Perry also wrote for the *Springfield Union* and served as editor of the *Westfield News*.

Wid summed up his father's influence in the local journalism scene this way. "He was a mentor and an influence to a lot of younger reporters. He made a difference."

ed in a Ware run back for a game-tying TD. And then "the pitiless breezes pushed and lifted and blew" Ware's PAT "just over the goal post cross bar for the 22-21 Ware win."

Neil's last Turkey Day Game coverage came in 1980, with a disappointing 21-12 loss to Greenfield, capping off a 6-4 season with Neil walking the sidelines for all 10 games.

His Thanksgiving Day coverage included this passage:

"When the Indians' first string quarterback Jay Crofton was nailed on the Greenfield sidelines and forced out of the game early in the second period, there were some not-so-quiet prayers com-

ing from under all those blue parkas, blankets and overcoats in the Turners stands. They were answered when the substitute quarterback, little freshman Brian Jurek, hit Owen Jander with a 17 yard pass, Mitzi Croteau raced 27 yards downfield, and Crofton came back to hit Mark Pelis for a touchdown. From that point on, both the Green and the Blue knew they were in for a classic football battle.

"They played the game on an icy, slick field that frequently caused backs on both sides to lose their footing." Also: "Sue Henry and Kim Rivet, co-cap-

see PERRY page 16

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Lakefront Camps Vandalized, Property Stolen

BY DAVID DETMOLD — Sometime on or about December 15th of 2009, persons unknown drove up the looping road around Laurel Lake in the Erving State Forest and ransacked all but two of the 40 camps that dot the lakefront, 27 on the Erving side, the others in Warwick, according to Erving chief of police Christopher Blair.

No one was there to see them at their work. No one lives at the lake in the wintertime. The road is not usually plowed for winter use, though it had been recently cleared at private expense to allow for a construction project.

"December 15th was the only warm day," after the first snowfall, Blair said. When the break-ins were finally discovered, the police inspected and found boot prints and tire tracks frozen into the snow.

Some of the camp owners live far away, in Connecticut or

elsewhere, according to Keith Ball, a High Street resident who also owns a camp on Laurel Lake.

Some of the camp owners do not even know their property has been vandalized, and Blair said a complete list of stolen property has not yet been compiled.

"They did a substantial amount of damage to the camps. In one, they took an axe and destroyed a television and hacked up the furniture. They kicked in doors."

Blair said television sets, stereo equipment, alcohol, tools, and tool boxes were among the valuables stolen.

Ball told the Erving selectboard on Monday, January 11th that his camp had been among those broken into, and he had lost stereo equipment and a television set. The safety door of his cabin had been pried or yanked off its hinges.

Ball said this is the third

time in 2009 that break-ins and larceny have occurred at the camps on Laurel Lake.

"They stole half a dozen kayaks last February," he said.

Selectboard member Andrew Goodwin recused himself from the discussion. He owns a camp on Laurel Lake. His camp was among those vandalized.

Blair, who was not at the meeting, said in a phone interview that three police departments have responded to the break-ins at Laurel Lake, including the state police and the environmental police, but only the environmental police have the equipment to patrol Laurel Lake in the winter time. He said a discussion is proceeding among the departments concerned about the possibility of gating the road in the wintertime.

Ball asked the selectboard if the town could install a surveillance camera on the road.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Keith Ball was among the camp owners around Laurel Lake whose cabins were broken into last month

Asked about this later, Blair said it was a good idea, one the police have already been considering for the French King Bridge, situated close by their station, where they are frequently called to handle suspected suicides.

He said a private camp owner could install such a camera for a few hundred dol-

lars. "The technology is improving all the time."

Selectboard member Jamie Hackett promised to communicate with Blair about the repeated break-ins at Laurel Lake and get back to Ball about his concerns.

Blair said the investigation is ongoing.

MONTPELIER from pg 9

connection to the land, our neighbors, and our communities. And what an experience we have just had. As we made our way up the Connecticut and White River valleys, we have been part of a profound democratic experience, with overwhelming support from church halls, potluck suppers, and the hospitality of homes and businesses all along the route, along with the gestures and actions of people driving by us, who by a percentage of 10 to 1 showed their agreement with our request for our legislators to act on this historic and unprecedented opportunity to not allow the continued operation of Vermont Yankee past 2012."

Williams handed petitions with about 1700 signatures of residents of the 20-mile zone around Vermont Yankee, calling for the shut down of the nuclear plant, to Shumlin and Smith.

In a later meet and greet with legislators, Chris Martin, a builder from Shelburne Falls said, "I have spent my entire adult life building energy-efficient houses and installing solar systems. I am also actively involved in helping my county become more food self-sufficient."

"I took these days off from work and walked 126 miles to Montpelier to bring a message from those of us in Massachusetts who live in the shadow of this decrepit reactor."

"The people of Franklin County, MA have overwhelmingly and repeatedly expressed their desire to have this plant shut down."

"We know that everything we love, from our land to our families, is threatened and degraded every day by the continued operation of Vermont Yankee, with its distant and arrogant owners."

"We implore you to use the

power that you so wisely reserved for this state legislature to remove this curse from our lives and to clean up the mess

air.

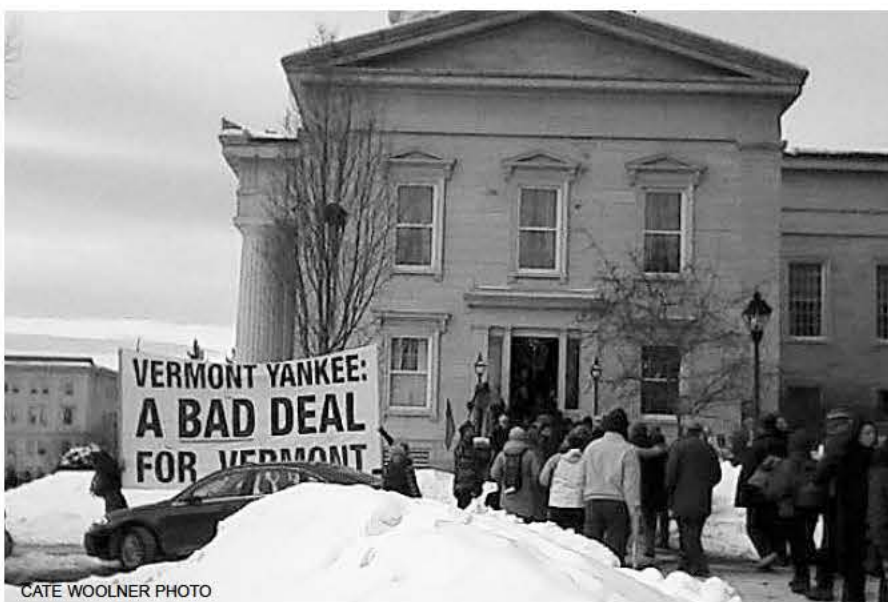
"I am here to represent my generation, and the generations to come. We don't need 20 more

tions, and power agreements under the golden statehouse dome. Pro-nuclear lobbyists were also there, exerting their own persuasive powers on the legislators, and waiting for this particular expression of democracy in action to amble back where it came from.

Outside, snow swirled down, and the Green Mountains donned another coat of white.

The air seemed fresh and pure in the capital city, regardless of the deals being made inside the marble halls of the statehouse.

But 120 miles to the south, the reactor was still pumping



CATE WOOLNER PHOTO

The Safe & Green walkers arriving at the statehouse on Wednesday.

before it gets worse.

"We do not want it. We do not need it, and in fact we will prosper without it."

Clara Bartlett also addressed state senators and reps in the gathering at the statehouse cafeteria after the press conference. Bartlett, a young woman from Swanzey, NH, walked the distance to Montpelier with her friend Jenny and sister Angela. She said, "I live within the 20-mile radius of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. I'm here to express gratitude to the legislators. The decisions made by you will ensure the prosperity of our soil, water, and

years of nuclear byproducts. Let us wake up..."

Here Bartlett began to cry, and struggled to control her emotion as the room went still.

"It is now we must wake up to address the mistakes of the past, so we can live to make the mistakes of the future..."

"This decision will not only affect Vermont, but also Massachusetts and New Hampshire."

She was warmly applauded, and then the gathered walkers and their supporters spoke with lawmakers over cookies and coffee, discussing details of legislative strategy, shell corpora-

radioactive gasses up its vent stack to blow down the wind, where it will settle to earth, enter the food chain, and add to the 400,000 curies of air borne radiation Vermont Yankee has already released over the last 37 years. More tritium was seeping toward the Connecticut River. And more high level spent fuel was piling up, to add to the million pounds of hot waste already stored on the riverside, lethal for 250,000 years, with no safe method of disposal, and no place else to go.

No amount of snow will be able to cover up this mess.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Assistance to Neighboring Departments

Thursday, 1/7

12:20 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

Friday, 1/8

7:00 a.m. Assisted Bernardston police at Four Leaf Clover Restaurant with an altercation, one male arrested.

9:30 a.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted], for no inspection sticker, unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle, subsequent offense, and refusal to identify self.

Sunday, 1/10

9:55 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Forest Street, verbal only.

Monday, 1/11

11:35 a.m. Report of a suspicious person in the area of Moore Street, investigated.

12:10 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle rollover in the North Street area in Northfield. Assisted Northfield police.

2:30 p.m. Report of a telephone scam on Old State Road, advised of options.

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FIELD NOTES FROM THE WENDELL ENERGY TASK FORCE

Winserts: A Win-Win Home Energy Saving Solution

BY LAURIE DIDONATO – Home weatherization is the most effective way to save on heating bills.

At a recent free presentation given by Brian Nugent of Athol, local residents learned how to make interior Winserts that significantly reduce window heat loss. Winserts consist of a custom-sized wood frame, two layers of clear film, and a thick polyfoam tape around the outer edge to make them fit snugly in your window frames. With care, they can last five years, when the polyfoam and

film can easily be replaced. Winserts are about three times more effective than a single plastic sheet. One dead air space is inside the Winsert, and a second is between the Winsert and the glass. This combination almost halves heat loss with new windows. Savings of 20% have been reported in homes with Winserts in every window, illustrating a quick return on your investment. For best results, caulk air leaks before installation.

Winserts do require up-front

effort to assemble, the most difficult part being the ripping of wood to the correct width and lengths to fit your windows. If you don't have access to a table saw and miter chop saw, fear not: Nugent will do this for you by arrangement. Bring him the measurements and uncut boards and he will rip and cut them for you.

He also encourages people to make Winserts as a local business opportunity.

Nugent also leads workshops for towns interested in making municipal buildings

more efficient. The Wendell Energy Task Force is planning a workshop for the Wendell town hall. This involves delivering measurements and sufficient pine boards to Nugent, picking a workshop date and inviting town volunteers. Nugent will show up with assembled frames or frame pieces ready to assemble and show volunteers how to apply the film and polyfoam. The end products will be a more energy-efficient town hall and a team of volunteers with the

experience to make Winserts for their own homes.

Free Winsert presentations are given every third Saturday at the Orange library, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For detailed instructions and photos, visit www.northquabbinenergy.org/winsert-main, or Google "Winserts."

For information on home weatherization, free home energy audits, and incentives for home insulation, visit Masssaves.com.

RACE from pg 7

committee chair Michael Langknecht, and education association president Karl Dziura had signed the MOU by the January 13th deadline.

In response to an invitation from the school committee, representatives of Gill and Montague were in attendance to discuss the budget process for the coming fiscal year.

Tupper Brown of the Gill finance committee began his statement to the school committee by saying he didn't have many numbers on revenues yet, but could say that a starting point for the finance committee and the selectboard in Gill is to begin with level funding from FY'10 and go downward from there as need be toward minus five percent or ten percent, as the revenue picture becomes clearer.

Michael Naughton, Montague finance committee member, said Montague will be looking at the fifty-fifty split on revenues between the town and schools that it has tried to use as a benchmark for apportioning its annual new growth revenue. He said that in the past, the town has allocated a slightly higher percentage to fund town departments, but that seems no longer possible.

Naughton said even with the

predictable increase of 2½ percent in local tax levies, the amount the town will bring in will not make up for an expected ten percent cut in state aid. He said Montague has decided against using any more reserves for funding operating budgets.

Singleton asked why Montague doesn't want to use reserves.

Brown said "Gill doesn't have any reserves left, to speak of. That town has used all their free cash to fund departmental services." He asked if the school committee could produce a level-funded, zero percent budget, and when the towns would be able to see it.

Ladd said he felt a level services budget (which would necessitate an increase to keep up with costs of salaries, insurance, etc.) would not be well received by the towns, and might suggest to residents that "We still don't get it." His preference, therefore, is for the school committee to produce a level funded budget.

A level services budget estimate, prepared by Lynn Bassett and presented at the meeting, would require an increase of \$800,000 over the Gill-Montague schools' fiscal year for 2010.

Ladd suggested the school

committee put off presenting a budget until more is known on the revenue side, and to give the administration time to find cuts to meet a level funded budget.

"With the climate of uncertainty in Boston and in the country, it would be better to be presenting a preliminary budget on March 1st," Ladd said.

Unfortunately, according to counsel, this would be a violation of the GMRSD's regional agreement, which requires an initial budget to be presented by February 1st.

Tupper Brown said he would prefer to have a level services budget to show the state as a way of demonstrating the problems caused by cuts in state aid.

There is a meeting planned between local officials from the school district and the towns with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in Turners Falls on February 3rd.

The next meeting of the Gill-Montague Regional School District school committee will be held on January 26th at the Gill Elementary School at 7 p.m.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Hit and Run in Montague Center

Tuesday, 1/5 6:40 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street, investigated.	Sheffield Elementary , returned to home or family.	A, investigated. 1:15 a.m. Suspicious person at 5th Street and Avenue A,	in front of the Montague Center post office, report taken.
Saturday, 1/9 7:59 a.m. Trespassing at Millers Falls Pub, services rendered.	8:41 a.m. Unwanted person on G Street, services rendered	referred to an officer.	7:46 a.m. Accident with property damage and personal injury near Scotty's Convenience Store , subject removed to hospital.
10:01 p.m. Arrest of [redacted], on a straight warrant.	8:40 p.m. Suicidal subject at French King Bridge, referred to an officer.	5:10 p.m. Assault on Farren Avenue, referred to an officer.	3:23 p.m. Illegal burn on Federal Street.
Thursday, 1/7 8:56 a.m. Breaking and entering, burglary, on Avenue A, report taken.	Sunday, 1/10 12:45 a.m. General disturbance at Second Street and Avenue	7:52 p.m. Suspicious person on George Avenue.	3:45 p.m. Narcotics violation on Third Street.
5:20 p.m. Missing person at	Street and Avenue	Tuesday, 1/12 12:17 a.m. Hit and run accident	

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FURBISHING from pg 10 from the freezer. A gift from the artist to owner Denise DiPaolo at the opening of her restaurant in 2006, the sculpture actually gets used in warmer seasons as a bench by customers waiting for tables.

Just staring at that slab of 345 million-year-old Indiana limestone made me wonder about that long-long-ago time when the Midwest lay at the bottom of a shallow sea where tiny marine organisms secreted lime. When they died, their shells dropped to the ocean floor, and with the help of pressure, time, and lime, got cemented into rocks

In no great rush, I took a turn around and looked over some of our town's oldest rocks, near the canal. Some time after the Indiana limestone formed, the world's land masses drifted together and combined into one single super-continent. Turners Falls then had an enviable position somewhere near the center of "Pangaea," as geologists dub this land mass. We were at an equatorial latitude then, and our climate would have been a heck of a lot warmer than it is now, and even more humid than the Happy Valley in summer dog-days – more like Costa Rica is today. The Avenue would have

been lush and green back then, with never a trace of snow.

At the canalside end of 3rd Street, I turned on the dirt lane in front of the Youth Sculpture Park and I could see our rock history at a glance. From programs at the Great Falls Discovery Center presented by resident geologist Steve Winters, I knew the continental and oceanic 'plates' of rock that make up the Earth's thin crust, and the deeper, hotter mantle are but islands floating on a molten mass of the hot liquid core in the planet's interior. Our area cracked apart, starting about 250 million years ago, splitting in a north-south rift in the heart of the Pangean super-continent, as what would become Europe started drifting east. Turners is located at about the center of the rift that extended from Nova Scotia to South Carolina, and there are few places where rocks formed at that time are as easily viewed in such concentration as right here in Turners Falls.

Starting about 245 million years ago, volcanoes spewed dust into the atmosphere and buried the area of present-day America. The molten lava from these violent eruptions solidified into basalt rocks, including the main part of the Canada Hill

ridge visible across the canal. Years ago, I'd walk dogs at the former animal shelter on French King Highway, and I recall many outcrops of basalt on the nearby cliffs.

On this side of the river, the escarpment that forms the rear of the sculpture park on Canal Street is made from sandstone rocks that started to form 200 million years ago, during a milder climactic period following the turbulent volcanism. Neighboring mountains were eroded by rain and thawing to furnish sediments to form these rocks. At the base are thin layers of shale formed from iron-rich mud and sand deposited when the area was a shallow lake, Lake Hitchcock. Next, a thicker bed of sandstone formed when streams ran through the old lakebeds. Dinosaurs ruled our landscape then, conifers were the largest trees, with smaller palm-like species and an undergrowth of ferns, where mouse-sized mammals scurried about, even as they do today.

The little 'rock garden' next door to the Booska Flooring showroom on Avenue A is a good spot to consider the recycling program Mother Nature instituted in the post-volcanic era. Geologic plates slammed against each other and pushed up mile high mountains of rock. Over the millennia, erosion weathered away bits of rock and constituent minerals, and this sediment got transported by water, ice, and wind to low lying places in our rift valley. The eroded particles built up, and over time their accumulated weight caused the material to compact and sink, forming sedimentary rock. In our area, the rocks slant to the southeast, as at Booska's rock garden – you can tell, even under a light covering of snow – because the southeast flank of our valley sank more than the northwest flank. Eventually enough sediment built up to produce a layer of rock as much as 750 feet thick, as in the Turners Falls 'red body' rocks.

The rock garden beside the yellow brick apartment building at 169-173 Avenue A was created by Ed Renaud, who has lived there for more than a decade. Renaud was bothered by the overgrowth of trees and shrubs around the rocks, and thought the area was starting to look like a jungle. Inspired by the volunteers who tend the formal sidewalk planters along the Avenue, Renaud thinned out the

trees and shrubs, weeded and hoed. With funds provided by Dennis Booska and his landlord Paul Desilets, Renaud laid down mulch and planted perennials and hostas. Now the little rock garden is attractive, and if you take notice of the rocks' southeastward slant, edifying about our geo-history.

Incidentally, on the other side of the building, at the corner of 5th Street, another throw-back to the age of the dinosaurs is flourishing: a ginkgo tree. Originating 270 million years ago, before our red sandstones, the ginkgo is a modern example of a "living fossil," halfway in the evolutionary scale from a fern to conifer, a unique species with no close living relatives. Ginkgoes probably went extinct in the wild, but survive today from being cultivated over the centuries by monks in central China. Today's ginkgoes are hardy, resistant to insects and disease, oblivious to confined soil, run-off from road salts, and air pollution, and are therefore a favorite for city plantings.

The one on the corner of Avenue A and 5th has a big gash in its trunk, produced either by "kids" or by a wandering snowplow, said town tree-warden Mark Stevens. The few ginkgoes planted along the Avenue (there is another on 11th Street) cost the town nothing, but came from a streetscape grant in the mid-1980s.


Further down the Avenue, the rocks at the rear of Peskeompskut Park are distinctive because they lie face up, and may show fossilized ripple marks, mud cracks, rain-drop impressions and clay chips embedded in the sandstone. You may even be able to see a fish fossil or two, or some dinosaur tracks. The ripped up clasts of clay, torn up from the former lake bed, record the agitation of the local landscape, flora, fauna and climate in long gone days.

Closer to the geo-present, past the library, the cliffs going up to Our Lady of Czestochowa along the southeast side of the Avenue show how freezing and melting water has been a good source of erosion. You can also detect the mechanical splitting of exposed rock from the action of plant roots. Interestingly, halfway up the stairs, you can also tell how some of the rock faces had been furbished by glaciers.

Recent snowfall has covered up a lot of the rocks. Imagine if

100,000 winter snowfalls kept piling up without ever melting in the spring or summer. The snow packs deeper and deeper, and the bottom layer gets compressed into ice. A glacier is born, and moves over time.

Here in Turners, the landscape experienced the forming and thawing of glaciers for much of the past three million years. Our glaciers might have reached more than a mile in height. They scoured the landscape down to the bedrock, even smoothing and polishing the face of the solid stones, just as if they had been in a jeweler's shop. The scouring of the rock I photographed for this article has been dated to approximately 25,000 years ago, just the blink of an eye in geologic time.


Having come, in my journey, so close to the present era, I walked back down the concrete stairs that replaced the steep end of 9th Street, and returned to the Avenue. I knew I would be going on Great Falls Discovery Center geology tours this season, not so much to look at the rocks but to examine what's inside them. I remember seeing a book on local geology by Richard Little at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and have decided to purchase it to supplement this year's tours. And I should not leave this walk without offering readers easy access to "A Geologic Walking Tour of Turners Falls, Massachusetts," free at the Discovery Center, the Carnegie Library, or by download in PDF form at www.turnersfallsriver-culture.org/geology-walking-tour-booklet. 

TOMB from pg 10

image of the head in a room that is the exact same size as the Djehutynakhts' tomb.

An exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts may not have been the kind of afterlife the Djehutynakhts envisioned for themselves, but they did achieve their goal of immortality. If only the archeologists who discovered the tomb had possessed the imagination to give it a name more befitting the time, effort, and expense the Djehutynakhts put into their glorious preservation. 'Ten-A' sounds more like an

apartment number or an airline flight.

Admission to the "Secrets of Tomb 10A," as well as to the museum's permanent collection, is "family friendly." Youths seventeen and under are free whenever school is not in session, and admission is free for everyone on Wednesdays from 4:00 p.m. to 9:45 p.m. Special audio guides are available for children as well as adults. Additional information about the mummies, mysteries, and marvels of Tomb 10A can be found at: www.mfa.org/tomb. 

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Larceny at French King Highway Business

Thursday, 1/7
 9:05 a.m. Response to an alarm at a Ben Hale Road residence.
 5:40 p.m. Report of larceny from French King Highway business.

Friday, 1/8
 5:06 p.m. Erratic vehicle complaint on French King Highway.

Saturday, 1/9
 8:46 p.m. On the lookout for possible despondent subject enroute to French King Bridge.
 10:10 p.m. Clear from above area, subject located in Athol.

Monday, 1/11
 12:59 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with a stolen motor vehicle.

Tuesday, 1/12
 5:10 a.m. Assisted with medical emergency on Main Road.

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Selections from King Phillip's War by Sheppard Ranbom

. . . I speak
 from the dung and arrow bones,
 the slag hills and tobacco barns,
 and the blustering, minty birch-
 speak not as revenge's renegade,
 but as victim of a tragedy played
 to genocide: I was America's first terrorist,
 the cause of every loss and wrong,
 and martyr for the thousands gone.

Selected poems from A Newfoundland Journal, by
 Janet MacFadyen

The pitcher plants are ringed
 with firs bent double from the wind
 branches corkscrewed and half dead,
 silvered, stunted-
 Whole mats of tuckamore face windward,
 a quickened net of branches
 too thick to cut through, too thick
 even for the wind.
 You can stop and rest in the lee of them
 and be comforted.

FROM LOSS, ALL is made-
 my hut, the scalp of trees;
 my life's tobacco glow, a dying ash
 fanned with my fading breaths.
 My smoke is small, a force
 that warms and irritates at once.
 I sing with burning throat from
 a pipe which knows no peace.
 My restless sleep is broken
 by thought's charges and retreats.
 My heart is the hard buckhorn
 of a deer slaughtered for its meat.
 Our hunger, like a hunter, propels us
 through the Great Swamp's unawakened
 dead. I weep tears of dew and sunlight
 for the black night to end.

I SEE MOST CLEARLY after twilight when
 the farmers' sheep and cows are hidden
 in their pens and the land is restored.
 My heart soars higher than smoke.
 Above, the moon is small, a conch medallion
 the sky goddess wears. We ride in the shadows
 of trees, a moving mass of darkness fat as hills.

Sheppard Ranbom

Third Annual Poetry and Prose Open Mic Night at the Discovery Center



BY SARAH DOYLE

GREAT FALLS – On Friday, January 22nd, at 7 p.m., the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A will proudly present two poets whose work focuses on themes of human and natural history and the people who live closely attuned to land and seasons. Sheppard Ranbom, originally from Springfield but now based in Washington, D.C., will join local Shutesbury poet Janet MacFadyen to co-host an evening of nature-themed poetry and short prose at Great Falls Discovery Center in downtown Turners Falls.

After the featured readers, the floor will open for the open mic. In the spirit of Great Falls Discovery Center, we invite all people who share a love of good writing and a love of the natural world to enjoy an evening of literary conviviality in a comfortable atmosphere. Bring along your own work or read something by your favorite poet or writer on a theme of plants or animals, stars or microbes, fossils or photons, light-hearted or profound.

Light refreshments and drinks will be for sale, along with the poets' featured books. Proceeds support GFDC educational mission to protect the plants and animals of the Connecticut River watershed.

For more information, call: (413) 863-3221 or visit: www.greatfallsma.org

In case of inclement weather, please call the same number to see if the event has been rescheduled to the snow date of the following Friday, January 29.

An old road
 in a valley of boulders,
 a valley with a black river flowing down
 from the distant high headwall and patch of snow.
 Between orange stones you find the occasional
 purple campanula
 laying a single bell against the ground.
 I have to catch myself not to step on them,
 so delicate and invisible.

The tracks vanish at the river; you can make out
 a footpath continuing on, increasingly haphazard
 then disappearing.
 If we were true adventurers, the foot
 would find its way around the rocks
 and the hand
 would seek out corner and crevice in the boulders
 until the trail unfolded before our eyes
 miraculously in the wilderness.

Janet MacFadyen

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Leverett, First in Franklin, May Allow for Historical Review Prior to Demolitions

BY BILL FRANKLIN – The town of Leverett is considering changes to its bylaws that would allow for the town historical commission to review and approve permits for the demolition of any buildings or structures within the town.

If approved, the bylaw would empower the historical commission to review structures subject to demolition to determine their historical value, and to instruct the building instructor to withhold a demolition permit for up to 18 months under penalty of fine while alternatives are explored.

Randy te Velde and Betsy Douglas, representatives of the historical commission, presented a proposal to the selectboard to establish a process for reviewing all requests for demolition, subject to considerations based on historical value.

The intent and purpose of this proposed change, according to the draft proposal, is to “protect and preserve historically significant buildings and structures” that reflect the “architectural, historical, cultural and

aesthetic” features of the town of Leverett.

The proposal defines a historically significant building as one associated with any “persons or events, or the architectural, cultural, economic, political or social history of the town, state or nation.” The commission would also consider a building to be important by virtue of the “type, period, style and method of construction,” or those associated with a “well known architect.”

According to te Velde, the proposed bylaw is largely based on existing models used elsewhere. Elements such as the definition of a “building” or the option of removal or transfer are commonly employed in other municipalities. The bylaw would not affect the usual alterations or remodeling of buildings unless these would constitute a situation tantamount to demolition.

“This is part of our history that we don’t want to lose,” said te Velde. “We are the first town within our area that is doing this.”

The commission noted the recent case of a sugar house on Rattlesnake Gutter Road near Montague Road, where a structure considered to have historical value was nearly demolished but wound up being preserved at the last minute by the negotiation of private parties who agreed to move the building to a new location.

“If we had to wait for state help, it wouldn’t have happened,” said Don Gibavic who, with his sister Eva, was able to work privately with the new owner of the property on which the sugar house was located. The parties came to an agreement that the structure would be disassembled. It is now stored, and will be moved to a new location – also on Rattlesnake Gutter Road – this coming spring.

The historical commission and selectboard agreed it would be necessary to inform the public about the new bylaw prior to a public vote on the issue.

Sometimes historical recognition and designation can make a property less desirable,

the selectboard said, due to the restrictions placed on property owners who want to make changes to their structures.

Unlike a designated historic district, where owners are not permitted to make any changes within the designated area without board approval, the proposed bylaw changes in Leverett would apply on a case by case basis, and they would not affect an owner’s right to make alterations that are not actually a demolition.

Buildings that are at least one hundred years old would automatically come within the province of the new law. Inspectors designated by the historical commission would, in case of a controversy, determine whether a building is, in fact, within the one hundred year restriction.

The basic procedure would require the historical commission to provide an initial sign-off on the owner’s permit request. Now, building permit requests require approval by the fire department, the conservation commission, and the build-

ing inspector.

“We would rather do that,” said te Velde, “than come in after the permit has been approved [by the other departments].”

Details of the proposed bylaw changes will appear in next month’s town newsletter.

see LEVERETT pg 18

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Taxi Off Road

Tuesday, 1/5

8:30 p.m. Easthampton resident requested a well-being check on a relative residing on Cider Mill Road. Officer checked on resident, no problem found.

Wednesday, 1/6

2:30 p.m. Officer responded to a Two Mile Road residence for a medical emergency. Resident transported to Cooley Dickinson Hospital by Amherst Fire Department ambulance. 3:00 p.m. Officer responded to Lake Drive in Shutesbury for a medical emergency. Assisted Shutesbury Police and Fire departments.

7:45 p.m. Report of a vehicle off the road at Camp Road. Taxi driver slid off the road due to icy conditions. Wrecker contacted, vehicle removed.

PERRY from pg 11

tains of the Turners cheerleaders, almost lost their voices in leading the cheers as the boys in blue came back onto the field for the second half.”

At the final whistle, Neil quoted proud TFHS athletic director Eddie Bourdeau saying: “We had a shot at it. Both sides played their hearts out. A great game.” And the long time Turners football writer concluded: “Emotionally exhausted fans from both Greenfield and Turners would add, ‘Amen.’”

Turners finished an impressive 6-4 after that 1-3 start with Neil walking the sidelines for all 10 games.

My father, who died unexpectedly at the age of 56, in 1985, after working as editor of the Westfield News for three years, covered many state and

national political figures and knew most of them on a first name basis, pols like Ted Kennedy, Frank Sargent, Mike Dukakis, Ed King, Tip O’Neil, Silvio Conte, and John Olver to name a few. But in his heart, I think Neil L. Perry was just as happy and pleased to cover and know guys like Jack Bassett, Eddie Bourdeau, Paul Cournoyer, John Zymna, Skip Galvin, John O’Riley and Jim Koldis on the Turners Falls football sidelines.

Wid Perry spent many hours researching his lively, well-written summary of his father’s football columns from the Greenfield Recorder-Gazette in the Greenfield Public Library’s microfilm files. To request a copy of his complete article, contact him at susanperyyoung@earthlink.net.



AIRPORT from pg 1

representing indigent criminal defendants.

Being a sole practitioner allows Longo the flexibility to branch off in a new direction on a part-time basis, and because he has past flight training experience and ground school education, the advertised position sparked his interest. The commission states, “We feel his abilities are a good match with our needs, and look forward to working with him.”

Longo states, “My primary function will be to ensure that the airport is in compliance with all state and federal regulations and statutes and to provide for the proper maintenance of the airport. I look forward to working with the airport commission and the town as the new airport manager, to serving the needs of the general avia-



SEAN WOOSLEY PHOTO

Michael Longo is the new manager at the Turners Falls Airport

tion community and business community, but also to promoting the airport as an asset of the town and county, making it community-friendly so non-pilots can appreciate all the airport can offer. I want to maintain a sensitivity to the issues of

others that impact the airport and how the airport affects those interests as well. A little spark of the aviation enthusiast is in all of us, and I hope to nurture and encourage that spark to grow.”

Longo and his wife, Brenda, are the parents of two sons, Vincent who attends GCC, and Alex who is a sophomore at Pioneer Regional High School.

They live in Greenfield.

In other airport news: The runway is now open for daytime use during the winter, with the runway replacement project expected to be completed, including a new lighting system, sometime in the spring.



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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q. I think I need a hearing aid. Any recommendations?

I've received this question from more than a few readers. It's a subject of great interest to seniors, so I'm going to write two columns on hearing aids.

About one in three Americans over 60 suffers from loss of hearing, which can range from the inability to hear certain voices to deafness.

However, only about one out of five people who would benefit from a hearing aid uses one.

It's important to explain that a hearing aid will not restore your normal hearing. With practice, however, a hearing aid will increase your awareness of sounds and what made them.

If you think you have a hearing problem, get checked by your personal doctor. If your hearing is diminished, the doctor will probably refer you to an otolaryngologist or audiologist.

An otolaryngologist is a physician who specializes in treating the ear, nose, and throat. An audiologist is a

health professional who conducts hearing tests to define your loss. Many otolaryngologists have audiologist associates in their offices.

Presbycusis, one form of hearing loss, occurs with age. Presbycusis can be caused by changes in the inner ear, auditory nerve, middle ear, or outer ear. Some of its causes are aging, loud noise, heredity, head injury, infection, illness, certain prescription drugs, and circulation problems such as high blood pressure. It seems to be inherited.

Tinnitus, also common in older people, is the ringing, hissing, or roaring sound in the ears frequently caused by exposure to loud noise or cer-

tain medicines. Tinnitus is a symptom that can come with any type of hearing loss.

Hearing loss can be caused by "ototoxic" medicines that damage the inner ear. Some antibiotics are ototoxic. Aspirin can cause temporary problems. If you're having a hearing problem, ask your doctor about any medications you're taking.

Hearing aids have a microphone, amplifier, and speaker. Sound is received by the microphone, which converts the sound waves to electrical signals and sends them to an amplifier. The amplifier boosts the signals and then sends them to the ear through a speaker.

Hearing aids are primarily

useful to people who have suffered sensorineural hearing loss from damage to the small sensory cells in the inner ear known as hair cells. The damage can be caused by disease, aging, or injury from noise or drugs.

A hearing aid magnifies sound vibrations. Surviving hair cells detect the larger vibrations and convert them into signals that are sent to the brain.

There are limits to the amplification a hearing aid can provide. In addition, if the inner ear is too damaged, even large vibrations will not be converted into signals to the brain.

In the next column, we'll discuss getting a hearing aid.

If you would like to ask a question, please write fred@healthygeez.com.

K-9 Kyra Heads for Well-Earned Retirement



SHAWN WOOSLEY PHOTO

K-9 officer Kyra and her handler, officer John Dempsey

BY JOE KWIECINSKI

MONTAGUE – Meet Kyra (pronounced keer-a). She weighs only about 68 pounds, but, according to patrolman John Dempsey of the Montague police department, this sable-colored German shepherd is worth her weight in gold.

Kyra and patrolman Dempsey are partnered as part of the Montague police K-9 unit. Policeman and dog have been working together since March, 2003 when she joined the force at the age of three and a half years.

The K-9 unit was established in the 1970s, but over the years there has been a gap in service. "Back in the '70s," said Patrolman Dempsey, "the unit was handled by Harvey

Kellyhouse, who's now retired. Harvey loved his work. He once told me he was involved in finding a missing child on a very cold day in the Montague Plains. He was always very proud of that."

The affection and respect between Dempsey and Kyra is evident. "She's my partner," the 43-year-old police officer said as he patted his dog on a chilly day in January. "She's been a wonderful dog. You know, dog handlers get attached to their canine partners the same way people get attached to their pets."

For Dempsey, working with canines dates back to his days in the service. He was in law enforcement with the Air Force as a handler of dogs who searched for bombs. Dempsey

served four years, from 1985 to 1989, stationed primarily at Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, South Dakota.

As a seven-year police veteran, Kyra is strictly used for her sense of smell. She is not used for protection or "aggression work," according to her partner.

Kyra is involved with drug detection, evidence recovery (finding items carrying human scent), tracking criminals and finding lost persons through following their actual footsteps, and area searches, ways of using the outdoor air and wind to locate a human.

"All people give off a unique odor," said Patrolman Dempsey, "that is as unique as a fingerprint."

When it comes to tracking lost persons, Kyra can be employed to find individuals who might be elderly or ill, or have wandered off. Or perhaps the lost person is a child. It's important work with missions to make a handler and his charge mighty proud.

Unfortunately, time waits for no man – or dog. And Kyra is now 10 years old. Are the Montague Police thinking of retiring their faithful friend?

"It's a matter of timing," said Dempsey, "because of her age. I'd like to have a new dog ready to go before Kyra declines. Even though she's healthy now, we have no way of knowing when she might start to decline. If I wait until that moment, there could be a break or gap in service.

"We're trying to transition a

new dog in canine service. Most handlers seem to retire their dogs between an average working age of 9 and 11, but that's only an average. I have noticed, though, conditions relevant to Kyra's age."

Training, according to the patrolman, is a complex process. "The human scent work – tracking and article searches – I'd schedule with the assistance of one of the canine trainers with the State Police. I will do some training on my work time, and a portion of the training would occur during my off-time. The drug training portion itself would require six weeks of schooling."

Another factor in preparing a new dog for the K-9 unit will be the fact that the handler will be training a canine that is brand new to police work.

"I really enjoy the training phase," said Dempsey. "You're bonding with a dog, forming a strong relationship. It's a gratifying thing to see a dog progress through the stages of becoming a certified police canine."

Dempsey will be looking for a socially friendly animal, like Kyra, a dog that's approachable to the public. "I'd like another German shepherd," said the patrolman. "The breed is definitely one I like to work with. They have a stable, friendly personality, but are very serious about their duties."

Community relations is another aspect of the police dog's job description. "I've done canine police demonstrations," said Dempsey, "at the Montague

Old Home Days, area schools, the annual Children's Day at the Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club, and even at some child care centers.

"By having the canine program reach out with these demonstrations, it's given me the opportunity to meet many of our citizens. When I have Kyra with me, it's a wonderful way to engage with adults and children in a positive manner."

The Montague police canine is primarily paid for through donations from the public and businesses and departmental funds. Vet care, equipment, and the purchase of a new dog will all come about as a result of this funding. There is a specific canine account in the town, according to Dempsey, where donations are deposited.

"One of the main donors to the canine fund has been the Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club," said Dempsey. "The Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club has also contributed. For the last several years we've been holding a golf tournament in June, and area businesses have contributed each year. I greatly appreciate the support from area clubs and businesses, plus the many small, private donations that have been given to me."

What will happen to Kyra after she retires? "Usually the officer adopts the dog after retirement from service," said Dempsey. "But Kyra is owned by the town of Montague, and the selectboard would have to give its permission for me to adopt her officially."

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300th Combat Engineer Battalion repairing the under piling of a bridge destroyed by enemy fire along the Carentan - Cberbourg Road in France - June 30, 1944.

BRAD PETERS & JAN ROSS

ERVING - In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the U. S. campaign in Europe in WWII, the Montague Reporter will follow the men of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion as they move through France, Belgium and Germany from their landing in Normandy in June 1944 to VE Day on May 8th, 1945.

Donald Ross, father of Jan Ross of Erving, served with the 300th.

William Lakey and the Potty Box

"We were moving in convoy to a new location with about five truckloads. While we were in Belgium, instead of a slit trench (latrine) we had built a potty box. It had three holes in it. We had this potty box sitting on the back of one of the trucks. One of the men was sitting on this potty box. We were going down the side of this river and the sergeant turned the convoy in the wrong direction and led us into a dead end

Dispatches from Belgium: January, 1945

BackSide Story: The Battle of the Bulge

where the bridge had been blown. The convoy stopped.

"Across the river, the Germans were on the second story of a building and shooting at us with a machine gun. This new guy sitting on the potty box, he got shot through the rear, the fleshy part of his butt. Cliff Elmore was driving the weapons carrier and they shot up the windshield and the whole weapons carrier. Cliff got out and got his M1 and he never got hit. This new boy said he couldn't see where he got hit. We laughed at that boy and after they patched him up, every time we would see him after that we would call him, Hit-in-the-butt."

Chuck Bice and TNT

"Our outfit had an intersection in Belgium to guard and we had put 240 pounds of TNT dug in the road in case any German tank come by we could blow the son-of-a-gun up. The Germans didn't make it up to the intersection but they came up real close. Just before we had a breakthrough, an American tank with a major in it come to the intersection. Man, they was wide open. He was fixin' to turn and go right through the intersection and I waved them down.

"He came out and said, 'Get the hell



Men from the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion at work during the Battle of the Bulge

out of the road; we're in a hurry. Get the hell out of the road; we're in a hurry!"

"I said, 'You won't hurry if you go past there. You'll get blown up.'

"He said, 'What are you talking about?'"

"I said, 'I've got 240 pounds of TNT in that road.'

"He was real rough at first, and then he said, 'OK. How long would it take you to fix that worry?' I said, 'Just about two minutes.'

"He said he would wait."

Norman Webb and Imposters
"I was on guard duty during the Battle of the Bulge and our orders were to stop imposters - Germans. I don't know why but we had a bazooka set up on some rocks. I stopped this jeep and there was a civilian in

Don't give me any problems because I sure don't want to kill an American.' He grudgingly crawled out of the jeep and showed me his identification and answered some questions like what the Windy City is.

"I assumed they were okay

civilian clothes driving and an American uniform sergeant in the passenger seat. There was a person lying down in the back end that turned out to be an American lieutenant. The civilian didn't talk clearly. Maybe his lips were frozen from the bitter cold. I was suspicious of them and didn't want to just let the password be adequate.

"The guy in the back end began to gripe and curse so I told them, 'You're more than likely who you say you are so I will do what I can to verify this and you can be on your way.

and they went on their way. The bad part of this during this tense little situation here was that the confounded bazooka fell off of those rocks over there. It startled us really bad. When they left, the fellow with me collapsed and said, 'My God, when that bazooka fell off I come into wanting to shoot those guys. I took all the slack up in my trigger.'

Note: The website of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion can be found at: www.300thcombatengineersinwwii.com

LEVERETT from pg 16

In other matters, the selectboard and the finance committee reviewed the school budget submitted by the school committee. This was a response to the selectboard's request for a level funded budget for the coming year, and for an itemized breakdown of all costs - especially those that may increase the budget beyond the level funding goals set by the selectboard.

As it now stands, the budget exceeds the level funding request by approximately fifty-eight thousand dollars.

"We asked them to come up

with zero," said selectboard member Peter d'Errico, "and they haven't done that."

Calling attention to the "drivers" - those budget items most responsible for the increase - the board questioned such expenses as the \$6500 dollars for conferences, travel and other related expenses. "They are not crucial for children's education," said d'Errico. "They're for schmoozing and networking and for professional development.

"You've got a big salary," added d'Errico. "If you want to go to a conference and party in a nice hotel, you can pay for it yourself. It

starts adding up to real money."

Referring to other items, the board wanted clarification on some matters of staffing: "Who was there last year? Who is there now? What are the actual staff changes?"

In addition, the board questioned the actual figures. "Some of the figures don't add up," said d'Errico. "Secretaries' salaries are not the same from one page to the next."

As far as the "further potential reductions," referred to in the budget document, d'Errico said, "None of those numbers make sense. I don't know how to read them."

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 14th
FREE Polka Lessons For Kids & Adults start with Sunderland's very own Tom and Deb Zimnowski. Lessons for everyone Thursday evenings 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Sunderland Elementary School. Free babysitting services available courtesy of Frontier Regional High School National Honor Society. Info. and registration call (413) 665-1151 or (413) 768-9857. See www.cafesun.org. Continues Thursday evenings: 1/21, 1/28 and February 4th.



Live Music News and Review presents: Boris Garcia, a band from Philly, at the Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls. Playing with Hot Day at the Zoo for that band's long awaited live CD release on January 16th, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Free Range, Rock with Betsy, Mark and Bruce to Classic Rock & Dance Music.* 8 to 10 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Salvation Army String Band*, 8 p.m. no cover.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15th
 Deja Brew, Wendell: *Heather Maloney Singer Songwriter - Powerhouse Performer!* 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Metal Show with three bands: Static Age (Misfits Tribute) End Count & Mycomium*, 9 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Fancy Trash & friends*, \$3 cover, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16th
Camouflage in Nature What tools do animals have to survive? Come learn about different types of camouflage animals use to keep them from being easy prey. And, why do some animals use camouflage, while others don't? Great Falls Discovery Center interpreter will share all of this information

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and more! Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. 1 to 2 p.m.

Animal Tracking: An Outdoor Adventure With Rachel Roberts. Children ages five and older can join educator Rachel Roberts at Northfield Mountain for this exciting program tracking animals from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Families will do a variety of hands-on science and art activities about animal tracking in winter. There will also be a brief story time with a wonderful book about animals in the wintertime and time to look at books about tracking. Call to pre-register for this free program, (800) 859-2960. Additional Program Information available www.firstlightpower.com/northfield/publicprograms.asp.

Movie: 28 Days Later at the Wendell Free Library, 8:15 p.m. Free Admission (but seating is limited). Another film in the monthly series of Science Fiction and Horror movies. Rated R For more information about the library, see www.wendellmass.us/wendell-free-library or call: (978) 544-3559.

Join the Fun as The Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts presents: *Father and Son Talks*. Musical dialogue between Nick Waynelovich and John Waynelovich (father & son.) *Father & Son Talks* is a reflection on music, love, family and more. At 8 p.m. at The JaDuke Center for the Performing Arts, Black Box Theater, Turners Falls. www.jaduke.com or (413) 863-0001.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Boris Garcia* on tour from Philly, 9:30 p.m. www.borisgarcia.com.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Eric Love*, singing all your favorite covers from the 60's & 70's just the way you remember them! 9 to 11 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rockit Queer w/BDJs Bex and Tommy Toboggan*, \$3 cover, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17th
 The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Kwajmal Jazz Band*, no cover, call for time: (413) 863-2866. Then Repo man

Night, movie, quiz, costume contest, Wii games, 9 p.m.

Dead of Winter Film Series at the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Endless Summer - 1966*. Written and directed by Bruce Brown, and the crown jewel to ten years of Bruce Brown surfing documentaries. Brown follows two young surfers around the world in search of the perfect wave. Yes, summer will return, 7 p.m.

Jazz Trio: *Hui Cox, Heather Maloney and Wes Brown* perform at Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls, 6:30 p.m. A special Jazz show with three distinct and acclaimed artists.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Acoustic Open Mic Night*, 8 to 10 p.m. All are welcome.

MONDAY, JANUARY 18th
 Greenfield Community College Honors the Dream. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance Ceremony, Sloan Theater, 1 p.m. Welcome: Herbert Hentz, Director of Diversity & Admission, Dr. Robert L. Pura, President, Greenfield Community College. Community Speaks: Open Microphone, light refreshments.

Green Fields Market: help create a



"All progress is precarious, and the solution of one problem brings us face to face with another problem." -Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday celebrated on January 18th

At the Brick House Community Center, Turners Falls, 7:30 p.m. Evening of music and spoken word for families honoring the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King. Moonlight and Morning Star and their son, jazz pianist Miro Sprague will offer the community and evening of music and poetry for all ages.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Yankee Trade White Elephant BINGO!* 8 p.m. free.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19th
 The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bourbon Tasting: 5 top-shelf whiskeys and fancy apps.* \$17, call (413) 863-2866, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20th
 The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quizmastah Chad's Quiznite Quiz!* 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21st
 Deja Brew, Wendell: *Wailin' Dave Robinson, Tommy Filault & Co.*, Blues Based Roots Music, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22nd
 Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Love Bomb*, 9:30 p.m.

3rd Annual Science & Nature Poetry & Prose Open Mic Night at Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Featuring poets Sheppard Ranbom & Janet MacFadyen. 7 to 9 p.m. Free & Open to the Public Contact Sarah Doyle at (413) 863-9972 or sarah_doyle@prodigy.net.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23rd
 At the Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *All about Beavers*, 1 to 2 p.m. What do beavers do in the winter? How do they alter the landscape, and what benefit do beavers have on the environment? Are they making a comeback in Massachusetts? Come join Great Falls Discovery interpreter and find out the answers!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24th
 Dead of Winter Film Series at the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Romy and Michelle's High School Reunion - 1997*. Written by Robin Schiff, directed by David Mirkin. Girly pals Romy and Michelle (Mira Sorvino, Lisa Kudrow) confront the dark places of the soul and the high school cafeteria on a mythic journey to their ten-year reunion. Let's fold scarves! 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31st
 The Shea Theater, Turners Falls presents a free variety show, 2 p.m. Featuring performances from The Country Players, Arena Civic Theatre, Ja'Duke Productions, Celtic Heels, the

2009 Valley Idol winners and comedian Muq Kaplan, as seen on Comedy Central Presents and The Tonight Show with Conan O'Brien. Donations requested at the door for fundraising. Reservations: (413) 863-2281 or shea@valinet.com. www.theshea.org for more information.

THROUGH JANUARY 31st
 The Gallery at Hallmark, Turners Falls: MySight gallery exhibition, featuring work by Hallmark Institute class of 2010.

ONGOING FRIDAYS
 Death Metal Knitting at the Brick House, Turners Falls. Every Friday during regular drop-in hours, 3 to 6 p.m. Start a new project or work on an existing one. Instruction available for all skill levels. Learn how to make your own scarf, cup holder, headband, and more. 863-9576.

ONGOING
 Northfield Mountain trails open. Over 25 miles of trails designed specifically for cross country skiing and groomed for both classical and free-style skiing. These trails offer some of the finest Nordic skiing in the region. Trails vary from beginner trails to the demanding 800-foot vertical climb of Tenth Mountain Trail. Wednesday through Sunday, 9 to 4:30 p.m. Call ahead first to the 24-hour Snow Phone for conditions: (800) 859-2960.

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3. LEAP YEAR PG DAILY 12:30 3:00 7:00 9:30
4. DAYBREAKERS R DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:20
5. SHERLOCK HOLMES PG13 DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:20
6. THE LOVELY BONES PG13 DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
7. THE BOOK OF ELI in DTS sound DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30 R

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 6 p.m.
 FILM NOIR: A TOUCH OF EVIL

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TALKING PICTURES

After Many a Vignette Dies the Yawn

A Single Man



1 eagle = the pits 4 eagles = the heights

BY TODD DETMOLD

CHICAGO — *A Single Man* arrives courtesy of Tom Ford, allegedly a fashion designer. I looked him up and found that his only previous accomplishment I'd ever heard of was being that guy on the cover of *Vanity Fair* with a naked Keira Knightley and Scarlett Johansson. Tough act to follow.

Ford is the co-writer and director of the film, and he spends the entire running time trying to upstage a terrific cast. The story and performances, full of understated quiet, are juxtaposed against a schizophrenic combination of saturated visuals and staccato editing with a sub-Philip Glass score that throws harsh, repeating strings at your ears until you think you're watching *The Hours*. Perhaps the disorienting miasma of nonsensical stylistic choices is meant to somehow capture the directionless loss of the film's hero, but I think more likely Ford just doesn't know what he's doing. It feels a bit like watching an artist throw a bunch of paint on a wall to see what sticks. There are those who would call this art and pass out awards.

That hero is George, a gay British professor of English in Los Angeles (poor guy) grap-

pling with the accidental death of his partner of sixteen years. It's 1962 and America is caught up in the Cuban Missile Crisis, though whether this is meant to lend gravity to George's forthcoming suicide or render it meaningless I have no idea (I doubt Ford has, either). The film follows George over the course of a single day, during which he goes to class, cleans out his office and bank account, ties up loose ends, buys a box of bullets and encounters several different people — men and women — who would like to have sex with him. Whether any of these consorts will inadvertently convince George not to pull the trigger I will not say, but rest assured the ending is preposterous.

Played by Colin Firth, George is full of an intense emptiness. It's easy to feel Firth's sorrow, but then so much time is spent extolling the dignified pain of a man with nothing to live for, you begin to wonder what it is you're watching the movie for.

Three major encounters color George's day. First there is a student nursing a nasty crush on his professor that's probably mutual. Then, on his way home from school George finds himself almost accepting the services of a Spanish prostitute who wants to

be James Dean and lingers outside a liquor store. Finally, George must say goodbye to his longtime beard, a fellow Brit named Charlotte, played by Julianne Moore with her trademark stinging desperation.



George, the *Single Man*, is played by Colin Firth, beside Julianne Moore as Charley

Ford allows each of these pairings a spare moment in which we are briefly concerned with the drama unfolding and the hint of a spark between two maybe-lovers. These moments only become frustrating for what they might've added up to in the hands of a director who doesn't feel the need to suddenly ruin them by draining the color palette, cuing the violinist and smash-cutting to

a close-up of somebody's eyebrow.

The episode in the liquor store parking lot, essentially a fifteen-minute flirtation, is framed by a giant advertisement for *Psycho* made up of a blue-tinted tight shot of Janet Leigh's eyes, widened in terror. As a subtle nod to *The Great Gatsby*, this might've been pretty cool, especially given that our protagonist is an English teacher. Here, it's just meaningless decoration.

nothingness, from film to audience or character to character.

George lives in a glass house but it turns out his lover was an architect or something. An admittedly well-thought-out first-act monologue about "invisible minorities" is rendered moot by the fact that everybody George interacts with seems to be not only aware of his homosexuality but also perfectly fine with it. The only concrete thing we're left with is that losing the person you

Psycho came out two years before the events of the film: set the thing up high and weather it, Mr. Ford.

As we slog from one scene to the next, it's tough to discern any kind of structure. That's kind of remarkable given that Ford at least had the sense to contain the film within a single day. With each passing dialogue, any message or meaning is muddled into

love really sucks, which is hardly justification for all the weighty texts referenced in the film (Kafka, Huxley's *After Many a Summer*).

In adaptation, the film fails to find any drama from the page and becomes a feature-length vignette about a sado who starts sad, stays sad and finishes sad. This strikes me as boring. The Oscars may feel otherwise.

Kegs Rolling At Element Brewery



JANEL NOCKLEBY PHOTO

Mark Wisniewski tapped the first keg of Element beer from Millers Falls at the Rendezvous Friday night.

BY JOE KWIECINSKI

TURNERS FALLS — When Element Brewing Company partners Ben Anhalt, Dan Kramer, and Tom Fields began working on their dream last summer, to open what would be the smallest commercial brewery in the state, they faced many barriers.

The three entrepreneurs' hard work has now begun to bear lots of sweet fruit. Most recently, The Rendezvous in Turners Falls tapped its first keg from the Millers Falls brewery Friday January 8th, and Rendezvous co-owner Mark Wisniewski indicates that the local brewery's keg will be frequently rotated into the mix at that establishment.

Judging from the praise Element Brewery's offerings garnered at The Rendezvous, the local company is off and running. "It's delicious," said Andy Chambers, a Turners Falls resident who received the first pint poured at last Friday's keg tapping.

Other Rendezvous regulars were equally enthusiastic. "Great tasting beer," said Gerry Cloutier.

"Awesome!" vouched Eddie Standish. "This is my new favorite beer." And Joan Cloutier said, "Really smooth. I might turn into a beer drinker."

Meanwhile, Hope and Olive also tapped its first keg from Element Brewery January 8th. So, the locally brewed suds are currently on tap at Hope and Olive, the Millers Pub, and the Rendezvous.

In addition, the Millers Falls beer makers are heading to Boston January 15th to participate in the Boston Beer Summit with 51 other fine breweries from throughout the nation. The beer show, which also features live bands, will be held at the big event center

known as The Castle.

Closer to home, the local company will hold a beer promotion at the Millers Pub Saturday, January 22nd at 6 p.m. All of Element's three new beers will be on tap. Also, there will be T-shirt and pint glass "giveaways." At the same time, an open house at Element Brewery Company will be on tap across the street, providing tours of the brewery at 30 Main Street in Millers.

"We're very excited about expanding our market," said Element Brewing partner Ben Anhalt. "We've worked diligently, and things are moving along very nicely. We've been selling half-gallon jugs, or growlers, out of our store front, too."



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