

Year 3
No. 14

50¢

The Montague Reporter

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 20, 2005

Cosby at TFHS Fiske Pond Purchase Approved



PARZYCH PHOTO

Cosby tells Montague: get it together

BY KENDRA OLSON
MONTAGUE - "I am here as a draw," said Dr. Bill Cosby as he began his speech at Turners Falls High School on the evening of Wednesday, January 19th, "but you really need to hear the truth [from the members of your own community]." Cosby and twelve community stage participants asked those sitting

in the audience to take part in their children's lives, to take advantage of the community resources, and to model respectful and nonviolent ways of living.

The event, titled *An Evening With Bill Cosby*, was the second in a series of five community events sponsored by the Gill-Montague Community see **COSBY** pg. 8

BY DAVID DETMOLD & JOSH HEINEMANN WENDELL - Voters in Wendell braved the cold Tuesday, January 18th, to weigh in on a non-binding opinion question, whether the town should spend \$400,000 to purchase the

125-acre Fiske Pond property. The purchase would be contingent on the town receiving a 70% reimbursement Self Help grant from the state Division of Conservation Services. Wendell's share of the purchase price

would be \$125,000, plus legal expenses.

The selectboard moved to place the question before the voters after the property's current owners, Chickadees, Inc., hardened their stance on terms for a conservation restriction on the property, to exclude hunting, fishing and logging. Even with these restrictions, voters approved the purchase by a large margin.

Paul and Melinda Godfrey were among those voting yes. Paul, a botanist, said it was an "outstanding area for the town to use, the best pond around to collect plants, and a safe place to swim with no upstream contaminants, except beavers." Melinda added, "I do wish hunting and fishing would be allowed."

Sandy Tarbox also voted yes. Though she has only lived in town for a year, still, she said, "I hear good things about the pond."

One person who declined to be named voted yes, but was ambivalent because the town is spending a lot of money on other things.

Molly Kaynor voted yes, and said she had faith the town will use it properly. "I'm crossing my fingers."

Morgan Mead voted yes because, "they are not making any more real estate; it is a good investment; we need a place to swim, and it will aggravate the Republicans."

During the afternoon, a number of people declined to answer when asked how they had voted; presumably some of the "Nays" were cast from among these voters. By 4:40 p.m., 106 people had cast their ballot.

Later, as the votes were tabulated, the results showed 267 voters came to the polls out of a list of 649 active voters - a

see **WENDELL** pg. 7

Montague Economic Development Forum Planned

BY DAVID DETMOLD

Town planner Robin Sherman outlined a comprehensive community development strategy, previewed upcoming community block grant development (CDBG) projects and set a date for a community forum on economic development in Montague. Speaking before the selectboard on Tuesday, January 18th, Sherman said the forum, tentatively scheduled to take place at the Great Hall of the Great Falls



Robin Sherman

see **FORUM** pg. 6

More Wild Animal Stories

BY JOE PARZYCH

GILL - Deer have been coming to browse on the rose hips growing on the arbor by our patio, 15 feet from our back door. A pair of cardinals also comes there to eat. Not to be outdone, Manny Holmes reported seeing a bobcat in broad daylight, one morning last week. Armed with a camera and a pistol, in case the bobcat was rabid, Manny tried to get close enough for a picture, but the bobcat was camera shy. "He was a beautiful animal," Holmes said. "About three times the size of a house cat."

Many years ago, as I drove down Mount Hermon Station Road, one dark and cloudy night, the headlights of our car illuminated three cowering kittens, huddled together in the middle of the road. I slowed to a halt. We were far from any houses, midway of the Kelly Sand and



Tuffy's cousin

Gravel operation, now Lane Construction.

"Oh, who could have done such a terrible thing, leaving those poor little kittens?" my wife said. "Go get them before they get run over."

I dutifully picked one up and brought it to her. When I returned for the other two, they were gone. I looked on both shoulders of the road, but beyond the light cast by the headlights they were nowhere to be seen. There was a rustling in the darkened brush on the side towards Lane's pit, and see **ANIMALS** pg. 16

THEATER REVIEW

Walk With Me

a presentation of the Performance Project

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS -

American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier, jailed for 29 years for a crime the US prosecuting attorney admits the government cannot prove he committed, recently called the American prison system "the swiftest growing Indian reservation in the country." That may be true, but it takes nothing away from Peltier's claim to point out it is also the fastest growing black ghetto and Hispanic barrio. The rate of incarceration of Hispanic inmates is consistently more than double that of white inmates. The rate of incarceration of black males in American jails is even more lopsided, equaling 5% of black men between the ages of 18 and 64



DETMOLD PHOTO

Sheila Petigny, Herschelle Reaves, Felix Vazquez and Naimah Petigny raise fists in a powerful salute to surviving life in the hood

nationwide, and topping 10% of the adult black male population in more than a dozen states, including Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Although they make up only 12% of the population of our country, blacks make up half the U.S. prison population, now topping 200 million souls. At a time when violent

crime statistics are falling nationwide, the quadrupling of the US prison population in the last twenty-five years, and the disproportionate incarceration of black Americans, is linked heavily to drug related offences and other nonviolent crime.

Calling this a civil rights issue, the American Friends Service Commit-

tee and other groups used the annual Martin Luther King holiday this year to spotlight what they called "the Criminalization of America" in a daylong series of workshops and events in Northampton on January 17th, capped by a riveting presentation of ex-offenders' theater work and poetry at the Center see **WALK** pg. 13

PET OF THE WEEK

Ready for the Love Fest



Betty Boop

Betty Boop is a friendly four-year-old long-hair cat in need of a good home. She has had a hard life as a stray, and that makes her appreciate the arms of a person all the more. She might come off shy at first, but it won't take long for the love-fest to start! Betty also loves kneading her toes and giving kisses. To learn more about adopting Betty Boop, please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org.

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Subscription Rates:
\$20 for 6 months

Montague Library News

Homebound Delivery

The Carnegie Library in Turners Falls is beginning a homebound delivery program. Any person living in Montague who has difficulty getting out to the library can use this service. Call the library at 863-3214 to sign up. Participants will be contacted by the library staff to discuss times for delivery and reading preferences. Whether it's the winter weather or general difficulty getting to the library, this new program will enable many residents to continue using the library.



Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson of Montague Center are performing "Music and Movement for Young Children" on Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls. The weekly program is free and for young children of all ages. It runs through the end of February. Registrations are not needed. The series is sponsored by the Gill - Montague Council of the Family Network. For more information, please call 863-3214.

Old-Style Pickle Making
Saturday, Feb. 12th

Dan Rosenberg will present a workshop on "Traditional Pickle-Making/Lacto-Fermentation" as part of this year's NOFA/Mass Practical Skills Workshop Series. Rosenberg, founder and owner of *Real Pickles* in Montague, has commercially produced raw, lacto-fermented vegetables for 3 1/2 years at the Community

Development Corporation Food Processing Center in Greenfield. The workshop will be a great opportunity for those interested in learning an original, healthy way of preserving foods as well as a chance to see how the food processing center works. For more information visit nofamass.org or contact Michael Faber at 413 848-2836.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES Jan. 24 - Jan. 28

MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth St., Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregational meals. Advanced registration at many of our activities is necessary. We need to know how many people will be joining so we can be prepared. A suggested donation of \$1 per exercise class is appreciated. Lunch reservations need to be called in by 11:30 a.m. the day before. Call Bunny Caldwell at 863-9357 weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (Leave message on machine at other times.) Transportation to the center can be provided. Trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip. All Hawthorne trips leave from the parking lot on First Street across from the Police Station.

Monday, 24th
9:45 a.m. Aerobics
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Craft Club
Tuesday, 25th
10:00 a.m. Tai Chi
Wednesday, 26th
9:30 a.m. Blood sugar and cholesterol screening, reservations required
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 27th
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 28th
9:45 a.m. Aerobics
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics

Make appointments now for FREE TAX ASSISTANCE! Feb. 8, 15, 24 and March 8, 15, 22. Call center for an appointment.

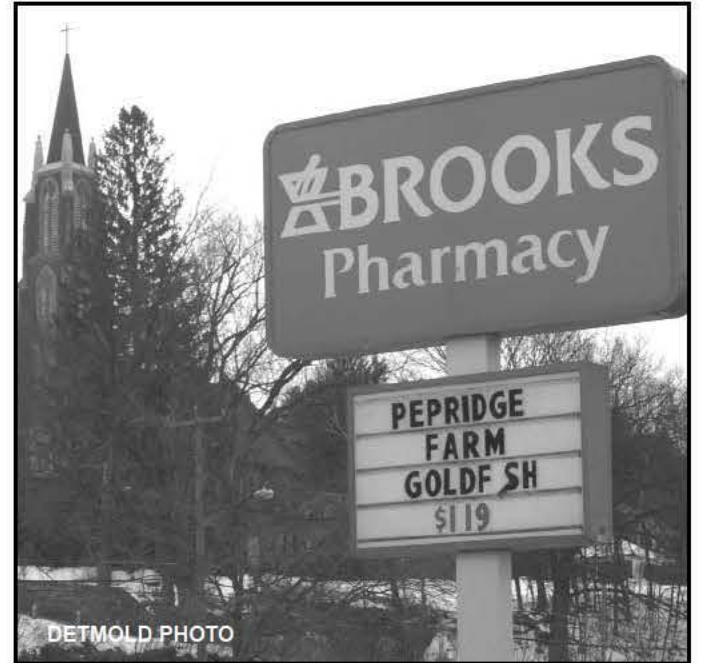
ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3

p.m. for activities and congregational meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at (413) 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at (978) 544-3898.

Monday, 24th
9:00 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12:30 p.m. Pitch
Tuesday, 25th
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Oil Painting
Wednesday, 26th
12:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 27th
9:00 a.m. Aerobics

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

FACES & PLACES



It's Peppridge Farm, remember?

Tax Rate Set

Gill - Assessor's clerk Harriet Tidd called to say the state has recently certified the town's tax rate. Last year's rate was \$19.27 per thousand. This year's rate will be \$14.31 per thousand, a difference of \$4.96 per thousand.

WRITERS WANTED

Like to write?
We need you!

The Montague Reporter

413-863-8666

FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS FOR MEN

The Men's Health Partnership offers free health screenings for men age 18 and older, with no income guidelines. Everyone qualifies! The next scheduled screening is February 15th, 2005 from 5 - 7 p.m. at the office of Dr. Ronald Catanese in Greenfield. Reservations are required.

Please call the Men's Health Partnership at 413-773-5555 or 978-544-2259 or 800-732-4636 for more information or to make your reservation.

Happy Birthday Daddy



Love, Dominic

Weight loss isn't easy, but the formula is simple:

Burn more calories than you consume & strength train 2 to 3 times a week.

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New ATRIUM Group Forming

The Turners Falls Women's Resource Center at 148 L St., is hosting a free ATRIUM group starting with an information session on Wednesday, February 2nd. This 12-week group will be held Wednesdays from 6 - 7:30 p.m. The ATRIUM group is a peer-led self-improvement group that helps women examine the connections between addictive behaviors and their past trauma. This is an educational and empowerment group that is appropriate for any woman 18 or older who has experienced abuse, violence or other trauma and who also struggles with self-harming behaviors, including food issues, addictions to alcohol or drugs, damaging or unsafe relationships, or other self-defeating behaviors.

The ATRIUM group is a holistic healing method that uses meditation, artwork, dialogue and writing exercises to address the effect of trauma on the mind, body and spirit.

To register for this group, or to see if the ATRIUM group is right for you, please attend our information session on February 2nd at 6 p.m. Free childcare is available, but we have a limited amount of spaces, so you must pre-register. For more information or to guarantee a spot in this group and sign up for childcare, please call Christine at the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center at (413) 863-4805.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

THE TREE OF THE RISING SONS

How many years has it been since they left?
Do tell.
How many wars must we still fight, before we can see again, the doves fly?
Do listen.
Isn't 1353 victims enough to account for?
Yet, look how this valiant tree wears so many yellow ribbons!
Not in the summertime nor the month of May.
But every day.
By the muffled voice of plaintive scars,
There is a tree in Greenfield, on Silver Street,
They call the tree of the rising sons!

by Flore



WIN A VACATION WEEK ON THE CAPE

Briarwood Resort in Falmouth, April 16th - 23rd, two-story townhouse w/two bedrooms, 1.5 baths, sleeps six.

\$20.00 per ticket. Must be 21 to accept prize

TO BENEFIT the TFHS MARCHING BAND

Drawing to be at the Spring Play in March
Only 100 tickets to be sold

Call Deb Austin for more info at 774-4650

Fire and Ice

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - (Wednesday, January 19th, -6 degrees at dawn.) A structure fire at Sally Wilder's house on Davis Turn Road, just east of the center of town, called me out of bed a little past midnight. I was out until dawn. I got so cold I am still warming up at 9:30 a.m. It was called in as a chimney fire that had spread to the structure, and I thought I was pretty good getting out, long Johns, my fast boots, what I thought was enough clothing. Turnout gear is pretty warm.

If the fire had just started to spread into the structure, we might have been able to contain it with a quick response, but I had to drive past the house to reach the station, the crew and my turnout gear. The road was so thick with smoke, not fog, that I had to slow almost to a walking speed to see and stay on the road. The pumper was leaving the station when I came in sight, and I radioed that smoke was thick on the road. They called mutual aid for three tankers, but more came, Shutesbury, Erving one and two, Orange, New Salem and Turners Falls. By the time I returned through the center of town, an orange glow filled the sky east of

town.

I got to the scene and fell in behind Bob Bowers on one line in back of the house. We had two lines in back, and two in front, and for a while it was easy to keep warm moving to hit the fire in one place and then another. Occasionally spray from the front of the house came down on us, and soon my jacket, helmet and face shield were covered with small beads of ice. My gloves soaked through from the slight leak at the nozzle, and they froze into a rigid shape. I balled my hands up, fingers curled to my palms, and the gloves grew stiffer. Twice, maybe three times, we were close to having the fire down but we ran out of water, and there was nothing to do but watch it re-ignite. Each time we waited for water, I got colder. I couldn't see what was happening for water supply, because that was happening around the front of the house, probably down at Bowers Pond.

The ground grew slippery with new ice, and the hose also grew slippery with a coating of ice, three feet back from the nozzle.

A crew, mostly Shutesbury firefighters, came around back with their own hose, and one of

them suggested I go into a warm cab for awhile. I don't know where he got the idea I was cold, maybe my shivering, or the stiff jointed way I was moving. That's what I did, but I am not sure it was wise, because the ice on my helmet and jacket melted. I was in and out the rest of the night. With dawn starting to show, the fire was out, the house was pretty well gutted, and the other crews went home. Everett Ricketts got a pencil ladder and short pike pole, and scraped a few red coals from a roof rafter, and we started to break down. Nozzles were frozen to the hose ends, and hoses lying full of water were becoming solid tubes of ice. Everett said we could come back for them later, and we hammered on the fittings to free the pumper from the hoses so we could drive it back to the station. I asked Everett, kind of insistently, if I could go straight home and not back to the station to repack the pumper with dry hose, because I had a little more than an hour before it was time to start my bus, and I needed to get as warm as I could in that time. Katie had a nice fire going, contained in the stove, and she made a fine pot of coffee.

African World artist Habib Koite & Bamada
rocks
Memorial Hall
5-piece Malian band
51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls
Tuesday, Feb. 1st, 7 p.m.
(doors open at 6)
Hilltown Folk:
(413) 625-2580
mention this Montague Reporter ad for a free hot beverage

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Montague's 5th Annual Winter Carnival
Friday, January 21 through Sunday, January 23, 2005
Brought to you by The Montague Parks & Recreation Department, in partnership with New England Extrusion, Montague Center Volunteer Firemen's Association, Montague Libraries, Montague Planning & Conservation, Montague/Gill Senior Center, The Brickhouse, and the 21st Century After-School Programs of Sheffield Elementary School & Great Falls Middle School

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
All programs are FREE OF CHARGE unless otherwise noted. Most activities are weather/condition dependent. Contact the MPRD Office for activity status.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21
BINGO at the SENIOR CENTER
Fifth Street, Turners Falls.....12:45pm
Monetary prizes are awarded, so break open your piggy bank and join us! This program is only available for Adults ages 18 and Up.
Sponsored by the Montague Council on Aging
PUBLIC SKATING
Montague Center Pond2:30 - 3:30pm

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22
WINTER TRACKING AT THE PLAINS9:00am - 12:00pm
Activity Leader: Walker Kolby.
Snowshoes (provided by Northfield Mountain Nature Ctr.) will be available if there is considerable snow coverage
Co-sponsored by the Montague Planning & Conservation Department
1st ANNUAL WINTER-JAM - Cardboard Sledding, Snowball Slingshot & Music by DJ
Unity Park, Turners Falls10:00am - 1:30pm
Cardboard Sled Jamboree
Construction 10:00am - 11:00am
Sled Races 11:00am - 11:30am
Snowball Slingshot 11:30am
Sponsored by The Brickhouse & the 21st Century After-School Programs of Sheffield & GFMS
TREASURE HUNTING IN THE PLAINS! - An introduction to the sport of Geocaching with Walker Kolby1:00pm
Co-sponsored by the Montague Planning & Conservation Department
WINTER CELEBRATION at the CARNEGIE LIBRARY
Carnegie Library, Turners Falls2:00pm
Participants will learn how to grow snowflakes in a jar, cut out fabulous paper snowflakes, and make some snow people puppets.
Sponsored by the Montague Libraries
BROOMBALL GAMES
The Pond (Montague Center School)2:00pm
*Activity status dependent upon ice conditions.
SATURDAY EVENING: 6:00PM-9:00PM
HORSE DRAWN HAYRIDES - The NEW Montague Center Firehouse. One of the truly wonderful experiences of the season. Hayrides depart from the NEW MONTAGUE CENTER FIREHOUSE, On Old Sunderland Road every 25 minutes. Coffee, cocoa, mulled cider and hot dogs will be provided courtesy of the Montague Center Fireman's Association. **Hayride Fee: \$2/person/trip.**
CARNIVAL BONFIRE Montague Center Park
ICE SKATING The Pond @ Montague Center School
(Conditions Permitting) Enjoy ice skating on the pond located next to the Montague Center School. B.Y.O.S. (Bring Your Own Skates)
*Activity status dependent upon ice conditions.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23
5th ANNUAL WINTER CARNIVAL 5K FUN RUN
Unity Park Fieldhouse 9:30am
The 3.1 mile run will start and finish at the Unity Park Fieldhouse. Light refreshments will be available at the finish line. Call the MPRD Office at 863-3216 to register and for course information.
Additional Co-Sponsors & Friends
The success of the Annual Winter Carnival is also dependent upon generous, community-minded businesses, organizations and groups. The Montague Parks & Recreation Department and Parks & Recreation Commission would like to thank these folks for their donations and assistance in pulling off this year's carnival: Connecticut River Internists, Four Rivers Federal Credit Union, Heat Fab, Inc., Renaissance Builders, Inc., St. Kazimierz Society, and Sirum Equipment Co.
CONTACT MPRD TO RECEIVE A DETAILED WINTER CARNIVAL SCHEDULE

The Montague Reporter

24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, Mass. 01376

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"The Voice of the Villages"

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August, 2002

Buying Fiske Pond

We welcome the decision of Wendell voters and the Wendell selectboard to move forward on the purchase and permanent conservation of the 125-acre Fiske Pond property in the southwestern corner of town. Tuesday's non-binding town-wide ballot question, answered affirmatively by nearly two thirds of the voters who cast ballots, gave the selectboard a clear directive to proceed, and the board acted on it Wednesday, voting 2-1 to negotiate the purchase of the property. There were some stiff hurdles along the way, and more remain, not least the chance that the Commonwealth's Division of Conservation Services may still decide not to award a Self Help grant to reimburse 70% of the town's \$400,000 purchase price for the property. That would kill the deal.

The town has already cleared a thicket that sprang up around the terms of the Conservation Restriction for the property. That threatened to choke off support for the acquisition. At the September 30th special town meeting, Wendell voters initially approved the purchase of the land by a lopsided vote of 81 to 18, after hearing from Claudia Scully, a representative of the landowner, Chickadees, Inc., that the Conservation Restriction on the property might be flexible enough to allow for hunting and logging on the land. A healthy give and take ensued between the conservation commission, the open space committee, the selectboard, and advocates of sustainable forest management and logging, hunters, even a local Native American who claimed aboriginal fishing rights to fish the pond. The discussions were tending towards a flexible, local management plan. Open space committee member Ray DiDonato, after meeting with a representative of local hunters and anglers, came to the select-

board on November 3rd saying, "There are multiple uses for the land. The town should have leeway for managing the land in a way that will please everyone."

In the offing, that proved to be a tall order. On December 1st, Scully came before the selectboard to clarify the owners' position on the Conservation Restriction. Apologizing for creating the false impression that Chickadees, Inc., would entertain a flexible approach to managing the land at the September town meeting, she stated flatly that the bargain price to the town was contingent on a restriction that allowed for no recreational killing, no buildings, and no removal of vegetation other than invasives or what is needed for trail maintenance. This statement prompted the board to return to the voters for further guidance. With the deadline for the Self Help grant approaching, they set a date for a non-binding opinion question for January 18th.

This is to the board's credit. Questions of long term management of municipal resources - not to mention the expenditure of at least \$120,000 from town coffers to acquire conservation land in a town already thick with state forests - questions like these should be decided by the voters. The purchase, if it goes through, will have an immediate effect on the tax rate, raising it by an estimated 20 cents per \$1000. It will also have a lasting effect on generations of Wendellites to come.

For one thing, it will afford them access to a clean, safe swimming area. As citizens in Montague know too well, that is a precious and scarce commodity. We are sorry a townwide consensus has eluded Wendell so far in acquiring this property, but we hope the whole town will one day enjoy the public ownership of Fiske Pond.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Protest the Stolen Inaugural

Not going to D.C.? March from Bridge Street School on Route 9 in Northampton to downtown Pulaski Park. The March will commence at 4 p.m. this Thursday, January 20th. Children, elders, jugglers, cyclists, all irate, compassionate, folk are welcome to bring hot chocolate, dancing shoes, banners, musical instruments, puppets, juggling balls, fancy apparel, pots and pans, speeches for

soap boxing, good energy, art making supplies, performances, your kids, your grandparents, your comrades, your voices, warm, warm, warm clothes.

Music and spontaneous events will take place in the park after the march and Food Not Bombs will provide food. Bridge Street School is at 2 Parsons St. -- on the right as you head west on Route 9 (which is Bridge Street) just

past the Bridge Street Cemetery before you take the sharp curve to the right into town. Pulaski Park is downtown next to the Academy of Music.

Refuse to recognize the installation of a dictator in his second stolen term. Only as a cohesive community can we create change. Join our display of dissent.

Peace and Love,
Don Ogden, Leverett

Notes from the Montague Cable Advisory Committee

Committee Seeks Objective Process to Award Cable Access Assignment



BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO

On Tuesday, January 18th, the Montague Cable Advisory Committee met for the ninth time since receiving the charge from the selectboard to investigate issues regarding local access. Since last July, the committee has been working to develop a set of criteria for evaluating local access. These criteria were presented at a public hearing on November 3rd. Following that meeting, a majority of the MCAC resolved to fold these criteria into an official Request for Proposals (RFP) the selectboard could issue. A

majority of the committee believed that an RFP was the only way the town could ensure a fair process for awarding local cable access to a provider. Committee member Roy Rosenblatt put together an extensive draft of this RFP over the holidays.

At the meeting on January 18th, the committee had hoped to finalize the wording of the RFP, but after two and a half hours of reviewing the document, the committee concluded that one more meeting was necessary to fine tune the RFP before handing it over to the selectboard.

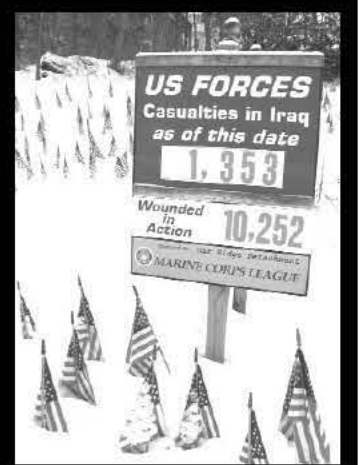
The next MCAC meeting is scheduled for January 31st at 7:00 p.m. at the Montague Center Library. As always, the public is welcome to attend.

We welcome your letters.

The Montague Reporter

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FAX (413) 863-3050
reporter@montaguema.net

American Dead in Iraq as of 1/12/05



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The Montague Reporter

24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376

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Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

GUEST EDITORIALS



Has it Become a Habit?

BY JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE - This week I would like to take a break from the humdrum world of the Montague budget deliberations and ask a delicate question with somewhat larger implications. Does the current President of the United States habitually lie and, if he does, is this OK?

There are several reasons why I hesitate to bring this up. For one, I have a nine-year-old son who, I feel, should be raised to respect the President of the United States. One of my formative political experiences was supporting President Eisenhower in 1956, while my father voted for liberal Democrat Adlai Stevenson. My stance probably did not impact the outcome of the election, but it has always left me with good memories. I supported Eisenhower because I knew nothing about his policies. My default position was to respect the president. Isn't this a good thing? So if the word leaks out to my son that I am calling the current president a liar in the *Montague Reporter*, this might put a dent in one young person's much-needed age of innocence.

Another problem is that I am currently registered as a Democrat. All presidents - Democrats, Republicans, Federalists, Whigs - have played fast and loose with the truth on occasion. One of my favorite presidents apparently lied under oath about an affair with a White

House intern. Not good. So raising the issue about Bush can easily be interpreted as simple partisanship. Add to this the likelihood that using the "L" word (liar, not liberal) might seem to be a personal attack on Mr. Bush, and the discussion quickly degenerates.

Then there is a problem caused by the fact that many honorable Americans voted for and apparently like Bush. Suggesting that he is a liar might create some defensiveness. Finally, I feel that the chairman of the local finance committee should project a certain air of comity. Suggesting the president is a liar is not terribly dignified.

Still, it's important to face up to the facts. Someone has to do it and, as they say in the recovery community, you must "admit you have a problem" before you can solve it. To me, this particular problem bears on our core values as a country. Lying occasionally happens, but it should not become a habit or a central political tactic. The result is to exacerbate divisions within the country and weaken support for our policies abroad.

At the risk of beating a dying horse, let's start with Iraq. Whatever you may think of the war, it is quite clear that Bush squandered much domestic unity and international support - coming out of 9/11 - by invading that country. I would argue the way Bush justified this action was almost as divisive as the invasion

itself. He constantly advanced a connection between terrorism and Iraq that did not exist. He constantly suggested that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, when in fact he had virtually no evidence to support this claim. When these justifications proved false, he shifted his rationale for the war yet again, claiming the invasion was designed to promote democracy in the Middle East. Now, the president frequently suggests that those who question his Iraq policy do not have faith in democracy. That's a divisive distortion, one that I take personally.

Now, consider Bush's behavior in the recent presidential campaign. Yes, there were unfair attacks and distortions on both sides. John Kerry suggested the Bush social security reform plan would cut benefits to the elderly. That was disingenuous because Bush didn't actually have a plan!

But, on the other side, the Bush campaign seemed to consist almost entirely of taking statements by Kerry completely out of context and, in some cases, manufacturing them out of whole cloth. Hardly a week went by when we did not hear a Bush attack that sounded more like a sixth-grade playground taunt than the opinion of a national leader. These were generally delivered to hand-picked groups of Republicans who would probably cheer wildly if it was suggested that Kerry was having an affair with Saddam Hussein. The low

point came when Bush claimed Kerry had stated the world would be better off if Hussein were still in power. Kerry had said nothing of the sort.

Finally, let's look at the current debate over the future of Social Security. I happen to think there is a case to be made for privatization of the system, Bush's proposed reform. It might produce a bigger return on the investment and it would virtually eliminate the demographic problem we face - too many retirees being supported by too few young workers paying into the system. But there are a number of very legitimate questions to be asked about the reform. Among these is how one pays the expense of the "transition cost" to private accounts. Financing privatization without a tax increase could add trillions to the federal budget deficit. Now, the president could present his plan, explain it, and answer these questions. The result might be a healthy debate and a unifying compromise.

But no. Instead Bush starts the whole discussion with a litany of distortions, which produce the predictable negative reaction. For example, the president insists on wildly exaggerating the nature of the problem, promoting the myth that social security will go broke very soon without fundamental reform. This is completely false. The system will be solvent for at

least forty years and even then - if nothing changes - will continue to pay benefits at nearly the current rate. Relatively small changes would save the current system for the foreseeable future. If the president wants more, he should certainly argue for it, but not create the false impression that a huge crisis requires privatization.

Furthermore, virtually everyone agrees that privatization will actually make things worse in the short run by taking billions out of the trust fund. When critics point things like this out, Bush claims - yet again falsely - the critics do not think there is any problem at all with the current system. So we are set up for a divisive debate from the start.

You get the point. There are those who believe the president constantly distorts reality because he is not very intelligent. My personal view is that he knows full well what he is doing and continues to do it because it seems to work. He has fashioned a narrow but cohesive political majority based on promoting the current divisions within our country. Bush probably also believes his dishonest tactics are OK because "everyone does it." Even if this were true, it would be a pretty bad excuse for a president who claims to have superior values. And it is certainly not an excuse I would accept from my nine-year-old son.

Demeaning the Spirit of Geneva

BY FRAN HEMOND

MONTAGUE - In 1859 Napoleon III of France and Francis Joseph of Austria were fighting. Three hundred thousand men faced each other in the struggle near Verona, now Italy. Forty thousand were killed, many more thousands were wounded, and the people of the region faced a big cleanup, rivaling the major battles of our Civil War.

A Geneva philanthropist, Henri Dunant, wrote an account of the horrors of the aftermath of the Battle of Solferino and called it *Souvenir de Solferino*, a book that became a bestseller. The abuse of prisoners of war, the impossibility of providing care, the burden on the area were so graphic that twelve countries agreed to send representatives to a conference in Geneva in 1864 to ameliorate the condition of combatants. One Gustav Moynier spent many years promoting agreement among nations to alleviate the post-battle barbarism.

After such great losses, Napoleon III and Francis Joseph found themselves able to reach a compromise. In 1864, the first conference at Geneva ended in an agreement among many nations

concerning the treatment of wounded soldiers. The Geneva Convention of 1906 extended protection to civilians and prisoners of war. Later, Britain was willing to include provisions covering maritime conflicts, the provisions of each ratification being very specific.

In 1947, a very detailed Geneva Convention extended protection to anyone who is not a proven threat to the nation holding him. The proof of danger must be determined by judicial process. The convention further states the protection given a prisoner of war remains with him throughout his captivity and cannot be taken from him by his captor or given up by the prisoner himself. He is protected against violence, intimidation and public curiosity. The last proviso is, perhaps, a matter of judgment and an indication of the civility of the captor.

In 1954, President Eisenhower, a man with first-hand knowledge of war and its horrors, a diplomat with credibility around the world, a good Republican, well aware of the potential destruction of nuclear war (we had dropped the bomb on Japan) strove mightily to

reduce global tensions. He stressed the necessity for fair play and good faith, without which no agreement has any value. He was respected around the world. Perhaps a period of his ill health prevented the extension of peaceful initiatives during his administration.

Nonetheless, the basic Geneva Convention, as ratified, provides that a captured soldier shall give only his name, date of birth, service number and rank. His treatment is humane, the conditions of his detention, prescribed. In practice, as George Washington and some modern military officers have observed, international treaties are influenced by the methods opposing belligerents use to observe them. Now, one of those belligerents is *us*.

These international conventions are written for times of stress. You don't need them in times of peace. The United States cannot afford to subvert them now. We cannot afford to have a man like Alberto Gonzales, who has temporized about the use of torture, elevated to the highest law enforcement post in the land. His mindset seems such that he would undermine the Geneva Convention and its spirit.

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GREENFIELD
Community College

FORUM

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Discovery Center on Tuesday, February 1st, at 7 p.m. (two days before the special town meeting to consider the town's bid to purchase the Strathmore Mill) will "look back on our successes over 20 years" and provide a status report on a number of economic development projects in town, including the potential new landfill, new industrial park, bike path, a downtown arts and cultural center at the former Cumberland Farms building, and the creation of an agricultural commission to work with existing farms and agricultural businesses. The town's proposed \$300,000 purchase of the 134-year-old Strathmore Mill will also be up for discussion, and Sherman invited town meeting members, business owners, and community residents to come with questions and concerns about that proposal.

"We do want to spend a few minutes talking about our successes," said Sherman. "We've been able to accomplish a number of the projects we've set out to do, if we look back over 20 years."

Sherman told the board she had received word the town had received a \$30,000 Smart Growth technical assistance grant from the state, one of 41 out of 73 communities to successfully apply for those funds in the recent grant cycle. Those funds are earmarked to evaluate

architectural, structural, parking and access issues as well as to develop market feasibility studies for the Strathmore. A town match of \$10,000 is required; one of the questions on the special town meeting warrant for February 3rd will seek approval for that funding.

Board member Allen Ross asked Sherman if the town could still access the pre-development planning funds if town meeting turns down the bid to purchase the mill. He said those studies could still be useful if a private developer were to look into the possibility of acquiring and renovating the 250,000-square foot complex. Sherman responded, "I don't know if the state would approve our spending the money," if the town did not own the mill. "My suspicion would be, 'No.' But I will ask."

In advance of this year's CDBG application, Sherman provided a broad-brush description of four projects the town hopes to receive funding for in the coming grant cycle. If approved, the bulk of the 600-odd thousand dollar grant request will be devoted to upgrading Peskeomskut Park, the closest thing Turners Falls has to a town common. Town meeting approved \$25,000 to develop design ready plans for improving the park in 1999. Those plans call for the installation of an outdoor performance pavilion, among other amenities. The town will be requesting \$275,000 for Peskomskut Park this year.

The grant will request money for design of improvements to the sidewalks and crosswalks in downtown Turners Falls, with the aim of removing barriers to wheelchair access, including reducing the grade of certain crossings, which are pitched too steeply. It was hoped the actual improvements could be part of this year's grant request, but town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the funding regulations were changed this year to require all requests for infrastructure improvements to come with bid-ready specs. Actual reconstruction of sidewalks and crosswalks will have to wait another year, he said. An added disappointment, the town will not be able to include a request for funds to pave the old DuBois garage property for a parking lot this year, because the EPA cleanup of the site is not yet complete.

The town will also request funds to assist low and moderate income residents in improving their homes. Though the actual dollar figure for this aspect of the grant has not been established yet, it will likely include funds in excess of \$100,000, to improve approximately half a dozen housing units. Another \$100,000 will be requested to fund the continuing work of two social service agencies, the Brick House's Youth Supporting Arts project, and the Montague Catholic Social Ministries SOAR (Skills, Opportunities, Action, Recognition) program. Details on all these projects will be aired at a public hearing before the selectboard on January 31st, at 7 p.m.

As part of the preparation for the CDBG application, Sherman delivered the 2005 Community Development Strategy plan to the board, outlining all the planning components that have gone into the work of economic development in Montague. The list is lengthy, and by the time she completed her summary, Ross, chairing the meeting in Pat Allen's absence, drew a long breath and said, "Whew. Months of work and an awful lot of background has gone into the planning that makes us eligible for these grants."

With the rising cost of gasoline, the board approved a request by library director Sue SanSoucie to increase the rate of reimbursement for town employees who drive their own vehicles on town business from 32.5 cents an hour to 37.5 cents an hour. Town accountant Carolyn Olsen estimated the change would cost the town roughly \$1,000 extra in travel reimbursements to various employees, primarily paid out to

before the board to ask their help in bringing the Red Sox to Turners Falls. After last season's world championship victory, the Sox offered to bring their trophy and to visit any of the towns and cities and the Commonwealth who would like to host them for an appearance. "I've been an avid Red Sox fan for 10 years, said Christenson, who is in 9th grade at Turners High. She said she has a brother in 8th grade who is also devoted to the Boston team. In fact, "My whole family are Red Sox fans," said Christenson, "It would be a dream come true to meet the players. I've never wanted anything so badly." She circulated a petition before coming to the board, but after contacting police chief Zukowski realized a petition wasn't needed. "We just need a request from the executive authority of the town," Christenson explained, looking pointedly at the board.



Red Sox Coming to Turners? You Gotta Believe

Katie Christenson came before the board to ask them to help bring the Red Sox to Turners Falls.

"It would be a dream come true to meet the players. I've never wanted anything so badly," said Christenson.

the building inspector and the board of health. (The building inspector spent \$1655 in '03 on travel, that amount will rise approximately \$280; the board of health is expected to see a \$240 rise in travel receipts over '03's \$1465 outlay.) Since the library has a relatively small travel reimbursement, Ross asked San Soucie why she had been tapped to make this request on behalf of all town employees.

Sherman replied, "I'll take that as an endorsement of the plan." The selectboard said that she might do so, and voted to approve it.

"I made it last time," said San Soucie.

"You have experience," quipped board member Patricia Pruitt.

Calculating the total population of Montague for the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission, for purposes of determining how many seasonal alcohol licenses Montague is entitled to, the town clerk's office forwarded a population estimate of 8482 souls residing in our five villages. There is only one seasonal alcohol license currently issued in Montague, to the Thomas and Thomas golf club.

Katie Christenson came

"I don't see how we can not do this," said Pruitt, once it became plain a letter from the board asking the Sox to come to Montague was all that was needed. Ross thanked Christenson for her civic involvement, and said he was certain she was voicing widely shared sentiments.

The selectboard approved spending \$320 to wire town hall so that live cablecasts could be produced from the second floor meeting room, where the finance committee traditionally meets, and from the police station, in the basement of the building.

In a brief discussion on upcoming budget deliberations, Ross suggested it might be prudent for the town to consider hiring a technical advisor to assist with the upkeep of the town's website, and to work with other departments that have created websites, such as the police department, the water department, and the Gill-Montague schools.

The board accepted the resignation of Bob Avery from the Wells Trust, a countywide college scholarship fund, and appealed for residents who might be interested in filling the opening to write letters of intent to the board.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Apollo's Well Located on Town Owned Land

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - At the January 12th selectboard meeting, Francesco Compagnone, known locally as Apollo, met with the board over a property line difficulty. The recent survey of the town center, done in preparation for construction design work for the proposed new library, shows that Apollo's fence is 20 feet inside the lot where the town offices are presently located. On town land, but on his side of the fence, are four peach trees, nut trees he planted, a mushroom garden, and a well Apollouses to water his garden.

Before he built the fence or started using the land 22 years ago, Apollo said he discussed the matter with then highway boss and road commissioner Tom Bardsley. Bardsley told him that as long as he built his fence on his side of a then existing barbed wire fence he would be fine, so that is what Apollo did.

After the recent survey, the town sent Apollo a letter informing him of the discrepancy. He consulted a lawyer who told him that after using the land openly,

without protest, for 20 years he could claim ownership by adverse possession. The trees, well, and mushroom garden provide a significant part of his livelihood.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said Bardsley had made a mistake back then. Chair Ted Lewis said that adverse possession does not work against towns, and Keller said the only way to know for sure what the law requires is to go through the courts. Apollo did not want that, and neither did the selectboard. Board member Christine Heard said perhaps the library plans - which are not finished yet - would clarify if this 20' x 218' strip of land was needed for the new library. It might be possible to move the mushroom garden (which consists of a number of inoculated oak logs) and to trade this strip for a similar strip on the back side of the town office lot.

Keller said the final library plan is due by February, and once that information is in hand, the board could possibly find a solution that works for everyone.

Apollo offered to walk the

property in the daytime with board members. He said several times he wanted to work things out in the easiest way possible. As he was leaving, Heard said, "It sounds like we'll be in touch in February."

Earlier in the meeting, Marty Arsenault, representing the Wendell Women's Club, requested the use of the town hall for a February 12th, 9:00 a.m. pancake breakfast, as a fundraiser for children's activities. The use was granted, without charge, but Lewis reminded her that water to the kitchen has been shut off. The kitchen is located over an unheated crawl space, and the pipes froze and broke when a previous user failed to turn the water off before leaving the building. They have not been repaired since.

Arsenault said the Women's Club was prepared to bring water to town hall to brew coffee, and to bring dishes home to be washed after the breakfast. Tickets will be \$5.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children; for more information on this event, call 978-544-3837.

WENDELL
continued from pg 1

649 active voters - a turnout of over 41% - with 173 (or 64%) voting yes, and 94 voting no.

On Wednesday night, with the results of the referendum in hand, the selectboard met and voted 2 to 1 in favor of proceeding with purchase of Fiske Pond, and to abide by the terms of the Conservation Restriction. Chair Ted Lewis cast the dissenting vote, but neither Dan Keller nor Christine Heard expressed much enthusiasm for the motion to approve. Heard said she was personally against the proposal, but respected the will of the majority of the voters. Keller spoke of the frustration of six months of negotiating for a liberalized conservation restriction on the land. "I

think all we have to show for it is a couple of picnic tables," he said. And he spoke of the thwarted will of the third of Wendell voters who oppose the purchase. "They are worried about the cost of the purchase and rising property tax rate," said Keller. "There should be a way their views can be constructively channeled, not just overruled by the will of the majority."

Ray DiDonato, of the open space committee, said, "I think the project will benefit Wendell in the long run. While it would have been nice to have accommodated the needs of hunters, for example, every Wendell citizen will be able to go there and use the land."

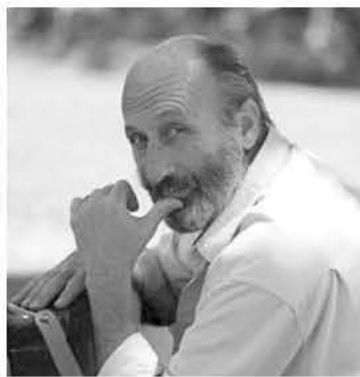
Among the uses the land will put to, swimming ranks high on the list. Robbie Leppzer, a

member of the informal advocacy group Friends of Fiske Pond, said he has been swimming at Fiske Pond for more than 20 years. There was a time when rowdy, inebriated behavior, largely from out-of-towners, spoiled the use of the pond for many townspeople, and Leppzer said the 40 - 50 members of his group would help to monitor the use of Fiske Pond in the future to make sure it remained family friendly.

To contact Friends of Fiske Pond, call 978-544- 7926, or email robbie@turningtide.com.

Keller said the selectboard would be negotiating the terms of the purchase and sale agreement in the immediate future. DiDonato said he was hopeful the town would hear positively regarding the Self Help grant in the next few weeks.

Noel Paul Stookey Concert to Benefit NEC



This benefit concert will support the work of the New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution in its efforts to prevent a 20% power boost at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power station in nearby Vernon. Reserved seats are priced at \$25 / \$15 / \$10. (Children's tickets are 1/2 the price of their adult guardian.) Tickets are available on line at www.NBOTickets.com, by phone at 1-800-THE-TICK (843-8425), or by calling the New England Coalition at 802-257-0336. They are also available (by cash or check only) at numerous retail outlets.

"New England Coalition is doing great work," said Stookey. "The organization has got the right balance of expertise on the technical and regulatory issues and an outreach and education program that has gotten the public involved. Vermont Yankee is on the forefront of the expansion of the nuclear industry in America, and NEC is on the front lines opposing them. They

On February 26th, the legendary Noel Paul Stookey, of Peter Paul and Mary fame, will give a special benefit concert in Brattleboro. Stookey will be joined by another guitar legend, Eddie Mottau, for an evening of blues, gospel, and folk music. Since the 1970's release of his "Wedding Song" Stookey has blended the trio's activities with those of his own as a solo artist, and is especially known for his humorous perspective on contemporary life.

The venue for the Saturday concert is the historic Latchis Theatre in Brattleboro, Vermont. The program begins at 7:30 p.m.

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COSBY

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School Partnership. The series, 6 Villages Raising Our Children, was designed in the wake of recent violent events in Turners Falls, said Superintendent Sue Gee as she introduced Wednesday evening's event, to bring people in the community together to face and discuss issues and to build involvement as well as understanding.

Throughout the evening, there was an emphasis on partnership and parental involvement. "Our schools cannot be isolated from the community at large," said Cheryl Fox, facilitator of the Gill-Montague Community School Partnership.

"We need to work in partnership," she said, "to make sure that our children are learning [respect and nonviolence]."

Erica Haas, who grew up in foster care in Greenfield and is now attending Bristol Community College, spoke of the potential to succeed despite difficult circumstances. She said she wanted to do things differently than her mother did. Illustrating how far she has come from the troubles of her youth, she offhandedly commented that her dilemma of the moment is trying to decide whether to pursue studies in Criminal Justice or Interior Design.

Samantha Longo, a senior at Turners Falls High School (TFHS), also spoke of "family

problems" while she was growing up and credited the Upward Bound program for keeping her on track.

Yves Marceau, who runs the Northfield Mt. Hermon Upward Bound program at TFHS that Longo spoke of, was up on stage with her. Speaking to the audience, he said, "You, as parents, have a much, much deeper impact [than we do as teachers]. As parents it's important to be involved in your children's education. The power of parents is phenomenal. Use that power." Marceau received a standing ovation, started by Cosby, for his comments.

Cosby, throughout his speech, repeatedly called on parents to use their power and participate in their children's lives. "All of you have to come to these organizations and reach out to them," he said. "Where are you that you are so busy that you won't come to the parent-teacher conference to find out what is going on with your child? How can you be afraid to raise this child properly?"

"Montague, Turners Falls," said Cosby, directly addressing and challenging the communities, "where was it that you became so used to bad things happening that you began to just say 'this is the way it is'? Where are you parents?"

Many in the audience appreciated Cosby's remarks, challenges and directives. "I thought it was a wonderful event," said TFHS junior Lauren Tela afterward, "I think it's important that people reach out. I see a lot of problems every day," she said, "I'm hoping that people will reach out more."

Similarly, Earl McGraw, Dean of Students at TFHS, said he thought the event was worthwhile. "I think [Cosby] got



Bill Cosby receives a water color painting of Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. from Tarrab Dempsey (grade 1) and Shaunte Parker (grade 2). When Cosby asked them to read the inscription on the back, they held a whispered conference before reading their notes of thanks.

through to the parents. I think he's right. It starts at home."

There was a moment of tension, however, during the question and answer period when a member of the audience, who works for Franklin Community Action Corp (FCAC), told Cosby that "some of the parents just don't know what to do, and there [is no longer funding] for the programs to teach them."

"But see, it's a victim mentality that we can't do anything because the funding has been cut," Cosby responded. "When we get rid of this victim feeling," he continued, "we begin to be people who are empowered."

Other audience members spoke of the need for people to volunteer and be willing to teach other people's children right from wrong. Virginia Youngberg, a senior at TFHS and a stage participant in the event, said, "I think the students need more adults who allow kids to live their lives fully and will just listen to them. The resource ratio is just too low."

Efrain Vazquez, a graduate of Franklin County Technical School, came all the way from Arkansas to participate in the

event. He spoke of coming to Franklin County from Holyoke and needing to prove himself to his teachers. He felt that he needed to overcome the stereotypes of "a Hispanic boy from Holyoke."

"We're not all in gangs," said Vazquez, "but it took me a while to prove myself to the community." He reached out to many of the programs in the community to give him direction and said that his foster dad, Tim Robinson, was a profound influence on his life. "I couldn't fool him for nothing," said Vazquez, "so I had to be straight with him."

Vazquez came to Turners to be a part of the event because "he wanted to give back to the community that helped give [him] direction."

In his closing comments, Cosby said, "I came to pull you in, but my hope is that tonight when I leave that this town will be a different place. I'm asking you to get yourselves together. Let those children know that they are loved, but [that] they're not going to get away with the bad stuff."

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Psychic Fair in Lake Pleasant

Saturday, January 29th, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The National Spiritual Alliance will sponsor a Psychic Fair at Thompson Temple across from the Post Office in Lake Pleasant. Divination methods include astrology, I-Ching, hand reading, spiritual counseling, and tarot cards. Consultation is with a medium of choice.

"Spirit and Spa," a portrait of the "glory days" of Lake Pleasant as a Spiritualist resort 100 years ago, is available at the TNSA Bookstore and through the TNSA internet website, www.thenationalspiritualallianceinc.org. The book was written by Louise Shattuck and David James.

TNSA's basic principles include belief in an infinite and eternal sentient creating and sustaining force, the interconnectedness of everything, the siblinghood of humanity, personal responsibility for thoughts, words, and deeds, non-judgmentalism, continuity of life of the soul, communication between the worlds of form and formlessness, and reincarnation as the method of progression toward perfection.

TNSA was incorporated in 1913 and evolved from the New England Spiritualist Campmeeting Association formed in 1874. Lake Pleasant is the oldest continuously-existing spiritualist community in the United States.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE

'06 Budget Presentations Begin

BY KATE ARSENAULT

Tom Bergeron jokingly asked for help when presenting his first budget request as superintendent of the Department of Public Works Budget to a joint meeting of the finance committee and the selectboard Wednesday night, January 19th. Help is coming in the form of increased Chapter 90 funding, now reaching \$310,000, nearly back at the level the town used to receive five or six years ago. State Chapter 90 funds are directed for road construction expenses and infrastructure improvements not otherwise covered in local budgets. Bergeron said Chapter 90 funding has been "a very good chunk of change" this year, and said he hopes to receive the same amount of funding next year. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio noted that many town roads are in need of resurfacing, and said future Chapter 90 funds should go into repaving these roads. Bergeron said there is \$100,000 left of this year's Chapter 90 funds,

which he intends to save and build on. He said his goals for using these funds include repaving 7th and 3rd streets in Turners Falls.

Finance committee member Marge Levenson asked if Bergeron would look at the needs of each village and get input from the community about roads and signs needing repair. Levenson said there are five very distinct villages in Montague, and that she suspects each has different needs. Levenson suggested a forum be developed over time so that residents of the villages can voice their needs to the DPW. Bergeron supported Levenson's sentiments, saying his department is always open to suggestions from community members. Levenson also suggested the DPW post information about upcoming road construction on its website, so that residents can know where and when the repairs will take place. Bergeron said he thought this was a good idea, and said his only reservations were that

dates for road construction could change easily, and that the department would need to find someone to update the website.

Increased personnel and disposal costs were the focus of the Water Pollution Control Facility's budget report, presented by WPCF superintendent Bob Trombley. His budget request called for a 17% increase in the WPCF operating budget. Total staffing was cited as a major cost, as well as a source of difficulty for the WPCF. Trombley said the facility is aging, and there are not enough staff members to keep it running the way it should. He referred to a Massachusetts regulation requiring the daily inspection of all pumping, ejector or lift stations at a sewer system. Trombley said the WPCF is not staffed to inspect stations more than three times a week, but that the Department of Environmental Protection is aware of this and has not enforced the regulation. However, said Trombley, "If station failures occur that result

in the discharge of raw sewage to surface waters or cause exposure to the general public, a fine could be levied, and the CMR (regulation) would then in all likelihood be enforced." Trombley said the town would then have to hire at least one more full time staff member at the WPCF.

Trombley noted his staff had been reduced by seven full time and two part time employees in 1995. He said there has been no increase in staffing in his department since then, and he now needs to hire a lab technician and a truck driver/laborer. He said these positions have steep learning curves, and that the lab technician will need to have a Bachelor of Science degree. The WPCF budget also calls for a new expense for "pager pay." Trombley said there is a need for staff to be on call, and this has led to a policy of paying employees to carry pagers. Trombley's budget requested \$11,484 for pager pay in Fiscal '06.

Biosolids disposal is another

big expense, according to Trombley, and accounts for 9% of the requested 17% increase in operations budget. He pointed to the Esleeck Manufacturing Company in Turners Falls as a business that has increased the amount of disposal, saying the amount of dry tonnage from Esleeck has increased by 33%. Selectboard member Allen Ross asked if the increase in solid waste disposal at Esleeck is an indicator of the amount of business the company is doing. Trombley said the increase is an indicator of increased production 90% of the time, though sometimes it results from mistakes in the manufacturing process. He said Esleeck does reimburse the town for the solid waste disposal. Nevertheless, Trombley projected rates for residential sewer users could be heading for an 86% increase, if the town does not identify grant funding to alleviate some of the aging plant's costs.

ASK LOUISE

Get help from the *Montague Reporter's* new advice columnist. Pet problems, love troubles, interior decorating disasters, all handled with confidentiality and aplomb. Email your questions to: reporter_louise@montaguema.net, or write to Ask Louise c/o Montague Reporter, 24 Third Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376



One way to reduce the number of telemarketing calls you receive is to submit your name and number for inclusion in the federal and state Do Not Call registries. Here are their respective telephone numbers and URLs:

Federal registry:
1-888-382-1222
<https://www.donotcall.gov/default.aspx>

Massachusetts registry:
1-866-231-2255
<https://www.madonotcall.gov/connect.com/Welcome.asp>

If you register by phone, be

sure to call from the phone number that you wish to register.

Once you've added your telephone numbers to the lists, you should notice a decrease in the number of calls you receive within a few weeks. The Web sites listed above provide additional details about what kinds of calls are restricted, and how to file a complaint against a telemarketer who calls you illegally.

Of course, there is another, simpler way to avoid being interrupted by calls during dinner: don't answer the phone.

Dear Louise,
When I'm wrong, I always try to say I'm sorry. My girlfriend is 35 years old, and still doesn't

know how to say she's sorry even when she says something outrageous to me in public. She just pretends the whole thing never happened. What should I do?

-Red-Faced in Turners Falls

Dear Red-Faced,

If your girlfriend is in the habit of making public scenes, you may have a larger problem on your hands than simply getting her to admit when she's wrong.

With that said, your best bet is to show your own maturity by discussing the matter with her in a non-confrontational, non-accusatory way. Do NOT say: "You

make me so @\$#!% angry!" or "I hate it when you act like an idiot in public!" Do say, "Darling, it's really important to me that we show respect for one another by apologizing when we're wrong." If she gets defensive or tries to provoke you into bickering with her, don't take the bait; just keep stating your side of things in a calm and respectful way. And remember to set a good example by listening to her side as well: if she makes a valid point about something, concede it.

Depending on how emotionally available she is, it make take several conversations of this kind before you begin get through to her, but hopefully your persistence will pay off.

Dear Louise,

How do you get rid of telemarketers who call during dinner time?

-Hungry, in Millers Falls

Dear Hungry,

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Free Wireless Access on the Byways of Montague

BY MICHAEL MULLER

Tuesday night finds me driving from the Cumbies in North Amherst at Rt. 63 towards NoHo on that little connector road to 116 when my cell phone account runs dry. I have one of those service plans where you buy your minutes in advance, \$40 at a time, and my account ran dry between Montague and Amherst, and I needed to make a call. It always happens when you least need it to happen, doesn't it? In any case, I knew I could pay my account online, but ... how was I to do that? I'm in a car, and I can't, like, call the phone company. My phone's dry.

Ahhh, but I do have my laptop with me, and a damn good wireless network card. It has an optional external antennae, which

I never use except in emergencies. Like now.

I pull into the Pine Street Co-Housing and pull into the first available parking lot. This is one of those community living / condo operations where hundreds of people live in two-story apartment buildings surrounded by parking lots. They can be found across the country and are fairly interchangeable, except that this village is in a college town. And that means free wireless access.

I pop in my really good wireless card, attach the antennae, toss the antennae onto the dash and start scanning. Immediately I see seven networks. Most of them are called "Lynksys" or "Netgear" which are the default names for the two major router manufacturers. In other words, if you buy a

router to allow more than one computer in your house to share a DSL or cable connection to the Internet, you buy one of these routers, and the default name of the network the router creates for you (for all the computers that will connect to it to get online) is the actual name of the manufacturer. Why not? It makes sense. What are they going to name it... Groucho? Bogart? Mik?

Anyway, I see seven networks. I'm just sitting in the parking lot, in my car, laptop in my lap, and I can see seven networks. Four of them are using the default name, and three are different, meaning the owner has actually read the manual and renamed the router, and probably added some security so people can't pull up in the parking lot and use their router to get online.

I don't bother with those. I select a network named "Netgear," and voila, I'm online. I quickly go to my bank's website, move money around, then go to my cell phone company's website and refill the phone, and then shut

the laptop. I count to ten then open my phone and make my call, and it works.

Welcome to Wardriving in America. This has become a new sport: buy a really good wireless card with an external antennae (with magnetic mount), attach it to the roof of your car and then slowly drive around looking for hot spots. When you find one, if it's open (not secured), you mark it down on your map and then drive on. Eventually you have a map of all hotspots in your area and you know where to go if you need access and you're not in a convenient place to get it, like your home or office.

Some people use this info for good, but most use it for mischief. They find an open network, look for any other computers on that network, see if there are any shared or unsecured folders, and then scan the files and see if there is anything of valuable like credit card info, bank info, etc.

As we move farther and farther into the information age, and more and more people get these inexpensive wireless routers (you can find them on eBay for \$15 now), we're opening up our world more and more to the network of networks: the Internet. In NYC you can probably avoid getting DSL when you move into a new apartment because chances are three of your neighbors already have it and have a wireless router. If you have a wireless card, you're online (assuming they don't all secure their networks).

Some commercial establishments give it away for free as an incentive to bring in customers. In Montague Center you have the Bookmill / Lady Killegrew Café and in Turners Falls you have Suzee's Laundromat. Imagine that, going to your laundromat and being able to get online while you do your wash. Is that crazy? No, it's brilliant, and I've already used it... though I prefer watching the waterfall while sipping some excellent coffee (no offense Chris).

Recently I did a war-drive of Turners and found many open networks, and it wasn't an exhaustive search. I know of three in Montague Center near my house (unfortunately not near enough) and more are coming online every month. Eventually you'll be able to walk down the street with your wireless palmtop device and get pretty decent coverage without having to contract with the wireless companies.

So what's the point? None, other than to tell you where to go for free wireless access in Montague Center and Turners Falls, and to warn you that if you have a wireless router you should read your manual and learn how to secure your network so people can't pull up in a car outside your house with a laptop and scan your hard drives or siphon your Internet connection. How do you do this? Look to a column in an upcoming issue of the *Montague Reporter*.

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Religious Services

Baptist
 Faith Baptist Church, 331 Silver Street, Greenfield, 774-6438
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.,
 Wednesday Adult Bible Study 7 p.m. Youth Bible Club at 6:45 p.m.

First Baptist Church of Turners Falls, 10 Prospect, Turners, 863-9083
 Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Christian Science
 First Church of Christ Scientist, 110 Federal St., Greenfield, 773-9765
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons)
 25 Bank Row, Greenfield, 772-8514 Sunday at 10 a.m.

Congregational
 Gill Congregational Church, Main Rd., 863-8613 Sunday at 10 a.m.
 First Congregational Church, 19 Bridge St., Millers Falls, 659-3430 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Bible study Wed. at 7 p.m.

Episcopal
 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Seventh and Prospect St., Turners, 863-4602 Sunday at 9 a.m.

Friends (Quakers)
 Mount Toby Monthly Meeting of Friends, Rte. 63, Leverett, 548-9188 Sunday at 10 a.m.

Jewish
 Temple Israel, 27 Pierce St., Greenfield, 773-5884 Friday at 6 p.m. (first weekend of the month) and Saturday at 9:30 a.m.; schedule does vary, it is advisable to call in advance

Lutheran
 St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 23 Long Ave., Greenfield, 773-5242 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Nondenominational
 Grace Church, 41 K St., Turners, 863-2771 Sunday at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

National Spiritual Alliance
 2 Montague Ave., Lake Pleasant, 367-0138 Sunday at 1 p.m.

Unity in the Pioneer Valley Church
 401 Chapman Street, Guiding Star Grange, 625-2960; Sunday at 10 a.m.

Roman Catholic
 Our Lady of Czestochowa, 84 K St., Turners, 863-4748

Saturday at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.; Sunday at 8 and 10:30 a.m.; Monday at 8 a.m.; and Tuesday-Friday at 5:30 p.m. (Confession one half hour prior to mass)

St. Anne's, J St., Turners, 863-4678
 Sunday at 8 a.m. and daily at 7 a.m. through February
 St. John's, 5 Church St., Millers Falls, 659-3435
 Saturday at 4:15 p.m. and Sunday at 8:30 a.m.

St. Mary's of the Assumption, 80 Seventh St., Turners, 863-2585
 Saturday at 4 p.m. and weekdays at 7 a.m. through October

Salvation Army
 72 Chapman St., Greenfield, 773-3154 Sunday at 11 a.m.

Unitarian Universalist
 All Souls, 399 Main St., Greenfield, 773-5018 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

First Parish Unitarian, Main St., Northfield, 498-5566 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

United Church of Christ
 Evangelical Congregational Church (UCC), 11 Church St., Erving (978) 544-8658

First Congregational Church (UCC), 4 North St., Montague Ctr., 367-9467 Sunday at 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Turners Falls (UCC), 148 L St., Turners, 863-9844 Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Contact the Reporter to add your service.

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Inside the Brick House

BY RUDY RENAUD

TURNERS FALLS - As it says in the Brick House literature, "In 1989, in response to the deaths of four women at the hands of their domestic partners, a group of concerned residents, service providers, and town officials formed a coalition that sought to create a Montague-based organization that would serve the needs identified by residents." That organization is the Brick House, located at 24 3rd Street in Turners Falls.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Amewusika Sedzro (Sika) works with Nate Greene (center) and Kit Henry on a video project at the Brick House in Turners Falls

The Brick House is an important community resource for folks of all ages, not the least of which are the youth of Montague. Amewusika Sedzro (Sika) works directly with Montague teens. One of her main tasks is to direct the youth support team that produces different video clips for the Brick House cable TV show.

Hailing from New York, Sika, an Americorps volunteer, earned a degree in film and video at Hampshire College, her introduction to the Pioneer Valley. After leaving the state for a brief stint back in upstate New York, she returned to Franklin County in October to begin

work at the Brick House. Sika feels strongly about the support the Brick House offers young people in town. "It gives youth options. Unlike at school, the young people here have an outlet to really be themselves and to utilize their creativity." Besides the film and video projects, this winter the Brick House is hosting ice skating trips to Greenfield, Thursday night movies, an April trip to MassMoCA, and a youth lock-in (sleepover) during spring break.

For any youth interested in these events, or interested in the

Brick House in general, call 863-9576, or go to thebrickhouseinc.org. Sika would be happy to show you everything they have to offer. As she puts it, "I wish I had this type of thing when I was growing up. I probably would've been a lot less angry."

And don't forget to stop by the Brick House this weekend during the Winter Carnival. Not only can you legally throw a snowball at the building, you can come in and see what they're up to while you're at it.

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WINTER TRACKING ON THE MONTAGUE PLAINS
 Saturday, January 22nd, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
 Learn how to recognize animal tracks in the snow and enjoy the magic of the Plains in winter!

TREASURE HUNTING IN THE PLAINS!
 An introduction to the sport of Geocaching
 Saturday, January 22nd 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Geocaching is where the age-old excitement of treasure hunting crosses paths with modern technology; creating an activity fit for anyone of any age with an adventurous spirit. Participants will be provided handheld GPS (Global Positioning System) devices to point them in the right direction, where they read and traverse the landscape in search of a hidden cache. Compasses, maps, radios and complete instruction on their use will be available for safety. Participants will travel in groups of three or more. All Ages Welcome! Please bring clothing, equipment, snacks, and water appropriate for the weather and your comfort. Snowshoes (provided by Northfield Mountain Nature Ctr.) will be available if there is considerable snow coverage.

To register for these FREE activities, call the Montague Parks & Recreation Department, 863-3216.

Sponsored by the Montague Parks & Recreation Department and the Montague Planning & Conservation Department

Wine and Beer Tasting Series at Lady Killigrew Cafe

The Lady Killigrew Café at the Bookmill in Montague Center introduced its winter wine list this past week, as well as a wine and beer tasting series to take place throughout the winter. A full tasting of their winter wine list is scheduled for Valentine's Day (Monday, Feb. 14th; reservation required), and promises to be out of the ordinary.

The Valentine's Day tasting will be the first in a wine and beer tasting series the Lady Killigrew will hold through February and March, including evenings devoted to Italian wines, fortified wines, and handcrafted Belgian and

German beers. Also in the works is a night featuring wines from young and upcoming wine-makers.

Both the wine list and the tasting series take an unconventional approach to wine appreciation, replacing the usual Merlot or Cabernet with such grapes as Syrah and Garganega. The Lady Killigrew wine list also presents a rowdier, more poetic



type of wine description. Instead of 'hints of tobacco and cut green grass', the Lady Killigrew list describes its

Zinfandel from Cline Cellars in California, for example, thus: 'Like seeing a celebrity, or something famous that you've seen only in pictures; it's instant recognition, excitement, and at the same time a distance.'

Also included on the list are a Syrah from Bonny Doon vineyards in California, a Rhone-style Red from the RBJ group in Australia, some Italian and

Spanish wines from select, small producers; also a sake list, and a Fortified wine list (madeira, port, and sherry) chosen especially for the cold winter.

The tasting will be led by Lady Killigrew co-owner Matthew Latkiewicz, who detailed his approach to wine-tasting in an article published in the Fall 2003 issue of Gastronomica, a food and culture magazine.

The Lady Killigrew serves food and drink from 10 a.m. to Late, Wednesday through Sunday. Her food menu includes grilled sandwiches, rice dishes, salads, and soups.

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Honor Society to Hold Prom Fashion Show

BY MARY JANE HORTON
TURNERS FALLS -

This year's members of the George F. Wrightson chapter of the National Honor Society had their annual induction ceremony on November 29th. Ten new members were added to this group from Turners Falls High, recognized for academic and extracurricular achievements, community service, leadership, and character. Also at the ceremony, eight members inducted last year were recognized. The new members inducted were: Kara Banash, Ryan Herzig, Julie Girard, Krista



The National Honor Society at TFHS

Leveille, Stacy Leveille, Adam McCarthy, Abby O'Gara, Bri Pecor, Anna Perry, and Anna Truckey. Dean of Students Earl McGraw was the guest speaker. He recognized the members who were inducted last year, includ-

ing Amber Ackerman, Chris Austin, Caitlin Coyle, Mary Jane Horton, Nikki Lively, Marissa Sicley, John Waynelovich, and Alayna Zellmann. These students remain active in community service. Over the holidays, they went caroling to local businesses and nursing homes including the Greenfield Adult Health Center, Farren Care Center, Franklin Medical Center, Poet's Seat Nursing Home, Gill-Montague Senior Center, Dunkin Donuts, Couture Brothers, Greenfield Savings Bank, the office of the Superintendent of Schools, and Food City.

The Honor Society students intend to hold the annual Prom Fashion Show, cosponsored by Aliber's Bridal Shop, on Wednesday, February 9th in the TFHS auditorium. They are looking forward to many other community endeavors in the future.

No School on Friday

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

I drive a school bus for the Swift River School. On Friday, January 14th, I was sitting on the couch with my coffee when the electric power went out. Suddenly, I was sitting in the dark, but fortunately I had my coffee cup in hand and was able to continue drinking it while the outside grew light, and I began to see around the room again. The first telephone call came from another driver. "Don't move your bus until you get another call."

"OK," I thought, and continued sipping

A few minutes later the same driver called and told me to drive my route, but tell any children who met the bus that there was no school. I thought I would feel pretty stupid doing that, but I have done dumber things before, and the choice was not mine.

In the center of Wendell I flagged down a teacher driving by and told her there was no electricity at the school, so school was cancelled. She also flagged me down to tell me the same thing. Most kids were not out; the mother at my second stop came out of the house to tell me there was no school, just as I was going to tell her the same thing.

One student, Peter, had not gotten the word. When he came to the door, I told him, "No school today," and you should have seen his eyes light up. Pure magic. Here's the job to have. Drive around town telling kids, "No School."

I told him, "Look, no kids on the bus," and he glanced to the back, saw I was telling the truth, and ran back to his waiting father with the news.

I was happy to park the bus for the day.

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CATHERINE REID VISITS SHEFFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Local author and naturalist Catherine Reid, of Shelburne Falls, spoke with the fifth grade students of Amy Bernard, Donna Klaiber, Sue Guy-Greene, and Bernie Sadoski on Friday, January 7th at the Sheffield Elementary School on Crocker Avenue in Turners Falls. She presented her research and experiences gained when writing her book: "Coyote: Seeking the Hunter in our Midst". Students were able to offer their recent learning related to a reading series selection on wolves during a question and answer discussion format. The Eastern Coyote is believed to have hybridized with remnant red and gray wolf populations.



Mike Wells, Catherine Reid, Rozzlyn Scott and Haley Fiske at Sheffield Elementary School

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WALK

continued from pg 1

and poetry at the Center for the Arts, where the Performance Project presented *Walk with Me*, under the direction of Julie Lichtenberg.

As shocking as the statistics of the American prison industry are, with one in 75 American men, and one in 25 black men now behind bars, how can anyone really understand what those brute statistics mean to the people living their lives in jail cells, or being released without means of reintegrating into society? What do those statistics tell of the toll on their families, or their communities? Short of volunteering to work in an inner city school or hospital, or signing up to do outreach work in an inner city neighborhood, you could take a crash course in the lessons of criminal justice for the poor by going to see "Walk With Me."

There is no substitute for experience. What this troupe lacks in stage polish, it more than makes up for in straight up raw material. Five of the seven-member cast have served time in jails, (although one of them, Court Dorsey of Wendell, admittedly served his time for a voluntary act of civil disobedience at the site of the Seabrook nuclear power plant in 1977). The others are from the hood, and it doesn't take sixty seconds for the play to immerse you in their reality. With a mixture of pantomime and hip hop, graffiti soaked scrims and jagged choreography, the players put you where they live and make you feel it. They make you hear it.

"Urban warfare..." "Concrete jungle..." "I expect to die before I'm 30..." Words jab with a staccato beat, as the actors leap and freeze and huddle on the stage, showing you the barriers and blocks that define their lives, the silences that fill the void of street noise and bass-heavy beats. Often as not, backs are turned to the audience, not with a Miles Davis defiance, but with an up against the wall no eye contact turf defining stance.

Felix Vasquez intones a poem naming the names of

those the poet knew who died violently, starting from the age of six, when he saw his uncle lying in a pool of blood and didn't know what to do, so he went back upstairs to watch some more TV. The list is long. "Benny, Dino, Negro, Miguel, Jesse... Diamond, Cosmo, Joey, Caspar, Ivan, Jessica, Flaco, Brian.... I know I'm gonna die



Felix Vasquez stands by the payphone in *Walk With Me*

soon. I wake up thinking I'm never gonna make it back to this bed. Georgie, Juan... All the chaos. All the chances. The end." It may be a strange way to start a play, but it grabs you by the throat and won't let go.

Two cast members who have not seen the inside of a jail cell, Sheila Marie Petigny and her daughter, young Naimah Zulmadelle, take a quiet moment in the midst of the mayhem to braid hair and ask questions any mother anywhere would ask a child. "Which kind of ice cream do you like better? Chocolate or vanilla? Which superhero is stronger? Superman or Spiderman? Which do you want more? Money or happiness?" And Sheila adds a few questions mothers in the Liberty Heights section of Springfield might ask their children. "Do you remember the first time you saw a family member die? What were his last words? Did you cry?" And the repeated question... "What would you rather be, sad or angry?" To which the young girl replies, "Angry."

The play talks in very direct terms about the pain that precedes the anger festering throughout America's inner cities, where decades of redlining, disinvestment, and white flight have knocked the bottom out of the melting pot. The millions left behind have a story to tell, a story the upper crust had

better listen to. It's a hard story to tell, a hard story to hear; the cast acknowledges this.

"Can you tell me the story?" asks one.

"What story?"

"It's too difficult."

"Why do you want to hear?"

"It's part of me."

"It's who I am."

"How do you know there is a story?"

"Because of all the silence."

The tension mounts with the backing soundtrack, not just onstage, but throughout the audience, packed with a multi-racial crowd from three Western Massachusetts counties. Many of the audience plainly know the story firsthand; you can see it in the faces of the young mothers rocking baby strollers, and the faces of the young men in baggy jeans and sweatshirts, rocking slowly to the beat, faces intent on the action. It's their story, too.

"I want to understand what happened in this place."

The play roams the flesh markets of Hunts Point, Randall Avenue in the Bronx to the Killing Fields of the Khmer Rouge, where Cambodian refugee Thea Som recalls the genocide his family was caught up in before he was born. He tells of his mother's pain. "She'd never mentioned I'd had an older brother. I could feel the broken words choking her. It hurts to see your son killed in front of you."

"What is worse, being lost or being completely alone?"

"Being completely alone."

"He's gone, gone, gone, roaming the streets of ghetto America. He's holding it together but he's shaking inside. The poor are not a part of this nation."

Walk with Me, provides flashes of humor to illuminate the dark tapestry of life in the streets. Some of these are MC'd by rapmaster Dorsey in his role as Commander Crème, the media hound sniffing out news stories for Live at Five. In his flash lavender suit jacket and shades, he is suitably clueless when it comes to explaining the line of former inmates trying to get back into the jail in winter for the four walls and three square meals the state provides. He and Herschelle Reaves do a rave-up as a pair of employment officers seeking the kind of skills ex-offenders have to offer: a rap sheet, possession of illegal

firearms, and a number of pagers. The Reintegration Sweepstakes creates a comic interlude as game show host Dorsey offers \$50,000 to the parolee who can last a week in the hood without violating the terms of his parole. "The only catch, if you break parole, you don't get the \$50,000 and you have to go back to jail," he explains. Theo Som is game to play, but the conclusion is foregone in the push and shove of life on the street.

This scene is rendered more powerful with the knowledge that the Performance Project's eighth cast member violated his probation, (partying, Dorsey said) shortly before the Northampton show, leaving the others with only three days to rewrite his material when he was sent back to prison.

"The state spends \$35,000 a year to house prisoners," said Dorsey, on the phone from Albuquerque, New Mexico, where *Walk with Me* is now per-

forming. "What could be done if a percentage of that money was used to give prisoners a leg up when they are released?" He told the story of a friend of his who was released from jail with no money, no ID, no wallet, and no transportation; not that unusual a story. "It's a tough thing for people to come out and make a fresh start," Dorsey said.

Among those in the audience on Monday was a man who has been directly involved with offenders on their way to jail. Greenfield District Court Judge Herbert Hodos, who has the responsibility of sending people there when circumstances warrant, offered high praise for the work of the five-year old Performance Project. "It is important work. It gets to the heart. It is amazing what these people's experiences have brought them through, and where they are today. The performance was a moving experience for all those in the audi-

continued next page

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WALK

continued from previous

ence. It gives us a view of their lives, it helps us better understand. They are very talented people; very powerful poets and performers."

Back in Noho, the poems and the stories kept pouring off the stage. "This is my secret. Only I can tell you. My soul is empty and my heart is crying. This day is the day that alters who I am forever." Pam Ann Bardsley tells of a girl held against her will, threatened, and abused. The poem ends with the girl shut up tight in a closet, barely daring to breathe. Does she survive her ordeal? Her poem is her survival.

"Out in the hallway, they keep going around in circles.

The syringe still stuck in her arm. Her baby curious.

Out in the hallway, they do a strange dance.

She stops, she stops, she stops."

"I'm not saying my choices were good. But they did make me one

strong-assed bitch.

Don't tell me to be quiet."

The play ends, as it must, on a note of empowerment, with all members of the cast raising their hands clenched in large, *papier mache* fists. They are green hands, Hulk-like. Their hands say, "We are the champions, the survivors. We are ready to fight." They say, "Black Power;" they say, "Green Power," the power of hope, the power to overcome long odds. They say, "Hello, I see you. I walk



Herschelle Reaves

with you." This may not be highly polished theater. The actors may be untrained, unused to the stage, but they make you forget that with the raw immediacy of their delivery. This is real theater, and as such it is redemptive, both for the performer and for the audience, because it forges a bond of experience between them, and puts them in a place neither would be without the other. Together, walking the same streets for an afternoon, or an evening. What more can theater do?

Dedication to Maggie

By Herschelle Reaves

Her name was Maggie
And she used to stroll a track
In Hunts Point... that's were it was
at
She was a hooker
Hard as nails... now listen while I
tell this tale
She was young black gifted and
strong
Only problem unfortunately she
didn't live long
She was alone, a product of the
street
And Randall Ave. was a usual beat
A renegade is supposed to be solo
But don't you know home girl had
no place to go so
She met some trick
And he put her in a glitch
She has to pay in order to sleep for
a day
Not only that, she has to remember
her costly crack
Cause without it to continue on
until the break of dawn is hard
without any sleep
Hustling in the streets
Now here we're a standing halfway
in the middle of the block
Me on one side... and her on the
other
And in a red jag pulls a brother
He rolls down the glass and
Maggie bends over exposing her
ass
Negotiates for a minute but doesn't
get in... even though she wants a
hit so bad Between two parked
trucks she takes a dip

Trying to light a stem without a
fucking thing in it
And down the block at a light is a
truck
I'm pissed, it's cold as shit, fuck
this shit, I'm gonna go call me a
trick.
Changed my mind... why I don't
know, so back to the corner I go
Then I see her... plain as day
Truck coming... Maggie in the way
Nothing could be said too late my
girl is already dead so I run to her
side and Couldn't believe it home
girl still bleeding and I'm thinking I
don't believe
What I am seeing
Struggling for her life I hold her
hand
Trying to be strong I tell her to hold
on
Don't you die in this street... fuck!
What's taking them so long!
It's a crime EMS taking their time
I guess they figure
Hunts Point Randall Ave.
It's probably a nigger and you
know what their saying
Fuck it she'll be DOA and everyone
comes down to look on the ground.
They see Maggie she's bleeding
and her so-called friends are turn-
ing around and leaving
Like Flavor says "911 is a joke" as
I lay by her side and watch her
choke broken On the inside and
scarred and scraped on the out
and nobody seemed to care About
the fact that Maggie is dying and
I'm crying and finally I hear sirens
47 minutes have passed these

motherfuckers and they slow ass...
they scoop Her up and throw her in
like she just committed a sin
Three days have passed and alas
she's gone
With only my memory to continue
on in a song
She was a hooker but with all due
respect my girl kicked for three
days in a cold Hospital bed without
half of her head
So here I dedicate this rhyme to a
beat
For how many of us die in these
streets
Sometimes fate... or maybe from
another brother
So to all my sisters who walk the
streets and my brothers who run
the streets or Spots selling your
crack, dope and pot
Bow your heads in a hooker's
prayer and remember the rhyme
that I am a saying

As we stroll along these streets
It's very few special people we
meet
It's in our hearts and souls we
prayin
That we make it thru the day
And for the evil lives we livin
Love and trust you never give
And for the word some say friend
Look around and think again
For the short time we share
It's in our hearts and souls we'll
bare
That troopers we are
Forever strong
Never beg and break a leg

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Thursday 1-13

1:25 a.m. Report of a minor motor vehicle accident on Montague City Road. No injuries. One subject summonsed to court.

2:28 a.m. Report of a tree branch in the road on Route 47. Officer removed it.

8:07 a.m. Car reported in snow bank on Greenfield Road by Hatchery Road. Pulled out by Rau's.

4:21 p.m. Report of a valuable book stolen from a Greenfield Road residence. Under investigation.

Friday 1-14

3:53 p.m. Report of a narcotics violation at the high school. Juvenile summonsed.

11:15 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at a 3rd Street address.

was arrested and charged with possession of a Class D drug (subsequent offense), possession of a class B drug, and possession of a class E drug. One other subject was summonsed.

Saturday 1-15

1:47 a.m. Report of a loud train in Lake Pleasant. B&M notified. They will move the train when they find another crew.

1:55 p.m. Walk-in to station reported hitting a barricade on Montague Street with a motor vehicle. Officer to follow up.

2:52 p.m. Report of an unwanted person refusing to leave the Carnegie Library. Subject told to either leave

or be considered trespassing. Subject left.

11:29 p.m. Walk-in to station turned in a wallet found in Greenfield. Owner notified.

Sunday 1-16

7:30 a.m. Walk-in to station reported woman fell at High School the previous night. Wanted to make sure the road had been sanded.

8:43 a.m. Walk-in to station reported motor vehicle had been struck the previous night. Report taken.

3:17 p.m. Family Dollar reported unauthorized dumping in their dumpster. Officer able to identify dumper and subject removed it.

7:22 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

10:41 p.m. Report of a loud, verbal argument at an L Street address. Peace restored.

Monday 1-17

12:54 a.m. Report of tire slashed at an H Street address. Looked to officer like the driver had run over a nail.

2:45 p.m. Caller reported losing a purse at Barton Cove. Left contact information in case it was turned in.

7:14 p.m. Report of a gas drive-off at Cumberland Farms. Officer located vehicle. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

7:35 p.m. Report of someone throwing ice at a house on K Street. Subject gone on arrival.

Tuesday 1-18

7:30 a.m. Walk-in to station brought a wallet left at the Mobil Station in Gill. Owner came to claim.

5:46 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle in snow bank at the Tech School. Towed out.

6:22 p.m. Report of a loud verbal disturbance at an L Street residence. All parties advised of court procedures.

11:38 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident on Bernardo Drive. Gone on arrival.

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CALENDAR

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 (see ad on pg. 3)

FRIDAY, JAN. 21ST
 Third Friday Contra Dance with *Tomczak Productions* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. to midnight. (802) 387-9380.

SATURDAY, JAN 22ND
 Acclaimed songwriter Mark Erelli to perform at the Wendell Full Moon Coffee House at 7:30 p.m. \$8-\$12, kids 6-12 \$2, under 6 free. The Wendell Full Moon Coffee House is located at the town common, in the Wendell Town Hall, (partial proceeds to benefit the Wendell Open Space Committee.) For more info or directions call (978) 544-0240 or visit www.wendellfullmoon.org. Mark will be joined by fellow-Signature Sounds artist and musician extraordinaire, Jim Henry. Open Mike begins at 7:30 and the feature is on at 8:00. Open Mic sign-up contact Chris Marano (978) 544-0240.

Lecture: *What Artists Need to Know about Websites, Artist Statements and Curried Soup* National keynote presenter Ariane Goodwin, Ed.D. gives artists a spicy taste of presentation power - What is it? How do you get it? And when do you use it? At Gallery 267, Main St. Greenfield. 7:30 p.m. (413) 774-6323

FRIDAY, JAN. 28TH
 A Bouquet of Music Concert Series - Espresso Jazz Concerts take place in Franklin Medical Center's main lobby. FMC is located at 164 High St. in Greenfield. Noon to 1:00 p.m. (413) 773-2573.

Fourth Friday Contra Dance with *David Kaynor & Greenfield Dance Band* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. - midnight. (413) 367-9380.

SATURDAY, JAN. 29TH
 It's the Annual Bowl-athon! NELCWIT (New England Learning Center for Women in Transition) Benefit for abused women and their families. Pizza, bowling and bowling shoes provided - bowlers asked to raise money to help support services through pledges. Held at the French King Entertainment Center in Erving. Pizza at 12:30 p.m. and bowling at 1:00 p.m. 413-772-0871 x 15.

SUNDAY, JAN. 30TH
 Got Kids? Family Dance at the Montague Grange: child-friendly contradancing at 4:00 p.m. - dance caller Diane Sanabria. The Montague Grange continues this wonderful family series, now in its fourth year. The series goes from October through April. The series features family-style contra dancing, paced for little feet (no age restriction) or adult beginners, in a beautiful, restored historic building, across from the Town Commons in picturesque Montague Center. Each dance is on the last Sunday of the month, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m., priced a sliding \$5-\$10, and includes a light snack.

TUESDAY, FEB. 1ST
 Habib Koité & Bamada to perform live, 7 p.m. at Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls. During the period from 1995 to 2002, Malian legend Habib Koité, backed by the superstar musicians of Bamada, performed more than 560 concerts in 29 countries. Hailed as the "African Eric Clapton," Koité's music combines centuries of Malian tradition with subtle Western influences to create songs that appeal to people from all walks of life. Habib's music proves that one does not have to forsake the past in order to develop, and that the modern world, for all of its benefits, needs to keep its links to the folklore, mythology and history of the people in order for it to retain its soul. \$20 advance / \$23 door / under 18 half price.

THURSDAY, FEB. 3RD
 Toastmasters Meeting - A public speaking educational club, Toastmasters can help anyone become a better speaker, listener, and develop leadership skills. Poet's Seat Speakers Toastmasters Club meets in the Social Room at the YMCA, 451 Main St., Greenfield. 7:00 p.m. 413-774-2208 or 773-1978.

FRIDAY, FEB. 4TH
 First Friday Contra Dance with *Moving Violations* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. 413-549-1913

SATURDAY, FEB. 5TH
 2nd Annual Growing A Green Community Fair featuring displays and samples of environmentally-friendly products, food, music and services. Greenfield High School, Lenox Avenue. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. 413-774-2791.

First Saturday Contra Dance with *Wild Asparagus* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. 413-772-6840



The Stone Coyotes
 Saturday, Jan. 22nd
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ONGOING
Now through February 13th
 The Green Trees Gallery is currently showing work by artists Alice Proujansky, Cynthia Guild, Eleanor Miller, Pacifico Palumbo, Joe McCarthy, Robert Steinem, Margo Fleck, Rebecca Blecher, Dan Brown, Nancy Fitz-Rapalje, Laura Garrison, Nicholas Raptelis, Jeanne Sisson, Janice Starmer, Jean Tandy, Frank Tencza, Nancy Tips, James Whitbeck, Tom Wyatt, Stephan Zeigfinger, Gene Cauthen, Michael Humphries, and Alan Morgan. The artwork at the spacious light filled Gallery ranges from traditional to cutting edge, there is fine selection of crafts and gifts for everyone. Please stop on by. Gallery hours are: Thursday - Sunday 11am - 5 pm. Located at 105 Main St, Northfield, 413-498-028.

Now through February 19th
 Talent Brewing: Annual Teen Exhibit. Students from local public and independent high schools will exhibit 2D and 3D work in a variety of media. Artspace Community Arts Center, 15 Mill St., Greenfield. 413-772-6811.

Now through February 26th
 The Fiber Art Center in Amherst is delighted to announce its first exhibit of works created by its students. Selected Fiber Art Center Student Works runs through February 26th. It includes works from both adults (juried) and children (unjuried) based on ideas and techniques learned in classes taught at the FAC. For more information con-

tact the FAC at (413) 256-1818 or go to www.fiberartcenter.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS
 February 11th -Second Friday Contra Dance with *David Kaynor & Greenfield Dance Band* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman St., Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. to midnight. 413-367-9380

February 12th -Second Saturday Contra Dance with *Tophill Music* at the Guiding Star Grange Hall (address above). 8:00 to 11:30 p.m. 413-773-1671.

February 19th -Chris Smither will be performing at Coffee & Soul at All Souls Church, 399 Main St., in Greenfield. The Associated Press calls him "one of the absolute best singer-songwriters in the world". "He's expanded the six-strings-and-foot stomps delivery of John Lee Hooker into an elegant, original style that draws as much on the sweet jazz melodies of gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt as the spidery swing of country bluesman John Hurt. And his writing has the poet's eye for detail. Spiritual seekers nod in recognition at the hard-won knowledge casually tossed off in his lyrics. Special guest Nick Plakias will open the show with some of his original true life ballads, cowboy yodels and midwestern rambles. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door. They can be purchased at World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield, on line at www.uugreenfield.org or arrangements can be made by calling 413-773-5018.

Mabel Zobel
 By
 Sandra Facto

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Open Mic with Mark Herschler

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Hot Spot Teen Center

Fri, Jan. 21st
 Open Mic, 6-9 p.m.

Thu, Jan. 27th
 Technology Drop-in, 3-5 p.m. and Movie Night, 6-8 p.m.

Fri, Jan. 28th
 Field Trip to Shelburne Falls Library for Open Mic, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Mondays - Ongoing Digital Arts Project

Tuesdays & Wednesdays - Ongoing Avenue A Music Project

All of these programs are free (except some skate trips) and open to local teens. Some require permission slips. For more information about any of these events or programs please call Jared at 863-9559. Teen Center located in The Brick House Community Center 24 Third St, Turners Falls

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- THE AVIATOR PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 6:00 9:00 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:00 3:00
- ELEKTRA PG 13 DAILY 6:00 9:00 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:00 3:00
- WHITE NOISE PG13 DAILY 6:15 9:15 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:15 3:15
- MEET THE FOCKERS PG13 DAILY 6:15 9:15 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:15 3:15
- ARE WE THERE YET PG in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:30 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:30 3:30
- COACH CARTER PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:30 MATINEE SAT,SUN,MON&WED 12:30 3:30

Winter Tracking on the Montague Plains

BY MANDI GARRISON

Alan Emond started tracking animals when he was about five years old. In those days, the budding naturalist played in a sandpit near the Montague Plains and began following and studying insects, as well as watching and tracking birds. Nowadays, Alan lives in Colrain and takes people on "Little Cree Spy" excursions. His business card lists tracking, hiking, camping, fishing and training.

On Tuesday, January 18th, Emond took me on a tracking excursion through the Montague Plains. Despite the bitter cold weather, the adventure proved to be exhilarating and stimulating. An ordinary person would see simply trees, snow and markings, but when Emond observes the ground of the Plains, a simple glance brings to life a wilderness

they give birth."

The toe pads of fisher tracks are very distinct in the snow. "The fishers are moving all over."

Emond had brought along a few sets of deer antlers of various sizes and shapes. "These antlers show how there are different genetics in an area," he explained. When a young buck is a year old, the doe kicks it out of her territory so there is no interbreeding.

The deer have suffered somewhat from the overpopulation of coyotes in the area lately, Emond said. Wolves, which would typically control the coyote population, at present do not inhabit New England. Instead, the coyote population has been somewhat reduced because of mange, caused by a mite that infects many canines, especially coyotes, and causes them to lose most of their hair. As a result, infected coyotes freeze to death.

In the winter, the metabolism of a deer slows down to conserve energy. When there is also a lot of ice, many deer won't get out of bed. Coyotes, however, can walk on top of the ice, making deer easy winter prey for them. "One morning I came in here and found three deer killed," Emond said.

On our excursion, we spotted deer tracks made before the last snowstorm, and a deer bed that seemed large

enough for "a couple of small deer." Emond said the deer's coat is composed of hollow hairs necessary for wintertime insulation.

"There is more of a struggle [in the winter]. Predator activity is a lot more obvious. Prey become less abundant," Emond said.

"Did you notice that all we've seen so far are predator tracks?" he asked.

"There is less of a food supply for predators in the winter," said Emond. The overpopulation of coyotes also makes it difficult for lesser predators to find food.

"In the swampier areas there are cottontail rabbits, which predators depend on," he said.

Emond said the most common tracks he sees are rodent tracks. Even in the wintertime, these creatures are still numerous on the Plains. While they would make a likely meal for a number of preda-



Male and female fisher cat tracks meeting

tors, "Winter is an easier time for rodents because they can tunnel under the snow," he said.

We did see a fair amount of squirrel tracks, sometimes accompanied by bobcat tracks. "The bobcat tried following the squirrel," Emond theorized.

The bobcat is a fierce predator and can kill many animals, even as large as deer. The majority of a bobcat's diet consists of rodents, including squirrels and rabbits. We saw numerous bobcat tracks throughout the excursion.

"Bobcat tracks have halos around them because their paws are so well-furred," said Emond. "There is an indent on the top of cat tracks - a V at the top of the pad. Dogs have a more rounded indent. This is how you can tell between cat and canine tracks."

In the area where the bobcat

tracks were located, we found a truck cap - evidence of illegal dumping - which would also make a good overnight spot for the bobcat. Unfortunately, the rubbish dumped in the area is generally not beneficial to wildlife.

The Plains area is also a good place to go if you want to catch a glimpse of some owls. "I came in here once and spooked two great horned owls," said Emond.

He explained, "There is a diversity of trees and plants [in Montague]. The land itself is ideal [for tracking] because it's wet and sandy. There are old farm segments [and] open woods with oaks and hickory."

We passed some pitch pines, common to the Plains. According to Emond, they reproduce when there is a fire. We also saw some "injured" trees that were hollowed

out by ants. The ants create tunnels, and then squirrels smooth them out and make nests in them.

A little fact. According to Emond, "The gray fox is the only canine that can climb trees." There are some gray foxes in the area.

Emond has been tracking in "many, many" places. "Every hill in Northwestern Massachusetts, southern New Hampshire and Vermont," he boasted, "and even in New York," he said.

His favorite time to go tracking is in early spring. "It's a transition period. Some of the southern birds are migrating back," he said. He also enjoys tracking in October. "There are full families of animals...getting ready for the winter."

However, tracking in warmer climates takes more time. "You can't track a mouse over dry leaves," he said. Write it down.

You can contact Alan Emond at 624-5115.



Alan Emond points out tracks in fresh powder.
Photos by Sarah Swanson

full of activity, animal escapades and life cycles.

One step on the floor of the forest and Emond had already spotted fox tracks from two different days. "You can see how the tracks age," he told me. He was right. One set of tracks was undeniably more defined than the other.

Not 40 feet into the woods and Emond spotted a trail of bobcat tracks. "Very interesting. The bobcat is going one way, and the fox another."

In the same vicinity, there were numerous fisher tracks. Fishers are a member of the weasel family. They are carnivores and very aggressive hunters. On top of a small slope there were male and female tracks within a close distance of one another. "This is very interesting," said Emond. "They only mate one day a year - after

ANIMALS

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then silence.

I was a little uneasy about all that rustling. It sounded like a lot more rustling than two little kittens could have generated. I decided it would be prudent to move on.

We brought the kitten to my mother-in-law, who had just moved into a farmhouse on Huckle Hill in Bernardston. She welcomed the kitten, because she needed a cat. The previous owners had tossed empty food tins out into the front yard until there was a mound about eight feet high. The house was full of mice.

And when the garbage was hauled away, it revealed a colony of rats. The rats ran away, but not very far.

The kitten was a little on the wild side, and got wilder by the day, despite my mother-in-law's

best efforts to tame him. This was no lap kitty, not easily intimidated by anyone or anything. He grew much bigger than the average house cat and sprouted tufts in his ears. He was far from cute and cuddly. My mother-in-law was the only one who could come close to him.

One day when my mother-in-law was a little late in feeding the kitty, he leaped up onto the table to help himself. My father-in-law shooed him off. But the kitty stood his ground, hissing, snarling and baring his teeth.

My mother-in-law intervened, calmed her "baby," took him down and fed him. She ceased referring to him as her baby, and began calling him "Tuffy". He was well named.

We figured Tuffy was possibly half feral and half bobcat, because he was bigger than a domestic cat, with similar markings to a bobcat, complete with ear tufts and a tail almost as long

as a domestic cat. Channel 57 recently showed an "Eastern United States Wild Cat" with nearly identical markings and the same length tail as Tuffy had.

Whatever his lineage, Tuffy earned his keep as a mouser even when half grown. He was hardly fully grown when he began tackling the rat population. My father-in-law forgave him for his feisty manner and grew to admire him; since some of the rats were huge and fought fiercely.

The last rat put up an epic battle. Tuffy won, but never recovered from his wounds. He died soon after.

In retrospect, it may have been just as well I did not venture further looking for the other two kittens in the brush beside the road on that dark and cloudy night. Tuffy's mama would have probably used my face for a scratching post.



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