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The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 14

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 7, 2010

Montague Schools Begin Container Recycling Program

BY ANNE HARDING – Students are taking the next big step in expanding recycling opportunities at Montague schools under the guidance of faculty advisors and with the assistance of Amy Donovan of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District.

Donovan, who lives and breathes recycling, keeps an up-to-date list of the 28 public schools in the district's member towns that participate in a variety of trash recycling and composting programs. Virtually all the schools recycle or compost paper, so Donovan's push in 2009 was expansion of the can and bottle recycling and food waste composting programs.

Gill-Montague business manager Lynn Bassett has been working with Donovan to get the program started. Members of an enthusiastic advisory team met with Donovan on December 18th to nail down some of the details. Team members include principals Jeff Kenney and Donna Fitzpatrick, facilities manager Steve Roberto, high school student council advisor P. J.

see **RECYCLING** pg 9



Montague Moves to Take Strathmore Mill for Back Taxes

Tax collector Patti Dion said Montague will take possession of the mill in 30 days.

BY DAVID DETMOLD – The town of Montague has decided to pull the curtain on John Ancil's dream of developing the former Strathmore paper mill into a state-of-the-art television and video school and production facility. In a unanimous vote at a special afternoon meeting on Tuesday, January 5th, the select-board authorized tax collector Patti Dion to expedite tax taking proceedings in Boston land court on the 244,482-square-foot mill complex, built in 1871.

Tax taking proceedings on the property have been on hold since April of 2008 to allow Ancil time to realize his development plans at the mill and begin paying

the back taxes. Dion said the town should now be able to come into clear title and ownership of the Strathmore Mill within 30 days.

No taxes have been paid on the property since 2003, when Jerry Jones bought the former mill from International Paper for \$40,000. Jones used the sprawling complex as a warehouse for his paper recycling

business, and as a private residence. As the town of Montague moved to take the property in April of 2008 for back taxes due, Jones sold the mill to New York state salvage contractor James Bent for \$1. Bent, in turn, transferred title to Ancil in the same month for \$50,000. Ancil has since employed Jones to handle maintenance at the mill.

Dion said the town of Montague is owed more than \$530,890 on the Strathmore, in a combination of back taxes, interest, legal fees, and money invested to stabilize

the property following a disastrous arson fire set by a former employee of Jones' on May 26th, 2008. That fire destroyed the four-story, 19,000-square-foot Building #10 at the Strathmore, leaving a pile of asbestos-tainted rubble in its wake.

In 2008, Montague town meeting approved spending \$300,000 to put a new roof on Building #2, which had been damaged in the fire, and to convert the mill's sprinkler system to a dry release system that could function with only minimal heat in the winter months.

Under Ancil's ownership, that sprinkler system has proved to be a particular problem. Repeated alarms caused by faulty sprinkler heads – and lately by vandalism or bungled salvage operations by persons unknown to the town –

see **TAKE BACK** pg 12

Village Sketchbook

Talking at the Deep Hole with Buddha

BY DAVID BRULE
TURNERS FALLS

It was one of those dark afternoons when the old year was winding down. I was standing on the frozen shore near the spot on the Connecticut River called the Deep Hole, watching cold waves lap the edge of the ice, small diving ducks busy as the pale sun went down beyond town.

Standing there, I scrutinized the marsh



SHAWN WOOLSEY PHOTO

Buddha Allen at the Deep Hole

for the snowy owl, that elusive totem bird. I had been told the day earlier by Mark Fairbrother that the enigmatic arctic owl was hunting near here. I wasn't expecting Buddha.

He seemed to step out of a swirling snow squall, striding towards me. He was a tall man, trim and fit, a broad smile and creased eyes as he looked out over the river.

"You're Bud... Buddha, right?" I stammered, instantly

see **BUDDHA** pg 10

The Occasional Diner

Scenes from an Italian Restaurant: Christina's Pizzeria & Tavern

BY IVAN USSACH

ERVING – On the way home after a recent cold and snowy afternoon spent outdoors, my wife and I were hungry and ready to try the recently opened Christina's Pizzeria and

Tavern on Route 2 in Erving (previously the site of the Smokin' Hippo and before that the Starlite Diner).

Taking my assignment very seriously, I figured I'd need to do more than just

order the pizza. I was reassured to learn that owner Jim Van Houten hailed from Brooklyn, where people know a thing or two about Italian cooking, and that the pizza crust was

see **DINER** pg 11



DETMOLD PHOTO

Marilyn Monroe looks over the shoulders of diners at Christina's Pizzeria and Tavern

Hearing Voices

Mt Holyoke Professor Gail Hornstein Offers New Model for Understanding Mental Illness

BY DAVID DETMOLD
LEVERETT – Agnes Richter, a seamstress in Austria who was incarcerated in a mental institution in the 1890s, spent years painstakingly stitching her autobiography in an indecipherable text on a jacket she made from an institutional uniform.

Gail Hornstein, a professor of psychiatry at Mt. Holyoke College and a resident of Leverett, has titled her new book after Agnes' jacket. In it, she attempts to explain the nature of madness through the voices of those who hear voices, to see mental illness through the eyes of those who see things the rest of us do not



DETMOLD PHOTO

Gail Hornstein (l) with Janine Roberts at the Leverett Library

or can not see.

In the process, Hornstein has arrived at what she considers to be something of a breakthrough in understanding what it means to be mentally ill, and how people so labeled have formed a

worldwide underground self-help movement to assist in their own recovery – not only from illness, but also from the medical profession which so often fails them.

On Tuesday, January see **VOICES** pg 10

PET OF THE WEEK

Happy-Go-Lucky



Kane

Kane, a one-year-old neutered male cat, is a happy-go-lucky kind of guy who doesn't let the birth defects in his two front legs slow him down.

He loves to cuddle and enjoys being held. For more information on adopting Kane and other great pets like him, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

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Students of the Week

Grade 6
Kelsey Shafer
Nevan Shattuck

Grade 7
Zachary Wright

Grade 8
Jessica Fuller

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NEW SALEM LIBRARY NEWS

Reading Aloud for Grown-Ups

NEW SALEM – The third annual Reading Aloud for Grown-ups series will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13th (weather date January 20th) in the Swift River Valley School cafeteria. New Salem Public Library and the 1794 Meetinghouse, Inc., co-sponsor the event, which is open to the public free of charge. Refreshments will be sold to benefit the library and Meetinghouse.

Each month, two readers will choose a short story for the pro-

gram. Edward Golden of Sunderland and Margo Culley of Wendell are the first two readers.

Reading on February 10th (February 24th weather date) will be Amy Fagin and Douglas Turner, both of New Salem and both trustees of the library. Mira Bartok and Mary-Ann Palmieri, both of New Salem, will read on March 10th (March 17th weather date). John Ciesluk and Jane Williams, both of New Salem, will read on April 14th.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Cityscapes Exhibition, Community Chorus and Teens & Tweens Wish List

The Wendell Free Library's art exhibition committee begins the New Year by presenting an exhibition, "Cityscapes," paintings in oil and acrylic by Daniel Putnam. See page 8 for a feature article on this exhibition. The show is up now and will continue throughout the month of January. Please come visit. The library is open: Tuesday 3 to 6 p.m.; Wednesday 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Community Chorus Ready for Rehearsal – The votes are in. The Wendell Community Chorus, directed by Morning Star Chenven, will meet Sunday evenings, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., starting Sunday, January 10th, for 12 weeks through Sunday March 28th. The chorus will hold a debut performance at the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse open mic on Saturday, April 17th. (The coffeehouse that night will benefit the library.) There are already 38 people signed up to sing: 31 women and 7 men. It is not too late to join! No sight reading or previous choral experience is required, just a love of singing. Please call the library at (978) 544-3559; rehearsals may have to be held in the town hall due to the overwhelming response.

The chorus is funded by the Friends of the Wendell Free Library and the Wendell Cultural Council.

The Teens and Tweens (TnT) program at the library is looking for a few items you might have

lying around your house, or items to be purchased and donated. Please contact TnT coordinator Jordan Funke with items to offer from the list, including playing cards, board games, role-playing game sets, Wii games and peripherals (DDR dance pads, Rock Band instruments, controllers, Mario Kart wheels, etc.), beanbag chairs with washable covers or attractive comfy chairs, magazine subscriptions (contact Funke for titles), knitting needles, crochet hooks, yarn, Manga series sets, craft materials, hot glue gun, snacks: perishable and non-perishable, sweet and healthy, (whatever you bring they will eat), prizes for contests: tickets to movies or events, technology, gift certificates, etc. Be creative! Email jordanfunke@gmail.com or call (413) 367-9465.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Mother Goose

TURNERS FALLS – Mother Goose on the Loose with Michael Nix and Linda Hickman will be held at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, January 9th at 10:30 a.m. The program is a fast paced interactive mix of live guitar, banjo, and other instruments, rhymes, stories, and puppets. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers and their parents or other care givers. For information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – Jan 11th to Jan 15th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Meal site Manager is Becky Cobb. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For information or to make meal reservations, call 863-9357. Writing Group begins 1/15. Feel free to call the senior center for information on any programs.

Monday, January 11th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, January 12th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Yoga
12:00 p.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting

1:00 p.m. Canasta
Wednesday, January 13th
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Senior Flu Clinic
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, January 14th
10:00 a.m. Coffee & Conversation, NO Tai Chi
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, January 15th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
12:00 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours



JANEL NOCKLEBY PHOTO

Snow paws at Unity Park

H1N1 Flu Clinic Saturday

BY PAT ALLEN

MONTAGUE – The four-town emergency dispensing site for Montague, Gill, Erving, and Wendell will be holding a free flu (H1N1) clinic on Saturday, January 9th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sheffield Elementary School on Crocker Avenue in Turners Falls. The clinic is open to the public and no appointment is necessary.

Public health officers are anticipating another wave of the H1N1 flu hitting the area in the next couple months, and highly recommend

everyone getting their vaccine now. This is also the appropriate time for children who need a booster to get one. Both the nasal spray and the IM vaccine will be available.

People from other towns are also welcome to attend the clinic.

To reach Sheffield School take Avenue A to 7th Street and follow 7th Street up the hill. Continue to curve right onto Montague Street, and take the third left onto Crocker Avenue. The parking lot will be on the right and signs will direct to the proper entry.

Wendell Senior Soup-er Supper

Wendell Council on Aging invites Wendell seniors to the first of this winter season's free Soup-er Suppers and Game Nights this Sunday, January 10th beginning at 5:30 in the Senior Center. Weather permitting. As last year, volunteer seniors will

provide soup(s), bread, cake, cookies, tea, coffee, cider and of course games, all free of charge in our comfortable new space.

Call ahead (544-2020) if you wish to contribute some food or fun for others or for a weather update.

Gill Montague Senior Center Writing Group

Friday Afternoons, January 15th & 22nd, Laura Rodley will be leading a group in writing brief stories in the form of love letters to or about someone special in the participants' pasts. The written works will be combined with photographs of the loved ones and made into story boards or presentation pieces. Some participants may want to create fictional works and some may want to memorialize loved ones.

Participants who wish can display their works at the February performance of "Love Letters" at the Gill Town Hall co-sponsored by the Council on Aging and the Gill Cultural Council.

Writers should bring any photos they wish to use to the first session. It might also be helpful to have a souvenir or memento for inspiration.

No writing experience is necessary, and this workshop should be a lot of fun. Anna Viadero has graciously offered to scan and reproduce the photos for us. Please call the Senior Center to sign up at 863-9357.

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Sawmill Road Race Winners



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

BY JON DOBOSZ
MONTAGUE CENTER – It turned out to be a beautiful day for the 2010 Sawmill River 10K Run road race, held on January 1st in Montague Center. Approximately 110 runners ranging from 15 to 65 years of age

came out to participate in this New Year's tradition that benefits Montague parks and recreation department's Sponsor-A-Child scholarship program. More than \$1000 was raised.

The winners are as follows: Youth Division, Lang Sorenson

(53:27); Open Division - Women, Kimberly Owen (42:06), Men, Drew Best (34:12); Master Division - Women, LeeAnn Cerpovicz (51:54), Men, Michael Holberman (40:48); Senior Division - Women, Becky Shattuck (49:57), Men, Rich Larsen (38:57); Senior Plus Division - Women, Linda Ryder (1:11:34), Men, William Dixon (39:59).

A long list of volunteers helped out to make for a successful event this year. They include: Mike Kociela, Brian Farrell, Kristy Dunbar, Conor Power, Becky Hollingsworth, Sam and Dan Colton, Marina Goldman, Bob and Mary Ellen Perry, Curt Englehardt, the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, and Montague parks and recreation commissioners Barb Kuklewicz, Dennis Grader, and Linda Ackerman.

School Committee Caucus Discusses Race to the Top and other Big Ideas

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS – The Franklin County School Committee Caucus, with 14 members in attendance, met Monday evening at the Turners Falls High School to prepare for a conference in April on "Big Ideas" in education, and to debate the state's pending Race to the Top application to the federal government, and whether local districts will sign a memorandum of understanding to participate in that application.

Glenn Koocher, director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, was at that meeting, and advised the local committee representatives to sign the MOU with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, to remain part of the discussion on Race to the Top Funding.

"The state is looking for districts to work with them on Race to the Top initiatives," said Koocher. "We are urging districts to sign to get a seat at the table for the planning and discussion process. You can always walk away later if you don't like what you hear."

Koocher said the state expects to receive \$250 million in federal Race to the Top funding for educational innovation over four years, "half of which will be sent

to districts with high Title 1 populations and chronically underperforming status." He said Gill-Montague, therefore, stands to gain a good share of funding, if they sign the MOU to participate in the state application.

But Kip Fonsch, chair of the Leverett school committee, said, "I'm confused why your organization would encourage us to sign a pact with the devil, when there are so many unanswered questions."

Koocher replied, "I'm saying, 'Pick up the phone and talk to the devil.'"

Keith McCormic of the Greenfield school committee said, "Greenfield has already

decided not to sign. They ask too much and offer too little," in the 21 page MOU. "This is a back door attempt to get from the school committees what so far the legislators have been unwilling to grant to the commissioners."

In a follow-up phone call, McCormic elaborated on his committee's objections.

"What it boiled down to was there were a lot of commitments to redesign education in one or more schools to the satisfaction of the state and federal government. But it was so vague: 'We promise to report this, and innovate that,' in keeping with guide- see **BIG IDEAS** pg 5



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG – The Gill School PTO is sponsoring a **winter farmers' market** at the Gill Elementary School located at 48 Boyle Road on Saturday, January 9th, from 9 a.m. to noon. There are presently more than a dozen vendors offering maple products, cheeses, jams, honey, emu products, beef, salsa, wheat flour, dried fruits and mohair.

On Sunday, January 24th at 3 p.m. in the Gill Tavern, Kim and Carol Gregory will present "**Spirits of '76,**" a lively, free program bringing to life the history of "Taverns, Tipplers, and Gentlemen Topers." Learn about the critical role taverns played during Colonial times and the Revolution and about the many taverns that served Gill's earliest residents and valley travelers. Enjoy syllabub, cyder and finger foods made from 18th century recipes. Reserve your spot by calling the Gill Tavern at (413) 863-9006 or email: thegilltavern@gmail.com. The Tavern opens for dinner at 5 p.m. If you stay for dinner, reservations are recommended. This presentation is supported, in part, by the Gill Cultural Council.

Dick Damon, from Millers

Falls, spent three hours! recently tuning and repairing the upright piano at the Wendell Town Hall. So now everything is ready for the **Contra Dance** which is taking place there this Saturday, January 9th. Dancing starts at 7:30, with Jeff Petrovitch calling. All proceeds from donations at the door will go toward the restoration of the Wendell Meeting House. Van Kaynor on fiddle and Peter Barnes on piano will join the rest of the band; all are welcome to come dance.

All boys and girls ages 10 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2010 Knights of Columbus **Free Throw Championship**. The local competition will be held Saturday, January 16th at 1:00 p.m. at the Sheffield School gymnasium.

Participants are required to furnish proof of age and written parental consent. For entry forms and additional information contact: Stephen Smith at (413) 863-4373 or (413) 863-9042.

The Montague parks and recreation has moved the **Youth Instructional Basketball Program** to Tuesday evenings, starting at 6:30 p.m. There are

see **LOCAL** page 14

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HAPPY NEW YEAR, MONTAGUE! YOU OWN AN EMPTY PAPER MILL

"We need to move forward," said Montague selectboard member Pat Allen, as she made a motion to take the Strathmore Mill for back taxes on Tuesday.

Her colleagues on the board agreed with her, and in 30 days, give or take a weekend, the town will be the proud owner of an empty, 244,482-square-foot paper mill built almost 140 years ago.

The town really had no other choice. Strathmore's present owner, John Ancil, dreamed big dreams for the property - hoping to convert the mill complex into a Green campus to house a school and production facility for students in the television and video production industry, building capacity for filmmakers interested in accessing Massachusetts' generous tax credits to make movies in the state. But after investing nearly three quarters of a million dollars of his own money in the project, Ancil came

up short, with little to show for his efforts other than a folder full of architectural drawings.

Ancil told the town this week he could not afford to ensure the mill complex was adequately secured or protected against another fire, like the one that destroyed one of the major buildings at the Strathmore on Memorial Day weekend in 2008.

There are two taxpaying businesses directly affected by whatever happens at the Strathmore - Swift River Hydro, which operates a generating plant on the lower level of the mill's main building, and Southworth Paper, one of the town's largest employers, situated just next door. If only to protect their concerns, the town needed to step in and secure the Strathmore Mill.

Montague has also invested nearly \$300,000 in the new roof on Building #2 and a dry release sprinkler system in the unheated mill, following the 2008 fire. This

New Deal Jobs Program Proposed

BY MONIQUE COPPOLA
BOSTON - As Congressional Democrats debate the need for a second federal economic stimulus package, one side is calling for a New Deal-style direct government jobs program, while others are promoting tax breaks as the answer to spur job creation. Both options could emerge in the proposal.

Carol Stambaugh, executive director of the National Association of Social Workers, Arizona chapter, supports a second stimulus program, saying it would put people to work. Doing so, even temporarily, she says, would have huge symbolic value beyond a paycheck.

"People right now need the tangible, the things that they can see - either in their hand, in their pocket, or in their community. Such a program would provide that."

As a point of comparison, the New Deal programs, says Stambaugh, left behind numerous needed improvements to the nation's infrastructure.

"They're still with us today in the form of parks, sidewalks and even in improvements that make

Grand Canyon National Park the treasure we have." The nation has plenty of crumbling roads and bridges that could be renewed through a jobs program, along with other transportation improvements, she adds.

"We're looking at a greener society. We're looking at trying to change the way we do things and how we live life. This is a way to invest in some of those new ideas, for example, improving our existing mass transit system."

Some economists contend that New Deal jobs did little to shorten the Great Depression. Stambaugh argues the federal work programs were essential because they gave people hope and that public attitudes and perceptions go a long way in driving what happens in the economy.

Monique Coppola writes for Commonwealth News Service, a statewide news service for Massachusetts. You can let your Congressional representatives know how you feel about this and other issues by calling (202) 224-3121 and asking to speak to Congressman John Olver's office, and the offices of Senators Kerry and Kirk.

investment needs to be protected as well.

When former town planner Robin Sherman came within a handful of votes of convincing town meeting to purchase the Strathmore Mill in 2004, she made the case for the town's need to control the future of that property. That was before the arson blaze reduced Building #11 to a heap of asbestos-tainted rubble that will cost more than half a million dollars to clean up. Now, the town also needs to control the property if it wants to apply for grant funds to clean that mess up, something environmental regulators will eventually insist on.

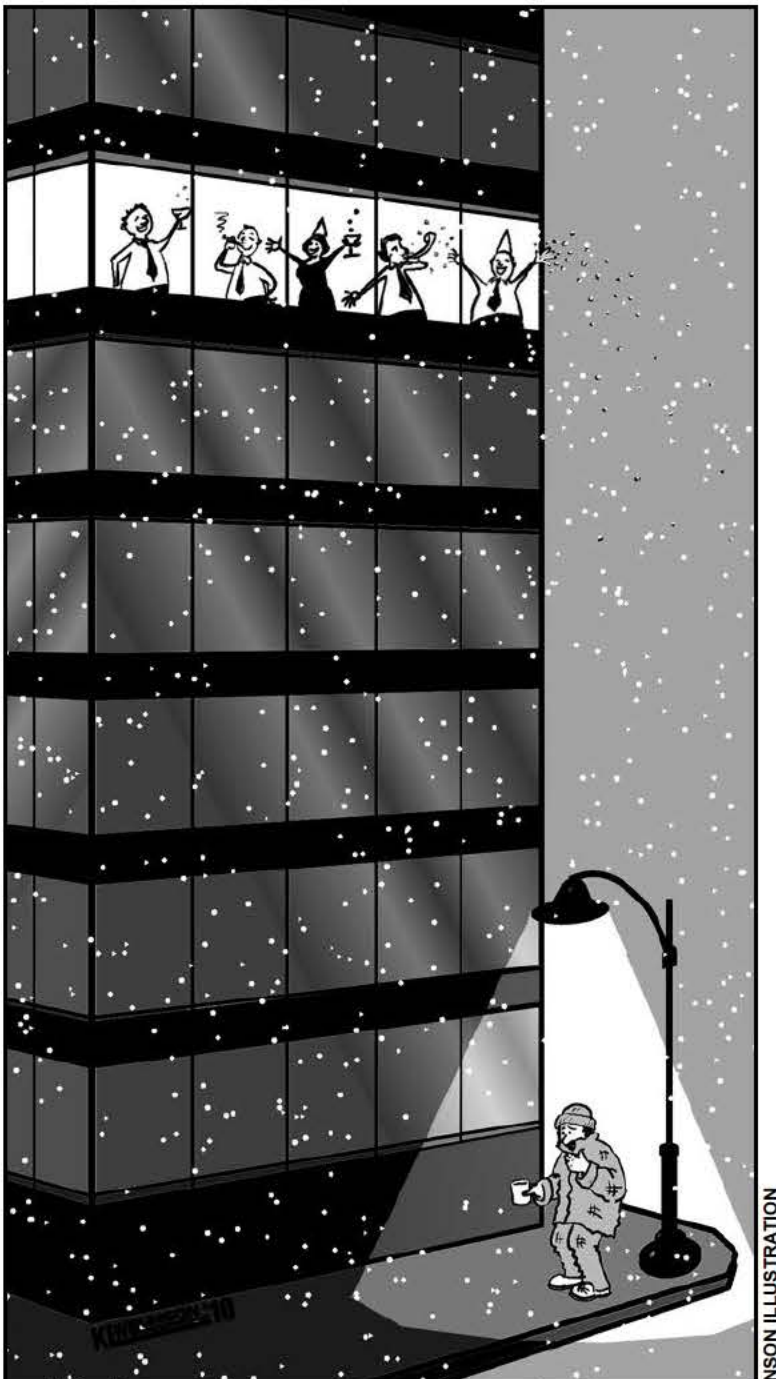
Town officials should not be surprised to hear a chorus of naysayers now, as they did in 2004, calling for the mill building to be torn down. A conservative estimate for accomplishing that feat several years ago was pegged at \$2 million, due to the difficulties of the site between the river and the canal.

The burden of owning a building of this age and condition could hardly fall on the town at a more difficult time, when municipal and state resources seem equally stretched, the commercial real estate market is moribund, relevant town departments are overburdened, and the prospects for attracting private developers are dim. The town does not even have a professional town planner to help drive the process and locate funds to deal with this unwanted New Year's gift.

But as Sherman said in 2004, the Strathmore Mill is integral to the economic future of downtown Turners Falls. We agreed with that assessment then. We agree with it now.

"We need to move forward," said Pat Allen on Tuesday. Yes, but how?

see **MILL** pg 5



Happy New Year to the U.S. Taxpayers from All of Us Here on Wall Street!

KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What's the Matter with the Mat?

BY JOSH GAMMON
TURNERS FALLS - Imagine that a family member whom you have been close with for many years gives you a gift to remember them by, in recognition of all you have done for them. Knowing you have particular tastes, this family member searches and crafts a useful gift that uniquely reflects your personality. This family member does not have a lot of money, but still spends \$2500 on the perfect gift to show their appreciation for all the great memories and opportunities you helped create for them.

The day finally comes when you are presented with the gift and your family member excitedly gives it to you, letting you know they worked hard to find it and buy it for you, but have no regrets. You accept the gift with open arms, and bid your family member farewell. But instead of showing off this gift to all of your friends and neighbors, you hide it in your closet.

Does this sound like a reasonable thing for anyone to do when presented with a gift, especially one so specifically chosen? I don't think so, but this exact chain of events has occurred at Turners Falls High School, and I believe it should be set right as soon as possible.

The mild controversy surrounding the Class of 2009's gift to the school benefits no one; in

fact it only hurts the high school's image. Refusing class gifts on an arbitrary basis does not show the true cohesion and spirit our district possesses, nor does it improve alumni relations. Last year's class worked hard to buy that mat for the school, and to let all of our hard work be for nothing is unnecessary and uncalled for. With rumors swirling around as to why the gift has been hidden, I cannot help but be astonished. A controversy surrounding a class gift is uncommon enough, but to generate a controversy about a mat is just plain ridiculous.

And so I call on the school committee, the elected representatives of not only the Class of 2009 but also every resident of the towns of Gill and Montague who send their children through our district to display and use this gift properly. Our school has long been known for its spirit and traditions, and I trust you will not let them be squandered by personal vendettas.

Former TFHS student council president Josh Gammon is now a freshman at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Editor's note: Principal Jeff Kenney, of Turners Falls High School, said recently the gift given to the high school by the Class of 2009, a floor mat depicting the sports teams' mascot, an Indian with full headdress, is considered offensive by Native Americans, and would not be displayed at a time when the high school is attempting to foster a deeper appreciation of the area's Native American history. He asked that future graduating classes coordinate with the administration before making class gifts.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Community Support Shines at Wendell Holiday Fair



CHRISTINE MORIN PHOTO

Barbara Caruso (right) hands Ed Hines, Swift River music teacher and Sheila Hunter, principal, a check for \$2000 from the Holiday Fair

BY BARBARA CARUSO – The 2009 Wendell Holiday Fair received tremendous community support from vendors, businesses and patrons. The annual fundraiser, held the first weekend in December at the Wendell town hall, generated a \$2000 donation for the Swift River School music and art departments.

We cannot stress how important the support of local businesses was to our success, especially during a year when many people saw their personal or business incomes influenced by the tough economy. People's generosity really shone for this event, to make it successful for our children's programs.

The money raised for the school came from vendor table fees, a holiday raffle and luncheon, and the direct donations to the school or raffle from several businesses. The Wendell Holiday Fair committee would like to thank the following companies and individuals for their continued generosity. Please support these businesses who continue to make our communities strong.

\$100 Gold Patrons: Companions of Health, Wendell; Country Cottage Gifts and Framery, Gill; Diemand Family

Farm, Wendell; Ed Hines Family, Wendell; Kevin Skorupa Family, Wendell; Klondike Sound, Greenfield; Newcomotion, Wendell; Orange Oil, New Salem.

\$50 Silver Patrons: Greenfield Farmer's Exchange, Greenfield; Green Fields Market, Greenfield; Richardson Excavating, Wendell; Whittier Plumbing, New Salem; Whole Foods, Hadley.

Bronze Patrons: Greenfield: Adam's Donuts, Bart's Café, Big Y Supermarket, BJ's, Foster's Market, Home Depot, Hope & Olive, Lorenz Honda, Lucky Nails, Magical Child, Richard D. Smith, Stop n Shop Supermarket. Orange: Dean's Beans, Friendly Town Pizza, Hamshaw Lumber, Hannaford Supermarket, House of Wax, Pete's Tire Barn, Radio Shack, Trailhead, WalMart. Turners Falls: 2nd Street Bakery, Montague Reporter, Ristorante DiPaolo, Seth & Eva's Music Store, Walter's Propane. Millers Falls: Millers Pub. New Salem: New Salem General Store. Wendell: Kaleidoscope of Gems, Myron's Fine Foods, Wendell Country Store.

Advocacy on Regional Transportation Cuts Worked

I'm writing to thank your newspaper for coverage of the \$18 million cut to Regional School Transportation Reimbursement and its effects on regional schools. My committee discussed this issue on November

17th and unanimously approved a letter to the governor protesting the mid-year cut.

Thanks in part to the coverage in the media, to advocacy of citizens, and especially to the sustained effort of our representa-

tives, it appears that the governor is poised to retract this 9-C cut.

– Farshid Hajir
Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee, chair
Leverett School Committee, member

Concerned about Traffic Patterns During Bridge Repair

I'm unhappy with the fact that the informational meeting with SPS New England, the contractor for the Gill-Montague bridge repair, was cancelled on short notice Wednesday. I appreciate that SPS apparently understands that closing the bridge for two years to all traffic, as they proposed, would be unacceptable to the business owners in town. However, the Montague Business Association wanted the opportu-

nity at this meeting to get more information from the contractor, more information than what the town of Montague is giving us.

I am afraid that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation will sign the contract with SPS, and the businesses in Gill and Montague will have no further say in traffic patterns for the duration of the construction project, nor will we be able to ask specific questions of the

contractor as to whether or not the bridge can be open both ways to traffic when they are not actively working.

Hopefully the town will respond to our, and Representative Steve Kulik's, request to hold a meeting with the Mass DOT, SPS New England and the business owners of Montague and Gill.

– Pam Kostanski, owner
JK Liquors, Turners Falls

MILL from pg 4

Even finding money to secure the mill properly will be a challenge for Montague just now. The town is having enough trouble finding a proper use for an empty elementary school building in the south end of town, and paying for the maintenance of one empty building is hard enough with reserves so low.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said he believed the main burden for dealing with the Strathmore will fall on his shoulders. His track record in this regard is a good one. Consider his success with another building many felt should have been demolished: the Colle Opera House, fully leased, paying for

itself, and providing space for dozens of new office workers downtown.

Abbondanzio pointed to the success the town had in securing funding for the reconstruction of another key property, the Crocker Bank Building, after it too had been damaged by an arson blaze. Even the small-scale commercial homesteading program which saved and returned to the tax rolls two downtown brick buildings once widely regarded as lost causes may point to a roadmap for redeveloping the Strathmore.

Moving forward may also involve revisiting the success of a past effort at the Strathmore: the innovative approach taken in the 1992 when Indeck, the neighbor-

ing cogeneration plant, leased the mill and offered it to tenants to subdivide at their own expense, at the irresistible price of \$2 a square foot, heated. Soon 35 artist lofts and small industries had set up shop throughout the mill complex, and the downtown began to bustle again.

Indeck is gone now, but the model may still prove a good one in the months and years ahead.

A first step forward, after issuing an RFP, might be for the town to call a meeting of stakeholders, including abutters, the business association, the EDIC, legislators, and other interested parties to share ideas about the old mill's future, to which the future of our downtown is inextricably tied.

BIG IDEAS from pg 3

lines that haven't been written yet." He added, "We need to see more of a partnership, not, 'Thou shalt do this...'"

And Mackensy Bailey of the Erving school committee said, "Erving felt we would only get \$3,000 a year," from the Race to the Top funding. "Not enough to pay for the administrator to take care of the grant." Erving will not be signing the MOU.

"I don't want to look like Neville Chamberlin on this," said Koocher. "But a number of districts are desperate for revenue and are willing to experiment with reform. Other districts are doing fine as is. They don't need it."

The caucus is aiming for Saturday, April 10th for an all-

day conference at the Greenfield Middle School to be called, "What's the Big Idea in Education." John DeWitt of the New Salem school committee said the caucus is looking for big ideas generated from the grassroots of local school committees and school communities, but at the same time "practical ideas that have legs, and can have immediate budgetary impacts."

He ticked off a short list of possible contenders in the realm of big ideas on the local education scene, including establishing a central administrative fund to manage the cost impacts of school choice in the county; applying for Green Community Act funding for school districts to build small scale renewable power plants to provide power

for school buildings, and sell excess power back to the grid – a suggestion was made to see if the dam in need of repair at Mahar could be converted to hydroelectric power in the course of renovation – utilizing 'distance learning' or 'virtual classrooms' countywide, so students could take classes at any school via computer; looking into countywide Readiness Schools, and exploring the possibility of teaming up with a public transportation provider to establish a countywide public/school transportation system.

DeWitt said an attempt would be made early to engage teacher unions in the county and invite their participation in the upcoming conference.



Briefly

It has come to my attention that the illustration above your 'Local Briefs' column features, in fact, not briefs but boxers. Please correct this gross inaccuracy immediately.

– Jamie Berger
Turners Falls

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

New Approaches in Energy Conservation



Jessica Bergman of Smart Power introduces Western Mass Saves

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL – Jessica Bergman has a passion for energy conservation, and she intends to do what it takes to “make energy efficiency fun and sexy.” Wearing a short form-fitting brown knit dress, Bergman set out to do just that at a meeting of the Gill selectboard on a cold Monday afternoon, January 4th.

Declaring, “You don’t have to not shower and wear hemp to care about the environment,” Bergman unveiled a new program called Western Mass Saves, a joint program of the national non-profit that employs her, Smart Power (*smartpower.com*) and Western Massachusetts Electric Co., which is funding her fulltime effort to sign up cities and towns in Western Massachusetts to a new, interactive web-based energy saving program.

As the website explains, “Western Mass Saves is a new way to help you save money, manage your energy use, and

help the environment,” by allowing residents to access regular monthly updates on their home energy use, comparing their utility bills to average bills in their community, and tracking progress each resident may make to reduce energy consumption by examining their actual usage. The website will offer personalized energy-saving tips, many of which require no or low upfront costs for the homeowner or renter to implement.

“We are offering this program at no cost to the town,” Bergman emphasized. “This pilot program is unique to Western Mass.”

Bergman, the sole employee of the Western Mass Saves program, said she had been spending time pitching the project at the Amherst Farmers Market this fall, and had been working with UMass with a variation called “America’s Greenest Campus.” She said UMass had rocketed from a negligible ranking among universities in terms of energy conservation to “third place,” under her ministrations, and she assured the selectboard, “We want to engage the youth as well as residents.”

The program will allow participants to plug in various alternatives for saving energy at home, at work, and as consumers, and will show how much money can be saved with each particular pledge, and how each step taken by individuals can affect the environment. The program can also show “how much the whole town could save by taking certain measures.”

She noted, “The average

house has 20 phantom load sources, which can add about \$200 to your electrical bill over the course of a year.” She said one goal of the program was to have “everyone reduce their monthly bills – perhaps by \$20.10 a month – in 2010,” by promoting simple measures like reducing phantom loads.

Bergman offered to send a sample memorandum of understanding to the selectboard before they decide whether Gill will join Amherst, Bernardston, Buckland, Shelburne and other towns in participating in the Western Mass Saves program. She seemed slightly taken aback by questions from members of the finance committee, who asked whether the program offered any product endorsements or provided iron-clad privacy guarantees. She assured them the program eschewed commercial advertisements of any sort, and had the best utility lawyers working on privacy issues.

Members of the energy committee, who were also present for the meeting, seemed interested to hear that Bergman would be willing to return to meet with them as often as they would like, in the interest of pursuing energy efficiency.

In other news, the selectboard heard a report from interim administrative assistant Ray Purington that the town hall had been inadvertently saving energy over the holidays, due to a faulty main control switch on the boiler. Purington said the staff had been coming in to temperatures in the low 40s between Christmas and New Years, significantly reducing the town’s carbon footprint until the repair man from Mackin arrived.

The town will seek to set up a meeting with representatives of regional Native American tribes interested in the future use of the town-owned Mariamante parcel, possibly on Wednesday, January 27th. Preliminary results from the ground-penetrating radar survey of the 10 acre parcel on the corner of Main and West Gill roads, conducted by Doria Kutrubes of Radar Solutions in Waltham in late October and early November, in cooperation with

see GILL pg 14

On January 1st, about 18 citizens of Western Massachusetts walked from the Gill town line to the gates of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, as the first leg of a two-week walk from Brattleboro to Montpelier, to call on the Vermont legislature to reject Entergy’s bid to relicense the 37-year-old nuclear plant for an additional 20 years. When the Western Mass contingent reached the gates of the nuclear plant, organizer Nina Keller, from Wendell, read aloud a letter, parts of which are reprinted below, to the guard at the gatehouse, and left the letter for the plant’s corporate owners.

TO the OWNERS and SHAREHOLDERS of ENTERGY

BY NINA KELLER

WENDELL – Due to the advanced age of the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor, its history of accidents, fire, missing fuel rods, collapsed cooling towers, we downwinders are insisting you respect the health of the Connecticut Valley, its citizens, air, water, and safety by:

- recognizing the increased episodes of cancers, thyroid disorders, etc. in this area, and taking some responsibility for these publicly.
- investing in safe, green, sustainable production of energy and include in your financial analysis of the true cost of nuclear power: the costs of mining, milling, tailings, transportation, manufacture of all technological parts including fuel rods, plant construction, and decommissioning.
- announcing that in the public opinion poll conducted by the Vermont Department of Public Service to analyze the leanings of the Vermont public about the state’s future energy supply, respondents did not choose nuclear as a prime source, and 62% of participants said the Vermont Yankee reactor should be closed at its decommissioning due date of 2012.
- hiring your current willing workers to decommission the reactor, and retraining them for sustainable replacement energy jobs.
- fully funding the decommissioning fund now.
- admitting there is no viable evacuation plan and no liability funds available for the public in the case of a severe accident
- promising you will abide by the vote of the Vermont state legislature on re-licensing, and that you will not try to supersede its vote by any means

With serious convictions, we await your response.

We are the Massachusetts downwinders, citizens who receive your Radiation without Representation, who are walking many miles today as part of the major Safe and Green Walk to the Vermont statehouse in Montpelier, in order to let our demands be known and responded to. We represent many others unable to walk on this frigid day and we represent our towns and the majority of Franklin County, Massachusetts towns that voted at annual 2009 town meetings for Vermont Yankee to be shut down on schedule in 2012.

Afterwards, two members of the group walked on to Brattleboro, to symbolically connect with the Safe & Green march to Montpelier. On Saturday, January 2nd, more than 70 walkers left Brattleboro, heading north for the Vermont statehouse, calling for the Vermont nuclear reactor to be shut down on schedule by 2012.



ANNA GYORGY PHOTO

Nina Keller at the gates of Vermont Yankee

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

December 23rd Wendell Selectboard Meeting

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – On the evening before Christmas Eve, the Wendell selectboard met and conducted business as usual, even with the distraction of two plates of cookies on the table in front of them. People who met with the board sampled the cookies, as did board members themselves, and members of the press.

Jean Forward of the Wendell historic commission met the board as the meeting opened to discuss the fate of the house on Wickett Pond Road that Marion Herrick lived in, which has become town property since Herrick passed away and taxes have not been paid. Forward said the house is historically significant, built around 1780 with three fireplaces, one in each of the three main rooms. Wendell does not have many buildings that old still standing.

There is not enough money available to make the house a full time museum, but Forward suggested the historic commission could manage the building as a living historic museum of women who remained at the homestead and made do during the Revolutionary War, and other early conflicts. It could be visited by school classes and staffed on demand by volunteers, who could sell their home-preserved foods, and other local products. She said no other Revolutionary-

era museum celebrates the homestead.

The property sits on 37 acres, but the town could sell 20 acres and hold onto the house, an orchard that needs to be located and cleared, and enough room for a garden.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said that sounded like a great idea.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said the town's lawyer recommended closing the building for now. Forward added there is evidence that someone lived in the building last winter.

The house itself needs one sill replaced, but the breezeway and barn were seriously damaged by the July 2006 tornado, which devastated the forestland all around the Herrick homestead, but miraculously left the old building largely intact. Windows will not need to be boarded up for the winter because there are shutters that can be closed over them. One door in back is skewed.

Keller suggested town custodian Larry Ramsdell could add that repair to the list of jobs in front of him.

Aldrich said creating the museum and selling the land would require a town meeting vote.

Anyone who wants to contact Jean Forward to volunteer for any part of the project can email her

at jforward@anthro.umass.edu, or by telephone at (978) 544-7502.

Steve Verney and Don King of the New Salem selectboard met the Wendell selectboard next to broach the subject of changing the formula the two towns use to pay for Swift River School expenses. The original agreement called for sharing expenses so that each town paid the same per-student cost. Recently the agreement was clarified to have the two towns share capital expenses equally, and pay remaining costs at the same per student rate.

Verney and King suggested that the building has other fixed expenses which are separate from education costs, like oil and electricity, and that the two towns might share those building expenses equally, because the two towns own the building equally. Costs directly related to education, like books and teachers' salaries, would still be assessed according to the number of students coming from each town.

The number of students that New Salem sends to Swift River School has dropped in the last ten

years, but the number of students Wendell sends has dropped more, and New Salem's contribution to the school has risen to a point where it is hard to sustain, the visiting board members said.

Although the change would cost Wendell, Keller said it had some merit, and he said his board would forward the numbers to the finance committee for review.

The towns have some flexibility in determining how they share the cost of running Swift River School.

Verney said he has not forgotten the idea of the two towns sharing the cost of a generator that could run all systems at the school, and allow it to be used as a shelter for both towns, but that for now that is not possible. Keller suggested a smaller generator could run some lights and keep the furnace and the refrigeration working.

Aldrich reported that the new emergency generator and gas tanks are in place at the library, but they are not connected because the building is so close to the lot line there is no room to dig a trench for the gas line. It will be necessary to visit the site and see where the tanks can be located so the tanks are a legal distance from any windows, and so a trench can be dug.

Abutters complained that they had not been notified about the Farley Road pole hearing held at the December 3rd selectboard meeting, and so that hearing was illegal, and the conclusion invalid. Aldrich said that she got a list of abutters from the assessors and used that list to send out notices, that she had not checked a map herself.

One neighbor has a problem with the guying pole National Grid intends to use at 135 Farley Road, because it would create a blind spot for someone leaving the driveway. There are other, more expensive options for securing the pole, though National Grid would prefer to avoid them.

The selectboard agreed to hold another hearing with all abutters notified, at the January 20th meeting.

The Mediation and Training Collaborative is offering free housing mediation program, a pre-eviction intervention service, intended to help resolve problems between landlords and tenants.

Aldrich said that selectboard chair Christine Heard, who was not at this meeting, wanted to resign her position as representative to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority. Laurel Facey

see **WENDELL** page 14

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Black Bear Visits Depot Road

Wednesday, 12/16

11:05 p.m. Report of a black bear destroying property on Depot Road. Gone on arrival.

Thursday, 12/17

3:25 p.m. The black bear returned to Depot Road. Officer scared it away.

Saturday, 12/19

1:30 p.m. Assisted Sunderland police with a domestic disturbance on Amherst Road.

Thursday, 12/24

Car vs. utility pole accident on Montague Road. Arrested [redacted] for driving under the influence, leaving the scene of

an accident with property damage, and driving to endanger. Northeast Utilities replaced the pole.

Monday, 12/28

6:05 p.m. Report of debit card number stolen and used in Dublin, Ireland. Report taken.

Wednesday, 12/30

5:54 p.m. Car vs. deer accident on Route 63 near Cranberry Pond. Deer struck and killed, no personal injury to driver [redacted]. Property damage, no citation issued.

10:45 p.m. Assisted Sunderland police with a disturbance on Amherst

Road. Peace restored.

Saturday, 1/2

6:18 p.m. Car vs. tree accident on North Leverett Road. Driver [redacted]

lost control of vehicle while traveling East, spinning across the center line, and striking a tree head-on. No injuries, car totaled. No citation issued.

Sunday 1/3

4:23 p.m. Assisted Amherst Fire Department and Hadley police with transportation of subject with a medical emergency to Cooley Dickinson Hospital.



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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Business Owners Oppose Bridge Closing Plan

BY BILL DRAKE – A proposed meeting concerning traffic patterns during pending construction on the Gill-Montague bridge was cancelled at the last minute on Wednesday, January 6th, leaving many town officials from Greenfield, Gill, and Montague, along with the Montague Business Association (MBA) members and a representative of state representative Stephen Kulik's office searching for answers.

Montague DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron said Wednesday the meeting had been cancelled Tuesday evening at the request of the contractor, SPS New England, because it had "gotten out of proportion, and they were not prepared to deal with that big a crowd."

At the January 4th Montague selectboard meeting, MBA president Chris Janke spoke on behalf of downtown Turners Falls businesses about the feared impact of interrupted traffic to and from Route 2 during bridge

restoration. Janke called for "a bi-directional solution to Gill-Montague bridge construction."

The long-planned \$40.7 million bridge reconstruction project is slated to begin on the Gill-Montague bridge in the late spring of this year. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation has proposed to keep one lane of traffic flowing one way over the bridge, from Gill to Turners, over the course of a four-year construction project, reconstructing 50 feet of pavement at a time on the more than quarter mile long bridge, working within barriers.

The contractor had hoped to meet Wednesday for a round table discussion with a small group of town officials to talk about reducing the project to two years, and closing the bridge entirely to traffic during that time, to expedite the deck reconstruction.

"As a business owner downtown," said Janke, "I've noticed if people find themselves some-

where, they do more while they're there. If they're shopping in the mall, then they'll eat in the mall. And, I don't want someone to say, 'Hey, I'm in Greenfield, so I'll shop here,' since they have to drive all the way through Greenfield to get to Turners."

Janke and the business association was concerned about the possibility of an end run maneuver from the construction firm, and contacted their state representative, Steve Kulik.

"I was surprised to hear [of the meeting], because it seemed to be coming directly from the construction company, not from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation," said Kulik. Kulik said he had already been in contact with Pam Kostanski, owner of Jay K's Liquors, of the Montague Business Association, and the Mass DOT in order to schedule a meeting in January with all concerned parties.

"I wanted everyone to have a chance for some input," Kulik

said.

"We're just getting started downtown, and to squash that with no real traffic plan would be a disaster," said Kostanski.

According to Frank Abbondanzio, an SPS representative contacted Bergeron about the possibility of completely closing the Gill-Montague Bridge for two years.

"It was the week of the 14th of December," said Bergeron. [SPS representatives] were here. We are possibly going to rent them some space at the old police office, and through conversation, they asked about closing the bridge [for two years to expedite the restoration.] I said it's not me who makes that decision."

After speaking with the general manager of SPS, Eric Johnson, on Tuesday evening, Bergeron said the contractor was dropping the idea of closing the bridge entirely for two years.

Under the state's traffic flow proposal, traffic leaving Turners

for Route 2 and Gill would exit over the canal via the White Bridge to Greenfield. Local officials are hoping to persuade the state to leave that route open to two-way traffic, at least for smaller delivery vehicles and cars.

Montague chief of police Ray Zukowski spoke against the state's plan to close the White Bridge to two-way traffic during the course of construction on the Gill-Montague bridge.

"Earlier in this process," Zukowski said, "I put up an objection for that simply for ambulance service. Otherwise they would have to go through Montague City."

Bergeron said a meeting would be scheduled soon between the state DOT, the contractor, and all interested residents and local officials. "It is not too late to have input," he said. "In fact," the MBA's protest "may have opened some eyes this week," he said.

Cityscapes Come to Wendell Library Art Gallery

BY RICHARD BALDWIN WENDELL – The Wendell Free Library is proud to start off the new year in the Herrick Gallery with "Cityscapes," our January exhibition of paintings by Daniel Putnam, of Wendell. Putnam is one of our town's younger and most talented artists. He graduated from Keene State College with a BA in art, has been painting for at least five years, has his own three piece band, Occam's Razor, and plays numerous instruments, all while maintaining a position as a pre-school teacher. Putnam describes his own work:

"Most of the paintings I am showing are part of a cohesive theme that I have been returning back to and building on for some time. I've called them cityscapes or industrial landscapes. I take notice of the buildings set in the New England countryside left



Keene Flood, painting by Daniel Putnam on display at the Herrick Gallery's January exhibition

behind from a long ago era or generation. I imagine the soul of these large brick protrusions in

the sky once being the very foundation of rural communities.

"Many of the buildings in my paintings are from Keene, NH where I resided for about six years. While attending art classes at Keene State College, I became very familiar with the buildings there and began painting them after reaching more freedom in subject. The genre I'm trying to execute varies from completely abstract to impressionism. I invoke the eye to decide what it is seeing by not making the image completely obvious. In terms of media, I use both acrylic and oil paint, along with other materials such as graphite, charcoal, and black ink."

Putnam maintains a wonderful palette of colors that lends an emotional tone throughout his work. His color combinations strike the viewer as soft, slightly somber, reflective tunes with minor chords. They are warm

and comfortable, yet mysterious as well. Come see for yourself. The show is up now and will continue throughout the month.

The Wendell Free Library is open Tuesday, from 3 to 6; Wednesday, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Saturday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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Local Nature Notes

January: Things to See, Hear, and Do

BY JEN AUDLEY

TURNERS FALLS – The moon will be new on January 15th, and then full again on January 30th. This week marks the depth of the year, the time with the least activity in the natural world. This month's full moon is sometimes called the Hunger Moon, and also the Wolf Moon.

mals come to drink, and predators come to hunt. (You can create a mini-oasis for animals in your yard or on your windowsill. Fill a dish with drinking water and refill it when it becomes dirty or frozen.)

Some birds are year-round residents of Franklin County, including blue jays, cardinals,



Slate-colored Junco

But, still! Signs of wildlife abound if you know where to look for them. Look for animals and animal signs near unfrozen water. In our region during winter, open water is like an oasis in the desert – waterbirds congregate there, other birds and mam-

mals come to drink, and predators come to hunt. (You can create a mini-oasis for animals in your yard or on your windowsill. Fill a dish with drinking water and refill it when it becomes dirty or frozen.)

Look for marks in the snow that tell what other creatures have been up to. On sidewalks in town, you're most likely to discover stories about humans and their dogs, but you probably won't have to look far to find tracks left by cats, squirrels, and birds. Venture a bit farther off the path to find signs of deer, rabbit, fox, beaver, coyote, and raccoon. (The Farmer's Almanac says raccoons mate at the end of this month. Great horned owls begin nesting then, too.)

The January thaw, an annual midwinter phenomenon that scientists have documented in New England but not yet explained, occurs each year around January 23rd. Temperatures may rise as much as 10 degrees Fahrenheit above normal for a few days, rousing spring peepers and flights of bees. (No kidding!)

Days are getting longer. The sun sets now about one minute later each day. By the end of the month, darkness won't come until 5:30 p.m., and the sun will be rising earlier, too, inching closer to 7 a.m. all month.

Learn more:

Winter Fare Farmers' Markets. Saturday, January 9th, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Gill Elementary School.

Ten or more vendors selling vegetables, honey, flour and other local products. Proceeds will benefit the Gill PTO.

Also January 9th: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School.

More than 20 local farmers and specialty food producers

with an array of locally grown foods. There will be hot soups from local restaurants, a barter session, and workshops to enhance your food production and gardening skills. (Greenfield's 3rd annual Winter Fare Farmers' Market is February 6th, 10 to 2 at Greenfield High School.)

Winter Trails Day

Saturday, January 9th, 1 to 4 p.m., Northfield Mountain

A limited quantity of ski equipment and snowshoe rentals will be available at no charge for first-time users. Beginning at 1 p.m. and running throughout the afternoon, free instructional clinics will be provided for first-time skiers and snowshoers. Free, for all ages. Pre-registration required; call (800) 859-2960.

Animal Tracking: An Outdoor Adventure With Rachel Roberts

Saturday, January 16th, 10 to 11:30 a.m., Northfield Mountain

Join youth educator Rachel Roberts for a variety of hands-on science and art activities about animal tracking in winter. There will also be a brief story time and time to look at books about tracking. Part of the class will be spent outdoors looking for signs of animals and playing tracking games, so dress appropriately. For ages 5 and older; free. Pre-registration required; call (800) 859-2960.

Winter Tracking in Warwick

Sunday, January 17th from 1:30 to 4 p.m. (Rain/snow postpones to January 31st, same time.) Meet at Warwick Library in center of town.

David Brown leads this walk in the local woods, searching for sign of fisher, deer, coyote, red and gray fox, otter and other wild mammals that live quite close to us, but hide in foliage and the night. Dress warmly with snow proof boots; snowshoes may be helpful. Suitable for reasonably fit adults and teens; about a mile will be covered at a slow pace. Free. (Sponsored by the Warwick Library and Warwick Cultural Council.)

Science and Nature Prose and Poetry Open Mike Night

Thursday, January 22nd, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls

Join us for this Friends of Great Falls Discovery Center annual event, now in its third year. This year's hosts are poets Janet MacFadyeh and Sheppard Rambom. In addition to their readings, the evening will open up to audience members who are invited to read a favorite piece of their own, or others. Come early to sign up. Listeners welcome, too, of course! Free; donations requested.

Snowshoeing in the Moonlight

Saturday, January 30th, 6:30 to 9 p.m., Northfield Mountain

Join us as we explore how to best navigate at night, share inspiring quotes from literary lovers of the moon and stars, and take a short "solo" walk by moonlight. No previous snowshoeing experience is necessary for this adventure by the light of the moon. For ages 12 and older, \$5 per person, \$17 with snowshoe rentals. Pre-registration required; call (800) 859-2960.

Eagle Count

From the Mass Wildlife News
WESTBOROUGH – A target date of January 8th, 2010 will be used for a concentrated survey of major rivers, lakes, reservoirs and the coast by staff from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and volunteers across the state, as part of a nationwide midwinter bald eagle survey held every year in early January. Ground teams will also be covering known eagle territories statewide during the day. In 2009, a record 81 bald eagles were documented in Massachusetts.

Anyone spotting an eagle from December 30th, 2009 to January 14th, 2010 is encouraged to report the sighting by email at Mass.wildlife@state.ma.us or by postal mail to "Eagle Survey," MassWildlife, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581. Please provide date, time, location and town of eagle sightings, number of birds, juvenile or adult, and observer contact information.

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RECYCLING from pg 1
Kilfeather, middle school student council advisor Katie Eicorn, and life skills teacher Jeremy Metz.

On Monday, January 4th, Donovan was back at the high school to present program information and trash statistics to student council members who will be coordinating the expanded recycling efforts there, on top of the current student-driven paper recycling collections that take place on Mondays. Drink container recycling efforts have previously been limited to students in Metz's Life Skills class collecting redeemable cans and bottles. They use the proceeds to fund field trips.

Along with the environmental goal of reducing landfill and incinerator waste, the school district may see some financial gains with the addition of container recycling. Currently, the high school complex pays \$65 to \$100 per ton for the pickup and disposal of approximately 20 cubic yards of trash weekly, at a cost of about \$524 per month. Recyclables are picked up for

considerably less, as the haulers can sell the materials to recycling facilities.

Food service manager Jim Loynd collected information to help estimate the numbers of containers the district typically throws in the trash. During October 2009, the cafeteria sold 106 16-ounce plastic juice bottles and 1,694 20-ounce plastic water and sports drink bottles. He noted these figures do not contain the bottles sold through the vending machines. In addition to plastic drink containers, Loynd came up with estimates for the daily disposal of 25 to 30 plastic gallon jugs and #10 cans.

Donovan will return to the middle school and high school complex next week to address the student body at large, and she hopes recycling bins can be distributed then so the program can get underway. Last month the container recycling began at Sheffield and Hillcrest Schools. Donovan said Gill Elementary School has had a comprehensive recycling program for some time.

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VOICES from pg 1

5th, Hornstein appeared at the Leverett Library before a crowd of about two dozen to discuss her new book – *Agnes' Jacket* – published by Rodale Press and available at bookstores everywhere.

Comfortable lecturing extemporaneously after 31 years in front of the classroom, and fervent on the topic she has researched for six years in preparation for the book, Hornstein held the audience in rapt attention.

"I wrote the book to be of interest to a wide range of people, not only people working in mental illness," she began. And she concluded almost an hour later by saying she wanted her readers to "Think about the mind in a much more complicated, creative and resilient way than we often do. We are terrified by mental illness. There's still a huge stigma attached to mental illness. We think about people with mental illness as being profoundly unlike us. And this prevents us from seeing the fundamental commonality between us all."

Hornstein said she has focused in her research primarily on people who are diagnosed with psychoses of one sort or another: schizophrenia, manic depression, paranoia and related disorders. "By definition, people who have experienced psychosis don't have any insight into their situation – their own psychic life – the ori-

gins of their distress. This is a core assumption," of the medical community that attempts to understand and treat them, Hornstein said.

Another core assumption of the psychiatric profession is that people who have suffered from profound problems like psychosis "cannot get better." Their illnesses can be managed, perhaps, but never cured.

Hornstein rejects both these assumptions.

For one thing, she provided her audience on Tuesday with a 700-title bibliography of published works called the "Bibliography of First Person Narratives of Madness – in English," exclusive of works of poetry or dramatic fiction. (See her site, www.gailhornstein.com, for a copy.)

"If hundreds of people have written accounts of their illness and publishers have published them – these aren't ravings in a bottom drawer," or apocryphal screeds stitched on a jacket sleeve – then presumably these people can and do exhibit insights into the nature of their own travails, regardless of medical professionals' ability to apprehend them.

And working together in democratic, patient-led support groups, many of which have welcomed Hornstein into their circles during her years of field work for the book, people who have survived the mental health

profession also demonstrate the ability to "get completely better," Hornstein averred, "through their own efforts and through the fundamental resiliency of human beings."

This optimistic view of mental illness, perhaps needless to say, has not met with a wide welcome among mental health professionals. Hornstein said, "Doctors and psychiatrists are nervous their special services are not the only ones that can help people."

"Of course it is the case that there are people in extreme distress who don't have any insight at the moment, just as there are people in this room who have experienced fear or anger or other extreme states for periods of time during which they don't have much insight. But to say a person with mental illness does not have insights is not only wrong but destructive."

"Psychologists do not take seriously the accounts," of former patients, or refugees from their profession, such as the hundreds of authors represented in the Bibliography of... Madness, Hornstein said. After all, these accounts often take the form of critiques of the mental health system by patients. But by denying the validity of patients' insights, Hornstein said, "We rob ourselves of the understanding of extreme states, emotional problems.... How would we understand mental illness if we looked at it from the point of view of

people who go through these states?"

In contrast to the rich, textured, and varied approaches patients take to explaining or interpreting their own experiences, Hornstein said psychoanalysts' case studies of their patients are generally couched in cold, clinical terms, invariably climaxing with their arrival at the mental institution. "From the point of view of people who experience such situations, that may not be the climax at all," noted Hornstein. "It may be an irritating sidelight."

In the course of her research, Hornstein said she "discovered there were groups of patients who had come together on their own to provide their own support or interpretation for mental health patients, like an underground movement."

She compared this phenomenon to the gay movement in the 1950s in America, where "you would know there were organizations, publications, meetings that connected you to the world of gay people, but straight people wouldn't know about them." She said this "alternate way of thinking about and coping with the world of mental illness," is taking place, by and large, "unknownst to their doctors."

Hornstein said many of these patient support groups were organized under the rubric of "Hearing Voices," and she contrasted this with the medical term

for a common symptom of psychosis, "auditory hallucinations."

"Auditory hallucinations is a pejorative term. By definition, there is something wrong with you if you're having hallucinations. Of course," she added, "we all know the major figures in world religions all had experiences with auditory hallucinations. But hey, we're living in the 21st Century. Things were different when there were burning bushes and water changing into wine."

"Mediums, clairvoyants, very spiritual people" are allowed by other cultures to "hear voices," without being labeled mentally ill, she said, but secular America pathologizes such deviations from the modern norm.

Hornstein said these patient led support groups "bring people together so they can talk about such experiences free from fear or opprobrium." She participates in one such Hearing Voices group now in Holyoke, as a facilitator. Indeed, Hornstein said she had just come from a meeting of that group prior to her talk at the Leverett Library.

"Against everything you would think from psychiatry, the people in these groups make extraordinarily insightful and useful interpretations and help people make sense of what has happened to them, often very terrifying things, in a context where there is no judgment. The mental

see VOICES page 13

HOLE from pg 1

recognizing him, although we had never exchanged words all these years.

"Yep. Buddha Allen."

I knew that.

We shook hands. I told him my name, and added "I'm Art Brule's son," to help establish links with old times fast. Around here, it helps to explain who your people are and what you're doing here to begin with.

Of course, he knew my father, and even my grandfather Joe. Both have been gone, five and ten years respectively, but it was natural of him to mention. Both of us being good talkers, especially concerning the townfolk and their times past and gone, we got right into it.

We talked about Joe's camp up the river a short way from where we stood. He remembered always stopping there for water

pouring out of a pipe where my grandfather had a spring on the shore. His in-laws the Welcomes had a camp just up from ours.

"We moved that camp higher up the bank quite a few years ago," he mused. "And you know, the door finally shut better when we moved the whole thing the hell out of there!"

Knowing I was in the presence of someone who loved local history, and was interested in talking about it, I asked if he knew where the term "Deep Hole" came from, because I had never found the underwater hole in years of paddling over the spot. Buddha didn't know either.

"They used to hay this spot before, maybe there was something there then." It's true that the dam had been raised in the 30s, putting fields under water and creating Barton Cove. Maybe that's what happened here too. I

shared that there had been an experimental farming effort up where the airport is now, called the White Coal Farm back in the 20s. It was intended to use local hydropower – 'white coal' – to irrigate crops on the land where the Plains reached the high riverbank. Maybe the local name came from that.

The conversation drifted to the days of harvesting ice on the river, Buddha being one of the few who still fondly remembers those days. "Skipped school to work for 25 cents an hour cutting ice. I remember cars driving right up the river here. You could walk or skate up the river, but you had to watch it at the Narrows 'cause ice jammed up and it was hard to get through."

I mentioned I had grown up on the Narrows in the 50s, and had a rowboat tied up there, in the days before summer work on

tobacco. We reminisced about the beauty of the Deep Hole in those days: a wonderful lagoon surrounded by a wall of cattails, the bank lined with thick-trunked ancient weeping willows.

"You'd paddle a canoe in there and be lost to the world. Think you were in *Wild Kingdom* like Marlin Perkins!" We both laughed at the reference.

I knew he had been friends with Eddie Pleasant, a neighbor of ours on Carlisle Avenue. "A real gentleman, Eddie Pleasant," Buddha said, as he recounted anecdotes about their trips ice-fishing up to Lake Champlain 40 years before. He even knew my maternal grandfather Abe Smith from Millers Falls. And wasn't it my aunt, he asked, who went off the Hairpin Turn on the Trail one day in the 40s when she was skipping school?

I chuckled, having read the

newspaper account found up in the homestead closet. So much for skipping school, if you wind up in the newspaper!


By then, I had totally forgotten about the snowy owl I was looking for. I mentioned Mark had tipped me off about the bird. "Don't know Mark, but I sure know his father, Gordon." And I remembered the elder Fairbrother too, when he was Scout master of the Turners Troop for years.

We could have gone on, but it was getting dark. "Well," said Buddha, "I'm going in for a beer! Nice talking with you."

He spun around and strode off into the clubhouse. I watched the dark waters for a little while longer. A swan moved slowly across the open channel of water between snowy banks, and faded away down river in the dusk.



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Do you need help with issues relevant to elders, caregivers and persons with disabilities? Call the Information and Caregiver Resource Center at Franklin County Home Care! You'll talk to a resource consultant who will get a general idea of what you need. If you need more help or information, the resource consultant will pass you on to an intake assessment specialist like Cindy Ray.

For five years, Cindy Ray has been helping people get the best support services available.

"I get contact information from our resource consultants. Then I contact the elder or a family member so I can make a home visit," said Cindy. Resource consultants may get requests for help from elders, caregivers, or professionals like social workers or health care providers.

Home visits let Cindy talk to the person in need of support, and people who care for them. She talks about available programs and services and which ones might fit their specific needs.

"Many people want to know

more about our programs that pay people for the care they provide to a family member, friend or neighbor. I can facilitate MassHealth applications, which often opens up more service options, and I always make sure to have materials describing Adult Day Health, our Adult Family Care program and our Personal Care Assistance program," she said.

Once the intake is complete and a plan is drawn up, Cindy talks to the case management director at Franklin County Home Care to finalize the plan of care. At that point, services are secured and care begins. Cindy's role in the process is over once the client is transitioned to case management.

Cindy Ray covers the North Quabbin area and splits coverage of central and south Franklin County with her co-worker Trevor Boeding, who also covers West County. In general, both intake specialists take a few days to a week to meet with people,

see FCHCC page 14

NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ladd Urges Race to the Top Participation

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE – The Gill-Montague Regional School committee met Wednesday night, January 6th, to discuss the request by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that they sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in support of the district's participation in federal Race to the Top grant programs. Massachusetts school districts are being asked to submit the memoranda to the state by January 13th, in order to be included in the state's grant application to the federal government.

Michael Langknecht, chair, began the meeting by reading from the document and supplemental materials to explain what will be required of districts. Sandra Brown of Gill expressed frustration at the language of the lengthy document, which is reportedly full of bureaucratized and vague terminology. She asked why the DESE can't write in full sentences and clear language.

Nevertheless, superintendent Carl Ladd pointed out, the Race to the Top program, which is a being offered on a competitive basis to states by the federal government, could give the district an additional 15% over current Title I and Title I-G funding, which would total \$90,000 each year for the next four years.

Ladd pointed out to the committee that most of the requirements contained in the memorandum would apply to the district anyway under the new education-reform legislation pending in the Massachusetts legislature.

Ladd said since the district is going to be required to institute reforms, they may as well work with the state to get Race to the Top money to support those efforts.

Karl Dziura, president of the G-M education association, spoke to the committee and said he would also recommend that the school committee sign the Memorandum of Understanding. He plans to ask his membership

to support the Race to the Top initiative.

No action was taken on the 6th. There will be further discussion at the meeting next week; a decision will be made then.

In other action, the school committee voted to accept the financial methodology and the amount of the structural budget gap for FY10 of \$857,000. They agreed this is just the first step to finding a solution and developing a plan to resolve the district's budget gap. This figure was differentiated from the budget gap that exists between the towns and the district. The school committee agreed they need to begin discussions with the towns in order to work in a collaborative effort to develop a budget for FY10.

Langknecht said the committee would invite town officials to attend next week's meeting, to be held on January 12th at Turners Falls High School at 7 p.m. The meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 26th will be held at Gill Elementary School.

DINER from pg 1

home made from a family recipe. You can order the crust thin on request.

Arriving about 5 p.m., the place was just beginning to stir, and we huddled by the wood pellet stove inside the Bada Bing Room while we looked over the menu and decided on beers. I went for the house draft, named, you guessed it, Bada Bing, by way of Budweiser. We considered it our duty to try the fried ravioli appetizer (\$6), as I'd never seen that on a menu before. The Italian Wedding soup (\$2.50 a cup) also sounded interesting. Finally, an order of eggplant parmesan, complete (\$14) with a salad and a side of pasta, to give the small combo pizza (\$14) some competition.

Then we waited, sipped and

took in the decor: two sports TV screens, an attractive polished wood bar, walls of similarly light golden wood below and dark red above, joined by warmly-hued maroon and gold curtains and offset by small stained glass ceiling lamps. Hanging grapes and leaves abound, as do pictures of Frank and the Rat Pack, Marilyn, Elvis, Barbra, and colorful visions of the homeland. They even have free wi-fi, and music on some Saturdays.

"Yum!" was the sound of the wife and me tasting the soup, served hot and hearty with flavorful bits of meat and kale swimming in a sea of perfectly round grains. The house salad with house Italian dressing went down very well, the lettuce not at all wimpy and giving the pleasantly tangy dressing something to live

for. The fried ravioli was next up, a half dozen of the little plumpers with a dipper dish of zesty marinara sauce. Soft and crunchy at the same time, with what my wife rapturously referred to as "a sweet and savory creamy, wonderfully-herbed cheese filling." My wife's a great baker, and she loved the "pleasantly chewy" dinner rolls made from the homemade pizza dough cut into strips and tied into knots.

Okay, the pizza and eggplant parmesan came next, and the servings were somewhere between generous and huge. Seriously, the small pizza would probably be considered large by most people. More importantly, it was delicious. I didn't want to stop eating it but had to save room for the eggplant, which was thinly sliced and very savory, and

supported by a healthy side of ziti. Yes, we'll be taking stuff home, oh well.

But wait: gotta have dessert. After all, this is a restaurant review, and our readers deserve nothing less. I'm hoping the cannoli is gonna transport me back to Little Italy. Christina's version is custardy, doused in attractively drizzled chocolate sauce and stuffed on both ends with chocolate chips. Rather than fight for the last bite, my wife graciously offered it to me.

There's also a wine menu, plenty of draft and bottled beers (Rolling Rocks for \$1 a glass), and a fully stocked bar. The menu includes grinders and a kids section. Christina's offers catering.

By now it's past 6 p.m., and the pace is picking up a bit, though still mellow. There's a guy sitting at the bar who says his chicken tenders are fantastic. At the table nearest us, a young couple with two young kids is busy with their big cheesy pizza and bowls of pasta. At the checkout counter, a guy is picking up an enormous box of pizza to go.

Must be the large size. Frankie, Dean and Sammy drift in to the bar and start humming along with Billy Joel to the beginning of "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant." I'll meet you any time you want.

Christina's is open from 11:30 to 9:30 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday, and til 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The bar is open until 1 a.m. For takeout, call (413) 423-3100.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

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4:28 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, operating to endanger, marked lanes violation, and having an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle
10:35 p.m. Suspicious vehicle investigated at a Main Road business.
10:40 p.m. Report of a suspicious subject on French King Bridge. Checked area.
Monday, 12/28
7:20 a.m. Officer called to

French King Bridge for suspicious motor vehicle.
11:10 a.m. Property damage complaint on West Gill Road.
11:30 a.m. Report of a traffic hazard on Main Road at Mount Hermon Road. Removed same.
12:31 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency on Mum's Ferry Road.
1:29 p.m. Two-vehicle accident on West Gill Road at South Cross.
Tuesday, 12/29
1:56 a.m. Report of a possible overdose on French

King Highway.
Wednesday, 12/30
6:33 p.m. Past report of motor vehicle accident on French King Highway on 12/27. Under investigation.
Thursday, 12/31
3:33 p.m. Unattended vehicle left blocking roadway on Main Road. Same towed.
6:53 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on Hoe Shop Road.
Friday, 1/1
12:16 a.m. Assisted Montague police with a disturbance on Second Street.
1:38 a.m. Assisted Erving police with a disturbance on

Prospect Street.
11:31 p.m. Disturbance on Gill-Montague Bridge, state police on scene, dealing with same.
Saturday, 1/2
10:03 a.m. Missing person report on Franklin Road.
Sunday, 1/3
5:46 p.m. Suspicious vehicle at a Boyle Road residence. Investigated.
Monday, 1/4
12:07 p.m. Breaking and entering and larceny to Hoe Shop Road residence. Under investigation.
Tuesday, 1/5
7:20 a.m. Animal complaint on Franklin Road.
8:40 a.m. Vandalism report on West Gill Road.

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Four Winds School Holds Anniversary Celebration

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
OLD DEERFIELD – On December 28th, Four Winds School celebrated its tenth anniversary at the Pioneer Valley Memorial Hall in Old Deerfield. That's where Four Winds School got started in September of 2000 with seven students and one

teacher, founder Steve Hussey. The second year, Four Winds School's enrollment increased to twelve students. The following year, the school moved to the old Riverside School on Route 2 in Gill. Eloise Michael joined the school to teach writing and sci-

ence labs in the seventh year. Founders of the board were James Kazokas, Lorna Kazokas, and John Hussey. James Kazokas died in May of 2006; the remaining board members established an annual award



Steve Hussey and Walton Congdon at the Four Winds School Anniversary
 JOE PARZYCH PHOTO

TAKE BACK from page 1 have provided frequent headaches for Anctil and the town building inspector, fire department, and two neighboring businesses – the abutting Southworth Paper Mill and Swift River Hydro (which operates out of a condominium facility within the Strathmore) – over the last two winters, including two alarms last week alone.

Concerns over building security, the maintenance of the sprinkler system, and the safety of the neighboring businesses – even more than the issue of unpaid taxes – prompted the selectboard to hold the meeting with Anctil on Tuesday, and finally pull the plug on his ownership of the mill.

Davis Hobbes, general manager of Swift River Hydro, was at that meeting, as were fire chief Ray Godin, superintendent of the department of public works Tom Bergeron, building inspector David Jensen, Paul Dunphy, an aide to state representative Steve Kulik, tax collector Dion, and a number of observers.

Anctil, looking tense, began the meeting by saying, "I think we made a valiant, noble effort in trying to revive the Strathmore. I gave it all I had."

Later, Anctil put a dollar figure on that effort, saying he had invested \$700,000 over the last two years. This included the pur-

chase of the Strathmore and the adjoining property, the site of the former Indeck co-generation coal plant, now disassembled and shipped to Guatemala, which Anctil purchased in the spring of 2008 from the Montague Energy Group for an additional \$50,000. Other costs included the removal of 97 tractor trailer loads of useless paper, much of it waterlogged from the firefighting efforts in Building #2 and subsequent rains, and payment for architectural plans, building clean-up, and related costs. Anctil said he paid approximately \$2,500 for each tractor trailer load of paper he removed from the mill. He said he was now, essentially, broke, and would walk away from the project with nothing to show for it but a sheaf of architectural plans, which he might be able to sell to a future developer.

"We cleaned up a lot of the debris and solved the town's problem [with the paper] there," Anctil continued. "At this point in the adventure, my wherewithal is pretty low on the scale. Any big expenses on the Strathmore I would not be able to grapple with."

He added, "I strongly encourage the town to put out an RFP [request for proposals for Strathmore] and see what can be developed on the town's side."

Anctil said he hopes to pursue

his plans for Strathmore regardless of whether the town takes ownership. He doubts other developers will be interested in the mill complex amid the present economic uncertainties. He and his wife, Jordan Quinn, are now residents of Montague, having purchased the former St. John's Church in Millers Falls for a private residence following the accidental fire that damaged their former home in the rectory of Ste. Anne's on 6th Street in Turners Falls on January 12th, 2008.

He said he and Quinn still anticipate a successful development effort at Ste. Anne's Church, which Quinn plans to develop into a nightclub and music hall. Federal and state historic tax credits have been awarded to aid Quinn in that development effort, and the state has allowed for the creation of a new all alcoholic beverage license specifically for that venture.

But passersby still see the empty, burned-out windows on the second floor of the rectory and the darkened church hall as evidence of the distance still to travel to bring that project to fruition.

"It's a bummer to be so low financially, to drive the ship," at the Strathmore, said Anctil. But from his standpoint as a Montague resident, and a partner in the development plans for Ste.

Anne's, Anctil said he still would be glad to see any redevelopment effort take hold at the Strathmore.

Hobbes said he was continually fielding calls about fire alarms due to the problems with the Strathmore sprinkler system. His alarm system at Swift River Hydro is tied to the larger system at the mill. Additionally, when the sprinkler system goes off, the pressure drops at the neighboring Southworth Mill, causing alarms to go off there, prompting the evacuation of that operating mill each time.

"All these problems... It concerns me," said Hobbes. "We have a sizeable investment there. We put in fire alarm systems and sprinklers. To be honest, they're worthless. I never know whether they're working or not," due to the faulty system in the larger mill complex.

Godin said, "I have concerns along the lines of Mr. Hobbes'. The circumstances are very much what they were one and a half years ago at Memorial Day weekend, with a slightly different cast of characters. People are maintaining the sprinkler system with no license to do so. That's a problem for me. This is at least the third meeting I've been at where we have laid out security issues and alarm and sprinkler issues. I got called back there last week, and we see evidence that

copper pipe is being salvaged out of there," and graffiti sprayed on the interior walls. "I'm ready to file some court complaints – but am I complaining against Mr. Jones," whose presence at the mill has been ongoing, leading selectboard member Pat Allen to question whether Jones is again residing there, "or Mr. Anctil, or Mr. Jensen? It's got to stop. We would not allow this at any other building in town. The town may have some liability if it takes ownership... [but] it's incumbent on the selectboard to set some firm ground rules. We can't keep going like this."

After Godin spoke, Anctil said, "I didn't come to this meeting prepared to promise anything."

At which point the selectboard moved to take the Strathmore Mill for back taxes.

Allen asked Anctil, "Please don't let anybody into that building, except Mr. Jones," for the next 30 days, until the town takes possession.

He promised he would not. Hobbes offered to make an employee of his, Eric Anderson, available at Hobbes' expense to tour the mill complex regularly, with an eye for security and maintenance issues, for an hour each working day.

The selectboard thanked him for this offer.



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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ — Q. I've been reading about athletes using steroids to build themselves up. Do these drugs work for older men?

First some background on steroids. There are many types of steroids, of those, two kinds are: corticosteroids and anabolic steroids. Corticosteroids, such as cortisone and prednisone, are drugs that help control inflammation. Anabolic steroids, such as androstenedione or andro, are substances that can help the body

make muscle.

Corticosteroids, which are like hormones that your adrenal glands produce to fight stress, are used to treat arthritis, asthma, lupus, multiple sclerosis, eczema and some kinds of cancer.

Anabolic steroids are drugs that are like the body's sex hormone testosterone. Testosterone directs the body to produce or enhance male characteristics. Medical uses of anabolic steroids include some hormone problems in men, late puberty, and muscle loss from some diseases.

When anabolic steroids increase the levels of testosterone in the blood, they stimulate muscle tissue in the body to grow larger and stronger. The effects of too much testosterone can be harmful. Some of the negative effects are rage, liver disease, high cholesterol, severe acne,

baldness and infertility.

So-called natural steroids such as DHEA that are sold as over-the-counter supplements at many health food stores can have the same harmful effects as synthetic steroids. The only difference between natural and synthetic steroids is that synthetic steroids are made in a lab and are chemically altered.

Prior to January 2005, anabolic steroid supplements containing androstenedione also were available at health food stores. Because of safety issues, however, these supplements now cannot be sold without a prescription.

Because some hormone levels drop with age, there's a theory that this decline causes us to age. Declining levels of testosterone, the male sex hormone, have been linked with decreased energy and sex drive, muscle weakness and

osteoporosis. But, can you reverse aging by restoring your hormones?

DHEA (dehydroepiandrosterone) is a hormone secreted by the adrenal gland. DHEA levels in the body begin to decrease after age 30. Your body converts DHEA into the sex hormones estrogen and testosterone. Proponents say it slows aging, increases muscle and bone strength, burns fat, improves cognition, bolsters immunity and protects against chronic diseases.

There is no convincing medical evidence to support these claims about DHEA. Even short-term use of DHEA may cause liver damage.

There is sufficient evidence supporting the use of DHEA in the treatment of adrenal insufficiency, depression, induction of labor, and lupus.

There is a lack of available studies on the long-term effects of DHEA. However, DHEA may cause higher than normal levels of androgens and estrogens in the body, and theoretically may increase the risk of prostate, breast, ovarian, and other hormone-sensitive cancers. Therefore, it is not recommended for regular use without supervision by a licensed healthcare professional.

Don't believe advertisements that tell you supplements are natural remedies, implying that they can't hurt you. Some people try supplements such as coral calcium, ginseng and echinacea to stop aging. There isn't any evidence to support the claims for these supplements either.

Talk to your doctor before taking any supplement. Ingredients in supplements can cause harmful interactions with your medications and serious side effects.

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

VOICES from pg 10

health system is all about judgment."

Responding to questions after her talk, Hornstein gave a few specific examples of how the patient support groups have helped people deal with their particular mental problems. As when one person who feared she was being poisoned through the public water supply was advised to drink bottled water from sealed bottles until she felt calm enough to deal with the source of her fears; or when a person

who imagined coded threats were being delivered to him in the form of specific configurations on car license plates on the street was helped to devise pragmatic coping strategies, while trying to understand the origins of his paranoia.

Incidentally, she said, "People with a diagnosis of paranoia would seem to be the least likely to come together in groups..." a comment that caused sudden laughter in the room, "but in fact, if you have that experience it's an unbelievable relief to meet others who

see things that way."

Hornstein offered some eternal verities about the psychiatric profession. Whether it's tossing people into snake pits, wrapping them in wet sheets, giving them shock treatment, lobotomizing them, institutionalizing them, or medicating them, there are always some people who are helped by any new treatment, others who are not. What's more, regarding psychiatric medication, the treatment *du jour*, "everyone in the field of psychiatric medicine agrees," that roughly a third of patients are helped by medications, another third are helped temporarily until their bodies can no longer tolerate the toxic side effects (or otherwise fail to respond), and another third are not helped by medications at all.

Even so, it is profoundly threatening to the institutions that exist to treat patients with mental illness that their clients may choose self-help groups rather than professional assistance as a means to a cure.

"How could it be that people with serious mental health issues could go off by themselves and help each other?" she asked rhetorically. "Think about Alcoholics Anonymous. Fifty years ago Bill Wilson started AA when 'two drunks got together in a room to help each other.'

And now the average doctor will send people with a drinking problem to AA."

Hornstein said, "This is exactly what is happening now in mental health, worldwide," as thousands of democratic groups are forming to help mental health patients help themselves.

In the process, patients are reframing the language and the paradigms by which mental health issues are discussed and understood. Like the patient leader in Britain who wants to discard the term "delusion" in favor of "unshared beliefs," citing as an example of an unshared belief former prime minister Tony Blair's obsession with Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq.

Hornstein said, "If your problem is you feel profoundly isolated from other people, you're hearing voices screaming in your head, those experiences can be helped by people who are deeply motivated to help you, who share your experiences."

As to the "epidemic" of young white boys in America being diagnosed now and medicated for attention deficit disorder, Hornstein said, "I think it's absurd that eight-year-olds have to sit still in their seats all day. If the only way they can get up is to have a diagnosis of mental illness they'll have for the rest of

their lives, what's wrong with this picture?"

Her prescription for her audience, whenever they come in contact with people troubled with mental problems, is to listen to them, "talk to them, let them say what they need, let them say what's frightening them, without anything bad happening to them."

She said a useful alternative to psychiatric institutionalization is being tried in Berlin, where a place called the "Runaway House" has been established, staffed by people who have experienced extreme mental states in the past, to provide a safe environment that is not a hospital where people can work through their own experiences by themselves, if they want to.

Recalling the one third or more of mental patients who find no succor with modern psychiatric medicine, Hornstein repeated the mantra of many patient support groups around the world, — "Freedom of Choice!" — and predicted that mental health system survivors, like the oppressed gay citizens of the world before them, would one day force the resistant institutions that now claim the right to enforce normative values to change, and allow their voices to be heard.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG		1:15 a.m.
Peace Disturbed		
Friday, 12/25		
7:22 a.m.	[redacted] arrested for probation warrant.	[redacted] arrested for domestic assault and battery, assault and battery on a police officer, and disorderly conduct.
6:16 p.m.	Assault and battery on Fourth Street.	3:08 a.m.
Saturday, 12/26		
9:17 p.m.	Unwanted person on Fifth Street.	[redacted] arrested for domestic assault and battery.
[redacted]	arrested for disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace.	Sunday, 1/3
Monday, 12/28		
7:44 p.m.	Suspicious activity at cemetery on Turnpike Road. Investigated.	2:59 a.m.
Tuesday, 12/29		
6:09 p.m.	Arrest of [redacted]	[redacted] arrested for disturbing the peace and domestic assault and battery.
		[redacted] arrested for disturbing the peace and domestic assault and battery.
		Thursday, 12/31
		6:29 p.m.
		[redacted] arrested on T Street for disturbing the peace, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest.
		Friday, 1/1
		[redacted] arrested for failure to stop at sign, failure to use seat belt, procuring liquor for a person under 21, unlicensed use of a motor vehicle.

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GILL from pg 6

the town of Gill, Native tribes, and local volunteers, will be discussed.

At least three federally recognized tribes have expressed interest in the future use of the parcel, due to historical accounts of an unusual "spokes burial" on or near the parcel, as well as archaeological findings and oral histories pointing to the presence of Native artifacts on the site.

Reached by phone on Tuesday, Doug Harris, preservationist for ceremonial landscapes for the Narragansett Indian Tribe, said the data from the ground penetrating radar survey of the parcel is still being processed, but "There have been findings. We should hold off on discussing those findings until the meeting."

Along with other towns in Franklin County, Gill will be asked to approve the inclusion of the town of Leverett in the

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at this year's annual town meeting. If two-thirds (14) of the member towns approve Leverett's bid to join, each town's assessment may drop slightly, Purington said. Meanwhile the town is advised to budget \$3,227 for district services this year, a \$52 increase from last year, which Purington said reflected a rise in Gill's equalized value from last year.

A seminar on the so-called "stretch code," a voluntary energy efficiency add-on to the newly updated state building code which towns and cities may adopt, will be held at the Hampton Inn in Greenfield on January 21st from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Adopting the stretch code is one of the measures that can qualify towns for future funding for energy conservation from a \$10 million annual fund under the state's Green Communities Act.



FOUR WINDS from pg 12

possible candidates, the board and students come to a consensus in choosing recipients each year.

So far, the recipients of the Kazokas award have been: inventor Mark Dupuis, educator Walton Condon, activist Juanita Nelson, and educator Susan Leary.

Condon, a former science teacher at Northfield Mount Hermon, and Nelson attended the school's anniversary celebration.

The name of Four Winds School comes from the Navajo, who revered the four winds. Here, the four winds are represented by community, teacher, parents and students. Students

come from surrounding towns, largely to the south, and are drawn to the school for a variety of reasons - boredom, frustration, not doing well in their studies, and the desire to be in smaller classes with a less structured curriculum. The small student body allows for more flexibility and individual attention than in public schools. Four Wind students go on to public high schools, private schools and boarding schools before enrolling in college.

Wes Mason was in the first class at Four Winds and the first to graduate from college, at UMass.



WENDELL from pg 7

agreed to take the position, and Keller and selectboard member Jeffery Pooser signed her appointment slip.

They also signed a new full alcohol pouring license for the Deja Brew pub, which will allow the pub to serve liquor starting January 1st.

Keller reported that insulation work had started on the town hall, and workers expected to be back Monday, December 28th.

Aldrich said a plumber from Whittier Plumbing found a leak in the heater box on the stage and shut off the gas to that heater.

Pooser said the building has other glaring leaks that should be addressed, a back door that does

not seal, for example. He also suggested a programmable thermostat for the main hall that could be set to drop to maintenance temperature after the hall is used, in case someone using the hall forgets to turn the thermostat down when leaving.

Town treasurer Carolyn Manley asked for and received approval to borrow money from the stabilization fund to cover bills until the next round of taxes start coming in.

The assessors came in and said bills would be ready to be sent out near the end of January. Then the assessors went into executive session with the selectboard to discuss the value of real property.



LOCAL from pg 3

still spots available. Girls and boys in grades K through 2 are invited to learn basic basketball skills, develop a general value of sportsmanship, and have FUN. Extensive parental involvement is needed to ensure a small player to coach ratio, which will in turn maximize skill development. Call the parks and recreation for more information, at 863-3216

The parks and recreation would also like to announce the start of **open swimming** at the **Turners Falls High School** pool on Friday evenings. Children swim from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at a cost of \$1.50 each. Then from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., it's the adults' turn for \$2.50.

For those who don't know, the parks and recreation office has moved to the basement of town hall for the winter, in the old Montague police department office.

Come meet Cate Woolner of Northfield for an open reception at the **Great Falls Discovery Center**, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 9th, to hear about her recent adventure to Antarctica. Also learn more about the methods Woolner uses to create her amazing photographs.

FCHCC from pg 11

design a plan of care and proceed or leave the information for families to consider further.

"Today, cases are much more complicated. People would rather be at home than in a nursing home but the more frail they get the more services are needed," she said.

Cindy likes her work as an intake specialist because she teaches people who are hungry to

learn.

"The more people know about their options the better choices they can make," she said. If you have a problem but aren't sure what you need or if you know what you need but don't know how to find it the Resource Consultants at FCHCC are the people to talk to first. The Resource Consultants at FCHCC are waiting to take your call. Our Intake Assessment Specialists

Refreshments will be served. This presentation will be followed up on Thursday evening, January 21st, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. with Woolner's presentation of the **Last Continent: Visions of Antarctica**. Join Woolner for a photo presentation detailing her adventure as she relates historical and scientific stories from the seventh continent. **Sharon Porlier**, owner of the **Box Car Restaurant** in Erving, used her natural instincts during an afternoon lunch hour last month to save the life of one of her customers. An elderly customer began to choke, and Porlier rushed to her assistance and performed the Heimlich maneuver. When the EMTs arrived on the scene they informed Porlier that she had probably saved the woman's life. By this time, the lady appeared more relaxed, seated at her table, sipping on her coffee. Both the Erving police and fire departments presented Porlier with commendations for her quick response.

The **Turners Falls High School** baseball team will conduct a **bottle and can drive** on Saturday, January 9th, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Turners Falls High School, Tumpike Road, in

Montague. Funds raised will go toward the purchase of new uniforms. Residents may drop off their returnables at the school. Cash donations also welcome.

To arrange a pickup on January 9th, contact Ryan Bernard at 522-7306.

In the Spirit of Martin Luther King, an evening of music and spoken word for families, will take place on Saturday, January 16th at 7:30 p.m., at the **Brick House**, in Turners Falls. Honoring the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the vocal duo Moonlight and Morning Star and their son, jazz pianist Miro Sprague, will join together to offer the community an evening of music and poetry for all ages at the Brick House. They'll be playing across many genres: jazz, blues, rap, world music, gospel, Civil Rights anthems, and originals, and they are calling young local poets and rappers to join them in honoring Dr. King.

Call (413) 422-1010 or write star-moon@comcast.net, if you would like to submit pieces that reflect the legacy of MLK.

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



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Laurel Lake Break Ins

Monday, 12/14
2:12 p.m. 911 Call from Box Car Restaurant for subject actively choking.
Tuesday, 12/15
1:35 p.m. Felony larceny reported on Gunn Street, under investigation.
Saturday, 12/19
8:45 a.m. [redacted] arrested for driving with a suspended license.
2:30 p.m. Several reports of breaking and entering in the Laurel Lake area, under investigation.

Sunday, 12/20
7:31 p.m. [redacted] arrested for domestic assault and battery.
Thursday, 12/24
11:05 a.m. Arrested [redacted] for warrant.
12:45 p.m. Slashed tires on Forest Street, under investigation.
3:00 p.m. [redacted] cited for felony malicious destruction of property.

4:28 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, reckless endangerment, marked lanes violation and open container violation.
Saturday, 12/26
3:06 p.m. Report of leaking propane truck heading west-bound on Route 2. Unable to locate, advised Gill police.
Thursday, 12/31
11:02 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for possession of a Class D drug and carrying a dangerous weapon, switch blade.
3:52 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted]

for operating a motor vehicle without insurance and with a revoked registration.
12:50 a.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating under the influence of liquor, second offense and open container violation.
Friday, 1/1
10:37 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Old State Road. [redacted] arrested for domestic assault and battery.
Saturday, 1/2
9:45 a.m. Fire on paper machine at the Erving Paper Mill. Erving fire department on scene, fire out before arrival.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



THURSDAY, JANUARY 7th

Echo Lake Concert Series: *Emma's Revolution*, Pat Humphries & Sandy O, 7:30 p.m. at Leverett Town Hall. \$12 to \$15. No advance sells or reservations. Info: (413) 548-9394. Doors open at 7 p.m. Emma's Revolution is also currently touring in support of their new CD collaborative with Holly Near, "We Came To Sing!" Tender and daring a cappella vocal arrangements of some of Holly Near's most-requested songs are paired with some of Emma's Revolution's most popular songs, and some new tracks that perfectly fit the three women's voices!

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Falltown String Band*, 7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8th

Friends Coffeehouse hosts *Gypsy Wranglers!* Swinging, bluesing and jazzing, creating a musical cattle drive from Paris, Texas, to Paris, France. Voted favorite swing band by the Valley Advocate's Grand Blam Slam six years in a row. Doors open 6:30 p.m. with program starting at 7 p.m. Donations accepted. Refreshments available. In the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jim Olsen's Rendezvous Ramble*, free, 7 p.m. then at 9 p.m. *High Country, Low-Fi* with Jeffrey Foucault and friends, \$5 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*. The Valley's legendary Reggae Band brings it all to you! 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Merrick Section All. CD Release Party* Country/bluegrass/rock 9:30 p.m.

Between the Uprights at 2nd Street, Turners Falls: *Curley Fingers Dupree Band*, 8:30 p.m. Top 40, dance and hip



Swing with the *Gypsy Wranglers* at the Great Falls Coffeehouse, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls on Friday, January 8th at 7 p.m.

hop music spun by DJ Brownie in the Extra Point Nightclub at 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9th

Artist's reception for Cate Woolner with photography displayed at the Great Falls Discovery Center in the Great Hall. Meet Cate and speak to her about her amazing adventure to Antarctica. Learn about the methods Cate uses to create her photographs. Refreshments will be served. 1 to 3 p.m. Photography is displayed through January 31st.

Snowshoe Hike offered in Royalston. Hike, ski or snowshoe around Royalston's Long Pond with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust and the Appalachian Mountain Club, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Long time Mount Grace members and volunteers Don Flye and Dam Bolton will co-lead the 7.5 mile moderately strenuous hike. Please bring a lunch or trail snacks and weather-appropriate clothing. The event is free. Please sign up. contact: David Kotker at (978) 248-2055 x19 or kotker@mountgrace.org.

Winter Trails Day at Northfield Mountain, Rt. 63, Northfield. 1 p.m. Free instructional clinics provided for first-time skiers and snow-shoers. Limited quantity of ski equipment and snowshoe rentals available at no charge for first-time users. This celebration is to attract children and adults who are new to winter sports. To register call (800) 859-2960.

Contra Dance at the Wendell Town Hall, Wendell Center, 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Caller Jeff Petrovitch and joining the band, two special guest musicians, Van Kaynor (Molly's brother) & Peter Barnes... these guys are truly great, seasoned contra dance musicians who will make this dance an event not to be missed if you like to contra dance. All are welcome! Any money raised from donations will go, in full, toward the restoration of the Wendell Meeting House.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Abi Tapia* at 7 p.m.. Info (413) 863-3111. *Brooke Brown Saracino* will also perform this evening.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Watcher & The Original Cowards*, 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie*. Singing all your favorite Johnny Cash tunes and many more. 9 to 11 p.m.

Between the Uprights at 2nd Street, Turners Falls: Top 40, hip-hop and dance music spun by *Mass Mobile DJs* in the Extra Point Nightclub, 10 p.m.

JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

tesy of Frontier Regional High School National Honor Society. Info. and registration call (413) 665-1151 or (413) 768-9857. See www.cafesun.org. Continues Thursday evenings: 1/21, 1/28 and February 4th.

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

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15th

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

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16th

Camouflage in Nature What tools do animals have to survive? Come learn about different types of camouflage animals use to keep them from being easy prey. And, why do some animals use camouflage, while others don't? Great Falls Discovery Center interpreter will share all of this information and more! Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. 1 to 2 p.m.

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

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Jason Connelley Band* Classic Rock & Blues 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10th

Talon of the Blackwater. Laura Siersema, vocals, keyboard, Billy Klock, drums, Wim Auer, fretless bass. At the Black Moon Music Lounge, 37 State St. (Rt 202) Belchertown, no cover, 8 p.m. (413) 323-0013. More information at: www.myspace.com/blackmoonjazz.

Dead of Winter

Film Series at the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, written and directed by John Cameron Mitchell. Trans-everything rock opera: Transgressive, transsexual, transformative, transplendent. Super-diva Hedwig, née Hansel, tours the US with her rock band as she tells her life story and follows the ex-boyfriend/bandmate who stole her songs. 7 p.m.



Jeffrey Foucault and friends: *High Country, Low-Fi* at the Rendezvous, Turners Falls on Friday, January 8th at 9 p.m. Preceded at 7 by *Jim Olsen's Ramble*

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: TNT KARAOKE with Opa Opa specials & swag, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Joe Fitzpatrick*. Acoustic Trio - Warped Americana, 8 to 10 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Second Sunday Comedy*, back and funnier than ever. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13th

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Spouse & The Milkman's Union*, 9 p.m. \$3 cover.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14th
FREE Polka Lessons For Kids & Adults start with Sunderland's very own Tom and Deb Zimnowski. Lessons for everyone Thursday evenings 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Sunderland Elementary School. Free babysitting services available cour-

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17th
Dead of Winter Film Series at the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Endless Summer - 1966*. Written and directed by Bruce Brown, and the crown jewel to ten years of Bruce Brown surfing documentaries. Brown follows two young surfers around the world in search of the perfect wave. Yes, summer will return.

THROUGH JANUARY 31st

The Gallery at Hallmark, Turners Falls: *MySight* gallery exhibition, featuring work by Hallmark Institute Class of 2010.

ONGOING FRIDAYS

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

ONGOING

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

HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER

MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m.
TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 to 6 p.m.
THURS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 to 8 p.m.
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips.
Info: Jared at 863-9559.
Hot Spot Teen Center is in The Brick House
24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376



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Showtimes for
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1. AVATAR in DTS sound
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2. ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKUEL
PG in DTS sound
DAILY 12:00 3:00 7:00 9:00
3. THE BLIND SIDE PG13
DAILY 12:00 3:00 7:00 9:30
4. IT'S COMPLICATED R
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:20
5. SHERLOCK HOLMES PG13
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:20
6. LEAP YEAR PG
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30
7. DAY BREAKERS
R in DTS sound
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30



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The Rendezvous

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9PM: HIGH COUNTRY, LOW-FI w/ Jeffrey Foucault and friends \$5
SAT: 1/9 9:30 PM | \$3
Watcher & The Original Cowards
SUN: 1/10 8 PM - 12 AM | FREE
TNT Karaoke w. Opa Opa specials & swag
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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – With the Solstice on December 21st, the shortest day (and longest night) have come and gone, and the minutes of daylight are now lengthening. My brother-in-law, who is an amateur astrologer, tells me that the Earth will be closest to the Sun, at a point known as the perihelion, on January 3rd. From that day forward we will notice morning daylight occurring slightly earlier each day.

It's confusing to consider that the coldest month of the year occurs when we are closest to the Sun. It helps to remember that while we are in winter at this time, the lower half of the world is in summer. The Earth will be furthest from the Sun on July 4th

of the coming year.

From the gardener's viewpoint, the significant fact is that the days are lengthening and eventually we will return to spring and summer, the most joyous and productive months from the weed-grubber's standpoint.

There is much to be done before then.

The cold of January is a great time to pore over the glossy, colored seed catalogues and send out the order for next season's precious seeds.

Hopefully, at the end of last year's garden season you made a list of the fruits you enjoyed the most. Try not to dwell on which crops were most productive or prolific, because that is usually a seasonal matter.

Last year was a poor one for tomatoes, between the tomato blight many gardeners suffered and the damp, cool season we all endured. Cold weather crops like lettuce and spinach did very well, as also did root crops and beans. My squash and cucumber plants, like my tomatoes, languished in

the chilly sunless days.

Don't let the memories of the past season determine your list. Grow what you like.

For this coming year, I am committed to choosing heirloom plants instead of hybrids. While many hybrids are bred to resist unhealthy plant conditions and produce more perfect fruits, they are products of a kind of genetic engineering that is artificial cross-pollination. Heirlooms, on the other hand, have survived because they are hardy in their own ways and popular for taste or color.

Finally, if you have the interest, you can harvest and save your own seed from heirloom plants and be assured this seed will produce again, true to form.

So far, my garden wish list is as follows: six tomato varieties, three sweet peppers, pole beans, bush peas, leaf lettuce, kale and carrots. I will also grow winter squash. This crop can of course be bought locally by the half-bushel or more at the end of the garden season. Non-organic winter squashes are some of the most sprayed vegetables, along with potatoes, and also retain the sprayed chemicals as long as any crop. So I will continue to grow

my own for fall and early winter storage, because I know exactly how they will be raised.

The tomato seed will be coming from two companies that specialize in this delectable fruit: Tomato Growers Supply and Totally Tomatoes. I will be growing: *Pineapple*, a large red-and yellow-striped beauty prized for its mild flavor and for how attractive it is sliced and served solo; *Delicious*, your classic beefsteak variety; *Brandywine Red* (Land's Valley strain) for its intense tomato flavor; *Rose*, a sweet Amish heirloom; *Sungold*, alas, the one hybrid, but the best producing and sweetest cherry tomato I've ever eaten; and a newcomer for my garden, *Chocolate Cherry*, a reddish-brown tomato prized for its flavor and storage quality.

My sweet peppers include: *Golden Calwonder*, a sweet yellow beauty; *King of the North*, which ripens to a bright red; and my favorite, *Chocolate Beauty*, which turns from purple to brown and grills up so sweetly, even if it is a hybrid.

Both beans and peas are old varieties. I'm growing *Kentucky Wonder* pole beans again, because they produce well, whatever the season. Picked young

and thin, they are very tender and tasty. They are forgiving, too, because if you don't keep up with them and they grow too big they can be used as a shell bean. *Knight* is an early, small-vined pea and the sweetest I've grown. Get them in early because they don't mind the cold and then enjoy an early feast of garden candy.

The jury is still out on the varieties of carrot and kale I will pick. It's fun to read about all the options and then choose a familiar one, or something new for your garden. Whichever you choose, be sure to order in time to plant as soon as the ground is workable. Carrots consume the length of the season to produce their full growth. Kale can be harvested at will all season, and even past the first light frosts.

So when the days end too early, giving way to the darkness, sit by the fire or a friendly lamp and enjoy those seed catalogues. The worst that can happen is that your eyes and taste buds will lead you to order much more than you have time or space to grow. If that happens, share with a friend or store the seed in a cool, dry place for another year.

Happy garden planning!

At the Golden Jubilee of the Montague Town Hall



A photo of the Montague town hall, taken in 1899 (courtesy of Peter Miller & Kyle Scott's Images of America: Montague)

Recently completed repairs to the brick façade of the former Montague town hall, on Center Street in Montague Center, brought to mind this article from the Turners Falls Reporter, published exactly 101 years ago, on January 7th, 1909.

"The Montague Town Hall was the scene of great festivity last evening when the golden jubilee ball and concert drew to its doors perhaps the second most memorable gathering in its quiet country history. Half a century ago, as the old program, framed and hanging in the hall attests, there was a concert by the Montague Cornet Band at the

new town hall to mark its completion. It was a brand new structure then, and a finely planned and built building. Last night, after its recent improvements, it showed itself as a rejuvenated and modernized structure, still in the leading class as a small public building.

"The urbanizing of the country shows clearly in the time of opening of the two concerts – that of 1859 began at 7 precisely with the doors opening at 6 – that of 1909 at 8. But the men and women of today who assembled at the hall last night, many of them in resurrected, ancient finery, women in hoopskirts and cassimere shawls and sky-scrappers, men in moleskins and dick-eys and beavers – were given a more varied program than their fathers listened to on that bitter, cold 6th of January 1859.

No body of outraged taxpayers, however, robbed the ticket booth as they did 50 years ago

and demanded free entrance to the hall. Whether this shows less spunk now is not clear, but everyone was glad to pay his share last night to see and hear and dance.

"The orchestra played 'Auld Lang Syne' as the curtain rose on a stage trimmed with golden festoons and laurel leaves. In front of the stage were warming pans, foot stoves, lanterns, etc. suggestive of the old ways and old days. The snare drum which the late Joseph Clapp played at the original concert was on the stage, together with one of the old band caps. In the center of the stage were Mrs. Louis Councilman in old costume, at a spinning wheel, and Mrs. Anson Cobb in Priscilla costume at a flax wheel. They formed a living picture which was greatly enjoyed.

"It was incumbent on the committee in charge to have music which should not be inferior to that of the concert of 50 years ago, and while there is no band in the village now, the music provided was by the Cole Orchestra of Orange, W.S. Cole leader, which played medleys of old and modern pieces, and by Miss Mabel Lincoln of Montague, whose piano solos were greatly appreciated.

"Herbert Parsons of

Greenfield made an address, speaking on the conditions of life in country towns a half century ago in comparison with those of the present time, particularly as to public spirit. He suggested that while there had been a development of pride in physical conditions, a greater interest being shown now in appearance of the streets and homes, it was at least open to question if interest in correct government is keeping up.

"The town hall is the New England temple of government,

"While there had been a development of pride in physical conditions, a greater interest being shown now in appearance of the streets and homes, it was at least open to question if interest in correct government is keeping up."

Herbert Parsons
January 7th, 1909

the house of the best form of local government yet given the world, but it is to preserve its dignity and worth only by the distinterested service of the interests of the town by all the citizens and in the largest degree by those whose talents make it pos-

sible for them to give the most.

"Mr. Parsons appeared in costume and was joyfully greeted, especially by A.M. Lawrence, who hastened to his assistance with an ancient toddy glass and enormous old glass bottle.

"Fred Whitmore of Sunderland gave a history of the town, especially that of the town hall. The only man present who had anything to do with the building of the town hall was George Goddard.

"There were about 50 couples present in old fashioned costumes. At the close of the concert, a flash picture of the audience was taken to hand down to the committee which shall celebrate the centennial of the old hall in 1959. Aunt Polly (Miss Mary Nichols) in a delightful old ruffled cap, served real hand-made pumpkin, apple and mince pie, twisted doughnuts and coffee in the dining hall during dancing. Her luncheon, served in the light of many bayberry dips, was another unusual feature much enjoyed. Then the hall was cleared for dancing, and the old and the new in costume, the old and the young in years, danced the night away."

Thanks to Lilian Fiske of the Montague historical society for supplying the copy.

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