



VALLEY IDOL 2008
Erin Richman of Royalston
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SHEFFIELD ARTISTS
Explore World & Local Architecture
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JUNE 5, 2008

Wendell Cuts \$98,203 from Mahar Request

Town Meeting Wraps in One Night

JOSH HEINEMANN - At one session, on the evening of June 3rd, Wendell citizens acted on all 29 articles of the annual town meeting warrant. Voters approved an operating budget of \$1,692,806, as well as payment on outstanding loans for the purchase of Fiske Pond, the town's new fire truck, town office property, and payment on the construction loan for the new town buildings.

Voters went along with the finance committee's recommendation that approximately \$80,000 in payments be taken from the stabilization account to reduce the impact of the construction expense on the tax rate for the first few years of the USDA loan for the new town library and office building, until some of the town's shorter term loans are paid off.

At last year's annual town meeting, Mahar Regional High School superintendent Reza Namin walked out abruptly during the contentious debate over the Mahar budget. This year, despite Namin's protest that it would be devastating to the high school's programs, Wendell voters followed the recommendation of the finance committee and approved, by simple majority, an assessment of \$266,626, which was \$98,203 less than the school committee's \$364,829 request. The finance committee arrived at the lower figure by using the alternative method of assessment for Mahar, which is calculated on the basis of an equal per student payment for each of the four towns in the district, as was called for in the original contract that created the school district.

The higher amount presented by the school

committee is based on the statutory method of assessment, and would result in Wendell's paying \$7,945 per student compared with the \$5,190 per student that Orange pays, and would total an additional \$98,213 for the town.

Finance committee member Jim Slavus said, "We're solidly behind the Mahar budget," but he called the statutory method "a distorted assessment."

Dr. Namin protested that Wendell's approval of the alternative payment would have a devastating impact on the school, and if followed by other towns would result in the school having no official budget. In that case, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education would assess each town monthly at 1/12th of last year's operating budget, a figure that would be higher than the amount

WENDELL pg 12

Tanzer Trial Gets Underway

ONE YEAR AFTER STRATHMORE BLAZE

BY DAVID DETMOLD GREENFIELD

Sergeant Chip Dodge of the Montague police took the witness stand in Greenfield Superior Court on Tuesday, June 3rd, during the preliminary motions phase of the arson trial of Jonathan Tanzer.

Tanzer, 44, a former resident of 5 Chestnut Lane in Turners, has been jailed in Greenfield since June 12th of last year, charged with breaking and entering in the night-



DETMOLD PHOTO

On Wednesday, the jury viewed the scene of the May 26th, 2007 fire at the Strathmore Mill. Here the jury bus pulls a U-turn in the middle of the street in front of Southworth; the narrow access road to Strathmore is visible at right. The jury also viewed Jonathan Tanzer's apartment on 5 Chestnut Lane, but spent most of the time turning the bus around in the narrow cul de sac.

time, burning a building, and burning personal property in connection with the fire that destroyed Building #10 of the Strathmore Mill in the early morning hours of May 26th, 2007.

A heroic response by the Turners Falls Fire Department, backed up by dozens of area

TRIAL pg 11

Turners Falls Dominates Tournament Play

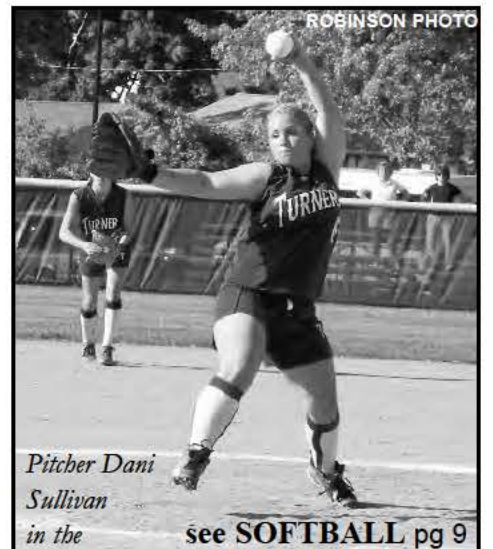
BY MATT ROBINSON

CHICOPEE - The hardest time to play good defense is when you're way ahead. When your batters are scoring all sorts of runs and the game's almost over you have a tendency to relax, especially when you have another game scheduled in less than 24 hours against the fourth best team in Western Massachusetts.

But the Turners girls softball

team never let down their guard. On Sunday June 1st, pitcher Danielle Sullivan and the Turners defense held 9th ranked Westfield Vocational scoreless. That's the same Westfield Voc team that scored 18 runs against Putnam on Thursday, May 29th.

By the third inning, with a huge lead, Powertown skipper Gary Mullins began sending in the reserves. But the next two



ROBINSON PHOTO

Pitcher Dani Sullivan in the

see SOFTBALL pg 9

Father and Son



TEAM UP FOR PARAMEDIC DUTY

JOE KWIECINSKI TURNERS FALLS - Meet Turners Falls' father and son paramedic team: James Bartus, Sr. and James Bartus, Jr. Listen as

walk through my backyard right into my father's backyard," noted James, Jr.

Both men's eyes light up as they talk about service to the public, or

they tell you about their devotion to duty, their commitment to delivering the highest quality emergency medical care to Montague, Gill, and Erving, often delivered under some of the most adverse circumstances imaginable.

The Bartuses work for Baystate Health Ambulance (BHA). Dad lives at 117 Montague Street in Turners Falls, while "Junior" (don't let him hear you call him that) resides at 177 Turnpike Road. "I can

about their family. The elder Bartus has been married to his wife Dorothy for close to four decades now. The younger Jim has been married six years; his spouse Christine is a nurse. James, Sr. is 56 years old. His son is 30.

But as a baby, young James had a remarkably difficult time. Born with a congenital heart defect, he was in an intensive care unit for a week and a half, beginning when he was three

see EMTs pg 10

PET OF THE WEEK High Octane



Lola

My name is Lola and I'm a six-month-old female sharpei mix in need of a good home. If my kennel were the size of a football field, I would be a happy camper. Instead, I'm sittin' here in this little kennel just dying to get out of here! I have the energy of a football team's worth of dogs. Sometimes I can be a little shy, but once I'm comfortable, no one can match me for energy! I play hard! So come get me on outta here and let's have some major fun! I should live with children 10 and over. I'm not good with cats, but I'd love to play with other dogs! For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email leverett@dpvhs.org.

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WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS Library Friends Meet Sunday

Friends of the Wendell Library will hold their annual membership meeting on Sunday, June 8th, at 2 p.m. in the Herrick Room of the library. All are welcome; new members can join on the spot, officers and board members will be elected, and nominations will be taken from the floor.

Friends' president Margo Culley said, "It is hard to believe that it is almost one year since we opened the doors of our new library. Our amazingly busy and successful new year would not have been possible without each and every one of you."

She continued, "An impor-

tant part of the success of our new library has been an active Friends membership. Please come to the annual meeting to celebrate and help plan for the future. We need your ideas for programming, for fundraising, and for uses of our community spaces, including our marvelous stone performance space. We would welcome your thoughts as to whether we should hold a 'first anniversary' party.

Librarian Rose Heidekamp will provide a review of the first year of operations in the new library, and how Friends' financial contributions have enhanced the facility and programming.

MONTAGUES LIBRARIES NEWS Summer Reading Starts June 12th

BY LINDA HICKMAN
MONTAGUE - The Montague Public Libraries *Wild Reads at Your Library* summer reading program starts on the last day of school, Thursday, June 12th. Children of any age and teens are invited to participate.

Sign-ups take place at the Carnegie, Millers Falls and Montague Center Libraries. Children read at home and receive weekly reading incentive prizes at the libraries. Many exciting programs and activities will be held at the libraries throughout the summer. The kick-off event is Live Birds of Prey with Tom Ricardi on Wednesday, June 18th, 10:30 a.m., at the Carnegie Library. Other special events will include a new No Strings Marionette Company pup-

pet show based on *The Hobbit*, on Wednesday, August 13th, 10 a.m., a Live Reptile Show, and a Manga (Japanese anime) program in August. Weekly events held throughout the summer include the following:

Stories and Songs with Children's Librarian Linda Hickman on guitar and banjo will be held on Mondays, 6:30 p.m. at the Montague Center Library. Wild Reads programs designed for grades K - 4 will be held on Tuesdays, 10 a.m. at the Carnegie Library. The wild themes will include Pirates, the Wild West, Big Cats, Monsters, Sharks, and Dragons. The Millers Falls Library Club, featuring arts and crafts, games, and music meets on Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- June 9th - 13th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Council-on-Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Mealsite Manager is Chris Richer. The Center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. A reservation is necessary and transportation can be provided. Trips: Call the Senior Center 863-9357 or 863-4500

Monday, 9th
9-11 a.m. Foot Screening. Gill & Montague residents only. \$5.
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

Tuesday, 10th
9 a.m. Walking Club meets at the Senior Center and walks west on Fifth Street to the Bike path, walks to Cabot Station and returns to center by way of Montague City Road. The entire loop is approximately 4 miles. The goal is to do the entire loop but the expectation is to do only what you can and turn around and return at whatever point is comfortable. Juice and crackers

served at the center. This is an Intergenerational program for people of all ages, bring your kids and grandkids.

11 a.m. "Why we need an override" - Jeff Singleton from the Montague Finance Board will be at the Senior Center to explain the override and Montague budget issues. He will answer questions about the town budget and the override.

Wednesday, 11th
9-11 a.m. Foot Screening. Gill & Montague residents only. \$5.
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Mealsite Meeting
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 12th
10 a.m. Coffee & Conversation
10:30 a.m. Michelle Miner, Community Liaison from Harborside Healthcare will give a thirty-minute program on Eye Safety. Learn about growing older with good vision and eye safety. We rely on sight more than any other sense, but the average home is full of dangers that often go unnoticed. In fact, accidents involving common household products cause 125,000 eye injuries each year. This presentation also discusses first aid for eye emergencies.
1 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 13th
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

Trips: Call the Senior Center 863-9357 or 863-4500

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 413-422-2584.

Monday, 2nd
9:00 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch

Tuesday, 3rd
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday, 4th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
12 Noon Bingo

Thursday, 5th
9 a.m. Aerobics
10:15 a.m. Pool

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

FACES & PLACES



Anja Schutz works her plot at the community garden on the corner of Fourth and L streets in Turners

photo: Joe Parzych

The weekly preschool story hour with Ruth O'Mara is held at the Carnegie Library on Wednesdays, 10:15 a.m. On Wednesday afternoons from 2 - 3 p.m., it is Teen Arts and Crafts Time at the Carnegie Library. Crafts will include bead making, jewelry, and wind chimes.

Music and Movement for young children with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson is held at the Millers Falls Library through June on Thursdays at 10 a.m. and will be offered at the Carnegie on Thursdays at 10 a.m. during July and August.

Monthly programs will include Mother Goose on the Loose on Saturdays at the Carnegie Library with Linda Hickman and Michael Nix. It will be held the first Saturday in June, the second Saturday in July, and the third Saturday in August. The Razzle

Dazzle Reading Camp and the Sheffield Summer School Program will be visiting the Carnegie Library weekly for programs featuring exciting books and themes in July and August.

Special parties will be held at each of the three Montague Libraries for summer reading program participants in the third week of August. The Carnegie Library party will include a live wild animal show.

For more information and for registration for the summer reading program visit the Carnegie, Millers Falls, or Montague Center Libraries. On-line reading program registration is also available, at www.readsinma.org/montague.

The Carnegie Library, 863-3214, in Turners Falls is open on Monday - Wednesday from 1 - 8 p.m., Thursday 1 - 5 p.m. and Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. It is closed on Saturdays for the summer. The Millers Falls Library, 659-3801, is open Tuesday and Thursday from 2 - 5 and 6 - 8 p.m. The Montague Center Library, 367-2852, is open Monday and Wednesday from 2 - 5 and 6 - 8 p.m.

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OUR VALLEY IDOL!

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - The judges were a bunch of whiners, the finalists were all class acts, and the grand prize went to Erin Richman, the young songstress from Royalston who had shown so much promise on audition night for this year's Valley Idol contest at the Shea.

She lived up to her promise, and then some.

Throughout the night of Saturday, May 31st, the three judges - Bill Jamieson, Ferne Bork, and Jamie Berger - took up much airtime complaining the contestants weren't giving them any reason to judge between them: they were all so good, how could they pick a winner?

But as soon as Richman parted the curtain for her final number - wearing a smashing red ball gown that glowed against the plush red curtain, and took her seat on the high stool, with her red hair framing her elfin features, and dove effortlessly into the deceptively simple Eva Cassidy version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" - a frisson of awareness swept through the auditorium. The difficulty of deciding melted away in the moment, and everyone knew: Here was this season's star. Here was our Valley Idol.

Which is not to say Richman didn't get a run for her money - \$1000 for the top prize - from runner up Jen Tobey, who pulled out all the stops with Bon Jovi's

"Wanted Dead or Alive," and Dave Peck, who delighted the audience with his tour de force rendering of Weird Al Yankovic's "One More Minute." But even though they rewarded Peck with the audience favorite award for an extra \$250 smackers, could anyone really imagine the coveted top slot going to a man who delivered lines like, "I'd rather clean all the bathrooms in Grand Central Station with my tongue than spend one more minute with you?"

Maybe next year.

Fourth runner up was Turners Falls's Tami Brooke, who did not let a little thing like the failure of her CD to play stop her from turning in a heartfelt a capella version of her chosen sound track number, receiving warm applause and kudos from the judges thereby.

Always a bridesmaid, never a bride, Vicki Stankiewicz of



DETMOLD PHOTO

Erin Richman of Royalston is our Valley Idol

Hadley came in fifth among the finalists, but took her defeat with the same good grace she displayed last year when the top honors also eluded her. Her fifth place showing came as something of a surprise, because she

really aced Tina Turner's "What's Love Got to Do With It?" turning that scorcher into a bonafide barnburner. But by the third night of competition, she had struck one too many poses to strike pay dirt.

In the Valley Idol Jr. competition, the kids showed the adults how to do it: with conviction.

Nine-year-old Leeanna Albanese of South Deerfield enjoyed every note of "Colors of the Wind" from Pocahontas, and delivered the song with such energy she

had the audience lapping it up like cream before the final verse ended. She was the winner of the 8 - 10 year old contingent.

Una Jensen, 11, the star of Shelburne, floored them with her definitive rendition of Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On." She looked classy in a cobalt blue dress with spangles, faux pearl necklace and earrings to match. Her delivery was understated and elegant, and though her voice was a bit raw in the higher register her emotional command of the material was unquestioned. She took top honors in the 11 - 14 set.

For the older teens, Cayla Plasse, 16, of Greenfield came in first, and wowed the audience with her simple, pure delivery of Evanescence's *My Immortal*. We look forward to seeing her compete with the adults as soon as she turns 18. From where we were sitting, she could bluff her way in now.

Congratulations Sister Joan Mullen



Sister Joan Mullen, president of the Sisters of Providence order, and formerly of Turners Falls, celebrated 50 years of service in her order at a jubilee on Sunday June 2nd at the Sisters of Providence Mother House in Holyoke. Many friends from Montague attended the celebration. Pictured (l to r) standing: Phyllis Boucher, Jason Viadero, Dom Viadero and Dr. Joe Viadero. Seated (l to r) are Mary Lou Bueno, Sister Joan Mullen and Dr. Ed Bueno.

GFDC Looking for "Friends"

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center is invited to the annual Friends event on Thursday evening, June 12. The Friends support the Discovery Center in a variety of ways, including greeting visitors to the center, operating the museum store, offering programs, and hosting the monthly coffeehouse series. Starting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday June 12, there will be food and refreshments served in the Great Hall of the Discovery Center, while guests try out a hands-on activity table,

view the current photo exhibit, and tour the museum and store.

From 6:15 to 7:00 p.m. there will be presentations, awards and a very brief meeting. Starting at 7 p.m., Dave Small will present a program on "Whip-Poor-Will in Montague" followed by a trip to see and hear Whip-Poor-Will on the Montague Plains. The Discovery Center is located at 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls and is handicapped accessible. For more info: call the Friends at 863-3221 X3.

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Override Needed as Montague Continues to Pursue Cost Control

BY ALLEN ROSS

MONTAGUE CENTER - It is no surprise that Montague, as most other Massachusetts towns, is facing a financial crisis. It is also clear that many of the circumstances leading to the current situation are beyond the immediate control of the town. Factors such as unfunded education-related mandates, rising fuel and health insurance costs, a national mortgage crisis and the associated recession, and the war in Iraq are clearly not of our doing.

It has become imperative to respond at a local level to minimize the negative impact of these state and national situations. We must continue to pursue local cost control as sensibly and fairly as possible.

Unfortunately, the challenge is daunting and painful and will require significant sacrifices from our whole community. The only options available at this time are to decrease expenses and increase revenue. Decreasing expenses means limiting town employees' wages and benefits, in which case loss of personnel and serv-

ices is a likely outcome.

I strongly feel that contributions to the financial solution should be as broad as possible, and not unfairly and preponderantly imposed on our town staff.

In my opinion, increasing revenue in the short term is only possible by a Proposition 2½ override. While property tax is not the ideal source of revenue, it tends to distribute the financial burden over the broadest number of residents, all of whom benefit from town services.

I strongly support the passage of an override as a necessary component in helping Montague continue its evolution as a stable and forward-moving town. Hopefully, as we continue to confront our difficult financial picture, we can minimize the blaming between the villages and districts and face these challenges in a spirit of cooperation.

Allen Ross is chair of the Montague selectboard. The opinions expressed here are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of anyone else in town government.



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Frank Discussion of Rising Taxes Needed

BY RAY DIDONATO

WENDELL - I am writing to respond to an editorial by Wendell selectboard member Dan Keller in last week's *Montague Reporter* (VI #34). In his letter, Keller mentions 'hobgoblins' residents raise in relation to increased tax bills in Wendell, in particular the town building projects.

As a participant in the list-serv discussion he references, I would first like to point out that there was only a passing reference to the construction projects as a contributing factor in this year's tax bills by one list-serv contributor, followed by Keller's rather lengthy response. The major crux of the conversation involved increased assessments - at a time when real estate prices are supposedly on the decline - and the relationship between assessments, the tax rate, and tax bills. The general consensus held that regardless of whether we pay for town services via increased assessments or an increased tax rate, our tax bills here in Wendell are likely to go up.

I have still not heard or seen an adequate explanation for why local assessments are rising as real estate values are decreasing, though I'm sure if our assessments were to decrease, our tax rate would only increase to compensate.

It is unfortunate that in defending the town construc-

tion projects, which I feel needed no defense in this context, Keller perpetuates the false notion that "increases people have seen in their property taxes this year are not related to the projects, with the exception of payments for Fiske Pond, and the Meltzer property."

As a finance committee member later confirmed, payments for Fiske Pond are decreasing every year, as our principal payment remains steady while our interest payments decline.

Nor do I think it is satisfying for taxpayers to read Keller citing Reagan era policies and our regressive tax structure to explain this year's tax bill increase. While these are large issues with merits for discussion, they are hardly new issues, nor do they adequately explain why local taxes are increasing now.

There are many likely reasons for increases in the tax bill, for example increased fuel costs, health care costs, and costs of public education - including the flawed Chapter 70 state funding formula which reflects in our distorted Mahar assessment - and PILOT payments (which Keller rightly brings up), just to name a few. And while Keller claims otherwise, I'm willing to wager that some of this year's tax increase also relates to heating, maintaining, servicing or otherwise

operating our new town offices, even though the building is energy efficient, and many volunteers have worked to make it function as the wonderful building it is.

Next year, as Keller writes, the costs of the construction projects will kick into the tax bill. I think at that point he will have some difficulty pointing to Federal Revenue Sharing, PILOT payments, and the regressive tax structure when citizens open their FY09 bills.

A little more of an honest discussion now of why our tax bills are increasing, rather than an historical overview of factors which I assume fiscal planners have been aware of and working under for years, may help to alleviate some of the reaction when those tax bills arrive.

Let's have a frank discussion about how and where our taxes have increased between last year and this year, line by line, item by item, not to demonize or criticize any particular project, but just to honestly discuss. We should be able to compare last year's budget with this year's budget to clearly see what has increased, and then be able to discuss why the increases occurred in real terms.

A fully informed public will be more apt to understand the numbers reflected on the tax bill and less apt to react negatively.

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 6/4/08



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

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GUEST EDITORIAL

Stepping up to the Plate for the Override

BY JEFF SINGLETON
MONTAGUE CENTER - Last week, Montague finance committee chair John Hanold presented a detailed, well written account of how the town of Montague came to the decision to support a Proposition 2½ override for the town operating budget. One of his key points is that this process is complicated. I would like to make a somewhat different point.

Each year, the finance committee holds extensive hearings on the budget. Each year, supporters of various programs - the libraries, parks and recreation, the senior center and others - come to us advocating for those services. When town meeting time approaches and potential budget cuts are on the agenda, oversight boards and advocates often crowd meetings opposing cutbacks.

We are told that libraries are essential, particularly in hard times. We are told that the senior center is a great community space that is filled with activities and support programs for our seniors. We are told that parks and recreation activities are vital, particularly for youth in our community. A hearing about the recycling program is crowded with supporters, who argue this program has been a model in the region.

As you may have guessed by the tone of the last paragraph, I strongly agree with these sentiments. Indeed, one of the reasons I joined the finance committee was to try to help figure out how to make the budget work so we can keep these good programs!

The last town meeting also agreed with these sentiments and responded by cutting other parts of the budget to save these programs. The meeting took them off the proposed 'basket override,' a kind of automatic

chopping block, and returned them to the operating budget. But town meeting also recognized the budget is not balanced, and supported a \$150,000 override to help plug the gap. That override has been endorsed by both the selectboard and finance committee.

The proposed override is only one part of a balanced solution to the structural gap the town now faces. That gap on the town side of the budget currently exceeds \$400,000. But we are not trying to solve this problem only with a tax increase. Town meeting has also voted over \$200,000 in cuts in the town budget. These cuts target some of the central causes of the structural gap, but they also fall primarily on the wages, benefits and jobs of town employees. We will also be making extensive use of reserves to close the budget gap, a necessary but dangerous action.

Only a balanced solution to our budget problem is viable in the long run. To simply cut wages, benefits and jobs every year is unfair and unworkable.



To rely primarily on reserves to close the gap creates a bigger problem in the very near future. Indeed, one of the reasons the problem is so great this year is that we have relied on reserves in the recent past. We need to deal with the revenue side of the budget equation too.

Realistically, a Proposition 2½ override is currently the only way to address the revenue side of the equation. We have little control over other revenue sources. State aid (primarily lottery distributions) and local receipts (auto excise tax, fees, etc.) are essentially flat.

Dealing with the revenue side requires the active support of those who, year in and out, come to finance committee meetings opposing service cuts. It will not work to simply advo-

cate for programs, leaving it to the selectboard and finance committee to figure out how to pay for them.

Tax increases in the form of Proposition 2½ overrides are difficult and unpopular. We all hesitate to support them, particularly given their impact on those on fixed incomes. But sometimes tax increases are necessary, and it is the job of town leaders, including advocates for key programs, to make the case for them. This happens in many other towns in the state. Montague is not a special case.

Although the original 'basket override' containing cuts has been eliminated, the reality is that if the current override fails, those cuts will be back on the table. The same advocacy that persuaded town meeting to restore money to the libraries, parks and recreation, the health department and the senior center needs to be extended in support of the override.

If there are any questions about the budget process that led to this override, please feel free to contact me. I will also try to

respond to questions posted on the montaguema.net website. The finance committee has not had the opportunity to review this letter, so the views expressed here are mine alone.

Jeff Singleton can be reached at: 413-367-2657 or at: singleje@bc.edu.

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Bike Path Ribbon Cutting

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GREAT FALLS - Friday was a beautiful sunny day for a bike path ribbon cutting, and some of the original members of the

Franklin County Bikeway Committee were still around to celebrate it.

Lyman 'Bill' Griswold, 90, of Greenfield, was a member of the bikeway committee "more than 20 years ago," when Dan Garvey was the state commissioner for highways. He recalled discussing the proposed Franklin County bikeway with Garvey, who was not shy about stating an opinion on the project. "He was clear the Norwottuck Trail [from Northampton to Amherst] had priority. That slowed things down."

In fact, planning for the Franklin County Bikeway began in the 70s, according to a fact sheet distributed by the Franklin Regional County of Governments on Friday. It's a wonder people's memories stretch that far back. But FRCOG director Linda Dunlavy ran through a litany of roadblocks that contributed to the delay in bringing the one mile Riverside



(Left to right) FRCOG director Linda Dunlavy, Bikeway Committeeman Chris Ethier, Mass Highway Commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky, Mass Highway District 2 Director Al Stegemann, Deerfield Selectboard member Carolyn Shores Ness, Congressman John Olver, Representative Steve Kulik, and Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner Richard Sullivan cut through the red tape at the official opening of the Canalside Bike Path

Greenway trail in Greenfield and the three and a half mile canalside trail in Montague and Deerfield to completion. Plans are to expand these off-road trails with designated road spurs to Old Deerfield, Sunderland, Mt. Hermon and Northfield Mountain.

Congressman John Olver, who was widely praised by a number of speakers for shepherding the Canalside Trail to completion said, "Ultimately, we will have a system of bike trails from the New Hampshire and Vermont borders all the way through to the Connecticut border, as much of it off road as possible."

Griswold had heard those predictions before, but he credited Olver for being "instrumental" in making the Canalside Trail a reality. "A lot of people think of earmarks as a dirty word, but without him it wouldn't have happened."

About 50 people turned up on Friday to celebrate the official opening of the \$2.8 million canalside trail; all but a handful were state, county or local officials. That may be because

locals have long since discovered the beauty of the canalside trail, and use it for everything from rollerblading to fireworks gazing. At least one Deerfield resident has been commuting regularly along the trail by bike to her work in the renovated Colle building for the better part of a year.

This past weekend, the trail was jammed with bikers, strollers, and tourists stopping by the fishway, which was also mobbed with fish maneuvering upriver to spawn.

Selectboard member Allen Ross cycled to Friday's ribbon cutting, and praised the natural attributes of the trail, including "incomparable river views, waterfalls, farmland, eagles, osprey, mink and otters."

Deerfield selectboard member Carolyn Ness didn't care how long it took, it was "wonderful that people actually worked together and got something done. This is a project that brings communities together, gets them out and enjoying our natural beauty."

Among the roadblocks to completion, Dunlavy recalled the

"three times survey flags were pulled up," the coal ash that had to be removed from the rail bed across from the mills and disposed of as hazardous waste, the undermined railroad bridge abutments at the confluence of the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers, and the difficulty of negotiating rights of way or acquisitions of land from a motley array of 50 private and corporate owners all along the path.

Mass Highway commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky called the ribbon cutting, "a great day for Mass Highway," which persevered with construction of the trail through its "long and tortured history." She added, "There are a lot of things that could make you throw up your hands."

She pointed over to Mass Highway's next big project in Montague, the bridge to Gill, and the dedicated Mass Highway employees who were inspecting the bridge that very day. "Safety is a premium at Mass Highway, as you can see by the bridge inspection. We are here for you. We wish you safe travels on this beautiful bike path."

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Ross Tapped as Selectboard Chair

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The Montague selectboard reorganized on Monday, June 2nd, with Allen Ross assuming the role of chair, and Patricia Pruitt taking the clerk's title. The meeting covered a lot of boggy ground, from a dispute over board of health complaints at a swimming pool company on Unity Street, to progress in solving code issues at the sewer treatment plant's operations building.



Al Ross at Friday's bike path ribbon cutting ceremony

Raymond Jarvis, owner of Apollo Pools on Unity Street, gave the selectboard a bit of a tongue lashing on Monday, after receiving a list of complaints from health agent Gina McNeely following her May 7th inspection of the premises. The complaints were detailed to conditions in the lot around Jarvis' business - including pallets, containers, sand bags, and non-functional vehicles - following calls from a resident of Avenue C, which abuts the property to the west.

Jarvis said, "I'm in the construction business. I can't have it look like a flower shop."

He said he had paid two men to work for a week installing a new fence and cleaning up the exterior of the property since he received McNeely's complaint.

"If I have to, I'll sell the place and move out of town," he added.

Jarvis said Apollo Pools had been in business at the Unity Street location for more than 80 years, since before a residential neighborhood had grown up behind the business on Avenue C. The hemlock trees planted there were meant to block the neighbors' view of the back of his lot, but have now grown up with underbrush, creating a different problem.

Kids from the neighborhood are taking advantage of 15 years of underbrush growing up along the rear of his lot to enter his property and build tree forts,

and to vandalize his property. He said neighborhood kids had caused \$2,000 - \$3,000 worth of destruction to his vehicles recently.

"Over 82 years, we haven't asked much of the town," Jarvis said. "I want the police to do surveillance. I want them to continually watch the area," and apprehend the youngsters who are trespassing and damaging his equipment.

McNeely, who was present at the meeting, said she had responded to complaints about the property's appearance. "Any property needs to be clean and neat and free of debris," according to statute, she said.

The selectboard asked McNeely to reinspect the property to determine whether Jarvis had complied with her order to clean up the premises, and asked Jarvis to speak with the board of health if he felt McNeely's order was unreasonable. They asked Jarvis to communicate with the chief of police about the problem of vandalism to his property.

Wastewater treatment plant supervisor Bob Trombley had some good news and some bad news for the selectboard. The good news first. After meeting with the town's building and electrical inspectors and the Turners Falls fire chief, along

with engineers from Camp Dresser & McGee, (CDM) Trombley reported that a consensus has been reached about how to deal with code problems at the operations building. Due to openings to a pump galley area and to the headworks, the operations building has been reclassified as a "Class 1, Div 1" area in terms of the potential for explosive or hazardous materials entering the building, Trombley explained. Consequently, bringing the building up to code, and installing or replacing equipment in that building would have been prohibitively expensive for the town, since all the equipment would have to be impervious to explosions.

To correct this situation, CDM had proposed installing an airlock in the operations building as part of current renovations to the sewer treatment facility, but cost overruns in the entire project necessitated leaving this option on the cutting room floor. But now, the engineers and the town inspectors have found a way to resolve the problem, by walling off the two areas where hazardous or potentially explosive materials are located, and entering those areas from the outside of the operations building in the future.

The selectboard approved the conceptual plan. Trombley will now ask CDM to provide design specifications and a cost analysis for the project. He stated that the second phase of the sewer upgrades, funded by Montague town meeting at \$5.7 million, is likely to come in about \$700,000 under budget by the time it wraps up, so it is possible the additional work to resolve code issues at the operations building can be accomplished by using those funds, without going back to the town for more money.

The bad news came in relation to the cost of sludge removal from the plant, a task that has been subcontracted out through the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District. The cost per ton to ship the sludge offsite is rising, Trombley said, from \$278.40 per ton to \$283.40 per ton, for the final year of the three-year contract, and is likely to continue increasing. The fuel surcharge for sludge hauling tacks on an additional \$2,000 a month, at present, Trombley said.

To bring the sewer upgrade project in under budget, another item cut from the current renovations at the treatment plant was the rotary press

system for dewatering sludge, which would have greatly reduced hauling costs over the long term. Trombley said he was hopeful the current \$307 billion "farm bill" which has lumbered through Congress recently, with all kinds of helpful earmarks added on, may contain some million dollars or more that Representative John Olver (D-Amherst) has been trying to tack on to assist with renovations to the Montague wastewater treatment plant. Additionally, the town approved \$400,000 in borrowing for a dewatering system at the treatment plant back in 2001, and that appropriation has never been tapped.

see ROSS pg 8

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ROSS from pg 7

Trombley said once the headworks and pump gallery are isolated at the operations building, it would be possible to afford a sludge press for less than what Montague would otherwise have to pay to install explosion proof dewatering equipment. Nevertheless, the price tag for that equipment is likely to be at least \$1.2 million, he said.

Special Town Meeting

In other news, the selectboard approved a five article warrant for a special town meeting on June 17th. The first article will rescind

\$62,525 in unspent funds from a warrant article for \$158,000 approved on June 2nd, 2007 to repair the roof at the Montague Center School. The second article will allow the town to formally change the name of Old Federal Street to Dewolf Road. Building inspector David Jensen said the layout of Dewolf Road needed review by the planning board, because it does not match the actual layout on the ground.

The third article of the June 17th town meeting will give the town a second crack at the Gill Montague Regional School Committee's '09 operating budget, which has been revised

downward by the cost of one \$50,000 pickup truck since the May 7th town meeting. At that meeting, the town voted down the GMRSD assessment request for \$7,935,253 by a wide margin. The number to be voted on June 17th, reflecting the deletion of Montague's 84% share of the cost of the pickup truck, will be \$7,893,252.

The next article will allow town meeting some latitude to decide how to balance the budget if town voters turn down a \$150,000 override at the previous day's election on June 16th. Polls will be open that day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The fifth article will ask

the town meeting to transfer \$150,000 from the assessor's overlay account into the stabilization fund. Approximately \$1.2 million will remain in reserve in the assessor's overlay account, until such time as the selectboard and finance committee asks for more of those reserve funds to be released.

A sixth article was added to the warrant at the request of finance committee member Jeff Singleton, who wanted a letter he had authored to state representatives and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, decrying a lack of adequate state aid for the schools, to be voted on and possibly endorsed by the town meeting.

The board also approved a permit request from the RiverCulture program to hold a concert at the bandshell in Peskeomskut Park, from 6 to 8 p.m. on Saturday, June 28th. Featured will be the Amherst-based six piece acoustic band MarKamusic, described in the band's website as "a high-energy, multi-national musical ensemble that performs Latin music deeply

rooted within the folkloric, popular and traditional genres of Latin America, the Caribbean and South American Andean regions." The board took under advisement the normally routine matter of approving the annual reappointment of 60 or more members of various town boards and committees, after Ross said, "There's one there I don't want to assign."

Ross has been the selectboard liaison to the airport commission since February of 2007, and championed the expansion of that commission to include up to two members from outside the town of Montague at the recent annual town meeting. The three-year appointment of one of the five members of the airport commission, Mark Fairbrother, is up for renewal this year.

The board voted unanimously to seek a study from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments comparing the costs of inspection services presently carried out by town staff if the FRCOG were to begin providing those inspection services for the town instead.



Frogs and Toads Invade French King Entertainment Center

ERVING - Celebrate 2008, the Year of the Frog at the North American Amphibian Conference (NAAC), this weekend.

The NAAC is one of the largest amphibian conservation and fundraising events in the US, developed to help preserve globally threatened amphibians. Guest speakers will be arriving from as far away as the Netherlands and Costa Rica to provide educational and entertaining workshops. Activities include field trips, vendor sales, lectures, banquet dinner and fundraising barbecue. All proceeds are donated to amphibian conservation organizations to

help support their work.

The American Association of Zoos and Aquariums has dubbed 2008 as Year of the Frog in an effort to raise awareness of the global decline of amphibians. Habitat destruction, disease and climate change are just a few of the many challenges facing the world's frogs, toads and salamanders. Extinction of amphibian species is occurring at an alarming rate, and many organizations are working hard to find solutions.

The conference is an event for everyone! "It's a family friendly event," said NAAC committeeman Richard Revis, of Black Jungle Terrarium

Supply in Turners Falls. "It's not just for scientists. The NAAC is bringing together a wide range of people including members of the zoo community, researchers, field biologists, frog keepers, and the general public... anyone curious and concerned about the health of our planet. The frightening mass-extinction that is currently taking place is far too large of a problem for only one segment of the population to address. It is only through the combined efforts of each of these groups we can hope to have an impact."

For more information go to: www.tnaac.org or call: 413-863-2770

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Mutual Aid and Assistance

Tuesday, 5/27

8:56 a.m. Report of wires down on Lester Street. Contacted Verizon.

10:10 a.m. Follow up investigation on Swamp Road regarding leaving the scene of an accident.

11:48 a.m. Assisted Northfield police with attempted suicide on Ferncliff Avenue.

2:04 p.m. Report of theft / destruction of mail at Public Works Boulevard.

Wednesday, 5/28

12:05 p.m. Report of malicious damage to mail boxes on Maple Avenue. Found to be slightly bent at pole; no damage to boxes.

4:45 p.m. Assisted Montague police on Federal Street and Lake Pleasant address in search of wanted subject out of Northfield. No contact made.

5:55 p.m. Mutual aid requested out of

Northfield for subject that fled on foot on Captain Beers Plain Road.

6:15 p.m. Assisted Montague police on Central Street in Turners Falls for a report of a suicidal man with a knife.

10:22 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Route 2 just before Erving Center. Vehicle was moved off of road and will be removed in the morning.

Thursday, 5/29

7:21 a.m. Report of a loose dog, broken chain found on Mountain Road. Contacted dog officer to remove same; found to be Orange owner.

Friday, 5/30

6:00 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for no seat belt and possession of Class D drug.

Saturday, 5/31

10:14 a.m. Medical call to Franklin Grocery. Assisted Erving fire department.

11:50 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted], for unlawfully attaching number plate, unregistered motor vehicle and seat belt violation.

1:10 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted], for unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

1:13 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after suspension.

Sunday, 6/1

12:45 p.m. Assisted Warwick police with domestic disturbance on Hocknum Road.

6:07 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

Golf Cart Complaint

Thursday 5/29

6:10 p.m. Assisted with disabled motor vehicle in traffic on French King Highway.

Friday, 5/30

2:50 p.m. Assisted fire department with fire at Main Road Business.

4:01 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency in Bernardston.

7:19 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle with suspended license, and failing to inspect a motor vehicle.

7:55 p.m. Assisted with disabled motor vehicle on French King Highway.

9:02 p.m. Report of suspicious motor vehicle on Ben Hale Road.

9:40 p.m. Noise complaint on West Gill Road.

Saturday 5/31

5:15 p.m. Assisted Greenfield police department with locating subject in Gill.

5:31 p.m. Traffic complaint on Boyle Road.

Sunday, 6/1

9:45 a.m. Vandalism complaint on West Gill Road.

1:40 p.m. Report of a larceny / scam at Main Road business.

6:03 p.m. Assisted Erving police department with arrest.

7:50 p.m. Assisted state police with motor vehicle stop, wanted subjects.

8:12 p.m. Report of disturbance at Boyle Road residence.

8:20 p.m. Arrested [redacted] Charged with Assault and Battery.

Monday, 6/2

9:06 a.m. Assisted with medical emergency on Mount Hermon campus.

11:30 a.m. Complaint from resident regarding golf carts on Franklin Road.

1:50 p.m. Assisted Greenfield police department with motor vehicle accident on French King Highway.

10:03 p.m. Investigated suspicious motor vehicles on Barton Cove Road.

10:15 p.m. Report of unknown type fire in woods on Grist Mill Road. Responded and checked same with fire department

Tuesday, 6/3

12:20 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency at Stoughton Place.

1:32 p.m. Report of larceny from French King Highway business.

3:20 p.m. Assisted Erving police department with motor vehicle stop in Gill.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Vandalism, Burglary and Rape Reported

Monday, 5/26
8:11 a.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Federal Street address, Montague. Services rendered.
10:45 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with operating motor vehicle with suspended license and no inspection sticker.

6:27 p.m. Report of vandalism at Highland Apartments, Millers Falls Road, Millers Falls. Services rendered.

Tuesday, 5/27
7:00 a.m. Report of vandalism at Thomas Memorial Golf Course, Montague City Road, Turners Falls. Investigated.

7:49 a.m. Report of unwanted person at a Chestnut Street address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.

7:38 p.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague. Investigated.

9:20 p.m. Assist other police department, Greenfield.

Wednesday, 5/28
8:27 a.m. Report of larceny at a Swamp Road address, Montague. Investigated.

7:10 p.m. Report of larceny at an Edward Avenue address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.

Thursday, 5/29
9:28 a.m. Report of domestic disturbance at an Old Sunderland Road address, Montague. Investigated.

12:32 p.m. Report of general disturbance at a West Mineral Road address, Millers Falls. Advised of options.

11:23 p.m. Report of structure fire at an Avenue A address, Turners Falls. A subject taken into protective custody.

Friday, 5/30
11:25 p.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a Turnpike Road address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.

11:37 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at First Street parking lot, Turners Falls. Investigated.

Saturday, 5/31
7:35 p.m. Report of brush fire in the area of Federal Street, Montague. Referred to other agency.

9:57 p.m. Report of unattended death at a Montague Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.

11:01 p.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a Fourth Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.

Sunday, 6/1
1:37 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Bridge Street address, Millers Falls. Peace restored.

3:15 p.m. Report of larceny at a Griswold Street address, Turners Falls.

3:35 p.m. Report of rape at a K Street address, Turners Falls.

6:47 p.m. Report of unwanted person at a Prospect Street address, Millers Falls. Peace

restored.
11:05 p.m. Arrested on a default warrant [redacted]

Monday, 6/2
8:24 a.m. Report of threatening / harassment at a G Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.

11:53 a.m. Report of abandoned auto on Chestnut Lane, Turners Falls. Advised of options.

5:49 p.m. Report of animal bite at a K Street address, Turners Falls. Referred to other agency.

5:59 p.m. Report of neighbor disturbance at Montague Catholic Social Ministries, Third Street, Turners Falls. Services rendered.

Tuesday, 6/3
12:18 a.m. Following a motor vehicle stop, arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with possession of Class D drug, motor vehicle registration not in possession and registration sticker missing.

3:25 p.m. Report of vandalism at a K Street address, Turners Falls.

4:01 p.m. Report of abandoned auto at a Farren Avenue address, Turners Falls. Advised of options.

4:22 p.m. Officer wanted at a Sherman Drive address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.

REFLECTIONS

BY ALI URBAN

MILLERS FALLS - On my first day of seventh grade, I stood at the bus stop with my new backpack, new clothes and a new feeling of dread. It was my first bus ride on a school bus for anything other than a field trip, and my first time in a public school. I had no idea what to expect.

My neighbor, who was several years older, must have recognized this apprehension, so she offered me words of encouragement and advice. She told me, "Your school experience is what you make of it." Throughout my education here, I have taken that advice to heart and learned there is much to be made of Turners Falls High School.

For the past two years, I've enjoyed writing this column and sharing with the community the positive happenings at school - especially at a time when media coverage generally revolves around budget crises and school configuration. But, of course, there is clearly more to the story than such issues. At the high school, for example, there has been new faculty to introduce, athletic teams to congratulate, students' service projects to highlight and unique field trips to recap.

Through this, I've made connections to new people and learned more about my school. After writing an article about our Green School, I came to better appreciate renewable energy and the changes that can be made to promote such energy that most people wouldn't even notice.

At Turners Falls High School, I've



been provided with many opportunities: a new facility, new technology and a solid academic experience. Sure, there have been some difficulties, questions of funding and staff changes. But throughout the challenges, the people at Turners Falls High School and the dedication of the teachers have buoyed me.

I've been fortunate to be taught by a broad range of people who have challenged me academically to strive to think more critically, to work past my abilities, and others who have challenged me to view the world from different perspectives, to be more accepting of people's differences and to adapt to changing environments.

Like most seniors, I find myself at the end of the school year facing mixed feelings of excitement and relief, coupled with melancholy apprehension. I'm excited to build on the solid foundation I have set at TFHS at Middlebury College next year. But I know that whatever I do, I'll always remember TFHS with great fondness and gratitude.

And don't forget to look for High School Highlights next school year, written by Josh Gammon and Lindsey Wilson.

SOFTBALL from 1

pitchers, Stephanie Ollari and Emily Mailloux, kept the shutout alive and JV standout Samantha Torres hit her first varsity pitch over the fence for a standup home run.

With the score 23 to nothing and bases loaded, Coach Mullins called a time out and spoke to his runner on second base. Before the next pitch, she ran off the base for an automatic out and jogged back to the bench. The game was called via the mercy rule in the fifth inning and Turners, won 23 - 0.

The next night, June 2, Turners faced 4th seeded Ware at Elms College. They began the same way they left off the night before. Two grounders to the mound and a strike out: One, Two, Three. And then Turners came up to bat.

Lead off hitter, Kim Arsenault cracked a triple to right field and scored on a passed ball. And Turners kept scoring while holding Ware to goose eggs on the scoreboard.

It wasn't until the fifth inning that Ware had its first hit. And it wasn't until the seventh that Ware scored its first run.

In that inning, Ware was beginning to hit the ball well and hard and was threatening to score more runs. Coach Mullins calmly approached the mound and met with his infield. That was all they needed. Turners made quick work of the remaining batters and dispatched this formidable foe, 10 - 2.

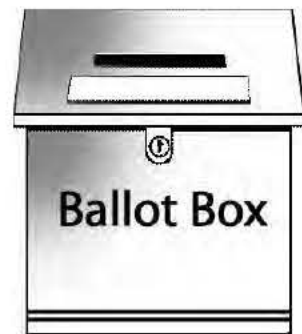
Turners returns to Elms College for the Western Mass Division III finals on Saturday, June 7th, to face third seeded Mount Everett High, who defeated Pioneer 7 - 0 in the early game on June 2nd.



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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELCTBOARD

Erving to Hold Special Town Meeting

BY NICHOLE CLAYTON - Erving will hold a special town meeting on June 23rd at 7 p.m. at the town hall to deal with two warrant articles. The first will allow the town to appropriate \$30,000 to pay for engineering services for improvements mandated by the Department of Environmental Protection at the well pumphouse in Erving. The second will allow the town to take by eminent domain a parcel of land sold to the town in 1973 by Joseph Wojtkowski to allow for the access road to the Erving wastewater treatment plant, to clear up a title defect from that sale.

On Monday, June 2nd, the selectboard and finance committee met with the school board, Erving Elementary School principal Charlene Galenski, and Sam Dean, the technology coordinator for the school, about the plan for new computers for the elementary school. On May 5th, Erving town meeting approved \$50,000 in seed money to replace the six-year-old computers the school is

now relying on, with the proviso that the details of the plan be approved by the selectboard, school and finance committees.

They approved Dean's plan unanimously on Monday; allowing the school to begin by leasing 70 new computers for four years, at a cost of \$17,000 a year. If the town follows up by investing \$12,000 a year toward the computer upgrades, the school should be able to begin replacing computers every three years starting in 2013, according to administrative coordinator Tom Sharp.

Erving Library will be getting a new heating and cooling system. The selectboard awarded the bid to replace the current inefficient unit, that came with the building, to Rice Oil, for \$9,535. Rice will begin installing the new system next week.

The Erving Library is also sponsoring a skydiving event on Wednesday, July 9th at 5:30 p.m. in connection with the 'Wild Reads' summer reading program. The skydiving event will begin

in the parking lot across the street from Country Creemee at the Turners Falls airport. The children will have time to look at the equipment and talk with the skydivers, and then watch them board and take off, all in anticipation of the big jump.

Cyd Scott, owner of Custom Entertainment in Erving is putting together a benefit concert for Kaleigh De Mello, a young girl paralyzed in a sledding accident last winter in Greenfield. The event is to be held at Veterans Park in Erving on June 21st from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. There will be several family activities, a picnic and musical performances. The money raised will help build a ramp for De Mello's home. Lady Elvis (Laura Herbert) is scheduled to make an appearance, along with Rob Fletcher on blues guitar, Chris Dixon, acoustic guitar wizard from Amherst, the Equalites making it down from Wendell with some heavy dub, and Pistol Fist, a "serious" metal from Boston.

Farewell to Montague Center School

BY SHERI LEH - The Farewell to Montague Center School party on Saturday went well, despite the rain showers. Thank goodness it was dry under the tents on the playground. Over 100 people attended, including current families, staff and students; grandparents; former principal Bob Mahler; Anna Garbiel's husband and brother; retired teachers; alumni students and community members. Everyone enjoyed the music provided by Bob Paulin, and refreshments provided by the PTO. Wendy Mieczkowski and Karen Wartel had the honor of cutting the cake,

decorated with a picture of the school and the words, "Farewell to Montague Center School." It was a memorable event for all who attended, like the school itself.



Emma Miner, (l - r) Maya Pezzati and Sienna Dillensneider, all 2nd graders, kiss a frog from the Montague Center School pond at Saturday's farewell party

EMTs from pg 1

days old. "It was devastating for my wife and me," said his father.

"After discharge from the hospital, Jim had to have checkups regularly. At first he'd see the doctor for a review every week, then every two weeks, followed by every month. At three years old, little Jim needed more surgery, so we took him to Mass General to have a cardiac catheterization. After he recovered, the regular doctor visits stopped, but we were told to keep our eyes on him. Things went pretty good, but Jim would always get tired after a certain point."

Jim Bartus, Jr., a young man with an impressive resume, has lived to do a lot of good things for a lot of people in our area.

Both members of the father-and-son ambulance team came

to the adrenaline-charged world of paramedics as a result of the other. "For me," Dad said, "it all started because of my son." James, Sr. wanted to learn first aid to make sure his child received any care he might need after being discharged from the hospital.

Years later, young Jim was driving with his father to orientation at Springfield College. Jim found out on campus he was shy four credits for the upcoming first semester. "They were offering an EMT class, and my father suggested I take it because he could help me study," recalled young Bartus.

Well, the son did take an EMT class and liked it so much that he went on to earn a paramedic certificate from Greenfield Community College before becoming a licensed respiratory therapist, attaining his associate's degree in

respiratory therapy at Springfield Technical Community College.

Last month, the two Bartuses and other members of the area community-based ambulance service were honored during the observance of National Emergency Medical Services Week.

Crisp, efficient, and sparing with his words, Jim, Sr. summarized the paramedic's role. "A paramedic works as an extension to the medical doctors in the emergency room. Ambulance services provide such a higher level of care than when I began as an EMT. Bear in mind the level of training, equipment, and procedures are all so much more sophisticated today. We can actually do 75 to 80 per cent of pre-hospital treatment right on board."

In addition to his work for BHA, James, Sr. has worked for

22 years as a firefighter for the Turners Falls Fire Department. He is no stranger to the role of hero. The elder Bartus initiated a full-department response to the devastating Strathmore Mill fire a year ago. His quick thinking and cool decision making in driving past the fully involved Building #10 minutes before it collapsed across the narrow canal access road enabled firefighters to successfully contain the blaze, and rescue 90 per cent of the Strathmore complex, along with neighboring Southworth paper mill. Ironically, Jim, Sr. was once a mechanic at Esleek Manufacturing, now the Southworth Company.

As for his son, Jim spoke modestly about his close to eight years in the field of paramedics. He was a member of the second graduating class of paramedics at GCC.

"Ultimately I want to be a doctor," he said. "By the way, today is an important day for me. I've been accepted in pre-med at UMass, and only earlier today I filled out my enrollment card for the university."

As the father and son paramedic team talk, the affection between the Bartuses is clearly felt. Asked what it's like to work side-by-side with your father under challenging circumstances, young Bartus said, "We love to work with each other. We're comfortable with each other. Yeah, it's neat to go on calls with Dad. Even the patients think it's pretty cool." Young Jim looked across the table at his father and grinned, "Do we like working with each other? Well, you know, it's actually very comfortable. After all, Dad's the one who taught me so much."



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TRIAL from page 1

departments, saved 90% of the mill complex and neighboring Southworth Paper.

Tanzer had been hired in 2006 as an occasional employee by former Strathmore owner Jerry Jones to help salvage materials, including copper wiring and copper piping, at the mill. He was badly injured in an electrical arc fire on May 6th, 2007 while working under Jones' supervision, attempting to strip copper wire from a live 13,800 volt transmission line on the side of one of the mill buildings.

Tanzer subsequently sued Jones for damages in that incident; a \$1 million lien had been attached to the Strathmore mill in connection with his damage claims shortly before the May 26th blaze.

The main evidence implicating Tanzer in the May 26th arson fire appears to rest on a statement made on the morning of June 12th of last year by Tanzer's girlfriend, Amber Hewes, 31, also formerly a resident of 5 Chestnut Lane. She told police she had driven Tanzer to the Strathmore at about 1:45 a.m. on the morning of May 26th and acted as lookout while Tanzer entered Building #10 through an unsecured rear door, ostensibly to steal and sell as scrap some copper he had stored in a closet there. According to Hewes' statement, Tanzer was gone for about half an hour, and when he returned to the car he was not carrying any copper.

Hewes statement continued, "I asked where the copper was and Jon stated that Jerry [Jones] took all of the copper out of the building. So Jon stated, 'I lit the fucker on fire.' I asked what he meant and he again stated that, 'I lit the fucker on fire. I was pissed and I walked by a bale of paper and lit it on fire.'"

Shortly after the blaze, the state fire marshal's office offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to an arrest and conviction in the case.

On Tuesday, Dodge was called to testify during a motion to suppress a statement made by a woman named Talia Siano, an acquaintance of Tanzer and Hewes. According to Dodge, during an interview with trooper Gerald Perwak of the state police fire marshal's office that took place at the Montague police station on June 25th of last year, two week's after Tanzer's arrest, Jones was asked about what motivation Tanzer might have had to burn the Strathmore down.

Jones told the interviewing officers that, "When Tanzer got drunk or drugged up, he got very belligerent," Dodge said. Jones mentioned a witness named Talia who could corroborate that on at least one occasion, after drinking at an 'apartment' at the Strathmore, Tanzer threatened to burn the mill down.

Five days later, Jones brought Talia Siano into the Montague police station, where she gave a statement to Dodge that a month and a half earlier she had been drinking with Jones, Tanzer, Hewes, and a woman named Jessica Newell, when "Jon and Jerry got into an argument and Jon got up and threatened to burn the place down."

The motion to suppress this statement by Siano was made by Tanzer's attorney, Barry Auskern, who argued Siano's statement should not be allowed because Dodge had shown Siano a photo of Tanzer, with Tanzer's full name on it, and asked her if that was the man who had made the threatening statement. Auskern argued the use of a single photo with the defendant's name on it, instead of an array of photos of males



Jonathan Tanzer being brought into court for arraignment by Sergeant Chip Dodge on June 12th of last year

including Tanzer, was overly suggestive, since the police already had a suspect in mind.

But prosecuting attorney Alice Perry countered, "We didn't have a suspect in mind; we had a suspect under arrest." Perry said the photo was not used to identify a suspect, but to confirm, for the interviewing officer, that Siano and he were talking about the same man, a man Siano claimed she was already acquainted with.

Judge David Ford, who will preside over the trial, ruled for the Commonwealth and allowed Siano's statement to be entered into evidence.

Ford also ruled for the Commonwealth on all other preliminary motions, including one by Auskern to prohibit jurors from viewing the apartment on Chestnut Lane and its proximity to the Strathmore, since there are any number of routes between the apartment and the mill. The judge ruled it was not the actual route that was of interest in the case, but the time it would have taken to traverse the distance by car.

Ford also denied a motion by Auskern to exclude "expert testimony" by Richard Orr, owner of Orr Cadillac in Springfield, whom the Commonwealth plans to call to testify that the make of

a Cadillac shown on surveillance photos taken near the Strathmore at the time and date of the fire matches the profile of the 2001 Cadillac SLS owned by Hewes.

Perry did agree to remove the vehicle identification number of Hewes' car from a "photo montage" comparing her Cadillac with the car captured in the surveillance video.

Ford also denied a motion to suppress the content of a text message allegedly made by Tanzer to Jones stating, "I'm going to burn the place down," in reference to the Strathmore. Perry admitted the Commonwealth did not have a record of the alleged text message, but the content of the message had been included in a police report of the interview conducted by trooper Perwak with Jones on June 25th.

The trial is likely to take six days, and conclude the middle of next week.

Perry wanted to know whether Auskern planned to put any witnesses on the stand to testify to Tanzer's good character. Auskern answered, "No."

After a jury of twelve, with two alternates, eight men and six women, was empanelled, Perry began to mount the Commonwealth's case against Tanzer by calling Captain James Bartus, a 22 year veteran of the Turners Falls Fire Department, to the witness stand.

After a briefly establishing his background and whereabouts on the morning of the fire, Perry resumed her direct examination of Bartus on Wednesday morning, carefully going over a series of photos of the conflagration that took down Building #10 on the morning of May 26th, 2007.

Several of the photos were displayed on a large screen in the courtroom, until Perry had difficulty with the PowerPoint system and resorted to handing

copies of the remaining photos to the jurors for their individual inspection, after Bartus first explained what he saw happening in each one. The photos were part of a series taken by a Hallmark Institute of Photography student who happened to be near the scene as the mill building burned.

Members of the jury leaned forward as the photos were displayed, with billowing orange flames swirling out of the blown out windows of the three story, 19,000 square foot building, illuminating the nighttime scene. At the defense table, Tanzer stared intently at the projected photos.

"This is roughly what we saw coming into the scene, coming across the canal," said Bartus. "This shows the fire building fully involved on all floors. At the time, we had stopped to see if it was safe to actually go past this with that much fire. It was only a matter of time before the building would collapse."

Bartus said he had taken a call from the Montague police department at 2:50 a.m. that the Strathmore was on fire. With Kyle Cogswell driving, he had the first engine on the scene six minutes later, and made the call to drive past the burning building on the 12 foot access road bordering the canal. Approximately eight minutes later, the three story building collapsed across that road.

"My intention was to stop the fire at the L," connecting Building #10 to Building #1 to the rear, "and not have it come any further to the rest of the complex," Bartus told the court. "Which we did."

In command of the scene until Turners fire chief Ray Godin arrived 15 minutes later, Bartus ordered the second and third Turners engines, under Captains Zellman and Dion, to remain south of the burning building, where they were joined by the Northfield ladder truck. Greenfield's ladder truck

see TRIAL page 16

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WENDELL from pg 1 requested by the school committee.

Several people spoke from the floor for paying the higher amount. Jim Woodward, a Wendell resident who is head of Mahar's physical education department, said his department has been level funded for three years and, "A dollar today does not buy what it bought three years ago."

Deidre Cabral supported the alternate method and urged town meeting to continue the process of changing the assessment method.

Slavas said that voting the alternative method would have no impact on Mahar's final budget, but would continue the process of restoring equitable payment among the four towns in the Mahar district (Orange, Petersham, New Salem, and Wendell). The passage of education reform in Massachusetts in 1993 allowed for the statutory method of assessment, but only in recent years has the distortion between the per pupil costs of

the member towns become so large.

Nancy Aldrich, who is the administrative assistant for both Wendell and New Salem, said New Salem's selectboard and finance committee would recommend "a small cut, just 2% or 3%" in the Mahar budget at their June 10th town meeting, and that Orange and Petersham were likely to recommend similarly modest cuts. New Salem's representative had voted for the alternative method of assessment at the Mahar school committee, Aldrich said. But only one of Petersham's two representatives on the committee supported that approach, even though Petersham stands to save about \$200,000 by returning to the alternative method, Aldrich said. Orange's seven committee members stood solidly against the change, which would come at Orange's expense.

Namin stayed through the remainder of the town's money articles, long past discussion of the school budgets, and when he left finance committee member

Barbara Caruso gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

Voters unanimously approved \$5,000 to update the town's open space plan, and, with dissenting votes, approved adding five parcels of town owned land to Wendell's town forest, to be managed for traditional uses, including wood harvesting, hunting, and fishing, under the control of the conservation commission. Income from land deeded to the town by William Phelps in 1888 will be dedicated to education.

Open space committee chair Marianne Sundell said that initial harvests of wood will not bring in much money because, as the forester reported, thinning has not been conducted on the lots for years, and the trees growing there now are tall and thin, and not very valuable.

Voters rejected an article to give the board of health authority to nominate an inspector of animals to be approved by the state. Jim Dunn and other members of the agriculture commission expressed concern that the

position would become part of the process of creating a National Animal Identification System, which they said would do nothing to slow the spread of infectious diseases, but would devastate small organic farmers and help large agribusinesses.

Voters approved an article that divided capital expenses at the Swift River School evenly between Wendell and New Salem, and then approved \$11,929 from stabilization to pay for a water tank replacement and a public address system at the school, according to equal assessment.

Nina Keller of the town's Safe and Green committee spoke for an article calling for the decommissioning of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant when its current operating license expires in 2012.

The article passed instructing the town clerk to send letters to our state representative and senator, the governor, U.S. senators and representatives, and the Vermont governor and legislature.

At 10:00 p.m., moderator Kathy Becker said she did not want to prolong the meeting another night for "one orphan article," and the discussion continued for article 28: a proposed noise ordinance.

Lisa Hoag spoke to add additional exemptions for agricultural and forestry use including harvesting, cutting, sawmills, and animals. Police officer Anne Diemand said if she is called with a complaint, she will respond, and that Massachusetts general law has a noise ordinance.

Town resident Morgan Mead said we don't need "one more goddamn law," the sentiment of a large part of the room; the article was defeated by simple majority.

People were already gathering belongings and leaving as the meeting adjourned. Resident Sharon Gensler asked town clerk Anna Hartjens to send a letter of appreciation and support to Senator Ted Kennedy.



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Sheffield Artists on Display

BY FLORE

TURNERS FALLS - If you were attending Sheffield School, you could not help it. You would become an artist! The school has been the recipient for two consecutive years of a Massachusetts Arts Council Grant. Working there, two gifted art teachers have come up with stimulating projects to pique their students' creative urge.

Last year, you may recall, their project was: "Knowledge and Nature." This year, artist in residence Ruth O'Mara and the school's art teacher Nancy Maegher proposed the theme:

"A young artist's view of Turners Falls and world architecture."

The students were encouraged to let their imaginations travel, as far as Russia with pictures of St. Basil's Cathedral.



"The Discovery Center"
by Nevan Shattuck

Move on to the Church of Notre Dame in Paris and climb, so to speak, the Tower of Belem in Portugal.

Not forgetting their own environment, as well, they studied the historic structures of the town they live in, Turners Falls. What might it have looked like in the early 1900s? Take the Carnegie Library, for example,

Equi's Candy Store, and the Colle Opera House, not omitting the Discovery Center, once a machine shop. Can you hear the horses' hooves? The squeaky carriages?

You will notice how the students acquired through their work a sense of belonging to a community, through their renderings of local and world architecture.

Don't miss their surprising, candid interpretations!

Their drawings will be on display in two locations, until June 11th: the Discovery Center and the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls.

The exhibit is funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Gill-Montague Education Fund and the Sheffield Parent Teacher Organization.

Bel Ete! (Happy summer!)

Turners Falls High Graduates 81

BY JOSH GAMMON - A harmonious, "Here's to our dear Turners High!" resounded through the packed gymnasium at Turners Falls High School on Friday night. The graduating Class of 2008 set the precedent of rehearsing the Alma Mater days before the actual ceremony.

Graduating senior Sean Crowell said, "I was glad they revived this tradition."

In the past, the song did not hold as much importance, but this year was different. The Class of 2008 was proud, and as they sang the last line of the time honored song, the students flung their blue and white caps into the air.

Speeches were delivered by principal Jeff Kenney, superintendent Kenneth Rocke, and school committee chairwoman, Mary Kociela. Class president Stephanie Joly also spoke, stressing the importance of graduating seniors pursuing their dreams. Valedictorian Molly Perry and Salutatorian Alice Urban spoke

about the effects one person could make on the world, and ended by saying that if everyone in the room committed to one positive change the world could be changed dramatically.

Thursday's awards night saw an impressive list of honors. Sean Crowell, recipient of five scholarships and awards, reminisced, "I was glad to see an array of kids be recognized through awards."

Students were not the only ones honored that night. Alice Urban, receiver of the \$10,000 Coca-Cola Scholarship, was asked by Coca-Cola to present an award to the teacher who most influenced on her education. Ali chose three-year French teacher, Yanik Nichols, known by many as strictly, "Madame."

All in all, 81 Turners Falls students graduated on May 31st. Over 60 students are going on to college, three are joining the armed forces, and the rest will be entering immediately into the work force.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION
BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. *Some friends and I (all in our 60s) have discovered similar traits in our husbands of late. There's a general grumpiness and lack of grooming. We've been told that, as men age, their frontal lobes begin to shrink, and this is the area of the brain which governs these qualities. Is this true? Are there remedies?*

Researchers at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit have discovered evidence suggesting the male brain shrinks faster with age than the female brain.

"We found that age-related shrinkage was greater for men in three regions of the brain that are involved in thinking, planning and memory," said Dr. C. Edward Coffey, the study's principal investigator.

There was evidence of greater shrinkage around the frontal (front) and temporal (middle) lobes of men.

"We have known for a while that men tend to be more prone to age-related brain disorders such as memory loss and Alzheimer's disease. These findings may help provide an explanation for these sex differences," Dr. Coffey said. "We are currently investigating the potential functional differences that might result from the acceleration of age-related brain

shrinkage in men."

Do men become grumpy and slovenly because of shrunken lobes? The jury is out on that question.

Researching this subject was a fascinating experience because there is so much interesting information available about differences between male and female brains. Here are some of the most fascinating facts:

1.) Dr. Gabrielle M. de Courten-Myers, a University of Cincinnati scientist, has determined men have about 2 billion more brain cells than women but the extra cells don't make them smarter than women.

2.) Louann Brizendine, a San Francisco neuropsychiatrist and author of *The Female Brain*,

asserts that the difference between male and female brains explains why women like to discuss their feelings, while men love to dwell upon sex.

"Women have an eight-lane superhighway for processing emotion, while men have a small country road," Brizendine says. "Men, however, have O'Hare Airport as a hub for processing thoughts about sex, where women have the airfield nearby that lands small and private planes."

3.) A brain-scanning study suggests that when males watch a mild electric shock given to a cheater, they don't feel his pain. Instead they enjoy it. Women's brains empathize with the cheater's pain and they get no pleasure from it.

5.) Men tend to perform better than women at certain spatial tasks, target-directed motor skills, mathematical reasoning, and navigating. (Is that why they don't ask for directions?) Women tend to excel at word tests, identifying matching items and precision manual tasks.

6.) Men and women with equal IQ's achieve the same scores with different areas of the brain, Richard J. Haier, PhD reported in *NeuroImage*. He

also found that women have more white matter and fewer gray matter areas related to IQ than men do.

But what about remedies for grumpy behavior? And here I have to admit there must be something to this female reader's complaint. After all, how did "grumpy old man" become a fixture in our language?

As an old, but not usually grumpy man, I have a recommendation. Take your grumpy old husband in your arms and tell him how much you love him and how much you appreciate all that he has done for you over many years.

I guarantee that, if you do this, his frontal lobe will grow.

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

June Fulfills the Promise of Spring

BY FRAN HEMOND

MONTAGUE CENTER - It's early June, with the promise of spring. The bright morning world of light and shadow, the green willow tree, one scraggly branch hiding the pendant oriole nest that sways precariously in every breeze, the blue sky above the dark pines on the hill, the ninety year old catalpa finally sprouting green, the stalky daffodil leaves still in the grass, a memory of yesterday's glory, are all mere background to the blossoming rhododendron.

Each bloom is a bouquet in itself. *The Reader's Digest Illustrated Guide to Gardening* points out the word rhododendron comes from the Greek words for tree rose, and its beauty is exceptional, like its name.

Rhododendrons love our acid soil, and the half-day of sunlight their locations provide. These lovelies are worth the attention they require.

I must remember that the daf-

fodil bulbs must be nourished by green leaves, and the daffodils must be left to brown out on their own. My lawn of a hundred daffodils is anathema to the lawn cutter, but daffodils in bloom after a wicked winter are fine recompense for a scraggly patch of lawn in vibrant late spring.

The rhododendron, which untrimmed grows high and hides the view of the pond, must be trimmed shortly after blooming, as late pruning will cut off next year's buds.

With good nectar available, the humming birds have put the area on their schedule. They also fly by the little red trumpets of the lipstick plant, a Mother's Day gift, which is in a hanging pot on the porch. Years ago I depended on a fuschia to get on the humming bird route.

Maybe if good food is available in a safe place, they will come. In any event, a rose-breasted grosbeak brought color

and size to the new smaller feeder that has replaced the old square open communal feeder the titmice and chickadees, cardinal and sparrows shared. The big feeder had been found by big blackbirds, who brought their friends and took over. They must eat, but elsewhere.

The grosbeak, so well named, 'gros' being Latin for 'thick,' managed to fit himself onto the small space and found the sunflower seed to his liking. The neat black and white back and wing pattern, seed-cracker bill, and rose breast make him one of our handsomest birds. Some birds stay around feeders during the winter, but he may have been recently returned from the south for a new nesting season.

So June is fulfilling the promise of spring, here in the country where the green is accentuated by big and little flowers, and the flash of colorful birds, a blessing in a troubled world.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, JUNE 6th

Vermont Center for Photography: *Journeys*, photographs by Ron Rosenstock. Opening night 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. during Brattleboro Gallery Walk. This is the first exhibit of Ron Rosenstock's color work from his new book, *Journeys*. On display until Sunday, July 27th. Vermont Center for Photography, 49 Flat St., Brattleboro, VT, (802) 251-6051.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: DJ Pushplay, \$3.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Evolution*, rock. 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Green Thumb Brothers** - Our own Simon White, Aaron Cox, Gabe & Jake Martinelli and company will wow you with their smooth Reggae style, 9 to 11 p.m..

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JUNE 6th & 7th

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *The Dhamma Brothers*. No special admission price charged but donations at the door will be gratefully accepted, 7:30 p.m. Q & A with Vipassana Prison Trust members both nights.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7th

Family Breeding Bird Survey at Northfield Mountain, 8 - 10:30 a.m. For ages 6 and older. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960. Mass Audubon is in year two of a five year breeding bird survey of the State. Help gather data for the survey for the block called "Orange-1" at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center. Bring binoculars if you have them.

At The Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: Annie Lynch & the Beekeepers with Tom Thumb. Shows begin around 8 p.m. \$5-\$10. Food & drinks available at The Lady Killigrew.

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Archguitar virtuoso **Peter Blanchette** presents an evening of music from Italian cinema. \$10 general, \$8 student/senior at the door. Unitarian Society of Northampton.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet & Armadillo Armor* \$3.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Deja Jazz** - all jazz, all night. 9 to 11 p.m.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Tracy & Company, rock & roll covers, come to dance, 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 8th

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Second Second Comedy. Shane Mauss, Maggie MacDonald (Boston Comedy Festival) and Dave Yubruh (show host) perform. 7 p.m. \$5.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Foundation for New Poetry* reading TNT Karaoke, free, 8 p.m.

Eating Local the Wild Way with Blanche Cybele Derby: Author, artist, life-long forager and cook -- Blanche's thirty years of foraging and preparing wild foods give her an intimate knowledge of plants through the seasons. Take this field walk to learn which plants are in season and how to gather and prepare them at home. 1 - 3 p.m. For ages 12 & older. Free. Pre-register (800) 859-2960.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Oweuhops and Haunt, 9 p.m., \$3.

THURSDAY, JUNE 12th

Whip-Poor-Wills in Montague: Dave Small will give a talk and lead a walk for the public on Whip-poor-wills. Co-sponsored by partners of the Great Falls Discovery Center and the Athol Bird and Nature Club. Meet at the Discovery Center, Turners Falls, then hike the Montague sand plain to see and hear these unusual birds. 7 to 9:30 p.m.

Coop Concerts 2008 Summer Series! Featuring Russ Thomas, Laura Siersema, and The Ambiguities. COOP Concerts continues their collaboration with NESEA to bring our fifth season of Thursday night concerts at the Greenfield Energy Park. Bring your blankets, chairs, picnic and spend an enjoyable evening of music. 6 to 8 p.m.



Musicians Mark Fraser, and Daphne Bye, Tex & Pat LaMountain, & Jennie McAvoy fill the Great Hall with music in combinations from solo, duo, trio to the whole band, keeping the audience guessing as to what will come next! *Rootcellar* performs at the Great Falls Coffee House at the Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Doors open 6:30 pm - coffee & homemade baked goods available. Museum will be open at intermission. Sliding scale donation of \$6 - \$12. Wheelchair accessible. Info. (413) 863-3221 x 3

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Jones Trio (jazz that thumps!) \$3.

North Quabbin Center for the Performing Arts at the 1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: Jami Sieber & Steve Gorn. The magical meeting of electric cello, vocals and bansuri flute. 7:30 p.m., \$15. Children 12 & under, free. www.1794meetinghouse.org.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Free Range** - Rock out with Betsy, Mark and Bruce to oldie cover tunes from the 60's & 70's. 8 to 10 p.m..

FRIDAY, JUNE 13th

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Dance or Die*, \$3 cover.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Bang Box*, 80's rock & roll covers, come to dance, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Nexus** - Harmonic eclectic rock / alternative. Dancing tends to break out when this group gets going! 9 to 11 p.m..

SATURDAY, JUNE 14th

Earth Wind and Sun Fair, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 10 to 4 p.m. Join us for a day filled with activities, workshops, and a Climate Change Geo-walk from 1 - 2:30 p.m. Info. (413) 863-3221 or stop by the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Padding Vernon to Pauchaug with the Connecticut River Watershed Council: Join Andrea Donlon, CRWC River Steward and Northfield Mountain's Beth Bazler on this 6½ mile paddle from the Vernon Dam. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. For ages 12 and older. Fee: \$10 per boat with own boat; \$25 with own boat shuttled; \$50 with rental. Pre-register (800) 859-2960.

RiverFest in Shelburne Falls. An annual tribute to the Deerfield River, and the role it plays in people's lives

and the ecosystem of western Massachusetts. Educational displays and demonstrations, the *Frog & Flower Parade*, art, crafts, tag, book and plant sales. This year's theme, *Celebrating a Working Watershed*, 10 to 4 p.m.

At The Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Of Shoes and Ships*. OS & S draws from a wide variety of influences, infusing their original music with strands of funk, rock and folk. 8 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet and Vaudevillains*, \$3.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Turn It Loose*, rockers come to dance, 9:30 p.m.

UNTIL JUNE 15th

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. On display: Lili Almog, Studio 52 - *Perfect Intimacy Revealed Through Photographer's Eyes* and Linda Butler - *Meditations on Simplicity*, Studio 56. In Gallery 85 - Stella Johnson's exhibit *Al Sol*.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17th

Undergrowth Farm presents: *Movements for Self-Determination*, a film series featuring documentaries highlighting historical and contemporary resistance movements. This month, *Sir! No Sir!* tells of the GI movement that helped end the Vietnam War. One of the most vibrant and widespread upheavals of the 1960's--having a profound impact on American society, yet virtually silenced. At the Brickhouse, Turners Falls. 7 p.m. Donations to the Hot Spot Teen Center accepted.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18th

Nutrition Talk - *The New Raw Food Diet* - with certified nutrition specialist Diana Allen, MS, CNS. 6:30 p.m., Green Fields Market, Greenfield. For more info: (413) 205-6971 or nutrition4evolution@earthlink.net

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Quizmastah Chad's Quiznite Quiz, 8 p.m., \$2 to play.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21st

Public reception for Volunteer Students from Hallmark Institute of Photography: *Annual Spring Exhibit & Benefit Print Sale* to support humanitarian work of Doctors Without Borders. On display June 19th - June 29th.

UNTIL JUNE 22ND

At Artspace, Greenfield on display-group exhibition: *Features, Studies of the Human Form*. Artwork crafted from a variety of materials, local artists. Artspace, Greenfield. Hours Mon. - Fri. 1 - 6 p.m.

ONGOING

The Turners Falls Fishway is open for the season! Public viewing during the height of spawning season. Open

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THURS - Drop-in, 3 - 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 - 8 p.m.
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips. Info: Jared at 863-9559.
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- SEX AND THE CITY R**
DAILY 6:00 9:00
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- IRONMAN**
DAILY 6:15 9:15 PG13
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS**
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- YOU DON'T MESS** PG13
WITH THE ZOHAN in dts sound
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Sun. 6/8 **FREE**
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TNT KARAOKE 8pm

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TRIAL from page 11

took up position across the canal on the bike path, and poured water across to fight the blaze.

Bartus instructed Zellman and Dion to, "Stop the fire from going south into Building #11, a large multi-story building which is within close proximity to Southworth, an existing, working paper mill." These men accomplished this task.

Bartus, who knew, "After the building collapsed the apparatus I was in was committed until the fire was put out," continued to fight the blaze from the north, with help of more men who came across the pedestrian bridge, pulling hoses with them.

The low tunnel beneath Southworth prevented fire engines from entering that way, but eventually hoses were carried between Building #11 and Southworth to fight the fire from the rear.

Bartus said it took approximately three hours to contain the blaze, and three days to extinguish it completely.

"What do you see here, Captain Bartus?" asked Perry, directing his attention to another photo.

"Here, the fire is so intense it is pushing out every window."

"And here?"

"This is the actual start of the collapse of the building. I had run out of water, and I was repositioning," to draw water from the canal, Bartus said.

Next slide.

"Here the roof is coming down through the third floor, collapsing in on itself."

Tanzer sat silent at the defense table, staring at the screen.

According to the statement given by Tanzer's girlfriend,

Amber Hewes, to the Montague police, she and Tanzer had returned to their apartment at 5 Chestnut Lane, after Tanzer told her he had set fire to Building #10. She told police they went to sleep for the remainder of the night. If her statement is true, this may have been Tanzer's first good look at the vast blaze that reduced Building #10 to rubble that night.

In cross examination, Auskern determined that Bartus is not trained as an arson investigator, that he was not able to determine whether the sprinkler system was working in Building #10 that night, and that the fire alarm system in the Strathmore had not activated before the fire crews arrived. Some hours later, the master fire alarm in Building #2 activated, and rang at the Turners Falls fire station, as it should have when the fire first broke out, but Bartus could not say why, during the course of the blaze, that alarm had finally gone off.

Auskern reminded Bartus that he had responded to a fire at the Strathmore on November 22nd of 2006, and refreshed his memory on a second fire at the Strathmore that same week. On one of these occasions Tanzer, working on salvage operations for Jones, accidentally cut through the line of an acetylene torch as he worked to cut apart stainless steel pipes, causing a fire. On another, slag from the pipes being cut apart ignited a smoldering fire in paper residue in the basement of the mill.

On May 26th, as Bartus fought the blaze with Cogswell on the north side of Building #10, approximately 15 minutes after they arrived at the scene, Bartus said he saw a woman exiting Building #2 near the pedestrian

bridge. Shortly thereafter, he told the court he saw Jones exiting the building at the same location. Auskern focused on his interaction with Jones.

Bartus said when he saw him, Jones' clothing was wet, but he was walking at normal speed. Auskern tried several times and by various methods to ask Bartus what Jones had said to him about the origin of the fire that morning, but Ford sustained objections by the Commonwealth to his queries on this point.

Perry called her next witness, Paige Skawski, operations manager from Acme Metals in Springfield, to testify that Tanzer's girlfriend, Amber Hewes, had become a frequent customer at her salvage business between December, 2006 and May of 2007.

"She was in quite frequently," Skawski said, and she produced computer records to prove it.

Last up for the Commonwealth on Wednesday, former Strathmore owner Jerry Jones took the witness stand, wearing his trademark blue blazer and swearing to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Asked how he came to own the 244,482 square foot Strathmore mill, Jones, a former manager for Sonoco Products in Holyoke and then for Mercer Paper Tube in York, PA, said, "I paid \$40,000 in cash for it."

Jones bought the mill in 2002 from International Paper Co., which had closed the mill and sold off the papermaking machinery in 1994.

Jones told the court he was living in the mill at the time of the fire.

On the morning of the May 26th, 2007 fire, Montague building inspector David Jensen acknowledged that Jones had been allowed to live there, despite the fact the Strathmore Mill is not zoned for residential use. "It was acknowledged that having a person in the building was not a bad thing, as a sort of 'night watchman,'" said Jensen, as he looked down from the pedestrian bridge at the smoking

ruins of Building #10 that morning.

Perry led Jones through a series of photos depicting his living quarters in the Strathmore, on the fourth level of Building #1. Earlier, Bartus explained Jones' apartment was about 40 to 50 feet away from the location of the fire, which was giving off intense heat and flames at the time of Bartus arrival on the scene.

Jones examined the photos one by one. "This shows the living room. This shows the dining room. This shows the kitchen and the refrigerator," he said, speaking softly.

Jones told the court he had previously employed Tanzer "four or five years earlier" at a mill in Easthampton where he had conducted a paper warehousing and recycling business, similar to the operation he carried on at the Strathmore, selling odd lots and ends of rolls to countries like Pakistan, India, and Taiwan.

Jones said Tanzer had come to work for him again at the Strathmore, "several months to a year" before the May 26th fire, handling "various duties: forklift operator, inspecting paper, removing precious metals."

On the latter point, Jones told the court he had "cleared about \$100,000" from the salvage of copper pipe and copper wire at the Strathmore, with Tanzer's assistance.

Jones said when Tanzer came to work for him at the Strathmore, he had allowed Tanzer and his girlfriend Hewes to live there with him in a spare office, rent free. But Jones said Tanzer and Hewes tended to drink, take drugs and fight. Jones said he also came to notice copper appeared to be disappearing, not part of the deliveries of scrap they made regularly to nearby WTE Recycling in Greenfield.

Jones said Tanzer admitted on one occasion he had taken scrap copper from the mill without permission, and had paid Jones back \$800 for it.

Jones said he had confronted Tanzer about his drinking and the disappearance of copper and told him to move out. After an argu-

ment on one such occasion, Jones said Tanzer sent him a text message threatening to burn the mill down.

Eventually, Jones said, Tanzer and Hewes moved to the apartment on Chestnut Lane.

Jones said Building #10 was filled with warehoused paper on the upper three floors at the time of the fire, though he did not mention this was in defiance of a court ordered agreement with the town of Montague to contain the warehoused paper to agreed upon areas where fire suppression sprinklers were operational. He said the electricity had been cut off to Building #10 some months before the blaze broke out, and all metal salvage operations in Building #10 had ceased weeks earlier.

Jones told the court about the May 6th incident in which Tanzer was badly burned during an attempt to strip copper from a live 13,800 volt wire, with Jones looking on over his shoulder. He said he took Tanzer to the Franklin Medical Center, from where he was transferred to UMass Medical in Worcester. Jones said he continued to pay wages to Tanzer while he was hospitalized, and only ceased to do so when Tanzer filed a \$1 million damage lawsuit against him over that incident, "a few days after he was released from the hospital." A lien in that amount was attached to the Strathmore five days before the May 26th fire, on Tanzer's behalf.

Before the trial adjourned for the day, Perry elicited from Jones the information that he had received a \$20,000 check from John Anctil, for the purchase of the Strathmore Mill, days before the fire, as a downpayment on a \$300,000 purchase and sale agreement for the property.

Anctil, of Lowell, eventually purchased the mill last month for \$50,000, from James Bent, of New York, who had purchased it on March 29th of this year from Jones for \$1. Anctil plans to open a film and video school and production facility in the mill.



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