



**STATE CHAMPIONS**  
65th Reunion in Montague  
Page 16



**HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!**  
No paper next week.

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 38

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 28, 2007

## State DOE to Gill and Montague: 'Your Schools are Underperforming'

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The Massachusetts Board of Education (MBOE) voted 4 to 1 with two abstentions on Tuesday, June 26th to place the Gill Montague Regional School District on "underperforming" status. Recently hired interim G-M superintendent Ken Roche, who attended the meeting with the MDOE in Waltham, along with former G-M superintendent Sue Gee, said, "My response was, I acknowledged the district is struggling, particularly on the fiscal side. We'd removed a number of positions before we even presented a budget this year."

At the G-M school committee meeting on Tuesday night, Roche said he told the state education board he traced the district's fiscal woes to 2003, when a 20% cut in state aid resulted in the loss of nearly two dozen teachers and staff, and the subsequent loss of 140 students to school choice, coupled with the loss of an additional \$700,000 in state aid that went with them. "I pointed out, sometimes the process creates a self-fulfilling prophecy."

In reporting the news, Roche was careful to say, "I hope people realize [the 'underperforming' label] is about our fiscal situation, not about our educational capacity." But later in the meeting, when Precinct 4's David Thompson asked what would happen if the towns "cannot come up with your

see SCHOOLS pg 12

## State Legislators Weigh in on Gill-Montague Budget Crisis

BY BETSY CALVERT  
TURNERS FALLS - News this week that the state Department of Education has labeled the Gill-Montague school system as "underperforming" came as a shock to many officials, even though the threat had been made clear.

Selectman Allen Ross said he had thought the state Board of Education would not follow through with its threat.

"I was kind of led to believe it was more unlikely than likely, since we had not finished our

budget sequence," Ross said yesterday.

Indeed, on the same day the state set in motion the precursor steps to state takeover of the district, the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee voted to present its third budget to the towns - this one asking for \$300,000 less in local assessments.

The newly proposed budget of \$16.43 million for fiscal 2008 means cutting nine to 10 existing staff, including five teachers, three teaching aids and two unspecified posi-

When a building burns in the night in Turners Falls, everyone in town knows it by the time they wake up. In the densely packed downtown, smoke fills the streets, and fills the houses in summer, smoke alarms go off blocks away, and residents wake up wondering whether it is their own dwelling on fire.

So it was when the Strathmore Mill Building #10 went up in flames on the morning of May 26th, 2007. So it was when the Crocker

Bank Building burned on the morning of June 26th, 1997.

Gripping, never-before seen raw footage of the fire, filmed by one who lived through it, former MCTV cameraman Bob Gentry, was shown on Channel 17 in Montague this week on the tenth anniversary of the blaze. It showed a hellish scene of mayhem and confusion, as ladder trucks jockeyed for position to pluck men off upper window ledges where they hung for dear life, in

some cases arriving minutes too late.

One man, Palden Sangpo, a native of Tibet, died after a plunge from the third floor to the pavement below. One man, Peter Jacob, sustained serious injuries moments later in a similar fall. One man, Joe Novak, held on, and was rescued. A total of 17 tenants were left homeless, in what was soon determined to be an arson fire, set by a runaway 15-year-old girl intending to settle a drug dealing score.

As at the Strathmore, the fire at the Crocker Bank took place in a building where basic fire and safety codes were found repeatedly to be in violation. On the night of the fire, the fire alarm was not working; it had been purposefully deactivated. Entrance doors meant to be self-locking were open to the street, or easily opened. Squatters were living in the building along with tenants legally renting.

Sometime around 2:30 in

see FIRE pg 8



**TEN YEARS AFTER**

**Fire at the Crocker Building**

BY DAVID DETMOLD  
TURNERS FALLS -

BOB GENTRY VIDEO STILL

## Teen Badly Injured Swimming



*at the Rock Dam*

DETMOLD PHOTO

BY JEAN HEBDEN

A Turners Falls teen was seriously injured on Tuesday, June 26th, in a swimming accident in the Connecticut River.

On a day when humidity made the 93 degree temperature seem even hotter, Donovan Murphy, 15, of 67 4th Street went to a section of the

Connecticut River known locally as the Rock Dam with friends and family members to get some relief from the

see SWIM pg 15

**PET OF THE WEEK**  
Your One & Only



**Smokey**

Smokey is just as soft as she looks, pale grey with dashes of peach in her fur, with a teardrop on her nose and a V on her forehead. She is a muted calico with little white paws and just adorable, particularly with her striking gold eyes. Smokey comes from a home that had too many pets to take care of and she's lived indoors only all her life. She's vocal, tolerant and sweet - with humans that is. She can be aggressive toward other cats and therefore this little diva will have to be your one and only. For more information on adopting Smokey please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dphvs.org.

**MILLERS FALLS LIBRARY NEWS**  
**Volcano Worlds**

BY LINDA HICKMAN  
MILLERS FALLS- Kartyr Lankowski of Millers Falls and Matthew looked on while the

clay volcano made by Willow Desjardins of Essex Junction, Vermont erupted. The Volcano Worlds program with artist Ruth O'Mara of Wendell will be repeated at the Carnegie Library on Friday, July 13th at 10 a.m. For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.



HICKMAN PHOTO

**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Puppet Show July 6th**

BY LINDA HICKMAN  
TURNERS FALLS - The No Strings Marionette Company will perform the Treasure Hunt at the Carnegie Library on July 6th at 10 a.m. The show will be held on the library lawn, or inside, depending upon the weather. The show is suitable for children of all ages and

adults. The No Strings Marionette Company is well known for its quality productions, with intricate puppets and elaborate settings. The show is sponsored by the Community Partnerships for Children. For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

**SLATE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Rhythm and Dance Party**

GILL - July 7th, 11:00 a.m. Megan Bathory-Peeler, instructor of Dance at Northfield Mount Hermon presents: Moxie Dance!!! Children's Rhythm and Dance party. Come play improvisational instruments and learn some cool new dance moves on the lawn at Slate library in the center of Gill.

On July 14th, at 10:30 a.m. Henry Lappen, Juggler Extraordinaire will perform.

Henry the Juggler is considered armed (and legged) and dangerous. He is known to cause spontaneous outbursts of laughter. He has in his possession balls, clubs, rings, torches and other apparatus of his trade. He is capable of walking on a thin wire high above the ground. He is known to change his height through the use of stilts. Join us for this fun filled morning at Sunny Slate library!

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES July 2-6 and 9-13**

**MONTAGUE Senior Center,** 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.

- Monday, 2nd**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
1 p.m. Canasta
- Tuesday, 3rd**  
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 4th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 5th**  
1:00 p.m. Pitch
- Friday, 6th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

- Monday, 9th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
1 p.m. Canasta
- Tuesday, 10th**  
9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 11th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 12th**  
1:00 p.m. Pitch
- Friday, 13th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

**ERVING Senior Center,** 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

- Monday, 2nd**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library



PHOTO BY AL MacINTIRE

Peter Diemand, of Diemand Farm in Wendell, works the disc hay mow with his JD 4010 Diesel Tractor, fully restored with the help of his son James, and others, over the past winter.

Photo by Al MacIntire, who also took the great shots of town meeting voters and Wendell town officials that accompanied the annual town meeting story in our June 14th issue (MR V#36).

**Free Lunch for Kids**

The Gill - Montague Regional School District will once again be offering the Summer Lunch Program. anyone ages 18 and under can receive a free lunch, regardless of their income status, Monday through Friday at either Hillcrest Elementary School or Unity Park in Turners Falls.

The program is sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Massachusetts DOE.

**Holiday Trash Schedule**

The town of Montague will change the trash and recycling schedule, due to the July 4th holiday. The schedule will change as follows: Wednesday will change to Thursday. Thursday will change to Friday.

IN MEMORIAM  
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# All in the Family in the Wizard of Oz

BY SARA CAMPBELL

**TURNERS FALLS** - When the *Wizard of Oz* comes to the stage of the Shea Theater in July, some lesser-known characters will have their time in the spotlight. Amy Connelly of Turners Falls has fabricated a trio of singing crows that are bigger than life. They join Scarecrow in the cornfield as Dorothy starts out along the Yellow Brick Road to Oz.

The three-foot tall puppets have wings that flap and eyes that blink. They have affectionately been named Larry, Lippy, and Leo, as each one developed a unique personality as it emerged from wire and feathers.

Connelly is a member of the Country Players board of directors, and a veteran director and producer of many dramatic shows over the past 15 years. Anyone who saw TCP's production of *Cinderella* last summer will remember the pumpkin carriage and its mouse-turned-carriage horse. Connelly was the mastermind behind the cre-

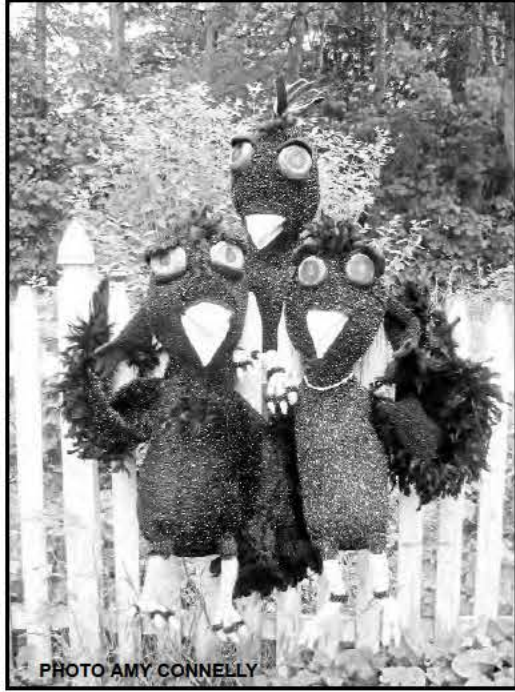


PHOTO AMY CONNELLY

Three crow puppets made by Amy Connelly will sing with Scarecrow, "If I Only Had a Brain."

fabricated by J.B. Hebert of South Deerfield, whose business WRXtra makes performance car parts for Subarus and other vehicles. He may have a few imported parts, but this Tin Man is American made!

Delaney is joined on the stage by his daughter Katie, a student at GCC, as Scarecrow. In all, there are at least 14 family groups performing or helping to produce the *Wizard of Oz*. The Wicked Witch's

daughter is a munchkin; Auntie Em's daughter is a jitterbug; the Emerald City guard has a winkie and a munchkin in his family.

Set designers are also hard at work constructing the three-sided rotating periactoid that will change the scene from Kansas to the Emerald City to the Wicked Witch's castle. As to how Glinda appears out of a bubble, we're not sure how they are going to manage that. The Country Players will present the classic musical *Wizard of Oz* at the Shea Theater stage on July 6th, 7th, 13th and 14th at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, July 15th at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 general admission, \$10 for seniors and students under 18. Tickets are available at the World Eye Bookshop or by calling the Shea at 863-2281. For more information see the web site at [www.countryplayers.org](http://www.countryplayers.org).

ation of the dancing, blinking horse, whose dancing to "Impossible" was a real crowd pleaser.

When the Tin Man squeaks and clangs onto the stage, he will be showing his 'metal.' Bob Delaney's costume is being

Set designers are also hard at work constructing the three-sided rotating periactoid that

glimpsed the exciting prizes: I'll buy a ticket later! But somehow time wasn't on your side, and the opportunity slipped away.

Well, you have one or two last chances. This Saturday, June 30th, we will be at Food City holding a raffle ticket we hope to put your name on. The cost is only \$1 per ticket, or \$5 for 6. Join the fun, and support your local newspaper!

The drawing will be held on Saturday, July 7th during intermission at the Country Players' performance of the *Wizard of Oz* at the Shea Theater. Come join us to see a fine performance, buy a last minute raffle ticket, and find out if your name is drawn for a prize!

## LAST CHANCE for FRIENDS OF THE REPORTER RAFFLE!

BY LYN CLARK - The Friends of the *Montague Reporter* have been raising money through raffle ticket sales for the past several weeks to assist our non-profit newspaper to move to new quarters on Fourth Street in August.

Many businesses have responded generously with prizes with wide appeal: FirstLight-Northfield Mountain: Two gift certificates - each for four passengers - for a cruise on the Quinnetuket riverboat; Rugg Lumber: one Milwaukee 8 1/2" circular saw; Ristorante Di Paolo: \$50 gift certificate; Greenfield Savings Bank: a complete tool kit; Diemand Egg Farm: two \$25 gift certificates; Ann Harding: one knitted scarf; Turners Falls Pizza House: two

\$10 gift certificates; Good Dirt Pottery: a large bowl, blue-glazed with dragonflies; Flore: matted artist proof of Painted Eagle; the Country Players: two tickets to the *Wizard of Oz*, second weekend. Thank you, donors!

With such outstanding support from our friends and business community, raffle tickets stubs are beginning to fill the shoebox in the offices of the *Montague Reporter*. Could it be that yours is not yet among them?

You may have seen us at the Art Fair, or the Farmers Market, perhaps at Food City. You may have hurried by on the way to some important engagement, thinking to yourself as you

## Historical Cutlery Exhibit

"Industries of Turners Falls, a Historical Perspective" is the title of an exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center from July 1st - 30th featuring the cutlery and paper industries from 1870s to 1930s. A collection of John Russell Company cutlery from this period will be displayed. Presented by the Museum of Our Industrial Heritage, Greenfield and the Great Falls Discovery Center, Avenue A, Turners Falls.

## Hands-On Industrial Archeology

The public is invited Saturday, July 7th, to explore the site of the John Russell Cutlery Co. conducted by Al Shane, curator of the Museum of our Industrial Heritage in Greenfield. Meet at 1:00 p.m. rain or shine, at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Sturdy footwear suggested. For additional info call (413) 548-9435.

The Country Players Present RSC's **The Wizard of Oz**  
July 6, 7, 13, and 14 at 7:30 p.m.  
July 15th at 2:00 p.m.  
At the Shea Theater in Turners Falls  
Tickets available at the door, or by calling 863-2281, or at World Eye Bookshop

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**The Montague Reporter**  
24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, Mass. 01376

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## Rosser's Sudden Death Leaves Void

**JONATHAN VON RANSON WENDELL** — Rosalie Rosser died Saturday night when a moose struck the side of her car on Route 2 in Phillipston. Her husband, Robert Rosser, who was in the car with her, was injured. He was released from the hospital Wednesday.

[The family has invited people to a tribute to Rosalie to be held this Sunday, July 1st, at 4 p.m. at the Wendell town hall].

Death seems especially unthinkable in this case, and

Neither displaying her efforts nor hiding them, but working like an artist with resources on every level - physical, emotional and spiritual, involving friends and grantors - she served as a guardian, a sort of unofficial, one-person welfare department, for the poorer families of Wendell and New Salem.

Patty Scutari, co-owner of Wendell Country Store, described Rosalie as "one of those rare people who give unconditionally. Some people in her position would make you reach your hand out. She'd just put it in your hand."

Working as a seamstress and a constant knitter, Rosalie sold her work in the recent Wendell Holiday Craft Fairs. In the late 1970s she booked arts and crafts events to earn insurance money to keep the Wendell Congregational Church (now the Meetinghouse) going, an effort that she abandoned when former members of the congregation objected to such use of the church building. She started a Peace Day in town that reflected her broad sense of justice by highlighting economic as well as military issues and alternatives. She helped me enormously with the series of Wendell Harvest Festivals I attempted in the early '80s. She once took over the Wendell Council on Aging and "whipped it into shape," in Charles Thompson Smith's words, and then turned it over to him to run.

Probably 15 years ago or more, Rosalie started Good Neighbors, the volunteer-run food distribution program that serves Wendell and surrounding communities. It involves juggling and scheduling produce and commodities - the former

see ROSSER next page



Rosalie Mae Rosser

has hit the community hard. It came only a week and a half after another Wendell matriarch, Elsie Diemand, died at 90, but the unexpectedness of Rosalie's departure, and the big part she played in the community, left people stunned, teary, and needing to talk.

In and among the glowing opinions now being shared about her, it is clear that Rosalie was a genuine human being. Her fellow townspeople could readily sense her bruises - she was a survivor of many life and health challenges - but that was because she never hid her vulnerable side; in fact, her somewhat sad, knowing presence came across as dignity, an almost preternatural grace.

Besides that deep calm, there was a positiveness to Rosalie that produced much practical good for the community.



Two Million Americans Wait for Passports

KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Sunday Afternoon Special

Anybody been to Turners Falls on a Sunday afternoon lately? Well today, June 24th, we have a band playing at the 2nd Street Sports Bar, I just heard a Lynyrd Skynyrd song, there is a charity print sale at the Hallmark Museum of

Photography, Ja'Duke is performing at the Shea Theater, the Great Falls Discovery Center is open, some youths are playing guitar and singing outside Seth & Eva's consignment store and the flowers are coming up nicely in the

planters. This all along Avenue A.

There certainly is a 'Changing Face of Turners Falls'.

- Don Clegg  
Montague City

## Elsie Diemand

Being a fairly recent resident of Wendell, or perhaps of a suburb called Wendell Depot, I hadn't had the opportunity to meet Elsie until Sunday, May 27th, after our Tranquility Zone meeting. I have become friends with her daughter Bertha. We stopped by, my friend Sister Estelle and I, had tea with Elsie. To me, she truly expressed a level of tranquility that a rich and kind life gives. I felt honored to listen to her clear and articulate stories, some recent, some in the past. She painted each of them with her quiet smile.

And by the way, she was

reading the *Montague Reporter*.

I'm with Elsie. A hometown newspaper is a vital pulse for the community. Please find enclosed my check for a subscription, and a little extra in memory of Elsie.

-Shay Cooper  
Wendell Depot

*Editor's note: In Elsie Diemand's memory, a scholarship fund has been established to provide - on a first come first served basis - for anyone who might like a subscription to the Montague Reporter, but who lacks the funds to pay for*

one. Call 413-863-8666, write us at 24 Third Street, Turners Falls 01376, or email us at [reporter@montaguema.net](mailto:reporter@montaguema.net) if you or anyone you know would like to receive a 26-week subscription from this fund.

Contributions to the scholarship fund may also be made to the above address.

## American Dead in Iraq as of 6/27/07



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

## Sign Me Up!

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### Note to Our Readers

The *Montague Reporter* will begin our usual summer schedule, printing every other week, following our June 28th issue. There will be no paper on July 5th and 19th, August 2nd, 16th, and 30th.

### We welcome your letters

**Montague Reporter**  
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[reporter@montaguema.net](mailto:reporter@montaguema.net)

**ROSSER** from pg 4

through Foster's, Whole Foods and Trader Joe's, and the latter through the federal government and WIC. People in Orange report that the extra food Rosalie would sometimes bring down to share with the food pantry there. At the latest food pickup, people stood with tears in their eyes describing how she'd helped them in their times of difficulty. She managed a toy

collection program out of a "concern for kids in Wendell and New Salem who might not otherwise have a nice Christmas."

That quote, and a lot of the information about Rosalie's work that precedes it, is from Charles, her neighbor and key helper in Good Neighbors. Charles explained her productivity this way: "She had a gift for somehow finding 50 hours in every day. Since she had so

many hours, she never seemed in a hurry. But she always managed to get a lot done." She was "always meeting people's needs," he said, "even ones that seemed slightly outré." According to Charles, she once provided a ham radio for a 15-year-old American boy with a plan to help handicapped kids in Lebanon, the details of which he now forgets.

"She was certainly battling cancer at times," he said. "It

would return, and she would somehow surmount the difficulty." She seemed in good health when she died.

Melinda Godfrey, another Good Neighbors volunteer, remembered Rosalie for her "endless patience, sometimes with people who didn't deserve patience." She speculated that it was because Rosalie "never claimed to know all the answers - [thus] she would have patience with other people's foibles and problems."

Picking up a theme that was sounded repeatedly in these reminiscences, Godfrey said, "She seems to me to have been a saint in every way I would think of a saint - an extremely good person. She went beyond good intention; she put it in practice."

In a writing group I held in my home for four years around

the recent turn of the century, Rosalie was one of the dedicated regulars. In the presence of her crinkly, blue, been-there eyes and spare, sometimes almost one-syllable writing and comments on the writing of others, the rest of us felt an encouragement to settle into ourselves.

Just a few weeks before her death, Rosalie received the Unsung Heroine Award from the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women at the State House in Boston.

Patty Scutari said something that made people nod "yes" in a circle that was held for Rosalie at the Good Neighbors food pickup only 14 hours after she died. "If Elsie (Diemand) was the heart of the community," Patty said, "Rosalie was the soul."



**OBITUARY Rosalie Mae Rosser**

Rosalie Mae Rosser died as a result of a car accident on June 23rd. She was born in Athol on August 17, 1935, and attended Athol schools.

She was the wife of Robert Rosser and the mother of Robert Chaisson of Orange, Francis Chaisson of Athol, Thomas Chaisson and Joy William Chaisson of Greenfield, Phyllis Ferris, Lola Bedaw and Lorraine Chaisson of Wendell. She leaves behind 24 grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Also two brothers, Jimmy Robinson of Illinois and John Robinson of California. Also several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her son Donald, her parents William and Hazel Robinson, sisters Anna Morin, Billie Irene Nicolliello, Starlene Shortis, Elnora Coppelino, Edna Chaisson and brothers William and Miles Robinson.

Rosalie was a very strong, caring and giving person who dedicated her life to her family and friends. Rosalie recently was honored at the Massachusetts state house with an unsung heroine award for 15 years of service running the Good Neighbors Food Pantry in Wendell. She has also been recognized more than once as Wendell's Citizen of the Year.

Mother is the essence of Love, a constant source of patience and understanding. Her gentle touch, reassuring smile and endless devotion are a source of strength through the years and across the miles. Mother is wisdom, guidance and beauty, whose life experience guide her children on the path to happiness.

There will be a tribute to her life on Sunday, July 1st at 4 p.m. at the Wendell Town Hall. Potluck to follow. Donations may be sent to the Good Neighbors Food Pantry, c/o Athol Savings Bank, 444 Main Street, PO Box 937, Athol, MA 01331.

**Francis, We'll Miss Ye**

BY RICHARD ANDERSEN

**MONTAGUE** - When Fran Dolan looked back on his life of 85 years, here's what he talked about:

Playing football and baseball for Turners Falls High School during the Depression and being awarded one of the two lettermen sweaters given to the school's best athletes by the American Legion.

Attending Williams College, where he was known as a 'hick' because he came from a town and wore a letterman's sweater from a school that no one there had ever heard of.

Losing his faith in late-night bullshit sessions with students from schools he'd only heard about.

Playing catcher for the Williams College baseball team and becoming a campus hero when he knocked out with one punch an opposing player who threatened him with a baseball bat.

Discovering Yeats and



SARAH SWANSON PHOTO

Fran Dolan 1922 - 2007

Shakespeare.

Serving as captain of a PT

boat during World War II.

Removing his captain's bars

in response to the challenge made by a belligerent sailor and showing everyone on board he didn't need the two little pieces of metal to command their boat.

Receiving as a gift from a Japanese war widow her late husband's aviation scarf.

Graduating from Harvard Law School, setting up practice in Turners Falls, and never missing the annual Williams-Amherst football game from that day on.

Introducing John F. Kennedy to the Turners Falls community on a campaign trip to Western Massachusetts.

Being married to only one woman and not divorcing her after she threw out his tattered letterman's sweater.

Retiring as the oldest-living and longest-practicing attorney in the state of Massachusetts.

Strolling with Henry David Thoreau who was sometimes accompanied by God.

Posing as an "Irish rogue" to Fran Hemond.

Quoting Yeats and

Shakespeare to anyone who would listen at the Shady Glen restaurant.

When people talk about Fran Dolan, here are some of the words they use to describe him:

Kind, gentle, friendly, humble, gallant, selfless, considerate, caring, smart, witty, and well-read, a sun worshipper, a perceptive listener, a responsible parent, a devoted mentor, a defender of the under-privileged, an advocate for peace, a poet of the heart, and an endless supplier of chocolate and flowers to women.

*I will arise and go now,  
for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with  
low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway,  
or on the pavements grey,  
I hear it in the deep heart's  
core.*

- from the Lake Isle of  
Imnisfree  
-William Butler Yeats

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# Sculls, Shells, World Rowers to Help CRWC Raise Funds

**GREENFIELD** - On July 22nd, a slew of shells - propelled by sculls and the gentle current - will head down the Connecticut River. In those shells will be seventy-five rowers in seventeen boats hailing from seventeen countries. All but one person in each 33-foot long boat will face backward; but for the rowers that isn't unusual. The circumstances and technical terms are second nature to members of the 2007 FISA World Rowing Tour (Federation Internationale des Societes d'Aviron; International Rowing Federation), who will begin their World Rowing Tour at Bellows Falls, VT on July 22nd. They finish up at New York, NY, on July 28th.

The shells are the sleek, flat-bottomed racing boats; the sculls are the oars. The crews are international ambassadors for the sport, here to experience the beauties of New England's Great

River. As FISA crews row, they'll help raise money for water quality testing and a new water-testing lab at the Connecticut River Watershed Council's headquarters in Greenfield. A forward-facing coxswain will bark instruction as the backwards-facing rowers square their oars, start their catches, and drive their sculls to a clean finish.

All told the rowing ambassadors will travel 131 miles, while asking supporters to make pledges to the CRWC at: [www.criver.org](http://www.criver.org). CRWC director Chelsea Gwyther hopes the eye-catching spectacle of five-person crews gliding along their river will inspire watershed residents, "People can sponsor the tour in the name of their favorite country, or in the name of cleaning up our wonderful Connecticut River," Gwyther said. During the tour, blogs from

the rowers will be posted on the CRWC website. "Our crews are excited about the fundraising aspect of the tour," said Marilyn Shapiro, FISA and Masters Rowing Association tour organizer, adding that crews will take a victory lap around Manhattan on the tour's last day. [www.fisarowing-tourusa2007.org](http://www.fisarowing-tourusa2007.org).

Though it might sound unwieldy, the 2007 World Rowing Tour promises to be quite a spectacle as it makes its way down the Connecticut River during the last full week of July. The public can learn more at the Watershed Council's website, where information

will also be posted about places to view the event and meet rowers at stops, including

Bellows Falls, VT, Barton Cove in Gill, or Hartford and Essex in Connecticut.



SUSAN RUSSO PHOTO

*The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center concluded their kayak raffle at 5:00 p.m. on Father's Day. Donna Perkins of Windsor Locks, CT is the happy recipient of a new kayak, paddle and vest, along with the huge stuffed bear that was included. Although Donna is not from this area, she and her son, Zachary, have family here, and are frequent visitors to the Great Falls Discovery Center. The Friends of GFDC would like to thank everyone who supported the Discovery Center by buying raffle tickets, and invite everyone to visit during the summer Tuesday through Sunday from 10 - 4:00. To see a calendar of current programs, please visit [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org)*

## TURNERSFALLS RIVERCULTURE

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## Congratulations Bulldogs!



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARTY GARCIA

### The Erving Bulldogs, Tri-County Pee-Wee League 2007 Eastern Division Champions

*Pictured (l - r) Back row; Coach Marty Garcia, Trent Holmes, Conner Myron, Caleb Bristol, Coach Buddy Meatty. Middle row; Michael Soucie, Nick Pollock, Kyle Meatty, Gunnar Garcia. Bottom row; Noah Marchand, Jordan Meatty, Jacob Clark, Jon LeClair, Amelia Marchand. Team Motto; Believe!*

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

## Bat Removed on North Street

#### Tuesday 6-12

5:15 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a vehicle negligently, and leaving the scene of an accident.

9:51 p.m. Caller from a North Street address requested help with removing a bat from her house. Bat located in living room and removed.

#### Thursday 6-14

8:15 a.m. Report of a stray cat under the porch at a North Street address. Caller advised not a police department issue.

#### Monday 6-18

11:30 a.m. Walk-in to station reported theft of a skill saw by an East Main Street resident. Report taken. Under investigation.

#### Friday 6-15

11:00 p.m. Report of underage drinking at Laurel Lake Campground, site #20. [redacted] was arrested and charged with being a minor in possession of alcohol (subsequent offense) and possession of marijuana. [redacted] was summoned for being a minor in possession of alcohol (subsequent offense).

#### Thursday 6-21

4:00 p.m. Report of an injured deer in the middle of Millers River in Farley. Found deer had broken front legs. Officer destroyed deer. 8:20 p.m. Report of an intoxicated man walking on River Road. Followed subject to residence on Pratt Street.

#### Saturday 6-16

#### Monday 6-25

3:00 p.m. Assisted Erving fire department at a North Street address, with an elderly woman who had fallen.

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# Hallmark Student Print Show Benefits Doctors Without Borders

**CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - When George Rosa III, president of the Hallmark Institute of Photography, got the inspiration a couple of years ago to start a contemporary photography museum in downtown Turners Falls, he wasn't thinking of it as being a philanthropic organization. Instead, he planned to make it the pre-eminent New England showplace for displaying work of internationally known contemporary photographers. He had a few other visions in mind, as well: building a renowned image collection where researchers could engage in archival work, creating a greater sense of the Institute as a major player in the training of photographers, and tapping into the growing arts renaissance in Montague. All of that has been realized. But more, too, has been achieved. The Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography has become a leading Western Massachusetts philanthropy.



PHOTOGRAPH BY KELLY HOFFMAN

One of the student works at the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography's Print Sale to Benefit Doctors Without Borders

The philanthropy thing started by accident and because of an accident. When the tsunami devastated South and Southeast Asia in December of 2005, a student named Katherine Kerkman, who was doing dishes in her apartment one day and thinking about what she could do to help the victims of the catastrophe, hit upon the idea of holding a student print sale as a benefit fundraiser. Rosa warmed to the idea, and pledged the Institute's help with mounting the show. And so, even before the museum officially opened, Rosa put up a show of student work to benefit AmericaCares, a nongovernmental organization directly involved in providing assistance to the millions in need. A couple of weeks later the sale of student prints had collected nearly \$11,000 for AmericaCares. Then, last June, the museum

mounted another show of student work, this time to benefit Doctors Without Borders. This time, the museum raised more than \$11,000 for the organization.

With this kind of success, it seemed only logical to Rosa and Paul Turnbull, the Hallmark Museum's director, that a student print show should be an annual affair, and it should be combined with a benefit. So again this year, Hallmark has mounted a stunning show of student prints. Again, the recipient of the money raised will be Doctors Without Borders.

Rosa was delighted for his students at the Institute. "Students graduate one day, and the next have work displayed in a museum." The quality of work also clearly impressed him: "Paul, who judged the submissions, had a

hard time selecting which prints to display on the wall, as so much of the work submitted was so strong." David Frazier, an instructor at Hallmark who organized the student show, echoed Rosa's remarks. "The work here is truly professional, definitely worth acquiring."

Frazier, Rosa and Turnbull are right to be proud. The show is extremely strong; the range and quality of work is first-rate.

Among the many accomplished pieces are Katie Mahoney's shot of yellow rubber boots in front of a red door. A subtle black and white photo by Tom Sands of what appears to be the Strathmore is a study in light, shadow and interior opening upon interior. Tamee Wight's landscape of a huge swirling sky dwarfing a tobacco barn conjures up any number of familiar local scenes, but Wight manages to

create something rather extraordinary out of the ordinary. So, too, does Kindra Keitel, whose shot of a weathered door creates a focal point out of a doorknob. Vanessa Cors' still life with newspapers, and Sarah Edwards' abstract shot of deckled paper edges, each distinct and unique, echo the themes of Tom Young and John Willis whose work was recently exhibited in the museum's "Recycled Realities" show.

Apparently, those who have been flocking to the show are as impressed as I. With one week left to go before the exhibition closes, the museum has already raised \$8000. Rosa, too was delighted with

the reception given the show, not to mention the amount the exhibition brought in. "This is not a rich community, and yet each time we've managed to raise substantial amounts for good causes. This show is a success all around - for the school, the museum and the town."

If you haven't yet gotten to the museum you have until this Sunday, July 1st. Prints are on sale for \$95 unframed, or \$175 framed. To view or purchase prints on line until July 1st, go to [www.HMCP.org/benefit](http://www.HMCP.org/benefit). The museum, at the corner of Avenue A and Third Street is open 1-5, Thursday through Sunday.

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# FIRE from page 1

the morning, a 15-year-old on the lam from her foster home in Springfield named Sylvia Cruz entered the Crocker building through an unsecured door, walked up to the third floor, entered a room that was supposed to have been vacant for a month but had apparently been home to squatters with whom she had had dealings in the crack cocaine trade, and set some alcohol pads she had brought for the purpose - because they would not leave a traceable accelerant - on the mattress and set them on fire.

A deadly conflagration followed.

"I was the guy who jumped that night," said Peter Jacob in a phone interview this week. Jacob lived on the third floor, one room in front of Palden, on the 2nd Street side. "I woke up to the sound of fire burning in the hallway." Jacob looked through the peephole and saw the third floor hallway filled with smoke and flames.

"I threw the mattress out the window," and got out on the window ledge, looking down at a forty foot drop.

In the window next to his, he saw Palden also out on his window ledge. They hung on for about 15 minutes, as a crowd gathered down below, calling encouragement. Other bystanders raced through the building on the lower floors, knocking on doors, rousting tenants from their sleep. "The alarms weren't working," Jacob recalled.

By then, "The fire was so close to the window. I looked over at Palden. He was hanging out.... All of a sudden, a big whoosh of flame came out behind his back," and Palden fell.

As Jacob held on by his fingertips, his feet only came to about the top of the ledge of the window below his. "The fire was too close to the window," he said. He called to spectators on the ground to move the thin mattress close to the building, below. "My fingers gave out. I landed feet first," he said. "It still hurts today."

Jacob had multiple fractures

in his feet, pelvis, and back. He walks today. He received a "lump sum" out-of-court settlement from the insurance company representing building owner Paul Goulston and his holding corporation, the P&E Realty Trust Co., and from the insurance company representing building manager Paul Gravel. Jacob said he did not care to disclose the amount of the settlement. He receives monthly disability checks as well.

Jacob said he only knew Palden casually, to say 'Hi' to, and to "bang on the door and tell him to stop his chanting," at four in the morning. Jacob said Palden used to get up very early to go to work, and he used to pray every morning before leaving his room. "He would still chant, but it would be a lot quieter."

Down the hall, on the corner facing southwest, lived Joe Novak. "I was the last one out of the building that night," Novak recalled, ten years to the day since the fire nearly forced him from a third story window ledge to the alley below.

"It was about three in the morning. I woke up; my lights were off. I had my TV on. When I woke up, it was off. It was all smoke, circulating out my window. I heard people yelling on the floor below, but nobody on the third floor."

Novak said he climbed out his window and hung from the window ledge as the fire came closer, and smoke poured out the window. "I hung there for about half an hour," he said. "I held on by one hand." His right hand. "It still bothers me to this day... my shoulder."

Novak worked out a lot. One downtown resident recalled, "His forearms were like Popeye's. That's what saved him."

That and a firefighter named Michael Winn, who arrived on the Greenfield ladder truck "one minute" after the Turners ladder truck had stopped in front of the building long enough for acting fire chief Ray Godin to step off the truck and assess the scene. Seeing Novak hanging from the window ledge, Godin came back to order his truck into position to

rescue him, but the ladder truck had already moved around the corner onto 2nd, responding to cries that men were hanging off the building on that side. By the time the Turners ladder truck got into position on 2nd Street, both Palden and Jacob were lying stricken on the street.

"As our ladder truck turned onto 2nd Street, Greenfield literally pulled up behind," Godin recalled.

Novak said, "People on the street were yelling, 'Hold on! Hold on! Don't jump!'"

He yelled back, "I'm not jumpin'!"

Among the crowd gathering below was Jeffrey Kenney, a resident of L Street, who came down to the Avenue when he saw the fire from his back porch. "I saw Joe Novak climbing out his window, people standing around, calling, 'Joey, what's going on? Hold on! The fire's on the other side!'"

Kenney recalled, "The Turners truck arrived, with no ladder. We were waiting for Greenfield. 'Joey, don't you dare jump!'" Kenney called up to him. "I got the ladder truck comin'."

With Greenfield's ladder finally in position and fully extended, still with space between the end of the ladder and where Novak hung by one hand from the ledge, Winn reached out and grabbed him and rolled Novak across his body, bringing him onto the ladder and to safety.

"The good Lord must have a plan for me," said Novak.

He now owns a home in Erving and works at a local machine shop. He said the fire used to bother him in his dreams, but no longer. "I sleep on the first floor now," he said.

In the basement offices and studio of MCTV, the director, Ron Bosch, recently divorced and out of his Buckland home, was sleeping while Gentry worked late, editing a videotape for the Great Falls Middle School called *the Teenage American Dream*. Gentry hoped to have the video ready for a pizza party at the school the next day, but that was not to happen.

"Just as I finished up, I came



Bob Gentry Video Still  
"Surround and Drown" at the Crocker Fire, morning of 6/26/97

outside for a smoke. I heard glass breaking, people screaming. I thought it was a bar fight," Gentry said

It turned out Cruz had set fire to the third floor of the building, in the room directly above the door to MCTV, and flames were already visible in the upper windows.

"I went back inside, woke up Ron, and grabbed a video camera and battery. When I got to the 2nd Street side of the building, I realized the enormity of what was happening."

The first ten minutes of the wildly careening video Gentry shot that night pauses from time to time to focus on an inferno of flame pouring from the third story windows, where Palden and Jacob had clung. Gentry's camera pauses long enough in the half-lit darkness of the street below to show Palden lying on a mattress, first with residents, then with medics surrounding and attending him, calling out "He's still breathing!" and getting him on oxygen and into an ambulance.

Gentry said when he got around to 2nd Street a little after three a.m., there were as yet no police or firefighters on the scene. He heard a friend named Micky calling to Palden, "'Stay alive! Stay with us!'"

Palden Sangpo died of head trauma on the way to Franklin Medical, ten days shy of his 37th birthday, leaving a wife and five children behind in exile in Dharmasala, India. They had been waiting to join him in America, and he had been working two jobs, at the Thomas and Thomas

rod factory and as a dishwasher at the Shady Glen, to save money for them to come to America.

In another sequence of the video, around the front of the building, Gentry focuses for long moments on the Greenfield ladder extended up into the black night, shot with flames and curling smoke. You hear cheers, then see Novak descending, Winn close behind.

That night, captain Robert Escott was the first firefighter on the scene, along with Leon Ambo. Escott said when the call came in around 3 a.m., "There was initially some confusion. We thought we were going to a dumpster fire." By the time they rounded the Hill by Scotty's, "We could see the fire," and knew it was a bad one. On the way down Unity Street, Escott called for backup, and specified that Greenfield send their ladder truck.

"It was a tragic fire. The building was mostly destroyed. Two people jumped right after we got there."

Escott said in response to the sight of Novak hanging off the window ledge on the southeast side, "We brought a hose line in the building," and fought the fire from inside, on the third floor, buying time for Novak until the ladder trucks from Turners and Greenfield could arrive.

"The third floor was well involved. The fire was starting to come down the stairs to the second floor. We pushed it back. We pushed it down the hall on the third floor. We stayed in there until we needed another air continued next page

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from previous page

bottle.”

Escott said firefighters continued to fight the blaze from inside the building for another half an hour.

Another firefighter to enter the building shortly after 3 a.m. was Captain David Dion, of Turners Falls. “When we got down there, we thought there was still a woman in the third floor rear apartment. I can’t remember her name now, the woman we were searching for. (Former Montague police officer) Chris Pervere and I kicked in the back door, and we went in looking for her. She wasn’t there. All I remember is the tar was boiling off the roof, and it burned holes in my turnout gear, and in the police officer’s gear. I still have that turnout gear down at the station, with holes burned through.”

After the firefighters made sure everyone was out of the building, Dion said, “It was just ‘surround and drown.’”

Former MCTV director Ron Bosch said once Gentry roused him from sleep, he ran out of the building. “Flames were shooting out of the roof. I got in a state of panic. Everything went so fast. We got some cameras out; the firefighters lifted up my car and moved it back from the building. We had no idea it would be so violent, so quick.” Bosch said the burning building, “with glass exploding and fire falling on the ground” reminded him of the Allied bombing of Rotterdam at the end of World War II, when he was five years old.

Although the roof and the interior of the historic bank building, built in 1882, had been destroyed in the blaze, the Crocker Bank building was eventually completely renovated by the Crocker-Cutlery Limited Partnership, and opened for new commercial and residential tenants in December of 2001. The project garnered a combined investment in the Cutlery Block and Crocker Bank of \$6 million in loans, grants, and the purchase of historic and low income tax credits from an alphabet soup of state agencies, including the Mass Housing Investment Corporation, the Mass Department of Housing and Community Development, Mass Historic Society, the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation, the

town of Montague, and a variety of private lenders. A grant from Northeast Utilities for \$120,040 allowed these structures to be “the first historic buildings in the Commonwealth to be brought up to EnergyStar program standards,” including extra insulation and energy saving utilities, according to Joanie Bernstein, assistant executive director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority in Turners Falls, who spearheaded the renovation.

The Crocker Bank, with its original turret restored, is once again home to the MCTV studios, now on the 2nd Street side of the building. Eight units of affordable housing fill the top two floors, where 27 single occupancy rooms stood before the blaze. The Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography intends to expand later this year to the ground floor commercial space on the Avenue A side.

After Palden’s death, attorney Thomas Lesser of Northampton represented his estate in a civil lawsuit filed by one of the Tibetan refugee’s American sponsors, Cathy Costanzo, of Holyoke. The suit charged the building’s owner, P&E Realty Trust Co., Paul Goulston, and manager, Paul Gravell, with negligence for failing to maintain the fire alarm system. A two million dollar lien was placed on the property, and Palden’s widow and children were eventually awarded an approximately \$1.3 million settlement for the negligence leading to Palden’s suffering and death.

“They failed to have working fire detectors in the building,” said Lesser. “In fact, they had deactivated the fire alarm.” Word on the street in those days held that the building manager, Gravell, had deactivated the alarm due to the owner’s annoyance with local youths entering the building and repeatedly tripping the alarm.

Lesser said the state fire marshal’s office and private investigators hired on behalf of Palden’s estate determined the fire alarm had in fact been deactivated on the night of the fatal fire.

Palden’s family was on a waiting list, six months away from entering the United States under the Family Reunification Program, when Palden died in the fire. “They’d been waiting

# Jefferson Speaks on Impeachment

**BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER** - A video exhorting the citizens of Franklin County to exercise their right to defend our constitution by bringing charges of impeachment against the administration of George W. Bush and Richard B. Cheney is being aired on MCTV, Channel 17.

Many people have the idea that impeachment is a radical solution that should only be considered by the Senate and Congress. When they hear Nancy Pelosi say, “Impeachment is off the table,” they think that means it’s none of our business.

Jefferson and other ‘Founding Fathers,’ wanted to be sure that the move to impeach could be initiated by state legislatures in response to pressure from their local individual communities (e.g. town meetings). The concept they had in mind was for

for over four years for their turn,” said Lesser earlier this week, as the U.S. Senate debated a new immigration law that would make it significantly more difficult for family members to be reunited with immigrants to this country like Palden, who entered the United States legally in 1991.

“When he died, there was no family [in America] for them to be reunited with,” said Lesser. He and Costanzo combined forces to travel to India and interview Palden’s family for a filmed deposition in the civil lawsuit, and again to persuade the U.S. embassy in Delhi to petition the INS for special humanitarian relief in allowing Palden’s widow and children to enter the United States. “They arrived in America eight days before Palden’s oldest son turned 21,” at which point they would have had to wait another eight years to enter, Lesser said.

Palden’s widow, Tsering Dolma, said her new life in Amherst, MA, is “very nice. My children are doing very well. I have a very good life. The one thing that makes me upset, I have no husband.”

Palden’s oldest son is working as a chef at a nursing home in Minneapolis, MN. One daughter is studying nursing in Boston, one son is studying

see FIRE page 13



COURTESY JANET MASUCCI

state legislatures to then instruct their federal representatives and senators to pursue impeachment.

As Jefferson reminds us in the video, “It behooves our citizens to be on their guard, to be firm in

their principles, and full of confidence in themselves - we are able to preserve our self-government if we will but think so.”

With the exception of Greenfield, every town in Franklin County that has brought up a resolution to impeach has succeeded in passing it. As a next step, a meeting between representative John Olver (D-Amherst) and representatives from towns in Franklin County that passed resolutions to impeach Bush and Cheney is scheduled to take place in Amherst on July 5th.

The video *Jefferson Speaks on Impeachment* will run again on Thursday July 5th at 6:30 p.m., on MCTV, Channel 17.

Jeanne Weintraub produced the video *Jefferson Speaks*, and sponsored the article recently passed by Montague town meeting favoring impeachment.

## MCTV Schedule

### Channel 17: June 29th - July 5th

<p>Barton Cove Eagles:                  *Eagle Broadcast is dependent upon working Equipment at Barton Cove*                  7A-8A (Daily); 1130A-530P (Tuesday);                  1P-6P (Thursday); 130P-6P (Friday,                  Monday, Wednesday); 2P-530P                  (Saturday, Sunday)</p> <p><b>Friday, June 29</b>                  8:00 am Montague Update: 3D Collaborative                  9:00 am Montague Selectboard: 6/18/07                  10:30 am Independent Voices #30                  11:00 am Plains Walk                  12:00 pm Discovery Center: Bat Explore                  6:30 pm NASA Connect: Virtual Earth                  7:00 pm GMRSD meeting 6/26/07                  10:30 pm Dan Seiden #8                  11:00 pm Art Fest</p> <p><b>Saturday, June 30</b>                  8:00 am NASA Connect: Virtual Earth                  8:30 am GMRSD Meeting 6/26/07                  12:00 pm Dan Seiden #8                  12:30 pm Art Fest                  6:00 pm The Well Being: "Managing Diabetes Today"                  7:00 pm Montague Special Meeting: (6/25/07)                  9:00 pm On The Ridge: Gary Sanderson                  9:30 pm Valley Idol 2007: Finals</p> <p><b>Sunday, July 1</b>                  8:00 am The Well Being: "Managing Diabetes Today"                  9:00 am Montague Special Meeting: (6/25/07)                  11:00 am On The Ridge: Gary Sanderson                  11:30 am Valley Idol 2007: Finals                  6:00pm Sheffield Play: "Dancing Princess"                  7:00 pm Division III State Softball Championship (6/16/07)                  9:30 pm Montague Update: Block Party                  10:00 pm Montague Update: Dave Lovelace                  10:30 pm Memories of Montague Machine</p> <p><b>Monday, July 2</b>                  8:00 am Sheffield Play: "Dancing Princess"                  9:00 am Division III State Softball Championship (6/16/07)</p>	<p>11:30 am Montague Update: Block Party                  12:00 pm Montague Update: Dave Lovelace                  12:30 pm Memories of Montague Machine                  6:00 pm Independent Voices #31                  7:00 pm Montague Select Board (Live)                  9:00 pm Montague Grange: Variety Show                  10:30 pm Discovery Center: Bat Explore</p> <p><b>Tuesday, July 3</b>                  8:00am Independent Voices #31                  8:30 am Montague Grange Variety Show                  10:00 am Discovery Center: Bat Explore                  6:00 pm GED Connection #6: Writing Style and Word Choice                  6:30 pm Montague Update: Block Party                  7:00 pm GMRSD (6/26/07)                  10:30 pm Discovery Center: Birds of Prey</p> <p><b>Wednesday, July 4</b>                  8:00 am GED Connection #6: Writing Style and Word Choice                  8:30 am Montague Update: Block Party                  9:00 am GMRSD (6/26/07)                  12:00 pm Discovery Center: Birds of Prey                  6:30 pm NASA Connect: Virtual Earth                  7:00 pm GED Connection #7: Writing Effective Sentences                  7:30 pm Division III State Softball Championship (6/16/07)                  10:00 pm The Well Being: "Managing Diabetes Today"                  11:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: "Right Here All Along"</p> <p><b>Thursday, July 5</b>                  8:00 am NASA Connect: Virtual Earth                  8:30 am GED Connection #7: Writing Effective Sentences                  9:00 am Division III State Softball Championship (6/16/07)                  11:30 am The Well Being: "Managing Diabetes Today"                  12:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: "Right Here All Along"                  6:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks                  7:00 pm Montague Select Board 6/26/07                  9:00 pm Independent Voices #31                  9:30 pm Montague Special Meeting (6/25/07)</p>
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## the poetry page

It is difficult  
to get the news from poems  
yet men die miserably every day  
for lack  
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

Poetry Page edited by  
**Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno,**  
**Janel Nockleby and Jamie Berger**

Readers are invited to send poems to the  
Montague Reporter at 24 3rd Street,  
Turners Falls, MA 01376;  
or email us your poetry at  
reporter-poems@montaguema.net

design by Boysen Hodgson

### Letter

Can you raise your voice a little louder than a flower?  
I can hear an hour pass but not your whisper  
Call to me with buds and stars Call to me with noises

You perhaps are tending tenderly your indoor plants whose  
Leaves go yellow in the winter  
Mine do and I do too, or tend to

An upright sunrise colored the slow moon gold  
It saw me getting up to peek and we bid ourselves  
Good Day, Good Night

Today a flock of geese flew westerly  
Squawking loudly. Later they flew east. South  
Was hotly in dispute or lost to them. If such  
Usually sensible creatures are confused,  
How much more could I be?  
Much more so.

Not at this precise moment though,  
For I hear the drum and voices singing  
From within out to my eyes. And I write in the same  
Direction as if dancing

I missed my mother suddenly as if I'd  
Never had her. Almost never, no.  
Not near me as in never near.  
I held out many years against the missing,  
Many years of holding out against knowing  
Who was missing.

Still I have to walk across the room  
Whether or not the floor is strewn  
With yellow roses.

I don't know why yellow except for you  
With gold as well for you

All the big events fall in the same way  
A moment, then a long, long afterward to stir  
Around in a cup of tea. Never mind that before was vast  
And dark. The tiny match moment, then out.

The little birds alighting in your eyes  
Appreciate the treats you leave in the juniper tree  
And swing and garden stones and dry, dry blue above.

Here not, with wind to ruffle the coats of dogs,  
The fleece of sheep and now I think  
When thence the errant tiger roams  
Observe concealment in a peach.

--Patricia Pruitt  
Turners Falls

.....For Francis

### Coffee Bean

Push the coffee bean off a cliff!  
Toast it like a marshmallow.  
Shoot it at your enemy.  
Squash it with your boot heel!

Want the bean with all your heart.  
Smash it with a hammer!  
Throw it in your hot bath water.  
Watch it like it matters.

Dip the bean in smooth, warm chocolate.  
Cradle it gently in your cup.  
Inhale its roasted oily darkness.  
Swear you'll never give it up.

--Sita Lang  
Turners Falls

### Employ denial

whenever you need a break

from reality.

--Gini Brown  
Berkeley, CA



### Misdirection

I asked you for a drawing  
I could find my way home by,  
not a transportation chart of the world,  
not to rig my defenses up to a satellite.

All the announcers have been quiet  
for a long time. Everything they loved  
became obvious and unspeakable.

Late at night you whispered me the play-  
by-play of everything you stole but I was  
sleeping. I can't mention the airline,  
the name of the hand soap you used in previous times.

If you trace my plans you'll see I'm at the end of the city.  
It is possible when we write a continual world.  
You can imagine yourself to be the center of the universe.

It just takes a small faith, an accuracy of measurement.  
Globally, you just watch the grass grow.  
I am asking, behaving like me,  
a whale moving under you.

You can approximate sounds under water:  
you listen to your heartbeat and it says  
what it says. It is unrepeatable.

--Seth Landman  
Northampton

### Stuff

In the end we know  
less than all the things we found.  
Start cleaning today.

--Sita Lang  
Turners Falls

### The Hollow

There is a hollow behind my heart,  
beneath my lungs,  
following your aorta.

I don't remember how it got there.

A cursed slant of sun  
may have cut through,  
or a boulder dashed down.  
But I was unaware.

I do not study the hollow,  
do not always listen  
when it groans its dark blue death.  
But I know it  
follows your aorta,  
and lives behind my heart.

--Sita Lang  
Turners Falls

### The Marsh Bench

Wind blowing on a pen  
makes the hand  
arch as a bow!  
An arrow,  
steadily,  
moving on the page.

Distilled,  
the looking,  
these feelings,  
all tied in one knot,  
ready to soar  
on wings.

Words!  
Ride the instant,  
O too precious!  
Listen,  
to the marsh bench  
to its mute begging,  
before the tide comes in!

--Flore  
Montague Center

The editors would like to thank the following for their generous financial underwriting of The Poetry Page:  
**Klondike Sound, Carlin Barton, Harry Brandt, Ron Bosch and Mary Drew, Michael Farrick, and Michael Muller.**

Sita Lang has a successful clean-out business, and she is attached to very little stuff. The "Hollow" poem was written after her father died in 2004. She hasn't had a drop of coffee for over 3 weeks, but has not given up on it totally.

Flore's poem was written in Wellfleet, Cape Cod, June 22nd 2007. She lives in Montague Center and is a regular contributor to The Montague Reporter.

Janel Nockleby's bee knowledge comes from watching Great Falls Discovery Center presentations on

MCTV. "Reactions Towards Flight" was published in a collaborative chapbook, The Conduct of Bees in the Buckwheat Season, from Factory Hollow Press in Amherst, MA.

Seth Landman lives in Northampton, MA. He spends his time watching basketball and writing poetry. He never wanted to live in western Massachusetts, but he has grown to love it.

Art Stein lives in Northfield and writes poems in the Japanese forms of Tanka and Senryu, in addition to free verse.

Candace R. Curran has won the Poet's Seat Prize twice. Her book of poems, Bone Cages was published in 1996 by Haley Press in Athol, MA.

Alex Phillips lives in Lake Pleasant and is the author of the chapbook Under a Paper Trellis from Factory Hollow Press in Amherst, MA. He directs the Juniper Institute for Young Writers, a summer UMASS creative writing program and is Assistant Director of The Dean's Book Course at UMASS.

Lisa Bourbeau has been fascinated by poetry since her early childhood.

Of her own work, she says, "the poem I need to write is protean, constantly changing its shape, rearranging itself in new forms, under new light." Her most recent book is Cuttings from the Garden of Little Fears (First Intensity Press). She was the recipient of a 2003 New Hampshire State Council on the Arts Fellowship.

Patricia Pruitt is a member of the Montague Selectboard. Her poems have appeared in a number of magazines including Agni and Talisman. Her most recent book is Windows.

John High is the author of eight books, including Here (from which the above selections are taken) Bloodline and The Desire Notebooks (Village Voice top 25 books of the year). He is the recipient of four Fulbrights, two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, and writing awards from the Witter Bynner Foundation, Arts International, and the Academy of American Poets, among others. A Zen practitioner, he is on the faculty of the English Department at Long Island University, Brooklyn where he teaches creative writing and literature.

Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno is a writer and artist. In April he was a guest poet at the Mussoorie International Writers' Festival in India. The selection here is from a long poem he began while in India.

Gina Brown, a Berkeley artist, is the daughter of Woody Brown (1927-2006). Woody was a savant, raconteur, great generous spirit, and first president of The Montague Reporter Board of Directors.

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**From Mussoorie Miscellany**

False endings are more complicated than false starts.

With false starts you haven't risked much  
and can start over

but with false endings you've already  
stumbled ten kilometers down a path  
carefully created for spraining ankles,  
never mind the stinging nettles  
the poison oak,  
the monkeys that block your path  
and hold you hostage until you fork over a mango,  
never mind the threat from  
a hairy Himalayan spider  
or malaria-carrying mosquito  
or a mad water buffalo  
or a barking deer on a rampage

so after all of that  
what a colossal  
disappointment when the trail ends  
at somebody's house  
where you know you don't want to go  
and it doesn't help much  
to think Robert Frost thoughts  
when the only way back is straight uphill.

--Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno  
Turners Falls

**Stonemason's Oratory**

I put down my dead on a rock.  
Is anything happening?  
I feel the spring in my lungs.  
Am I getting beautiful?  
The summer, like a thousand hands  
pushing out from my chest.  
I'll show you tan.  
My lungs shrivel like fall leaves.  
Even the dirt swallows me,  
embarrassed by the raw baby pigment.  
Just then I realize I am  
going to die from exposure.  
I remember my will,  
thankfully, back at home in the safe.  
Then I remembered the safe.  
The safe was a soup can.  
Then I remembered the will.  
The will was a half-smoked Camel.  
I thought of my kids, suffering  
in public school. I thought  
of my wife, turning her stool  
sample over to the doctor at  
the free clinic. I thought of  
my grave, kicked over by hooligans,  
the etchings fading  
till instead of "died 2002"  
it says "i d 00" and how much like  
a robot that makes me sound.

--Alex Phillips  
Lake Pleasant

**Just One Step**

I'd love to waltz  
into a seamless  
Strauss-blue river  
lose myself  
in a steamy  
Cuban rhumba  
feel the Big Easy's  
zydeco vibrations  
rip through  
as Astor Piazzola  
predatory  
tango!

Were I to lift you  
onto this makeshift  
ballroom floor  
strewn with  
wildflowers  
could we still dance  
as when lust and luck  
shaped our days ?

We could enter  
this world through  
the measured silences  
of a stately  
pavanne  
move again  
as one

--Art Stein  
Northfield

**Visiting Cliff Hobb's Farm in Princeton**

He brought them from the barn  
humble but showing off  
I could tell  
treasure  
like children  
but better mannered than me  
two golden calves in a small wooden  
yoke he carved

With a tender switch  
heard for the first time  
haw and gee  
saw tiny beasts nuzzle  
nuzzle and say prayers  
say their prayers  
both on their knees  
when he asked them to

--Candace R. Curran  
Orange

**Reactions Towards Flight**

Killer bees put honey in their tea just like everyone else. Sure, it's  
death money honey but what isn't. The bad bees aren't bees at all.  
They're just bees heavy with liberation. One hairy bumblebee  
says to another you've got a little pollen on your chin. Carpenter  
bees are good pollinators. They eat homes with earthquake insurance.  
Bees need 60 degrees. Shad need  
59 degrees. Bee Scouts give away  
free directions and Avon Honey samples.  
Bees are the best.

--Janel Nockleby  
Turners Falls



**cadenza**

for adeline brown

it's a trap, addy  
this life, or the next  
fog under fingernails,  
sea glass fragmenting the sill,  
the sleight of hand of rivers, dark woods,  
shallows deepened churning shadows,

...a constant  
shucking off of light...

weeping cherry, dragonfly, dwarf iris, phlox...  
and the early shoots!  
they are green enough  
for one whole shrunken season.

each matters  
or not  
first and last

to stand against and be defined by

this sky  
that inclines itself toward  
nothing-

...to be sheer color,  
cloud burdened, without shape,  
estranged...

see the moon, held captive  
in each pale curl  
of breath. always  
the eye persists, steel jawed,  
snapping away

fallen

crumbs in an apron pocket  
a nest under the eaves  
twilight reshaping  
the harsh lines

impeccable distance

cruel as barbed wire strung  
against an otherwise kind  
but wholly imperfect  
white expanse

--Lisa Bourbeau  
Francestown, NH



letting go of death  
& leaves  
slow walk in black morning cold  
breath on the brow -  
sometimes we forget ourselves  
tree branches stark glittering wind

--John High  
Brooklyn, NY

it's holiday & the geese make happy  
a woman appears at the edge  
of a movie -

tanks, tango, & you go to  
breakfast & moon & then

who knows the one who  
requires your attention so soon

--John High  
Brooklyn, NY

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**SCHOOLS**

continued from page 1

budget?" Roche replied, "That's a good question. For us to reduce the budget beyond a certain point, we'd be taking the towns below the level of educational capacity they want to go."

"Gill-Montague has the leadership and the fiscal resources to pull our way out of this crisis," the superintendent asserted. But he also cautioned, "Very often you see towns weigh finances on the one side, and education on the other, and you try to find a balance between the two. But school choice throws everything off. At some point, parents make a choice, and it can become very costly to the towns. There's a tipping point you can reach if you cut the budget too much; we have to be conscious of that as we move forward with the budget."

Roche said there were pluses and minuses contained in the MBOE decision. "If the Department of Education comes out here with financial help, and help with technical issues, and help with curriculum development, I would welcome that." The MBOE will send a fact-finding team to assess the status of education at the GMRSD, and offer assistance in ameliorating problems, including "a lack of capacity on the fiscal side to support the district, and a lack of capacity on the leadership side, in terms of personnel, to improve student achievement. He cited the inability of the district to add a fulltime curriculum development coordinator in this year's budget, as called for by the state's recent educational assessment of the GMRSD.

Now that the number of students at the Great Falls Middle School has expanded, educator Nancy Daniel-Green called on the G-M school committee to consider reinstating a principal at both the high school and the middle school, with their own deans, rather than having one



GMRSD school committee chair Mary Kociela presents an award to departing committee members Sue Henry and Richard Colton in appreciation of their service to the district, on Tuesday, June 26th.

principal, and one assistant principal oversee secondary education at both schools

On the minus side, Roche said, "We have a concern that the label of underperforming will affect people's perceptions of the district, further stigmatize the district, and give parents the impression that our education is inadequate."

To the contrary, Roche said, "We are performing very well with the resources we have to work with," and there have been significant improvements since the '04-'05 Educational Quality Assessment the MBOE based their decision on was performed. Roche cited a "New reading curriculum, new math curriculum, targeted instruction for students, teacher and principal training," all put in place since the EQA report, and stated, "Student achievement is improving," at district schools.

Speaking of the term 'underperforming,' Roche said, "It's so frustrating to me to hear that label. We have really good schools, and really good teachers. Parents should not be afraid: it's a label."

Referring to a report by Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton showing the G-M schools had lost 25% of their student enrolment in the last 10 years, but had also shed 21% of their staff, Roche said, "It is difficult for a school to contract efficiently, but we

have done exactly that." He said the GMRSD has reduced special education costs by bringing out-of-district placements back to the district, and is exploring the possibility of collaborative administration with other districts in the area.

Roche said he hoped the move by the MBOE to label the Gill-Montague district 'underperforming,' "would galvanize the community and be a wake-up call to the community."

But he said if the district does not get its fiscal house in order promptly, it is in danger of being declared "chronically underperforming" by the MBOE, which would open the door for the state to take control of the district, and enforce budgetary requirements on the member towns.

As a step towards resolving the \$863,421 gap between what the towns of Gill and Montague have voted and what the GMRSD says it needs to run the schools in '08, the school committee voted unanimously to shave an additional \$300,000 off of the towns' assessment, by cutting \$115,000 by eliminating five more teacher and staff positions (for a total of 10), by declaring their intent to find \$35,000 in unspecified cuts, and by taking \$150,000 out of their free cash (excess and deficiency) account, leaving a scant \$18,700 in free cash to handle the upcoming year's exigen-

cies. But G-M business manager Lynn Bassett said she expected that account to grow by \$150,000 by July 1st, due to the district's stringent penny pinching on supplies and utilities over the past year.

Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton, who has been campaigning for the state to assume a fair share of the responsibility for the present budget crunch, said the state has determined the town of Montague's minimum contribution for the schools should be \$4.3 million, "but we contribute over \$6 million. We're 50% percent over what the state recommends." The schools' share of total town spending has increased from 45% to 55% in the past decade, Singleton claimed, while the state's share of net school spending has decreased by a similar percent over the same period of time. "The fiscal problem is primarily on the state side," said Singleton.

Roche said there was a good possibility that the GMRSD would be eligible for state 'Pothole' funding as early as August or September, but that would still be too late to calculate in the budget as certified by the school committee on Tuesday, nor would it be likely to go far toward plugging the \$563,421 gap still to be reckoned with. Of Montague's share of that remaining deficit,

Singleton grumbled, "The town does not have \$500,000!"

And, at least in the short run, it may be irrelevant whether the town of Montague, by itself, feels it can come up with the additional revenues needed to fund the re-certified '08 school budget. Roche made it clear that with two failed budgets, the GMRSD is now headed towards a "district meeting," where all registered voters in Gill and Montague will be invited to a joint meeting to vote on the budget. If the voters approve the new figure certified by the G-M school committee on Tuesday - \$16,426,901 - then the towns of Gill and Montague will have to meet separately and find ways to fund their assessments. If, on the other hand, the district voters reject the budget, and a way forward cannot be found, the state requires the towns to pay the district 1/12th of the previous year's budget each month. A one twelfth budget, if it is calculated to include the '07 debt payments for the high school building project (\$1 million more than the '08 debt figure) would be substantially in excess of what the towns have voted so far this year. And if the towns and the district do not agree on a budget by December, Roche said the state commissioner of education would step in and establish a budget for the GMRSD and require the towns to pay for it.

The district meeting will be held within 45 days, and a time and place, and moderated by a person yet to be determined.

The town of Montague will find it has \$62,000 more than it thought it had to work with in addressing the \$500,000 budget gap. On Tuesday, the school committee also approved a lower than expected contract for replacing the roof on the Montague Center School, for \$95,475, far less than the \$158,000 the town appropriated for the job at the June 2nd annual town meeting. Roche said that money would be returned to the town.

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**FIRE** from page 9

chemistry at UMass Amherst, where another daughter is studying accounting, and her youngest son is a high school student in Amherst. They last saw their father on his two trips back to India in the 1990s. But he called his family frequently, up until his death.

Former Shady Glen owner John Carey recalled Palden on the morning of the blaze that took his life as, "A devout Buddhist, and a wonderful man. He was working to bring his family here from India. He'd do anything you asked him to do. He ate standing up. He never took a break."



Palden Sangpo

In Palden's memory, residents of Montague planted cornelian dogwood trees on either side of a stone bench donated in his memory at Peskeomskut Park by fellow Tibetan and local stonemason Sonam Lama, assisted by Joel Sears of Wendell. A ginko tree was also planted in Palden's memory, at an interfaith prayer ceremony on July 6, 1997 attended by many members of the local Tibetan community.

Tsering has visited Turners Falls, and seen the bench and

trees that were carefully protected during the recent renovation of Peskeomskut Park in her husband's honor. She has also visited the Shady Glen, and said she would like to thank everyone who helped her husband during his life here, and on the morning of his death.

Clerk of Franklin County Superior Court Eve Blakeslee said Sylvia Cruz pled guilty to a charge of involuntary manslaughter in Palden's death on October 29th, 1998. On January 21st, 1999, Cruz was sentenced to commitment to a secure Department of Youth Services facility until she was 21 years old. She is on probation now, and living

in Springfield. Palden's family asked the court at sentencing to spare Cruz from jail time, because, Lesser said, "They didn't think that would help anybody. She was forgiven by them. She was not transferred to adult court."

Lesser said he has heard that Cruz is "doing quite well in Springfield."

Tsering said Cruz sends her family \$65 a month as restitution for her husband's death.



# Staff Cuts at Erving Elementary

BY NICHOLE CLAYTON

The Erving Elementary School is suffering the loss of several teaching positions for the upcoming school year. Budgetary considerations forced two of the cuts. However, when a fourth grade teacher retired this year, it was expected the additional cut would fall on a speech teacher, an 'at will employee.'

The teachers, parents, and students at Erving elementary were surprised to learn that the cuts extended to another fourth grade teacher, Tara Boissonneault, well-loved by students and parents alike. Parent Betsy Sicard said Boissonneault is considered by parents to be "a huge asset to the school. She is a wonderful teacher who put a lot of effort into teaching and had a great teaching style that the children responded well to," Sicard said.

The decision not to reappoint Boissonneault, who would have achieved professional status next year, following her three-year trial status, coupled with what some in the school community considered to be a lack of communication leading up to the decision, had some teachers and parents expressing concern at a recent Erving school committee meeting, on Tuesday, June 19th.

With this being the first year for newly hired district superintendent Joan Wickman and for principal Charlene Galenski, parents say the communication

Erving has been accustomed to in the past may be different than what they are seeing now. The dismissal of Boissonneault and refusal by Superintendent Wickman to rehire her is "the straw that broke the camel's back," said Sicard.

Wickman stated at the school committee meeting on the 19th that Boissonneault could apply for the open 4th grade teaching position, but she would not hire her back. Wickman would not give a reason why, when asked. Wickman is away from the Union #28 office this week and unavailable for comment.

At the Erving selectboard meeting of Monday, June 25th, approximately 25 parents showed up to express their concern over the school district's decision not to reappoint Boissonneault, and to ask the selectboard to write a letter on their behalf to the the Union #28 superintendent and the Erving principal asking them to reconsider their decision. "That has been done," said Erving town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp, who said he was impressed with the support the community is showing for a favorite teacher.

Eric Overgaard, chair of the Erving school committee, said budgetary consideration was not thought to be the reason why Boissonneault was not reappointed. He called the decision a "per-

sommel issue," that has not been discussed outside the school administration, for privacy reasons. Overgaard said he knows parents are upset, because Boissonneault was great with the children. "I really feel for the parents that are affected by this. There are strong emotions attached. However, I do not know how to allay them."

Overgaard stated he believes that Superintendent Wickman does not make decisions on a whim, nor does she take issues lightly, but "puts everything into it in order to make the decision she feels is best." Overgaard said the school committee's role lies in setting policy, negotiating and supporting the school budget, and trying to provide the students with the best education possible. Staff personnel issues are not in the school committee's purview.

Erving Elementary Teacher Association president Karen Sturtevant said, "With the new superintendent and new principal, and a teacher, Tara Boissonneault, in a new grade, the staff feels expectations were not always clear." Sturtevant went on to say, "She (Boissonneault) is an Erving person. She lives in Erving. Her son went to Erving Elementary School. It created an emotional upheaval in the town."

A phone call to Erving Elementary principal Galenski went unreturned at press time.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG**

## Keeping the Peace

**Wednesday 6-20**

6:45 p.m. Report taken at the station regarding larceny from a town resident.

8:20 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with serious car crash.

**Thursday 6-21**

6:55 a.m. Report of downed power lines on West Gill Road. Responded with fire department.

12:45 p.m. Neighbor dispute on French King Highway. Report taken.

1:40 p.m. Report of vandalism to a vehicle on Cove View Lane. Under investigation.

6:50 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency on French King Highway.

**Friday 6-22**

9:30 a.m. Family dispute on Oak Street. Legal advice given.

12:30 p.m. Officer requested to stand by and keep the peace on Oak Street.

**Saturday 6-23**

9:45 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with an arrest.

**Sunday 6-24**

1:20 p.m. Report of unwanted subject at West Gill Road residence. Responded and removed same, also assisted occupant with emergency restraining order.

5:35 p.m. Stolen vehicle from Springfield, MA recovered on River View Drive. Under investigation.

**Monday 6-25**

5:20 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency on West Gill Road.

**Tuesday 6-26**

7:20 a.m. Assisted state police with motor vehicle stop on French King Highway.

1:18 p.m. Report of past threats received at North Cross Road residence.

8:31 p.m. Restraining order issues on Chappell Drive.

**JOSH HEINEMANN**

**WENDELL** - The Swift River School cafeteria and auditorium saw a retirement party for Joy Breneman on a recent afternoon. With Joan Beatty, also retiring this year, Joy is one of two faculty members who have been teaching at the school since it opened. When the Wendell Center School moved to Swift River, Joy was one of the teachers who moved. She asked that the following poem about the move be included with this piece.

The party was attended by parents and students, former students and their parents, a former principal, and the school community. Someone coming to the celebration might have had a hard time finding Joy. She was likely to be



HEINEMANN PHOTO

Joy Breneman with Booie Harris

seen crouching among the preschool children, helping them reach up to the table and find a treat, or trying to contain their spilling popcorn on the stage.

**Leaving The Old Schoolhouse**

In this town  
Life slowed down to  
Where it can be felt  
Like the clean cool brook  
Washing over hot tired feet.

From the schoolhouse steps

I watch - detached  
Young people exercising in unison  
An Old lady walking, smiling  
Quietly wise  
Knowing how to live.

Like over there, the robin knows  
How to  
Teach its young  
And the wren knows  
How to fly.

I know the children are a  
Part of this place  
Like the laurel  
Now we must leave  
Our old school in  
The center of town,  
The graveyard across the way,  
The old church and town hall.

Our stubborn old school sits still  
Betrayed by us,  
Daring to think we might come back.  
I sit sadly soaking up the sun.  
The new school will be better.  
I wonder,

- Marcia C. Santner

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**STATE**  
continued from pg 1

horizon is the annual fall "Pothole" money from the state, or extra assistance for urgent needs, state legislators told local officials at a brainstorming session held Monday, June 25th in the Montague town hall. A second form of financial assistance holds promise for reducing runaway health insurance premiums for school (and town) employees: the anticipated availability of the Group Insurance Commission, which will allow local teachers' unions to buy health care in the same pool with state employees. The bill to allow local towns and schools to join the GIC has passed both houses of the legislature, and could become law any day, state representative Stephen Kulik, D-Worthington, and state senator Stanley Rosenberg, D-Amherst, said Monday.

Voters in both towns will likely be asked to vote on the new GMRSB operating budget at a joint, two-town 'District Meeting,' with every voter having a vote, said interim G-M school superintendent Kenneth Rocke. That meeting will not be scheduled before July, he said. Any override votes would come to the ballot box after that.

Kulik was unimpressed by the ruling of the state board on Tuesday.

"I have very little faith in the Board of Education on most matters," he said yesterday.

He described the board of gubernatorially appointment members as "highly politicized," in that they are appointed, in this case, by past governors, all Republican, and in Kulik's opinion, anti-public education. They are more interested in supporting private schools and voucher systems to

divert tax money to private schools, Kulik said.

He said he expects changes in the near future with the retirement of Massachusetts Education Commissioner David Driscoll, appointed by former Governor Paul Celluci, as well as a possible expansion of the board to include more members.

The label of 'underperforming' is inaccurate as well as punitive, Kulik said. It is punishing the district based on a report written by another gubernatorially appointed team for Education Quality Assessment, during 2004-2005.

"Here we are sitting in 2007," Kulik said. "It's inconsistent and hypocritical." He added that he hopes someone sends a copy of *the Reporter* to the Board of Education.

The label makes it harder for the district to keep students from leaving through the disputed school choice program or to area charter and private schools. Meanwhile, the Gill-Montague district is, in fact, a good one, Kulik said.

State board members voted 4-1 with two abstentions Tuesday, in favor of the district label of underperforming. The one dissenter was a woman from Jamaica Plain, who asked, "Why this school district?" Rocke recalled.

Ross said he wonders if a state takeover is inevitable, given the fact that Montague has never approved an override. He said his fear of a takeover is based on the fact that the state's main criticism of the town is financial rather than academic. That means the town, by state standards, is not coughing up enough money. So a lesser budget can only lead to further criticism from the state.

Academically, the district is meeting most of the



State legislators Chris Donelan, Steve Kulik, and Stan Rosenberg confer at the start of a meeting with Gill and Montague town and school officials on Monday, at the Montague town hall.

requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind law, implemented in Massachusetts with the Massachusetts Curriculum Assessment System, Rocke said.

As for financial support from the towns, Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton on Monday presented legislators with charts showing how the town's share of the school budget has increased in recent years, while the state's share has decreased.

Rosenberg advised town officials at the Monday meeting, however, that further state aid is probably not going to be forthcoming, except perhaps through the upcoming fall Pothole money [reportedly \$4.3 million for the entire state]. The state dramatically increased its aid to poor districts like Gill-Montague starting in the 1990s with education reform legislation, Rosenberg said. Likewise, the local district dramatically increased its pay to local teachers, who were earning well below the state average. Now that state aid has leveled off, Rosenberg said, the town, the state and the county have to become more creative.

"This is not about point east, 'Give us more money!'" Rosenberg said, referring to the state capital and legislature in Boston. "This is also about self-help."

To that end, legislators have been meeting for several months with school superintendents and municipal leaders throughout the county to come up with solutions for the rural county with school districts with declining enrollment, but increasing

costs. Those meetings are looking at consolidating districts or administration as options, he said, but there is no preset conclusion. The team is waiting for responses from consulting teams, to be paid for by a grant from the Massachusetts-based Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

These ideas will not solve the immediate budget crisis, legislators agreed.

Officials from the state Department of Education did not return calls for comment from *the Reporter*. At the board meeting, however, G-M officials were notified that the state would be sending out a team of advisers and consultants.

"We're very hopeful that they are going to send us technical assistance, and maybe money," Rocke said.

Still, will the new status as underperforming mean mountains of more paperwork for administrators already labeled by the state board as insufficient in number?

"If they ask us to submit three or four more volumes of paperwork, I'll be disappointed in the state," Rocke said.

For the state to take over a school district, it must first be labeled 'chronically underperforming,' Rocke said. No one in the district seems to know the timetable for this process, including Rosenberg.

"I will have to get on top of it and learn," he said.

When state legislators gathered with town and school officials in Montague on Monday, Ross raised a question about a political strategy he said has been a topic of semi-official debate in town. That is,

an unofficial proposal to simply let the state take over the district, particularly if that means more money.

This is not a strategy he supports, Ross said, nor does Rocke.

"While a political strategy is important," Ross said, "going into receivership is not the most credible way to go about it."

It would be more useful, he said, if a large number of towns decided to make that statement. It would force the state to reconsider its method of funding education largely through local property taxes, instead of raising the state income tax.

Rosenberg said state takeover of school districts has happened before in the state, although not in his district.

"It's a stage that you do not aspire to," he said.



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## Arts & Eats at Gill Elementary School



SANDY KOSTERMAN PHOTO

Pictured above are students from Gill Elementary School in Grade 2 (left to right) Sophie Margola, Chloe Castro-Santos and Katie Sprankle.

**GILL** - On June 7th, students of Gill Elementary School, parents and teachers enjoyed an art show created by students, along with a chicken barbecue, while they listened to local musicians at the school.

## SWIM from page 1

heat, fishing and swimming. According to Donovan's aunt, Sarah Belair, at about 2:30 p.m. his mother, Jennifer Murphy, arrived at the Rock Dam. She saw Donovan standing on the rocks next to where his stepfather, Darnell, was fishing. Then

stepfather leaped into the water and turned him over, Donovan had a large gash in his head that was spilling blood into the river. His mother called the Montague police from her cell phone.

While waiting in the water for emergency responders to arrive, Donovan said to his stepfather, "My neck hurts." Belair said the

was a "teenager with a head injury and a lot of bleeding at the Rock Dam." Dodge, second on the scene, said he observed "a kid in the water, with friends holding him against a rock ledge. There was fast flowing water behind him."

Dodge said word at the scene was that Donovan was unconscious when he first surfaced. "We formed a human chain. We were able to pull him up from the water and lay him on the rocks."

Emergency responders from Turners Falls Fire and BHA Ambulance were on the scene "super fast," Dodge said. By 3:20 p.m., Donovan was in the ambulance heading for the Franklin Medical Center and a helicopter ride to BayState in Springfield. Dodge said the Montague police do not patrol the Rock Dam regularly, but they are familiar with the scene from the 1998 drownings that occurred there.

Once in the ambulance, according to Belair, Donovan told his mother he was hungry. Then he looked at her and asked, "Am I going to die?"

On Wednesday his grandmother, Judy Metcalf said that it took 15 staples to close the gash on Donovan's head; he was breathing with the assistance of a

going according to plan and on schedule. He also submitted bids from several companies for work and materials for aspects of the road work not covered by the Mass Highway. Selectboard member Nancy Griswold asked LaClaire what local wood turtles could expect during the remaining course of construction, and whether a sign could be posted for the turtles to use underground culverts rather than risk the hazards of crossing the road.

As always, the issue of money loomed large. Gas procurement for the town was awarded to Rice Fuels, as their bid was half a cent lower per gallon than the competitors'. On a different item, the board decided not to update the exist-

ing law library at town hall, at the cost of \$228 a book, but to investigate online software that would provide legal updates instead.

A discussion of the current budgetary crisis faced by the Gill-Montague regional schools brought praise for the new school superintendent Ken Roche. "I think he is doing a good job; he's pulling money from every nook and cranny," Griswold said. Griswold and board member Anne Banash had just come from a meeting with Roche, Montague town officials, school committee members, and state legislators Chris Donelan, Steve Kulik and Stan Rosenberg at the Montague town hall, directly before their board met.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Signs posted on trees above the Rock Dam, at a picnic area off Migratory Way maintained by the utility company, warn people of dangerous swimming conditions below.

Donovan jumped into the river. What happened next, to watching friends and family members, was nearly unthinkable.

Donovan's aunt said he floated to the surface of the river face down and unmoving. When his

response time of the police was "Very fast." Officer Dan Miner, first on the scene, jumped into the water to help the teen, until the ambulance arrived.

Sergeant Chip Dodge said the cell phone call came into the office at 2:50 p.m., saying there

ventilator, and could feel nothing from his chest down. "We are praying that it is temporary and the feeling will come back," she said. "But, thank God, there is no sign of brain damage. They should put signs up that say No Swimming, and a camera to make sure."

This is the second accident in recent history at Rock Dam. In 1998, two Turners Falls teens, Chris Gallagher and Winter Orion Clark, drowned in the same spot. Thereafter, a committee was formed in town to explore possible safe swimming spots for all Montague residents. Selectboard chair Pat Allen, a member of that group, said on Wednesday the committee stopped meeting because there "really were no sites available," and "building a town swimming pool was out of the financial reach of the town."



Donovan Murphy



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# The Boys of Summer, 1942

BY MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** - On June 20th, eight men and their families met to celebrate the Turners Falls State Baseball Championship of 1942. Sixty-five years ago to the day, a group of 15 boys from Turners Falls traveled to Fenway Park and beat Arlington High school 5 to 4 to capture the Massachusetts State Baseball Championship. If you're from the town of Montague, you know their names. Kostanski, Welcome, Zukowski, Bush, Burke, Milewski, Richardson, Bourdeau, Bassett, Mucha, Whiteman, Lorden, Togneri, Wrightson, Hilliard, Martin, and Neipp. They were true Hometown Heroes.

Many of the team were born in Montague, but not at the hospital. You see, they were all members of the generation that grew up during the Great Depression, when money was scarce, the food was raised in the backyard and clothes were homemade hand-me-downs. When they were in high school, the country was involved in the largest war in human history. So, when they left school, they went directly into the war, all



MATT ROBINSON PHOTO

Paul Whiteman, Ray Zukowski, George Richardson, Coach, Michael Milewski, Ted Mucha, George Bush, Joel Lorden, son of coach Lorden, Walter Kostanski.

fifteen of them.

But between the Depression and entering the war, they were able to experience a day they would remember for the rest of their lives. A day when they played in Fenway Park. A day when a tiny little school in Western Massachusetts rose up to beat a big city school. A day when fans from Turners Falls traveled to Boston, gas rationing be damned.

At the 2007 team reunion, they didn't talk about "the Game" very much. Rather, they wanted to hear about each other.

What's new since the last time they met, or how old acquaintances are doing. And they spoke about lost teammates, many of whom were last seen at one of these reunions.

But they didn't cry in their beer. Instead, they socialized, and reminisced, and told stories. And they joked, and laughed, and uttered a few cuss words. And for a brief time, they were teenagers again. Even though the youngest is over eighty, they were able to revisit a time when they were truly the "Boys of Summer."

## Tim de Christopher Exhibit at the Oxbow Gallery



**NORTHAMPTON** -- "Falling Apart / Falling Away" is the title of an art exhibit by Turners Falls sculptor Tim de Christopher. The exhibit features sculpture and other media and will be shown from July 16th through August 5th, 2007, at the Oxbow Gallery, 275 Pleasant Street in Northampton. An opening

reception will be held July 20th from 5 to 8 p.m. with special guest Madison Cribbs, puppeteer.

The gallery is open extended hours: July 21st - August 3rd, 12 - 5 p.m.

More info at: [www.oxbowgallery.com](http://www.oxbowgallery.com)

This exhibit is funded in part by a grant from the Northampton Arts Council.

[www.turnersfallsriverculture.org](http://www.turnersfallsriverculture.org)  
Arts, Culture, Recreation in Turners Falls.

# Breakthrough in Agriculture?

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

**GILL** - The deer that have kept my shrubbery trimmed all winter have been eyeing my garden with great interest from across the road at my bother Louis'. A large rabbit I spotted by my garden has not been seen lately, though I saw a cute little bunny in my garden. Baby bunnies cease to be cute when beans get mowed down. Something has also been eating my strawberries as fast as they ripen, sometimes faster. Possibly crows. Even the leaves began to disappear.

Someone told me that dog

hair and coyote urine is effective in 'marking territory' to keep animals at bay. A dog grooming place supplied me with a bag of dog hair as soft as cashmere, free of charge. I told the grooming lady I wanted it for rabbits.

"It is so soft; your rabbits will love it to nest their babies," the groomer said.

Since her words cast doubt as to whether the rabbits



PHOTO: JOE PARZYCH

The deer, who have kept my shrubbery trimmed all winter, have been eyeing my garden with great interest from across the road at my bother Louis'.

would shun or love the dog hair, I bought some coyote urine as insurance. I wondered how they get the coyotes to urinate in those expensive little bottles, reasoning that the hassle of getting coyotes to cooperate is probably worth the exorbitant price. The problem is, you don't get much urine for your money.

To cut costs, I decided to try some home produced urine, the production occurring first thing in the morning at maxi-

mum strength. I asked my wife if she thought it was strong enough to keep rabbits and crows at bay.

"That stuff should drop birds out of the sky, in full flight," she said.

Not only did the marauding varmints steer clear by a wide margin, but the beans and squash perked up in the vicinity of the 'markings.' I just hope that the plants do not take up the material. Then again, I may make a breakthrough in agriculture with the production of the first pre-salted vegetables.

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**THE HEALTHY GEEZER**

**And Now for the Question You've All Been Waiting For...**

**BY FRED CICETTI**  
LEONIA, NJ - *Q. Will sex mess up my pacemaker?*

Only if powerful magnets are involved. Seriously, your pacemaker is safe.

Modern pacemakers are stable devices, but there are still some precautions you should take if you've had one of those miraculous gizmos implanted in your chest.

The following could be problems:

Power machines are dangerous. Stand at least two feet away from arc-welding equipment, high-voltage transformers and motor-generator systems.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a no-no if you have a pacemaker. In fact, any procedure that exposes you to electromagnetic energy is a problem. These procedures include therapeutic radiation, shockwave lithotripsy that breaks up large

kidney stones, and electrocautery to control bleeding during surgery.

Short-wave or microwave diathermy uses high-frequency, high-intensity signals. These may interfere with a pacemaker.

Metal detectors at airports don't interfere with pacemakers when you pass through them briefly. However, you should not hang around them for a long time or lean against them. And, if security personnel want to use a hand-held metal detector, ask them to avoid your pacemaker.

Cell phones. I found a variety of opinions on this. Some sources say cell phones are harmless. However, others insist that you shouldn't put your cell directly over your pacemaker because it's possible that the pacemaker could misinterpret a phone signal, withhold pacing and make you feel tired.

Newer cell phones that use



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

new frequencies might make pacemakers less reliable. This subject is being researched by cell phone companies. The old cliché is appropriate: better safe than sorry.

Modern pacemakers have built-in protection from most types of interference produced by everyday electrical appliances. The following don't create problems and you shouldn't worry about being around them if you have a pacemaker:

Microwave ovens, televi-

sions and their remote controls, dental equipment, radios, toasters, electric blankets, CB radios, heating pads, stereos, vacuum cleaners, hair dryers, gardening machinery, electric shavers, food processors, computers, copy machines and shop tools.

Always inform all healthcare professionals that you have a pacemaker before receiving any treatment. And always carry an identification card that informs people that you have a pacemaker.

There are more than 3 million artificial pacemakers in use today. They are devices that help the heart beat in a regular rhythm when its natural pacemaker isn't working. One of the most common problems requiring a pacemaker is bradycardia, a heart rate that's too slow. This can be brought on by age.

An implanted electronic pacemaker is made up of a pulse generator and leads. The leads are flexible, insulated wires that deliver the electrical pulses to your heart. The pulse generator is a small metal container that houses a battery and the electrical circuitry that regulates the rate of electrical pulses sent to your heart.

Surgery to implant the pacemaker is usually performed under local anesthesia and typically takes less than three hours. The pulse generator is usually implanted under the skin beneath your collarbone.

Some models are as small as a quarter.

[In our next column, we'll discuss implantable cardioverter-defibrillators (ICDs)]

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

**WASTE NOT**

**Red, White and Blue Goes Green**

**BY AMY DONOVAN**  
GREENFIELD - This year, consider the environmental impact of your 4th of July and other summer parties. To recycle aluminum cans, glass bottles, and plastic bottles at your party, place a well-marked recycling bin next to your trashcan. For town-specific information on recycling, including transfer station hours and locations, visit: [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/towns/](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/towns/)

Instead of purchasing disposable plastic plates, cups, and utensils, which are made from fossil fuels, consider the alternatives, which are often made from recycled or renewable resources. Of course, I have to mention the best choice is to use reusable dishes and utensils and wash them in the dishwasher on the energy sav-

ing setting, or by hand. If that is not possible, these "disposable" products are available at your local health food store, or by visiting the company's website and clicking on "Retailers" or "Find a Store". Recycline, ([www.recycline.com](http://www.recycline.com)) a Massachusetts-based company, makes "Preserve" tableware; colorful 100% recycled plastic plates, cups, and utensils, which can be washed in the dishwasher on a low heat setting. Seventh Generation ([www.seventh-gen.com/](http://www.seventh-gen.com/)) offers biodegradable paper plates and napkins from 100% recycled paper and without chlorine bleach or chemical coatings. Bambu ([www.bambu-home.com](http://www.bambu-home.com)) manufactures beautiful disposable tableware from 100% organically grown and renewable bamboo. Marcal, a brand of

paper products found in all major grocery stores, makes napkins and paper towels from recycled paper and without chlorine bleach.

Composting is an American tradition. Presidents George Washington and Thomas Jefferson composted! Instead of filling your town trash bag with food waste from your event, compost your biodegradable paper plates, napkins, paper towels, and non-meat food waste such as cornhusks, watermelon rinds, salad trimmings, and bread in your backyard compost bin.

This Independence Day, celebrate your freedom from waste!

*Amy Donovan is the program director of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District.*

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Rabbit Returned**

**Wednesday 6-13**

9:41 a.m. While assisting another agency at 91 4th Street.

[redacted] was arrested on two default warrants.

8:10 p.m. Report of a restraining order violation at a 4th Street address.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with violating a restraining order.

**Thursday 6-14**

4:58 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Avenue A by Food City.

[redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant and also charged with operating with a suspended license (subsequent offense) and violating traffic signs, signals, markings, or zones.

**Monday 6-18**

12:07 p.m. Report of a loud noise disturbance at the corner of Turners Falls Road and Turnpike Road.

[redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.

**Thursday 6-21**

1:31 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle theft from a Chestnut Lane

address. After an investigation it was found to be a dispute over ownership. Parties advised it was a civil matter.

**Friday 6-22**

4:36 p.m. Walk-in to station reported an assault at a Central Street address.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with two counts of assault and battery with a dangerous weapon.

**Saturday 6-23**

10:59 a.m. Report of a loose dog with no collar in the Food City parking lot. Report taken.

**Monday 6-25**

10:05 p.m. Caller reported hitting a deer on Dry Hill Road. Wanted it on record.

**Tuesday 6-26**

12:51 a.m. Patrol officer observed suspicious person on Avenue A by Subway. Subject placed in protective custody.

2:18 p.m. Animal complaint from Lake Pleasant Road north of the Scalper's Lodge. Caller reported a dog had been hit by a car. Found to be a large domestic rabbit. Animal Control Officer returned it to its family for a proper burial.

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

## Dynamite

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

**GILL** - Once the family cleared the orchard and pruned the apple trees, Pa showed Stanley and Walter how to graft scions of one variety onto trees of another variety. I don't know where Pa learned to graft, but he was able to successfully grow a variety of apples on the same tree. He was

quite proud of his skill, but the lessons were not appreciated.

"While I show them how to graft, they are watching the neighbor plow with a new tractor. Everything has to be fast and easy, I tell them. They don't want to work; just want to do everything the lazy way."

They were able to plow brush stubble under with horse and plow, but tree stumps and boulders presented a problem. By the time Pa got to dealing with the stumps, the older kids had all left home. A good-natured Italian, Mr. DeGrano, came to the rescue. He was a short jolly fellow who worked at Mass Broken Stone Quarry as a blaster.

On 4th of July weekend, Mr. DeGrano showed up with a case of dynamite, a box of blasting caps and a coil of fuse. He poked holes under the stumps, stuffed

them with dynamite, and blew the stumps sky high with magnificent explosions of dirt and dust, leaving only the distinctive smell of explosives in the air. When he tucked enough dynamite under boulders, they shattered into crushed rock, seconds after he touched off the fuse, leaving a crater in its place. Shards of rock peppered the apple trees. It took the trees years to recover from the trauma and to bear a decent crop of apples.

Seeing the explosive force of the dynamite, I couldn't believe my ears when Mr. DeGrano asked me if I wanted to light a fuse, the very first day. Though he cut the fuse a bit longer than usual, I ran for my life as soon as I touched a match to the fuse and it began its ominous sizzle. My blast seemed bigger and louder than any of the others. It was the most glorious 4th, ever. Later, I bragged shamelessly to my friends about lighting the biggest firecracker of all and showed them the craters as proof.

"Put the rest of the dynamite in a safe-a place until I come back again to blast," Mr. DeGrano said at the end of the

day.

Pa slid the half case of dynamite, coil of fuse, and box of copper caps under his bed for safe keeping. When Mr. DeGrano came back to continue blasting, and learned of Pa's choice of a storage place, he told Pa the box of caps alone, would have blown him to smithereens, never mind the dynamite.

"There be just a beeg hole where house was, if it go off."

The next time Mr. DeGrano came to the farm, he came out to the hayfield, very agitated. "Bad news," he said, "war starts." Pa and Ma looked startled. Without a radio, telephone or newspapers we often did not know what was going on in the world until Pa got a weekly newspaper. "Terrible, terrible," Pa said.

"What is war?" I asked Mr. DeGrano.

"That is when armies fight with guns, and shoot each other on the battlefield," Mr. DeGrano said.

"What is a battlefield?"

"It is a field like this."

I got scared. "Will they come here?" I asked, looking to see if anyone was coming, wondering where we could run and hide.

"No, the battlefield is far

away," he said. But it was not reassuring to me.

"Why do they do that?"

"People go crazy and just begin to shoot each other and blow each other up with bombs that explode like the dynamite."

"If they came here, I would go upstairs with my gun and shoot them," Pa said. "They might kill me but I would kill some of them."

The whole idea of war was terrifying, and every time we blasted a stump or boulder, I thought about people going crazy and killing other people.

It must have been the beginning of WWII, when Hitler's army invaded Poland or when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia. It may have been the latter, because Mr. DeGrano was far more distressed than Pa and Ma. He used up the dynamite and did not come to the farm again. Pa told me to throw the fuses and blasting caps in a pond in the woods.

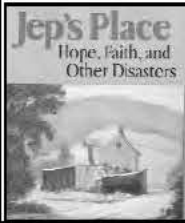
I missed Mr. DeGrano; he was a kind and gentle man. I didn't think he would ever go crazy and want to kill people. I wished that he would come back to see us, but he never did.

- Continued Next Week

### JEP'S PLACE: HOPE, FAITH AND OTHER DISASTERS

by Joseph A. Parzych

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### Summer Park Program

The Erving Recreation Commission would like to remind everyone that registration for the summer park program for weeks one and two will end on Tuesday, July 3rd at 3:00 p.m.

The summer park program will start on Monday, July 9th and will end August 17th.

Please note that you must pre-register your child no later than three days before the week you want your child to go

to summer park program. Space is limited and filling up quickly so don't delay.

For more information on summer programs sponsored by the Erving Recreation Commission, or for an application, please call 413-

### Tax Office Vacation

The Erving Tax Collector's office will be closed starting July 2nd, through July 12th. The office will reopen on Monday, July 16th at 9:00 a.m.

## Commander Cody at the Schuetzen Verein



EDWARD SHAMO PHOTO

Commander Cody and his band livened up the proceedings at the Schuetzen Verein on Saturday night, raising funds for the new veterans memorial on Avenue A in Turners Falls.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

## THURSDAY, JUNE 28TH

Co-op Concert featuring local musicians **Joe Graveline, Kathy & George Chapman and Ed Phelps**. Three 40-minute gigs each night from the Franklin County Musicians' Cooperative. Bring a picnic dinner, blanket, or chair and enjoy the music. At Greenfield Energy Park, Greenfield. 6-8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, JUNE 29TH

*Free Spirits* showing at Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls. This documentary about the Renaissance Community and its charismatic, ill-fated leader Michael Metelica Rapunzel chronicles the "birth, life, and loss of a New-Age dream" 7:30 p.m. See *Spirit In The Flesh* below.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls. **HEROES** - rockers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 30TH

*Spirit In The Flesh* reunion show at Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls. 7:30 p.m.. For tickets call the Shea Theater at 413-863-2281. Tickets also available at Wagon Wheel Restaurant, Gill; Boswell's Books, Shelburne Falls; World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield or please visit [www.theshea.org/productions/html](http://www.theshea.org/productions/html). All proceeds from the concert will go to a new foundation to benefit former Brotherhood/Renaissance commune members in need. See the Pothole Pictures above.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls. **John Sheldon & Blue Streak**, 9:30 p.m.

The National Spiritual Alliance conducts a Psychic Fair, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Thompson Temple, Lake Pleasant. Readings and Reiki healings cost \$25 for 20 minutes.

*Silkwood* showing at Pothole Pictures. Vivid and passionate dramatization of the true story of nuclear parts plant worker, whistleblower, and activist Karen Silkwood. Meryl Streep, Cher, Kurt Russell. R. Representatives of local anti-nuclear group the Citizen's Awareness Network will lead a discussion about

nuclear issues following the film. 7:30 p.m. Music before the movies, **Abdul Baki Band**, 7 p.m.

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: **Brooks Williams**. Brooks solo: **red-hot blues, sultry slide, and fiery fingerpicking**. \$10/\$12, 8:00 p.m.

Alien Attack! Join Refuge staff at The Great Falls Discovery Center to learn about local plant invaders in the Connecticut River watershed. Geared towards adults, all are welcome.



*Made of Thunder, Made of Glass* Exhibit open at Memorial Hall Museum in Deerfield featuring an extraordinary collection of beadwork by early 19th century artisans representative of our Northeast region Native art history (see below for more info)

## SUNDAY, JULY 1ST

Sunday in the Park Concerts - Featuring **Glengarry Bhoys**. High energy Celtic band - infectious fusion of rock and Celtic-style. Celtic Heels an Irish step-dance troupe performs. At the Energy Park, Miles Street, Greenfield. 6 pm. 413-774-6051 x14

## MONDAY, JULY 2ND

Live Jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, 6 to 9 p.m.

Montague Community Band Concert at Peskeomskut Park, just off Avenue A, Turners Falls. 7 pm.

## TUESDAY, JULY 3RD

Greenfield Military Band Concerts Delightful "Pops" concert. At the Energy Park, Miles Street, Greenfield. 7-8 pm.

## FRIDAY, JULY 6TH

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **LOVE BOMB**. Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JULY 7TH

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls. **Catamount**. Classic and southern rock, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

## FRIDAY, JULY 13TH

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **ROCK 201**. Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JULY 14TH

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: **Matt and Shannon Heaton**. Celtic duo play trad & originals w/bazouki, guitar & Irish flute \$10/\$12. 8 p.m.

*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* showing at Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls. Live music to a silent film by Devil Music Ensemble. The first American film version of Stevenson's horror tale of the doctor who turns into a sadistic beast is haunting, powerful, creepy and expressive of the duality of good and evil. John Barrymore's bravura physical performance

is convulsive and overwhelming. Martha Mansfield, Nita Naldi. Directed by John S. Robertson. 1920. NR. 96 min. B & W. Admission \$12 at the door, no advance tickets.

## SATURDAY, JULY 21ST

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: **Swing Caravan**. Swinging trio plays gypsy jazz Django-style: energetic genius, \$10/\$12. 8 p.m.

## ON GOING

Quinnetukut II Riverboat trips. For reservations, (800) 859-2960. Adults \$10, senior (55+) \$9, child (14 & under) \$5. Group (15 or more) \$8.

## NOW THROUGH JULY 1ST

Benefit Exhibition and Print Sale at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography. Print sale proceeds donated to aid the international humanitarian medical organization, Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres.

## NOW THROUGH AUGUST 12TH

The *Green Trees Gallery*, Northfield, "Conceptual Portraiture"

Featured are: Gene Cauthen's bronze sculptures, Nayana Glazier's acrylic color tinted figures against distorted black and white backdrops, Margot Fleck's block printing, Joe Landry's sculptures, Kerry Kazokas' oils, Kevin Slattery's depictions of celebrities, Lauren Watrous' paintings, Robert Markey's oil paintings, and introducing photos by Doug Tibbles. Opening reception **Saturday, June 30th 5-7 p.m.** All are welcome and refreshments will be served. There will also be a selection of work by over 30 regional artists. 413-498-0283. [www.greentreesgallery.com](http://www.greentreesgallery.com)

## NOW THROUGH NOVEMBER 4TH

Exhibit - **Made of Thunder, Made of Glass**: American Indian Beadwork of the Northeast features approximately one hundred extraordinary beaded bags and hats from the Gerry Biron and JoAnne Russo collection. The intricate floral, geometric and figurative beadwork by early nineteenth-century Iroquois (Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk), Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora), and Wabanaki (Abenaki, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot), is accompanied by contemporary paintings of Native Americans by Gerry Biron, of Mi'kmaq descent. The exhibition of exceptional beadwork and portraits of Natives with beadwork, examines the creativity and meaning of Native American beaded designs. Memorial Hall Museum, 8 Memorial Street, Deerfield. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. 413-774-7476.

## JULY 5TH THROUGH SEPTEMBER 25TH

Art Exhibition: **Hymn to the Earth** Photo Exhibit An exhibit of luminous imagery by photographer Ron Rosenstock. Featuring landscapes of beauty and spirit from Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, the South Americas, India and the United States - both black white and color photographs. At Hallmark Museum of

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**Memorial Hall Theater**  
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June 29th 7:30 p.m.  
*The story of a Western Mass commune:*  
**Free Spirits**  
Directed by Bruce Geisler. 2006. 96 min. Color/B&W

June 30th 7:30 p.m.  
Compelling anti-nuke drama:  
**Silkwood**  
Directed by Mike Nichols. 1983. R. 128 min. Color.

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DAILY 12:00 3:00 6:40 9:20	
2. RATATOUILLE G in DTS sound	
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DAILY 12:00 3:00 6:40 9:20	
4. FANTASTIC FOUR: RISE OF SILVER SURFER	PG
DAILY 12:15 2:15 4:15 6:45 9:15	
5. SURF'S UP	PG
DAILY 12:15 2:15 4:15	
5. OCEAN'S 13	PG13
DAILY 6:45 9:15	
6. WAITRESS	PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30	
7. LIVE FREE OR DIE HARDER	PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30	
BEGINNING MONDAY, JULY 2ND	
5. WAITRESS	PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 6:30 9:30	
6. TRANSFORMERS	PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 8:00 11:00	

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ILLUSTRATION BY ANJA SCHUTZ

BY KARL MEYER

**COLRAIN** - June is the month of the juvenile. Out there, taking their first steps, launching first flights, paddling their first puddles, everything from birds to toads and snakes to weasels, are heading into the world for the first time. It's pretty entertaining. I've been getting a firsthand look while participating in Massachusetts Audubon's Breeding Bird Survey - their first statewide canvass of nesting birds in over a quarter century. You have to promise to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours scavenging the outdoors for singing, breeding birds, at ungodly hours when the morning dusk is just acquiring its first shine.

Despite the bad hours and pay it's been an overall hit in many ways - better than a B-movie. Each person is responsible for about half a dozen square

miles, charged with visiting as many habitats as possible. I'm doing mine by bike as a gesture to a warming planet. But even before I hit the seat on a given morning I'm already in bird survey territory from my back deck. It got interesting that very first day in mid-May: SEX. I've now seen enough bird mating to make Bill Clinton blush.

On day one, a pair of kestrels got the "birds and the bees" going in the dead branches of a tall oak about three hundred yards off. I imagine they thought they had privacy. It was fairly brief, and then the two hung around on separate limbs for a few minutes. The female took off, north. The male lingered a minute or two, then did the same. I haven't seen them since. Maybe they didn't like the neighborhood. Still, I thought I had a racy and important *Bird Atlas* contribution



Baby grosbeak

there. Apparently not, I was informed. It was too early in the season, and the survey's about nesting - duh!

Back to the binoculars. I still couldn't escape the avian sex. I can now tell you that tree swallows in my neck of the woods prefer the spindly branches of a nearly dead spruce for romance. They picked the absolutely worst day. Watching them, in the wind, in the tender and tenuous enterprise of first love, was a combination of the ridiculous and the sublime. Imagine the international space station and the shuttle trying to link-up, delicately, when the atmosphere is

s u d d e n l y imbued with oxygen, wind, and gravity. You get the pic-

ture. Seeing that patient female on a swaying branch top and that determined male paddling a fresh east wind was a true marvel. If anything passed between them you'd hope it was a note from Dr. Ruth. But they were right back at it the next day.

The rose-breasted grosbeaks here were more matter of fact. No frills: just get it done in a black cherry tree. I think they were old hands. Each fall there are up to a dozen fledged grosbeaks here, picking the wild grapes beside several sets of parents. But already the early effects of spring pairings are obvious.

Yesterday, heading back about 7:30 in the a.m., I was surprised by the squeaking chirps of a 20-inch long baby fisher, venturing out for the first

time. The furred, warm-chocolate brown creature with tapered tail was a bit confused, pacing near a roadside culvert where it had probably been warned to stay put. Not this character. With just a hint of baby-pink on the nose, he was out to see the world, or at least to scream, "Where's my breakfast?" when the underbrush got too dull. Fisher kits are born in tree nests and crevices, but mom moves them to ground

Baby woodchucks

level when they can get around on their own some.

Then this morning, up a steep dirt road in old woods, five juvenile ravens screamed to beat the band. They were already good flyers, but haven't seen enough humans to know it is customary to hide and shut up! They yelled, they squawked, they hooted like there was no tomorrow. If a parent was around those kids would've gotten hell. Alas, no! Young, wet-behind the ears, they couldn't keep those vocal cords contained. Normally, seeing these large, raucously wild flyers would be magical - but I'm listening for birds here. Quiet! It went on for twenty minutes.

And then there's a new trio of hedgehogs out back - baby woodchucks, dumb and adorable. Without the sense that god gave...woodchucks. They know I must mean danger, but they just can't make themselves turn away into the weeds. They're little chunks of grizzled fur with tiny, brownish tails - each about the size of two merged softballs. They come to the edge of the grass like Moe, Larry, and Curly, coolly falling over each other like painted turtles trying to slither onto a log that's already standing-room-only. But that's June for you, presenting this year's crop of spring graduates: naive, and full of juice.

Life in the fast lane, without a clue that a tiny pinch of common sense and fear will someday serve them well. More power to them. It's pretty damned charming.

*Cooling thought: Fill half-gallon jugs three-quarters full with water and place them in any leftover space in your freezer. They keep the temperature more stable using less energy.*

## ON THE BEATEN TRACK

## Front Porch Music

BY FLORE

**GILL** - What makes a village a real community?

I mean the kind you will always remember if you have to leave it?

All imbued with vivid, fond memory in childhood-like nostalgia, would you say?

I'll tell you, it's having one's very own country store!

Most likely located on Main Street, all happenings are registered as soon as you step in. We gathered the first time we came in, that a little girl named Olive had just been born! The counter provides an intersecting pivot point of local interests.

On the one hand, you gather the latest news. On the other you bring

your own!

Gill has one of these gems. An amazing, grand Country Store!

The building has also an interest-

ovated it and have been running the Gill Store for the past two years, with the helping hand of Gill newcomer Vicki Van Zee. Booth and Greenough are also the ones running the Peoples Pint in Greenfield.

At the Gill Store, they are renewing the old tradition of carrying fresh, organic produce and local crafts. They are also introducing a breakfast *en musique*. Fiddler,

banjo, guitars, jamming starts at 9 a.m. for the summer, each Sunday. Enjoy this close-by, sumptuous discovery!



FLORE PHOTO

Left to right: Zach Johnson, Phil Watson, Wendy Robinson, and John Beckoff