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Soft Serve Stands Measure up
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WALKING ON THE WILD SIDE
West Along the River
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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 4 - NO. 38

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

June 29, 2006

Erving Approves 185-Acre Conservation Land Purchase

\$800,000 TO PURCHASE GINIUSZ FARM ON OLD STATE ROAD

BY JOSH HEINEMANN Citizens at the Erving special town meeting voted Monday evening, June 26th, to spend \$800,000 in free cash and buy approximately 185 acres in two parcels on Old State Road from the estate of John Giniusz, and also to buy back the Conservation Restriction on 6.78 acres, which will remain owned by the family. Of the remaining acreage, 167.3 acres on the north side of Old State Road will be kept in conservation land; 16.7 acres on the south side of the road will be put to a future use by the town which has yet to be determined. State Self Help grant money is available to cover 52% of the appraised value of the conserved land, and selectboard member Linda Downs-Bembury said the grant application, due in August, with an

answer expected by the end of the year, was likely to be approved. The special town meeting was held at the Erving Elementary School, and every one of the school's parking places was taken; a few vehicles were parked on the lawn. Extra copies of the warrant were produced for people who arrived late. Still, moderator Rich Peabody expressed a hope the meeting would end by 9:00 p.m., and his hope was nearly realized. Debate centered on the cost of the parcel, and the consequences to the town of buying the land, or of leav-

ing it available for another buyer, most likely a developer. Arguments in favor of the purchase mentioned the fact that Erving has no conservation land, other than state forest and parks, the fact see **ERVING** pg 6

Montague Board Battles \$600,000 Budget Gap

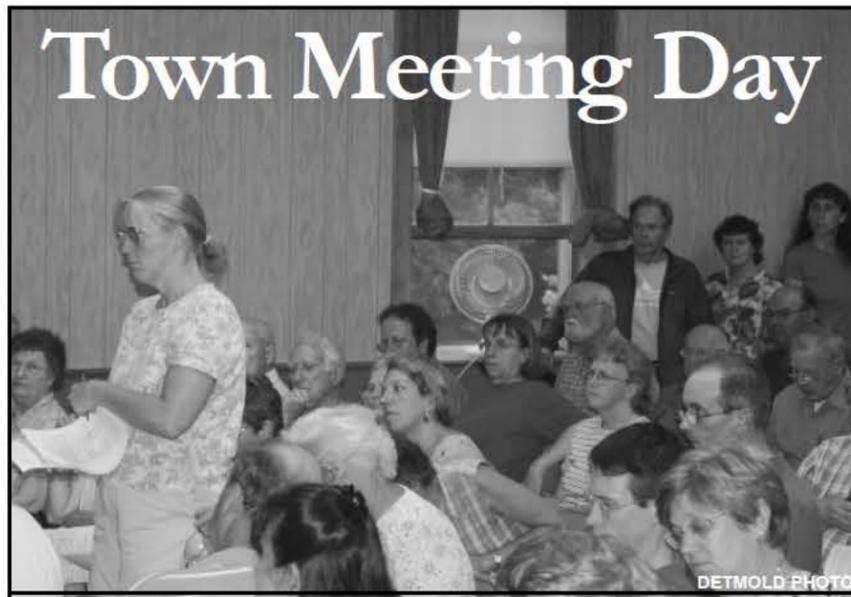
TOWN NURSE, 2 HIGHWAY POSITIONS ON CHOPPING BLOCK

BY DAVID DETMOLD On Monday, June 26th, the Montague selectboard worked to close a \$600,000 budget gap left in the wake of the June 6th override defeat. According to chair Patricia Pruitt, the board

hopes to avoid the need for a second override attempt, by meeting the schools halfway. To this end, the board has proposed a series of cuts to town departments to be acted on at a special town meeting on July 12th, at 7 p.m., at the high school. The proposed cuts include \$65,472 from the highway department, resulting in the loss of two positions there, and \$24,635 from the board of health, resulting in the loss of the town's public health nurse. Additionally, the board has proposed a reduction of

\$3,360 in wages at the town clerk's office, to be accomplished by saving one month's salary when the clerk retires next May, at which time the assistant clerk would presumably run the office for the month of June. An adjustment in how summer help is paid for at the parks and recreation department, with \$7,500 to be shifted from the revolving fund for this purpose, will allow a savings of an equal amount in the salary line item. A similar sum is to be taken from the public library budget, at the discretion of the library director. Finally, the board is seeking \$2,050 in savings in the line item for town hall computers.

After additional contributions to the town's unemployment benefit fund for the laid off workers, the board seeks see **BUDGET** pg 8



Joanne Rabideau questioned the size of the police budget at the Gill Annual Town Meeting, Monday, June 26th. See story below.

Gill Town Meeting Approves \$2.1 Million Budget

NOISE BYLAW, NEW ASSESSING SOFTWARE PASSES

BY DAVID DETMOLD It took more than four hours in the breathless second floor town hall meeting room, but when the gavel finally fell on Gill's annual town meeting Monday night, June 26th, voters had approved a \$2.1 million budget, apparently avoided an override, curbed a pay hike for town officials, and passed a narrowly tailored noise ordinance to deal with noisy ATVs on West Gill Road by a vote of 40 - 28.

An article to establish an agricultural commission in town passed unanimously, while a measure to purchase and upgrade assessing software and hire an outside firm to perform a walk through of

all residential and commercial property in town for a recollection of assessing data - at a cost of \$60,000 - passed after vigorous debate.

In general, the meeting was characterized by a great deal of confusion over dollar amounts and the wording of motions, with town counsel Donna MacNicol stepping to the microphone on a number of occasions to act as referee, as voters found their printed warrants more useful as hand-held fans than blueprints of the meeting's proceedings as the night wore on.

The hard-to-pin-down financial facts held up discussion early in the evening when Paul Nowill, chair of the

finance committee, rose to speak against a proposed 3½% cost of living increase for salaried town officials. The finance committee proposed a 2½% increase instead, as more in keeping with the fiscal restraints communities throughout the Commonwealth live with under the confines of Proposition 2½. But the selectboard - which supported the higher figure as the average of a mean of two regional consumer price indexes - and the finance committee could not agree on what the actual amounts for the salaries of numerous officials would total, if the voters agreed to hold

see **GILL** pg 7

Wendell Approves Extra Funds for Swift River

ADDITIONAL \$40,000 FOR REGIONAL SCHOOL

BY JOSH HEINEMANN Before the annual town meeting, Wendell held a brief special town meeting at 7:00 p.m., at which citizens approved the one article - to transfer \$259,305 from free cash to stabilization. The special town meeting lasted one minute.

The annual town meeting started at 7:30 p.m. By 10:00 p.m. voters had approved the entire annual town meeting warrant, and were putting chairs away, gathering in small groups outside the town hall, and starting on their way home. Most of the articles were the necessary details of running the town, allowing the selectboard to borrow money as needed, to apply for and

accept EOCB block grant money, continue to make payments on the town's bills; Fiske Pond, last year's purchase of property for the new town office building, the new fire truck, and older bills, payments for Swift River School construction, Mahar construction, the fire station and highway garage. Voters approved \$4,000 towards the triennial independent audit expense, \$20,000 for stabilization, and \$12,500 for the reserve fund.

Article 4 set salaries and compensation for elected and appointed officials, and passed with one dissenting vote, with the amounts unchanged from finance committee recommendation. The

finance committee recommended more (\$372,633) than the school committee had requested for Swift River School (\$338,653), so that Wendell's per pupil cost matched what New Salem already authorized at its town meeting. The finance committee's intention was to keep the original Swift River agreement, for each town to pay the same amount per student, intact. Finance committee chair Michael Idoine provided voters with a graph and figures from the last ten years which showed that during that time New Salem had paid more than their per pupil share in school assessments. For see **WENDELL** pg 11

PET OF THE WEEK

Feed me Lots!



Maggie

Cow-spotted Maggie is a cute little two-year-old domestic short hair cat who could certainly use a few more good meals to fatten her up some!

She mustn't have been the best mouse-catching stray so she's a bit skinny and enjoying her delicious kitty fare at the shelter.

She acts a little shy at first (but then she was brand new) but quickly responds to petting with a lot of purring and great happiness.

She is a cutie too with her adorable markings and huge gold eyes.

For more info on adopting Maggie, please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Exploring Insects

BY LINDA HICKMAN
TURNERS FALLS- The Carnegie Library and Great Falls Discovery Center are offering "Exploring Insects," a four session series for elementary age children. The free programs will meet on Thursdays in July from 2 - 3 p.m. The first

two sessions are on bees and butterflies and will meet at the Carnegie Library. The last two sessions are on beetles and bugs and will be held at the Discovery Center. Sue Cloutier of the Discovery Center is running the fun hands-on programs about local insects. Parents and

care-givers have the option of attending with the children. For more information, or to register, please contact the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.



TURNERS FALLS- Seth and Kristen Leamy of Turners Falls enjoyed making insect prints at the Carnegie Library on Thursday, June 22nd, with artist Ruth O'Mara. The program was sponsored by the Community Partnerships for children.

Insect Facts, Fiction and Science Fiction at Northfield Mountain

NORTHFIELD, MA. On Saturday, July 8th, from 6:30 - 9 p.m., entomologist Kelley Downer will help participants explore their insect fears and fascinations as she introduces her audience to the rich world of arthropods - the insects of the world, in a program at Northfield Mountain. Downer will explain fact from fiction as she lets participants examine - and even hold, some fascinating bugs, including the Madagascar hissing cockroach. Downer will

work to debunk common insect fears through her stories and her hands-on approach with live arthropods. Afterward participants will share a laugh viewing the classic sci-fi film, "Them!" - a 1950s-era tale of atom bomb-created giant ants taking up residence in Los Angeles storm drains. There is a fee for the program. For registration and information phone Northfield Mountain: (800) 859-2960. For more information, call (413) 659-4461.

FACES & PLACES



A crew from Northeast Generation arrives on the scene Wednesday June 28th at about 3 p.m. after a downed power line blocked traffic on Greenfield Road for several hours. Highway workers from the Montague DPW moving along the roadway disturbed a dead tree that shifted and broke a guy wire, knocking over the telephone pole and causing the line to fall onto the road.



Teens are hard at work on the mural across from the Brickhouse Teen Center

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES July 3rd - 7th

MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth St., Turners Falls, is open Mon. - Fri. from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Make meal reservations a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on the machine when the center is closed (863-9357). Mealsite manager is Chris Richer. The center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. Transportation to the center can be provided. Special trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip.

Monday, 3rd
10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11:30 a.m. PACE Aerobics

Tuesday, 4th
9:30 a.m. Aerobics
Wednesday, 5th
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 6th
1 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 7th
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (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, 3rd
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch
Tuesday, 4th
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, 5th
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing
12 Noon Bingo
Thursday, 6th
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m Shopping

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

The Good Life
The Good Life is free monthly news for people 55 and older in Franklin County and the North Quabbin area. To receive The Good Life call 413-773-5555 Ext 296 or 978-544-2259 Ext 296 and leave your mailing address. You may also email your info to goodlife@fchcc.org with "subscribe" in the subject line. You may receive The Good Life electronically as a PDF file if you request it.
The Good Life is a publication of Franklin County Home Care.

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South Deerfield Bookstore Helps Sheffield School

BY RUTH WITTY

TURNERS FALLS - When Ken Schoen, owner of Schoen Books, heard from Tova Neugut, director of the 21st Century After School program at the Sheffield School, that her school lacked funding for enrichment programs for the students, he wanted to help. Schoen had already been sending books to support a



Sheffield School students enjoy reading "Miss Rumphius," by Barbara Cooney, thanks to donations from Ken Schoen and Jane Trigere of Schoen Books in South Deerfield.

Holocaust center in West Virginia, to libraries for prisoners, the Greenfield Public Library and to local high schools. This year, Schoen and his wife Jane Trigere began sending children's books to Sheffield School as well.

Sheffield School, a third through sixth grade school, welcomed second graders from the neighboring Hillcrest School for "Step-Up Day" last month. When the second graders came over to Sheffield for an assembly, Schoen supplied all the chil-

dren with a copy of "Miss Rumphius," by Barbara Cooney, about a woman who spreads beauty throughout the world by planting lupines. After reading the book the kids planted real

lupine seeds, which will probably be in flower to greet them when they come to the Sheffield in the fall. Previously the students had painted a beautiful mural pathway between the two schools that depicts Montague history. The pathway's murals include scenes from the past including dinosaurs, horses and carriages, and, on a more modern note, baseball.

Schoen has also been helping out with the summer program at Sheffield directed by Neugut, called Ready Set Go to Sheffield.

The program is for kids entering grades three through six, and combines academic work with cultural enrichment and fun activities from July 31st, for four weeks. Schoen and Trigere want all kids who go to this program to go home with a book of their own, and they have raised \$600 so far towards this goal. Any contributions are appreciated: to the

Gill Montague Education Fund, care of Sheffield School, for the summer reading program. Parents who are interested in sending their children to the summer program should call 413-863-9326.

Schoen Books has been in business since 1990, and deals in used, out of print and scholarly books, with a specialty in Judaica and modern European history, anthropology and the social sciences. They also buy scholarly libraries. They welcome calls at 413-665-0066.

Last Day of School at Franklin County Tech



In Hot Water. Photo by Christine Toubeau

Electrical instructor and Colrain resident Bill Kerivan falls from the dunking stool during field day at the Franklin County Technical School on the last day of school. The dunking booth was a fund raiser for the class of 2009 organized by class advisors Dean Scranton and Dan Prasol.

The dunking booth was one of a number of activities that day, culminating in a barbeque with administrators cooking burgers and dogs for students and staff.

For more information

about other events and community involvement contact Peter LaFrance or Paul Cohen at 413-863-9561, ext. 119.

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Slope Editions Publishes Nordic Anthology

BY CHRIS JANKE - "The whole object of travel is not to set foot on a foreign land," wrote G.K. Chesterton, "it is at last to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land." Such is the effect, too, of reading *The Other Side of Landscape*, the new anthology of contemporary Nordic poetry published by Slope Editions. Working simultaneously under the influence of newer foreign poetries and certain thousand-year-old native traditions, this inspired collection achieves a transcendent unity amidst a

diversity of voices, harmony among potentially conflicted aesthetics, an "Electrical I"-as editors Nicolaj Stochholm and Anni Sumari suggest in their introduction-that gives the reader, like Chesterton's traveler, a sense of wonder for the familiar, an "electrical eye."

The Other Side of Landscape is a collection of seventeen Nordic poets born since 1962, poets who have been as influenced by modern and post-modern techniques as they have been by the Edda, that collection of

ancient texts which derives from pan-Scandinavian mythology. *The Other Side of Landscape* represents the largest and most exciting collection of modern Nordic poets ever for an American audience. It's a poetry that refuses to be ignored.

The Other Side of Landscape is available locally at Books and More on Avenue A in Turners Falls.

Chris Janke, of Turners Falls, is the senior editor of Slope Editions.

Community Meeting Regarding Violence in The Patch

A meeting in support of the community regarding recent violence in The Patch neighborhood of Turners Falls will be held on Thursday, June 29th from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The meeting will be held inside the Parent Development Center on G Street in The Patch. Youth 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Sponsored by the Brick House Community Resource Center Community Response Team.

For more information call the Brick House at 863-9576.

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Save the Town Nurse

The town of Montague has maintained a public health nurse since 1918. For the last seven years, that office has been filled by Joan Pajak, working 20 hours a week, first from an inconvenient office on the second floor and finally, after an expensive town hall renovation, from a first floor office the elderly and infirm could more easily get to.

Pajak has not been content to wait in her office for citizens with health concerns to seek her out. She has arranged countless blood pressure clinics and flu clinics throughout the five villages, even the smallest of them. She monitors the elderly for osteoporosis, diabetes, hypertension, medication and wound management in their homes. Town employees have access to the nurse for preventative medicine. Following the administration of flu shots at clinics, she files the paperwork needed for reimbursement for the shots given, saving money for the town.

Since September the 11th, 2001, all levels of government have become responsible for a broad range of emergency preparedness. In the event of an outbreak of avian flu, anthrax, or any biological emergency, it is the town nurse who would initiate our community's response. She would be the one who would recognize, evaluate and report to the state so an accurate picture of an outbreak could be swiftly achieved.

With the rise of communicable diseases like hepatitis C, and the persistent threat of tuberculosis in

our Commonwealth, the services of a town nurse may be called to the fore in containing an outbreak at any time. She routinely follows up on food borne illnesses, handling the person's illness and following their treatment.

Funding the position of town nurse is a sensible, proactive allocation of public resources for the greater good of the entire community. As Gina McNeely, Montague's health agent put it, "We could say we don't need a fire department, until we have a fire. But when there's an outbreak of communicable disease - bacterial meningitis, shigella, flu - the town nurse provides the first line of defense. If we can prevent one communicable disease from getting into a school, her position justifies itself."

Looking over the range of services town hall provides to the elderly and the less affluent members of our community, some might say these taxpayers are, on the whole, shortchanged. The availability and service of the town nurse is one valuable asset the town of Montague provides our senior citizens for their tax dollars.

It is a shame, as the selectboard dashes off in the direction of cutting positions as quickly as they dashed in the direction of defending an exorbitant override a month ago, that the town nurse finds herself on the chopping block. If calmer heads cannot prevail, we stand to lose a valuable, cost-effective public health service. Once we lose her, the town nurse will not return.

Note to Our Readers

Next week, the Montague Reporter will begin printing on summer schedule, with issues every other week during the months of July and August. There will be no paper next week, July 6th. The Montague Reporter will print on July 13th, 27th, August 10th and 24th. To

allow the editor a long deserved vacation, the board of directors will edit and publish the July 27th issue; we look forward to the results of their effort with interest.

Regular weekly publication will resume September 7th. Have a good summer!



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Politics of School Closing

I find it a little hard to side with Jeff Singleton's "romantic" dissertation objecting to Joyce Phillips' editorial supporting the closing of the Montague Center School.

I do believe Joyce has put a lot of thought into what she wrote, for us all to consider, and as a former member and former chair of the school committee she offers valuable

knowledge for those of us on the outside to consider.

All of this discussion in reference to the Montague Center School makes me wonder if the children of Lake Pleasant and the children of Millers Falls were given as much consideration when the Highland School, which is handicapped accessible and in excellent condition, was closed. Those

children had to be transported to other schools. Perhaps someone can answer this question for me.

Or perhaps the answer lies in the political make-up of the villages. For the sake of the children of all five villages, I hope not.

- Art Gilmore
Turners Falls

Chipping Away at Inalienable Rights

Part of the Fourth Amendment (you know - the recently hollowed out inalienable right against unreasonable search and seizure) has to do with a reasonable expectation of privacy. Under the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution, if you are in your home, you have a reasonable expectation of privacy - as long as anything incriminating can't be seen through one of your windows or through an open door, from the street. Being out in public divests you of a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Now, the Supreme Court, no longer particularly concerned about the rights of the citizenry (scratch that "of, by, and for the people" idea), has ruled that judges cannot throw out evidence collected by the police who have search warrants but do not properly announce their arrival.

So, the police never make mistakes? They never enter the wrong home, pointing guns, and otherwise terrifying the occu-

pants? Not having to announce their arrival will mean many more wrong homes will be entered without warning.

"So what! If you're innocent, there's nothing to worry about!" This is a ridiculous premise to begin with, but that's another story. "Only criminals," the conventional wisdom continues, "care if intimidating strangers in uniforms with guns at the ready barge into their homes unannounced." Little Suzy and Timmy won't be traumatized by such unfortunate, but necessary acts. And if they are, well that's just the price of living in a dictatorship, uh, democracy.

Not having to announce their arrival will help police nab more criminals red-handed? That is most likely to be true

with unorganized criminals who are the most easily incriminated anyway. The smart, really dangerous ones aren't going to be in their homes where you can spot them through a window or door from the street.

- Jerri Higgins
Montague City

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American Dead in Iraq as of 6/28/06



Root Tavern Holds History Within Its Walls

BY VERA FOLEY

MONTAGUE CENTER

When we think of colonial houses, we think of wooden beams, white plaster walls, and sharply sloping roofs, painted, sketched, or even photographed against a lush but distant countryside, something to be admired in textbooks and biographies, but not to be seen in the here and now. The former Root Tavern, the oldest building in Montague, is testament to the survival of at least one of these buildings. The tale of its long life on Old Sunderland Road is one that represents both the caretaking of several previous owners interested in historical preservation, and the assiduous research of the house's current owner, Rick Dodge, who also owns an antiques shop adjacent to the Book Mill.

Today, Dodge's house is a vision of the plaster-and-beam interior and unpainted exterior common in the early 1700s. Originally a saltbox (a house in which the roof slants all the way down to ground level on one side), it holds a wealth of evidence of its long past. It only needed someone to unearth them. That's where Dodge comes in.

By reading inventory papers left to Joseph Root, whose father, Joseph Root Sr., left him several lots of land in Montague known as the "Hunting Hills" in 1728, he discovered details of the livelihood of the building's first owner "He owned a farm,

a cider mill, a sawmill, and one other mill. He raised cattle and grains, which he shipped down the Connecticut River." The house itself was built in the 1730s.

Today, we see not a saltbox, but a regular pitched roof. This occurred, says Dodge, in the 1780s or 90s, so that more rooms could be added upstairs, for rent. Today, one can still see the numbers hung on the doors of some of these old rooms. The house had become a tavern. As it was situated on the road leading to the Deerfield ferry, it was well suited to this purpose; according to Dodge, there was a decent amount of traffic moving along the east - west road.

However, in 1800, the tavern

relatives, or in-laws, and the house itself was growing old; it was no longer an advantageous place to live. Records show that a ballroom, added during the tavern days, was taken off and moved into Montague Center to form the core of a new house during this time period. No documentation remains as to which house that was.

Like so many other old buildings, the old tavern might simply have been torn down in favor of a newer building, but by good fortune, in 1921, it was, to use Dodge's word, "rediscovered" by a recent Smith College graduate, Ardelia Hall, and her mother, who decided to

buy it as a summer house for \$2,000. Much of the knowledge that has been accumulated about the Hall's relationship to the house came by dint of Dodge's research. He found copies of her correspondence, both by letter and by telegram, in the attic.

Hall lived in the old house each year from May to September until 1979, and was responsible for one pivotal aspect of the house's appearance that remains to this day: the doorway.

The front door of the Root Tavern is perhaps the first thing one notices about the old building. It is a double door, surrounded by carved wood on either side and above, in a baroque fashion. The shapes etched into the wood, and the scrolls above, are distinctive and ornate. The doorway's existence is a story in itself, as Dodge tells it.



DAVOL PHOTOS

The oldest house in Montague, the historic Root Tavern is now a private residence on Old Sunderland Road.



The doorway, not original to the building, was taken from a house in Hatfield built in 1762.

closed, and, by 1820, "the Root family dispersed," Dodge said. The house remained in the family, but it was often sold to older

The house's original doorway, from the time of Joseph Root, was removed in the late 19th century. It was very simple. When Hall bought the house, she was drawn to its original simplicity, but there was one problem. "Ardelia Hall thought the house original except for the Victorian doorway," Dodge explained. As an employee of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Hall was in a position to find something more appropriate. This something appeared in the form of a door taken off an old Hatfield house, built in 1762, which was donated to the museum. Hall hired an architect to make an exact drawing, and, in 1933, the new doorway, as it is today, was installed at Root Tavern.

How does Dodge know so much about Hall? Again, research. After working in Boston and at the Metropolitan, Hall found her niche in the State Department in Washington D.C., during World War II. It was her job to locate and return pieces of art stolen from their original owners by the Nazis. However, telegrams are not necessary to determine the occupation of the owner of Root Tavern. "She was a prominent

figure in her field," Dodge explained. "Her papers are in the national archives."

The restoration of the house, by this time nearly 250 years old, was a project for the next owners, Hannah and Paul Neville, who bought it from Hall. According to Dodge, "They made the house livable year-round." Renovations included updating the plumbing, putting in insulation, and a host of other related tasks. They also put in a "typical 18th century kitchen floor." Paul Neville unearthed a greater treasure: he discovered under the newer layer of plaster on a wall in a front room, lay the original paneling, etched with the name "I. Root." (I was considered a substitute for J in those times.)

The historical preservation of the former Root Tavern has been remarkably successful, thanks to people such as Hall, the Nevilles, and Dodge himself. Bits of old china may still be found in the garden; the kitchen walls are coated with aged white plaster, rather than modern wallpaper. The narrow halls and low ceilings add a charm to the house that has lasted for centuries and will, with care, last for many more.

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Hams Make the Best of Bad Beginnings

BY HYRUM H. HUSKEY JR.,
KB1KRS

GREENFIELD - Members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, Inc. figured they would have a bad beginning to their annual ARRL Field Day weekend on June 24th and 25th. Showers and possible thunderstorms were predicted for the day. Plus, the eleven-year sun spot cycle is near its low and producing some fairly poor propagation conditions at times.

Indeed, it looked to be a soggy weekend as the group began to set up wire antennas in a light rain Saturday morning at Poets Seat tower. The planned Morse code station antenna proved especially difficult to install. It is normally placed from a tall tree to the tower structure by "launching" a light line out over the tree, and then attaching a stronger rope to it for retrieval and tying on the wire antenna. Perhaps because of the rain, it took repeated fishing pole casts by Bob Dickerman, WA1QKT, a Northfield resident, who persevered until successful. Meanwhile, this writer clung to

wet branches on the steep slippery slope below the target tree, trying to find the lead weight attached to the invisible fishing line among the dripping trees. Hey, this is fun?

At the tower parking lot, another group was assembling a tent shelter alongside the travel trailer. Chet, N1XPT and Beth (KB1NQL) Chin, from Turners Falls, assisted in piecing together a variety of tent wall pieces while wary eyes sized up a growing puddle that threatened to eventually run straight through the tent location.

But as operating time approached at 2 p.m., the sun was shining and both stations were on the air. Many club members had shown up to help set up equipment, operate the voice station, provide meals support, and answer questions from a number of public visitors.

Walt Congden, W1ZPB, also a Northfield resident, began his

annual 24-hour, inspirational marathon of contacts via Morse code, and went through the night with a little help of bleary-eyed

and newly licensed hams from Greenfield High School and the Franklin County Community Emergency Response Team began to make radio contacts with other amateur groups across the country. With the assistance of experienced "control operators," a number of younger visiting children also were able to experience "being on the air." Several visiting adults were encouraged to return to their past radio hobby.

By 2:00 p.m. Sunday, both stations were making the last permitted contacts as our allotted operating period expired. The sun was still

shining as we began to close up our demonstration of emergency communication capabilities. People were still showing up to help and to visit. Two hundred and eighty-eight radio contacts had been logged during our twenty-four hour operating period. Contacts were established with other amateur stations as far away as California, Texas, Washington state, and the Virgin Islands. Hey, this stuff is fun!

In addition to the author, and those listed in the article, other amateur radio club members in the Town of Montague include the Turners Falls dentist, Robert Koolkin N1KRR; Edward Boutwell KB1BNG, and Thomas Kurtyka KB1GCC.



Kane Kurtka and Eli Ketchum, members of the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club

recorders trying not to doze off on the graveyard shift.

Meals were prepared on site,

ERVING continued from pg 1

this property is unique and beautiful, with views of the Millers River, that sustained forest management of the parcel could bring a regular income to the town, and that breaking the piece into two acre lots each with a house and family could put a serious strain on the school and a serious drain on the town's budget. Selectboard member Andrew Tessier said a new house in town would have to be assessed at \$1.7 million for its taxes to pay for the education costs for one student.

One woman objected to the proposal, saying that Northfield Mountain already owned 1,000 acres in Erving, the state forest held another 1,300 acres, and that only seven building lots actually could be put in on the piece. She said the cost of the land was more than the town should take on. The value of the

Northfield Mountain facility could decrease and raise residential taxes further, she warned.

A two-thirds majority was needed for approval, and a motion was made to use a paper ballot, but voters agreed to a standing vote instead, with respect allowed for opposing viewpoints. The result was 88% for the purchase, 102 to 13.

Article One, which allowed the town to accept Massachusetts General Law and require eligible retirees to enroll in Medicare and a Medicare supplemental plan, and so transfer insurance expense to the state and federal government, passed unanimously.

Article 2 allowed a piece of land the Erving Paper mill had once given to the town to be given back to the paper mill, so the mill could access a well on the land for a new source of potable water. The newly constructed bypass of Route 2, north of the paper mill's park-

ing lot, paved over the well the paper mill had been using, and the road cannot open until the paper mill locates a new water source. The article was divided into three sections for book-keeping, and all three sections passed unanimously.

Article 3 was the land purchase, and Article 4 transferred \$30,000 from stabilization to pay for legal expenses, including a current assessment, associated with the purchase. Article 4 passed 89 to 13.

Article 5 passed unanimously, transferring \$30,000 from overlay surplus to cover expenses, including DEP monitoring, of the Maple Avenue Landfill closure in Farley. Article 6 to transfer free cash to stabilization was passed over, because the land purchase emptied the free cash account.

Article 7 and 8 passed unanimously, allowing the town to take Laurel Lane as a public way and rename it Ridge Road as of July 1st this year.

MCTV Schedule

Channel 17

Friday, June 30

Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
7:00 PM Turners Falls H.S.
Girls Softball Championship
9:00 PM Montague Update
10:00 PM Women and HIV
11:00 PM Classic Arts Showcase

Saturday, July 1

Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
7:00 PM GMRSD
Elementary Study Group
9:00 PM GMRSD Committee Meeting 6/27

Sunday, July 2

Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
7:00 PM Turners Falls H.S.
Graduation
8:00 PM Turners Falls H.S.
Girls Softball Championship
10:00 PM Grand Canyon Rapids
10:30 PM Classic Arts Showcase

Monday, July 3

Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
7:00 PM Montague Selectboard 6/26
8:30 PM The Spirit of Lake Pleasant
10:00 PM GaiaVision
11:00 PM Classic Arts Showcase

Tuesday, July 4

Eagle All Day From 6:00 AM
7:00 PM GMRSD
Elementary Study Group
9:00 PM GMRSD Committee Meeting 6/27

Wednesday, July 5

Eagle All Day from 6:00 AM
7:00 PM Turners Falls Girls Softball Championship
9:30 PM Franklin County Democrat
10:00 PM Montague Update
11:00 PM Discovery Center Presents: The Importance of Pollinators and Plants

Thursday, July 6

Eagle All Day from 6:00 AM
7:00 PM Montague Selectboard 6/26
9:30 PM Discovery Center Presents: Tracking Mammals
10:30 PM Grand Canyon Rapids
11:00 PM A Lake Pleasant Slide Show

Wednesday, July 12 at 6:00 PM

-- Watch the Montague Special Town Meeting LIVE on MCTV channel 17.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Four Car Pile Up

Wednesday, 6-21

10:46 a.m. Assisted Gill police with a motor vehicle rollover with entrapment on Route 2. Subject injured, refused EMS.

3:20 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop, a criminal application was issued to [redacted] for operating after revocation. Vehicle was removed by a friend.

Friday 6-23

5: 41 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on High Street,

[redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor (3rd offense), operating after revocation, license not in possession, and failure to wear a seatbelt.

Saturday 6-24

3:00 p.m. Report of a disabled motor vehicle on River Road. Gone on arrival.

Sunday 6-25

4:55 p.m. Report of two baby raccoons in roadway on Route 2 near Millers River. Found to be very young. Relocated critters to top of mountain.

Tuesday 6-27

2:01 p.m. Report of a four-car motor vehicle accident on Route 2 by police station. One subject transported to FMC. One subject cited for failure to use care when stopping.

No hormones or antibiotics

Ground - \$5.00 lb.
Steaks - \$10.00 lb.

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Your Pace at Your Place



GILL
continued from pg 1

them to a 2½% increase. It took several tries, and a calculator, for the two boards to arrive at the same figures, at which point the meeting approved the lower salaries by a vote of 68 to 29. The reduction saved the town about \$3,000.

Greg Snedeker, the only elected member on Gill's battered board of assessors (Phil Maddern was recently appointed to the board to insure the assessors could have a quorum and hold meetings) proved he was cool under fire, as he fielded questions and critical comments from the floor for more than half an hour on the subject of new software and a recollection of data for the assessing office. He told the more than 120 voters on hand, "The town's property record cards have not been updated in more than 30 years. Much of our data is wrong. A recollection will bring our whole town up-to-date for proper assessment."

JoAnn Greenleaf, a former Gill assessor who serves as Montague's director of assessing, pointed out the recollection of data had been mandated by the state to take place by 2008. "There isn't an option," said Greenleaf, who declined to renew her service to the Gill board after being written in during the May election. "You've got to do it."

John Duda wanted to know whether the recollection of data would penalize people living along the river, who were hit with stiff increases in property

assessments three years ago, when a spike in a small cluster of home sales seemed to indicate property values had fallen behind the market in the so-called Riverview district. Snedeker said, "The recollection will start the process over. It will create a fair means of assessing, townwide."

When Joe Williams called for the town to wait until a full board of assessors had been elected, to see whether a full board would support a move to a new software system rather than the state-supplied CAMA system the assessors use now, Geri Johnson replied, "I don't think we're going to see a full board of assessors until we do this." Snedeker, a computer software specialist, said the CAMA system was not user friendly, and required extra time to update records.

Paul Seamans, who lives on the river at the end of Munn's Ferry Road, stood up to say, since the establishment of the Riverview property tax district, "We paid [in property taxes] 2½ times what we paid two years ago. I came here in 1953 to be a teacher. I don't want to live in Riverview. I want to live in Gill." His remarks were met with applause.

Snedeker said the three property transactions that led to the creation of the Riverview district in 2004 were all characterized by faulty data in the assessing office, which may have led to an improper market analysis of the neighborhood. "On one transaction, we had a vacant lot listed which wasn't there. On the second transaction, our data

card was off by 1,000 square feet, (for the house measurement). The assessment on the third property dropped after the new owners applied for an abatement," he said, "because the data on the card was wrong."

After this explanation, the voters approved the \$60,000 special article for new assessing software and recollection of data.

As discussion turned to the \$2,144,500.69 omnibus budget, to fund all town services and the proposed \$1,164,320 Gill-Montague school assessment, the devil still dwelt in the financial details, as side conversations (inaudible to folks in the back of the room) continued about the likelihood of a further drop in the school budget, and whether the debt for the school building project was included in the omnibus figure, or whether it should have been. Nowill, for the finance committee, rose to ask voters to remove the police department budget from the omnibus, to make the police, rather than the schools, the subject of an override, should one be needed. But Ann Banash, speaking for the selectboard, said, "We will avoid an override at all costs," even if the school committee holds firm at their current level of cuts, leaving the town about \$20,000 above the levy limit for the '07 budget. Banash said that amount could be found in new receipts or cash reserves, if need be.

Still the voters engaged in a lively debate about the merits of a police force with three full-time officers for a town of 1300

people, with Joanne Rabideau saying, "I support the police department, but I think the budget can be trimmed," and Sandy Brown saying, "All other departments took a decrease," in their budget proposals, "but the police department is increasing at a much greater rate than any other department. We have more police than any other town our size."

Defending the need for full-time officers backed up by mutual aid from surrounding towns, Chief David Hastings pointed to recent arrests involving hate crimes, drugs and weapons, and said, "Law enforcement in today's world is not something you can do by yourself." He also said response time from the Shelburne Falls state police barracks varied, especially in winter weather, and, "When you make a call, I want that call to be answered by a Gill officer."

On behalf of the Gill-Montague schools, school committee chair Mary Kociela defended the budget her committee had certified on Friday morning, June 23rd, with \$300,000 in cuts and new revenues. "We are feeling very pressed. We feel to make further cuts will put our district at risk. That's why we certified \$300,000 in cuts, and no more."

After John Duda successfully moved to increase the recreation commission's budget by \$1800, restoring it to the original request of \$3600, the omnibus passed without further discussion.

An excessive noise bylaw, written to specifically address a

continuing noise problem West Gill Road residents have complained about for years resulting from the use of modified dirt bikes (with no mufflers) and ATVs, unregistered trucks, snowmobiles, and other recreational vehicles, passed after vigorous debate, 40 - 28. The measure will give police officers the power to enforce \$200 fines on violators, if noise is plainly audible at the lot line of the premises from which it is produced.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Rescue in Barton Cove

Tuesday, 6-20

4:19 p.m. A three-vehicle accident on French King Highway in the area of the long rest area. One subject transported to FMC for evaluation. Citation issued to operator of vehicle that caused crash.

Wednesday, 6-21

3:37 a.m. Received information regarding a past sexual assault that occurred in town. Case under investigation with state police.

10:45 a.m. Responded to a vehicle rollover accident on French King Highway near the

public boat ramp. State police commercial vehicle team called to assist with investigation.

5:35 p.m. Report of a subject riding a motorized beer cooler on Franklin Road. Checked above location, no problem found.

Thursday, 6-22

3:20 a.m. Responded to an alarm on the Walnut Street; all OK.

10:15 a.m. Alarm sounding at a Riverside residence; all checked secure.

Friday, 6-23

6:40 p.m. Assisted Erving police with witnessing a Breathalyzer refusal.

Saturday, 6-24

1:40 a.m. Assisted Northfield police with motor vehicle stop, suspended operator.

2:55 p.m. Report of a truck spilling liquid onto Route 10, checked area, substance spilled was actually coffee creamer.

Sunday, 6-25

10:25 a.m. Assisted disabled motorist on French King Highway.

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Bike Path Progress

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE CITY - While the canalside section of the Montague bike path has been held up since last summer, construction has begun on the section of the bike path between Montague City Road and McClellan Farm Road in Deerfield. This so-called 'southern section' of the bike path, which will cross the Connecticut River on a former railroad trestle, is being built by Northern Construction Co. of Weymouth, who won the bid at \$1,616,692.

According to the Franklin Regional Council of Government's senior transportation planner, Elizabeth Giannini, Northern Construction "started on the demolition work this spring, cleaning out brush along the old railroad bed and remov-



The bike path will cross the Connecticut River on a former railroad trestle.

ing old railroad ties on the trestle. They have been laying down sub-decking on the railroad bridge; a second layer will go next." Giannini said the top level of decking will resemble the

material in use on the bike path on the trestle between Hadley and Northampton, diagonal pressure treated planking. She said a wooden handrail will be augmented by a taller black

chain link fence along both sides of the trestle, for added safety. Giannini said some stone work would be needed on one of the old railroad bridge abutments, where the old stones had washed out. MassHighway, which is supervising the project, inspected the damage to the abutment and found it to be superficial, she said. The contractor will wait until July or August, "when the water level is lower" to undertake this aspect

of the work, said Giannini, presuming it ever stops raining.

Weeks of rain have also delayed completion of the \$1,355,396 "northern section" of the bike path, which runs along the canal from Depot Street to Unity Park. The section from 6th Street to the Gill-Montague bridge awaits a final survey from Mass Highway, to replace survey stakes lost or pulled out over the winter. Once that happens, Warner Brothers, of Sunderland, should have the final stretch of paving and "decorative, historically sensitive fencing" completed by the end of August, Giannini said.

The southern section, across the railroad bridge to Deerfield, should be complete by spring of 2007. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held when the path opens officially.

BUDGET

continued from pg 1

to realize a savings of \$102,831 from these cuts. The town hopes to augment those savings by rescinding the \$10,000 back that town meeting appropriated on May 6th to the conservation fund, along with \$5,000 from an article for computer hardware. Additionally, the \$25,000 for the fire curtain for the Shea, not needed and never purchased, is proposed for rescission. Finally, the town plans to move \$49,529 from the stabilization fund and apply it to bridging the budget gap. This would leave about \$350,000 in stabilization.

An additional article will take \$125,000 from the town's education stabilization fund, set up with money returned from the schools in '05, and give it to the schools to purchase reading and math textbooks. This would leave \$88,000 in the education fund.

The board approved a new five-year industrial pretreatment discharge permit for Southworth

Paper. Wastewater treatment plant supervisor Bob Trombley said neither the town nor the paper mill had requested changes in the discharge permit formerly held by Esleek Manufacturing Company, recently acquired by Agawam-based Southworth. A permit is required for users who generate a sufficient volume of waste.

Trombley said, "So far production is up," at the Southworth plant, "often at six days a week. They are looking at the pros of going to seven days a week in September."

Board member Allen Ross jokingly asked if the new owners had shown "any interest in buying Strathmore?"

Lou Collins, manager of the 2nd Street Café in Turners, received the board's approval to hold an outdoor café from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 16th in conjunction with a sale of raffle tickets for a custom chopper designed by East Coast Chopper Works. The two Avenue A businesses will be donating raffle

ticket sales to the Shriners Childrens Hospitals, which provide free orthopedic, burn, and spinal injury care to children throughout North America.

Collins said a live band will perform outside the bar that day, and alcohol may be consumed, but not sold, in the outdoor café. He said the model who provided the inspiration for the 'Wild Child' logo on the custom 14' chopper may appear to sign autographs.

The board accepted a bid from Massamont Insurance for \$132,120 to provide property, liability, auto, and workers compensation insurance for the town for the coming fiscal year. "We think you're a pretty good risk, and we look forward to providing coverage for you," said Massamont's Hugh Campbell.

The board also approved bids for \$2.731 per gallon for diesel oil from Rice Oil, and \$2.998 for gasoline from Sandri Oil for the coming year. They approved a list of surplus equipment, including a '98 Ford Crown Victoria with

162,000 miles on it, and a 2000 Ford Crown Victoria with 158,000 miles on it, from the police department, a fax machine and Dell computer, and three telephones from the assessors office, and a variety of vehicles, cement mixers, and glass crushers from the highway department.

Art Gilmore was appointed the selectboard's representative to the Trustees of the Soldiers Memorial. They renewed a

\$12,625 contract for landfill monitoring services (for the former solid waste landfill on Turnpike Road) with Tighe and Bond for fiscal '07. Before going into executive session for discussion of collective bargaining and real estate, the board appointed Republican Kathy Peura and Democrat Jay di Pucchio to the board of registrars to replace departing registrars Katherine Krause and Virginia Kostanski.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Raccoon Not Located

Friday, 6-23

12:05 p.m. Report of a stolen bike from a Millers Falls Road address. Report taken.

2:02 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a motor vehicle theft from a 2nd Street address. Vehicle was loaned to someone and not returned. Report taken.

Saturday, 6-24

12:13 a.m. Report of a suspicious car behind Food City.

[REDACTED], was arrested on three default warrants.

10:20 a.m. Report of a larceny from a Montague City Road address. A license plate was stolen. Report taken.

9:11 p.m. Caller from 5th Street reported someone threatened to break into their home. Investigated.

Sunday, 6-25

11:28 a.m. Report of a loose golden retriever on

North Leverett Road. Owner located.

6:34 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at a 4th Street address. Subject was put in protective custody.

11:37 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a 3rd Street address.

[REDACTED], was arrested on a default warrant.

Monday 6-26

7:20 p.m. Report of a baby raccoon that looked ill by the intersection of Route 63 and North Leverett Road. Caller reported it went into the woods.

9:00 p.m. Caller reported that baby raccoon is back. Officer searched area. Raccoon not located.

Tuesday 6-27

3:47 p.m. Report of people in Connecticut River by the buoys. Kayakers had overturned. Rescue boat sent.

Deval Patrick Speaks in Greenfield

BY RUTH WITTY

Deval Patrick, a Democratic candidate for governor of Massachusetts, spoke at the Second Congregational Church in Greenfield, on June 26th to a packed crowd.

Dispensing with the usual catch phrases, Patrick appeared to be listening to the concerns voiced by the audience and admitted he did not know all the answers. He said he wanted to work on the three issues he has heard raised again and again in his travels throughout the Commonwealth,

to wit: health care affordability, education and housing. He said that the problem of housing includes not only homelessness as such but the fact that the average middle class family is only two to four paychecks away, or one major unforeseeable disaster away, from homelessness.

Responding to questions, Patrick said the state needs to set an example on the environment by purchasing hybrid cars for state officials. He said mass transit needs to be improved and made easier to use. In response to a

question on gay marriage Patrick said he is all for legalized same sex marriage, but without offending the questioner, basically said, "We need to move on to more pressing issues."

Patrick touted his grass roots credentials, claiming to have received more contributions from individual contributors than any other gubernatorial candidate in the state. He also fielded concerns about the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant and repeated his support for limiting campaign contributions.



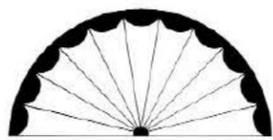
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The Cream of the Local Creamies

BY NINA BANDER

TURNERS FALLS - I grew up without experiencing the normal pleasures of bowling alleys, fast food restaurants, pizza parlors, drive-ins, carnivals and other suburban pastimes. My parents were just too adult-centered to even realize that other folks were packing the station wagon and heading off for greasy French fries and sodas and burgers with their smiling crew, while we were grumbling through yet another boring sup-du-jour at some restaurant with flocked wallpaper and candle sconces. It wasn't until I was hauling my own self around that I was able to visit Gino's or Burger King. It was pretty good stuff, I pretended, although really it was all about just being like everybody else. But I never even heard of soft serve ice cream until we moved to Massachusetts from Baltimore in '74. Maybe it started as a New England treat. Or perhaps it was - or is - a rural phenomenon?

I was on a cycle-camping trip with 12 other girls going up the coast from Boston to Bangor, Maine when I discovered Dairy Queen. Once, twice, three times a day we'd stop our ride to grab a cone. Wow!

So I take extra pleasure bringing the kids for a soft serve cone at any of the local 'creamies' we have in and around Montague. It's like, "Hey! We're doing what everyone else is doing and it's fun and genuinely delicious! Everyone's happy and it's cheap, too!" And each place has its own local character, unlike the franchise deals.

Grabbing a creamy, cold swirl of ice cream on a hot day while still in the old sweaty gardening clothes, sitting out on a sticky picnic table with a bunch of other sweaty, underdressed families and trying to get down to the cone before it melts all over your lap, well, you really



Yelena Romashka serves two soft serve cones to Wayne LaClaire at Yelena's Soft Serve on Turners Falls Road

can't beat it. Take it from someone who grew up pop-culturally deprived!

Have you been to Yelena's soft serve, the one where Dontin's used to be, on the way to the fire station in Turners? We've decided they churn out the sweetest and meltiest soft serve of the four local creamies.

The Large twist (\$2.50) was 9½ inches high from bottom of cone to the tip and the Small (\$1.75) measured 7 inches. We got free water when we asked for it, and sprinkles were a quarter extra. Pluses include umbrellas on the tables and a gazebo; minuses include backing out from the parking area onto Turners Falls Road to leave, and no napkin dispensers for customers to grab the inevitable extra wipes. They are open 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. every day except on Sunday, when they are open 12 - 9 p.m.

Right on Avenue A you'll see a small sidewalk sign with a cone on it outside of Equi's Candy Store in the summer. Not able to keep homemade choco-

late on the racks during the hot summer months, the owners have installed a soft serve machine to take up the slack. There's only one flavor - vanilla - and I don't think they sell a lot of cones because they haven't mastered (yet) pulling off a symmetrical tower that doesn't have a gap in the middle. Nonetheless, their Large teetered sideways to reach 8 inches (\$2.00) and a Small (\$1.75) struggled up to a full 6½. You can get sprinkles, but they are just sort of dropped over the top instead of rolled in. Pluses include finding a free newspaper on the bench outside; minuses are a lack of variety and the atmosphere of a store that sells candy, lotto, cigs, and beer, rather than a roadside ice cream stand.

Across from the airport on Millers Falls Road you'll find the very popular Country Creamee. Open 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. daily, they have both frozen yogurt soft serve (nonfat) and regular soft serve, with vanilla or chocolate, and feature fla-

vors. Here the Large (\$2.75) reaches an impressive 10 inches and the Small (\$1.75) is a real bargain at 8 inches. Dips and sprinkles are an extra 40 cents; if you ask for a cup of water it is given, and although you'll get a pile of napkins with your order, there are none outside the window.

They have eight picnic tables and ample parking, and although the lines often look dauntingly long, we find they move fairly quickly. Plus there's usually a nice breeze blowing up there and you can watch some planes taking off or landing across the way. Drawbacks include getting more ice cream than you really think you (or your kids) ought to be eating at any one time, and the likelihood of larger, more disastrous leaks and spills.

Last on the tour of local

creamies is the one at the Wagon Wheel restaurant, right over the bridge on Route 2 in Gill. They have a choice of vanilla or chocolate and sprinkles are free. You can get a Small (\$1.75) that measures 6½ inches tall, and the Large (\$3.15) reaches up to 9 inches, base to tip. They also offer hard ice cream, and they have two nice big self serve napkin dispensers outside the window. Open Monday - Saturday, 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. and Sunday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., they've got about 19 picnic tables outside, as well as indoor seating and lots of parking.

Well there you have it, take your pick while the season lasts. My kids really hated it when I was measuring the cones but I always wanted to know just how they all compared. I thought about getting all scientific and finding out the butter fat content and calories, but I didn't want to be a pest and make a fuss and embarrass those connoisseurs of normality, my kids. And maybe the cone size and shape varies according to the person serving you that day. Who knows?

It's not just about the amount of ice cream anyway. It's all about the experience, the shared memories, the fun times of summer, and all that normal happy stuff.



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Bike Trek Across Maine

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - Picture a morning still cool and damp. You have just traveled a mile in a line of bicycles with everyone rolling slowly, maybe a little stiff from yesterday's ride, maybe still cool like the morning. The line is slowly getting its speed up, almost like a train. You crest a small rise and see maybe a quarter mile ahead to the next crest, and the whole right shoulder is a line of bicycles, regular bikes, tandems, recumbents, tandem recumbents, and mountain bikes. There is one bicycle with four riders in a row. In the first five miles, groups of riders stop and shed their outside layers. There are bright jerseys everywhere. Through the day the line stretches out, and by 10:00 a.m. you might find yourself alone for minutes at a time.

The trek across Maine was a fundraiser for the Maine branch of the American Lung Association. This year over 1,400 riders and 300 volunteers raised more than a million dol-

lars. The riders covered 180 miles in three days, June 16th - 18th, from Sunday River across Maine to Owls Head Transportation Museum in Rockland. Food, baggage transport, and lodging, which varied from tent sites to dorm rooms, were provided, and there was mechanical and medical support all the way.

In 2005, cold rain fell for two of the three days. Amazingly (considering all the rain we've had this season), this year's trip was (almost) all sunny. The organizers start you in groups of 50 riders, a pace car in front for the first half mile, and a nice easy coast to the first intersection. You pedal to the rest stop,



PHOTO BY JOSH HEINEMANN

Earlier this month, a hot and sunny bike ride from Sunday River to Rockland, Maine, raised funds for the American Lung Association

eat, drink, get on and pedal to the next rest stop, eat, drink, pedal to....

At the end of the day there is a welcome shower and a nap, and then more food, a real meal. By the middle of the first day it is hard to imagine anything else in your life, because the bike, the road, and the other riders are all there is. There are volunteers

who cheer, blow whistles and ring bells as you turn into a rest stop. Mechanics, parts, and massage therapists are available at the day's end.

We passed beautiful scenery, mountains to the left and a river to the right, potato fields, a sagging barn, working farms and houses with equipment parked in the yard. At the top of one long hot climb a family stood out in the road, spraying riders as they passed by, and the young daughter had frozen sweet sticks which you could take from her hand without even changing pace. There was one cloudburst on a long downhill

that cooled us off as sweetly as the ice stick.

Day three was hot, and before the third rest stop I thought I would drop. I stopped and shared some shade and a tree trunk to lean against with another woman who had the same idea. We spoke only a few words. "It's hot." She was done, and when the support truck stopped to ask if we needed help, she took a ride. She gave me her water, which I did not drink, but poured over my head. The driver said the rest stop was a half mile ahead, so I rode on and caught up with some others from my team. They said they had not waited long, and I was willing to believe them. I poured ice water over my head and shoulders, drank some more water, and with their help and the help of a cooling sea breeze, I pedaled 17 more miles in to Rockland, the Owls Head Transportation Museum (worth a visit in its own right) a cheeseburger and a cold soda.

They were delicious.

Sox Future Bright with Young Hurlers

BY LEE CARIGNAN

TURNERS FALLS - For the first time in decades the Boston Red Sox have an abundance of talented young pitching prospects. They could potentially anchor the Red Sox pitching staff for years to come.

The 86-year World Series drought always seemed to be an obstacle and compounded problems for the franchise over the years. The demons of the past haunted Red Sox general managers with the pressure of having to win a championship right away at any cost. General manager Lou Gorman saw his 1986 Red Sox come within one strike

of winning the World Series. This created a desperation with him in the following years that may have caused him to trade away young prospects Curt Schilling, Brady Anderson, and future Hall-of-Famer Jeff Bagwell. Even general manager Dan Duquette, who took over for Gorman in 1994, fell into the same trap. Duquette had the reputation of patiently building from the bottom up. In his previous job he built the Montreal Expos into a playoff caliber team, despite the organization's limited budget. Duquette did make the trade to get Pedro Martinez, but by the time he was fired from the Red

Sox he had depleted the farm system to one of the worst in major league baseball.

In fact the Red Sox have had limited success bringing pitchers up through their organization in the last 30 years. Future Hall of Fame pitcher Roger Clemens, and Aaron Seeley, who has had a modestly successful career, are the only exceptions.

Today, thanks to Theo Epstein and the franchise's new ownership, the Sox are loaded with young pitchers. Unlike his predecessors, general manager Theo Epstein has been able to keep the major league club at a championship level without stripping away his young prospects in the minor leagues. Epstein has also placed a premium on pitching by drafting pitchers in the early rounds every year. Winning the World Series in 2004 lifted a huge burden from the Red Sox organization, allowing Epstein to be even more patient with his prospects. The results have been outstanding. In the past, before the trade deadline, the Red Sox would trade prospects for veteran players they thought could help them win the World Series. This year the Sox are so deep

with pitching prospects, instead of trading them they are bringing them up and playing them.

The Red Sox are bringing up young pitchers in bunches, which includes a cast of young men who cannot yet rent a car. Craig Hansen, David Pauley, and John Lester are all 22. Manny Delcarmen is 24. On the road, they have no choice but to pile in with closer Jonathan Papelbon or Josh Beckett, who are both 25 years old.

The kids are producing too. Jonathan Papelbon has 21 saves on the season and has become one of the best closers in all of baseball, with a .036 ERA. Craig Hanson and Manny Delcarmen have been flirting with playing time with the major league club, and pitched well in their last appearances. Both pitchers could be with the Red Sox permanently by the end of the year. Hanson and Papelbon could become a great 1-2 punch to close out games for years to come. They also have lefty John Lester, who has joined the starting rotation, and got his first major league win last week in an impressive six innings of work against the Atlanta Braves. Lester could become a fixture in the rotation

from here on out if he keeps performing well.

With veteran starting pitchers Matt Clement and David Wells on the disabled list, the Sox need all the young guys to continue pitching well. Wells may retire soon, and Clement has struggled all season long. Veteran relief pitchers Keith Foulke, Rudy Seanez, and Julian Tavarez haven't gotten the job done this season either, putting more pressure on the kids to perform right away.

The Red Sox have a \$135 million payroll this year and are going through a well-publicized transition from old to young. Unlike Red Sox management of the past, Epstein has lived up to his promise of rebuilding the minor league system, something that will allow the club to cut costs and spend more prudently on the open market. Now the young guys are being thrown into the fire, ready or not, and there really is no telling what they will do.

One thing is certain. The Red Sox are building a pitching staff for the long haul for the first time in years.



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TURNERS FALLS HIGH SCHOOL 4TH QUARTER HONOR ROLL

GRADE 12

First Honors:

Christine Annear
Kara Banash
Christopher Bourbeau
Tyler Deruiter
Vera Foley
Julie Girard
Peter Griswold
Emily Lapean
Kimberly Lastowski
Stacy Leveille
Bryce Mainville
Adam McCarthy
Allison Murphy
Abigail O'Gara
Brianna Pecor
Anna Perry
Liya Samokhina
Nicole Siano
Anna Truckey
Nathan Underwood

Second Honors:

Maxwell Mcauliffe
Kara Mulligan
Katelyn Otto

Third Honors:

Julie Avery
Allen Cloutier
Nathan Davies
Ian Herzig
Ashley Johnson
Jared Johnson
Megan McLaughlin
Carleigh Niedzwiedz
Ashley Parker
Erin Pelletier
Kenneth Pleasant
Rebecca Rollins
Michael Tombs

GRADE 11

First Honors:

Laura Babij
Katelin Bailey
Rebec Bonnette-Southar
Shanna Clark
Nichelle Cocco
Nicole Couture
Michelle Dame
Julianna Felton
Alysia Galbraith
Richard Gallagher
Benjamin Garber
Elizabeth Giknis

Jason Grimard

Chelsea Isles
Jenna Lapachinski
Daniel Leveille
Jesse Lucas
Julianne Rosewarne
Lauren Sena
Christopher Seymour
William Shattuck IV
Aimee Shattuck
Valeriya Shumilova
Lauren Tela
Haley Trenholm
Lauryn Zellmann

Second Honors:

James Deputy
Mitchell Guevin
Christopher Sicard
Ashleigh St. Peter
Timothy Stockwell

Third Honors:

Michael Bartos
Krista Bascom
Gregory Dorman
Anne Fish
Ethan Kociela
Chris Krzykowski
Holly Phillips

GRADE 10

First Honors:

Alix Ackerman
Katie Christenson
Abbey Daniel-Green
Amanda Golembeski
Stephanie Joly
Colby Lavin
Corey Leveille
Amber Marion
Kayla Pecor
Molly Perry
Vadim Popovici
Tenzin Soepa
Alexander Tufano
Alice Urban
Gina Varuzzo
Katlyn Vear
Erica Zajac

Second Honors:

Aliza Broga
Amanda Emond
Samuel Johnson
Zachary Little
Dawn Miner

Third Honors:

Kara Bassett
Brian Campbell
Alexis Canniff
Briant Deruiter
Krystal Ducharme
Walter Fitzpatrick
Kiersten Henry
Kellie Lastowski
Brittany Mazor
Ashlea Rawls
Brittany Senn
Samantha Stafford
Danielle Sullivan
Jeffrey Tela
Courtney Wells

GRADE 9

First Honors:

Amy Baxter
David Bennett
Samuel Colton
Julianna Coyle
Theodore Dunbar
Nadezhda Filobokova
Tranae Gallagher
Joshua Gammon
Jodi Hallett
Christopher Humphrey
Nicholas Imbimbo
Susanna Khasonova
Cherie-Lee Nash
Sara Pease
Nicholas Skarzynski
Jeremiah Wawrzyniak
Lindsey Wilson

Second Honors:

Joseph Auger
Emma Banning
Leah Booker
Ashley Costa
Adam Felton
Kimberlee Fritz
Anne-Marie Grant
Kelsey Kane
Angela Marguet
Olga Samokhina
Kevin Wegiel
Samantha Wondoloski

Third Honors:

Brandon Breault
Nicole Dubay
Robert Emond Jr
Kimberly Nelson
James Sanchez
Chad Thome

GREAT FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL 4TH QUARTER HONOR ROLL

GRADE 7

First Honors:

Anna Bochamnikova
Zhanna Bochamnikova
McKenna Brunell
Erin Casey
Sarah Crowell
Kristy Dunbar
Sarah Foster
Nicole Fuller
David Garcia
Brooke Hastings
Vance Herzig
Julie Howard-Thompson
Jack Hubert
Katherine Kuklewicz
Joseph Lafleur
Daniel Skarzynski
Andrew Turban
Taylor Varilly
Natasha Vaughn
Savannah Yates

Second Honors:

Makayla Dolhenty
Uriah Forest-Bulley
Taylor Howe
Tyler Howe
Kelliann Humphrey
Kelsey O'Brien
Elysia Ollari
Katarina Palso
Kelsey Waldron

Third Honors:

Nichole Baxter
Jocelyn Brown
Jordan Charboneau
Jacob Eugin
Emily Mailloux
Yirka Mercado
Ryan Pelis
Andrew Podlesny
Emily Robertson
Kenneth Rounds
Conner Scott
Kayla Weller
Cody Wells
Brittany Yolish

GRADE 8

First Honors:

Ashley Bailey
Jill Bernard
Moriah Fahey
Matthew Garber
Megan Grimard
Olivia Nicotra
Carlyn Perry
Sergiu Placinta
Cayla Pollard
Kathleen Rinaldi
Dustin Rivard
Elena Rushford
Ashley Sears
Alex Westfall

Second Honors:

Juliana Aprileo

Eric Bastarache
Donna Lee Bettencourt
Nataliya Buhakova
Emma Butynski
Amanda Carlisle
Danielle Dolhenty
Jacob Lapean
Christopher Shattuck
Yaritza Torres
Matthew Wozniak

Third Honors:

Kayla Breor
Hannah Brown
Lucas Foley
Ashley Gibson
Abeni Hession-Davies
Tyler Hobbs
Samantha Horan
Cassandra Kazar
Zakary Korpita
Joshua Lapachinski
Evan Pleasant
Melani Sicard
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WENDELL continued from pg 1

ception in Wendell, as expressed on town meeting floor, had been exactly the opposite.

But New Salem's payment to Swift River School, along with its whole budget, is dependent on an upcoming override vote. Chris Wing proposed an amendment stating that Wendell would pay the higher amount notwithstanding New Salem's action on its override. The amendment was defeated, but brought up again by a person who had voted nay, under a misunderstanding. On the second vote the amendment passed.

The total amount authorized in article 4 was \$1,653,028, and the total spending

many years, the perception in Wendell, as expressed on town meeting floor, had been exactly the opposite. authorized by the voters was \$1,853,039. Voters approved the creation of an agricultural commission to represent farming and forestry concerns. Supporter Nina Keller said she already had volunteers lined up to serve on the commission.

Voters approved articles calling for an independent safety assessment of the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor, and a town nuclear advisory committee to meet monthly until a realistic evacuation plan is formulated for Vermont Yankee, and requesting that the selectboard advocate that state and federal legislators increase radiological emergency plans to include reliable notification, and realistic evacuation plans for everyone within a 50-mile radius of Vermont Yankee.



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THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOXICOLOGIST

Do Household Antibacterials Cause More Harm than Good?

BY EMILY MONOSSON
MONTAGUE CENTER - What do my husband's armpits, my son's sandals, my mother's steak knives and my daughter's hairbrush all have in common? Antibacterials. They are all impregnated with antibacterial chemicals - well maybe not the armpits, but the underarm deodorant. These days, just about anywhere that is suitable for bacteria is apparently also suitable for antibacterial treatment by manufacturers hoping to attract health-conscious shoppers.

But here's the rub - antibacterial chemicals are now showing up in the environment - in places they were never meant to be. In water flowing into rivers downstream from sewage treatment plants, in fish, and in treated sewage sludge that is applied to agricultural crops.

Additionally, while it's clear the use of antibacterials are beneficial in clinical settings, according to a Food and Drug Administration panel on nonprescription drugs there is little or no indication that such additives protect the consumer any better than washing with plain soap and water.

As a one-time teacher of microbiology, I'd always prided myself on having the foresight to stay away from purchasing soap products with antimicrobials. Although to my surprise, there they were in other household items I'd purchased including the Teva sandals and the Old Spice Classic with triclosan I'd bought for my husband.

"[The antibacterials] triclocarban (and triclosan) were introduced in the heyday of chlorine chemistry, when chemicals like DDT and PCBs were considered safe. Relative to the latter, the antimicrobials are less problematic, but now that PCBs and DDT are banned, the focus has shifted to other chlorinated chemicals like triclocarban and triclosan," says Dr. Rolf Halden, of Johns Hopkins University.

Recently, Dr. Halden's group

reported in the journal Environmental Science and Technology that the majority of triclocarban that is washed down the drain and into sewage treatment plants ends up in sewage sludge, which in turn may end up on agricultural fields.

His research reveals not only the persistent nature of the chemical (not unlike those other chlorinated chemicals now banned). It also highlights the high volumes of these chemicals in use by consumers and released into the environment. Halden's group estimated that in their study area alone, more than one ton of triclocarban ends up in the environment (and on agricultural land - where it can be taken up by crops) each year!

While Halden is concerned about the release of the chemicals into the environment, Dr. Stuart Levy, the director of the Center for Adaptation Genetics and Drug Resistance at Tufts University, is concerned about the potential for antimicrobials to encourage development of antibiotic or drug resistant microbes.

Development of antibiotic resistance is an important survival mechanism for microbes, and soil microbes in particular. Soil is packed with microbes. They are part of what makes healthy soil healthy. Soil is also a fertile hunting ground for new antibiotics. In fact the first mass-produced antibiotic, penicillin, was produced by a soil-dwelling microbe. What better way to stake one's microscopic claim than to poison one's neighbors? So soil microbes are constantly battling antibiotics produced by neighboring soil microbes. And in order to survive the constant assaults, bacteria have become adept at developing antibiotic resistance.

The same can be said for the millions of bacteria that live on and in our bodies. When they are constantly exposed to antibiotics, it is possible some will overcome, and develop antibiotic

resistance. This is where the antimicrobials come in.

"We produced the original evidence that triclosan [a chemical similar in structure to triclocarban] can lead to antibiotic resistance," said Dr. Levy, "but while resistance to antibacterials has been found among bacteria outside the laboratory, they have not been linked to the use of triclosan."

"Triclocarban is another antibacterial found in soaps. No one has looked at its mechanisms of action. There is clearly concern about the exposure to both of these antibacterials [causing antibiotic resistance], but in particular triclosan. The other antibacterials of concern are those under the heading of quaternary ammonium compounds like benzalkonium chloride. More and more data are linking resistance to this product with antibiotic resistance."

So, antibacterials which have the potential to cause antibiotic resistance are released into the environment in huge quantities as a result of consumer use, and an FDA panel has concluded that antimicrobial products appear to be no more protective to consumers than soap and water. Who's in charge of regulating this stuff?

Antimicrobials are regulated by both the FDA and the Environmental Protection Agency, depending upon their use, and claims made by manufacturers. EPA regulates antimicrobials when they are used as pesticides, for example to reduce odors in my son's stinky Tevas, but FDA regulates them as drugs when used in something like the bottle of soft-soap that graces the bathroom sink at my daughter's school. In either case - since triclosan and triclocarban were developed and registered at least thirty years ago, back when persistent chemicals weren't known to be a problem, and antibiotic resistance hadn't reared its ugly head - one wonders how today's research has enlightened the reg-

ulators.

"Advances in a number of fields have changed the way we examine and interpret the potential risk of synthetic chemicals," says Halden. "Many studies conducted in the 1970s would not pass muster today."

Levy noted that while "there is no evidence of a change in regulation, there certainly seems to be a greater insight and concern by regulatory agencies like the FDA and EPA. They are both looking more closely at this issue, thanks to the advocacy of scientists and others."

It's also worth noting that perhaps not all products present the same risks. "It is presumably more likely that triclosan in a water-solubilizable form [soft-soaps for example] would be more risky than that which has been incorporated into something

like a mattress or sneakers," suggests Levy. But he said even with these products, the fate of antibacterials is unknown.

So where does that leave us? According to Dr. Bernadette Albanese, a public health expert, "If people spent as much time washing their hands as they do reading the labels of this stuff, we'd all be better off. Putting antibacterial in soap, towelettes, band-aids is mostly useless. The message should be proper and frequent hand washing, use plain (liquid) soap and paper towels. That is the message the public needs to hear."

Although I'm not sure I'm ready to give up the microban treated Tevas (have you smelled a well-worn pair of Tevas?) I'll definitely be reading my consumer product labels more carefully.

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BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ - Q. Should I be worried about bird flu?

The risk from bird flu is low for most people, because the viruses do not usually infect humans. The spread of avian influenza viruses between people has been reported very rarely. There is no evidence of transmission beyond one person.

Animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans are known as "zoonoses." Seniors are among the most vulnerable to zoonoses. You can get one of these diseases from a household pet.

Speaking of birds... Psittacosis is a common bird disease known as "parrot fever." It occurs frequently in birds

such as parakeets and cockatiels. Bacteria in bird droppings and nasal discharges can be inhaled. Psittacosis can develop into pneumonia and other health problems.

To help prevent transmission of psittacosis, don't let birds fly around the house. Wash your hands after contact with birds. Wear a dust mask and gloves when cleaning a birdcage. Antibacterial drugs are used to treat the disease in birds and people.

Cats can carry a parasite that causes the disease toxoplasmosis. You can get it from cat feces. Wearing gloves while gardening or changing a cat's litter box is important. Washing your hands afterward is advised.

Few people who carry the toxoplasma parasite become ill. Those who get sick may suffer from swollen glands and muscle aches. Antimicrobial drugs are available to treat infected people.

Worms can infect dogs, cats, and humans. Worms live in the intestines of animals and are expelled in the stool. Yards and homes can become contaminated from worm eggs that are passed in animal feces and hatch in the soil.

Just one roundworm larva has been known to damage the retina of the eye and cause blindness. Hookworm larvae can cause painful inflammation where they crawl just below the skin's surface. Drugs are available to destroy worms that infect dogs, cats and people.

People usually get salmonellosis by eating contaminated food. But it can also be transmitted to people through pets, particularly reptiles, baby chicks, and ducklings, which commonly pass the Salmonella bacterium in their feces.

People have to be especially careful around reptiles. You should not let them roam freely through the house. Always wash

your hands with hot, soapy water after handling reptiles or anything they contact.

Most persons infected with Salmonella develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. Most victims recover without treatment. The elderly are more likely to have more severe symptoms.

Ringworm, a skin and scalp disease, is caused by fungi. People get it by touching an infected animal. Ringworm can infect cats, dogs, horses and other animals. In humans, ringworm may produce ring-shaped, reddish, itchy rash. Topical and oral medications may be used to treat ringworm.

Cat-Scratch Disease (CSD) may cause fever, fatigue, headache and swollen lymph glands. Most people get better on their own in about three weeks. Most cat scratches don't develop into CSD. If you are bitten or scratched, wash the area immediately with soap and

water.

Rabies, a deadly viral disease, is transmitted through the saliva of a rabid animal, usually by a bite. Domestic animals account for less than ten percent of the reported animal rabies cases. If you are bitten, immediately wash the wound with soap and water, let the wound bleed, and get medical help at once.

Mycobacterium is one of the main infectious germ families associated with fish and aquarium water. A common route of this infection in humans is through cuts or scrapes on hands or feet. People should wear rubber gloves when cleaning the fish tank and wash their hands well afterwards.

If I haven't mentioned this before, wash your hands often when you are around animals.

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

FINDING BALANCE: TIPS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

All Is Om, Om Is All



BY JENNY CHAPIN,
MONTAGUE CENTER -

Given the inroads that the word Om, or Aum, and its symbol, have made into our culture, it's respectful to the originating culture to have some idea what it means. To many, Aum is considered the most important sound, the symbol of all words, and all consciousness. It is seen as the first manifestation of the unmanifest, the vibration from which stems the entire cosmos.

Aum is the primordial sound of the universe, in five-part harmony. It is the underlying unceasing movement of the tides, of the breath, of the cycles of life-death-birth, in which there is no one point of beginning or ending. It is the seed of all words, the vibratory hum of creation.

A is the first vowel in Sanskrit, the first sound a baby

makes. It comes from the darkness, the depths. Representing connection to creative pulse of the Universe, it is the power to create, the longing to live, and our will. In yoga, this corresponds to going into the pose.

U is the final vowel in Sanskrit. It represents the sustaining power of the Universe, and the most refined moment of creation. It is the power of knowledge and wisdom. In yoga, this is the moment when the pose comes together in perfect alignment and harmony between body, heart, and spirit.

M represents dissolution. This is the power that destroys and dissolves creation. It is Consciousness merging back with Source. In yoga, this is coming out of the pose (which is more important than students realize; leaving a pose sloppily is when we are most likely to

get hurt).

The dot, or bindu, symbolizes the power of silence that is the entry point into the beyond. It is also known as the fourth sound, the echo. One of my teachers describes it as a "concentrated point of light."

The bindu is transformed into nada, a subtle inarticulate vibration within. It assumes the form of a half moon.

The bindu and nada represent ultimate reality. The part of the symbol that's shaped like a "3" - the lower and upper curves, the tail - holds the various triads that reality is broken down into: mind-body-speech; waking-dreaming-dreamless sleep (three states of experience, beyond which is the fourth state of silence); creation-preservation-destruction; past-present-future; female-male-neuter.

Paramahansa Yogananda

stated in Autobiography of a Yogi, "Aum of the Vedas [the ancient sacred Hindu texts] became the sacred word Hum of the Tibetans, Amin of the Moslems, and Amen of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians." As the root of other holy words, Aum is thus in a sense the holiest of holies.

According to Hindu metaphysics, the closest approximation of the name and form of the Universe is Aum, so when we chant the sound, it's a way to align our own inner vibration with the vibration of the Universe.

This word originates two steps before its expression through the mouth. It begins in the belly, the center and core of the body. From there, it rises to the heart and fills the space in the chest with its expanding

vibration. Only then does the cavity of the mouth, the muscular shaping of the tongue, send out what has already been brought forth, to merge with the sound external to the body.

I think this quote from Bawa Mahaiyaddeen, a contemporary Sufi Muslim saint from Sri Lanka, describes Aum perfectly: "God is a Power. The power becomes light. The light becomes vibration. The vibration becomes sound. The sound becomes word. The word becomes language. The language becomes scripture. Like that, Return to the Source."

Jenny Chapin is an acupuncturist, bodyworker, and yoga teacher in Greenfield. Suggest a topic or question for her column at jgchapin@crocker.com.

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Knights, knaves, jugglers, jousting and more at the Vermont Renaissance Fair held at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Free admission for kids weekend, July 1 & 2. Photo courtesy of Vermont Renaissance Fair

FRIDAY, JUNE 30TH
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls: Smokin' Hal Benoit & Co., rockers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 1ST
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls: Strange Brew, rockers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

JULY 1ST TO 31ST
Every day is family day in July at Historic Deerfield. Noon to 4 p.m., Hands-on History Workshop. Learn about everyday life and the material culture of early New England through four weeks of daily offerings, each with a different theme. July 1-7: Folk Art; July 8-14: Work & Play; July 15-21: Tea & Spices; July 22-30: Building Basics. Free with admission. www.historic-deerfield.org

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, JULY 1 & 2

Vermont Renaissance Fair Presents: Pirates of the Renaissance! Bringing Olde England to New England. Free Kids Weekend! As many as three children (13 years and under) free with each paid adult. (802) 463-2565 Continues July 8 - 9 & 15-16 Held at Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., rain or shine. Adult - \$12, Child (5-13 years) - \$6, Weekend Pass - Good for any two festival days. Adults \$18, Child \$9

THURSDAY, JULY 6TH
COOP Concerts Franklin County Musicians' Cooperative performs folk, alternative rock, classical, Celtic, blues and more. Three great acts every Thursday evening (through September 14th). Featuring Charlie Apicella & Amy Bateman, Laura Siersema, and Roland LaPierre and Friends. Bring a picnic dinner, a blanket or chair and enjoy the music. At the Greenfield Energy Park, Miles Street, Greenfield. 6 to

8 p.m. 772-1553.

Summer Lecture Series
"The Worm in the Apple: Slavery in Early New England" 7:30 p.m., Blue & White Hall, 10 Memorial Street, Deerfield. Joanne Pope Melish,

Associate Professor of History, University of Kentucky, presents first in a series of three talks on topic of slavery in New England. Co-sponsored by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. Free.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JULY 7TH & 8TH
The Country Players present *Cinderella* at The Shea Theatre. Continues July 14th, 15th, 16th. Contact the Shea for details, Avenue A, Turners Falls, 863-2281.

THURSDAY, JULY 6TH - SEPTEMBER 24TH
Exhibit: Kevin Bubriski Photo Documentary Exhibit On **JULY 8TH** - Opening reception for Kevin Bubriski photo documentary exhibit at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography. 1 to 5 p.m. Artist talk followed by book signing at Hallmark Institute of Photography from 7 to 8 p.m.

UNTIL OCTOBER 31ST
Exhibit: George Bluh Photographs: Eastern European Farmers: An exhibit of a photo/journal documentary of farmers of Eastern European heritage in Franklin and Hampshire Counties. Memorial Hall Museum, 10 Memorial Street, Deerfield. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. 774-3768.

Upcoming at the Discovery Center

New seasonal hours: Open Tuesday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 1st to October 9th

UNTIL JULY 10TH
Nature Landscapes by Elisa Campbell on display.

THURSDAY, JUNE 30TH
10- 11 a.m. Water Wonders: Growing Up with Nature. Join Dawn Marvin Ward for a nature program for pre-school aged children. Sponsored by the Gill-Montague Community Partnership for Children with grant funding from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

SUNDAYS, JUNE -OCTOBER
Family Nature Program geared towards the family group with lots of crafts, nature activities and live animal presentations. Programs at 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. The GFDC will be open to the public every Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 1ST
7 - 11 a.m. Eagles, Bagels and Video at Barton Cove and Great Falls Discovery Center. Celebrate Independence Day Weekend by connecting with our national symbol - the Bald eagle. We'll view one of the first eagle nests in MA outside the Quabbin Reservoir on this two-mile round trip hike. This program is for ages 7 and older. Fee: \$6 per person. Pre-registration required, please call Northfield Mountain Recreation & Environmental Center at (413) 659-4461.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5TH
Junior Rangers Programs. July and August, Wednesdays @ 10:30 a.m. Jr. Rangers- 5-6 year olds in July, 7-8 year olds in August. Children will do various nature activities to earn a Jr. Ranger badge.

TUESDAY, JULY 11TH
"Wild Edible Plants of Massachusetts," 7 - 8:30 p.m. Hands-on interactive and inter-generational introduction to identification and uses of our native plants for food and beverage presented by naturalist/educator John Root.

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DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:00
- THE LAKE HOUSE** PG 13
DAILY 6:30 9:00
- NACHO LIBRE** PG
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WEST ALONG THE RIVER

A Walk on the Wild Side

BY DAVID BRULE

MILLERS FALLS - The confluence of two rivers was sacred ground to Native Americans. The sacred and the mystical still mix in those places today. The Pequoid River, now known as the Millers, enters the Connecticut on the very edge of Montague township. Erving land begins a little more than a stone's throw away on the other side. The land on both sides of the river has little changed since the Pocumtuk and Squakheag fished and hunted along these banks. The old footpath that led from Pocumtuk lands (in Deerfield) to the Squakheag village (in Northfield) was used for thousands of years by peoples native to this place. When Europeans first came here, the path led into hostile territory, at the edge of the known world. White men died on this path and at the mouth of the Millers, and Captain Beers led his men to slaughter at the hands of the enraged Squakheag a few miles north in 1675.

After King Philip's War, the path became part of the stage route bringing Montague to Boston. It's now a quiet country road which saw its heyday during the stagecoach era, when Durkee's Tavern offered hospitality to wayfarers, days when riverboat traffic used the locks through the French King rapids, and at the turn of last century when log drives jammed the Connecticut.

One Sunday morning this wet month of June, a small band of hikers stepped off the edge of the freshly-mown lawn of the last house on the road and into the wilds, for a ramble up

Mineral Mountain, as guests of the Waidlich family. Most of us hikers were members of the Millers River Watershed Council, out for an energizing jaunt along the Millers corridor, on private land that has been set aside and protected from development forever by the Waidlichs.

Henry Waidlich was born, grew up, and raised a family with his wife Betty on this farmland at the mouth of the Millers. Henry's father, John, came here in 1925 and gradually bought up 400 acres of field and woods. Years later in 1988, Henry and his brother Joe decided to set the land aside under a conservation restriction, in perpetuity.

Henry and Betty were founding members of the Watershed Council in the 1970s, when the Millers was a foul, polluted stream that poured a putrid brownish green current sullenly into the bigger river. Now the Millers flows clean and noisily to its appointment with the Connecticut.

Which brings us full circle to our intrepid band of hikers slipping and sliding along the path this wet June day. Bird calls are sparse in these rainforest-like conditions. Ovenbirds insist on calling, "Teacher, teacher, TEACHER!" louder and louder; the Towhee tells us "Drink your TEA;" a red-eyed Vireo warbles endlessly; otherwise the only other sounds are the various



PHOTO: MONIQUE BRULE

The mouth of the Millers River in June.

The Waidlich's land is on the right side of the river.

exclamations from our group over finding red efts everywhere, off to become newts! Here and there are rather pale, sun-deprived Jack-in-the-Pulpits, and plenty of coyote scat. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the mother bear and her cubs, the bobcats and the accidental cougar apparently give us a wide berth, although the last hiker in our file keeps a wary watch behind. We traipse around ver-

Millers Falls far below. But try as we may, we have an impossible time orienting our vision and none of us recognize the landmarks from that height and angle, even though several of us have lived there for more than 30 years!

We loop homeward through a boulder-strewn ravine, cool under the towering hemlocks. This gap feels like the site of some cataclysm that split the ridge above us,

leaving high rocky ledges and slides on each side of the path. In fact, we are on an ancient fault line where the prehistoric supercontinent of Pangea began pulling apart and drifting, more than 400 million years ago. The fault line we are standing on did not split deeply enough, but 100 miles east of here that part of Pangea would eventually wind up as North Africa!

Actually, we're quite content to be here in Massachusetts, thank you, and like horses headed to the barn, we're moving quickly down the gentle wooded slope to a mountain of sandwiches awaiting us in the Waidlich kitchen.

We've accomplished our objectives. We've gotten acquainted with a wild and protected part of Montague only a few miles from our citizens' comfortable living rooms, we've energized our inspiration to cobble together a green corridor along the Millers, and we've worked up an appetite for those hard-earned sandwiches!

Gill Farm and Garden Tour

BY RUTH WITTY

The first annual Gill Farm and Garden tour on Sunday, June 25th, sponsored by the Friends of Gill, allowed gardening aficionados - and those with just a passing interest in plants and farming - to see some of the wonderful farms and gardens of Gill.

Here are some of the highlights:

The Banash residence includes a man-made stream with a pond and some beautiful large goldfish. Flowers found in the lush beds include daisies, poppies, day lilies and phlox in both shade and sun gardens. Ann Banash makes lovely pottery bowls with real squash leaf imprints. She sells them at garden centers as garden ornaments.

A little west on Route 2, Yukul's Greenhouse is a riot of color. Inside they sell everything from cool ferns to brilliant begonias. Non-stop begonias are a specialty - they flower continuously throughout the season. The popular herb echinacea is now available in new colors of orange and yellow, as well as the original deep purple; it is pleasing to the eye and useful for healing. Yukul's sports an amazing variety of blooms for a not very large store; for flower lovers, it is definitely worth a visit.

The Barry residence on West Gill Road formerly held a Christmas tree farm out back. Now, owner John Barry has retired from that business and has planted a variety of trees and shrubs. Some of the outstanding features are his rugosa bushes, which are simi-

lar to a wild rose, with the advantage of not being prone to attack by Japanese beetles. Rugosa have pink single layer flowers. Barry's five acres are also home to rhododendrons, deutzia and Korean spice bushes, which offer a wonderful fragrance in the spring. Barry has a baby Douglas fir, fifteen years old. Douglas fir can grow to be a hundred years old and seventy-five to a hundred feet tall. The most extraordinary thing to be seen at his arboretum, however, is the American chestnut tree, one of a species that almost became extinct due to the chestnut blight. Barry grew it from a chestnut planted twenty years ago and somehow, perhaps due to its relative isolation in Gill, it has survived and has been producing chestnuts for the last three years.

On the Golembeski family farm on West Gill Road, the family breeds and raises Appaloosa horses, Herefords, sheep and black and white bardoock chickens. Children taking the tour seemed fascinated by the five lambs - including a jet black one - all very tame and fond of being petted.

Uppingil Farm is known locally for its delicious pick-your-own strawberries, including a section of organic strawberries. Owner Cliff Hatch milks seven cows, and sells raw milk from his Main Road farmstand. Some claim raw milk offers added health benefits over pasteurized milk, as some enzymes in milk are destroyed by pasteurization. Of course, the farmer who

sells raw milk has to be much more careful to safeguard the health of his cows.

At Uppingil, the cows can be seen leading a very healthy lifestyle, roaming the hills in the fresh air, chomping fresh grass. The farm also grows corn, squash and pumpkins. From the several family groups present, it seemed obvious that strawberry picking was a welcome, fun activity for the whole family. Children of all ages are welcome at Uppingil, with parental supervision of course.

At Songline Emu Farm visitors were able to see a rare working emu farm. Visitors given a tour were told the emu is a flightless bird which has roamed the Australian outback for millions of years. Much like the Native Americans' relationship with the bison, the Aborigines viewed the emu as a central part of their existence. The emu provided them with food and clothing and numerous useful products. Although emu cannot fly, they can run forty miles per hour over short distances. Emu meat is very lean (97% fat free) red meat comparable to beef in taste. However it is higher in protein, vitamin C and iron compared to beef. It can be purchased at Songline Farm at 66 French King Highway.

Luckily the weather remained fine for the garden tour, though the planned Friends of Gill picnic on the Common was postponed because of the threat of rain. It has been rescheduled for August 27th.

Independence Days in the Past

BY FRAN HEMOND

MONTAGUE CENTER - Before World War II, when society tamed the exuberance of Independence Day, its spirited observance drove the less able underground for the day. My grandmother regularly took the cable car to the Mountain House on Mount Tom, where it was quiet. The boys in town released the frustrations of the year in an explosion of devices that sent garbage cans flying and kept neighborhoods noisy. Every year a few fingers and sometimes eyes were damaged, and in later years much of America banned the five-inch salutes and cherry bombs and relegated skyrockets to public displays.

In earlier times, the real Independence Day started with the bonfire the night before. In Holyoke, it began in a southern section of town on the Connecticut River called Springdale. Up the hill to the west in Elmwood, a bluff overlooked a park on the river, some distance away. Fourth of July

started here.

My recollection is of walking dark, abandoned streets to the bluff. I was permitted to be out in the late night with my next-door friend, because our big brothers were willing to take us along. Dark shapes assumed new roles in the unlit side streets, and we were not sad to hurry along with the boys.

When we reached the bluff, a fantastic sight burst forth on the far horizon. A fire blazed and calmed and shot up again. Little figures scurried about, all encompassed in the black night: unquestioned magic. In later years, there must have been starlit nights, but this memorable Independence Day was fire and dark.

Years later I went to the park at Springdale late at night to see the bonfire firsthand. The fire blazed and calmed, the young men threw in orange crates and assorted wood debris and sweated in the hot night. But the romance lost something in close observance.