



**ABRAHAM IDOLIZED!**  
Smoove Groove wid nothin' left to Prove  
see page 11



**ON TO THE REGIONAL FINALS**  
Girard Hurls Two No Hitters  
see page 12

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 4 - NO. 35

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

June 8, 2006

## 'Mr. C's' Finale

LONG-TIME MUSIC TEACHER TO RETIRE

BY ALI URBAN

**TURNERS FALLS** - Football games: 300. Miles ridden on a bus: 24,000. Parades: 300. Total hours of sleep at band camp: 6. But, for Steve Ciechowski, retiring band and chorus director at Turners Falls High School, the fond memo-

have stayed the same. "We're fortunate that the kids who are here want to be here. They are all gifted kids, and I think that is a testament to our music program."

He recalled fond memories of parades, band trips, football games, festivals and band camps saying, "There are so

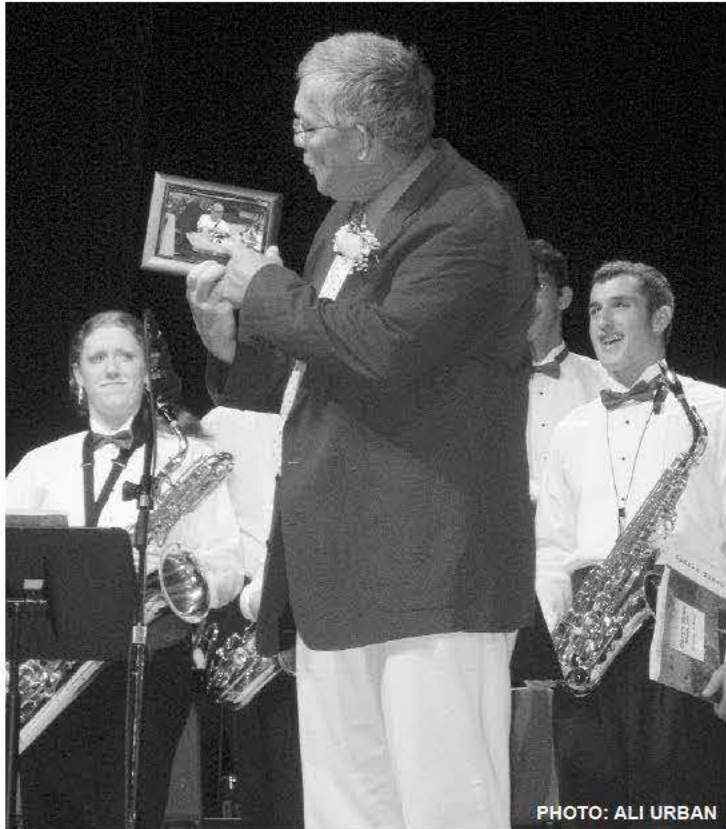


PHOTO: ALI URBAN

Steve Ciechowski, who has been music director at Turners Falls High School for 33 years, accepts a photo gift at his final concert, May 31st. Jazz members, junior Chelsea Isles, and sophomore Zack Little, look on.

ries of good times are endless. Ciechowski directed his final high school concert at Turners Falls High School on Wednesday, May 31st. There he said farewell to the performers and audience, thanking them for their years of dedication and participation. "This is a bittersweet time," he said. "Will I miss the kids? Absolutely. But it is time to move on."

For 33 years, Ciechowski has labored in the Gill-Montague Regional School District music department, teaching classes and directing the schools' bands and choruses. A graduate of Westfield State College and its first music major program, Ciechowski came to teach in Turners Falls after student teaching in South Hadley.

Ciechowski, known to students simply as 'C,' has seen the school change through the years, but he says the students

many memories; I just can't choose one that's my favorite."

These experiences with 'C' are highlights of many students' high school years. He connected with students where they were, go-carting on band trips, playing games at band camp and debating whether the Celtics or the Pacers was a better basketball team. Sometimes while directing the band, he would step over and play bass on the keyboard or pick up a trumpet and play along with the students.

Ciechowski knows how to balance discipline, fun and productivity. "He has a great demeanor with the kids," said music boosters president Steve Prokovich. "He gets along well with them and shows them respect, and also expects that respect in return."

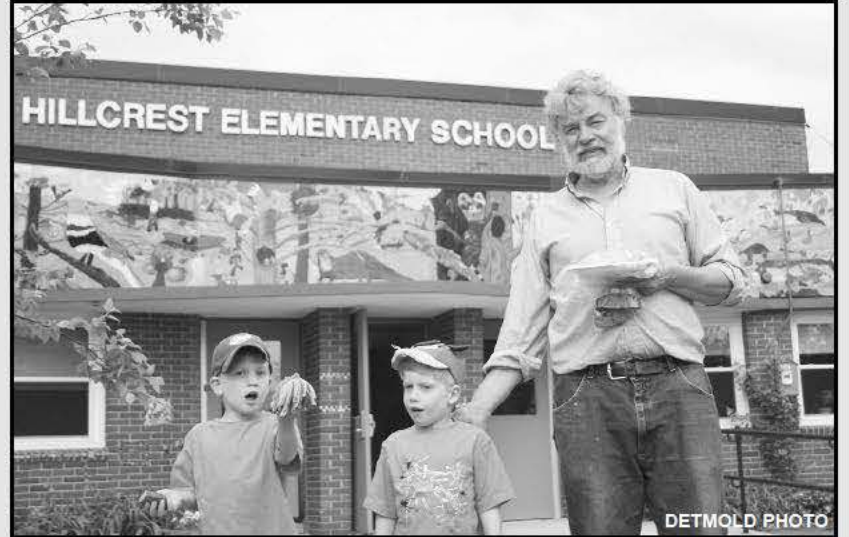
For Prokovich, working with the music boosters for the past eight years has taken him

see MR. C pg 7

## Override Fails in Montague

BY DAVID DETMOLD AND RUTH WITTY

Citizens for Public Education, the committee of Montague parents, teachers and school officials who printed flyers, put up lawn signs, and made phone calls in support of the \$600,000 Proposition 2½ override request for the schools last month, have a long summer ahead of them. Voters in Montague turned down the request by 236 votes. With 1388 - or nearly 32% of the registered voters turning out - the final vote was 812 to 576. The margin of defeat: 58.5% to 41.5% was an improvement over the results of the last school override in Montague, in August of 2003, when voters rejected a request for \$275,000, less than half the amount of money sought on Tuesday, by a margin



DETMOLD PHOTO

Dana Slaymaker, right, who voted with his sons Gavin and Isaac, was among the 41% who supported the override. He said he did so, "with mixed feelings. It's a Hobson's Choice between higher taxes and education, with no real choice on whether the money will be used effectively. On the other hand, there's no real alternative funding available."

of 68% to 32%.

On Tuesday night, school committee members huddled with town officials in the hallway of town hall as the precinct returns came in, considering their options. The idea of finding some cuts on the town side of the budget, finding proportional cuts or new revenues from the

school budget, and heading back to the voters with a smaller override request later in the summer was one approach under discussion as the evening wore on.

By a quarter past eight, after losing in all the other precincts in town, the impromptu fiscal collaborative was cheered slightly

by the late results from Precinct 1, Montague Center, where the override passed handily by a vote of 203 to 139. (Three years ago, the smaller school override measure lost in Montague Center by one vote, 163 to 164.)

School committee chair Mary Kociela

OVERRIDE pg 10

## MOVIE REVIEW

### Free Spirits

Written and directed by Bruce Geisler

REVIEWED BY DANIEL A. BROWN LEYDEN

The Renaissance Community hardly needs an introduction to residents of Franklin County, especially to those who lived in Turners Falls during the 1970s. It was difficult to miss, especially downtown, where this lively and controversial commune owned the Shea Theater, Colle Opera, the Cutlery Block and a whole range of businesses. While they were viewed by the outside population with emotions ranging from support to outright fear, one might have been tempted to think,

"What was it like to actually be a part of this group?"

The documentary film, *Free Spirits*, which has recently completed a successful run in three Valley theaters, answers that question. It is a rarity among documentaries in that it is filmed, directed and narrated by former and current members of the commune it documents. Although it gives an insider's perspective, (and I should know, as I was one of the commune members



Michael Metelica (lower left) and some of his treehouse friends; 1968.

Geisler interviewed) it is an easily accessible film for the mainstream viewer as well.

Using a mix of talking-head interviews, historical and communal film footage, *Free Spirits* traces the entire 20-year epic of the Brotherhood of the

Spirit/Renaissance Community commune, with special emphasis on its mercurial leader Michael Metelica Rapunzel, who died of cancer in 2003. To follow Metelica's journey from a visionary teenager living alone

see FREE pg 9

**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Carefree**



**Katie**

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PHONE (413) 863-8666  
FAX (413) 863-3050  
reporter@montaguema.net  
Postmaster: Send address changes to  
The Montague Reporter  
24 3rd Street  
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**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Ladybug Program at Carnegie**

BY LINDA HICKMAN

There will be a hands-on science program on "Ladybugs and Their Friends" at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls on Monday, June 12th at 10 a.m. Environmental educator Dawn Ward is leading the hands-on science program

designed for young children and their families. Activities will include games and an outdoor insect search, weather permitting. The program is sponsored by the Community Partnerships for Children. For more information, call 863-3214.

**WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS**

**Groundbreaking Ceremony**

BY NINA KELLER -

On Sunday, June 11th at 4 p.m., there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for the long awaited construction of Wendell's new library. Plans include a kid's kazoo band, tea and cake cutting at the gazebo, shovel ceremony and more. The library is a main gathering place and hub of social and educational activity in town. Because the

current library is small, this occasion is momentous, as it ushers in an era when the new library space will be accessible to more users and uses.

All are welcome to attend and to participate in the joyous event, a realization of years of work and a momentous step towards creating a more useful space for Wendell's well loved and well utilized library collection.

**'Protecting Kids from Internet Predators'**

**TURNERS FALLS** - On Tuesday, June 13th from 7 to 9 p.m. at Turners Falls High School, a workshop on "protecting your kids this summer from Internet predators" will be hosted by detectives Eric Johnson and Michael Carrier of the Brattleboro Police Department. The department has intensified its efforts to investigate and prevent child predators from solic-

iting potential victims via the Internet.

As a result of their efforts, the BPD has made recent arrests involving predators attempting to lure children over the Internet. This event is free and designed for parents and teens. Sponsored by the Brick House Community Resource Center.

Call 413-863-9576 for more information.

**Brick House Meeting and Picnic Open to Public**

The public is invited to attend a barbecue and annual meeting of the board of directors at the Brick House on Monday, June 12th from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.

Public comments always welcome! The Brick House is located at 24 Third Street in Turners Falls. For more information call 863-9576.

**MONTAGUE ELKS GIVE TO POLICE**

The Montague Elks Lodge #2521 is pleased to announce that District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler Kevin J. Hastings from the Montague Lodge was recently assigned \$250 to be awarded to a charity of his choice. The money is from the Massachusetts Elks Charitable Trust.

Hastings presented a check to Sergeant Charles Dodge of the Montague police department. The money is being used to promote public safety in the community with the aid of computers in the police cruisers.

Dodge said the computers assist the officers in being out in the public for more of their work.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES June 12th - 16th**

**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, 12th**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11:30 a.m. PACE Aerobics  
**Tuesday, 13th**

9:30 a.m. Aerobics  
**Wednesday, 14th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 15th**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, 16th**  
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**

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE DEPARTMENT

*A Plotkin's Furniture truck from Orange plowed into the side of a 1950 DeSoto on the corner of Dell and Davis Street more than half a century ago. The image lingers on in the vintage photo files of the Montague Police.*

**Great Falls Farmers Market**

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# Gill Works to Balance Budget

**DAVID DETMOLD** - On Wednesday, June 7th, the Gill selectboard struggled to put together a balanced budget, within the levy limit, before meeting with the finance committee on June 12th, and the public at an informational pre-town meeting on June 19th. Gill will hold its annual town meeting on Monday, June 26th.

But after two hours of going over departmental budgets and special articles with a fine-toothed comb, the selectboard was unable to pull the gap between the tax levy and the proposed \$2,453,203 '07 operating budget closer than \$58,000. That amount would take into account the entire assessment request by the Gill-Montague schools, but with Montague voters turning back a \$600,000 Proposition 2½ override on June 6th, the amount of the school assessment for Gill and Montague is likely to be reduced, according to GMRSD officials also meeting Wednesday evening. Still, the possibility that Gill will have to seek some form of property tax increase beyond the levy limit, whether a one-time debt exclusion or a Proposition 2½ override, is still very much on the table.

"I would like to not do an override," said selectboard chair Phil Maddern. Board member Lee Stevens concurred. But Anne Banash said, "We will present our budget, either balanced or contingent on some kind of override."

One large capital item facing the town this year is a request from the assessors for \$65,000 to fund a recollection of data by hiring an outside firm to inspect each property in town. Included in that fee would be a complete update of assessors records, and

assistance with the first year of the triennial property revaluation. The town would also gain new software for the assessors, and training in how to use it.

The assessors have seen numerous resignations in recent years, following a controversy over the creation of a new property tax district along the river. Assessors have blamed inefficiencies in the current computer system and faulty or incomplete data for adding to the job's difficulty. Last month, Maddern was appointed to serve as a temporary assessor with the one elected member, Greg Snedeker, so the board can have a quorum to hold meetings.

The selectboard discussed the possibility of funding all or part of the \$65,000 special article through a debt exclusion vote.

The board took umbrage at the finance committee's recommendation to cut back cost of living increases for town employees from 3½% to 2½%, for a total savings of around \$3,500. Still, the board looked for savings of \$6,000 from the fire department's request for new equipment purchases and maintenance, and \$7,000 from a fund for health benefits for employees who may seek coverage under the town's plan.

Meeting on June 5th, the finance committee had also recommended discussing the police budget outside the omnibus, with an eye toward reducing staffing, or cutting back patrols.

"We've gone from an excessively weak force, to an excessively expensive force," said committee chair Paul Newell. "They've been a good force, but expensive."

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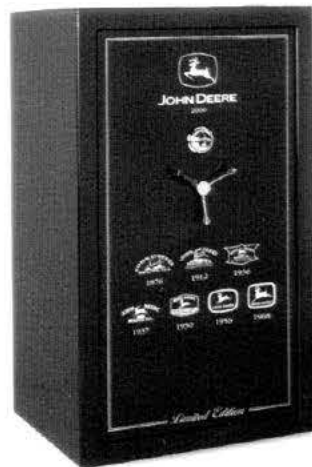
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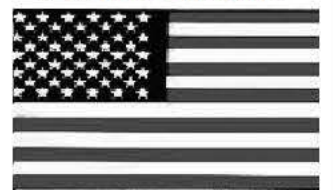
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## Erving Special Town Meeting

On Monday, June 26th,  
Special Town Meeting

Erving Elementary School at 7:30 p.m.

One of the business items will be seeking Town Vote approval for \$800,000 to purchase approximately 184 acres on Old State Road (previously the Giniusz Farm). The majority of this land will be protected under conservation laws.

Sat., June 10th, Mt. Grace Land Trust and the Erving Conservation Commission will lead a hike on this proposed land purchase. Come and learn more about the Town's plans for its future use. To register, call Betsy or Tom at Town Hall at 413-422-2800 Extension 100.

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# The Montague Reporter

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"The Voice of the Villages"

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August, 2002

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## An Override Will Be Needed

On Tuesday, Montague voters rejected a \$600,000 override request for the schools. We believe they did the right thing. Due to a lack of political leadership, and an annual town meeting scheduled at the beginning of May rather than the end of June, they were asked too much, too soon, before final state aid figures were even known.

They are still not known, but as the state budget begins to take final form, it seems as like as not that an extra \$100,000 in state aid may be arriving to help bridge the gap in Montague's fiscal '07 budget. Add to that the \$25,000 in a special article for a fire curtain for the Shea Theater that turns out to have been unneeded - and never purchased - and you can begin to see the possibility that a quarter of the requested override amount may soon be available to school or town coffers, without the painful or "devastating" cuts forecast.

The evening after 58.5% of the 1388 Montague voters who turned out at the polls rejected the override, the G-M school budget committee met to examine alternatives. According to Superintendent Sue Gee, they decided to raid the piggy bank - the Excess and Deficiency fund - of another \$100,000, leaving just \$126,000 to cover unforeseen contingencies in the coming

school year. There will be those who cry foul at this, saying the money was there and should have been applied to the operating budget. These same critics would be the first to blame the administration if the schools lack sufficient reserves to meet an emergency in the coming months. Yet cutting more teachers, and driving the flight of students from district schools, would have even worse consequences for the town. We have left the schools no choice but to operate on a very thin margin.

Still, \$100,000 here, \$100,000 in hoped-for new state revenues, add that to rescindable special articles on the town side (like the fire curtain fund), or even the \$65,000 voted in March for a feasibility study for a new community center (does anybody really think Montague can afford to build a community center at the same time as we begin the too-long delayed police station?) and you're starting to talk about some real money.

Sure, the cuts may be painful before we reach the bottom line. But town officials need to remember - before they head back to the voters, hat in hand, asking for another override - that the same unavoidable factors driving the million dollar increase in the school budget: spiraling health care and energy costs - are hitting the taxpayers just as hard, or harder. We turn to them if we can't make ends meet, but whom do they turn to? In these circumstances, we owe it to the taxpayers not to ask for a dollar more than we really need.

This is a terrible way to fund the schools. George Bush and the catastrophic waste of his debacle in Iraq, his huge tax giveaways to the rich are largely to blame. Regardless, here in Montague, we believe some amount of an override will be needed before next year's budget is put in place. A lot more hard work will have to occur before the final figure is arrived at. That work should have been undertaken long before June 6th.

## American Dead in Iraq as of 6/7/06

**US FORCES**  
Casualties in Iraq  
as of this date

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Afghanistan **225**

Wounded in Action **18,993**

Source: US Marine Corps Detachment  
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# The Montague Reporter

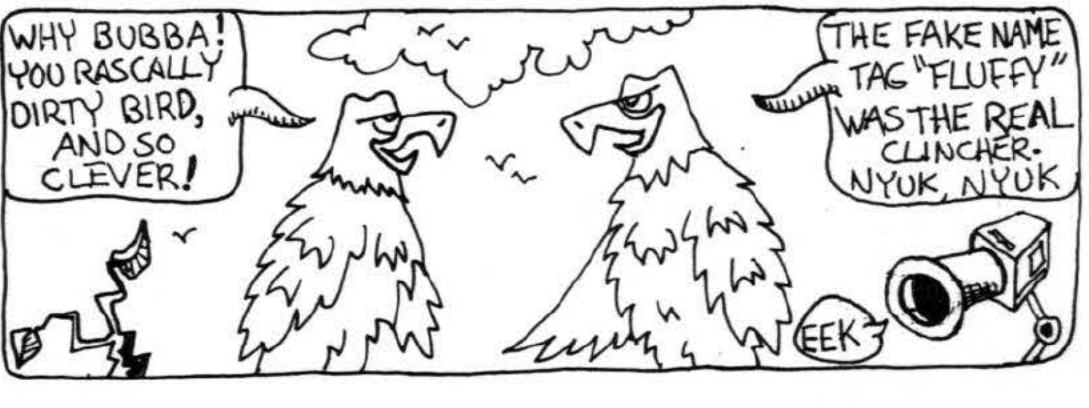
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## BUBBA AND CARMINE (SAGES OF BARTON'S COVE) BY DENIS BORDEAUX



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Little Holyoke in the Patch?

Thank you for your informative coverage of the ongoing deterioration of the Railroad Salvage building and the resulting closure of the Power Street bridge, and the re-emergence of former selectman Ed Voudren as a local developer, financier, and powerbroker. Watch out Donald Trump!

People living in the Patch have a great deal at stake in how the Railroad Salvage building property is developed. The plan Mr. Voudren supports includes 88 apartments and a mix of commercial space. The present owner, Gary Kosuda, has not responded to a letter from the Ad Hoc Property Owners Association requesting information about his plans to clean up the blighted property. Building inspector David Jensen revealed during a recent selectboard meeting that the Housing Authority was interested in developing the site for public housing.

Any housing intensive development would have a serious impact on the Patch, because the

Power Street bridge is one-way. The traffic would route through G, H, I, and 11th Street, causing increased congestion in an area

"If the Housing Authority wants to build public housing, let them build it in Montague Center."

where stop signs are routinely ignored, if they exist at all. Residents await a traffic impact report from the developer backed by Voudren, Belchertown developer Mark Kislyuk, who is in hot water with the town over property he owns at 181 Avenue A.

The Patch has undergone quite a blossoming recently. In 2004, I bought a two-family on the canal side because I knew the quality of life, and value of homes, are underrated here. There has been a recent flurry of housing sales; each new owner upgrades their property. The bike path is being constructed on

the east bank of the canal.

I did not move to the Patch to see it turned into a little Holyoke. If the Housing Authority wants to build public housing, let them build it in Montague Center. Patch property owners are encouraged to contact the selectboard and tell them you will not support any development at the Railroad Salvage property that threatens the heritage and quality of life that makes the Patch a special place to live, and the people who live there special.

If they intend to develop it as housing, they better put up another bridge at the north end, or rebuild the Power Street bridge to allow for two-way traffic. Better yet, show up at the selectboard meeting on June 19th at 7 p.m. and ask them to proceed with due deliberation in support of a balanced and well-considered plan for developing the Railroad Salvage property in a way we can all live with.

Peter Fisher  
-The Patch

### Reilly, Patrick Opt for Public Campaign Financing

Mass Voters for Fair Elections welcomes the support that two of the Democratic candidates are showing for public campaign financing. Deval Patrick and Tom Reilly have both announced they will apply for public matching funds.

Reilly and Patrick have shown they believe in the principle of public campaign financing. We look forward to their endorsement of our proposal for

expanding the law to cover legislative races as well.

Mass Voters aims to ensure that candidates for House and Senate can opt for voluntary matching funds. What's good for gubernatorial candidates who already have millions of dollars in their campaign accounts is even more important for teachers and firefighters who would like to run for the House and Senate. So we antic-

ipate both Reilly and Patrick getting behind our proposal wholeheartedly.

Peter Vickery  
- Amherst

We welcome your letters.

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GUEST  EDITORIAL

## You Know Where You Stand in Turners Falls

**CHRISTOPHER HOLMES** - I just celebrated my 32nd birthday, and I think I can honestly say I am a happy man. It's amazing how a spacious one-bedroom apartment, a lovable cat, and knowing who my true friends are can make me feel content.

For a short period of time in my late teens I lived in Greenfield. I remember at that time I had an acquaintance who was raised in a more privileged environment in Cape Cod. As we rode in her car down Canada Hill, overlooking the landscape of Turners Falls, she would say bitterly, "Look at that, what an ugly town." Typical for an Easterner living on the coast. (I'm sure there are others wondering like me when Beacon Hill is going to get around to fixing

our beautiful Gill-Montague bridge.)

I was young and might have agreed with her at the time, but that was before I moved back here in 1996, after experiencing college and the lovely city of Fitchburg. Yes, when I was riding over that hill I dreamt that I would be like Jack Kerouac and live many wild adventures in places so much better than this town, but, like Kerouac returning to Lowell, I have come back to call Turners home.

Are there others who agree with me that in towns like Greenfield you don't experience the honesty we are accustomed to here? When I was younger, I hated that honesty, but with maturity it's come to be something I cherish and laugh at, at

the same time.

When I'm walking in my neighborhood downtown, if someone doesn't like me I can read it by their body language, or a stare, or by them simply ignoring my 'Hello.'

I can enjoy a leisurely hour or maybe even more on a bench on Avenue A, and not have to worry about offending anyone. Try that on your best day on Main Street in Greenfield. We all know how the merchants there feel about someone sitting on a bench. Rather than sharing a conversation, they are happy to assume someone on a bench is on the welfare line or waiting to go to a methadone clinic.

When I ride my bike or take a short walk here, downtown in the springtime, I get to soak in

the beautiful blooming trees and the scent of the lilac bushes, the irises blooming in the community gardens, and the smell of the pizza house in the alleyway.

Then there are the people. I can always count on seeing Phil outside Equi's, Howie strolling up to get a bite to eat, Alphonse outside Cup o' Joe, stopping in Equi's to say hi to Edie, Pam or Walter and that future heart-breaker Tyler. Who can forget the guys rolling in to Ed's Barbershop or the faithful stopping into the VFW? And if you ever get trapped at the light on Third Street, no, that isn't Larry the Cable Guy or Hank from King of the Hill, that's just some hunter or fisherman getting supplies at Pipione's.

It can pretty predictable in

Turners. Being single, I usually know to sleep in on holidays; there's not much shakin' on the Avenue on those days. But predictability is something one becomes accustomed to living here. The Shady Glen wouldn't have been around so long if it weren't.

I can remember many times in my youth living in this town, muttering to myself, "I'm bored." But with adulthood, my resources have expanded and I realize that if I want to experience the city or the ocean, I just need to hop on a bus. But like my Uncle Al told me when I was 18, "Wherever you go, there you are."

It's always good to know where I stand when I set foot back here in Turners Falls.

## Bo's Arts Debuts at Flag Day Reading

June 14th at the Book Mill

**BY JANEL NOCKLEBY**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER** - For the definition of dog "in an unabridged dictionary, the little drawing would be of her," explained Jamie Berger, author and Turners Falls resident, referring to his beloved dog Bo. While she isn't included in any dictionaries yet, Berger contends that Bo is the paragon of dogs. Now she has her own book out, which is pretty compelling proof. The just released *Bo's Arts* is an entire book of short essays by Berger and art, primarily by San Francisco artists, all inspired by Bo.

Both the essays and the art in *Bo's Arts* succeed in making anyone who is a dog lover or an art fan melt into a pile of goo. Perhaps you've already met Bo on one of her many strolls in Turners Falls and wanted to pet her. The draw to Bo is mysterious and irresistible. My recommendation: Don't fight it. Besides, it's the Year of the Dog.

Berger's short essays range from funny to sweet to poignant as he describes how people react to Bo. His stories include descriptions of a seemingly deranged homeless woman in San Francisco who has a brief moment of lucidity when she sees Bo, 30 fifth graders chasing Bo, constant inquiries as to Bo's dog lineage, how the family of Joe Montana all wave to Bo at a restaurant, and many more vignettes of encounters with Bo.

Berger was born in Albany, NY, spent several years writing in New York City and San Francisco, and now is working towards his Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing at UMass Amherst, focusing on non-fiction. He fell in love

with the visual art scene in San Francisco when he lived there, finally got the puppy he had always wanted, and so *Bo's Arts* was born.

Berger described how it all began in the book. "One late night, in a cozy kitchen with two friends, their sketchpads and charcoals, a bottle of Jameson's, and one soft dog, the first Bo art was made and the *Bo's Arts* world played entered my brain," he wrote. In early 2004, over 50 pieces of artwork inspired by Bo were on display at San Francisco's Adobe Books, in the Backroom Gallery.

The artists that have contributed to *Bo's Arts* imagine a world in which any aspect of life can have a Bo twist.

Sure, there are stunning paintings and photographs included in the book, but there is also a dog bone toy made out of a Converse sneaker by Futurefarmers (a hot shot art and design collective in San Francisco), an incredible Bobble-head Bo by Kirk Markopoulos made out of sculpey (and Yes! it bobs), a cute little shrinky-dink Bo by Mitche Manitou, an ink drawing of Bo on a plastic take-out bag by Peter Herrmann, a 3-D



PHOTO: JANEL NOCKLEBY

Jamie Berger and his beloved dog, Bo, the inspiration for *Bo's Arts*

map of Bo's haunts in San Francisco by Adriane Colburn, a collection of Bo's hair and blanket fuzz stuck to tape by Lora Finelli, an adorable felt Super Bo (with cape!) by Carrie Barnes, an etching including Bo's footprints by Case Hudson, caramel candy shaped like Bo's ears by Boston resident Cathe Janke, a cardboard bust by Alan D'Souza, and an amazing embroidered street scene titled *Everything Bo sniffed on our walk around the block by the Atlas Café* by Emily Prince.

"It turned out to be one of the best-selling shows we've ever had," wrote Eleanor Harwood, curator for the Backroom Gallery at Adobe Books, in the introduction of the book. "The show allowed

several artists to reinvent their process or to make a significant departure in form."

Bo art even appears on human bodies. Valerie George created a pair of Bo-hair earrings. Berger now has a small tattoo on his left ankle that is a replica of the book's back cover design, a cutout by Colburn. It is a silhouette of Bo.

Additional highlights include a Polaroid by Niki Ulehla in which the title nearly says it all, *The giraffe has been felled and Bo*

*waits with the wild dogs until God says 'Go Get it!'* Berger said, "Everybody is freaking out about this one," referring to Gretchen LeMaistre's black-and-white silver print, *Bodalisque*. "It is the runaway favorite so far." The photograph is of Bo lounging on an antique chaise with her chin resting on the arm. She is America's next top dog model.

When Bo was modeling for the photos in the book, "She was like a pro. She would sit under the hot lights, or in a cold park. I think this cover is just great because it shows what a model she is. I wouldn't say she's exactly a ham, but she seems to know what to do in front of the camera," said Berger. "Her eyes are very

expressive," he added, unnecessarily. All you have to do is take one look at her, and goodbye Greta Garbo.

The book cover is partially made out of a kind of synthetic suede-like fabric, which echoes the original title of the art exhibit in San Francisco, *Bo's Arts: Visual Interpretations of a Soft Dog*. Bo is very, very soft. Even softer than the cover.

Lucky Western Mass residents can meet Bo in person (or would that be 'in canine')... Berger has planned a "Bo's Arts Flag Day Book Release Party Reading Extravaganza" at the Lady Killigrew and the Book Mill for Wednesday June 14th, at 7 p.m. There is no charge.

Fiction writer and musician Sara Jaffe of Northampton, poet Elizabeth Hughey of Montague Center, and perhaps other poets of Turners Falls will read, as will Berger, who promises that at the event, "Bo will be soft, flags will be waved, food and beverages will be eaten and drunk, books will be sold and signed by author and subject." Also, Berger will debut *Bo's Arts: the PowerPoint Presentation*.

The book is available at Evil Twin Publications, [www.evil twinpublications.com](http://www.evil twinpublications.com), Amazon.com, or ask for it at an independent bookstore. Berger plans to take Bo with him to readings in the Northeast and on the West coast, and is currently looking for venues such as bookstores, community spaces, or pet stores. He will be making a rubber stamp of Bo's paw print, so she can be "represented in the signing," he said.

## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

## Wendell Building Projects "Ready to Go!"

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - The bulk of Wendell's May 31st selectboard meeting was spent with Jim Slavas and chair Michael Idoine of the finance committee, discussing the town's '07 operating budget, the impact of the town's new construction on the tax rate, free cash, and the contract with New Salem for financing the Swift River Regional School. After handing the board an incomplete draft of the '07 budget, the finance committee discussed the projected tax impact of borrowing for the town center building projects.

Slavas said the property tax impact will peak in the third year of the note. Then, older loans will be retired, and the impact will drop. Idoine said the impact is

expected to stay within the range of \$1 - \$2 per \$1,000.

The most recent assessed value of property in town is \$55 million, but for this year the expected total value is \$75 million. Selectboard member Christine Heard asked how much of that difference was due to inflation, and how much was from new construction. Assessor Paul Sullivan was called over from the assessor's office for an answer. He said new growth accounted for \$6.7 million of the town's added value, and the rest had resulted from inflation. He said those were informal estimates. He added, "The state could tell me, 'Stand on your head,' tomorrow. I could be standing on my head now."

Slavas said that the difference between borrowing \$1.2 million and \$1.3 million comes to about 4 cents / \$1000 valuation, and that in three years when the tax rate is highest, the impact will be about 25 cents / \$1000, depending on how much is actually borrowed, and how long the loan is held.

Treasurer Carolyn Manley said that USDA might provide the town with short-term loans (which will cost less) for the beginning of the town's payments. She and Slavas both suggested that the town's free cash be put into stabilization, where it can be used to postpone borrowing and save the town money.

Regarding the Swift River School contract, Idoine began by saying any progress the joint committee of the two towns examining the contract might be making is overshadowed by New Salem's fiscal restraints. Shared town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said when free cash was used in New Salem to lower the tax rate recently, it lowered the levy limit. Now, that is one reason New Salem has trouble raising the money it needs to meet town and school operating budgets this year. She went on to say that New Salem's town counsel recommended passing an unbalanced budget, just so the town can function.

The original agreement for paying the Swift River budget was for both New Salem and Wendell to contribute a percentage of the school budget based on the number of students attending Swift River from that town. Idoine said the problem became "more baroque" as state education reform required a mandatory minimum payment from each town; the minimum payment is determined by a formula no one understands. Wendell's minimum payment was \$238 per student in fiscal 2005, \$226 in 2006 and is expected to be \$207 in fiscal 2007. Decisions by the school committees ten years ago left that minimum payment out of the percent formula used in calculating the obligation for each town.

Slavas thought the total amount

paid by each town, including the minimum payment, should reflect the number of students sent to the school. He said that although our perception is that Wendell has been paying some of New Salem's share, over the last ten years the opposite has been true. He also suggested that the school payments be calculated from a three year running average of students from each town to stabilize wide fluctuations in one grade.

The school has lost \$58,000 through school choice. Idoine said, "I haven't heard of any town making money on school choice." Heard lamented "market driven education."

State Chapter 70 funds are now given directly to the school budget, not to each town for use in the school budget.

Myron Becker came into the meeting and left quickly after handing his resignation from the Zoning Board of Appeals to Aldrich.

Aldrich said Mark Stuart had formally filed a site plan review (for his sand pit) with the planning board. Other boards have 35 days to respond, which will delay a hearing until early July.

Board chair Ted Lewis asked Aldrich to encourage the town clerk to submit a list of open board positions, so interested people can volunteer at the annual town meeting on Wednesday, June 21st.

Board member Dan Keller said the lab had returned results from the water test of the new town well. Sodium was high but it flushed clean. Toluene was also detected but the level was within allowable limits. If bids are made for the town water system before the end of June, then Davenport Construction, the contractor building the town septic system, can bid on that, and perhaps do the water system while their equipment is in town.

Aldrich said she received an email from FRCOG asking that the town name a representative to the COG. Nina Keller was appointed recently as temporary representative, and Lewis asked Dan Keller if she might be willing

to become a permanent representative.

Aldrich had a letter from Charles Smith requesting that Elizabeth Jacob of Depot Road be appointed to the open space committee. The selectboard approved her appointment unanimously for the remainder of this fiscal year, after which she will need to be reappointed.

Brian McCue of Renaissance Painting met with the selectboard to go over his \$12,550 estimate for scraping, priming and putting two coats of finish latex paint on the town hall. He provided references and insurance information. The original specifications called for acrylic latex primer, but McCue said an oil-based primer was a preferred choice because it adheres to dry wood better. Chips dropped by the scraping will be caught by plastic sheets stapled to the bottom of the building. The building will be white, but McCue suggested that the accents, eaves, trim and columns, be a different color; he will try a gallon of semi-gloss Navaho white on the posts in front, so people can see how that looks before he completes the entire trim painting.

Library trustee Phyllis Lawrence and librarian Rosie Heidkamp met with the selectboard to discuss plans for a groundbreaking ceremony for the town building projects. The ceremony will be Sunday afternoon June 11th, from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the bandstand. Representative Steve Kulik and Senator Stan Rosenberg are invited, as well as architect Margo Jones, project manager Marc Sullivan and townspeople. Lewis wanted to shy away from thanking individuals, because the list of people who have helped move the projects forward is so long it would be impossible to name everyone. He said thanks should focus on the cooperation among everyone on all phases of the projects that brought the town as far as it has come. Keller said he has already written his speech: "Ready to go!"

If weather is unpleasant the event will move to the town hall.

## MCTV Schedule

Channel 17

## Friday, June 9th

Eagle All Day From 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. Memorial Day Parade 2006  
8:00 p.m. Grange Weed Walk  
9:30 p.m. GaiaVision  
10:30 p.m. Women and HIV

7:00 p.m. GMRSD Committee Meeting LIVE  
9:30 p.m. Montague Update  
10:30 p.m. Memorial Day Parade 2006  
11:30 p.m. From the MCTV Archives

## Saturday, June 10th

Eagle All Day From 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. Montague Selectboard 6/5  
8:30 p.m. Montague Update  
9:30 p.m. Mother's Day Peace March  
10:30 p.m. From the Discovery Center

## Wednesday, June 14th

Eagle All Day from 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. Montague Select board 6/5  
9:30 p.m. Franklin County Democrat  
10:00 p.m. Montague Update  
10:30 p.m. From the Discovery Center

## Sunday, June 11th

Eagle All Day from 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. Memorial Day Parade 2006  
8:00 p.m. Franklin County Democrat  
8:30 p.m. GMRSD Committee Meeting 5/23  
10:30 p.m. Brick House Poetry Reading

## Thursday, June 15th

Eagle All Day from 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. GMRSD Committee Meeting 6/13  
9:30 p.m. Grange Weed Walk  
10:00 p.m. The Truth About Tobacco  
10:30 p.m. From the MCTV Archives

## Monday, June 12th

Eagle All Day From 6:00 a.m.  
7:00 p.m. Montague Selectboard 6/5  
8:30 p.m. Montague Update  
9:30 p.m. Grange Weed Walk  
11:00 p.m. GaiaVision

MCTV offers studio tours and orientations on the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. The public is welcome and encouraged to come down to the studio at 34 Second Street in Turners Falls to see the MCTV studio and learn about the exciting opportunities MCTV has to offer area residents. Call 863-9200 for more information.

## Tuesday, June 13th

Eagle All Day From 6:00 a.m.



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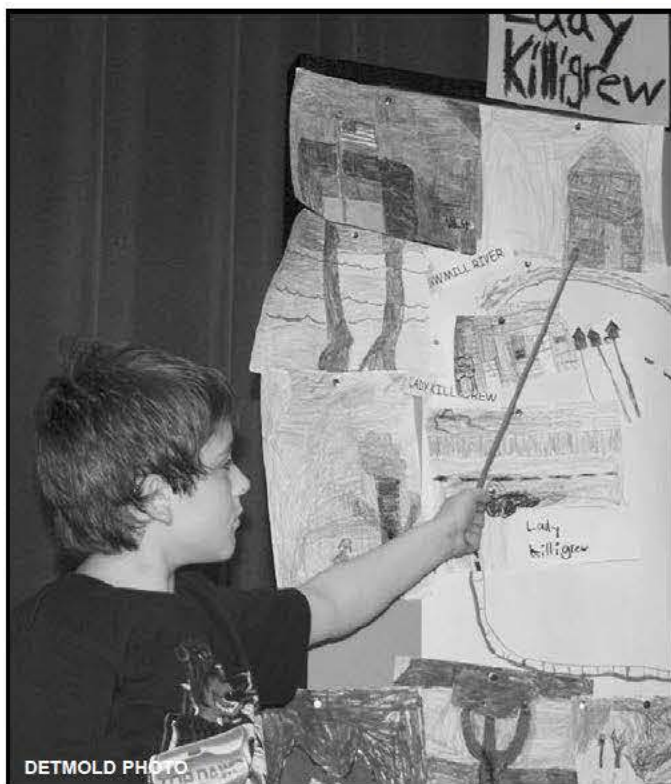
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# Sawmill River a Laboratory for Montague Center Students

**BY RUTH WITTY MONTAGUE CENTER** - Parents, do you ever despair seeing your elementary age child yet again playing video games while the sun shines outside? Do you remember playing in the forests and fields as a child, but now you feel nervous letting your child wander too far afield, and the yard is "boring?"

Environmentalists sometimes voice concern over whether the coming generation will be motivated to safeguard the environment, as kids these days seem to spend so little time actually experiencing nature.

But over the last three years the Montague Center School - with the help of the Hitchcock Center in Amherst - has done something to reverse this trend. The Sawmill River Project has gotten the kids and staff excited about studying their local river. Each grade,



Robert, a 3rd Grade Student at Montague Center, points to clues in the Sawmill River Quest

kindergarten through third, has performed age appropriate studies of the river, with the help of the Hitchcock Center's Colleen Kelley.

At an assembly on Wednesday, May 31st, the students presented a report on their studies of the Sawmill, its tributaries, and a pond right next to the school. Teachers

have obviously made a big effort to include aspects of the study in all subjects. Kids even count frogs during math, write stories about river creatures such as turtles, fish, caddis flies, crayfish and ducks, and make clay snails in art class. One first grade group even created a field guide of pond creatures!

However, the older students have been encouraged to study the river using the scientific method, asking the question, "How healthy is the river?" To answer this question they measured dissolved oxygen, which aquatic creatures depend on for survival. They measured pH, as a certain pH range is necessary to support life. They also



Student art from Montague Center depicts life along the Sawmill River.

counted aquatic organisms. They determined that the Sawmill River is pretty healthy at present. Listening to the students make their presentation, you could sense they had become very involved with the project, and had gotten to know the river very well in the process. It was also obvious they were proud to share the results of their studies.

Julie Johnson, director of the Hitchcock Center, said the Sawmill River Project will continue next year at the

Montague Center School. It has been funded by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust, as well as by a grant from Captain Planet, a foundation for environmental education. Johnson feels the project has helped students to better appreciate nature, that the students have come to see the Sawmill River in a whole new way. Walking around the school and seeing the numerous examples of river art on the walls, you could tell that this was true.

## Family Clay Class at Hillcrest

**TURNERS FALLS** - Ruth O'Mara, local artist and educator, has been offering a family clay class to the students and parents of Hillcrest Elementary School in Turners Falls.

The free class has provided an opportunity for families to work together at the school in a creative environment.

Students were introduced to the art of clay tile making, pinch pots, and other fun clay projects.

The class ran for three Thursdays, from May 25th to June 8th.

There will be an informal exhibit of finished work on Thursday, June 15th, from 3:10 - 4:10 p.m. at Hillcrest Elementary.

On Saturday, June 17th, from 11 - noon, Mudpie Potters Community Clay Center in Leverett will be open for Family Clay class students to come and see Mudpie's clay studio.

Students can see the kilns, the clay, Mudpie members' clay works, the pottery wheels and more.

O'Mara is the co-director of Mudpie Potters

Community Clay Center.

Mudpie Potters is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing excellent visual arts education to our community.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Montague Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and the Hillcrest Elementary After School Program.

For more information: Mudpie Potters Community Clay Center: 413-548-3939.


## MR. C continued from pg 6

many new places. "It's the best non-paying job I could ask for," said the band camp 'nurse.' This is also Prokowich's last year working with the music program.

Anna Perry, a senior, commented on Ciechomski's ability to make everyone feel included. "Being part of the marching band is like being part of a big family. Mr. C seems to bring together a wide range of people," she said.

This ability made band and chorus genuinely fun for students. Perry said that Ciechomski made the best of less-than-desirable circum-

stances, for example marching in the Franklin County Fair parade in pouring rain. "He's one of those people who can always make you smile. He can find the good in whatever is going on, and you always end up laughing about it," she said. "We find we are enjoying ourselves and thus enjoying the music."

Now, Ciechomski will be able to enjoy music at home where he plans to spend time "doing the things I wasn't able to do before." And he'll play more golf. He still intends to attend TFHS football games. But now he can sit back, relax and just enjoy watching the game, and of course, the marching band. 

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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

# More Talk on Railroad Salvage

**BY PATRICK RENNICK** - A mysterious brick sat across from selectboard member Pat Allen's stack of paperwork during Monday night's board meeting, June 5th. This artifact was later identified as a piece of the Railroad Salvage building, situated by the barricaded Power Street at the north end of the Patch. The street was closed off for safety purposes in February after town officials noticed large pieces of the building's roof had fallen in. On Saturday, May 27th, part of the brick wall tumbled into the road, prompting the Montague highway department to add additional barricades at either end of Power Street to

keep residents from walking by the building. The safety hazard posed by the building is also joined by a potential emergency hazard for residents of the Patch who now only have one exit route, due to the closing of the Power Street bridge.

"We need another update," said Allen. The building's owner, Gary Kosuda, has a contractor and structural engineer working to come up with a plan to stabilize the building, according to building inspector David Jensen.

"He has the basic people to put the project together, but they haven't been working together," said Jensen. "It is frustrating that he didn't nail all this down earli-

er." Jensen is optimistic that substantial activity will begin on the building by the fall.

"In the extreme case that there is no noticeable activity and the structure continues to deteriorate, what are our options?" asked selectboard member Allen Ross.

"If my perception is that he is not moving ahead, the only alternative I see is a court order to demolish the building," said Jensen.

"I strongly support aggressive action," said Ross. Jensen said he has urged Kosuda to attend the selectboard meeting on June 19th.

The right of way for the east

end of Dry Hill Road, from Wendell Road up to the town owned Dry Hill Cemetery has been staked out to 33 feet by the Montague highway department. The highway department has also staked out a 16-foot roadway within the right of way. DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron has received price quotes for a one-lane gravel road with drainage ditches at approximately 700 feet ranging from \$30,000 to \$60,000, depending on DPW participation in the project.

Peter Horwitz of Turners Falls brought forward a noise complaint after the selectboard had delivered the results of recent

noise readings conducted by the Montague police department over several weekends.

"The noise is excessive enough on weekends that I have trouble sleeping," said Horwitz, speaking of Yesterday's Bar on 3rd Street. According to noise readings, the decibel level at the front door of the bar ranged from 63 - 78 decibels. The higher end of this reading could be likened to the sounds of traffic in a busy street. The Second Street Café has also reached similar levels, with the sound at the front door ranging from 68 - 79 db's. The selectboard advised Horwitz to follow town procedures and file a formal complaint.

## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

### Town Meeting Set for Old State Road Land Purchase

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - At their Monday, June 6th meeting, the Erving selectboard prepared an eight item warrant for a special town meeting scheduled for Monday, June 26th. Aside from minor housekeeping measures, voters will be asked to approve spending \$800,000 for the purchase of 184 acres of conservation land on Old State Road. The town hopes to acquire a Self-Help grant from the state to assist with the purchase of the Giniusz family land, which abuts the historic town cemetery and includes old fields, forest, and cliffs. If successful, the grant would defray 72% to 86% of the purchase price, on the condition the land is permanently conserved and open for public recreation.

On Saturday, June 10th, Erving conservation commissioner Laura Herbert, with a representative of the Mt. Grace Land Trust, will lead a walk on the proposed conservation land, starting at 10 a.m. Interested residents are encouraged to attend; meet at the logging road across from the cemetery on Old State Road.

If the town approves the pur-

chase, the Erving conservation commission would develop a management plan for the land.

Voters will also be asked to approve a land transfer of "a sliver of land" across from the nearly completed Route 2 bypass, just east of Erving Center. The town is seeking to transfer the property to the Erving Paper Mill, for no remuneration, so that the paper mill can take advantage of a well they accidentally drilled on the property last year. The well, which would be used to supply potable water for the mill, was one of five drilled during the course of exploring the surrounding right of way in an attempt to replace the mill's drinking water supply, which was covered up during the course of relocating the highway. The search for a new well is the source of a long and costly delay in completing the multi-million dollar project. Unlike the other four attempts, the well on the town-owned land has the advantage of testing positive for water purity and pressure.

In a meeting with Dennis Rindone, chair of the Route 2

Task Force, on Wednesday, June 7th, at the Erving town hall, Mass Highway Commissioner Luisa Paiewonsky predicted the Route 2 bypass could be open by the end of summer, if the town approves the land transfer. Town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp called the property "a strip of land now dead-ended by the new highway. It is surplus land."

In other news, the board approved a contract with Tighe and Bond for \$21,150 for engineering services for capping the old Maple Avenue landfill in Farley. "We're getting off cheap," said Sharp.

The board re-appointed Mick LaClaire to a three-year post as the town's fire chief, with a 3% cost of living raise.

The board authorized Mike Pierce, at POTW #1, the town's wastewater treatment plant, to contract with LaFleur Electrical to increase to 175 amps the power supply at the Arch Street pump station, in Erving Center. The increased power supply will allow both pumps in the station to operate simultaneously, in the event of heavy flow due to rainstorms.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Stolen Car Taken for a Ride

**Thursday 5-25**

7:10 a.m. Report of a missing vehicle at Erving Paper. Found to be repossessed overnight.

9:00 p.m. [REDACTED] was arrested on New Street for a default warrant.

**Friday 5-26**

11:30 p.m. Resident from Mountain Road reported neighbors racing up and down the street. Caller believes underage drinking going on. Officer made contact with several teenagers. Advised to keep it down.

**Tuesday 5-30**

8:30 a.m. Officer flagged down by passerby reporting a confused, elderly man driving near the cemetery. Officer unable to locate.

**Wednesday 5-31**

9:05 a.m. Report of a one-car accident on Route 2 in Farley. Motor vehicle lost rear wheel and skidded into a field. No injuries reported.

**Thursday 6-1**

5:10 a.m. Report of a motor vehicle stolen from a French King Highway address.

6:00 a.m. Caller reports observing stolen motor vehicle from previous call traveling east-bound in Gill at a high rate of speed with several subjects inside. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were arrested and charged with larceny of a motor vehicle.

3:35 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Route 2, [REDACTED] was arrested and charged with operating with a revoked license and possession of a class D drug.

**Friday 6-2**

9:10 a.m. Report of a disabled tractor trailer on Route 2 at West Prospect Street. Operator said he had help on the way.

**Sunday 6-4**

3:15 p.m. Report of one-car accident on Route 2. No injuries..

**Monday 6-5**

8:50 p.m. Mutual aid to Gill Police for arrest on Mountain Road.

**Tuesday 6-6**

9:30 a.m. Assisted motorist on West Main Street with changing a flat tire.

## POTHOLE PIX SHOWS TWO FILMS at RIVERFEST

Pothole Pictures, the non-profit, all-volunteer, community-run theater in Shelburne Falls will present two special films for Riverfest weekend.

On both Friday and Saturday nights June 9th and 10th at 7:30 p.m., *Winged Migration* will be shown. This 2002 documentary is a technically stunning extravaganza which captures the life and death struggles of migration and the majesty of birds in flight. The viewer vicariously experiences the thrill of flying, soaring up close with flamingos, swans, eagles, and condors. This much-loved film took three years to film, and employed 14 cinematographers in forty countries.

There will be live music on stage both nights from 7 to 7:30 p.m. before the film. On Friday, Bobodenk will play folk rock, and on Saturday, Swing Caravan will play gypsy swing music.

And at 4 p.m. on Saturday June 10th only, *Mixin' It Up on the Mohawk Trail* will be shown. This film, made entirely by West County teenagers from the Community Action Youth Program, examines the Native American people who lived in this area before the Europeans came. Drama, claymation, and interviews are interwoven to present a history lesson and an exploration of Native American conditions in this area today.

Many of the teenagers involved in this project will be present at the showing to discuss the film. *Mixin' It Up on the Mohawk Trail* was directed by Iris Wheaton and Kursten Pickup. Local youths appearing in the film include Amanda Nichols, RoseAnn Hathaway, Amanda Schmidt, Ali Hamdan, Colleen Rauch, Caitlin Freed, and Jenna Kuklinski.

Admission to both films is \$6 at the door, or one pre-purchased ticket.

Pothole Pictures is located at 51 Bridge St in Shelburne Falls, right above town hall.

For information or to purchase advance tickets, call 413-625-2896.

## NMH Receives \$10 Million Bequest

**GILL** - A Northfield Mount Hermon School alumnus has donated securities valued at \$10 million to the school. David Bolger, real estate developer, investment banker, financier, and philanthropist, has asked that his gift be used to endow scholarships, establish a faculty chair, and support an endowment for the school's Memorial Chapel. This is the largest gift Northfield Mount Hermon (NMH) has

received in its 126-year history.

Bolger, a 1950 graduate, is the founder and president of Ridgewood, NJ - based Bolger & Co., Inc. He is the former chairman and sole stockholder of the Farmers & Merchants State Bank in Boise, ID. The son of Dutch immigrants, Bolger was able to attend Northfield Mount Hermon because of a scholarship. He later worked nights and weekends at a steel

mill to put himself through college.

A longtime supporter of NMH, Bolger has donated more than \$2 million over the past two decades to a wide range of school projects, including the Bolger Arts Center. In addition to his other philanthropic endeavors, he has also donated a bus and Land Rover to Project Hope in Haiti and given a \$700,000 interest-free loan to preserve Effigy Mounds in Iowa.



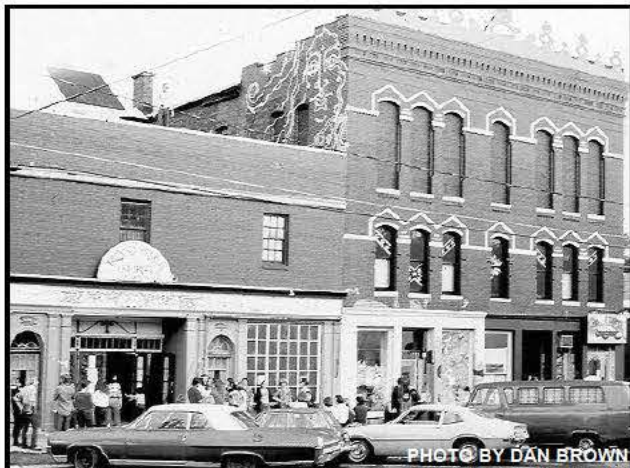
FREE

continued from pg 1 in a treehouse to the omnipotent leader of hundreds before he is finally deposed, is Shakespearean tragedy at its most eloquent. It is to director Bruce Geisler's credit that he attempts to maintain an even tone without yielding to judgmental extremes regarding Metelica or the commune at large. Geisler (who lived in the commune for five years) tells the story and lets the viewer make the call.

The film begins with footage of two pivotal years, 1967 and 1968. The narrator explains how the hope encapsulated by the Summer of Love gave way

itation on the tensions between spirituality and temptation, power and ego. One can't help contrasting the flowery language of the members with some of their less-altruistic actions, such as evicting a family from the very home they had offered to the overcrowded group. Or how, in a later period of accumulated wealth, they could stand by and watch their friends be ruthlessly exploited by the leader they all trusted.

The film documents the various identities the collective lurches through, from rural commune through yuppie capitalist enclave to its plan to build a self-sufficient community on



The Shee Theater and Colle Block in 1975, owned by the Renaissance Community

to despair following the assassinations of King and Robert Kennedy and the riots of the Chicago Convention. An entire generation started looking for new alternatives, and one of them was the Brotherhood of the Spirit commune.

Many came, spurred by a curious media that seemed attracted to this particular group, where love and good vibes were heartily in evidence in the early halcyon days. One member recalls gazing down the road one morning and seeing hundreds of people converging on the commune's Warwick site the day after a photo spread of the group appeared in Look Magazine. Unlike most hippie communes of the time, the Brotherhood had rules prohibiting drugs, alcohol and sexual promiscuity (the latter injunction provoking some caustic wit from several of the women interviewed) as well as a spiritual direction. They also received a great deal of animosity from local residents and officials, culminating in the later murder of a commune member, never solved.

From the outset, one can predict innocence about to be lost. That is exactly what happens. In fact, the film is a med-

the property in Gill that became the group's final resting place. Through this communal journey, the fifteen or so narrators

also reflect on their personal changes, whereby their initial exuberance gives way to a more critical look at the commune and their own relationship with Metelica.

In the end, the enterprise falls apart, spurred by Metelica's losing battle with drugs and alcohol. He remains a tragic figure, however, and the film bravely asserts that his downfall is as much the fault of the communal population who granted him unlimited power as it is of Metelica himself. Fortunately, the film ends on a hopeful note as the members relate the lessons learned and the camaraderie they still share.

Free Spirits will return this fall in area theaters. If you are able to view this film with one of the many former members still living in the area, you might find the experience instructive. The soundtrack, for sale at various local venues, is composed by Spirit in Flesh, the commune's former house band, that reunited last year to re-record many of their earlier songs. For more information about the film and future showings, visit the director's website at www.acornproductions.net.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Trespassing at Railroad Salvage

Friday 6-2

6:07 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at an East Main Street, Millers Falls address. Building entered. Found that caller did not own the building.

Saturday 6-3

2:04 a.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Bridge Street, Millers Falls address. Found to be verbal only. One party left for the night.

1:12 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a larceny at a 2nd Street address. A bike was taken. Reporting party will call if bike is returned.

7:35 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a robbery at Exxon. Someone snatched money from youth. Report taken.

11:56 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Turnpike Road at Montague Street, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license and a stop sign violation.

Sunday 6-4

1:11 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Millers Falls Road at W. Mineral Road, [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor (second offense) and speeding.

10:56 a.m. Report of an environmental incident on Dry Hill Road. Caller states oil had spilled the previous day and had been covered by 'speedy-dry'. All the rain had washed the mixture into his driveway. Referred to Montague Center Fire Department.

Monday 6-5

7:32 a.m. Report of a larceny at a Crocker Ave address. A lawn mower was missing. Report taken.

11:11 a.m. [redacted] was arrested near Cup O' Joe for violating an abuse prevention order.

6:32 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Walnut Street at Fairway Avenue, [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested and charged with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and possession of a class D drug.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with possession of a class D drug.

8:46 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on the General Pierce Bridge, [redacted]

[redacted], Westhampton, was arrested on a default warrant.

Tuesday 6-6

3:30 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at the bellybowl. It looked like someone had entered the window. Nothing appeared to be missing.

Wednesday 6-7

2:25 p.m. [redacted] and [redacted] were both arrested behind The Railroad Salvage building and charged with trespassing and disorderly conduct.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

Assault and Vandalism on Mountain Road

Wednesday 5-31

2:50 p.m. Bascom Road resident reported ATVs trespassing on their property. Report taken, environmental police contacted and advised.

11:24 p.m. Summoned [redacted] for operating after suspension of license, no inspection sticker, and headlight violation.

Thursday 6-01

10:45 a.m. Department called and advised of a suicidal subject heading to the French King Bridge. Officers sent to area, canceled on arrival; subject found at different location.

1:30 p.m. Medical assistance at the Barton Cove area. BHS transported same without incident.

1:45 p.m. Report of a past

altercation in the Riverside area, report taken.

Friday 6-02

11:30 a.m. Report of a loose boar in the Bascom Road area.

Saturday 6-03

2:18 p.m. Motor vehicle stop for traffic offenses, resulted in two arrests.

[redacted] arrested for driving with a suspended license. Passenger, [redacted] arrested on a default warrant.

3:00 p.m. Unwanted person at NMH - same was moved along, report taken.

Sunday 6-04

9:20 a.m. Power outage at the Main Road - Route 2 intersection. Officer stood by until

problem fixed.

5:40 p.m. Report of a gas drive off at the Gill Mobil, report taken.

Monday 6-05

11:45 a.m. Mutual aid to Northfield to assist with an arrest of a subject for a violation of a 209A restraining order.

9:14 p.m. Arrested [redacted]. Charged with assault and battery, vandalizing property.

Tuesday 6-06

4:45 p.m. Report of a larceny of items from a boat in the Barton Cove area. Report taken.

5:10 p.m. Report of items vandalized at Mountain Road residence.

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## OVERRIDE

continued from pg 1

said the positive result in her precinct was due to the hard work and organizing of the ad hoc Citizens for Public Education, who managed to turn out their supporters in Montague Center. They also narrowed the gap slightly on the Hill, which had been the center of opposition to the school override in 2003, when voters in Precincts 3 and 4 rejected the measure almost exactly 2 to 1, (66%) with a combined vote of 412 to 209. This time around, with more than twice as much money riding on the outcome, voters in Precincts 3 and 4 turned down the proposal by 62%, 334 to 202.

Voters in Montague City were the harshest in opposition, turning down the override by 76% (146 to 46). "I have a little problem with the [school committee's] estimates," said Katie Rosewarne. "I don't think the town had a problem with their budget until suddenly the costs escalated, and then it was left to us to fix it."

Michael Dobias said, "My taxes jumped through the roof for the school. I don't have kids. I don't plan to have kids. They just replaced the track again. They spent how much money on a new brick façade? How does that help them to learn? It's a school. I'm very disappointed. I'm disgusted."

Stanley Kacpura said, "They build a larger school, then they have less kids. They should have fixed the rest of the schools instead [of rebuilding the high school/middle school]. Now what're they going to do? School choice is killing us." He shrugged and said, "You got to give the kids an education. But at the same time you got to have a limit."

His wife Irene chimed in, "We've got so much else we have to do in town. I hate to see the taxes go up. But what're you going to do?"

Monica Lane said, "I voted No, surprisingly. I have four children in the schools. My taxes are \$4,000 a year already. I just have a plain old home. The government needs to pay for these schools. Too much money goes to the war, and so many other wasteful things. Franklin County is the poorest county in the state. Where do they think I'm going to get the money to pay for this?"

Alice Fairbrother said, "I don't think we need the override." Her husband Gordon added, "What're they doing now up there at the high school? Replacing the track. They just put it down a few years ago. What was wrong with it?"

(Superintendent Sue Gee said

the track had been improperly installed seven years ago, and needed a drainage system to prevent it from "washing away." The building committee waited until every other aspect of the high school renovation was complete, Gee said, and brought in at a million dollars under budget, before deciding to spend the more than \$100,000 it will take to fix the track, taking advantage of the 90% state reimbursement while it lasts.)

"I don't know about you, but the country's nine trillion dollars in debt. We have to be frugal."

- Joe Shulda  
Precinct 5

Finally, a "Yes" voter emerged from the old Masonic Hall in Montague City. Kathleen Hctor said she voted for the override because, "The kids need a good education. I don't think all the schools should be combined."

Over in tenant-heavy Precinct 5, downtown Turners Falls, where the smaller school override eked out its only victory in 2003, (52-47), this time around the totals were almost exactly reversed. The measure lost 46 to 51 on Tuesday.

Mike Farrick was among the supporters. He said, "Schools are one of the most important services this town has to offer. I can't see underfunding them."

But Joe Shulda spoke for the majority when he said, "I don't know about you, but the country's nine trillion dollars in debt. We have to be frugal."

At 4 p.m. in Millers Falls, a flock of pigeons roosted on the slate roof of the old Highland School, decorating the *bas relief* lamp of learning above the doorway, as pigeons do. Stanley Zera walked up the sidewalk, using his cane. "It didn't used to be so far when I was a kid," he said. "I spent six years in this beautiful building. I had very good teachers." Zera did not support the override.

"A Proposition 2½ override is forever," noted Zera. "If they did it as a debt exclusion, that would have been different. It's a one-shot deal. I would have supported that. But as an override, it's \$160 bucks a year, forever."

Of the 221 voters who turned out in Precinct 2, 64% voted against the override. (Three years ago, 65% percent of the voters who came to the poll in Precinct 2 rejected the smaller school override.)

Among the supporters this time around were Brenda Olsen. "I'm all in favor of it," she said.

"The children need it. It's hard on the elderly; that's the only bad part."

Andy Georgeson, who just moved to town from California, the birthplace of property tax limiting initiatives, said, "All across the country school funding is pathetic. There is all kinds of money for things you don't need, and you can't shift it. I don't think property taxes are a good way to fund schools, in general. You can't pay salaries with lottery money, you need a sure thing. Proposition 13 (in California, like Prop 2½ here) made us all dependent on the state; you have to go on your hands and knees begging for money. The schools need to be funded some other way." He supported the override.

But a building contractor who wished to remain anonymous, calling himself a "working class guy in a bastion of liberalism," said, "I think Proposition 2½ was

"I voted No. I'm a retired person. I already have to save \$300 a month to pay for property taxes. I have grandchildren in the school. I know what their parents are going through."

- Anonymous  
Precinct 3

put in place to stay within the property tax restraints. If the override is turned down, it goes back to town meeting to figure out how to cut \$600,000 out of the budget. I don't get any extra money when I can't make ends meet. I don't go to my neighbors for a handout. It irritates me very much."

Brenda Harvey, a teacher with kids in the Gill-Montague schools, said she supported the measure, as did her husband. She added, "You should get rid of the Governor and all the Republicans."

Jack Lipsy said, "We need to support the school systems. The kids are getting a raw deal from the federal government. If the town doesn't support the schools, who's gonna?"

At 4:45, Precinct 3 had seen 171 voters turn out, while across

the Hillcrest assembly hall Precinct 4 had checked off 172. Henry Boucher, handing out ballots at Precinct 4's table, greeted the next voter in line cheerily. "Hello, Robert. How many do you want?"

"We need to support the school systems. The kids are getting a raw deal from the federal government. If the town doesn't support the schools, who's gonna?"

- Jack Lipsy  
Precinct 2

Near the door, Michelle Rubin and her daughter Jayna staffed a bake sale table, with banana bread, cookies, and slices of pumpkin pie. A sign by the table listed all the things the PTO had purchased for the schools with bake sale money recently, including artists-in-residence teaching puppetry to the kids, student writing box supplies, *Scholastic News* magazines, \$800 worth of books for the school library, and a \$350 donation from Hillcrest to Hurricane Katrina relief.

Outside, Chris Boyle, the husband of a school committee member, with one child in Sheffield and one at the Middle School, said he supported the override, "Because we need to keep the programs we have currently and add back art districtwide."

But a woman named Marianne, who declined to give her last name, said she voted No.

"I'm a retired person. I already have to save \$300 a month to pay for property taxes. I have grandchildren in the school. I know what their parents are going through."

Bob Martineau called after a friend of his, wearing the t-shirt of a local landscaping company, "What do you think?"

His friend called back over his shoulder, "I think I have to get

myself to work to pay these taxes."

A retired lady with neatly coiffed white hair said she had supported the measure. "I guess they need it. What're you going to do? Either you lay off people or you pay a little more in taxes."

David Prasol said, "You don't shortchange a school district. When you shortchange a school district, you shortchange the community. What does that say about your opinion of the youth?"

Ed and Kay Gillespie were both voting Yes. "They cut enough art and music programs," he said. "It's pretty obvious the schools need help," she said. The Gillespies laughed when asked if they had kids in the schools. "Even our grandchildren are through college," replied Kay, who seemed flattered by the question.

Dana Slaymaker said he had supported the measure, "with mixed feelings. It's a Hobson's Choice between higher taxes and education, with no real choice on whether the money will be used effectively. On the other hand, there's no real alternative funding available."

By 5:00 p.m., Michelle Rubin and her daughter had taken in more than \$200 at their bake sale table.

Down in Montague Center, the mainstay of support for the override on Tuesday, Nancy Paglia, who has a son in Montague Center school, voted Yes. "We can't get money from the government for schools for quality education. Why are we funding war and not education?" she asked.

An anonymous opponent said "I'm old and don't get a break in taxes. Schools waste a lot of money." Another anonymous opponent spoke of other town needs such as a new police station. "It's younger families that want the override," he said.

Leslie Lomasson said she backed the override. "It's a shame the state and federal government don't support us more. The town can't support a \$600,000 deficit."

Richard Anderson said he voted Yes. "Education is not an expense. It is an investment," he said. "Why should our kids be shortchanged for something so important? It is our civic responsibility to support schools."

With nearly 6 out of 10 voters rejecting the override this time, it is apparent the dialogue between the residents of the town, and the officials who are trying to craft a budget to keep town services and school programs running, will have to continue until an agreement can be reached.

It could be a long summer.



Michelle Rubin and her daughter Jayna staffed the Hillcrest School PTO bake sale table during voting.

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BY DAVID DETMOLD

**TURNERS FALLS** - The stars were lining up against a number of the final five contestants in Saturday night's finale of Valley Idol. Heavy betting on local favorite Alana Martineau and Colrain songbird Brandee Simone could not offset the fact that Alana had suffered a death in the family that same day, and was weighed down with the sadness of that event as she took the stage for the first number. Meanwhile Brandee, who had moved the audience with the depth of her delivery in the qualifying rounds, admitted after her first song fell flat that she was feeling sick on Saturday. Bad things come in threes, as the old wives tell, so it came as no surprise when Turners Falls' other top contender, John Waynelovich, found the tempo on Billy Joel's "Tell Her About It" running away from him. He never quite caught up with it.

That left the first round wide open for the other two finalists, Abraham Oyola of Charlemont and Vicki Stankiewicz of Hadley, and they took the opportunity to drive their acts right through to the finish line. These two could not offer greater con-

# Valley Idol Award Absolutely Abraham

trast for the judges to choose between: Abraham the epitome of poise, with his sometimes silky sometimes rough delivery, and the quirky, post-punk aplomb of Vicki, who never let the judges know which corner of the left-field wall she would be bouncing off of next. But she hit a home run in the first round with "What's Up," by Four Non Blondes, again showcasing her slightly offbeat persona, with a loud - soft, high - low pitch. But she wrapped it up real sweet, and the crowd loved it.

One of the judges, Phil Simon, fell for it hook, line and sinker. "That was easily the most difficult range of the entire competition. Some people complained you shouldn't have made it to the finals. You just proved you



Winner of the First Valley Idol Award: Abraham Oyola

belong there. As of this moment, you are running in the front."

Abraham played it safe with Bon Jovi's "Wanted Dead or Alive," but he didn't miss a beat. He still had judge Kim Morin eating out of his hand, as he had throughout four nights of competition. "It's good to see you taking command of the stage," she said, sounding as if she wished that wasn't all he would take command of. "You never lose your strength, and when you let it go, it fills the house!"

Simon was a little more disparaging, commenting on Oyola's flashy metallic pendant, "It's a shame you couldn't find a necklace to wear tonight."

After the break, the three who had stumbled slightly in the first round all put pedal to the metal to make up for lost ground. Alana, who had pulled her punches slightly on namesake Alannah Myles' sultry southern cooker "Black Velvet," came back with a soul-baring rendition of Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On," breaking down in tears on the final verse, and get-

ting a hug from MC Nick Danger in the process. "You have an amazing talent," Morin told her. "Share it wherever you can. It's gorgeous."

Brandee regained her reputation as a young woman in full control of her material with a spot-on rendering of Faith Hill's "Cry Just a Little for Me." And John Waynelovich offered up what judge Ken Adams called "the best performance you gave us all four nights," on "This Is the Moment," from the Jekyll and Hyde sound track, proving he'd learned his chops from a musical master.

But when Vicki appeared in a drop-dead décolletage, she erased whatever gains they may have made during her heartfelt Faith Hill reprise, "Breathe." It showed a tender side the audience had not seen before, and the judges lapped it up. Simon said,



Finalists await the judges' outcome. From left to right: Abraham Oyola, Brandee Simone, Vicki Stankiewicz, Alana Martineau and John Waynelovich.



Audience Favorite Alana Martineau

a baby, until he kicked into over-drive and drove it home for all he was worth. After the crowd died down, Adams had to hand it to him. "You have a fantastic career ahead of you!"

While the ballots were tabulated in the front office, the crowd grew restless until DJ Tom Mayo, of Shining Star Productions was called up on stage to help pass the time. He treated the audience to a skinny guy with Tourette's Syndrome and a Boston Red Sox cap doing a spastic version of "Billy Jean," proving he was, in fact, the spiritual son of Michael Jackson, right down to the skin color and the bad Moon Walk.

Then it was time to find the real Valley Idol. John Waynelovich, who will be appearing in Ja'Duke's "Guys and Dolls" later this summer, took fifth place. Next, Turners' other hometown favorite, Alana Martineau, took fourth, but the judges called her back later to give her \$250 and the "Audience Favorite" award. With three contestants left, Brandee Simone looked shocked and pleased to win third place, and the \$500 that came with it. With two to go, the crowd roared its approval as Vicki Stankiewicz was handed \$750 and the second prize, leaving Abraham Oyola, the sexy crooner from Charlemont, to claim the \$1000 top spot, and the coveted bragging rights as the first Valley Idol.

Check him out the next chance you get a karaoke bar near you.

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# Girard Tosses No Hitter at Pioneer

BY LEE CARIGNAN

**NORTHFIELD** - The Turners Falls Indians girls softball team defeated Pioneer Valley Regional High School 1-0 on Monday in quarterfinal play to advance in the playoffs. The win was Turners Falls' 52nd straight win, dating back two years. The loss ends the season for defending Division 3 champion Pioneer,

finishing with a 12-8 record this season.

Monday's game was a great pitching duel between Turners ace Julie Girard and Pioneer's Ashtyn Welcome. Girard finished with a no-hitter in the game, with 10 strikeouts and a walk. Girard struck out the first five batters and retired the first 8 before allowing a base runner. Pioneer's only threat of

the game came with a walk in the fourth inning. But they ended up stranding the runner on second base.

Turners, who only managed two hits on the night themselves, had a big threat in the second inning when Danielle Sullivan belted a single to move runners on first and second base with only one out. But Welcome got Sarah Ambo

out on strikes, and forced Julianne Rosewarne to fly out to retire the side.

The Indians scored the only run of the game in the fifth inning. Kelly Lastowski drew a one-out walk and reached second base on a wild pitch. Kim Lastowski grounded out, moving Kelly to third base. Ashleigh St. Peter belted a clutch single into right field to

get the game winning RBI. That would be all Turners would need, as Girard retired the last nine hitters she faced in dominating fashion.



## Turners Heading to Regional Finals

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**AMHERST** - In the bottom of the fifth, a red-tail hawk with a squirrel in its talons landed on the top of the backstop at the Western Mass Division III Softball semifinals at UMass Tuesday, June 6th. It could have been a symbol for the predicament the girls from fifth-ranked Sabis International Charter School found themselves in against top-seeded Turners Falls.

Turners ace Julie Girard dominated the Sabis Bulldogs from the first inning, and never relaxed her grip. She retired the first nine batters in order, striking out seven. Sometimes she bowled her fastball by the dazed Sabis girls like they were so many duckpins, or else she humiliated them with her patented change-up, that often looked like it had bubblegum attached to it as it made its elastic loop to the plate.

Sabis managed one unearned run, after Girard gave up a walk to lead-off batter Amanda Alvarado in the top of the fourth. A neat throw from Kim Lastowski just failed to stop Alvarado from stealing second. A sacrifice bunt advanced her to third, with one away. Girard fanned the next batter, but Lastowski let the final strike get away from her, and Danielle Borecki took first on a passed ball, as Alvarado scored. Then



Following 53 straight wins, the Turners Falls Girls Softball team heads to the regional finals.

Girard efficiently retired the side. She went on to retire the next nine batters in order over the last three innings, striking out six more for a total of sixteen K's on the game.

Turners racked up three runs on a total of six hits, two of the hits supplied by Girard.

In the first inning, Kim Lastowski drew a walk and stole second. Girard hit a dribbler past the Sabis pitcher, Kim LaMothe. The second baseman, Xiomara Alban, threw it over the first baseman's glove, allowing Lastowski in for the first run.

Turners increased their lead in the bottom of the third, when Girard drew a walk with one

away. Courtesy runner Angela Marguet stole second, advanced to third on a wild pitch, and scored on a sacrifice grounder to second by Alison Murphy.

Turners loaded the bases in the bottom of the fifth, after the Lastowski sisters, Kellie and Kim, both flied out to the glove of the Sabis right fielder. Ashleigh St. Peter tagged a short fly to left; Girard backed it up with a solid line drive to right center, Alison Murphy drew a walk, but Chelseigh St. Peter failed to convert, grounding out

offense, yelled, "Hit the Ball," Sara Ambo tapped a modest

to second.

The girls in blue came back with an insurance run in the sixth, after Danielle Sullivan teed off on the first pitch deep to right center. Pinch runner Kim Arsenault stole second, reached third on an error, and after coach Gary Mullins, exasperated with his team's lackluster

grounder to shortstop, scoring Arsenault on a fielder's choice.

In the top of the seventh, with Girard looking as strong as when she threw her first pitch, Kellie Lastowski saved her no-hitter with a spontaneous over the head snag on a solid line drive by Jezeray Ortiz. Girard fanned the last batter, securing her team's 3-1 victory, and a ticket to the Western Mass finals against Ware, Sunday June 11th, at 5 p.m. at the UMass field.

After the game, perennial Turners fan George Bush (of Fourth Street, not Pennsylvania Avenue) exulted in the team's 53rd straight win "Two no-hitters in a row!" beamed Bush. "Now, on to the finals!"



Girard winds up for the final out. Turners takes on Ware at the Regional Finals at UMass, Sunday, June 11th, at 5 p.m.

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**THE HEALTHY GEEZER**

# Preventing Falls

**BY FRED CICETTI**

**LEONIA, NJ - Q.** I had an aging aunt who fell and broke her hip. She was never the same after that. Now that I'm old, myself, I'm worried about falling. What should I do about this?

Well, first of all, you can't go around worrying about falling or you won't be relaxed; that can lead to a fall. So, you should concentrate on employing techniques to avoid falls and then don't let the fear take over you mind.

But a respect for the dangers of falling is justified by the statistics.

Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma. Of all fall-related fractures, hip breaks cause the greatest number of deaths and lead to the most severe health problems and reduced quality of life.

As we age, the power of our senses, reflexes and coordination diminishes. Maladies and the medicines we take for them can contribute to balance problems. Then there's osteoporosis - a disease that makes bones more likely to snap.

There are many steps you can take to prevent a fall and the possibility of breaking a bone. I'm dedicating the remainder of this column to the best tips I collected from a variety of experts:

- \* Get your bones tested. Your doctor can prescribe medications that will make your bones harder to break.
- \* Regular exercise makes you stronger and keeps your joints, tendons, and ligaments flexible. Weight-bearing exercise such as walking may slow bone loss from osteoporosis.
- \* Alcohol impacts your reflexes and balance. Enough said.
- \* Get up slowly from lying



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

and sitting to avoid feeling light-headed.

- \* Avoid temperature extremes in your home; they can make you dizzy.
- \* Wear rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes.
- \* Always hold the handrails on stairways.
- \* Don't stand on a chair to get to something. Buy a "reach stick," a grabbing tool you can find at many hardware stores.
- \* Clear floors where you

walk.

- \* Never carry any package that will obstruct your view of the next step.
- \* Mount grab bars near toilets, tubs and showers.
- \* Place non-skid mats, strips, or carpet on all surfaces that may get wet, especially bathtubs and shower stalls.
- \* Let the soap suds go down the drain before you move around in the shower. If you are prone to falling, use a shower chair and a handheld shower attachment.
- \* Put nightlights and light switches close to your bed.
- \* Use bright bulbs in your home.
- \* Keep your telephone near your bed. During the day, keep a portable phone with you so you won't have to walk to answer it.
- \* Tack down all carpets and area rugs.
- \* Close cabinet doors and drawers so you won't run into

them.

- \* When it rains or snows, consider using a cane.
  - \* Use a shoulder bag, fanny pack, or backpack to leave hands free.
  - \* Check curb heights before stepping down.
  - \* When entering rooms, look for differences in floor levels.
  - \* Insure that every room in your home has a light switch near the entrance.
  - \* Practice balancing. Hold onto something such as a countertop and stand on one leg at a time for a minute. Gradually increase the time. Try balancing with your eyes closed. Stand on your toes, then rock back to balance on your heels. Hold each position for a count of 10.
  - \* Be especially careful around pets.
- If you have a question, please write to [fredcicetti@gmail.com](mailto:fredcicetti@gmail.com).

**FINDING BALANCE: TIPS FOR A HAPPY LIFE**

## Rain Got You Down?



**BY JENNY CHAPIN**

**MONTAGUE CENTER -** Last Saturday I realized I'd better not wait until the rain stopped before planting more of my garden, and I recalled the first gardens I worked in, 20 years ago in northern California, where quite often we were wet while planting, weeding, and harvesting. Back then, I lived in a tiny cabin without electricity or running water, with the shower room a short hike away, so getting wet and dirty was a bit of a hassle. Now, with my bathroom next to the kitchen, and a washer and dryer in the mudroom, I'd feel silly if I let a little rain keep me indoors.

So I watched for a break in the rainfall, got the tools from the shed, hauled a bag of moo-

do to the garden, and moved plants from their root-bound trays to their new home. It was perfect transplanting weather, the light rain easing their transition and giving them time to adjust.

While this rain is good for the ground, most of us have by now had about as much rain as we can handle and still keep a smile on our face. There seem to be two options we can choose between when the weather gets this extreme: join it, or balance it. (A third option, shaking a fist at the sky, turns out to be not terribly effective, regardless of the strength of the gesture.)

Damp weather can make one feel sluggish and logy. It's inviting to hole up at home with movies or a good book. The

sofa calls to me for a nap, and if I let myself lie down, the steady sound of the rain is a lullaby, luring me to Morpheus. When I do go out to walk my dog, I give over to the rain, expecting that I'll return home needing to be towed off as much as my pooch.

At some point, though, we may need to counter the buildup of water in the body. Dampness can look like water retention in the body, edema (fluid accumulation in the tissues), excess weight or feelings of heaviness, fatigue, swollen joints, and mucus conditions. An overabundance of water eventually begins to put out our inner fire, which affects our appetite and digestion, our ability to stay warm, and our enthusiasm for life.

How can we offset dampness? Cooked foods bring warmth to the internal organs, as does ginger tea. Chamomile tea helps disperse damp. Exercise invigorates the body, clears obstructions, and gets things moving, overcoming that sluggishness. Foods that dry dampness include lettuce, celery, turnip, asparagus, vinegar, papaya, and leafy greens. Avoid or limit raw and cold foods, dairy products, meat, eggs, tofu, pineapple, and salt.

When it's sunny and in the 70s, I feel like I should be outside. What I tend to forget is how, when I was younger, rain was just another element to play in. Picture a little kid in her rubber boots, stomping in the puddles just for the fun of seeing the water splash up, undaunted

by the fact of getting wet - because only the Wicked Witch of the West has to worry about melting by water. We don't have to lose that enthusiasm as we age, that ability to delight in whatever the weather gods throw our way (given that it's not a dangerous extreme, of course).

So when the rain starts getting you down, try to keep your sense of humor, grab a friend, and go puddle-jumping. Lift your face to the sky, catch raindrops in your open mouth, and remember: when the sun does come out again, you'll love it that much more.

*Jenny Chapin is an acupuncturist, bodyworker, and yoga teacher in Greenfield. Suggest a topic or question for her column at [jgchapin@crocker.com](mailto:jgchapin@crocker.com).*

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### THEATER REVIEW

# Fabulous Boston Wedding

**BY FLORE**

**NORTHAMPTON** - Full house, for the premier coup d'envoi (take off) of Pauline Production's showcase of David Mamet's "Boston Wedding" last Saturday, June 3rd, in Northampton. Director-producer Jeanine Haas "wanted to start a theater company whose goal would be twofold: to raise money for local good causes and issues, and to further the influence of women in theater."



Haas said, "Boston Marriage was my choice for several reasons. May 17th was the second year anniversary of same sex legal marriage in Massachusetts..." 'Boston Marriage' was a term used for two women who lived together instead of marrying at the turn of the last century. The play, which ran for just two nights, was a fundraiser for New Century Theater.

Saturday night was a memorable event for the intimate stage known as Hallie Flanagan in the Mendenhall Center, at Smith College. The theater was

practically bursting at the seams. Twenty-three more extra chairs had to be found and squeezed in at strategic spots, so everyone could attend the play, while "The Raging Grannies" were entertaining with their famous revolutionary songs!

An ambitious performance for Pauling Productions to tackle for its maiden debut. Why? Know that its playful author, David Mamet takes delight in using words in a whirling cadenza, demanding a continuous "be on your toes" type of performance from the actors. Tongue twisters are his favorite challenges, especially tough on performers and their listeners! In the theater milieu his work is labeled 'Mametspeak'!

Who is David Mamet? He was born 1947 in Flossmoor, IL, and attended Goddard College in Vermont. He is a talented individual who started as an



*Kelsey Flynn, left, and Barbara McEwen, right, perform in Pauline Production's "Boston Marriage" by David Mamet.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SAMUEL RUSH

actor, then directed plays, before writing them. I saw one of his unforgettable adaptations in France years ago of Brecht's "Caucasian Charcoal Circles." Mamet won the Pulitzer Prize for his play "Glengarry Glen Ross".

"Boston Wedding" is one of his early works. It was performed in London at the famous New Ambassadors Theater in the West End. The setting is a comfortable rococo drawing room, with a flair for chintz, in the 1890s. Three women reveal their hopes, despairs, and predilections, while aiming at each other's throats, in a display of high-tension emotion. Anna, the aging

companion, is played by Barbara McEwen, Claire, her protégée, by Kelsey Flynn, and Catherine, the innocent, jolly maid, by Margaret Reilly. They deliver, one the other, a sort of "cyanide sorbet confectioned by Escoffier."

Mark your calendar for the coming plays:

June 15th - July 2nd, New Century Theater presents at Mendenhall, Smith College: Henry James' "The Turn of The Screw."

July 6th-16th, Tennessee Williams' "The Glass Menagerie."

July 20th - 30th, Donald Margulies' "Sight Unseen."

August 3rd -13th, Wendy Wasserstein's "The Sisters Rosensweig."

Reservations: 413-585-3220  
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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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**FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH**  
Opening Reception of Elisa Campbell's Photography Exhibit at Great Falls Discovery Center, 5 - 7 p.m.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, Chris Piquette Band, Rock & Roll. Come to dance! 9:30 pm (413) 659-3384

Arena Civic Theatre presents *Lion in Winter* by James Goldman, Directed by Elisa A. Martin. 8 p.m., Tickets available at World Eye Bookshop or call 863-2281 x 3, \$12.50 general; \$10 seniors and students. Continues on June 16, 17, & 18 at The Shea Theatre.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 10TH**  
1794 Meeting House, New Salem presents Southern Rail. Heart stopping Bluegrass! 7:30 p.m., \$10/\$8 (978) 544-5200 or www.1794meetinghouse.org for more information.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, Drunk Stuntmen. Jack Grace band opens. Come to

dance! 9:30 pm (413) 659-3384

*Lion in Winter* at The Shea Theatre, see June 9th listing.

Giant Indoor Tag Sale at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, 84 K Street, Turners Falls. Proceeds benefit church's Oil Tank Removal Fund, 9 - 1 p.m. rain or shine. For donations and information call Shirley Webb 773-7202.

Life Cycle of a Honey Bee. Learn about the life cycle of honey bees and the important role they play in pollination. Live bees on display for program. Program led by Dan Conlon of Warm Colors Apiary. Program geared towards families. 1 - 2 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center 863-3221.



Mammal Tracking on Montague Sandplain, bring cameras, binoculars, join tracker Preston Taylor and learn how

to I.D. animals through tracks. Meet at 10 a.m. at parking spot under power lines on Plains Road. Info: Call Great Falls Discovery Center 863-3221. A Mass BioDays event.

12th Annual Classic Day in Greenfield - Got Wheels? Presented by the Greenfield Business Association. The theme will focus on transportation. Old and new vehicles on display, vintage bikes, biodiesel car, motorcycle show and music, crafts, food, children's activities, Pizza Eating Contest. Loose Caboose, Shakin' All Over, Zoë Darrow and the Fiddleheads, and Songwriters Showcase with - Seth Glier, Joe Graveline, Stephanie Marshall, Pat & Tex LaMountain and Russ Thomas Held in the Greenfield Energy Park . Miles St., Greenfield. 10-4 p.m.

Workshop: Fly Fishing with Jim Lafley Learn the basics of rods, reels, lines, knots, flies and general fly fishing etiquette. At Northfield Mountain Recreation Area located on Route 63 in Northfield. No previous experience required. For ages 12 and older. 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Pre-register at 800-859-2960

**SUNDAY, JUNE 11TH**  
Scandinavian Dance: Second Sundays at the Montague Grange, Main Street, Montague Center. Last Dance of the Season! 3 -6 p.m. Great live music played by Andrea Larson and friends. We will celebrate midsummer with a dance party, enjoy refreshments, and play to your requests! Dancers with all levels of experience are welcome. No partner necessary. \$10 suggested donation.

Great Falls Discovery Center Family Program. 12:30 p.m. *Nature Craft Time*: Leaf rubbings and other nature art designs. 2 p.m. *Meet an Animal*: Meet a couple of local frogs and hear about their habitats and needs. 3:30 p.m. *Nature Game*: Join in on the fun of Nature Wheel of Fortune and guess puzzles. Programs sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. FREE. For more information call the Great Falls Discovery Center 863-3221.

The Goddess Festival: For Women's Cancer & Survivors Featuring music and drumming circles, and food. At the Greenfield Energy Park located at the end of Miles Street in Greenfield. Noon to 5 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14TH** (Flag Day!) Bo's Arts, a reading about visual art about a dog - possibly augmented by music and power point presentations. at the Montague Bookmill, 440 Greenfield Rd, Montague, 367.9666 no charge, 7 p.m. Presented by The Lady Killigrew.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 15TH**  
Learn how to buy and sell on eBay at the Carnegie Library, 10 - 12 p.m. RSVP 863-4727, refreshments served.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 16TH**  
Nature Detective, Growing Up with Nature: Four Class Series for Children. Join Dawn Marvin Ward for a series of nature programming for preschool aged children. Sponsored by the Gill-Montague Community Partnership for Children with grant funding from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. At the Great Falls Discovery Center, 10 - 11 a.m. 12:00 PM - Grief Workshop

**SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH**  
The National Spiritual Alliance is sponsoring a workshop today from noon-4:30 p.m. entitled "Death, Dying, and the Grief Process. Facilitator is Rev. Cori Lovering, TNSA president and a retired nurse. The workshop will be conducted at Thompson Temple across from the Post Office in Lake Pleasant and the cost is \$25.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 18TH**  
5 p.m. Family dance with Cindy Green, followed by a potluck supper and a Pie Social at the Montague Grange Hall, Montague Center. 7:15 p.m. Contra Dance for all with Cindy Green, David Kaynor, Steve Howland, and the Montague All-Comers Band.

**UNTIL- JUNE 18TH**  
Botanic Garden of Smith College Church Exhibition Gallery, Northampton. www.smith.edu/garden/exhibits/upcoming-exhibitions

**ONGOING**  
Jay Maisel at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Hours, Thurs.-Sun. 1-5 p.m. Free. 863-0009.

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# How to Free a Hummingbird

BY FRAN HEMOND

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - A buzz in the little greenhouse usually means beware, a bumblebee is checking out the goodies and you may be next. The door had been opened to let in cool air to temper the good solar heat of a sunny afternoon. A big black cat picture in the window was supposed to discourage flying creatures from coming in. This buzzer had paid no heed. He was a hummingbird that had wandered in and was angrily trying to fly through the window wall.

His ruby throat was not the bright red of an adult bird, and

he acted like a young one, not familiar with the need to avoid cats and buildings. To put out a hummingbird undamaged would require the help of the gods.

He was three inches of twinkling wings and long bill. His wings beat so fast they were a blur. He hovered, flew forward and backward, up and down with facility, looking for a hole through the window wall. He had come thousands of miles from



Ruby Throated Hummingbird

Central America without mishap. How to free him.

Consulting the experts' books, I found that his weight equaled one penny, that his wings beat more than 50 times a second, that he hovers over a flower as he collects its nectar with his bill, that he perches only briefly to rest, and that he is pugnacious.

My butterfly net has put out moths and butterflies. They always seem to fly up into the

net and can be carried out. This little guy kept flying down and out, but after quiet assuring conversation and many tries, he perched on the side of the net and was carried out the door. Free and undamaged! He took off to the north, a wiser bird.

In my experience the hummingbirds are fairly common where bee balm and other red flowering plants are available. A blooming fuschia plant hanging on a porch is an invitation for them to zoom in, hover to feed, and zoom off. Place your plant by a viewing window, and the iridescent little beings may favor you with regular visits.

## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

# Dodging Wet Weather

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - Once again the rain is keeping me out of the garden. Luckily, the weather over the long Memorial Day weekend was more hospitable, and I was able to get the tomatoes and peppers in. In fact, it was so bright and hot the tomatoes could have used sunscreen.

In the sunroom, the plants got plenty of sunlight but it was filtered through tinted glass. If you notice white spots or white leaves on your plants, it's likely sunburn. There's no great need for concern. You can snip these off with no harm done to the plant. Tomato plants often lose

bottom leaves due to disease but there's always plenty of new growth above to keep the plant going as it prepares to develop that luscious fruit we all wait for.

If you are just getting plants into the garden, you would be wise to do some judicious pruning for good plant development. If you've grown your own and they've gotten a bit leggy like mine, it's best to snip the bottom leaves and bury the plant deeply either straight up or lengthwise. The underground stem will put out roots that will make the plant strong and hearty.

If you succumbed to buying those impressive potted tomatoes with blossoms or even petite fruits, grit your teeth and snip them off. Leaving them on will drain the plant's energies into the fruit and blossom instead of into general growth. Don't worry, you'll have fruit soon enough and you'll pick it from plants that are hearty and healthy for a long producing



MARY AZARIAN ILLUSTRATION

season.

Remember to look up the name of the tomatoes you are growing. Tomatoes come in determinate and indeterminate varieties. Determinates have a pre-determined length of season and will grow only to a certain height. Indeterminates will continue to grow until they are killed by frost or disease. These plants will appreciate tall support systems like staking or cages. Your tomatoes will also appreciate weeding.

This is where mulching

comes in. I have used black plastic because it holds the heat and inhibits weed growth. Tomatoes do not like competition, so any weed control you choose will result in happier plants. Tomatoes also like food. Side dressing with compost or any organic fertilizer will result in heavier yields.

On the subject of weeding, if your garden is like the Brown garden, there are more weeds than you can keep up with. The peas are starting to set blossoms and of course, there are weeds between the double rows of pea plants. These plants are tall now and well established. Their roots are shallow so they prefer sharing with a few weeds rather than being subjected to heavy weeding, which disturbs the roots. I lose more pea plants by over-weeding when they are tall than by ignoring the crabgrass and other aliens.

If you are intent on weeding, put your energy into keeping

your root crops weed free. Carrots, onions, leeks, beets will appreciate your efforts. Weeds in these crops will actually inhibit root development, causing forked carrots and puny onions, leeks and beets.

There is still time to plant beans, squash and cucumbers. You'll be as far ahead as your neighbors if you wait until the ground dries out a bit. They may have their crops in earlier, but they'll also probably experience powdery mildew. This plant killer loves damp weather. You can recognize it by the whitish powder on leaves that are simultaneously folding and dying. If you get ahead of this problem you can treat it with spray or powder, but it's best to beat it by waiting to plant until the soil has dried out a bit and the sun returns. In the meantime, you can enjoy harvesting radishes, lettuce and spinach crops. Don't forget to plant a new row of lettuce for the one you pick. As always, happy gardening!

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