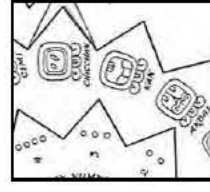




TWO EGGS IN THE NEST!

Eagle Update
Page 8



SECRETS OF THE MAYA

Revealed
Page 12

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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YEAR 6 - NO. 22

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 6, 2008

Return of the Landfill

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE - "It's time we re-address the landfill issue," said Allen Ross, at the selectboard meeting Monday night. And with those seven or eight words, a bone of contention that won't stay buried - what Montague should do with a state permitted 34-acre landfill site off Turnpike Road - has popped back onto the town's agenda.

A Short History

The town has worried the landfill issue since at least as far back as May of 1987, when town meeting first appropriated \$40,000 to conduct a hydrogeological study for expansion and development at the pre-existing Turnpike Road landfill, where the town formerly dumped and buried residents' trash. That site has since been capped in compliance with Department of Environmental Protection standards, though an adjacent 'burn dump' from earlier years still needs remediation to satisfy DEP regulations.

In March of 1989, town meeting turned down a petitioned article to require a two-thirds majority to approve siting a new solid waste facility in town. In June of that year, special town meeting approved, by a vote of 57 to 18, a motion to develop a 'state-of-the-art' landfill at the Turnpike Road site, with a capacity of up to 200 tons per day, for regional solid waste disposal. The same meeting defeated unanimously a proposal to appropriate \$8,075,000 to cre-

see LANDFILL pg 11

MOVE OVER MIKE MULLIGAN



SARA CAMPBELL PHOTO

Doug Cutter at the controls of the Kobota, in the pit at the WPCF

BY SARA CAMPBELL

MONTAGUE CITY - Work continues at the wastewater treatment plant on Greenfield Road, as Van Dyke Construction, out of Rindge, NH excavates the foundation for the new wet weather chlorine tank. Penta is the prime contractor on the \$2 million job, the second phase of the \$5.7 million combined sewer overflow remediation and treatment plant upgrades. The tank, which will pretreat overflow from the plant during severe rainstorms, certainly would have come in handy on

see SEWER pg 15

GMRSD Rolls Out Prelim \$17 Mil Budget

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

TURNERS FALLS - "We are not underperforming, we are under resourced," said school superintendent Ken Rocke, in a defiant retort to the Massachusetts DOE, at Tuesday night's presentation of the Gill-Montague schools' (GMRSD) preliminary \$17,068,078 operating budget for fiscal '09. Last June, just as Rocke came on board as interim superintendent for the beleaguered district, the DOE placed the GMRSD on watch as an underperforming district due to what it termed a lack of educational leadership, and a lack of fiscal resources to meet educational goals.

On Tuesday, Rocke, with help from G-M business manager Lynn Bassett, Sheffield principal Chip Wood and upper school principal Jeff Kenney, outlined the proposed budget, which amounts to a 5½% hike over the GMRSD's present operating budget.

Sounding a familiar refrain from recent budget struggles, Rocke said, "We're trying to

see BUDGET pg 9

Representative Donelan Attends Erving Selectboard

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

State Representative Christopher Donelan (D-Orange) made an appearance Monday night at the Erving selectboard meeting. Donelan offered straight talk to constituents about the prospect for state aid in a year when Massachusetts is dealing with a \$1.3 billion budget gap.



Christopher Donelan

Asked if he thought it was realistic that Erving stood to make any gain in state aid over last year from Governor Deval Patrick's optimistic budget forecast, Donelan replied, "How realistic is it? Not very. There is vir-

tually no chance it will affect this year's budget." Donelan cited non-recurring revenue and a shortfall in lottery money as some of the factors working against the governor's budget. "When people who like to play

scratch tickets every day get a \$600 bill for oil, that's going to cut into their desire to play," Donelan opined.

When it came to Patrick's plan to build three casinos in Massachusetts and apply revenue from licensing their construction to this year's state budget, Donelan said, "Everything is speculation at this point."

However, Donelan told the selectboard the state was not looking at any "big cuts," and only an extreme downturn would change the overall

see DONELAN pg 15

Beth Peura Promoted to Chief Master Sergeant

BY JOE KWIECINSKI

MONTAGUE - Kathy and Andy Peura, of Old Homestead Farm on Federal Street, point to the good education provided by the local community as a major factor in the upbringing of their daughter Beth, who was promoted February 15th to the highest enlisted rank in the United States Air Force: Chief Master Sergeant.

"It might sound corny," Kathy said, "but it takes an entire community, as they say, to help raise its children. We had a lot of help in bringing up both Beth and our son



CMS Beth Peura (center) received the Bronze Star in San Antonio, Texas last month.

Timothy. For example, school system, and at they had marvelous teachers in the Montague

see PEURA pg 8

PET OF THE WEEK

Time for a Treat



Nellie

My name is Nellie and I am a four-year-old black and white domestic short hair cat in need of a good home. I am a shy girl that warms up quickly, and once I am your friend I am the best friend a person could have. I am full of love and sweetness, and I am always up for batting some toys around. I also love to eat. Sometimes I think about canned food all afternoon, dreaming of what flavor I would like to eat best. I might even start talking to you to ask if you can open the can! For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email leverett@dpvhs.org.

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CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Mother Goose March 8th

Mother Goose on the Loose has been rescheduled to Saturday, March 8th, at the Carnegie Library, at 10:30 a.m. The program is an interactive mix of guitar and banjo music, rhymes, stories, puppets, and other visuals. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers and are performed by children's librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix.

The monthly Saturday pro-

grams are usually held the first Saturday of each month through spring. Linda Hickman also performs the programs solo on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. weekly at the Carnegie Library. The programs are supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. For more information call 863-3214.

Free Programs at Turners Falls Women's Resource Center

BY CHRISTINE DIANI - New, free programs for women are starting in March at the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center (TFWRC) at 41 Third Street in Turners Falls.

The M.I.N.D. Program, Montague Institute for New Directions, a collaboration between the Brick House and Turners Falls Women's Resource Center is a free 60-hour training program for women. This training program was developed in response to the need identified by Montague residents for a program for women in the low to moderate income range that would increase economic opportunities and provide leadership training. During the 60-hour training, women will experience: group building activities that lead to goal identification, group exploration of community issues, leadership skill development, increased employability skills such as

computer literacy, resume writing and interviewing skills, communication and conflict resolution skills, and stress management and reduction techniques.

The M.I.N.D. Program starts Monday, March 17th and meets Mondays from 12:30 - 3 p.m. and Thursdays from 2 - 4:30 p.m. and will be co-facilitated by Christine Diani and Vickie Flynn, and will include guest speakers.

Introduction to Toning with Carol Pedigree will be offered as a one time workshop on Tuesday, March 25th from 6-8 p.m. Toning and chanting are healing techniques anyone can learn. They can be useful for chronic pain or anxiety management. Discover the natural vibrations, overtones, and harmonics within the human voice and you can begin to develop its innate therapeutic capabilities to enhance health and wellness.

All programs are free to area

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- March 10-14

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

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

Tuesday, 11th
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. AARP tax preparation; advance registration needed.
1:00 p.m. Spring Painting Classes. David Sund instructing. Gill & Montague residents \$10 for 6 weeks; all others \$15.

Wednesday, 12th

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Mealsite Meeting
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 13th
10 a.m. Coffee & Conversation
10:30 a.m. Nutrition Program with Michelle Miner.
:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 14th
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1 p.m. Christmas Work Bee

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

Monday, 10th
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch

Tuesday, 11th

FACES & PLACES

DETMOLD PHOTO

DETMOLD PHOTO

Plowing Out 5th Street, Saturday Morning

women and, if needed, free childcare is provided during the programs. To sign up for these programs at the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center or for more information, call Christine at (413) 863-2455 or email christine mcs@m@crocker.com.

GREAT FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE WEEK

Grade 6 : Meghan Casey
Grade 7: Hannah Harvey
Grade 8: Haley Ozdarski & Brandyn Boroski

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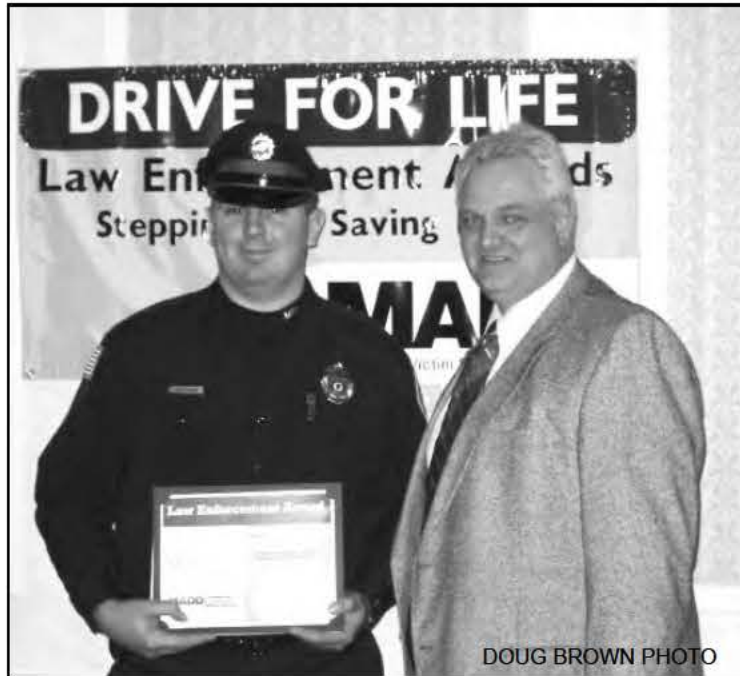
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JOE GRAVELINE

Lapointe Honored for Drunk Driver Haul

DEVENS - Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) recognized patrolman Christopher Lapointe of the Montague police department at its annual Drive for Life law enforcement recognition event in Devens, on Tuesday, February 26th. MADD considers law enforcement officers the frontline in the campaign to eliminate drunk driving. Lapointe had the most operating under the influence arrests in Montague last year, according to Montague police chief Ray Zukowski. Lapointe handled 11 out of a total of 27 OUI arrests for the department last year.

Highly visible enforcement campaigns - including ignition interlock devices for all convicted drunk drivers - are the cornerstones of the campaign to eliminate drunk driving. "Dedicated, well-trained police officers are our everyday heroes, stopping drunk drivers before they hurt themselves or



Patrolman Christopher Lapointe of the Montague Police, with Chief Raymond Zukowski, at the Drive for Life annual Award Ceremony in Devens on February 26th. Lapointe was honored for having the most drunk driving tags in the department last year: eleven.

others," said Barbara Harrington, MADD state director. The 110 local officers and state troopers recognized at the Drive for Life made 2,800 arrests in 2007, about eight arrests every day.

Corrections

At the Gill special town meeting, of Monday, February 25th, Article VII, to adopt a quarterly tax payment system for the town was tabled by majority vote, not passed by majority vote, as reported (MR VI #21). The motion was tabled until more infor-

mation could be presented. We regret the error.

In the same issue, an article on the Democratic Town Caucus listed the term for Montague Housing Authority as three years. The office is actually a five-year term.

SAFE & GREEN Wendell Gathering Tuesday, March 11th - 7 p.m. Wendell Free Library

TO WRITE A TOWN MEETING RESOLUTION CALLING FOR:
CLOSURE AND DECOMMISSIONING of the Vermont Yankee
Reactor by the time its operating license expires in 2012

Considerations:

- replacement energy: conservation and renewable sources
- full employment and retraining for current workers
- no relicensing.

Other towns in MA, many in FRANKLIN COUNTY and especially those within the 20 mile radius of the reactor, are having similar meetings. Some MA towns are joining with sister cities in VT to support the impact they may have via legislative action. Visitors will include Randy Kehler and Chad Simmons from Citizens Awareness Network, who will share insights and strategies that other towns have developed in this campaign. Anyone is welcome to attend. Additional ideas will be considered.

Inclusive Birding Continues in Turners Falls

BY MARCY MARCHELLO - On the Saturday mornings of March 8th, 22nd, and April 12th, accessible birding will return to Turners Falls from 10 a.m. to noon. This free annual program explores easy access birding hot spots, in search of lingering winter waterfowl,

nesting bald eagles and arriving spring migrants. Facilitated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's universal access program and the Hampshire Bird Club, the outings are gently paced to accommodate seniors, families, and people with disabilities. Pre-

registration is encouraged, as the program is limited to ten participants. Binoculars and other supportive devices are provided. The program starts at the Great Falls Discovery Center. For further information and to register, call 413-545-5758.

Gill-Montague Kindergarten Registration March 13th

Gill-Montague Regional School District announces its annual Kindergarten Registration for all children who will be 5 years old by September 1st, 2008. The registration will be held Thursday, March 13th from noon to 5:30

p.m. at Hillcrest Elementary School, for all students residing in Turners Falls, Montague City and Turnpike Road. It will be held at Montague Center School for all students residing in Montague Center, Lake Pleasant and Millers Falls. It

will be held at Gill Elementary School for all Gill students. Please bring: birth certificate, record of immunization, proof of residency. For more information please call Hillcrest: 863-9526; Gill: 863-9255; Montague Center: 367-9201.

International Women's Day: March 8th

On Saturday, March 8th, International Women's Day, from 11 a.m. - Noon, on the Greenfield Town Common, the weekly peace vigil will focus on "Women Say NO to

War! US Out of Iraq and Afghanistan; No War on Iran."

Sponsored by the Greenfield Weekly Peace Vigil, Coalition for Women's

Lives, Code Pink, and the Socialist Party/Western Mass Local. Contact person: Mary McClintock (mcclinto@verizon.net).

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Canvas or Plastic?

As Montague once again takes up the discussion of the best use for 36 acres of town owned land off Turnpike Road, the selectboard has ruled out using this part of town to dump any more municipal solid waste. That's a politically wise move. Municipal solid waste - commonly called trash - has a lot of downsides, as residents of this neighborhood remember all too well. For one thing, it smells bad. For another, it blows in the wind, brings vermin, flocks of birds, and a host of attendant environmental problems requiring long-term containment.

As we seek to maximize the potential profit Montague can make from this state-permitted landfill site, a site we have spent many hundreds of thousands of dollars developing, if we are going to limit the debate to more politically palatable uses - a longterm burial site for contaminated soils, for example, or incinerator ash -- we should also spend some time considering how to reduce our own municipal solid waste stream. After all, if we don't want 'them' to send their trash to Montague, who are we to send our trash there?

There are practical steps each household can take to reduce the amount of trash we put out on the curb each week for the brave men from the DPW to haul away. Now that the town has hiked the cost of trash stickers to \$3.00 a bag, it makes even more practical sense for us to explore all these methods: reusing, recycling, composting, and reducing the amount of non-biodegradable packaging we purchase with the items we buy. These and many other means of reducing your household's pay per throw budget will have the added benefit of reducing the amount of trash that winds up buried in some other town's landfill or going up the stack in some other community's incinerator. We print how-to advice on all these methods in our regular Waste Not column,

and the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District offers more ideas at their practical, easy-to-use website: www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.

We're going to take a moment to suggest another way to reduce the amount of non-biodegradable trash heading to landfills and incinerators from our town, in the sincere hope readers will pick it up. The next time you go grocery shopping, bring a canvas bag with you. Or if you are doing a lot of shopping, bring two. If you don't own a canvas bag, pick one up: Food City offers them for sale now, as do most of the area coops and grocery stores.

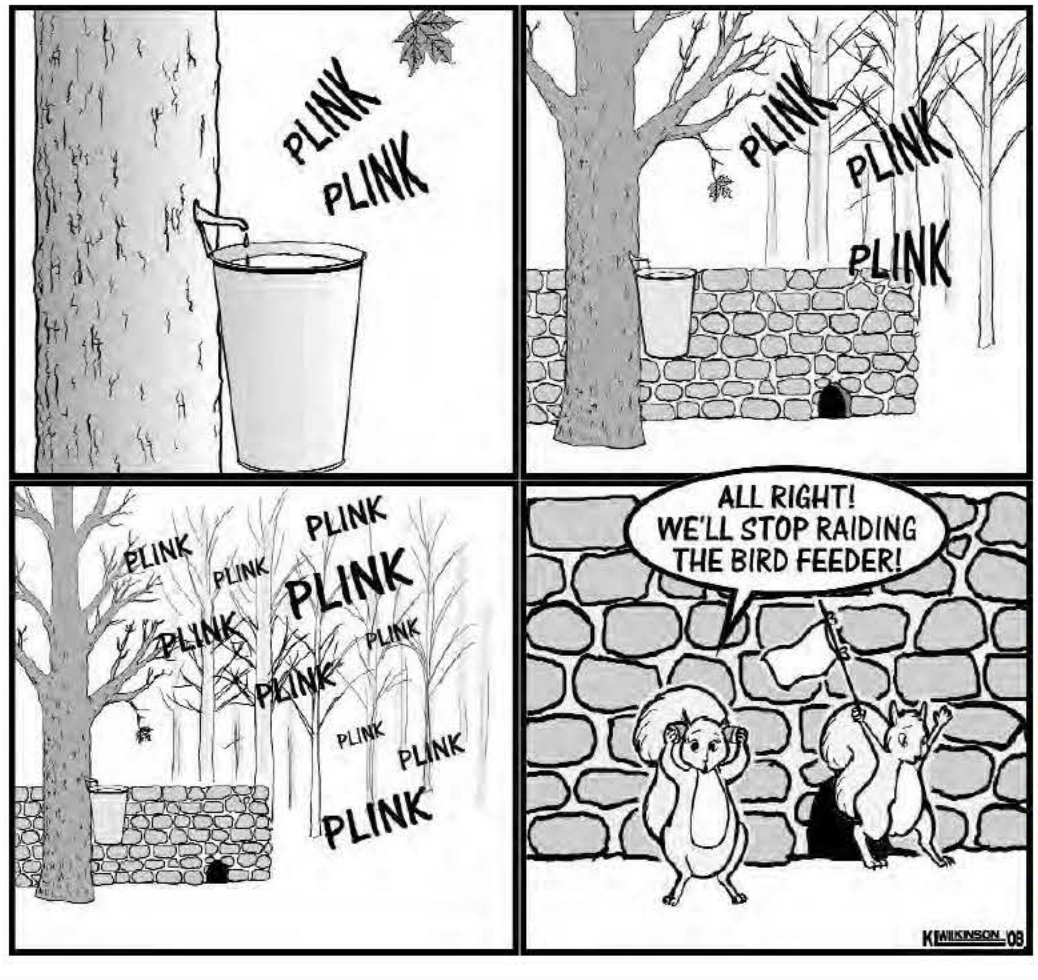
Other countries, like Ireland, have introduced a modest tax on the use of plastic (petro-chemically produced) bags at the check-out line. Once the tax was introduced, the use of plastic bags in Ireland dropped to almost nothing. In this country, cities like San Francisco have passed bans on the use of plastic bags, and we hope that practice spreads.

America currently produces and consumes 90 billion plastic bags a year, which wind up festooning our trees and roadsides after one or two uses, or taking up needed landfill space, where they will take 1000 years to degrade, or heading to incinerators, where burning plastic increases the threat of harmful stack emissions.

We'll reserve judgment on the best use of the town owned land off Turnpike Road until we hear more from the selectboard. But there is no need to wait on reducing the problem we ship out to other towns, each and every week. The non-biodegradable plastic bag is one aspect of American culture we would be glad to leave behind, permanently, in favor of a sensible, low-cost, renewable option: the canvas bag.

Try one on for size. You'll like it.

THE SAP IS RUNNING



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Concern on Revived Landfill

The public portion of Monday's selectboard meeting (March 3rd) closed with board member Allen Ross' proposal to convene a committee to revisit the development of a landfill in Montague. I have heard Dr. Ross mention his interest in a landfill at several joint meetings of the selectboard and finance committee, and he's aware of my cautious response. Since the selectboard has now voted to appoint a new committee, it is time to share my perspective.

I share Dr. Ross' concern for Montague's economic health, but am not yet convinced this is the best means to ensure it, or the highest and best use of the property. I served on the committee that drafted a Request For Proposals (RFP) for landfill development in 2005, and served as well on the committee that examined the sole technical proposal that passed the initial qualification test in December of that year. In the course of this examination my opinion changed from mild interest to

concern, and when the bidder was judged non-compliant with the terms of the RFP in 2006 I felt the project had ended satisfactorily.

Some important concerns were not fully treated in the first proposal cycle, and a new committee should be sure to give them extended attention as it proceeds. Quality of town life, truck access to the site, and reliable financial projections are subjects that were not resolved at the time the last bidder was finally judged non-compliant.

I don't think I'm alone in raising these concerns, and hope others familiar with the last evaluation will be consulted. For example, DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron was an evaluation team member who expressed concerns about the impact of trucks on Turnpike Road, Millers Falls Road, Routes 47 and 63 and the various bridges into town. Health director Gina McNeely and toxicologist Emily Monosson also served on that committee, and

should be asked for their views.

I hope the new committee will both broaden its scope and take a measured approach to this initiative.

- John Hanold
Turners Falls

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GCC Receives Funding for STEM RAYS Program

Greenfield Community College, UMass and Smith College will share \$312,000 over three years from the Board of Higher Education, to continue the successful STEM RAYS (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) program, working with teachers in Franklin County to provide authentic research based after school experiences for students in grades 4-8. STEM RAYS was originally funded through a National Science Foundation

grant that will be completed in Fall of 2008. Funding from the Board of Higher Education will continue the program into 2011 and allow an increase in the number of sites in the region. The program is currently operating in 18 schools in Franklin County and serving over 200 students in after school science research programs.

Grants will fund engineering curriculum development, summer camps on biotechnology, and STEM teacher training.

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 3/5/08



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

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GUEST  EDITORIAL

Shake the Hand of the Man

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
SMITHFIELD, RI - On Thursday, I got an internet notice from Bryant University that Bill Clinton was going to speak at my alma mater on Friday. I took a ride down to see the wizard. Bryant had only two days to get the show organized and to send out emails. I arrived at the Tupper campus in Smithfield, R.I. at 10 a.m. The Tupperware heirs had donated the 400 plus acres of land to Bryant in memory of the company's founder.

The gym doors were to open at 12:15. The campus parking lots were filled everywhere by 10 a.m. when I arrived. Cars were beginning to line the road leading to the campus. A crowd lined up at the gym, sometimes four or five across. The end had snaked out of sight by 11 a.m. But the gods were smiling down on me.

By some miracle, a single solitary empty parking space stood waiting, close by the gym. I slipped into the spot in an instant. It turned out to also be next to the campus library. An omen, of sorts, I thought. So, I took a copy of *Jep's Place* into the library to inquire if they would like a donation from an alum. Librarian Laura Kohl graciously accepted.

When I inquired about Bill Clinton's address, she said it was going to be mobbed and the best I could hope for was standing room in the gym or a seat in the auditorium where people would be able to view Clinton's talk simulcast on a closed circuit TV screen. I couldn't see waiting outside for several hours in the biting cold and sharp wind, and I decided to



Stephanie Reategui introduced Clinton and U.S. Rep Jim Langevin at the rally for his wife at Bryant University in Rhode Island last week. Langevin did a warm-up for Clinton. It really wasn't needed. Clinton's charisma was self-evident. When he began speaking, you could feel the enthusiasm and energy surging from the audience.

Hillary Clinton went on to win Rhode Island handily in Tuesday's primary election.

return home. A TV screen, I can watch at home, I said.

"Why don't you go over to alumni relations?" she said. "Ask for Robin Warde. Tell her I sent you."

Robin was very cordial and said she might be able to get me a ticket so I could sit in the bleachers at the back of the gym. "It will be too long to stand for over three hours waiting," she said. "People will begin lining up outside at 11:00 or before, for the noon opening."

Robin introduced me to some other people. Then she exclaimed, "Oh, I know you. You're the one who wrote *Jep's Place*. Did you see your book listed in the internet mailing? We publicized it. I'll go get you a copy of the publicity."

Another woman asked to see a copy of *Jep's Place*. I went to

my car to get one. She wanted to buy a signed copy for her father, Henry Maker. Soon I was being introduced to more people. I gave up trying to remember the long list of names.

"Wait a minute," Robin said. "I'll see if I can get a green ticket for you."

She returned with a green ticket. White or green, what's the difference, I wondered. Next, Richard LaFleur, Major and Planned gifts officer took me, and a couple of others, to lunch. He picked up the tab. We went outside to stand in line. The gym wasn't open yet and the line, four or five wide, snaked back as far as the eye could see. The wind was cold and sharp. After shivering outside for a few minutes, we retreated to the warm building.

When the gym doors opened

a pleasant young woman took my arm as we privileged ones bypassed the huddle masses lined up like lemmings, and we went inside to find our reserved seats, ringside, where officials, faculty, trustees and other VIPs could sit on cushioned chairs with a clear view of the podium, right in front of us. I felt like a Republican.

A bevy of photographers crowded a raised platform at the rear of the gym next to the bleachers. Two lone photographers stood ringside near us.

"I wonder who those two photographers are," I said to LaFleur. "Do you suppose the secret service guys will throw me out if I go up there too?"

"You can try."

"What the heck, I've got on a blue blazer and I'm just as bald as he is."

The Secret Service guy clos-

est to me began giving me the evil eye, so I took his picture. He was not amused, but he didn't escort me out.

Bill Clinton was introduced by a shapely young woman in high heels and form fitting white sweater. Bill rewarded her with a lingering snuggle. It seemed to momentarily distract him from his mission of bailing out Hillary's listing boat.

To Clinton's credit, he spoke with neither notes, teleprompter, stammer, stutter, nor hesitation. He made five points, listing Hillary's accomplishments, that all the previous debates and hoopla had never revealed. The enthusiastic crowd, young and old, cheered and applauded him as he made salient points about jobs, green energy, global warming, student loan rates, education, affordable health care, McCain's hundred year war plans in Iraq, a war that has already lasted longer than WWII and caused half the world to hate us. The response was deafening. The enthusiastic crowd set the atmosphere alive with energy. You could almost smell the Oval Office falling to the Democrats again.

Clinton closed his stirring address by coming down to the fence to greet and shake the hands of the audience, who pressed forward adoringly. The increasingly nervous Secret Service men admonished the crowd not to push, as the fence began to tilt toward the President.

It was a memorable day. I'd never shaken the hand of a president, especially a hand still warm from caressing the shapely mistress of ceremonies in her form fitting sweater.

The Push and Pull of Building a New Police Station

BY PAM HANOLD
TURNERS FALLS - Following the town vote approving a new police station in November, the building committee has shifted from the design phase to the building phase, adding Ken Morin, Robert (Budda) Allen, Bill Whiteman, and Jason Burbank

to the committee's ranks, along with their construction and engineering expertise. That gives us a committee with eleven voting members, plus four contributing members, and several others in the "call me when I can be useful" category.

We immediately needed to meet the submissions timeline

for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), as well as comply with the state's requirement of having an Owner's Project Manager (OPM) hired prior to hiring the architect for the construction phase. With town administrator Frank Abbondanzio's help, we put

out a Request for Qualifications for an OPM on November 28th.

All proposals were due by 2 p.m. on Friday, December 14th. At 3 p.m., a subcommittee started reading to rank the top three proposals. By noon on Monday the 24th, we had reviewed the proposals

received, checked references, interviewed the top three candidates, recommended a first and second choice to the select-board, negotiated a contract with the OPM (who reviewed the architect's design even before signing his contract, thereby enabling us to negoti-

see **POLICE** pg 6

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EYE ON TOWN FINANCES

Montague Budgeting: Just Like Home

BY JOHN HANOLD

TURNERS FALLS - The Montague selectboard and finance committee are sponsoring a public forum at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 17th, in the upstairs meeting room of town hall (next to the Shady Glen), during the usual Monday meeting of the selectboard. The purpose is to have an open discussion of the town's forecasted shortfall for the fiscal year starting in July, 2008. Articles on this subject have appeared in this newspaper on February 14th and 28th.

The boards want to share with the general public the town of Montague's estimated revenue and spending figures, and will describe some alternatives to close the anticipated gap, which the town administrator estimated last week at \$1.5 million.

No decisions will be made at the forum, but the public's opinions and suggestions will be helpful to the boards as they prepare a budget to recommend to the Montague's annual town meeting on May 3rd, at the Turners Falls High School.

As I began thinking about the forum, I saw some parallels between the town's choices and the choices a household faces. Here's how I see the situation - it's a simplified look rather than a perfect fit, but it puts things in perspective for me.

Think of Montague as a family household with a

regular salary and some savings in the bank. The family incurs various expenses, for everything from fuel oil to school supplies for the kids to house cleaning and entertainment. If the household's expenses are greater than the salary, the family has to pick a combination of three ways to close the gap: cut back on some expenses (which may mean less entertainment, fewer school supplies for the kids, and other economies), draw down the savings account (which puts the problem off for only a little while), or get a salary increase.

Montague as Household

Montague's 'salary' is the total of property taxes, plus local fees like sewer and permit fees, plus state aid from the legislature. Our 'savings' include the checking account (called free cash, a particularly tantalizing term) and various stabilization and excess overlay balances. The 'household expenses' are the cost of town government, the cost of running the Water Pollution Control Facility, and the assessment from the Gill-Montague School District.

On the expense side, Montague has tried for years to restrict annual spending increases, but has fewer and fewer places to look for economies.



Energy costs and personnel costs, in particular, have risen faster than our town's 'salary.' Over recent years town departments have shared staff, left open positions unfilled, and actively sought grants. The school district has attempted to moderate spending growth in the face of myriad state and federal requirements for both special-needs and regular students.

Furthermore, in spite of attempts to preserve savings for unexpected events (think of securing the Strathmore after the 2007 fire, or replacing vehicles or equipment that unexpectedly break down), recent years' budgets have been balanced in part by reducing our savings accounts. About 95% of free cash has already been earmarked to help balance the coming year's budget, and the town stabilization fund is down to less than three years' worth of typical requests. The education stabilization fund, intended for non-recurring education items, has dropped

from its initial \$518,000 balance to less than \$2,000.

The excess overlay reserve account still exceeds \$1,500,000, but use of savings (generally termed "reserves" in town finance) for recurring expenses is as foolish for a town as cashing savings bonds to buy food would be for a household. After the bonds are gone, the family still needs food - but no longer has the resources to buy it. Like any household, a town that consumes its savings follows a risky course. A better use for reserves would be to address long-deferred projects like a DPW garage, a new home for the senior center or library, or economic development of the Strathmore or other under-used sites.

With one exception, there are no prospects for expanding the town's 'salary.'

Local receipts (dog tags, permits, sewer fees, etc.) change very little from year to year, and it's too soon to repeat last year's increase in the price of trash stickers. News from the legislature indicates that no increase from the current year is likely in aid (especially lottery revenue). The aid bill is still in preparation, but we don't expect significant changes from our current estimate.

The one exception to limited 'salary' prospects is property taxes. If we imagine our town

as a household, the 'employer' who sets the salary for our work is the town residents, and the way we get a salary increase is to ask for one in the form of a Proposition 2-1/2 override. This increases the allowable rise in the overall tax levy for the next year, and is the base for levy increases in future years.

So, our 'Montague household' confronts a set of choices: do we reduce expenses further, which may mean eliminating some services (not just reducing them further)? Do we further consume our savings account, which leads to a more severe gap the following year? Do we ask for a salary increase, and risk rejection (at which point we are back to the first two choices)?

Perhaps we do a little of each. Last year we drew down our savings, and so our dilemma is back again, bigger than before. Come to the forum on March 17th for more information, and an opportunity to share your thoughts on the problem, which affects us all.

John Hanold is the chair of the Montague finance Committee. The thoughts expressed here are his alone, and do not necessarily represent the views of other members of the finance committee, the selectboard, or other townspeople.

POLICE from page 5

ate the architects contract), and gotten both contracts signed and sent! Our thanks to the selectboard, who attended extra meetings during the holiday season to affirm our choices.

Kudos go to all the committee members, selectboard, and town staff whose efforts resulted in achieving such an incredibly ambitious schedule.

Thanks to that push before New Years, we were all set to dive right into providing the volumes of paperwork needed for the block grant, from which we hope to receive \$600,000 to pay down the cost of the \$5.6 million building project.

Through the combined efforts of the architect and his staff, the OPM and the clerk of the works, building committee members, town staff, and several others who happened to walk into the line of sight when extra hands were needed, we met all submission requirements by the first week of February.

Joanie Bernstein and the staff at the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority were very

helpful in organizing material and keeping us current on the to-do checklist.

OPM Tony DiLuzio and clerk of the works Ted Fiffy, of the Maguire Group, got a baptism by fire. They promised to start work at the end of the interview, gambling that contract negotiations would work out. Because they immediately reviewed Brian Humes' design work and okayed it, he was under contract as fast as possible and able to tackle the difficult task of producing bid-ready plans in about half the usual time allocated.

Humes, DiLuzio, and Fiffy and their firms have been remarkably effective and hard working on our behalf. Jacunski Humes had to break down their computer plans into many small pieces to fit into the less-than-current (technologically speaking), Massachusetts government computer system, which proved an extremely time-consuming task. DiLuzio and Fiffy had to come up to speed quickly on our town, and the many processes needing verification and explanation. It

is truly amazing how many aspects of information are required for a Block Grant.

Along with the accomplishments of December and January came one major disappointment. The committee was startled to discover that the Block Grant process prohibits our signing any construction contracts prior to having the grant awarded. In recent years, that has happened anywhere from the 6th of July to mid-September. So we are rooting for some interest at the federal level in distributing money sooner rather than later in an election year. Even so we will not be able to make our May groundbreaking deadline.

What we can and are doing is working assiduously to get all our ducks in order so we can move as quickly as possible when the money comes through. Permits, blueprint details, incorporating cash flows and schedules, furniture, and anything else we can do in advance are being worked on.

Last Thursday, Ken Morin and Turners Falls water department superintendent Michael Brown, presented a

change suggestion for more efficient water mains for the project that would alleviate the need and expense of tearing up the street for access. Next week our engineering and construction committee members will be meeting with the architect's engineers, looking especially at the efficiency of energy-saving features. To have such broadly knowledgeable and committed committee members is very reassuring. We look repeatedly for effectiveness, not only in the design and construction, but also with regard to ongoing durability, maintenance, and expense. Having other town staff people and residents adding their thinking makes this truly a continuing community endeavor.

Personally, this has been quite an intense learning period. Who knew that you can go to the Montague website and actually read years of minutes for the selectboard, finance committee, and capitol improvements committee? Or that there are not only state requirements for an OPM but also official manuals and

guidelines on what to consider and cover in contracting with one? Or that you can spend ten hours in town hall and kind souls will bring in food? Or that there are a number of differently detailed turtles to identify and protect in any given terrain - reminding me of the many spotted owl bumper stickers of the Northwest, to say nothing of the rich taste of turtle soup.

The last months have been full of these kinds of discoveries as well as the opportunity to meet and work with many capable and interesting people. Still, I look forward to the time when life on this committee no longer reminds me of the puzzlement Dr. Doolittle faced when encountering a Push-me Pull-you.

The building committee currently meets every other Thursday (oftener if needed) at 5:30 p.m. at the town hall. Fall back location when the town hall rooms are unavailable is the Turners Falls Fire Station - which is where we will meet on March 13th. All meetings are posted and open to the public.

OBITUARY

Judy Ellen Marz: Artist, Teacher, Tibetan Orphan Fundraiser

MONTAGUE - Judy Ellen Marz was born to Martin and Elizabeth Marz on January 10th, 1947 and grew up in Wickatunk, New Jersey. She died of lung cancer, peacefully and well attended by close friends on February 29th, 2008 in Montague, Massachusetts.

Judy graduated from Georgian Court College with a BA in Fine Arts in 1969. She worked for several years in the early 1970s as a potter's apprentice with the Robinson Pottery Studio in Henniker, NH, and then as an art teacher in the Salem, NH school system. From 1976 - 1996 she taught at Rundlett Jr. HS, and then at Concord HS.

In 1995, Judy became an ordained Minister of Natural Healing in the Healing Light Center Church. In 1996 she moved to Montague, where she began a new career as an energy healer, medical intuitive and spirit guide painter. She has since painted individual spirit guide portraits for more than 400 people.

The work which most touched Judy's heart and to which she was most dedicated was the fundraising she did on behalf of

exiled Tibetan Bon orphans living in northern India. From her first trip to Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India during the late 1980s, through her last trip in January 2007 and up until her death, her primary focus and purpose in life was to raise money to improve the impoverished conditions of the many orphans living at the monastery. The fundraising projects began on a very small scale with her high school students. Their early efforts with car washes and other projects had by 1989 grown into the official non-profit Bon Foundation organization, which over the past 20 years has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for food, clothing, shelter, education and the general welfare of hundreds of orphans and the Tibetan Bon community in exile in India. For the past ten years she has also operated Tibetan Yungdrung Bon Arts, a fundraising business which sold museum quality Bon



Judy Marz at the Garrison Institute, with a wagonload of stone statuary of Bon deities

artifacts including statues, thangkas, and other religious objects on behalf of the Bonpo.

The Cheshire Family Funeral home in Swanzey, NH is in charge of the cremation. Her ashes will be brought to the Menri Monastery in India later this year, where they will be incorporated in a stupa on the

monastery grounds and into 1000 small stupas, which will be delivered by pilgrims to various religious sites throughout Tibet. Of course her final wish was that anyone wanting to contribute to a memorial of her life make a donation to the Orphan Fund of the Bon Foundation, PO Box 181148, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118 (bonfoundation.org).

Judy is survived by her aunt Marie Hermes Janwich, her cousin Karen Janwich Eldridge, Karen's husband Kevin, and their children Patrick, Kyle and Kara in New Jersey. She is also survived by hundreds of loving friends all over the world and a very grateful Tibetan Bon community in Dolanji, India. Although she will be greatly missed by us all, she leaves a legacy of service and dedication

to the welfare of others that will long shine bright in our hearts and memory. Plans for a memorial celebration in mid-May are underway. For further information, contact kaliroad@hotmail.com.

The Bolt Hole by local author Lyn Clark

A strange young child, lost en route to a new home, becomes a catalyst for change for the girl who hides him, and her spinster landlady. Secrets are revealed, and mysteries solved as the state police narrow the search to their small village on the Mohawk Trail.

Lots of local color! Don't miss this page-turner!
(For adults and teens)

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PEURA from pg 1

Montague Congregational Church."

In addition, Beth's highly decorated career in the Air Force began at Turners Falls High School when a recruiter visited the school during her senior year. Two months after 1985 graduation, she went to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas to begin her six-week basic training. Following that, Beth spent a year in the 53rd Medical Wing squadron on the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

In 1987, Beth was asked if she wanted to become a military training instructor (MTI). Always one to step up to a challenge, she not only accepted the invitation but, as usual, excelled in her difficult, but gratifying duties for about eight years. Peura was elected as the Blue Rope of the Year, signifying her status as the top MTI in the entire Air Force for a twelve month span. "A lot of her airmen returned to thank her for her devotion to teaching," noted Kathy, "because she always built her trainees up."

One story perhaps best sums up Beth Peura's tenure as an MTI. "Most of her recruits were from the inner cities, from places such as New York and Los Angeles," said her mother. A six-foot, seven-inch trainee once not only towered over her but was giving her a very hard time. "Being only 5'-4", 100 pounds," Kathy. Peura explained, "Beth ordered him to kneel down and look into her eyes. She told the recruit, 'All your life you've been told you can't succeed, that you're worthless. Today I look into

your eyes and see an airman in you who will make his family and his country proud of him.'" That young man went on to an accomplished Air Force career.

In 1994, Peura married her fellow MTI, now Captain Marc Snoddy, who hails from Welford, SC. They have a 12-year-old son, Tyler, who spends summers with his grandparents in Montague.

Peura, 41, has been in harm's way on three occasions. She was stationed with the 53rd Medical Wing in Kuwait at the start of Desert Storm, and stayed there for a year. She also went on assignment with the 53rd to establish a combat trauma hospital at the Air Force base in Balad, north of Baghdad, in 2005 and returned there for another assignment last year. The hospital took care of wounded Marines, along with Iraqi soldiers and civilians.

"They took in anyone who was injured," Kathy Peura said. The Montague Congregational Church and the Turners Falls branch of the Greenfield Savings Bank sent packages of cookies, snacks, books, sunscreen, writing materials, envelopes, and stamps to Iraq. Peura and her colleagues put the vast overflow of food and gifts into a big box. Mrs. Peura stated, "It's touching how the soldiers wanted to connect with people back home. Some would come into the hospital on any medical pretense - even a case of chapped lips - to be able to get some of the things that had been sent over."

Peura's mother and father are deeply moved by the dangerous and stressful situations to which their daughter has been exposed in Iraq. "I know she's seen some profound things," Kathy said. "We can't even begin to

understand what is going on there. You have to fly in at night without turning your lights on. The hospital is in a tent. There is mortar fire. You have to have a helmet and flak jacket to protect you when you go outside. And with all this in the background, they try their very, very best to tend to the wounded."

Peura's husband Marc returned to Baghdad on March 5th to begin his third tour of duty there. Peura, currently the superintendent of the 39th Medical Inpatient Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, will start school this summer in Washington, D.C. CMS Peura will spend a year learning the Turkmen language before assignment to the U.S. Embassy in Turkmenistan, located just north of Iran and Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, all these events have their effect on the Peura family in Montague. Their daughter and son-in-law are constantly in the thoughts of her mother and father, who manage Old Homestead Farm, where they've done maple sugaring since 1991. They also raise strawberries in the summer, and pumpkins in the fall. In addition, Andy is a farrier, shoeing horses on a full-time basis. Their 42-year-old son Timothy is an electrician in Sunderland.

Right now maple sugar is the "order of the day" for Andy and Kathy. The sugaring season runs from the last week of February to early April. Andy, who has all his buckets out now, said, "We're set to go. We just need some sap."

This is the sweet season, made sweeter still by the honor and recognition bestowed on their daughter, of whom they are justifiably proud.



TWO EGGS ARE BETTER THAN ONE!

BY PAT CARLISLE

GREAT FALLS - A leap year egg appeared high atop Eagle Island, in the Eagle's nest, on Friday. By 1:40 p.m., as the eagle parents exchanged incubating duties, we saw it for the first time. Those of us who have been watching expectantly for the last few days could guess from past years' experience that an egg was about to be laid.

True to form, the proud parents-to-be doubled viewers' pleasure - as they have in years past - by providing a second egg on Tuesday, March 4th, sometime in the mid-afternoon. And as in the past, we had hoped for an early spring this year, only to find eight to ten inches of new snow!

Some of us worry, but past history tells us these eagle parents know what to do. We will watch for a third egg, hopefully, in a day or two. In 35 days, or so, we can expect to watch an eagle chick use its 'egg tooth' to crack open the shell of the first egg, and



Last Updated - 03/05/08 14:45

emerge as a small white fuzzy looking baby with big feet and a wobbly head. Then we will watch the baby change and grow almost before our eyes. If all goes well, the first hatchling will be followed soon thereafter by a sister or brother... and we still are holding out hope for a third!

Both parents share incubating duties and provide feedings. We enjoy watching these daily activities on local access TV Channel 17. This

paper prints a daily schedule; we now enjoy eagle viewing from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. and again every afternoon.

The Great Falls Discovery Center shows daily live eagle activity on their TV. The winter hours there are Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come and visit this amazing museum; it's free!

You can also find the Barton cove eagles at www.firstlightpower.com/eagles/

Happy Eagle watching!

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BUDGET from pg 1

to strike a balance between what our students need and what our towns can afford.”

Apologizing for the triteness of the metaphor, Rocke said the GMRSD has been hit by a “perfect storm” of unfavorable financial conditions. One factor is the declining enrollment in the school system, with students choosing out. A second factor is

declining state aid.

Wood said, “There are a lot of budget injustices out there, and the stakes are higher, and the needs are deeper. All our public departments, from the fire department to the highway are just getting by.” Wood talked of positive developments at the district elementary schools, where Responsive Classroom Professional Development training, with the assistance of

Turners Falls-based Northeast Foundation for Children, has taken hold and improved student participation in the learning process. Wood said the Responsive Classroom model is responsible for “great strides” in the ability of elementary students to complete their elementary education “able and motivated to apply basic skills in all academic areas, and social responsibility.”

Representing the middle and high schools, principal Jeff Kenney opened his part of the presentation by saying, “We are making a difference. You can see that in the MCAS scores [up sharply at the upper school] from last year. The question is, how do we maintain our forward momentum?” Particularly troubling to Kenney is the dropout rate at TFHS: 22.7%, compared to a state average of 9.4%. “Everything we’re doing is to zero in on this,” Kenney said.

To this end, Kenney outlined measures such as the 9th Grade Academy (where 8th graders are able to get support during their transition to high school), the development of an advisor/advisee program, and the Literacy Initiative. Kenney also spoke favorably of the “Reconnecting Youth” program, operated in conjunction with the Brick House in Turners Falls. This program targets youth at risk of dropping out, and attempts to re-engage them with a peer group, teach life skills, and involve them in specially designed in school and after school programs. Reminding the audience the news was not all bad, Kenney reiterated, “Those who stay [in school] do very well.”

Approximately 19 of the 54 males in the TFHS 2007 cohort dropped out before they would have graduated last year, along with three of the 42 females.

Bassett reviewed several handouts that detailed budget costs by department and service for the district. The proposed budget represents a \$877,177 increase from last year’s hard fought \$16,180,901 budget, which required a special district meeting to pass last July.

In the proposed budget for next year, student instruction accounts for \$384,511 of the increase, Bassett said. Sharply up in the coming year are costs for choice out and charter school tuition, which are costing the district an additional \$143,678 this year, (an 18.05% increase from last year’s figure, which amounted to \$887,179). The number of students choosing out of district schools this year climbed from 150 to an estimated 157.

After Bassett’s presentation, Rocke reviewed measures the GMRSD is taking to limit costs. Key measures include joining the FRCOG to explore energy performance contracts, exploring “possible collaborations” with Greenfield, and perhaps most effectively, introducing “supportive classrooms” wherein special education students are kept within the district rather than bussed elsewhere at a hefty cost to the district. (Costs for out of district special education placement increased 24.5% in the last year).

Pointing out that cutting staff meant cutting services, which in turn means that parents may accelerate the rate at which

children are choiced out to better funded districts, Rocke ended his presentation stating, “It’s a bit of a bleak picture, but it’s prudent for our towns to invest in their education.”

There was a short question and answer session between the budget proposal and the regular school board meeting. While thanking the committee for its presentation, Millers Falls resident and town meeting member Mike Naughton suggested the presentation was lacking. “I’d love to see something on the revenue side. What are the numbers there?” Naughton asked.

Naughton also brought up the question that has been on the minds of many, “How can you think the towns can afford a million dollar budget increase?” he asked. If the budget proposed by the GMRSD passes in its current form, the increase in the assessments to the town of Montague (going up 11.4% - or \$814,390 - to \$7,937,233) and Gill (going up 16.4% - or \$213,634 - to \$1,517,372) combined would equal \$1,026,042.

“The towns have a different set of questions to ask themselves, but it is our moral, ethical and professional obligation to bring this budget forward,” replied Rocke.

“I agree we have a different set of questions, but I don’t think the towns can afford this,” Naughton replied.



**MCTV Schedule: Channel 17
March 7 through March 13**

Eagle Cam: Friday 1P-530P Saturday 1P-530P Sunday 1230P-530P Monday 1P-530P Tuesday 12P-530P Wednesday 230P-530P Thursday 1P-530P If We Have a Signal You Will Have a Picture Friday, February 7 8:00 am MCTV Video Camp 8:30 am Flight 9:00 am Select Board (3/3/08) 10:00 am Montague Update: John Ancil 11:00 am Independent Voices 41 11:30 am The Underground Railway Concert 6:00 pm Montague Update: Russ Brown 7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting & Budget Public Hearing (3/4/08) 9:30 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Mass for Mr & Mrs Lensey 10:00 pm Women Girls & HIV: African American Women 10:30 pm EatonDoRyu #10 Saturday, March 8 8:00 am Montague Update: Russ Brown 9:00 am GMRSD Meeting & Budget Public Hearing (3/4/08) 11:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Mass for Mr & Mrs Lensey 11:30 am Women Girls & HIV: African American Women 12:00 pm EatonDoRyu #10 6:00 pm Independent Voices 43 7:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: We Are Blessed 8:00 pm Coffee House: Skin N Bonz 9:00 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Lt Gov Tim Murray 9:30 pm Underground Railway Concert Sunday, March 9 8:00 am Independent Voices 43 8:30 am Carlos W. Anderson: We Are Blessed 9:30 am Coffee House: Skin N Bonz 10:30 am The Western Mass Democrat: Lt Gov Tim Murray 11:00 am The Underground Railway Concert 6:00 pm Physician Focus: Physicians, Patients & Primary Care 6:30 pm UN Panel 8:30 pm TFHS Week In Review 9:00 pm Safe & Green Campaign 11:00 pm Refusal	Monday, March 10 8:00 am Physician Focus: Physicians, Patients, & Primary Care 8:30 am UN Panel 10:30 am TFHS Week in Review 11:00 am Safe & Green Campaign 6:00 pm Women Girls & HIV: African American Women 6:30 pm Flight 7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live) 9:00 pm Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks 10:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: In The World Not of It 10:30 pm Montague Update: Russ Brown Tuesday, March 11 8:00 am Women Girls & HIV: African American Women 8:30 am Flight 9:00 am Discovery Center: Fossil Tracks 10:00 am Carlos W. Anderson: In The World Not of It 10:30 am Montague Update: Russ Brown 6:00 pm TFHS Week in Review 7:00 pm GMRSD & Budget Public Hearing (3/4/08) 9:30 pm Wisdom Way Solar Village 10:30 pm Safe & Green Campaign Wednesday, March 12 8:00 am TFHS Week in Review 9:00 am GMRSD & Budget Public Hearing (3/4/08) 11:30 am Wisdom Way Solar Village 12:30 pm Safe & Green Campaign 6:00 pm Montague Update: John Ancil 7:00 pm On the Ridge: New England Brush Wolf Hunting 7:30 pm EatonDoRyu #10 8:00 pm Coffee House: Skin N Bonz 9:00 pm Community Land Trust Meeting 10:00 pm Discovery Center: Open Mic Night Thursday, March 13 8:00 am Montague Update: John Ancil 9:00 am On the Ridge: New England Brush Wolf Hunting 9:30 am Eaton DoRyu #10 10:00 am Coffee House: Skin N Bonz 11:00 am Community Land Trust Meeting 6:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: We Are Blessed 7:00 pm Montague Select Board (3/10/08) 9:00 pm TFHS Week In Review 10:00 pm Senses of Place
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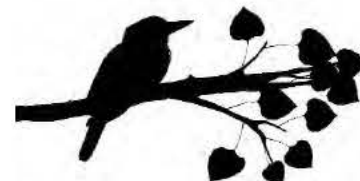


ILLUSTRATION BY ANJA SCHUTZ

BY KARL MEYER

GREENFIELD - From the second floor, it's a marvelous show. There's a runway of arching oaks and maples forming an aerial highway for the endless high-wire performance by our local grey squirrels. Bounding, leaping, chasing, twisting, they engage in a frenetic ballet, rocketing through delicate branches, 70 feet above the ground as if they were standing on solid earth. Down, around, and over limbs and trunks in the wink of an eye, they tag-team one another as if they didn't have a care in the world.

They do have a few cares, of course. They like my neighbor's feeder, which occasionally leads to streaking visits from the local Cooper's hawk. And there are owls in the neighborhood. Raccoons will do them harm too, and snakes may take their share come late spring. Out in the countryside, fishers are more of a worry for grey squirrels, as are foxes and bobcats.

Still, these long-tailed, arboreal creatures don't seem to have too many worries at the moment. They have the oaks and an artificial supply of food at those feeders, plus when the maple sap begins to rise they will score the bark and drink the sweet juice that flows from the scar. When that flow drops off, grey squirrels are quite happy to sit amidst those swelling maple buds and nip them off for ready meals.

Their big food, of course, is nuts: oak, hickory, beech. They need those nut trees to get them through the lean season, when pine cone seed may not quite be enough. At just about a pound a piece, grey squirrels do a surprising amount of local farming. Those acorns get planted, helter-skelter; scatter hoarding is how it's referred to. But they have extremely good noses, and can sniff up an acorn or hickory nut cached under a foot of snow. Still, maybe two out of ten acorns never gets retrieved, leading to the continuation of oak and hickory habitats

through their own planting.

Mating time for grey squirrels is just past. There will be two or three young in the early spring. These will be born in a leaf nest hidden in some tree hollow. Those other leafy nests, conspicuous in the branches serve merely as temporary shelters. However, if the main nest and young get threatened, mom may move the nest, taking each little curled-up fur ball in her mouth and moving them one at a time. The spectacle looks pretty much like a squirrel with a monstrous goiter.

There's another squirrel mating season in summer, so these creatures don't waste time. Their lives are fairly short, from a few years to as many as six. Their entire time on the planet may take place within a single acre of home turf.

Squirrels can be active at any time of day, but like many mammals that activity is most pronounced in early morning or late in the day. Gray squirrels are good nappers; they will

sprawl lengthwise on a branch and just lounge. If necessary though, they rocket into action, scrambling, head-first and full-tilt down a trunk without giving it a thought. They do this via very sturdy back legs with flexible wrists that give them vice-grip footing when claws are turned either forward or back. Those eight-inch tails are used for balance, warmth, and even predator distraction.

Curiously, though life seems boundingly simple and fun for grey squirrels, they do face wholesale jeopardy at times, particularly in forested sites well away from artificial food. Nut trees produce crops that have cycles of heavy production called "mast years." Conversely, they have years when seed production is scant. This deeply affects local squirrel populations. There are any number of recorded incidents of mass squirrel migrations and die-offs in natural history texts. One interesting one occurred at Hartford, CT, in 1933 when over a thousand squirrels were

noted swimming across the Connecticut River.

Yet squirrels always seem 'neighborly', wherever you encounter them. A few weeks back I was walking in woodlands filled with tall white pines. It was mid-morning, after a quite cold night. I started hearing that quiet, grinding, scratching noise squirrels make. First I ignored it, but then it became so omnipresent that I had to stop and look through the pine branches. In the space of maybe three acres there were over two dozen squirrels, each sitting balled-up on its individual limb, grinding away contentedly as the day warmed. It was like the slow, late summer chorus of katydids, the embodiment of peace.

Cooling thought: Skip the jet fuel. The planet would love you if you figured out how to keep it more local, or fit the train into your plans.

Karl Meyer can be reached at: karlmeyerwriting.com

Spring Forward on Sunday

BY FRAN HEMOND

MONTAGUE CENTER - Don't forget! On Sunday, March 9th, at 2 a.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time begins. There is an easy way to reset clocks that my kids taught me. This is almost spring, so the hands of the clock spring ahead! And, in the fall, they fall back.

Do not try to reason out how man's patterns conform to some natural happening. Daylight Savings is a manmade rule that adjusts the available daylight to our waking hours, at least for city folks. Farmers are up and out with the sun, whatever the clock may say.

In 2005, Congress passed a brave show of an energy bill, stipulating that, starting in 2007, clocks would be set ahead one hour starting on the second Sunday in March, and ending on the first Sunday in November. The bill replaced the familiar April to October time change, adding an extra month of daylight evening hours.

But don't try phoning your friends in Arizona or Hawaii using Daylight Savings Time as your guide. They aren't buying it. They have enough daylight as it is, thank you very much. States are allowed to adjust because of latitude and their

position in relation to the time zones, which are hundreds of miles wide. Up until 2005, 77 of Indiana's 92 counties stayed on Standard Time all year long, the other 15 switched to Daylight Savings. With the time zone between Eastern and Central dividing the state, it was hard enough to tell what time it was in Indiana anyway, without the added disagreement over Daylight Savings. But this wrinkle has finally been ironed out.

The day, starting at the Prime Meridian, or more poetically at Big Ben in London, is hard to pin down. But the little sundial in everybody's garden

can speak with real authority as to sun time right there.

The sun is now rising shortly after six, Eastern Standard Time. On the ninth of March, we will call it "shortly after seven," and shove an hour of light to the evening. "Surely this sunrise is now early enough that no little child will have to wait for the school bus in the dark," was the way this changing of the time label was presented to me.

In March, the eleven and a half hours of daylight - which will expand to over fifteen hours of daylight at the Summer Solstice on June 21st - has been allocated so that lazy

bones will have to get up earlier to meet the pattern of our business world. The farmers and animals use light efficiently all along, and Whiskers and Speckles wake up their keepers with the sun and their pleasure.

During World War II we had Daylight Time year round, and called it War Time. It resulted in work hours we thought saved energy and light, and summer hours of light after supper. But to be practical, as Ben Franklin, who first brought the idea from France many years ago would have wished, just remind yourself: remember March 9th and Spring Ahead!

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LANDFILL from pg 1

ate such a facility.

In October of that year, town meeting gave the selectboard the go-ahead to negotiate an agreement for the sale of the landfill expansion area. But town meeting turned around and rescinded that authority a little more than two years later, in November of 1991.

Also in October of 1989, town meeting voted unanimously to authorize borrowing \$1.5 million to design a state-of-the-art landfill with 200 tons a day capacity. Checking back through the records, town accountant Carolyn Olsen affirmed this week that the town actually spent only \$333,518 from this appropriation (Article 15 of 10/19/89) in developing the site.

In October of 1991, a four-part non-binding opinion question took a poll of residents townwide on how much municipal solid waste the new site should handle, and a majority (52%) backed an 85-ton per day alternative.

A month later, at the same meeting where town meeting voted unanimously to take back the selectboard's authority to negotiate a sale of the landfill site to a third party for solid waste disposal services, a motion to hold a binding townwide referendum on the sale of "any land owned by the town designated for landfill expansion of any type of waste disposal to any party" was defeated by majority vote. By these two actions, town meeting essentially retained for itself the authority to determine the fate of the landfill expansion.

The next year, on May 6th, 1992, town meeting failed by two votes to reach a two-thirds majority needed to appropriate \$6,400,000 to construct a town operated 200-ton per day regional landfill facility off Turnpike Road.

The same question was then put to voters in the form of a townwide Proposition 2½ override, which failed by a vote of 830 to 644 (56% to 44%).

In May of 1996, town meeting transferred the "care, custody, management and control of the landfill to the selectboard to lease for a term not to exceed 20 years, to lease up to 15 acres for a regional sludge processing facility," but that proposal never came to fruition.

The landfill rested unquietly for a time, until outside interest from a number of potential waste haulers interested in developing the state-permitted landfill site sparked renewed interest at the end of 2002. One potential developer, a former Turners resident named Ted Skrypek, handed out flyers in the Turnpike Road neighborhood, charging the selectboard with entering into backroom negotiations that could lead to the lease of the site to another waste-hauler.

Subsequently, the firms Global Environmental Solutions, dealing in contaminated soils

from Eastern Massachusetts brown-field sites, and Energy Answers Corporation out of Albany, NY made public their interest in the site, raising the prospects of a bidding war, and the selectboard decided to open a hearing on the prospects for the landfill's development. That meeting, held on March 22nd, 2004, was packed with abutters who denounced the idea of developing the landfill - particularly for municipal solid waste - and the selectboard decided to return to town meeting for approval to issue a request for proposals (RFP) to develop the landfill.

In October of 2004, town meeting authorized \$20,000 for engineering and consulting services to develop an RFP for the landfill. In the process of doing so, the landfill committee appointed by the selectboard ruled out the use of the site for municipal solid waste.

In the fall of 2005, that RFP was issued, and in December, instead of receiving bids from the "nine or ten" developers the town's landfill consultant Camp, Dresser McKee had predicted would apply, only two proposals came in, one of which was disqualified for technical reasons. The committee turned down the only qualifying proposal, from Coventa Energy, Inc. of Haverhill, as being insufficient to the RFP's requirements. Coventa had proposed to bury ash from trash incineration and contaminated soils at the Turnpike Road site.

Why Now?

At Monday's selectboard meeting, when asked why he was bringing the issue of the landfill back to the table at this time, Ross said, "It's a precious site, to have a permitted landfill site. It's quite clear that the town is facing a number of very significant financial challenges. Most of the consideration had been defined by what we can go without - cutbacks, 2½ overrides - but the town also has opportunities to develop income sources."

He went on to say it takes three to five years to develop industrial sites, "assuming we have industries and businesses interested in them." But, he said, "The landfill is already an asset we have now."

From the audience, John Reynolds of Precinct 1 asked Ross how long he thought it would take the town to get the landfill on line, and Ross replied "a three year timeframe would be optimistic."

Patricia Pruitt, joining Ross in voting to reform a landfill committee to consider issuing an RFP for the site, cautioned, "Last time, some bids came in less

than we were led to expect. On the other hand, as space for trash becomes scarce, we've got some."

At which town administrator Frank Abbondanzio reminded the board it would take a policy change to consider accepting "trash" or municipal solid waste, and Pruitt acknowledged she was speaking metaphorically.

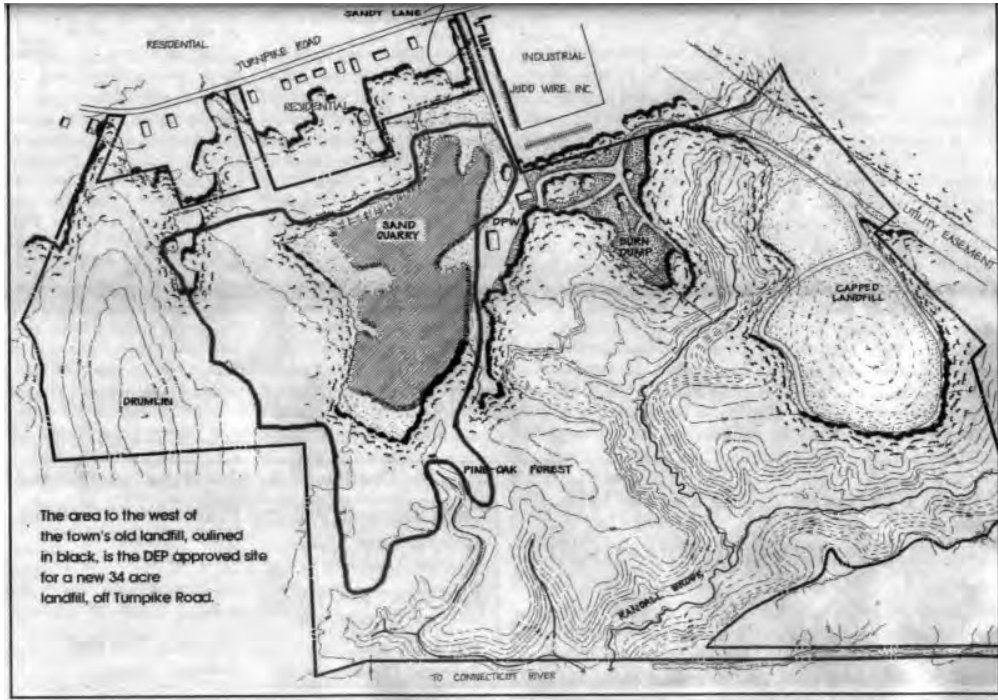
At the first mention of the word landfill, board chair Pat Allen stood up and recused herself from the proceeding, moving to a seat in the audience. Allen is an abutter to the landfill site.

In other business before the board, Ross proposed "we should have the discussion and make the appointments," of two new members to the airport commission. The board agreed to put that item on the agenda at an upcoming meeting.

G-Link

The board also agreed to accept an increased assessment for the so-called G-Link Franklin Regional Transit Authority bus route from Greenfield to Athol, which stops at Avenue A & 3rd Street seven times a day, five days a week. Due to a loss of supporting grant funding, the increased assessment for Montague will amount to about \$7,000, Abbondanzio said. The board had made inquiries about the number of riders who use the service from Montague, but the FRTA had been unable to make those numbers available in time for the board's decision. Unwilling to back away from public transportation during a time of spiraling gas prices, the board agreed to the increased assessment, which Abbondanzio said equaled about \$35 a day, or \$5 a run. The board also invited FRTA to send a representative to a future board meeting to promote the service, which connects to towns further east like Winchendon and Gardner.

A spot check of a few of the G-Link stops at Avenue A and 3rd Street this week, found one rider from Greenfield departing at the bus stop at 3:14 p.m. on



A schematic drawing of the permitted landfill site off Turnpike Road

it down. Young will accomplish the task by "craning in a forklift" to the fourth floor, according to building inspector David Jensen.

Temporary repairs to the roof on Building #11 are complete. The sprinkler system is being monitored for a week to make sure it is functioning adequately. Jensen said, "It's down to minor leaks. We'll have protected that structure. It will be useful to someone, someday."

False Alarms

Police chief Ray Zukowski asked the board to consider enacting a regulation to fine residents and businesses for repeated false alarms. Zukowski said his department responded to 345 alarm calls last year. "That's a lot of calls." He estimated more than 300 of them were false alarms.

The board asked him to show them some sample regulations from other towns. He happened to have the Northfield regulations on hand, which stipulate \$50 fines for the fourth and subsequent alarms during the course of a year. The board will consider the matter.

The board also requested a list of reserve officers from Civil Service, (the department is short handed on reserves) and authorized the chief to advertise for per diem dispatch help. The board appointed Jason Burbank of East Chestnut Hill to the police station building committee, acknowledging his expertise in the area of photovoltaic applications.



Tuesday, and one man boarding the bus at 5:19 p.m., and then quickly getting off again when he found out where it was heading. The next morning, at 7:14 a.m., one man boarded the Athol bus. At 9:14 a.m., no riders boarded or departed. At 12:59 p.m., a woman with a baby in a stroller got on the Athol bus, with a little help. At 3:14 p.m., five riders departed at 3rd and L, and one got off at the bus kiosk; none got on.

For six of the seven runs from Greenfield to Athol, FRTA runs an additional bus to Turners Falls within five minutes of the G-Link's arrival time.

Strathmore Update

The town has accepted the low bid of \$6000 from Richard Young of Millers Falls to remove bales of paper, much of it waterlogged, from an overloaded room on the 4th floor of Building #1 of the Strathmore Mill to an opening or shaft, where a forklift operating from the third (ground) floor can reach the bundled paper and lift

Seed Fest at Montague Grange

Sunday, March 16th from 1 - 5pm

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Lots of good detail about the day's events are at www.growseed.org, or call Suzanne at 367-2281

- 1:00 Registration - \$5 Donation requested
- 1:30 Saving Vegetable Seed- Danny Botkin
- 2:00 Breed Your Own Vegetables - Suzanne Webber
- 2:30 Homestead Seed-Saving - Nina Keller
- 3:00 Restoring Heritage Wheat - Eli Rogosa
- 3:30 Planning a Community Seed Network- Adrienne Shelton and All
- 4:00 Seed Swap
- 5:00 Potluck and Networking

Maya Predict End of History

BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO -

(Recorded live at the Montague Phantom Brain Swap, at the Rendezvous, February 27th, 2008, 10:05 p.m.)

First, some background:

Turners Falls resident Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno first came across the Mayan Books of Prophecies, the Chilam Balam, in 1964, in his second year of secondary school in Durango, Mexico, in a few Spanish translation excerpts included in an anthology of Mexican literature. He was immediately drawn to the power and beauty of the ancient words.

In 1970, during his senior year in college at the University of California, Santa Barbara, Laucanno was fascinated by anthropology and archaeology, and kept returning to Mexico every chance he got. The dual influences of anthropology and Mexico pushed him to attempt a few translations of the Chilam Balam from Spanish.

Despite encouragement, Laucanno did not pursue the Chilam Balam further at the time. Not until 1983 did he return to the Maya, during his first year of teaching at MIT, when he had a revelation of sorts. He was riding on a bus to school when suddenly a few lines he knew were not his jumped into his head, and he decided to transcribe the 'dictation'. By the afternoon, teaching done, he had become obsessed with the lines, and finally realized they were coming from the Chilam Balam.

Laucanno went to the library and checked out the Spanish translation. The words, of course, were there. He knew he had to translate the Books.

Over the next year, Laucanno worked on the translations from Spanish, and began to teach himself some ancient Mayan. He was fortunate in that the Tozzer Library at Harvard's Peabody Museum contained an original copy of the Chilam Balam, along with every reference book ever written about the Maya and their prophecies. He devoured the books and chronicles. During the summer of 1984, he journeyed with his wife Patricia Pruiitt to Yucatán, and spent the summer working on the translations on location in Mérida. In the fall of 1985, Laucanno completed the manuscript and sent it to New Directions and City Lights. Both responded affirmatively, but Laucanno decided to go with City Lights, a decision he never regretted. Lawrence Ferlinghetti loved the book, and became Laucanno's editor. The book came out in January of 1987, and has been continu-

ously in print since then.

This is the lecture he gave, which you may also view on MCTV, Channel 17:

"Most of you are here tonight to listen to some music and kick back. But there may be a few of you here because the Maya have predicted that on December 21st, the solstice, at 11:11 Greenwich Mean Time, the year 2012, the cycle of history comes to an end. (Applause.)

"So some of you are probably thinking, if 2012 is the end of it all, I don't

maybe a little earlier.

"What this enabled them to do was something very simple. It gave them a start point and it allowed them to do all sorts of calculations.

"So, they had zeros; they had place holders, and they began to decide to count everything. The Maya were incredible counters. They were absolutely obsessed with time. 'Maya-' itself in Maya means cycle, so they really are the people of time.

"By around 1000 B.C.E., they had

you have to have an end date, and so then they began to play with that. This is what's called the Mayan Long Count, in which cycles spin in time until ultimately they end in zero.

"They calculated back in time. There's a stele at Cobá in Quintana Roo that claims that the world was actually formed from nothing about 4.5 billion years before, which is almost uncannily what the geophysicists think. How they got that one, I don't know. They also project into the future 40 - 50,000 years. But their main concern was the particular cycle we're in right now.

"Now, they had various ways of looking at time, and the Long Count Calendar, which is the one I'm mainly talking about, was only one of three calendars. The second was the one they used for ritual purposes and divinations, and then they also had to divide everything into smaller units. The Mayan year is called a *tun*, and basically a year consists of 20 days in a month times 18.

"I will read you a poem I translated about the time [Phantom Brain Swap M.C.] Neil Young was born, from a Mayan book of prophecy called the *Chilam Balam*.

"I'll read you a poem called:

The Tim Wheel:

*The wheel of time turns,
foretells the future
tells the past.
Turns in the sun
and in the shadow.
Turns throughout the long night.
Counts off the days
and the years
and all the epochs.
gives us the signs,
the ones to live by
and those to die by:*

*Carries us up the ninefold path
shows us the nine precious gifts
brings us face to face with the gods
guides us on our perilous journeys
teaches us of demons
who preside over darkness.
Brings us to the awesome
reckoning with the rose
on whose petals are inscribed
the book of years,
the eternal turning
towards our ends.*

"You get a sense in there of this whole notion of movement, of things going continually forward and backwards.

"There's a gorgeous illustration of everything has already happened on pg 13



ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL SILVA

have to pay my credit cards off, and maybe I can just move into the Rendezvous for the next three years and many odd months, and just enjoy myself.

"I'm here to try to set the record straight.

"The basic premise is that the end of this particular cycle of history is over on December 21st, 2012. But let me back up for a minute and talk a little bit about the Maya themselves, because they were fairly extraordinary, and how they came to devise all these predictions is of some interest.

"The first thing you probably need to know about the Maya, if you do not already, is that they were probably the world's greatest astronomers and cosmologists. Secondly, they were among the world's greatest mathematicians.

"By about 1500 years before Jesus came around, the Maya had already developed a calendar, and they continually refined it over the next millennia or so. By around the year 500 (B.C.E.), they had nearly fixed all dates in time. They had measured forwards and backwards. And they managed to do all this because of two key inventions: one is the invention of the zero, the other is the invention of numerical place holders.

"To give you a little perspective: the zero didn't get to Europe until about 550 A.D., and then it came from India and Arabia through the Moorish empire in Spain into the larger part of Europe. The Maya had zero by around 1000 B.C.E.,

managed to figure out that the Earth revolved around the Sun and that it did so in a precise orbit, and it took 365 days and a bit to get around. They also looked at Venus and said, 'Gee, let's measure how long it takes Venus to get around the Sun.' They were a little off there. Modern astrophysicists have determined the difference between the Maya calculation and their calculation is about 13 seconds. But, I think probably the astrophysicists are wrong.

"The Maya were amazing. The calendar served the purpose of fixing all sorts of dates in time. In addition, they had this notion that everything had already happened that was going to happen. That is to say, the future is already contained in the past. Nothing that is going to happen in the future hasn't already happened. Quite a concept.

"[The Maya also] said, 'Gee, if we're going to have all this repetition of cycle after cycle after cycle, then we need a start date.' So the Maya got together the priests who figure these things out, and they said, 'All right, we need a base date. When did this whole epoch start?' Then, for a variety of reasons - much too complicated for me to go into tonight - but essentially a mix of astronomy, astrology, and mythology, and probably some arbitrary decision making, they decided that this particular cycle of history began in 3113 B.C.E., and that it would continue on until 2012. There are some reasons for the end dates: if you have a start date,

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this that the Maya came up with where they actually have a series of wheels, and each is a cog, and the smallest one represents the year, the next is the 20-year cycle of the *katuns*; that wheel feeds into a larger wheel, which is the *baktun*, which is 400 years, and then that one feeds into the largest wheel which is called the *Alauntun*, which is 160,000 *baktuns* or 64 million years.

“Everything cycles and these cogs move and it’s just absolutely gorgeous and very hard sometimes to figure out.

“But what they are doing is this. They’re playing around with this notion of history as being always repeatable, and so they devised this other system - the *tuns*, the *katuns*, etc. And so, the calendar served not only the purpose of fixing dates in time, but also the purpose of predicting into the future. So if you wanted to know whether tomorrow might be a good day to come to the Rendezvous or not, you could find out whether or not, in the last era, when the same signs occurred, it was a good night, or whether you got arrested, or something like that, and so you wouldn’t come.

“And the Maya were internally gloomy, as well: nothing was ever going to be good. “So the notion of prophecy becomes very important, and it’s all connected intricately with the calendar. I’ll read you a prophecy. All the prophecies, like this one, are typically happy prognostications.

Katun 9 Ahau

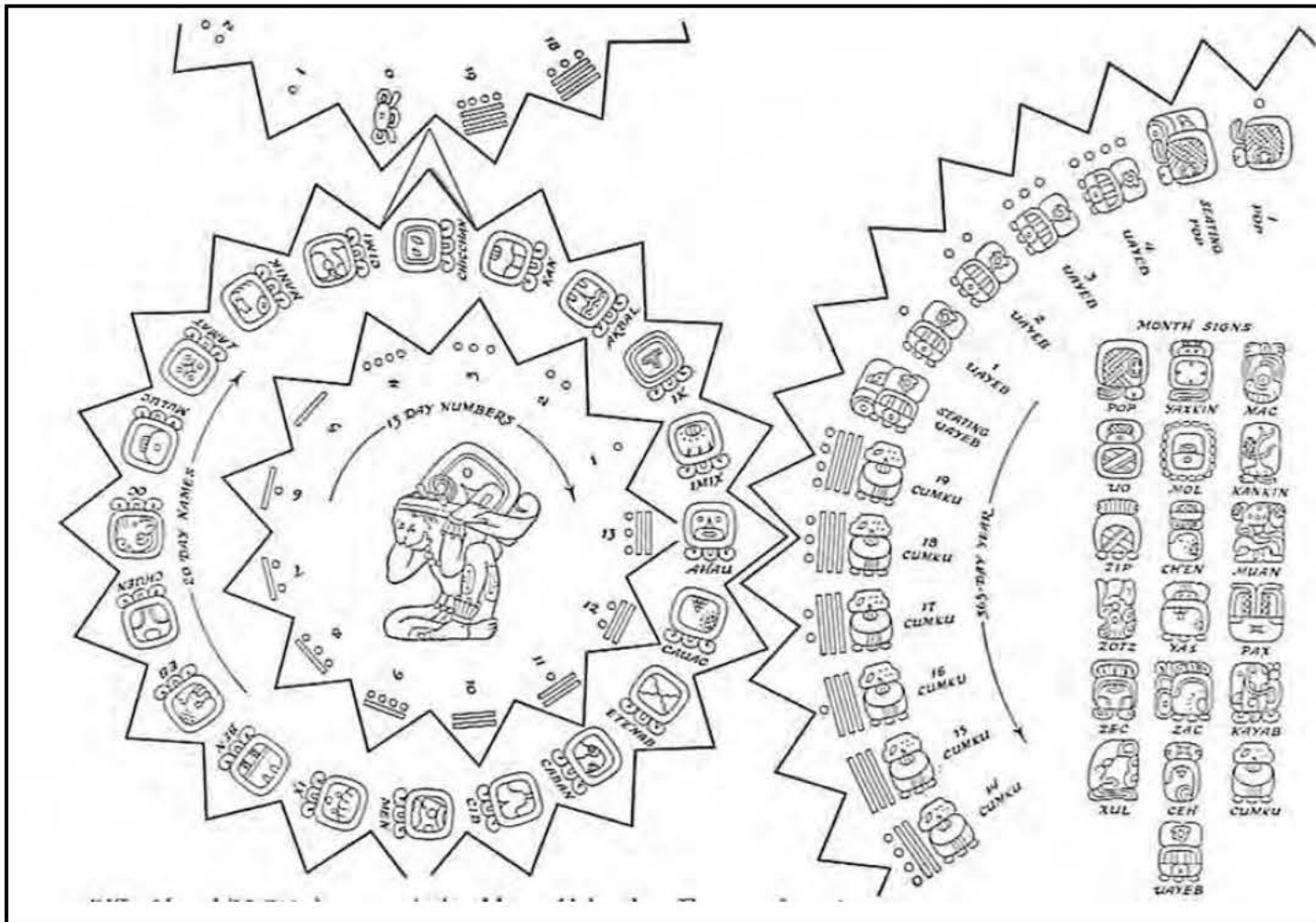
It is the era of the impotent jaguar, of the headless deer of the blind parrot of the legless monkey. Even at night the screech owls cower not venturing forth in search of prey.

It is the era of the conqueror and the conquered of pillage and ruin and waste the gods driven underground and buried in the minds of a few old men gone mad.

No harvest no corn only black bread and corpses hanging from trees in autumn light. It is the era prophesied by Ah Kaul Chel The sage priest of Uxmal:

Oh lord, at this era’s end though it be bitter to know he will come and reward you for rolling up his mat, and with him, from everywhere will come the plagues the age of lamentation.

No priest nor fortune teller can read the signs.



Chaos rules on earth.

“You have this calendar that’s used to predict the future, predict the past... And now for a brief divagation, (but I’m actually not going too far away). My first car was a 1956 Chevy, which I bought in the 60s. I think it had 89,000 miles on it. Some of you may know odometers used to only go up to 100,000 miles, then they turned over...

“So, I drove my car around, and I got up to a point where I was about to turn the odometer over, and I happened to be in the Sonora Desert, and I got up to the top of a hill, and I was at 99,998, then 99,999... And then I stopped and put it into neutral and I glided ever so slowly down this hill.

“I still remember vividly: I wanted to watch the odometer turn over. So I watched the odometer turn over, and I stopped exactly when I had six zeros. And then I thought, ‘Gee, I’ve got a new car,’ (laughter from Patricia). And I drove away and six months later the transmission died.

“I use this analogy, because this is exactly how the Maya thought about time, and thought about cycles of history. It’s not the end of something: it’s an odometer turning over.

“So, what’s going to happen on December 21st, 2012, at 11:11 a.m.? The odometer is going to turn over on this era, on this cycle of history. In the Maya Long Count we reach a point where the count goes to 13 zeros. Is it the end of the world? No - it’s not the end of the world. It’s the beginning of a new era. It’s the beginning of a new cycle.

“And it’s hard to know. There’s some sense from the Mayan prognostications that in fact history begins again. The Maya, depending on which group you look at, to the Quiché Maya in the highlands of Guatemala (who gave us the *Popul Vuh*) or the lowland Maya of Palenque and the Yucatán, we’re either in the fourth or fifth man-cycle - not the world cycle. So we’re simply entering the next phase: it will either begin the fifth or the sixth cycle. And there’s also a sense that now we’ll be making our new history, and that we’re finally free, in a certain way, from that prophetic past, because we haven’t yet had a past in this particular epoch.

So, despite certain New Age crises and claims that the world is about to end, I really think of it as a new beginning. And I think it probably also makes sense for you to continue to pay off your Visa bill.”

After the lecture, Laucanno responded to a skeptical question. If the Maya were so keen on prophesying the future, why weren’t they able to avoid their own defeat at the hands of the conquistadors?

He replied: “The prophecies are all about the conquest. The Maya were still flourishing when Montejo conquered Yucatán. To some extent the prophecies of ruin played into their defeat, but superior firepower, horses and disease all worked to the Spanish advantage.”

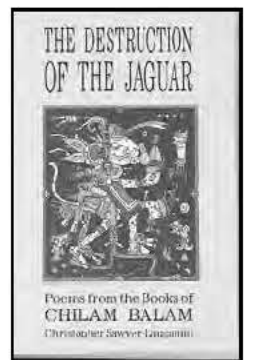
A few notes on the Books of Chilam Balam and Laucanno’s translation: The versions that survived were all written in Mayan, but in Roman script. The originals were glyphs written on deerskin, but were burned in a huge bonfire in 1562 by Bishop Diego de Landa, who declared them to be “nothing but superstition and lies of the devil.”

A few years later, the local priests regretted

what Laucanno decided to extract, hence his translation is called: Destruction of the Jaguar: Poems from the Books of Chilam Balam.

The first couple of passes were largely translations from Spanish, but as he acquired more Mayan, Laucanno began to work more from the originals. The final result, however, is still far more indebted to the Spanish translators than to the Maya themselves.

Laucanno says he is not a Mayan scholar, and has never claimed to be. He is a poet with a keen interest in the Maya. His main aim was not to reproduce the entire books, rather to bring across the poetry that lurked within the originals. Neither pure translation nor original work, his versions are instead an attempt to recreate the essence of the ancient texts, to reinvent in a modern idiom the woe and wonder of a gone civilization.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG
Vandalism and Trespassing

- Tuesday, February 26**
3:44 p.m. Report of accident with property damage at Unity Street, Turners Falls.
- 4:08 p.m. Report of accident with property damage on Turnpike Road, Turners Falls.
- 8:11 p.m. Loud noise disturbance at an Avenue A address. Peace restored.
- Wednesday, February 27**
1:16 a.m. Medical emergency at a Turner Street address, Lake Pleasant. Subject removed to hospital.
- 9:56 a.m. Report of hit and run accident on Fifth Street, Turners Falls.
- 3:46 p.m. Report of neighbor disturbance at a Thirteenth Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 6:22 p.m. Report of threatening harassment at a Montague City Road address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 6:53 p.m. Report of accident with property damage at Cumberland Farms, Montague City Road, Turners Falls.
- 8:00 p.m. Unwanted person at J Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- Thursday, February 28**
10:19 a.m. Report of accident with property damage on Bridge Street, Millers Falls.
- 3:38 p.m. Medical emergency on Avenue A across from Food City, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 4:57 p.m. Medical emergency at L Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 6:33 p.m. Unwanted person at Davis Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 11:05 p.m. Medical emergency at a Fifth Street address, Turners Falls.
- Friday, February 29**
1:10 a.m. Report of larceny at an Eleventh Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
- 9:46 a.m. Accident with property damage at Route 63 intersection with Route 47, Montague. Services rendered.
- 9:50 p.m. Medical emergency at Sunrise Terrace address, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.
- Saturday, March 1**
1:04 a.m. Report of motor vehicle accident with personal injury on Sunderland Road at Gunn Road. Arrested [redacted]. Charged with operating under the influence of liquor, second offense, operating to endanger, open container in motor vehicle and speeding.
- 7:00 a.m. Medical emergency at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague. Referred to other agency.
- 2:54 p.m. Report of neighbor disturbance on Bernardo Drive, Montague. Advised of options.
- 6:34 p.m. Report of accident with personal injury on Unity Street, Turners Falls.
- 8:30 p.m. Report of general disturbance at a Fourth Street address, Turners Falls. Advised of options.
- 9:07 p.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted] on a straight warrant.
- Sunday, March 2**
1:14 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Chestnut Hill address, Montague. Investigated.
- 4:30 p.m. Report of neighbor disturbance at a Montague City Road address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
- 3:54 p.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a Turnpike Road address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
- 8:36 p.m. Report of burglary breaking and entering at a Davis Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
- Monday, March 3**
10:19 a.m. Report of vandalism at Turbosteam Corporation, Industrial Boulevard, Turners Falls.
- 10:46 a.m. Report of threatening harassment at Post Office, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Arrested [redacted]. Charged with disorderly conduct and resisting arrest.
- 12:31 p.m. Report of general disturbance at a Rod Shop Road address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
- 1:43 p.m. Report of general disturbance at a G Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
- 4:09 p.m. Report of hit and run accident in Greenfield Savings Bank parking lot, Avenue A, Turners Falls.
- 4:45 p.m. Report of vandalism at Ristorante DiPaolo, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- 7:35 p.m. Unwanted person at a J Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
- Tuesday, March 4**
9:20 a.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a Seventh Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
- 10:20 a.m. Report of possible suicide at Smiarowski Road address, Montague. Investigated.
- 2:51 p.m. Report of trespassing at Hassey-Savage Company, Inc. on Industrial Boulevard, Turners Falls.



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DONELAN from pg 1

picture. Donelan spoke enthusiastically about plans to reform public education to reduce expenses. "Steve Kulik, Stan Rosenberg and I are working on this. Education costs are growing in leaps and bounds. Instead of relying on the state, we're trying to take care of it ourselves," he said.

Donelan envisions structural changes within school districts to cut down administrative bureaucracy and save money. For example, he cited changes that would allow school districts to place joint bids for bussing service, fuel and textbooks, rather than having each district fend for themselves for such services. "You have some of these small towns paying twice as much because they belong to two school districts. We want to reduce administrative costs and bring that money to the classroom," he said.

Asked to enumerate some of his top legislative priorities, Donelan cited a bill that would matter to residents of Erving, and to many other small towns in Western Massachusetts: the Broadband Bill, which would help bring access to the internet to locales that are currently working at a disadvantage in the high speed information age. He also said he supports the governor's Life Sciences initiative, and other such measures to foster economic growth in Massachusetts.

Regarding prospects for the long-delayed new courthouse in Greenfield, Donelan said the project has been included in the governor's bond bill and was

now "looking very favorable, and moving forward." Also, Donelan and Rosenberg have managed to earmark \$31 million in capital improvement funds for Greenfield Community College. "I think this shows the difference in priorities between the Romney and Patrick administrations," Donelan added.

On the issue of relicensing the 36-year-old Vermont Yankee nuclear plant in Vernon for 20 more years beyond its scheduled retirement date of 2012, Donelan said, "We're out of the loop on this, because we've been kept out of the loop on it the whole time, even though we've persistently stuck our noses in it. They are still treating us like the awkward stepchild... It's unfortunate that a neighboring state doesn't have much say."

In other news, assistant assessor Jackie Boyden brought news that the Northfield Mountain Pumped Hydro Station, which pays almost 90% of the town of Erving's property taxes, appears not to have dropped in value during the most recent revaluation. A new transformer has been put in at the station, and that upgrade, counting as new growth, has helped maintain the facility's overall tax value.

"There was some fear that there would be more ground lost, but this won't be the case. I can live with that," said select-board chair Andy Tessier. He was referring to the \$30 million drop in valuation the hydro facility suffered in the last reval. "Early indications are that things are stable," confirmed town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp.



SEWER from pg 1

Wednesday.

The new tank will be located adjacent to the Connecticut River on land that was partially filled when the plant was expanded in the 60s, and which was subject to the action of the river over many more years. Soil borings in the planning stages indicated soft soil down below, and as excavation progressed the borings proved to be correct.

At its deepest, the excavation is 30 feet down. That depth includes removing some unsuitable material, up to 10 feet below the tank, and bringing up a solid base before the form-

work for concrete is built.

Excavators encountered wood that must have washed up years ago, in the form of planking, not tree limbs. Perhaps these were the remains of the old covered bridge to Cheapside, washed away during the flood of March, 1936. The biggest piece excavated was the size of a railroad tie. (The 836-foot Howe truss covered bridge once carried railroad tracks on its upper deck, though train traffic on the span was discontinued in 1921.)

The wood impeded the progress of driving sheet metal for the cofferdam, and also the boring of dewatering wells. Still, the excavators said the

impediment didn't "feel" like rocks, and it wasn't.

If necessary, a larger excavator on-site is able to lift the little Kobota pictured on the front page at the bottom of the excavation. The bottom of the hole is beyond its reach. The little guy fills the big bucket, and material is lifted out to a truck.

The surface being backfilled now has been covered by thermal blankets to prevent frost penetration, and a low area is maintained where water can be pumped out. That came in handy Wednesday. From both a financial and time standpoint, work on the second phase of the project is now 29% complete.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Uninsured Drivers and a Loose Lab

Tuesday, February 26

7:42 a.m. Assisted Gill police with severe knife laceration, Ben Hale Road.

9:02 a.m. One car accident on Route 2, Farley.

4:00 p.m. Assisted Northfield police with motor vehicle accident, Route 63 at town line.

Wednesday, February 27

10:05 a.m. Report of custodial interference from High Street. Subject took child from residence; returned child without incident.

3:45 p.m. Motor vehicle accident on West Main Street.

10:05 p.m. Report of domestic situation on Lillian's Way. Situation controlled.

Thursday, February 28

9:30 a.m. Report of agitated subject at police station. Took subject into custody and transported same to hospital for evaluation.

9:20 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and without insurance.

Friday, February 29

2:15 p.m. Report of larceny on Forest Street.

Saturday, March 1

1:00 p.m. Criminal citation issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after revoked for insurance, operating a vehicle without insurance and failure to wear seatbelt.

4:00 p.m. Medical emergency on Warner Street. Assisted Erving emergency medical technicians and BHA Ambulance.

8:43 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, operating a motor vehicle with a defective tail light and speeding.

Monday, March 3

2:50 p.m. Report of loose, black Labrador retriever on North Street. Dog officer located owner and gave verbal warning.

11:00 p.m. Car vs. deer on Route 2, Farley.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

Lost Trailer on Main and W. Gill

Thursday, February 28

11:15 p.m. Barking dog complaint in the Mountain Road area. Officer checked area and heard nothing.

Friday, February 29

5:15 a.m. Report of an unwanted subject at a French King Highway residence. Officer investigated and situation was unfounded.

6:30 p.m. Assisted Northfield Police with a possible underage drinking party.

10:33 p.m. Suspicious activity investigated at empty Main Road residence.

Saturday, March 1

1:20 p.m. Assist Erving Police with

motor vehicle stop on French King Highway.

Sunday, March 2

10:25 p.m. Motor vehicle accident at Route 10 and Gill Center Road intersection.

Monday, March 3

8:00 a.m. Traffic concern at corner of Main and West Gill - a tractor trailer unit lost its trailer - officer stood by to assist with traffic.

3:59 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency off of French King Highway

9:46 p.m. Report of subject walking in travel lane on French King Highway in Factory Hollow. Checked area unable to locate.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY AMY DONOVAN

GREENFIELD - Do you know what becomes of your recyclables when they leave your recycling bin, or what they are made into? They are sent on a journey that begins with the Springfield Materials Recovery Facility (Springfield MRF), which is currently paying your town \$41 a ton for its recyclables.

The Springfield MRF sorts and bales paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, and metal containers, processing 45,000 tons of recyclables each year. The MRF sells recyclables to manufacturers who use the material as feedstock in manufacturing various products. As oil and gas prices continue to rise, recycled materials are in demand as an alternative to more costly and energy consumptive raw materials.

We'll start with the ubiquitous water bottle. Water bottles, along with juice and soda bottles, are made from polyethylene terephthalate. This clear, rigid and strong plastic is also known as PET, PETE, or #1 plastic, and identified by a "#1" in the recycle symbol on the bottom of the bottle. After being sorted and baled at the MRF, the PET is sent to Plastrec, in Ontario, Canada. There it is shredded into "flake," small pieces which are about the size and shape of cornflakes cereal. After cleaning and sorting by color, the flake is sold to manufacturers who make fleece clothing, fiberfill, plastic bottles, insulation, and carpets. The fiber for clothing and other textiles is made from flake that has been heated and stretched to form long polyester fibers. PET plastic is in high demand; the MRF receives \$300 per ton for this type of plastic.

Plastic milk jugs and laundry detergent bottles are made from high-density polyethylene, also known as

HDPE, or #2 plastic. Colored HDPE is sorted, baled, and sent to a Canadian company that makes plastic pallets and recycling bins. The opaque plastic, primarily milk jugs, is sent to a company in Alabama that makes a plastic resin that eventually becomes non-food containers, plastic pipe or automotive parts.

"Gable Top" is the name for a group of containers that are sent to the Paper Tigers Company in Bannockburn, IL. The name "Gable Top" comes from the traditional orange juice container with the gabled top, but this group includes milk cartons, juice boxes, and aseptic containers, which hold soymilk and soups. The Paper Tigers were the first to develop technologies to extract the long and valuable paper fibers in these containers. The paper is pulped and sold to paper mills, which make newsprint, tissue paper, copy paper, and paperboard. Don't let the high paper content of these containers fool you. You should place them in your

recycling bin with other containers such as bottles and cans, and not with your mixed paper recycling.

Bales of aluminum soda cans, pie plates, trays, and aluminum foil are sent to United Scrap Metal Recyclers in Cicero, IL. From there they are sent to Alcoa, where the aluminum is made into new cans, aluminum siding, and other durable goods. Aluminum can be recycled indefinitely and the process is fast: a soda can that you put into your recycling bin may be made into a new can within 60 days. Steel cans are sent to the Poscor Group in Hamilton, Ontario. From there they are shipped by rail to manufacturers and melted into new steel.

Glass is sent to Container Recycling Alliance in Franklin, MA. There it is sorted by color and crushed into small pieces called cullet. The cullet is sold to manufacturers of glass containers and fiberglass. The average glass bottle contains 30% recycled glass.

Paper and cardboard are unique in that they are not baled at the MRF; they are simply loaded into a truck and sent to Newark Mills in Fitchburg, MA. Newark uses 100% recycled fibers to manufacture board games, boxes, and hardcover book board: no trees ever enter the process. The hardcover for the latest Harry Potter book was made almost entirely from recycled paper that came from Western Mass; it took 36,000 tons of paper to make the hardcover for all of the first edition books, and the MRF recycled 32,000 tons of paper last year.

Our recyclables may all have different destinations and applications, but one thing they have in common is they are all in high demand.

Links for more information: www.springfieldmrf.org, www.massrecyclespaper.org, www.franklin-countywastedistrict.org

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

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

A Child of the Living Waters Named Ondine

BY FLORE

AMHERST - Circus people are familiarly referred to in France as: *Les Enfants de la Balle*, or children of the traveling ball. The theater world could easily wear the label of children of the imagination: *Les Enfants de L'Imaginaire*.

So they are, in the astounding adaptation of *Ondine*, by gifted playwright Dan O'Brien, at UMass' Rand Theater.

The UMass theater department has done it again, pulling off another brilliant odyssey! These young actors are not only dedicated, they are also, unquestionably, gifted. Imagine a cast of 32, totally immersed in the characters they portray, letting them each evolve on stage to their fullest efflorescence. From the beginning of the story until the end, the public succumbs to their allegorical spell.

Gina Kaufmann directs, and

to her efforts are added the fantastic design of Sean Cote and costume whiz Sarah Nelson.

According to Germanic folklore, an Undine is a spirit living under water. Remember Ulysses, in Greek myth, begging to be attached to the mast of his boat so that he could suffer the sweet torment of the seducing chants of the sirens?

Even so the audience, bound to their seats, but straining to catch the next line from the lips of these sweet sprites.

Still, the case of *Ondine* is

somewhat exceptional.

The play was originally written by French dramaturge Jean Giraudoux.

He takes the stance in this

play, as he does in works like *Tiger at the Gate* and *the Mad Woman of Chaillot* that drama is better understood, at times, if presented as comedy. Each

year, in the small town of Bellac in France, where he was born in the autumn of 1882, Giraudoux is honored with a festival staging of his plays showcasing young, promising authors, as well. I happened to attend one year, and witnessed the excitement in the streets.

At UMass, Kaufman's reading of O'Brien's *Ondine* is seeing its first performances. Later, it will include stagings at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, the New Harmony Project and the Jean Cocteau Repertory Theater in New York.

What good fortune for us! Remember, the Rand Theater is a small house, designed for passionate playgoers. Get your tickets early, before they tell you at the box office: *Complet!*

March 6th and 7th, performances at 8 p.m. Matinee March 8th at 2 p.m.



JON CRISPIN PHOTO

Anna Ryan Dynarski and Jennifer Reddish light up the stage in Ondine, at the Rand Theater, UMass

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THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Ad Hoc Hiccups

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. Are hiccups dangerous?

Hiccups - sometimes spelled hiccoughs - are not dangerous themselves, and are rarely a sign of a health problem.

However, if hiccups persist for more than 48 hours, you should see a doctor. Hiccups can be a sign of kidney failure, pneumonia, lung tumors, digestion problems and heart attack.

If hiccups are so severe that they interfere with your life, see your doctor. If your hiccups last for more than three hours and you are experiencing severe abdominal pain, or you spit up blood, you should get emergency medical attention.

A hiccup is a sudden, involuntary spasm of the diaphragm, the muscle at the base of the lungs that helps you breathe. The spasm is followed by the vocal cords closing. This combined action pro-

duces a recognizable sound.

The term hiccup is an example of onomatopoeia, the formation of words that imitate sounds. The medical term for hiccup is "singultus." The Latin word "singultus" means "the act of catching one's breath while sobbing."

Almost all cases of hiccups last only a few minutes. If hiccups last longer than two days, they are considered "persistent." Hiccups lasting longer than one month are termed "intractable."

Charles Osborne, an Iowa man, hiccupped continuously for 68 years (1922-1990). Osborne was entered in Guinness World Records as the man with the Longest Attack of Hiccups.

The exact cause of hiccups is an ancient mystery. Hippocrates, the Greek "Father of Medicine," thought liver inflammation was responsible for hiccups.

Here are some possible causes that have been proposed:

- * Stomach expansion from a big meal or swallowing air by gobbling food, drinking carbonated beverages or chewing gum. The expanded stomach presses on the diaphragm.

- Eating spicy food, which may irritate the nerves controlling diaphragm contractions.

- Drinking alcohol, which can relax your diaphragm and vocal cords.

- Stress or sudden excitement.
- Smoking, which may irritate the nerves that control the diaphragm.

- A sudden internal or external temperature change.

- Noxious fumes

There are many remedies to transient hiccups. Some are believed to work because they build up carbon dioxide in your blood. These include breathing into a paper bag. If you stimulate the nerve between your brain and stomach, you can relieve hiccups.

Drinking water stimulates the nerve.

Here are some popular techniques:

- Hold your breath.
- Breathe repeatedly into a paper bag.
- Drink a glass of water quickly.
- Use smelling salts.
- Pull hard on your tongue.
- Eat a teaspoon of sugar.
- Have someone frighten you.
- Sit down, lean forward and compress the diaphragm against the knees.

Massage of your carotid sinus may help eliminate hiccups. This sinus is located in your neck, just below your jaw. This hiccups treatment should be performed only by a healthcare professional. Never try carotid massage yourself; it can be dangerous.

For more severe, persistent hiccups, your doctor may try medications. Surgery to disable the nerve that controls the diaphragm is often the treatment of last resort.

Here are some interesting facts about hiccups:

Hiccups appear to serve no purpose.



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Hiccups occur 4 - 60 times per minute.

Hiccups are more common in the evening.

There's no difference between the genders when it comes to everyday hiccups. However, eight out of ten cases of persistent and intractable hiccups occur in men.

Hiccups strike at any age, and in utero.

Hiccups occur less frequently as we get older. However, intractable hiccups are more common in adults.

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

GUEST EDITORIAL

PRANIC SELF HEALING

BY LLAN STARKWEATHER

LEVERETT - My fourth book, *Pranic Self-Healing - Intention not in Tension* includes a lot about 'environmental health,' which your Healthy Geezer columnist missed in his February 21st column on that topic. At 78, I can recognize a geezer's credentials, and I am saddened that your contributor is still stuck in beliefs about health that are twenty years out of date. I must disagree especially with his positions on the sun and fluoride, and amplify what he says about chemicals in our bodies and environment.

Most important is our relationship to diminishing intake of solar prana with aging. A significant fact of geezerhood is that the body from birth produces most of its essential hormones, and the ability to do so decreases with aging such that, for example, at age 70 it creates only 20% of the body's most prevalent hormone - DHEA - as it did at 20. DHEA is a natural steroid which protects the heart, grows brain cells, is anti-aging, bone building, and burns fat to lose weight and convert fat to muscle. It is an essential testosterone precursor produced by the male body, which regulates weight. An inexpensive supplement derived

from wild Mexican yam can be bought almost anywhere, and is the first thing I recommend that men balance out. DHEA-keto 7 is available without the testosterone boost for female weight control.

The body's ability to produce in the liver from oral supplementation the absorbable vitamin D-25 significantly declines with age, as well. Older people almost without exception do not get enough of this most vital deterrent to auto-immune diseases such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, and osteoporosis and a promoter of bone health. While the skin's sun exposure generates Vitamin D-25 immediately usable by the next cell and storable when sufficient (and when exposed to ultraviolet radiation, the skin also makes 'feel good' endorphins) aside from fish, dietary sources of Vitamin D are few and far between.

For healthy people with adequate sun exposure, 800 to 1,000 IU of vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) per day should suffice. North of the 40th parallel, 2,000 IU/day from, late Fall to early Spring. Individuals with dark skin may require up to 10 times more sun exposure as those with fairer complexions.

The body also expects to

receive the essential nutrient, ultraviolet light in another way - visually through the eyes' special structure for receiving UV and passing it along to the pineal and pituitary glands for most significant and essential immune system protection. This prana comes from the sun, but does not imply any direct exposure to the sun's rays, as vitamin D generation does. You just have to be outside with un-glazed eyes to take in the ambient light, which includes UV. The worst thing for your health is sunglasses, since we have gone to live behind glass on our faces (70-80% of the population), and in our houses and vehicles of transportation. People didn't need glasses, and cancer and diseases of the immune system were not the biggest health problem a century ago.

The sun does not cause melanoma or any other form of fatal cancer. Dermatologists have no scientific basis for that assertion and it is more likely that a lack of adequate sunlight is a strong factor to the development of melanoma, which usually develop under clothing. Sunglasses for adornment are a very major corporate interest, however. Sunscreen is detrimental to good health and should be avoided. There has been a dra-

matic rise in melanoma coupled with the use of sun blocking oils. Cosmetically undesirable sun carcinomas take years to develop and can easily be removed. The ever-increasing diseases of the immune system can be attributed to the fact that metabolism and glandular activities are directly regulated by receiving the lower end of the visual spectrum.

Flouride absolutely must be avoided. Tooth decay is caused by acids in our foods and beverages eating enamel. By the time you brush, food acids have done their work. Rinsing with water or milk after eating is much more effective than most toothpastes, which also contain glycerine which coats the acids and traps them next to your teeth. Commercial bar soap cleans, without leaving any coating, and rinses easily.

After 50, people often have trouble absorbing vitamin B 12 (cyanocobalamin), our absolutely essential source for cobalt, found primarily in the same green and yellow leafy vegetables that are the source for another essential B vitamin, folate, which is already difficult to obtain from food.

American agriculture uses 4.5 pounds of pesticides for every man woman and child in the country each year and they don't

go away. The adverse affects of these chemicals are more of a problem than most would imagine. The EPA estimates that at least 80,000 chemicals are produced and used today. The CDC tested 2,500 volunteers' blood and urine for a mere 116 man-made chemicals and found detectable levels of 89 chemicals, including pesticides, phthalates, herbicides, pest repellants, and disinfectants that our species has never before dealt with. Almost nothing is known about long-term effects, low dose or threshold affects, or - most difficult to test - interaction with other chemicals. Do you need to know anything else about eating organic food?

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JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 7th

The Greenfield Community College Chorus concert performance of songs and choruses from opera and musical theater, 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. in the Music Room, S-358, at Greenfield Community College. This is a preview of a longer performance by the GCC Chorus to be given at 7:30 p.m. on **Friday, April 11th** in GCC's Sloan Theater.

Open Swim at Turners Falls High School Pool. Family Swim 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Adult Lap Swim 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Green Thumb Brothers** - Reggae, no cover 9 to 11 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Rusty Belle, The Amity Front**, 9 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MARCH 7th & 8th

Artspace's Pottery & More Seconds Sale, Friday, 6 - 9 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Greenfield High School, Greenfield. Thirty-six artisans participating.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: TBA: Rock & Roll covers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8th

Comedy at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Hyperbole, hyperbole, hyperbole! Jimmy Dunn with Kelly MacFarland, 8 p.m. www.sheacomedy.com

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Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: TBA: Rock & Roll covers,



come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

St James Coffeehouse, Greenfield: **Lui Collins**, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. www.luicollins.com

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Richard Chase Group** - Acoustic Folk Rock, no cover 9 to 11 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 9th

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Steve Crow, Peter Kim, Don Macaully** - Acoustic Trio, no cover 7 to 10 p.m.

The Dead of Winter Film Series at the Montague Bookmill, Montague Center. **Dog Day Afternoon** (1975) One of the great American films of the Seventies, starring Al Pacino. Directed by Sidney Lumet, screenplay by Frank Pierson. 7 p.m.

Second Sunday Comedy show at the Route 63 Roadhouse, 7 to 8:30 p.m. 3 Comics for \$5.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Karaoke! 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. with TNT Productions.

MONDAY, MARCH 10th

Montague Center Library, Evening Sing-a-Long, 6:30 p.m. Childrens librarian Linda Hickman plays guitar and banjo and performs a variety of children's music. Info: call the Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week, or the Montague Center Library, 367-2852, on Monday evenings.

Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, **Clay Jazz Duo**, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Slope Editions hosts a reading fea-



The Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen, & Bruce Kahn Trio are joined by Joe Graveline on Friday, March 14 at 7 p.m. at the Great Falls Coffeehouse. The trio uses three voices, guitar and keyboard in performing a range of music including standard compositions to weave a beautiful tapestry of song. Joe sings original songs as well as those from his (and his father's) youth, with a beautiful voice and expert guitar.

turing Cecily Iddings and Chris Hosea, 7 p.m.. Following the reading (at 9 p.m.) is a performance by the jazz combo **Ghost Quartet**. www.rendezvousfma.com for more info.

TUESDAY, MARCH 11th

"Boomer Crooners," meet at 6:30 p.m. at All Souls Unitarian Church, Greenfield. First gathering of a new informal singing group, focusing on rock and folk oldies, gospel, Broadway show, Irish, and traditional American songs. Info: John Berkowitz of Saxtons River, Vermont, (802) 869-1778 or johnberk@vermontel.net

TUESDAYS, MARCH 11th to JUNE 10th

Accessible Birding with Joe Superchi. Visit local sites 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. Open to birders of all abilities. Call ahead for wheelchair van access (978)248-9491.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13th

The Plow that Broke the Plains, Historic documentary (made in 1934) depicts the social and economic history of the Great Plains from the settlement of the prairies by cattlemen and farmers through the WWI boom to drought and Depression; 30 min., 7 p.m. at the New Salem Public Library.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Free Range** - Folk & Rock, no cover 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 14th

Great Falls Coffeehouse: **Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen & Bruce Kahn Trio** with **Joe Graveline**, 7 p.m. The coffeehouse is in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Doors open at 6:30, the concert at 7 p.m. Info. (413)

863-3221, ext. 3.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Bill Downes and Dan Marani** - Acoustic Rock, no cover 9 to 11 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MARCH 14th & 15th

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: Looney Tunes Cartoon Festival! Bugs, Daffy and the whole gang and their zany hi-jinks. 90 min. Color.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15th

Echo Lake Coffee House: Singer/songwriter and political activist, **Colleen Kattau** with her band, **Nice Guys**, Leverett Town Hall, 7:30 p.m., \$10. Info: (413) 548-9394.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Blame It On Tina** - Folk Rock, no

cover 9 to 11 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 16th

Free, mini-Zero Balancing body work sessions from 1 to 4 p.m. to kick off **Zero Balancing Awareness Week**, March 16 - 22. Held in the upstairs meeting room of Green Fields Market, Greenfield.

Scandinavian Dance at the Montague Grange, Montague Center. Hambo, Schottis, Polska, Waltz and more! All levels of experience, no partner necessary, 3 to 6 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Kevin Skorpup & Mario Cote** - Celtic Music, no cover 7 to 9 p.m.

THROUGH MARCH 16th

On display at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls: Paul Taylor **Themes and Variations** at Gallery 85, Susan Kae Grant **Night Journeys** at Gallery 52 & 56.

MONDAY, MARCH 17th

Deja Brew, Wendell: **St. Patrick's Day Party** - Irish Folk & Fiddle with Ronald Meck & Adrian Meck, no cover 8 to 11 p.m.

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- SEMI-PRO** R
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- STEP UP 2: THE STREETS** PG13
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VILLAGE SKETCHBOOK

The Multiple Perspectives of 1704

BY DAVID BRULE
POCUMTUCK

(OLD DEERFIELD) - If you happened to be a child growing up in the Valley at some point in the last 50 years, you became familiar with the story of the Deerfield attack recounted in *A Boy Captive of Old Deerfield*, by Mary Wells Smith. You might even remember the distinctive voice of John Haigis Sr. reading from the book on WHAI.

For most of us, that version of the incident set the images and events permanently in our minds. The savages against the Christians, the evil French and Indians against the honest hard-working English farmers seeking a new start in a New World. That simplistic view has been shaken to the core by volumes of recent research that redefine Deerfield and, by the way, have significant implications for Turners Falls.

On Saturday morning, March 1st, the snow lay deep and still swirled thickly in the Deerfield air as we gathered outside the Tavern for a walking tour of the town from a different perspective, the Native American. The day before had been bright and sunny, with light streaming through the windows of the First Church of Deerfield for a commemorative service. The service, marking the 304th anniversary of the attack, drew from three perspectives: the settlers in New England, the officers from New France, and the native peoples who had been in this spot for the last 12,000 years, (and who are still among us, as has become apparent).

The director of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, Timothy Neumann, in his address to the group, evoked a phrase that had particular resonance - that of multiple perspectives - on what happened that day in Deerfield,

February 29th, 1704. That phrase - multiple perspectives - has taken on considerable importance in interpreting and understanding Connecticut Valley culture and history.

With that phrase echoing in my mind, Margaret Bruchac appeared to share two Abenaki songs of remembrance and thanks for all those who preceded us, who define who we are because of their generations of lives and efforts. Silence as the Abenaki words filled the church. This time, I said to myself, the visit to Deerfield will be different.

So when the surprisingly snowy Saturday morning arrived, we set out, a hardy small band of us trying to keep up with the long strides of our guide Marge, stunning in a knee-length coat of royal blue with dashes of dark red, cut in the early Colonial style copied by the Native Americans of this region. She had carefully researched the style and material and made her coat as authentic a replica as possible to what her Abenaki ancestors might have worn in the 1700s.

While walking, we were reminded that to envision a new perspective on this place, one needs to suspend bias, shed ethnocentric modes of thought and be willing to time travel. Doing so, you begin to see this place, Pocumtuck/Deerfield, as it had been: both a way station and camp or settlement for tribal people for at least 10,000 years before the first white settlers.

This was a pivotal place in tribal histories. There had been constant fluid movement through tribal sites in what is now known as Massachusetts, New York, and Quebec. The Abenaki and associated Algonquian tribes were deeply attached to the Connecticut River Valley, and Deerfield was central to their sense of place

and homeland. In fact, in spite of the arrival of whites and subsequent conflicts, even after the 1704 attack Native people continued to appear at Deerfield for visits to their ancestral homelands, even 150 years later.

Our guide mentioned that during the visit of tribal people in 1837, the most moving sight for them was the famous 'Indian Door' which their ancestors had unsuccessfully attempted to hack through to get into the Sheldon House in 1704. They were heard to say that it symbolized for them how hard their ancestors had fought to get this land back. How's that for perspective?

That hints at what motivated the tribes to instigate the attack in 1704. Scholars Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney, who have authored numerous groundbreaking works on the 1704 attacks and their aftermath state "diverse motives - a mixture of personal, familial, spiritual, strategic, and possibly commercial considerations" probably inspired the attack. We could also add revenge to that list.

This is where Peskeompskut (Turners Falls) comes in. In the history of the conflict in the Valley, the so-called Falls Fight of 1676 stands out as a singularly vicious and genocidal massacre of elderly men, women and their children by the forces of Captain William Turner. It was, in military terms, a devastatingly effective event. It was a massacre that left the Pocumtucks, the Norwotocks, the Sokoki of our region demoralized and terrorized. Many survivors fled to Canada and sought refuge in villages and missions near Trois Rivieres, Montréal, and upper Québec three hundred miles away. (It should be noted that many of us of French Canadian descent are also of Abenaki, Native American descent, and some of

us are right back here in Peskeompskut!)

Another perspective to keep in mind. These refugees sought support from the French for an attack on Deerfield, and in 1704 they exacted revenge for the Falls massacre only six miles away and 28 years earlier.

Back on the streets of modern Old Deerfield, Bruchac continues her tour, citing history, folklore and oral histories, and the names of individual sachems and tribal leaders that you can't find in Sheldon's History of Deerfield. Luckily, our guide,

armed with her PhD research and immense knowledge of the native presence in the Valley has authored numerous works, including a small self-guided walking tour entitled "*Pocumtuck: a Native Homeland*" that can be found in the shops of Old Deerfield. You could do this walk and see for yourself!

Before leaving, we reflected over a cup of coffee. I needed to talk about the Falls Massacre of 1676. What importance, if any, did it have for our modern Turners Falls? That seems so long ago, and hasn't everyone forgotten? Marge suggested that the events of May 19th, 1676

are not "someone else's history." It's ours. Maybe it's time we deal with the massacre.

Native people feel that the onus of what happened there lingers in the spiritual life of the town. I thought of the contro-



Marge Bruchac, Abenaki Artist

More on Bruchac at: www.avcnet.org/ne-do-ba/wa_02.html

versial 'medicine stones' on the edge of the Montague Plains, standing in the way of a new airport runway. The tribal people tell us those stones are keeping that area in balance, and should be respected as per a new agreement signed by the town and tribal representatives, as one step in reconciliation, in 2004. If those stones are assuring and preserving the equilibrium of that place, maybe it's time we take more steps in the reconciliation process to heal the spiritual wounds that linger at the Falls. It just might help us re-establish the balance that's within our grasp, in this little town on the river.

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