



DON'T FEED THE WATERFOWL
 Urges U.S. Fish & Wildlife /
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RECALLING THE GLORY DAYS
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The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 24

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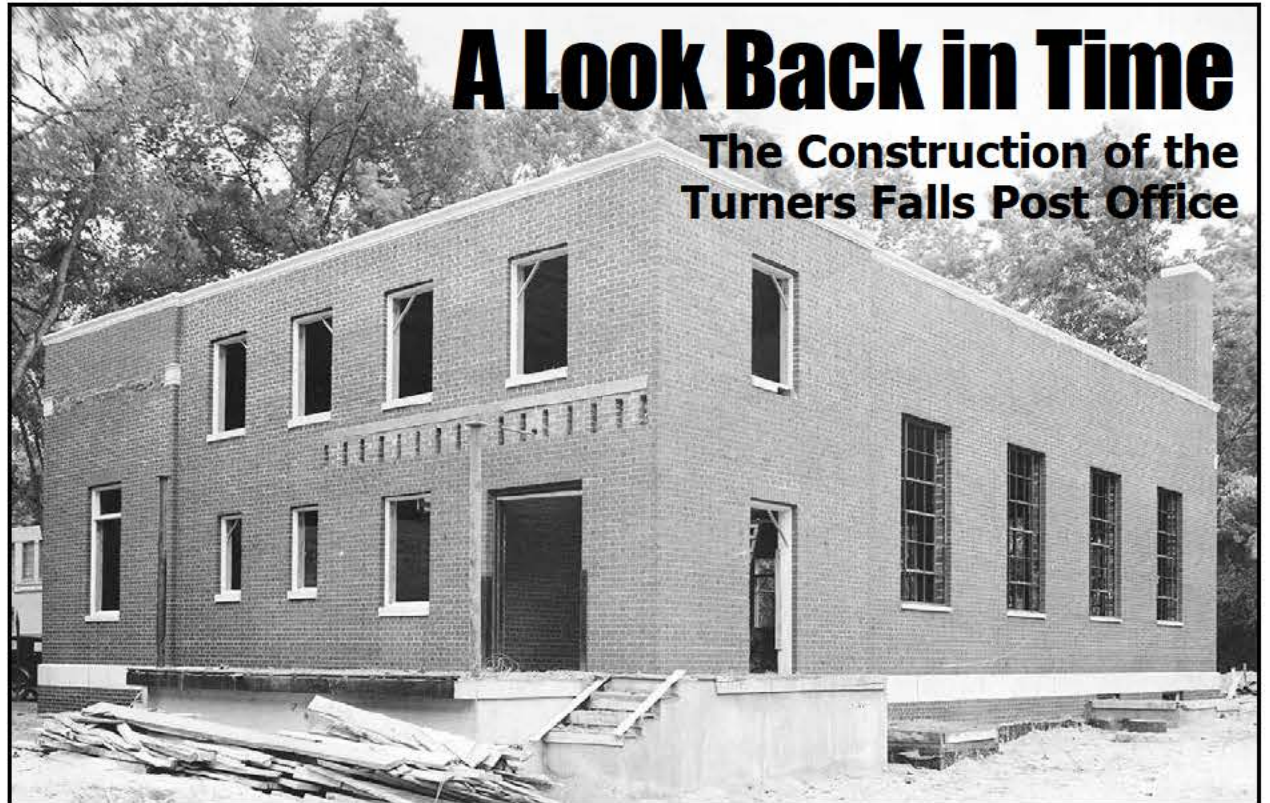
MARCH 29, 2007

Impeachment and Bio-Engineered Crops Head to Town Meeting

BY JOHN HANOLD
 MONTAGUE - National issues will get a hearing - though perhaps a brief one - at the Montague town meeting on June 2nd, after citizens gathered the signatures of enough registered voters to place articles on the warrant opposing genetically engineered crops and to instruct state and Congressional represen-

tatives to advance articles of impeachment against President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. The GE crop petition, circulated by Alice Armen in Montague Center and Suzette Snow Cobb in Turners Falls, garnered more than 20 signatures. The second petition, circulated by

see CROPS pg 10



A Look Back in Time

The Construction of the Turners Falls Post Office

The above photo, among a number on display in the Turners Falls Post Office lobby, was taken on May 28th, 1935. It shows the rear of the post office building facing southeast.

Some Repairs Still Needed at New Town Offices



Dan Keller, left, and volunteers Ruth Sherman and Derek Hughes help move equipment into the new Wendell town offices on Saturday, March 24th.

JOSH HEINEMANN PHOTO

BY JOSH HEINEMANN
 WENDELL - Selectboard member Christine Heard, looking around the cramped trailer office where the selectboard has been meeting for the last year, said, "I notice we are not in the new office building yet." It was March 21st, time once again for the board's favorite discussion topic, the building project update.

The town of Wendell is hoping to soon see the end of construction on a new library and a new municipal office building in the center of town. The original completion date for the town offices was February 15th. Each

see REPAIRS pg 11

JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
 TURNERS FALLS - The display case in the Turners Falls Post Office lobby was empty for a time. It had once displayed stamps of interest to stamp collectors, but those displays were recently discontinued for fear someone might smash the glass and grab the stamps.

Postmistress Debbie Rowley found 1935 photographs of the post office

under construction tucked away in a drawer at the post office. A Turners Falls postal employee placed them in the display case in the lobby.

There is no history of the Turners Falls post office construction at the Carnegie Library. The only local person who volunteered any recollection of the construction is James Trembl of

see OFFICE pg 12

VILLAGE SKETCHBOOK

Zoë Darrow Takes the Stage at the Shea

BY DAVID BRULE
 TURNERS FALLS - Down from the mountains comes Zoë Darrow and the Fiddleheads, coming to the Shea this weekend. The young fiddling phenomenon brings her blend of Irish, Scottish, and Cape Breton tunes to town in a benefit at the venerable Shea Theater for the Jonathan Edwards Academy.

Zoë is one of a new generation of virtuoso fiddlers, who brings drive and emotion to many a traditional dance tune, and a new burst of energy to the Valley musical scene.

In case you haven't noticed,

our Pioneer Valley, and in particular the stretch from Montague to Amherst, has more fiddlers per square mile (make that per square foot!) than any other region in New England. And if you enlarge the range to reach from Brattleboro to Springfield, our Connecticut River Valley is easily to the violin what Nashville is to the guitar. The fiddle and contradance community that sprang up around David Kaynor and Susan Conger of Montague Center spread to the Guiding Star Grange, Munson Library, the far reaches of Shelburne Falls



Zoë Darrow

and Buckland, and has given our valley a national reputation for its culture of music and dance.

Zoë Darrow is right at the top of this Valley talent. She brings youth, exuberance, Hilltown freshness and sheer energy packed into her concerts, fiddling and step-dancing up a storm. It's all in the family with her dad Philip Darrow on the guitar, and uncle

Tom Coburn on the keyboard and piano. Zoë has been turning up at some of the Friday night Irish sessions at the Harp in North Amherst, and has played the width and breadth of Valley venues as her reputation grows. She's not shy about jumping into the jam at the Harp and her infectious energy automatically injects a jolt into the playing, like a double shot of espresso to the main vein! Often her mother Pamela lays down a steady beat on the Irish bodhrán, with Dad or uncle on the guitar or bass.

She belongs to that class of see DARROW pg 16

PET OF THE WEEK

Happy Cat



Fuzzy Brain

Fuzzy Brain is a male one-year-old cat in need of a good home. He's a black and white cow-spotted kitty with silky soft medium length fur which is quite immaculate, and beautiful gold & green eyes. Some of his whiskers have been cut but the rest of them curl with happiness when you come to visit! He may have an endearing kind of worried look to his eyes but he's actually very sweet and friendly. For more information on adopting Fuzzy Brain, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Moose Month

BY LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS - March is Month of the Moose at the Carnegie Library in Turners Falls. This annual event celebrates moose in the wild and in children's literature. A Moose Month Celebration will be held on Saturday, March 31st, at 2 p.m. Children's Librarian Linda Hickman will share



MACKY

moose facts, photographs, and stories with children of all ages and their families. Participants will make moose puppets.

Refreshments will be served. The program is free and no registration is required.

The public is invited to visit the library's resident moose, "Macky," anytime during regular library hours. "Macky" is a very large mounted moose head with a four-foot wide rack of antlers on permanent display in the children's room. Moose books,

facts and photographs are also on display in the children's room through the end of March. The moose head and

FACES & PLACES



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

Emily, a student at Northfield Mount Hermon, reacted to the news that an old border oak at the north entrance to the private school will have to come down to make way for new utility wires.

photographs may be viewed when the Carnegie Library is open, Monday - Wednesday, 1 p.m. - 8 p.m., Thursday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Saturday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

For more information, contact the Carnegie Library, 201 Ave. A, Turners Falls, 413-863-3214.

GFMS Students of the Week

Grade 7
Jailene Ramos
Angel Renaud

Grade 8
Illayna Perkins

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Happy 10th
Birthday, Miette!
Love,
Daddy

Erving Firefighters Association

5th Annual Spaghetti Supper

French King Restaurant • Erving
Sat. March 31st
4:30-8:00 p.m.
Adults \$10 • Child (5 - 10) \$5 • Under 5 - Free

Nonviolent Conflict Resolution Talk

A public talk by Belgian-Flemish anthropologist, educator, and peacemaker Pat Patfoort.

Thursday evening, April 5th, 7:00 p.m., at the Wellspring House, 284 Main Street, Ashfield. Free admission and refreshments. Donations to help defray Ms. Patfoort's travel expenses gratefully accepted. All are welcome.

Pat Patfoort is the co-founder and director of the Fireflower Center for Conflict Management in Brugge, Belgium. The author of numer-

Montague Reporter Friends Meeting Rescheduled

The Friends of the Montague Reporter will meet on Monday, April 23rd, at 7 p.m. at 24 3rd Street.

workplaces and prisons.

She has also facilitated dialog and reconciliation projects in the Caucasus, Kosovo, Rwanda, the Congo, and Senegal.

For further information, call Randy Kehler (624-8858) or Mary Link (628-4695).

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SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES April 2nd - April 6th

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

Monday, 2nd
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
11:00 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Canasta

Tuesday, 3rd
Hemoglobin A1C Screening

9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
10:00 a.m. Brown Bag
1:00 p.m. Council on Aging

Wednesday, 4th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 5th
Hemoglobin A1C Screening
1:00 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 6th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

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

for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

Monday, 2nd
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch

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

Wednesday, 4th
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing
12 Noon Bingo

Thursday, 5th
9 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Shopping

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

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YOU are MCTV, and You Could be \$10 Richer

BY MIK MULLER

MONTAGUE - The other day I was stopped in the street by an acquaintance and asked, "Will MCTV be at the (so and so) event to tape it?" and I replied I wasn't sure, and that I'd ask the staff if anyone was covering it.

As I walked to my office with my warm fresh brewed coffee in my cold hands I almost did a double take and ran back. "Hey," I thought... "You are MCTV!"

Yes, MCTV does have regular volunteers who go to events with cameras, but they're just residents of town like yourself. They're volunteers.

This is how it works. The town of Montague hired MCTV to manage the station and organize and train the residents of Montague how to shoot and edit, if necessary, video to air on our very own cable television station. That means you. Yes, you.

So, if there's a sports event going on, either come into the station to borrow one of our cameras, or use your own, or your neighbor's camera. You don't need a special camera to shoot it. And if you have a late model computer, of any kind, it is very likely that you have the software to edit the video into something that can be aired. Especially if you have a new-ish laptop. And it's possible you have the ability to burn a DVD, which you can then just bring to the station on 2nd Street in Turners Falls and hand in.

If you don't have the equipment to shoot, edit or burn a DVD, stop by the station and the friendly staff will train you how to do it yourself. MCTV, like all public access TV stations, is people-powered. If residents aren't willing to step up and hand in their own shows, even if it's just a "talking head" show or a simple walk through the park, then all we can air is stuff handed in by people from other areas, or piped in via satellite, and then we're hardly local public access anymore.

Come on. Get up off the couch, come in to the station, borrow a camera if you don't have one (it's free!) and shoot a show.

Or a series of shows.

Some ideas for shows: interviews, current events discussion, art in progress, bike riding, cooking, eating, comedy sketch, bowling, environmental topics, nature, hiking, boating, fishing, hunting, 'how to,' history, music, musical instruction, writing, painting, sewing, auto, my vacation, what I do for a living, seasonal activities, manufacturing, events, meetings, spiritual... almost anything you can think of.

So here it is. I dare you to put

this paper down for one minute right now, think of something that you like to do and would consider sharing with the community, then come into the station and get started.

And to make it sweeter, if you do hand in a show, I will give you \$10 cash. That's right. If you have not yet been to the station and produced a show you will receive a crisp \$10 bill from me during the months of April and May for your first show. All you have to do is sign up to be a pro-

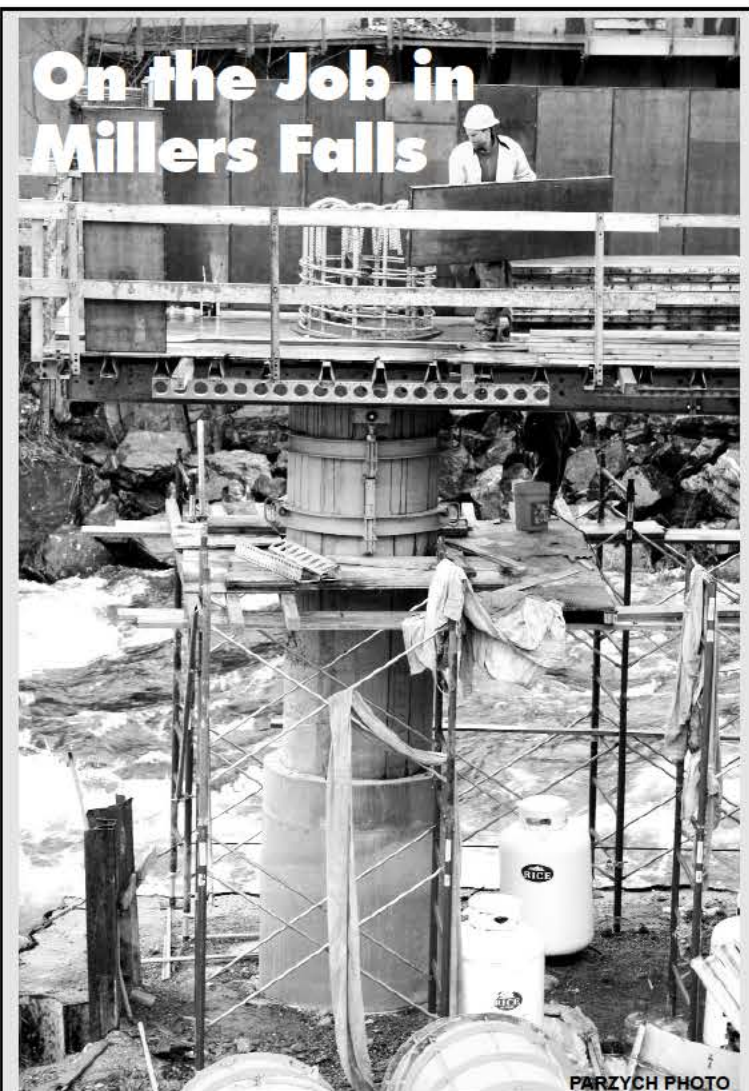
ducer member, shoot a show on your own, edit it and hand it in. Come and get it! (Limit first ten new producers.)

In addition to shooting your own show there are plenty of opportunities to participate in shoots already scheduled. For instance, MCTV will be at the annual town meeting on June 2nd. We'll also be shooting Valley Idol, and other upcoming events. Contact Dean at the station to volunteer as part of the crew for these events, or ask

about the next producers meeting.

The MCTV studios are located at 34 2nd Street in Turners Falls. Hours of operation are typically 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday - Friday, with evening hours on Monday and Tuesday till 9:00 p.m. and morning hours on Fridays starting at 11:00 a.m. Call 413-863-9200 or visit www.MontagueTV.org

Mik Muller is the president of the MCCI board of directors. He takes outreach seriously.



On the Job in Millers Falls

PARZYCH PHOTO

BY JOE PARZYCH

MILLERS FALLS - The crew from Petricca Construction is back on the job in Millers Falls. The bridge repair on Route 63 between Erving and Montague came to a halt last September when a support cage on a central foundation pillar, drilled 40 feet down into bedrock, was determined to be slightly askew. This week, the crew jackhammered the concrete column down six feet, attached a new cage, poured a new four foot diameter column, wrapped the point of juncture with re-bars and poured a six foot diameter collar around the four foot diameter pillar. It only took the state 5½ months to make a decision that could have been made on the very day the column was first poured and the shifted cage noticed. The "green" concrete would have been easily chipped out instead of letting it get iron-hard for 5½ months.

Easter Egg Hunt

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The Montague Reporter

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Woodstock Generation

In this era of rapidly changing climate, it was encouraging to read of one town's decision to buck the tide of manmade global warming by adopting a Zero Carbon initiative. Within the next decade, the town of Woodstock, NY (population 6,250) proposes to reduce their collective carbon emissions to zero, through a combination of energy conservation measures, recycling, green buildings, and forestry management. The series of practical, cost effective measures the town has agreed to undertake include an anti-idling message to educate town employees (and by extension the general public) to turn off any non-emergency vehicle left idling for more than one minute. Other goals include "adopting and enforcing land-use policies that reduce sprawl, preserve open space, and create compact, walkable communities" (an idea that sounds identical to the village center model and open space plan of Montague). Woodstock has also agreed to have their municipal buildings conform to Energy Star and U.S. Green Building Council guidelines, a criterion Montague would be wise to adopt for any new building projects, such as the proposed new police station, and to use in retrofitting older town buildings. Woodstock plans to improve pump efficiency and recover methane for energy production at their wastewater treatment plant, (a smaller system than our town's), and has installed a 16.8 Kilowatt solar power array on the top of their town hall, and a geo-thermal heating and cooling unit at their highway garage.

Montague needs to look no further than the high school on Turnpike Road for a good example of how to incorporate green features into a municipal building. The active and passive rooftop solar power installations, energy saving fixtures, motion sensor lights, and other features at the high school reduce the district's utility costs while educating students about the ways of using alternative building design to reduce mankind's negative impact on our global environment.

The town should look to each of its buildings, and work with each of its departments to devise ways of reducing energy use and costs. Converting town vehicles and heating systems to run on alternative fuels like biodiesel, which have less harmful tailpipe or vent stack emissions, seeking grants to install active solar panels on town buildings to cut electric bills, prioritizing the replacement of old windows and doors and emphasizing the insulation of town buildings are all sensible, cost-effective measures well within Montague's grasp.

In the not-too-distant past, Montague, like most towns in Franklin County, maintained an active energy committee. This was during the oil embargo 70s, when Jimmy Carter put solar panels on the White House, and American auto makers competed with one another to reduce the gas mileage of the nation's cars. After three decades of bulimic national energy consumption, perhaps it is time for the small towns of America to lead the way once again toward a saner national policy on renewable energy use, recycling, and stewardship of the environment. Montague should revive its town energy committee, encourage it to set clear goals and guidelines for municipal energy use, and implement them. The children of our community will thank us if we do. So will the taxpayers.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GSB Donates to Soldiers Memorial

The Greenfield Savings Bank has donated \$13,000 to the Montague Trustees of the Soldiers Memorial renovation fund. The veterans of Montague, and especially the Trustees of the Soldiers Memorial would like to express our heartfelt thanks for this generous contribution. Thanks in particular are due to Greenfield

Savings Bank president Rebecca Caplice, Turners Falls branch manager Linda Ackerman, and past GSB president Joseph Poirier for the unflinching support they have shown over the years as we have moved forward with our plans to renovate the Soldiers Memorial. Your recent donation will, in all likelihood, make it

possible for us to break ground on the new memorial following the parade and ceremony to be held at the Avenue A site on Memorial Day, May 28th, 2007. The veterans of Montague thank you.

Sincerely,

- Art Gilmore, Chair
Montague Soldiers Memorial Trustees

Wendell Open Space Committee Seeks Member

The Wendell open space committee is looking for a new member. The committee has two main goals. The first is to protect and enhance the town's rural character, sense of community, natural open space and cultural resources. The second is to ensure that the town improves the quality, quantity, and accessibility of its recreational resources.

In recent years the committee helped to secure a state grant that enabled the town to purchase Fiske Pond, to create a management plan for the property, and to administer stewardship funds raised by the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust. The committee also sponsored a warrant article that designated town lands on Montague Road as town forest and conservation land, and worked with forester Mike Mauri to develop a management plan for this property.

The committee is currently working to develop a town policy for responding to the proposed sale of Chapter 61 lands and determining whether the town sees value in exercising the right of first refusal or assigning that right to a land trust that provides an opportunity for input from various town boards. In the next year the committee plans to work with Mauri on implementing the town forest management plan, and will ask town meeting for funds for developing management plans for other town owned lands. We will also be taking the first steps to update the Wendell open space plan and working closely with the Forest Conservation Bylaw project to identify protection priorities in town.

The committee meets the fourth Monday of every month at the town hall. For more information, please call 978 544-8981 or msundell65@hotmail.com.

-Marianne Sundell
Wendell

Call for Artists

The Northfield Arts Group is sponsoring its third annual outdoor Summer Arts Festival on Saturday, August 18th, 2007 from 10 - 4 p.m. at the Green Trees Gallery in Northfield, MA. The event will include artists, live music, food vendors and art activities for children.

Artists and artisans interested in selling their work may call Jean Kozlowski at 498-5344 or email Mary Jo @ mj-k@comcast.net for more information or application.

American Dead in Iraq as of 3/28/07



Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza

Saturday, April 7, 10:00am
Unity Park, First Street, Turners Falls

Children ages 4 to 12 are invited to take part in this great community tradition! We will enjoy face painting, egg decorating, bake sale, pictures with Peter Cottontail (\$1 per picture), and our Annual Egg Hunt where kids will have the challenge of finding well over 4,000 candy- and toy-filled eggs that will be placed throughout Unity Park.

Participants must bring their own basket/bag for the eggs.
THIS EVENT IS RAIN OR SHINE.

We thank the generosity of the event Co-Sponsors:
Hillside Plastics, Greenfield Savings Bank, The Franklin County Rotary Club, The Montague Elks, New England Extrusion, Sheffield Elem. PTO, Sirum Equipment Co., Equi's Candy Store, and Boy Scout Troop #6.

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GUEST EDITORIALS

Support the Feasibility Study for a Community Center for Montague

On Monday, March 19th, a petition was handed in to the Montague selectboard to place an article at annual town meeting to rescind the \$65,000 set aside by town meeting in March of 2006 to fund a feasibility study for a new community center. The community center would provide a new home for the Carnegie Library, the Gill-

Montague Senior Center and the Montague parks and recreation department. The petition was signed by a majority of the town meeting representatives of Precinct 5, downtown Turners Falls. In response, the trustees of the Montague public libraries delivered the following letter to the selectboard on Monday, March 26th.

The Montague library trustees were deeply concerned by the petition to rescind the funds set aside to study the feasibility of a multi-use community building. This petition came after what was clearly a successful and productive meeting in which community stakeholders, including potential organizational partners and citizens,

were able to discuss the needs of the community freely and openly. This brainstorming session was only the first step in the process, and a responsible and well put together study would then determine the viability of what would certainly be a scaled down plan from the dreams that were put forth during the community meeting. We

feel this petition derails the democratic and open processes to which we have steadfastly adhered.

By the library working together with the senior center and parks and recreation, we see great possibilities that would move our community forward and even attract funds and

see CENTER pg 6

EARTH TALK

Which Countries are Driving Global Warming? From the Editors of E: the Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: Which of the countries that signed onto the Kyoto Protocol for reducing global warming emissions are fulfilling or surpassing their commitments? Which are falling short and why?

-- Dan S., via e-mail

As of the end of 2006, 169 countries had signed onto the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement forged in Kyoto, Japan in 1997 calling on the world's industrialized nations to reduce emissions of so-called "greenhouse gases" thought to be contributing to global warming. The agreement called for a 5.2 percent reduction overall in the release of six pollutants-carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, sulfur hexafluoride, hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs)-by 2012 in relation to 1990 levels.

Although the agreement was hammered out 10 years ago, its emissions reduction standards did not take effect until two years ago, in February 2005. As such, signatory countries have only



The United States and Australia together account for 30 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Regrettably, neither country has agreed to sign the Kyoto agreement, which calls on the world's industrialized nations to reduce emissions thought to be contributing to global warming.

barely begun to make changes, and no one has yet conducted a comprehensive study of progress toward reaching targets. United Nations research does show, however, that a majority of the 36 European countries that signed onto the Kyoto Protocol are currently not on track to meet their goals by 2012.

However, the 27-member European Union (EU), which as a block is one of the

largest global warming polluters, is likely to meet its collective goal. This is due in large part to Eastern European states having shut down or modernized heavy polluting Soviet-era industries during the 1990s. Also helping the EU effort is the United Kingdom, which is on track to meet its goals, thanks mostly to a switch from coal-fired power plants to cleaner burning natural gas. Germany and France also hope to meet their

Kyoto commitments, largely through a program of subsidies for the development of non-polluting energy sources. And Sweden expects to overachieve on its Kyoto targets thanks to the imposition of a hefty carbon tax on polluting industries and big investments in alternative energy sources.

Topping the list of Kyoto slackers is Canada, which last year became the first signatory country to announce that it would not meet its Kyoto target of a six percent emissions cut by 2012. New oil production in the tar sands of Alberta has instead forced Canada's greenhouse gas emissions up significantly, as the government has chosen to pursue economic growth as a priority over meeting its Kyoto commitments. Japan is also lagging behind. If no additional measures are taken, the United Nations forecasts that Japan's emissions will instead grow six percent by 2012. But Japan's environment ministry says that implementation of some market-based incentives in 2008 should help Japan

meet its goal.

Regrettably, the United States and Australia don't have to worry about meeting any commitments, as neither country agreed to sign the Kyoto agreement, even though together the two major industrial powers account for 30 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. U.S. President George W. Bush does not support mandatory caps on emissions, arguing that such a move would cause irreparable harm to the U.S. economy. He also complains that developing nations are not being held up to the same standards as the rest of the world. Unfortunately, with the U.S. on the sidelines, the good faith efforts of dozens of other nations could end up being quite immaterial in the fight to stave off global warming.

Contacts: Kyoto Protocol, http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/background/items/2878.php; United Nations Climate Change Page, <http://climate-change.unep.net>.

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CENTER continued from pg 5

excitement about the project. We are saddened by what we view as a disingenuous attempt to block this process.

We would like to outline some history that has brought us to where we are today.

The Montague board of library trustees began seven years ago to seek funds from Massachusetts Library grants to try to bring the 1904 Carnegie Library building up to code and into a position to meet the changing needs of the 21st century. These necessary changes would include stacks, access, parking, meeting rooms and fire and safety code regulations. In its present condition, we are concerned that the code violations of the building put the library, its

staff, patrons and trustees, and even the town selectmen and administration at an unnecessary legal risk.

The process moved slowly and carefully, and input was sought from town residents and library patrons about what would be good for the library.

As a result of this application process a program, or plan, for the library was painstakingly put together. However, it seems the program is little understood by some of the residents of our town and clearly needs some explanation.

The program lays out the number and size of spaces needed for the library and is based on demographics and current library statistics as well as projected growth. In order to qualify for state grant money (at the time we first applied,

parts of the project were to be reimbursed at 60%) the library design had to include the space configuration defined by the program as well as parking and accessibility to go with it.

Many who saw the plans that were generated by this process thought they were grandiose. However, they clearly did not understand the issues outlined by architects, including the odd structure of the Carnegie Library, the difficult ledge terrain, and the many problems associated with expanding the library building. For example, the upstairs meeting room we currently have would not qualify for any of the program space.

Any attachments to the building would have a lot of wasted space because of the way the roof is pitched. Any extra foundations or footings would have to be built on ledge, which is extremely expensive and unpredictable (you are never sure how much ledge will need to be blasted for a particular footprint until you start the job). Add to that the fact that the Massachusetts Historical Commission required that the new extension match the architecture of the original design. These requirements resulted in an extremely expensive project that was out of line with what the town could afford. In

addition, parking and access proved to be problematic and costly at the site.

In short, the library trustees had to vote not to bring such a project to town meeting. We felt we had to do this because, although we desperately wanted to improve our library facilities, we didn't feel the plan was fiscally responsible based on the town's budget scenarios.

After many years, we were back to the starting point, with a library that isn't anywhere near up to code, and is in many ways in deplorable condition for both staff and patrons.

We have learned that building a new building would be much less costly than renovating an old one at a difficult site. In addition, sharing the facility with other departments in need of expansion would lessen costs for each program.

An initial meeting was held with interested parties from the police department, parks and recreation, senior center, libraries and capital improvements as well as representation for the board of selectmen and the town administrator. These meetings have taken place over at least two years, identifying needs and trying to realistically look into community centers of

various kinds in other towns led the group to feel that we might have a cost saving way of providing better resources for the town of Montague. The library trustees are anxious to proceed with a building plan, but wanted to look at the community center option before branching out on their own. Fortunately, we would still have the opportunity to apply for state grant money for any portion of a building that meets our program needs, even within a community center context.

It is well known that foundations favor collaborations between programs because they are cost effective and more likely to be successful because they meet the needs of the community. By being smart, innovative, collaborative, and positive we can work together to create something that will not be a drain to the town, but rather will attract the interest, excitement, and funds needed to make our town an even better place to live.

Please support us in our efforts to move forward with an intelligent and careful study of the feasibility of this exciting and much needed project.

- The Montague Public Libraries Board of Trustees



MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: March 30th - April 5th

Barton Cove Eagles:
7A-8A (Daily); 2P-5:30P (Friday); 1P-5:30P (Saturday thru Monday); 12P-5:30P (Tuesday, Thursday); 7A-5:30P (Wednesday Egg Hatch Watch)

Princess"

Sunday, April 1
8:00 am The Well Being: "Arthritis Rehabilitation"
9:00 am Montague Update: Pam Hanold
10:00 am Coffee House Series: Pat & Tex
LaMountain, Russ Thomas, Joe Graveline
12:00 pm "The Dancing Princess"
6:00 pm Montague Update: James Rourke
7:00 pm Over The Falls: Deb Kats & John Ward
8:00 pm Market Music Series: Michael Nix
9:30 pm Discovery Center: "What's Happening With Eagles"
10:00 pm Rev. Carlos Anderson: "A House Divided"

Tuesday, April 3

8:00 am Montague Update: Ray Zukowski
9:00 am Coffee House Series: Stephanie Marshall
10:30 am Velocity
6:00 pm GED Connection #34
6:30 pm Kidz Art #3
7:00 pm GMRSD (3/27/07)
TBD Prevailing Winds

Wednesday, April 4

6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #13
7:00 pm GED Connection #35
7:30 pm The Well Being: "Arthritis Rehabilitation"
8:30 pm Montague Update: Pam Hanold
9:30 pm Rev. Carlos Anderson: "Shalom"

Thursday, April 5

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #13
8:30 am GED Connection #35
9:00 am The Well Being: "Arthritis Rehabilitation"
10:00 am Montague Update: Pam Hanold
11:00 am Rev. Carlos Anderson: "Shalom"
6:00 pm Over The Falls: Deb Kats & John Ward
7:00 pm Montague Select Board 4/2/07
9:00 pm Coffee House Series: Pat & Tex
LaMountain, Russ Thomas, Joe Graveline
11:00 pm Greenfield High School Field Hockey 2006

Friday, March 30
8:00 am On The Ridge: Coyote Hunting
9:00 am Montague Select Board 3/26/07
10:30 am Discovery Center: John Root/Wild Edibles
12:00 pm Coffee House Series: Montague Community Band
1:30 pm Velocity
6:00 pm Nasa Destination Tomorrow #13
6:30 pm Kidz Art #3
7:00 pm GMRSD meeting 3/27/07
TBD Positive Profiles In Courage

Saturday, March 31
8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #13
8:30 am Kidz Art #3
9:00 am GMRSD meeting 3/27/07
TBD Positive Profiles In Courage
6:30 pm The Well Being: "Arthritis Rehabilitation"
7:30 pm Montague Update: Pam Hanold
8:30 pm Coffee House Series: Pat & Tex
LaMountain, Russ Thomas, Joe Graveline
10:30 pm "The Dancing

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Target Practice

Wednesday 3-21

8:10 a.m. Report of a child locked in car with engine running at a Prospect Street address. Assisted with getting child out of vehicle.

11:59 p.m. Report of an out of control 21-year-old man at a French King Highway address. [redacted] was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.

Thursday 3-22

8:06 a.m. Follow-up on dog bite investigation at a Central Street address. Dog has been removed from town.

Friday 3-23

12:35 p.m. Report of a loose dog in the area of the French King Bridge. Area searched. Unable to locate.

10:47 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Route 2, [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor and speeding.

Saturday 3-24

11:57 p.m. One car off road on Gulf Road near town line. Owner lives on Swamp Road. No one answered door. Vehicle towed.

Sunday 3-25

1:00 p.m. After a motor vehicle

stop on Route 2 a criminal application was issued to [redacted] for operating with a suspended license, operating with a suspended registration, and failure to inspect.

Monday 3-26

1:30 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop a criminal application was issued to [redacted] for illegally attaching plates and driving an unregistered vehicle.

Tuesday 3-27

10:37 a.m. Report of shots fired in the Central Street area. Found to be someone target practicing in Montague.

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HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Bonjour Paris! . . . TFHS Students Travel to the City of Light

BY ALI URBAN

Many Turners Falls High School students spent their February vacation skiing, spending time with friends, picking up extra hours at their work or enjoying some time to relax. Seven senior and junior French language students, however, traveled with their teacher, Yanik Nichols, to Paris to experience the language and culture about which they have studied.

"The students got to experience so much history and culture by being in Paris," Nichols said. "It is just a taste of a foreign culture, but I feel it is essential to have." She said students cannot get the same experience from just speaking the language, talking about the culture and watching videos. She said there is no substitute for actually going to a place where the language is spoken.

For six days (including travel time), the seven girls and two chaperones toured Paris with EF Tours, a travel group that specializes in school travel. Their first stop was the oldest church in Paris: *St. Germain des Pre* (St. Germain of the Fields), built in 952. The students were able to do some shopping nearby, one of the

most chic shopping areas of Paris.

"We then headed over to *Les Jardins du Luxembourg* (the Luxemburg Gardens). We wandered around the pools, where kids often sail little wooden boats in the warmer weather - by then we were quite exhausted as you can imagine," Nichols said.

For Abbey Daniel-Green, a junior, the best part of the trip was the visit to Versailles, the palace made famous by Louis XIV, the Sun King, and then by Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette.

"I loved being able to see the culture and better understanding how people are different," she said. "Versailles was the best part. All of the gold and architecture was amazing." Daniel-Green thought the trip helped her to "understand the background of the language close up. Hearing people speak it all around me made it seem more real."

Nichols said it is essential that all foreign language students experience the language in its country of origin. "Our TFHS students did a remarkable job," she said. "The tour director remarked several times on the level of 'our girls' French

language ability. I really did not worry about them being able to communicate. They could enjoy themselves with it."

The travelers also went to Notre Dame Cathedral, where they were glad to have a chance to hear the organ music at the end of Mass, went for a morning tour of the area of Montmartre and saw the Sacre Coeur Cathedral. "We then headed off to the Louvre for a lightening fast visit," Nichols said. The students went to see the Mona Lisa, of course, and then went into the Michelangelo sculpture room to pose next to statues like Hercules killing the Hydra.

French cuisine was not overlooked, and students enjoyed a dinner at a bistro called *Le Select*, courtesy of a Gill-Montague Education Fund grant. Nichols expressed gratitude to the GMEF for the grant because it allowed the students to have a deeper French experience, without adding an extra financial burden on the students who had paid for this trip by themselves.

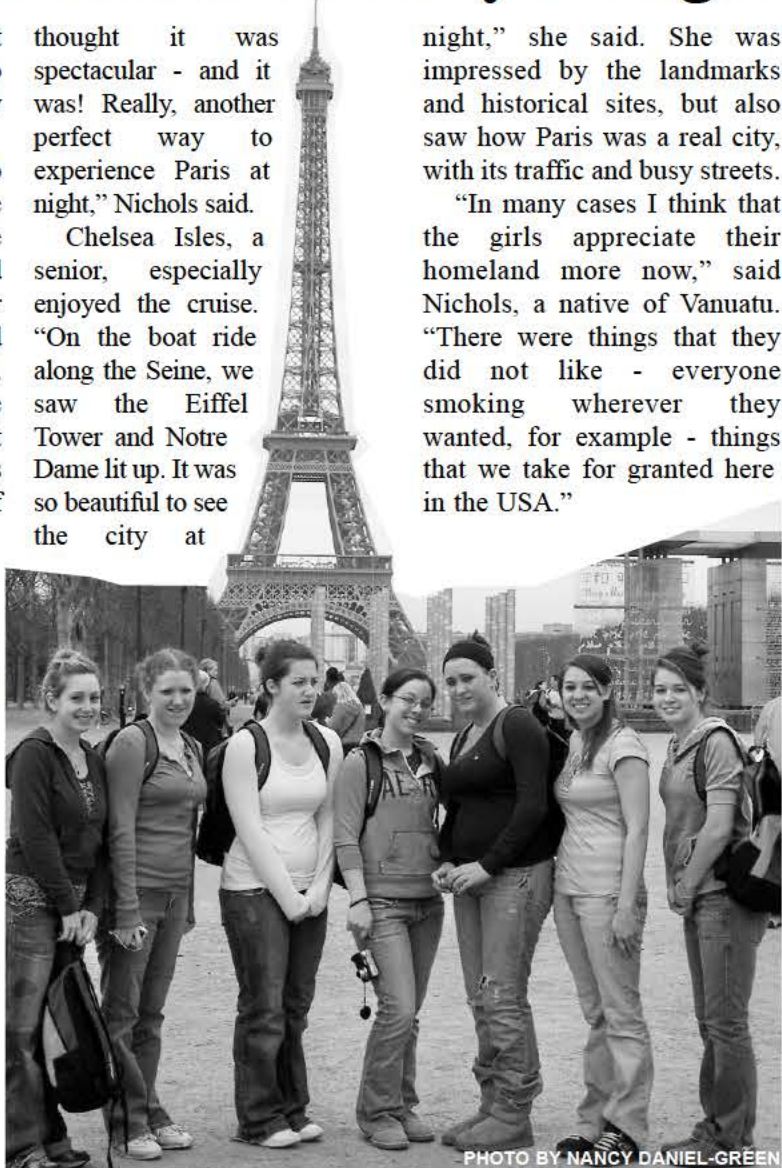
The group experienced the City of Light at night with a trip to the second floor of the Eiffel Tower and a boat cruise down the Seine. "The girls just

thought it was spectacular - and it was! Really, another perfect way to experience Paris at night," Nichols said.

Chelsea Isles, a senior, especially enjoyed the cruise. "On the boat ride along the Seine, we saw the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame lit up. It was so beautiful to see the city at

night," she said. She was impressed by the landmarks and historical sites, but also saw how Paris was a real city, with its traffic and busy streets.

"In many cases I think that the girls appreciate their homeland more now," said Nichols, a native of Vanuatu. "There were things that they did not like - everyone smoking wherever they wanted, for example - things that we take for granted here in the USA."



Turners Falls High School French students pose in front of the Eiffel Tower. Seven seniors and juniors traveled to Paris during February vacation.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Tech School Seeks 13% Increase

BY KEVIN FOLEY

The Franklin County Technical School is requesting budget \$213,454 from the town of Erving for fiscal '08. Last year's Tech School assessment for Erving was \$188,473, making this year's request almost a \$25,000 (13.2%) increase from last year's figure.

Still, administrative coordinator Tom Sharp said, "That is less than we originally expected. But when the town has to hold to a 2½% [levy] increase and one of its biggest line items is increasing by that much, it's a problem."

The members of the

selectboard aren't pleased with this year's Tech School assessment. "Years ago, they came to all the towns to talk about the budget. Now they want the towns to go there," said Andy Tessier, selectboard chair. "My opinion is that they should go to every community, and (the communities) can offer their own thoughts on it."

The May 7th town elections are shaping up, with three new candidates for two available school committee seats. Melanie Burnett of Swamp Road, Beth Lux of Flagg Hill Road and Son Hui May of Mountain Road are the three candidates.

As for the selectboard seat up for grabs this year, Tessier has decided to run again. The decision to run came after a period of uncertainty, when Tessier contemplated not pursuing re-election.

The town will vote on a \$100,000 extension to the Route 2 water main, at the May 9th annual town meeting. The town will save about \$150,000 on extending the water main west along Route 2 toward the state highway garage by putting in the new pipe when Mass Highway will be repaving that section of highway.

"They're going to have it all

dug up," said Sharp. "It will make it easy on us."

Bonuses for highway department members will be on the ballot for the annual town meeting. The selectboard considers the bonuses a sign of appreciation for the work that the highway department has put in.

"We're really fortunate that the highway department is a multi-talented group," said Sharp. "They did a lot of work that would have [otherwise] cost the town a lot of money." The group has done work all over town, including re-roofing and re-siding the historical museum

and closing the Farley landfill, as well as performing their normal road maintenance duties in town.

The selectboard gave permission for a surveyor from Rural Development Incorporated, a nonprofit organization of the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, to survey the land where the new senior housing facility will be located.

"They're going to help us plan the building of it, and they're going to help us figure out how to pay for it with grants," said Sharp.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Says: Don't Feed the Birds

BY KEVIN FOLEY

THE PATCH - Migratory Way is a great spot to stop and take in the sights and sounds of nature, especially birds and waterfowl that frequently stop to rest on the canal during their north - south journeys. Many local residents enjoy watching the birds traveling through, but some people also feed the waterfowl along the canal and that is creating a problem, according to Susan Russo, Visitor Services Manager of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (NFWR).

"If you're feeding the (waterfowl) bread and they're getting dependant on it, they're losing the ability to forage and collect food," said Russo. The waterfowl will eventually develop dependence on the food source that passersby provide. This may cause them not to migrate in the winter, Russo said.

Feeding is so common on Migratory Way that Russo said last week when she was near the canal, a goose walked up to the railing where she was standing. "I could tell he was looking for food," she said.

The NFWR has addressed the



In working with First Light Power and US Geological Survey, the Conte Refuge has posted caution signs along Migratory Way to discourage the feeding of birds. Here, Bob Smith of USGS posts such a sign.

problem by posting signs along Migratory Way telling people not to feed waterfowl, and warning them about the dangers involved with it.

Russo said the new rule has been generally well received by visitors she has talked to, but she suspects there will still be some resistance to the no feeding suggestion. "Not everyone's going to listen right out of the gate. We are approaching this gradually

so we don't overwhelm people all at once."

Another problem with feeding waterfowl, according to Russo, is people mainly use bread to feed them, which lacks many of the nutritional benefits that should make up a bird's diet. "Think about if we only ate bread for two or three weeks,"

said Russo. "We would be getting full, but we would be missing out on a lot of vitamins and nutrients we need."

One more hazard involved with feeding is the spread of disease among the waterfowl. When there is a large gathering of birds they will step in each other's feces. Also, if a bird pecks at a piece of food and gets its saliva on it, another bird could pick up the same piece of food, which is a cause of the rampant spread of diseases, according to Russo.

The Great Falls Discovery Center hosts many weekly nature-themed information sessions (see: www.greatfallsma.org). Russo stressed she is 'very available' to people around town who want to learn more about benign ways of interacting with nature.

Gina McNeely, Montague's health agent, said feeding wild birds other than waterfowl is certainly appropriate, but only if done correctly. Birdfeeders and

birdseed are both healthy methods of feeding birds, but people have to be careful about maintaining feeders if they choose to use them.

"You have to refill hummingbird feeders regularly," McNeely said. "The hummingbirds will keep coming back looking for food."

People should keep their feeders inside right now, according to McNeely. Bears will be coming out of hibernation and looking for food, and if people aren't careful, they may attract a bear to their backyard.

Along the canal, some Turners Falls residents don't appreciate the gulls and other waterfowl flocking to their neighborhood. "They're nuisances. People have to learn that they're not good to have around the neighborhood," said one G Street resident.

Another resident wagered a guess as to why so many of the birds are flocking around. "I assume it's because people are feeding them. I don't really like having them around."

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

Under the Influence

Wednesday 3-21

12:15 p.m. Parking complaint called in on Barton Cove Road at French King Highway.

3:31 p.m. Report of a disorderly person on Barton Cove Road.

11:50 p.m. Assisted Erving police with arrest on French King Highway.

Thursday 3-22

1:05 a.m. Loud noise complaint on Cove View Lane; subject spoken to.

5:40 p.m. Assisted Bernardston Police with motor vehicle accident on Route 10.

10:50 p.m. Request to notify subject from a Maryland police agency regarding an investigation.

Friday 3-23

4:01 a.m. Request from Winchester, New Hampshire police to give a notification to resident.

4:31 p.m. Arrested [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], charged with operating under the influence (3rd offense), possession of open container of alcohol, speeding, and failing to wear safety belt. Offenses occurred on West Gill Road.

Saturday 3-24

1:55 a.m. Report of vehicle off of roadway in the area of Factory Hollow on French King Highway, unfounded.

11:10 a.m. Report of detour sign damaged on Main Road.

10:33 p.m. Report of detour sign stolen from Main Road.

Monday 3-26

8:15 p.m. Assisted subject with motor vehicle lock-out on Mount Hermon campus. Entry gained.

Tuesday 3-27

3:35 p.m. Report of erratic operator on Route 142 and West Gill Road, unable to locate.

3:40 p.m. Investigated two car motor vehicle crash on Route 10 in Bernardston near Gill town line.

5:57 p.m. Report of noise complaint from ATVs on West Gill Road. Checked area; unable to locate.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

GMRSD Seeks 6.92% Budget Increase to Meet Mandates

BY DAVID DETMOLD - In between tear-choked testimonials from parents calling for closing or keeping open the Montague Center School, the Gill-Montague school committee rolled up their sleeves and passed a \$17,570,995 operating budget for the district schools for the coming fiscal year. The new budget figure represents a 6.92% overall increase in the operating budget from last year's \$16.4 million budget. School committee member Michael Langknecht called it a "minimally adequate budget to meet the needs of our students."

School committee chair Mary Kociela said, "We realize this is a hefty increase. We felt the need to meet all the mandates that are placed upon us."

Even before the ink was dry on the '08 operating budget, the committee said it recognized that fiscal constraints of the member towns will likely cause the new budget to be cut back. In Montague, town officials have called for no more than a 2½% (roughly \$300,000) increase over last year's school assessment. Gill, responsible for 14.2% of the GMRSD budget, says it can spend no more than \$32,450 over last year's assessment without

seeking a Proposition 2½ override. But committee members voted unanimously to support the \$17.57 million figure - which includes a fulltime curriculum coordinator and new reading specialists, among other add-ons - because they say state and federal mandates, including regulations requiring the district to continuously improve test scores in district schools, leave them no choice.

The school committee also continued to wrestle with the fallout of this winter's false start at reconfiguring district elementary schools, seeking and failing to reaffirm a prior consensus favoring broad grade span elementary schools, hearing again from Sheffield school principal Chip Wood, who advocated moving the district elementary schools toward "managed intra-district choice" to alleviate the inequitable distribution of children who live in poverty or who have special needs, currently making up a larger percentage at the Turners Falls elementary schools than at Gill or Montague Center, and agreeing to explore low-cost alternatives to conduct a non-biased survey of students choosing into or out of the district.

Superintendent Sue Gee said promotion of GMRSD schools had contributed to an increase of 14 students choosing into the district this year, to a total of 80. Still, 155 students are choosing out of the district this year, a number that does not include private school placements. Committee member Ted Castro-Santos said students choosing out of the district account for a loss of \$1 million in state aid to the district annually. "The costs of school choice to our district are of an entirely different order of magnitude than the costs of fixing schools. This is real. I can't accept any decision that does not take it into account," he said.

During the public input section of the agenda, Sue Dresser made a plea to the committee to allow the third grade to advance to a fourth grade at Montague Center, rather than shift to Sheffield, next year. She said the committee had chosen to uphold their vote to allow the fifth graders from Sheffield to go to the Middle School next year, and quoted some committee members who said they did not want to disappoint the Sheffield 5th graders who were excited about that promised move. "You promised the third graders at

Montague Center they would be going to 4th grade at Montague Center. Don't disappoint them."

Stacey Langknecht and Bob Avery spoke of a new fundraising initiative to raise money for the GMRSD schools. Scheduled for May 12th, the event will be a combined golf tournament at Thomas Memorial golf course and a Montague Mile walk and run, utilizing the new track at the high school. Langknecht said the first year, the fundraiser would benefit reading programs in grades K-12, athletics at the middle school and high school and physical education in grades K-6.

Avery said, "I've been thinking for years about a Montague Mile. This is the right time to start it, with the new track."

Parent Laura Wildman-Hanlon delivered a passionate defense of Montague Center School, and parent Kelly Gobel gave an equally impassioned defense of the campus model of Hillcrest and Sheffield Schools. Wildman-Hanlon said her children were being taunted on the bus, told by students from Sheffield, "You're stupid. Your school has to close." Gobel said the only way for the town to come together would be for students from all parts of town to

come to one elementary school campus; Montague could not afford to maintain two K-5 elementary schools at either end of town.

Joyce Phillips gave a speech about the difference between fact and opinion, and told about the meeting she attended four years ago with representatives of the Kuzmeskus bus company where bus routes carrying students from downtown Turners to Montague Center were eliminated as a cost saving measure.

Ironically, the town is now faced with a federal mandate to bus students from Sheffield school, (an underperforming school according to the federal No Child Left Behind guidelines), to Gill, if their parents choose to have them go to openings in the upper grades there. There are apparently no spaces available at Montague Center for Sheffield students, unless a decision is made to split a large second grade there into two third grades, or to allow the third graders to continue to a fourth grade at that school. The school district will be forced to set aside \$51,000 this year to pay for the possible busing of Sheffield intra-district choice students, according to Gee.

Odor Traced to Australis Sewer Continues to Annoy Neighbors

BY KEVIN FOLEY
TURNERS FALLS - What has been described as a "rotten egg smell" has been coming from a three-gallon-a-minute waste stream from the 200,000-gallon manure holding tank at Australis Aquaculture LLC in the industrial park, and spreading via the town sewer line to bother an entire neighborhood for months. Australis is a fish farm that produces barramundi, an Australian speciality product, for the domestic market. The bad smell, which has been causing complaints from residents of Norman Circle, Millers Falls Road, and Turnpike Road), has been noticeable for roughly the past five months.

Although Australis has tried different methods of getting rid of the odor, neighbors of the fish farm say it is still very much in the air.

"We smell it close to daily, since last October," said Alfred Popp, headmaster of the Jonathan Edwards Academy on Industrial Boulevard. "The smell has been getting less intense, but we can still smell it every morning."

Butch Stevens of Millers Falls Road lives near the plant and has smelled hydrogen sulfide on and off for a few months. "It hasn't gotten less intense, it hasn't changed at all. We usually get it at night, that's when they dump it." Stevens has recently contact-

ed the board of health about the smell, which he said is especially strong on Sunday nights.

The smell is due to levels of sulfides in the farm's manure tank wastestream, which Bob Trombley, superintendent of the Montague wastewater treatment plant recently compared to an aquarium tank filter. Sulfides change to hydrogen sulfide gas in the sewer line, according to Trombley, where even small levels give off the characteristic "rotten egg smell."

"We are committed to fixing the problem," Australis' managing director Josh Goldman said in February. This week, Tracy Hellman of Australis said that

commitment has not changed. "We have addressed the issue and we will continue to work with local residents and businesses to improve it."

Australis has tried changing the pH levels in the holding tank, and are currently exploring a method recommended by the state Department of Environmental Protection of using hydrogen peroxide in order to alleviate the bad smell.

Eva Tor, spokeswoman for Mass DEP, is working with Australis to find a solution. "This week we visited Australis to gain a better understanding of what the situation is there. We're currently assessing the situation and

I am communicating with the town, as well as Australis."

Among the neighbors who have conducted their own assessment of the situation since last summer, using their noses, Norman Circle resident Barry Kostanski said Tuesday, "This past weekend was a weekend from hell." He said the smell was strong each day, Saturday through Monday. "They've had plenty of time to straighten this out. I've been guaranteed by the DEP and Trombley that the odor will stop. It's not stopping."

Goldman was in Australia this week, and unavailable for comment. Trombley was also out of town.

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CROPS

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Diane Sicard in Turners Falls, gained at least 80 signatures. Only ten signatures of registered voters are needed to place an article on the annual town meeting warrant. After brief discussion, the selectboard on March 26th voted to forward the petitions to the town clerk for verification of signatures, and to place the articles on the warrant.

Police Station Update

The selectboard meeting began with a presentation by Jay diPucchio, representing the police station building commit-

tee, who reported that architect Brian Humes and police chief Ray Zukowski have continued to discuss possible reductions in floor space, with an eye toward joint use of some areas with the Turners Falls fire department. The reduction from the initial guidelines-driven plan now exceeds 25%, and selectboard member Pat Allen cautioned, "We don't want to cut too much, just because we've been used to nothing!"

The next face-to-face meeting with the architect, on Thursday, March 29th at 5:30 p.m. at the Turners Falls fire station, will present the evolving "footprint" to the chairs of the fire department prudential committee, town selectboard, capital improvements committee, and finance committee, with any others who wish to attend. All these groups have been briefed in the past, but diPucchio said, "We want to get a lot of experienced eyes on this preliminary plan."

Easily the sweetest item of the evening was approval for Girl Scout Troops 24 and 27 to staff card tables for cookie sales on the sidewalk at Ninth and K Streets on Saturday, March 31st from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Troop leader Kim Hersey

shared cookie selling -and eating - memories informally with those present.

Zoning Change Advances

A more serious item, a milestone in a ten-year process, was a formal presentation by town planner Dan Laroche to the selectboard of a zoning change for five parcels on Millers Falls Road. The procedure is for the planner to get approval from the selectboard to proceed to public hearings, probably during April. He observed, "I'm not asking for support or non-support, just advancing the process." Laroche obtained the desired approval, and after the hearings any resulting plan will seek town meeting concurrence, probably in a special town meeting in the fall.

The five parcels, 20 acres situated in a contiguous stretch between Norman Circle and the Hallmark building on the corner of Industrial Boulevard, all on the north side of Millers Falls Road, have long been zoned ambiguously as partly residential (close to the road) and partly industrial (closer to the river), would be reclassified as industrial. The traffic pattern on Millers Falls Road, the availability of utilities in the ground, the proximity to the industrial park, and the fact that Franklin County has very little remaining industrial space makes this a desirable change, in the view of Laroche and the planning board.

The next item related to the zoning request in a way familiar to small town government. Doug Stevens of the planning board is also the supervisory surveyor for a company whose clients include one of the parcel owners on Millers Falls Road. Stevens sought, and obtained, a selectboard determination (per state law) that his involvement does not present a conflict of interest or personal enrichment issue. Stevens observed that though he tends to seek forgiveness rather than permission in his life, this is an area where he feels full disclosure and permission is the correct path to follow. He has no expectation of

being professionally involved, but his company responsibilities make it difficult to avoid involvement without declining business.

Abbondanzio's update report included a request to reclassify dispatcher Jesse Sinclair from full-time to per diem, at an hourly rate of \$13.61, concurrent with Sinclair's departure from fulltime work in Montague to join the Greenfield dispatch staff. The town will use him, on an as-needed basis, to fill shifts that otherwise would divert an officer from police duty.

Petitions National and Local

The majority of the update period was devoted to three petitions for warrant articles for the annual town meeting. The petitions opposing the cultivation of genetically-engineered crops in Montague and favoring the impeachment of Bush and Cheney advanced without much discussion.

The third petition, originating from a caucus of Precinct 5 town meeting members, seeks to rescind the \$65,000 appropriation at the special town meeting of March 2006 to fund a feasibility study for a proposed community center for the Carnegie Library, the Gill-Montague senior center, and the Montague parks and recreation department.

Discussion of the petition's intent, and the consequences of rescinding the feasibility study funding, included contributions from both petitioners and library trustees. Selectboard member Patricia Pruitt asked if the intention was to allow discussion at town meeting, or to actually impound the funds; petitioner David Detmold replied that he and the other petitioners understood at last year's annual town meeting that a petitioned article on the town meeting warrant was the proper way to discuss the study. He added there was no intention to proscribe eventual use of the funds, more a desire to avoid tackling both a new police station and a new community center at more or less the same

time. Library trustee Karen Schweitzer stated the feasibility study would not be based on a single-building option, and that both public discussion and professional advice were important. Petitioner Pam Hanold expressed her concern - based on police station studies years ago - that a study at this time might be obsolete by the time Montague was ready to build a community center; trustee Veronica Phaneuf responded that program information and public input would be of benefit at any future time.

Library director Sue SanSoucie felt it is important to maintain forward motion from the fruitful public hearing on the community center proposal in late February, and that no extensive spending was expected in the near future.

An additional uncertainty centered around town meeting moderator Ray Godin's intention, as reported by selectboard member Pat Allen, to limit discussion on petitioned articles during what will no doubt be a lengthy town meeting. Reached later by phone, Godin referred generally to the first two petitioned articles, which he had not seen yet, when he said, "Town meeting is the business meeting of the town. It is not a debating society. I'm not going to entertain tons of discussion on subjects the town has no impact on one way or another." But Godin said a discussion of rescinding a previous town meeting article would be an appropriate item for the warrant.

At Allen's urging, and in view of the desire for a full discussion of the community center feasibility study spending, Detmold agreed to withdraw the petition at this time in favor of a chance to place the item on a special town meeting warrant in the fall. Since many of the Precinct 5 petitioners were in attendance and seemed to concur, this represented an amicable solution. The board went into executive session and the multitudes dispersed into the rain.

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REPAIRS
continued from pg 1

week that passed without the town being able to occupy the building led to extra utility costs for the rented trailers that now house town offices, and extra short term borrowing costs for the construction loan, at \$4000 a month. The town needs to have both the projects finished in time to meet a June 19th deadline for completing paperwork for a lower interest USDA loan for the building projects. The contract with Handford Construction had allowed for a \$250 a day fee for late completion of the buildings, but the board has been forbearing in exercising their rights to late fees on the town offices, as Handford has made a good faith effort to wrap up the project.

Board member Dan Keller said the building inspector had given a temporary occupancy permit, but before town departments can move in there are still some issues with the floor that need to be resolved. Installation was done by a subcontractor, whose work left "bubbles, bumps, long lateral humps, and some tears." Waxing and polishing make the flaws look worse. Redoing the work is probably worse than living with the flaws because the edges are already covered by baseboard and the baseboard is glued to the wall; removing the baseboard will pull off paint and possibly some of the sheetrock. Grinding the excess glue now would fill the whole building, including the ventilation system and the exposed trusses, with dust.

On Thursday, March 22nd, the building committee met with representatives of Handford Construction and the flooring subcontractors to negotiate and insist on what repairs can be done without causing further damage, so the town gets a credit for the poor workmanship, and linoleum to store for future replacement. Keller said there are flaws in every room.

Board chair Ted Lewis said that in five years repairing the floor will be a worse job. Keller called the situation "a drag," and did not deny Lewis' point. Heard said that any decision on repair would be up to the building committee.

As for the new town center septic system, a section of conduit for the electrical controls of the septic system broke, filled with water and had to be replaced. But that repair has been done, and the pumps test-

ed. Aldrich said the septic system account still has money in it, but Keller pointed out that work on the septic system is not finished. Steve Mason, who designed the system, will be coming back to start it up.

The cellar floor of the library has been poured, including perimeter drains. The suspended ceiling and light fixtures are in, and the 60% of the floor which is hardwood has been installed. Exterior work including landscaping and painting for both buildings will wait for warmer spring weather. The USDA inspector called the library 73% complete, and the office building 95% complete.

On Saturday, March 24th, Aldrich, two selectboard members, and some volunteers moved records and equipment from the trailer office to their room in the new building. Telephones were scheduled to be moved over to the new offices on Tuesday, March 27th.

Small Business Loans

The board meeting opened with Alan Singer from Franklin County Community Development Corporation outlining the small business loan and assistance program the CDC operates, and offering his services to Wendell businesses and residents who might wish to start a business. The CDC has helped create over 1,000 jobs in Franklin County and the North Quabbin region, and offers loans from \$5,000 to \$200,000 for start up, expansion, or to provide bridge financing where banks will not lend the entire amount a business needs. They offer business courses, and a self guided tutorial. The service is free and confidential.

In the Venture Center at 324 Wells Street, Greenfield, the CDC's food processing center, which is open for tours, is now showing a positive cash flow with 61 users.

Governor Patrick has shown his support for the CDC by including a line item for its continued funding in the state budget.

Special Town Meeting

The selectboard picked April 11th as the date of the next special town meeting. Warrant articles will include \$30,000 to complete conversion of the old library into a senior center. Margo Jones, the architect for the other town building projects will do the design work for that project without charge, because the original plan for the town

office included a senior center, and she considered a senior center part of her job. The new senior center will have a kitchen and bathroom with running water, with wastewater flowing into the new town septic system. Librarian Rose Heidkamp said that books are now providing most of the building's insulation, and the board agreed that conventional insulation should be installed when the building is converted.

The board of assessors has asked for an article that would increase the amount of personal property exempt from excise tax from \$1,500 to \$10,000; personal property worth \$11,000 would be taxed as the full \$11,000, not just the \$1,000 over the exemption.

Another warrant article would allow the selectboard to consider late payment of taxes when granting a license, but Keller thought a matter of policy like that should wait for the annual town meeting.

The veterans' benefits account is short, and an article on the special town meeting warrant would fill the gap.

There is \$265,000 in free cash, minus the \$6,625 that was paid to the Mahar account, an allowed use of free cash. The remainder needs to be put into stabilization or another account where it can be used.

Fiscal '08 Budget

Discussion followed on the fiscal 2008 budget, which will include additional costs for the maintenance of the larger library, and the larger town office building. Heat and electricity costs will be hard to estimate for the new buildings. They are larger but they are also tighter, allow in more natural light, and their electric lights are more efficient than the lights in the old buildings.

Lewis said it makes sense to put the maintenance of all town properties into one account, and the telephone bills of town departments into one account. Keller agreed, but said it was still important to keep track of departments' telephone use. Aldrich said she would soon need a new computer, and Keller told her to start looking for a good source.

Aldrich said insurance for the new buildings will cost considerably more than it did for the old buildings, as replacement costs would be considerably higher. Wendell gets a discount for paying all at once, for a high tech alarm system and for courses

that Aldrich is able to take during the year.

Lewis recommended increasing wages of town workers by 3% to take effect July 1st.

Toothpicks and Crumbs

At the March 7th board meeting, members asked Aldrich to send a letter to a recent user of the town hall because on the next day people found crumbs and toothpicks on the floor, and the water left on dripping through the leaking toilets into the tight tank. The user, Phyllis Brooks, answered that she had turned off the water, and her group had not used toothpicks, or had any food in the hall. She said her group had left the hall in better shape than they found it. That leaves a mystery of who came into the building and left the floor littered with toothpicks and crumbs between 4:00 p.m. one afternoon, and 10:00 a.m. the next morning. Aldrich said there are many keys out. Heard said, "It seems like we should write or call with an apology," but she added that "The crumbs and toothpicks are a mystery."

Library Playground

Librarian Rose Heidkamp met with the selectboard, and said the Handford Construction fence would soon be coming down at the new library, and that the playground there needs some repair, and will need maintenance. She was not sure if the library trustees or the selectboard would be responsible for playground upkeep. Some parents have shown interest in helping.

Police chief Ed Chase offered some community policing money for the playground, and Heidkamp suggested using some of the contingency money from the library construction account.

The selectboard agreed to give responsibility for the playground to the library trustees, with the understanding that they will consult with the selectboard about major changes or expenses.

Heidkamp also said that moving heat and electricity costs of the library into a general town building heat and electric bill would work in the library's favor. The library is required to spend 20% of its budget on new books, and reducing the library budget by the cost of oil and electricity would allow her more leeway in using the library's money.

Unregistered Vehicle Tour

There are still properties in town that have more than two

unregistered vehicles and no permit for the extras. Lewis said people are using them for storage, contrary to the intent of the bylaw that allows two on a property. Lewis said selectboard members used to ride around town once a year and look, an approach he felt was more even-handed than waiting for complaints from neighbors. Keller said looking for unregistered vehicles is allowed as long as it is done from public roads. Heard said that she could go around town with Lewis some time during the school's April vacation, when the leaves will not be out yet, so the view into the woods will be less restricted. The 60 miles of town roads can be covered in a few hours; Lewis said they usually make the trip over two sessions.

FRCOG has offered again to set up machines for traffic counts in four places on Wendell roads. In the past vehicles have been clocked traveling over 80 m.p.h. on West Street, and Depot Road. After some discussion, with the hope of getting information for parts of town that have not been checked before, board members agreed to ask for the counts to be made on Mormon Hollow Road near Farley Road, on New Salem Road near Jennison Road, on Montague Road near the east end of Wickett Pond Road, and on Locke Hill Road north of Old Stage Road.

The selectboard nominated Reverend Lloyd for this month's North Quabbin Community Coalition Spotlight award, for going above and beyond what is required. Heard said she could think of six more people who deserved the recognition, and Keller said others could be nominated in upcoming months.



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OFFICE
continued from pg 1

Greenfield. Treml remembered his father pointing to a hole in the ground next to Ste. Anne's Church, informing him that a new post office would soon be built there.

"You can't put a building there," Treml told his father. "There's a hole there."

Not only was there a hole there, but a stream ran through it. Construction was delayed from February 2nd, 1935 until March, not because of the wetland and the stream, but because there was a question about the ownership of this piece of useless swamp. The stream and foundation drains were piped into a nearby manhole on the corner of 6th Street and Avenue A.

The firm Swanburg Construction, with headquarters on Amherst Street in Manchester, NH, won the contract to build the new post office for the grand sum of \$37,650. The old post office was on 2nd Street, next to the Crocker Bank with the chimes, in the space now occupied by Montague Community TV.

A February 2nd, 1935 photo shows a wooded area on 6th Street and Avenue A, abutting Ste. Anne's Church and the First National Bank. A March 2nd, 1935 photo shows a construction shanty standing on the site.

On March 26th, 1935, with the land title cleared, a couple of men are pictured next to a test pit, presumably dug or being dug by them, on the wooded site. In a remarkably short time, without any evidence of heavy equipment involved, the firm cleared the site, excavated, formed and poured concrete foundations, mixed the concrete on-site, and constructed the building, all in about eight months time. The new U.S. post office was complete and open for business on October 14th, 1935.

In the Greenfield post office lobby, there are photos of that post office under construction in 1915. In some of the photos, a derrick is pictured. Erecting a derrick on a construction site was a common practice, years ago. A derrick, other than an oil well drilling derrick, is essentially a tripod to accommodate a pulley used to hoist heavy



In this photo, the photographer was facing southeast. Couture Bros Gas Station can be seen at left; St Kazimierz and Carnegie Library at right. Foundation walls with manhole in foreground.

objects with a long pole or beam pivoting at the base. Peter Politis, who once worked for Mackin Construction, was adept at setting up derricks inside factories or other places to lift machinery into place where it was not possible to gain access with a conventional crane. Sometimes, Politis set up a derrick simply because it was quicker and easier than arranging to bring a crane onto the job.

For this article, I relied heavily on news tidbits gleaned from *Greenfield Recorder-Gazette* files stored on microfilm at the Greenfield Public Library. One of them reads, "A large number of local men is being employed on the project."

That was on April 3rd, 1935. The Great Depression had begun a false recovery in 1933. Franklin D. Roosevelt's many make-work projects gave the economy a boost, but by 1935 the Depression was back in the doldrums. The Turners Falls post office may have been one of FDR's projects aimed at getting people back to work. Men were looking for work in droves, but despite the brief news article stating that, "A large number of local men is

being employed on the project," there seem to be very few men at work in any of the photos. Maybe more than two was considered "many." Whatever the number, they did not waste any time building a structure that has withstood the test of time, in a wet area, yet.

By July of 1935, Postmaster Fred C. Haigis announced open competitive examinations by the civil service commission for a fireman-laborer. "Duties of the position will include cleaning, heating, and ventilating of the building, and all manual and repair work..... Applicants must be between the ages of 20 and 55 on the date when applications close."

On Wednesday, October 2nd, 1935, Postmaster Haigis announced that construction engineer Paul E. West had turned the completed building over to him. Swanburg Construction Company had the building constructed before the arrival of furniture and fixtures for the interior and before a carload of coal arrived to fire the furnace! Postmaster Haigis requested permission from the Post Office Department to move equipment from the old post office on Second Street to

the new quarters until the shipment of new furniture arrived. Next door to the old post office, the Crocker Bank, which merged that year with the Greenfield Institute of Savings to eventually become the Greenfield Savings Bank, also generously offered to furnish equipment free.

Officially, Swanburg Construction began work in February. The test pit dug in the wet land area may have been a token gesture to meet the terms of the contract of work beginning by a certain date. Foundation work did not get under way until March. But Swanburg Construction had foundations in place by April 3rd, 1935, the building ready for occupancy by October 1st and had turned the building over to the postmaster on October 2nd. With the arrival of the carload of coal delivered on October 9th, the janitor fired up the boiler and Postmaster Haigis opened the post office for business on Monday, Oct 14th, 1935. With largely manual labor, the building went up incredibly fast.

The old post office on Second Street closed after 53 years of service. The first mail was received at the Second Street location in 1882. Previous to that, the post office was in the building known as the Plotkin Block across Second Street. Previous to that, a local post office was located in Montague City in Koch's Grocery store. The post office remained open in that store as a branch office for many years.

Swanburg Construction Company is no longer in business. One of the two sons, who had been running the company founded by their father, fell ill and could not continue. The brothers could not come to an agreement on a buyout price and the company closed in 1959.

Joseph A. Parzych is the author of Jep's Place. He was six years old at the time of these events.



March 29th, 1935 - The front wall is formed. Turners Falls Inn on the left.

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Turners Falls Athletic Club Recalls Glory Days

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
TURNERS FALLS - When I needed some information on the construction of the Turners Falls post office in 1935, Sam Couture told me that a group gathered in the basement of the old Athletic Club hall on 5th Street, now the home of the Gill-Montague Senior Center. "Five old timers meet there every Monday evening at about 6:30," Couture said. "They can tell you all about it." (Couture does not consider himself an old timer, being a mere 78 years old, and still just a kid.)

The Monday evening group is the governing body of the Turners Falls Athletic Club, founded in 1928 to foster semi-professional sports. The TFAC first began promoting semi-pro baseball, but progressed to promoting basketball after WWII. Some of the semi-pro players, recalled to collective memory by the august TFAC group are: Tom Walsh, Lou Bush and a man whose last name is Skrivner. His first name has been lost to collective recall, except for his having coached at Mass Aggy.

In the TFAC's baseball heyday, Jimmy Guy was president and manager of the club.

"There was no money for advertising," said James "Trip" Trembl. "Jimmy would write notices on the sidewalk with chalk when they were having a

game. Then he'd walk around town yelling to announce that there would be a game that afternoon at Unity Park. Coach Care was a left-handed hitter and hit so many home runs

into the poplar trees on the edge of the ball field that they changed the rules - a ball socked into the trees was considered two balls. Big crowds showed up."

"They had clowns and House of David exhibition games," George Richason recalled. "When they had those, the club got calls from out of state to reserve tickets."

Most of the time, the baseball players only got what they received when passing the hat at the game. After expenses, the players divided up what precious little was left.

"They didn't do it for the money," Bill Shanahan averred.

"They did it because they loved the game," Bill Barry chimed in.



The Governors of the Turners Falls Athletic Club meet each week on 5th Street. Left to right: George Richason - 90, Charles Woodard - 87, Bill Barry - 75, Bill Shanahan - 75 (President), James Trembl - 84. Not present: George F. Bush - 80, vacationing in Florida.

The athletic club building was once owned by the Women's Temperance Society, responsible for local efforts to ban Demon Alcohol during Prohibition. At some point the building became part of St. Mary's Church. When the Springfield Diocese decided to divest itself of the building, the Athletic Club, then at their zenith with over 300 members, bought it.

"Club membership has since dwindled to 105 members," Richason said. "When we had basketball games at the old high school - the one that burned - the place would be packed. Now, people stay home and watch TV."

With membership falling, and receiving a reasonable offer when downtown Turners Falls

was undergoing urban renewal, the TFAC governing body decided to sell.

"We got something over \$45,000 for the building - with the privilege of meeting downstairs one day a week and four times a year upstairs," Richason said. "The money is invested. Ten percent goes back into the principal. The rest is given out as athletic and academic scholarships."

There's no discrimination. Last year, out of three scholarships given, two recipients were girls. The fund keeps growing from dues, donations, interest on investments and fundraisers. It now totals \$53,112.40.

"We always get a nice thank-you note from the recipients," Trembl said. "But none have ever contributed, even after they were out of school and working."

"None of the fathers of scholarship winners have ever joined the club, either," Richason noted.

"We get a \$3 fee from club members, and we ask for donations," Shanahan said. "Some give up to \$100 - Ed Prondecki gives \$500, and Joe Scrypek is right up there [with a generous donation], too."

"For fundraisers we have dinners and a raffle," Bill Barry

said. "The AC holds a fall clam-bake at the Rod & Gun Club and occasionally at the Schuetzen Verein picnic grounds."

"We are not getting any younger," Richason said. "When the present governing body is gone, we have made arrangements for the town of Montague to take over the fund, TFAC Trust, 51 Montague Street, Turners Falls, MA. The town will continue to invest the fund money and give out scholarships, and because 10% always goes back into the fund, it will remain, perpetually growing a little each year to offset inflation."

The Turners Falls Athletic Club Governing Body includes:

George Richason - 90, Charles Woodard - 87, Bill Barry - 75, Bill Shanahan - 75, (President), James Trembl - 84 and George Bush - 80 (vacationing in Florida).

So what did I learn about the post office construction?

Trembl said, "All I can tell you is that when my father told me they were going to build a post office there, I said, 'You can't put up a building there. There's a hole there.'"

George Richason said, "I lived in Riverside and I never came over the river."

Though I didn't learn much about the post office construction, I did learn about the TFAC - past, present and future.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Restless Legs Syndrome

BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ - Q. I've been seeing lots of TV commercials lately about "restless legs syndrome." I've never heard of this condition. Is it rare?

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) affects about one in ten adults in North America and Europe. RLS is found in both men and women, but can begin in children. The percentage of people with RLS increases with age. And, seniors experience symptoms longer and more frequently.

Many researchers believe that RLS is under-reported. Victims of RLS are often diagnosed as suffering from insomnia, depression or a disorder of the nerves, muscles or skeleton.

RLS is a neurologic movement disorder. It produces uncomfortable sensations that

cause an irresistible urge to move the legs. RLS symptoms can be relieved temporarily by movement. Symptoms occur during inactivity and strike most frequently during the evening. These attacks lead to sleep problems.

The following are 11 questions from the Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation. If you answer "yes" to 6 or more of these, you may have RLS.

- When you sit or lie down, do you have a strong desire to move your legs?
- Does your desire to move your legs feel impossible to resist?
- Have you ever used the words "unpleasant," "creepy-crawly," "creeping," "itching," "pulling" or "tugging" to describe your symptoms to others?

- Does your desire to move often occur when you are resting or sitting still?
 - Does moving your legs make you feel better?
 - Do you complain of these symptoms more at night?
 - Do you keep your bed partner awake with the jerking movements of your legs?
 - Do you ever have involuntary leg movements while you are awake?
 - Are you tired or unable to concentrate during the day?
 - Do any of your family members have similar complaints?
 - Does a trip to the doctor only reveal that nothing is wrong and there is no physical cause for your discomfort?
- RLS may be inherited. About half of patients have a family history of the RLS.
- Also, there is a lower inci-

dence of RLS in Asia than there is in North America and Europe.

There are two forms of RLS - primary and secondary. Primary RLS is unrelated to other disorders; its cause is unknown. Secondary RLS can be brought on by kidney failure, pregnancy, iron deficiency anemia, or some medications. Research has shown that there is a relationship between RLS and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Most people with RLS also have periodic limb movement disorder (PLMD), which causes leg twitching or jerking movements during sleep.

There are two drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat RLS; both are also used in higher doses for Parkinson's disease. These are Mirapex and Requip.



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

Both drugs may make people fall asleep without warning. There are also several drugs approved for other conditions that help alleviate RLS symptoms.

It is possible to combat the symptoms in other ways. Walking, massage, stretching, hot or cold baths, vibration, acupressure, meditation and yoga can help.

Caffeine and alcohol can worsen RLS symptoms.

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

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Gazing into the Well

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GILL - After the tiles were in place and backfilled, Pa covered the top of the well with thick planks. He nailed a sheet of galvanized metal over them to shed rain. The sheet metal acted as a hinge when he lifted a plank to check the water level.

The new well didn't produce much water. Recovery was slow and the water was often cloudy, especially during dry times as the level got lower. Clothes became dingier and dingier with each washing. Ma began lugging water from the rain barrel to scrub clothes.

One day, Pa went behind the

house to check the water level in the well. I tagged along. He tipped the plank back to peer into that deep dark place. "Want to take a look?" he asked.

I moved forward to take a place beside him. He got a firm grip on the straps of my overalls. I leaned forward to look. The well seemed to go down, down, to the center of the earth. The still water far down at the bottom looked like a round looking glass. Cool air rose from the well. Goose pimples popped up on my arms as I gazed down into the void. The well seemed to be drawing me in. The world turned sideways, making me feel I was losing my balance. Pa's firm grip on my back felt reassuring. While still keeping a secure hold of me, he counted the tiles - "Jeden... dwa... trzy..." his

voice trailing off to a whisper. A frown came over his face. The well was very low.

He pulled me away from the brink and lowered the plank cover, warning me never to open it. Though my father my mother and my sisters all warned me repeatedly to never to open the cover, I couldn't help but be drawn to that well. The hinged plank cover, shaded by fragrant lilacs, held a fascination - beckoning me - to lift the plank and view the forbidden depths. The warnings made it all the more irresistible. The well seemed to draw me like a magnet.

One day when Pa was away, I looked to see if anyone was watching, then slipped into the cool shade of the lilacs. I knelt and lifted the plank, heart racing, hands shaking, to gaze

down into the cool depths. This time the well seemed to go even further into the earth, with that odd feeling that an increase in the force of gravity drew me toward the void. I felt enlivened by the fear that I'd lean too far and the depths would pull me down, to tumble, head first, down, down, into the water far below. The fear of getting caught only made the experience more daring, more thrilling, and more satisfying. The cool air rising from the well filled my lungs. I felt a heady feeling of not being quite in control. When I felt the pull of the well drawing me and I felt that I was losing my balance, I quickly closed the cover and went away with my secret safe, my heart pounding, and my hands shaking.

- Continued Next Week

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Water Rate Increase for Turners Falls Fire District

Property owners within the Turners Falls Fire District pay a semi-annual water bill. These payments help to cover water use and infrastructure costs.

Due to increases in energy,

insurance and other operating costs, the Turners Falls Fire District finds it necessary to increase the rates for the first time since 2003 as follows. The current rate is \$1.50 per 1,000

gallons. The new rate of \$1.75 per 1,000 gallons for the first 200,000 gallons will go into effect with any water used after the April 2007 meter readings. The first billing of the new rate will come out November 1, 2007.

Rates for within the Turners Falls Fire District

Minimum Charge \$30.00

21,000 to 200,000 gallons - \$1.75 per 1,000 gallons

201,000 to 400,000 gallons - \$1.85 per 1,000 gallons

401,000 to 600,000 gallons - \$1.95 per 1,000 gallons

601,000 to 800,000 gallons - \$2.05 per 1,000 gallons

801,000 to 1,000,000 gallons - \$2.15 per 1,000 gallons

1,001,000 and above - \$2.25 per 1,000 gallons

- Board of Water Commissioners

Ken Morin - Chairman

Steve Call

Kevin McCarthy

Sudoku

By Willy White

The answers to this week's puzzle will run next week.

		5	3		9		8	
			8		7	9		1
						5	7	
8	9	1		7		3	5	4
	6			3			2	
4	3	2		9		1		7
	5	9						
6		3	7		5			
	1		9		6	4		

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THURSDAY TO SUNDAY, MARCH 29TH- APRIL 1ST
The classic Rogers and Hammerstein musical, "The Sound of Music" performed by the Barre Players. 8 p.m. Thursday, Fridays & Saturdays; 2 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets are \$14 adults, \$12 seniors. Info: 978-724-0108.

FRIDAY, MARCH 30TH
Deja Brew, Wendell - Acoustic Duo *Warped Americana*, Steve Crow & Peter Kim. 9 to 11 p.m., no cover.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse: Heros-classic rockers, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST
John Willis' and Tom Young's "Recycled Realities and Other Stories" at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Reception with live music and hors d'oeuvres from 1 -5 pm. Slide presentation from 7:15-8:45 p.m. at Hallmark Institute of Photography Educational Center

Deja Brew: Rock - *The Midnight Movers*. 9 to 11 p.m. No cover

Rt. 63 Roadhouse: *Drunk Stuntmen* come back to rock the Roadhouse! 9:30 p.m.

Annual Easter Bazaar & Spring Galk. Polish food sale, bake sale, Easter & spring crafts, items from Poland, religious goods, gifts. Breakfast & lunch served. Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, 84 K Street, Turners Falls. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Annual Sugar on Snow Supper Menu: Comed beef hash, baked beans, coleslaw, Havard Beets, homemade breads and donuts, beverage, dill pickles, and Ripley Farms maple sugar. At Montague Congregational Church, Montague Center. 6 pm. Reservations: 774-7256.

Zoe Darrow and the Fiddleheads! Including a Silent Auction to benefit Jonathan Edwards Academy at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls.

Deja Brew, Wendell-*The Euphemisms*-Acoustic Folk Rock. 9 to 11 p.m., no cover.

The National Spiritual Alliance Psychic Fair at Thompson Temple, Lake Pleasant. Readers use a variety of methods to obtain information for those who consult them. Readings cost \$25



Jay Mankita and Peter Siegel at the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Saturday, April 7th, 8 p.m.

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SUNDAY, APRIL 1ST
Deja Brew: Josh Levangie - Johnny Cash Favorites. 9 to 11p.m. No cover.

MONDAY, APRIL 2ND
Live Jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Avenue A, 6 to 9 p.m. Info. 863-4441.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4TH
Fiddle Tune swap at Deja Brew, Wendell, all welcome. 7 to 9 p.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5TH
Rt. 63 Roadhouse: Open Mic, all levels welcome. Guitarist Steve Crow is the host. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., no cover.

Deja Brew: Kellianna - Acoustic Rock. 8 to 10 p.m. No cover.

FRIDAY, APRIL 6TH
Rt. 63 Roadhouse: *Equalites & Green Thumb* - open reggae, ska rockin - come to dance! 8:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 7TH
Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell Common, Wendell. Jay Mankita and Peter Siegel perform. Proceeds to benefit the Chicken Coop School. 8 p.m. Open Mic begins at 7:30, open mic sign-up and info. visit www.wendellfullmoon.org. Admission is \$6 to \$12 at the door; kids 6-12 \$2; under 6 free.

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center. Adam Sweeney & Eric Alan of the ever-popular *Amity Front*. Arrive early for couches, armchairs, and to browse the books. \$7 cover. 8 p.m.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse: *Catamount*, clas-

sic and southern rock. Come to dance. 9:30 p.m.

THURSDAY TO SATURDAY, APRIL 12TH TO 14TH

The Country Players presents: *A Few Good Men* by Aaron Sorkin, directed by Richard J. Martin at The Shea Theatre. 8 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday. Call and reserve your tickets now! 863-2281 ext. 1

SATURDAY, APRIL 14TH

Concert - Travis LeDoyt with his All Star Nashville Band. A rousing night of non stop music, Orange Town Hall auditorium, Orange. Show time 7 p.m., doors open 6:30 p.m.

68th Season Pioneer Valley Symphony Brass and Brahms Under the direction of Paul Phillips, featuring Eric Berlin, trumpet soloist performing the Alexander Arutiunian Trumpet Concerto. Program also includes Jean Sibelius' Karelia Suite and Johannes Brahms' Symphony No. 2 At Greenfield High School. Pre-concert talk at 7 p.m. Concert at 7:30 p.m. 773-3664.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, APRIL 20TH TO 22ND

Arena Civic Theatre presents: *The Crucible* directed by Catherine King at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Tickets \$12.50 general, \$10 for Senior Citizens & Students. Available at World Eye Bookshop and at the Door. Call

863-2281 x3 for reservations. Friday & Saturday's performance at 8 p.m. Sunday performance 2 p.m. Continues April 27th to 29th.

MONDAY, APRIL 9TH
The Friends of the Montague Reporter meeting at 7 p.m. at 24 3rd Street. Support your community newspaper! 863-8666 for more info.

SUNDAY, APRIL 22ND

The 1st Annual Montague Community Variety Show at 6:30 p.m. at the Grange Hall, Montague Center. In celebration of the creative strength and energy of the entire town, performers of all ages are invited to share their music, magic tricks, dance acts, spoken word, family skits, baton twirling, comedy, etc. Performers are encouraged to sign up early to guarantee time on stage. Proceeds this year will benefit the Turn Children Education Fund. To sign up or for more information, call 367-2483 or dradway@verizon.net.

TUESDAY, APRIL 24TH

Montague Plains Field Walk with Tim Simmons, Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. For ages 10 and older, held at Montague Plains. Call to pre-register 800-859-2960. Fee: \$5 donation appreciated. Restoration ecologist Tim Simmons will share fascinating findings from research on land use history and breeding bird responses to mowing, logging and fire, not to mention biodiversity conservation.

ONGOING

Exhibit: John Willis' and Tom Young's "Recycled Realities and Other Stories" at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Haunting and surreal, series of black and white images invite viewers into a vast paper landscape at Erving Paper Mill. Also images from photographic projects: "View from the Rez" and "Timeline".

AUDITIONS

The Country Players is holding auditions for Wizard of Oz, directed by David Grout. Performances are July 6, 7 & 13, 14, 15. Auditions are Sunday, April 22nd from 2 to 5 p.m. at GCC Downtown Center and Tuesday, April 24th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Shea Theater.

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3. **300 R**
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4. **WILD HOGS PG13**
DAILY 6:45 9:15
MATINEE 12:15 3:15
5. **PREMONITION R**
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MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15
5. **HILLS HAVE EYES 2 R**
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6. **SHOOTER R**
DAILY 6:30 9:00 in DTS sound
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7. **BLADES OF GLORY PG13**
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<p>SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST Live Bald Eagle with Tom Richardi. Celebrate the success story of the bald eagle as we prepare for it to be delisted from the status of being an endangered species. 1 p.m. UNTIL MARCH 31ST Stephen Gingold's Nature Photography. Explore the world of nature, both at a landscape scale and focused at close range for details, through the eyes of Stephen Gingold as you see his photographs in this special exhibit.</p>	<p>APRIL 6TH TO 28TH Museum of Industrial Heritage Display and Jack Coughlin Sketched Portraits in the Great Hall. SATURDAY, APRIL 7TH Signs of Early Spring. Discover the early signs of Spring. Some hands on activities and take-home items that can bring Spring inside your window. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Something's Fishy. Join Refuge staff to learn about the life cycle of a fish and some of our local species. Geared</p>	<p>towards all ages and will include building a fish mobile. 1 p.m. THURSDAY, APRIL 12TH Sustainable Forestry Practices in the Valley. Pioneer Valley Institute presents a talk by Jay Healy, owner of Hall Tavern Farm in Charlemont and former state legislator and agricultural commissioner. This talk is also part of the Great Falls Discovery Center's Woodlot Management for Landowners Series starting this spring and running through the fall. 7- 9 p.m</p>
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Starting Tomatoes from Seed

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY - While the late winter has been slow to let go, signs of Spring are here nonetheless. Area sugar-houses are boiling sap, the snow is receding and the tips of daffodils are emerging from the muddy ground. The birds are singing early and late; both song sparrow and redwing blackbirds could be heard on St. Patrick's Day, although we were still shoveling the large accumulation from Thursday's storm. The leek and onion plants look perky in their individual cells. They are bright green blades, the promise of large bulbs in late summer.

By the end of the month it will be time to start tomatoes from seed so that they will be ready to plant outside around Memorial Day. The seed packs from Tomato Grower's Supply sound like creative fiction. Marianna's Peace: "large, one to two pound pink-red beefsteak fruits...with...luscious, full tomato flavor"; Brandywine Red: "smooth, red fruit that are juicy and loaded with intense tomato flavor"; Box Car Willie: "very

heavy crop of good-sized, smooth red tomatoes with delicious flavor"; Arkansas Traveler: a "Southern heirloom well known for its ability to produce fruit in hot weather"; Believe It Or Not: "wonderful sandwich tomato...full, sweet tomato flavor and plenty of juice." In addition, I plan some old standbys: Gardener's Delight, a cherry also known as Sugar Lump that produces six to twelve fruited clusters of crack resistant sweet tomatoes and Bush Celebrity, a compact plant ideal for containers that produces a reliable crop of good-sized sweet-tart fruit.

These mouth-watering tomatoes will be started as fragile seeds about the size of the head of a straight pin in a set of cleverly designed British



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

propagator kits, which include Styrofoam trays with 40 cells, a tray of dibbles that doubles as a plant platform, a moisture wicking capillary mat that looks like old-fashioned blotting paper, a tray for water and a clear plastic lid to hold in moisture. The cell tray will be filled with sterile seed starting mix, a blend of sphagnum peat and perlite that offers a light medium with water-holding capacity so that plants can breathe, retain moisture and develop a large root system before they are transplanted

into a denser mixture of soil and food. You will need a warm room with strong light for the better part of the day. Without these requirements, you will need to provide specially designed growing lights. Germination requires a soil temperature of 75 - 80 degrees and will take about 7 - 10 days.

Once the seeds have germinated, producing small two-leaved plants, you will want to begin watering with a very light fertilizer such as a seaweed based product. Remember that plants can tolerate a lack of moisture better than over-watering, which can cause damping off, a condition that rots plants. Leave the plastic covers off the plants by daytime and replace at night to keep in heat and moisture. Tomato seeds need to be started six to eight weeks before the frost free planting time appropriate to your garden's elevation. You should not plan to set the young plants out until your garden soil has thoroughly warmed up. This means that you'll need to plan on transplanting your young

tomatoes into regular potting soil when the true tomato leaves are showing. This gives you the opportunity to plant them in a three or four inch pot so that the roots can continue to spread. A couple of weeks before it's time to put the plants outside permanently, you should harden them up by setting them outside for day-times and gradually even overnight.

If you're like me, you'll have started more plants than you need for your own use, so you can either give away these potted beauties or put them all in the ground and share the fruit later. With catalogue colors and descriptions like those of the varieties I'll be starting, it's hard not to overplant. The winter's harvest of hard, red but tasteless store bought tomatoes only whets the appetite for the tangy, sun warmed fruits of the summer season. Too bad someone hasn't figured out a way to produce this same mouth-watering taste and texture all year round. But then, we gardeners wouldn't have anything to do come Spring.

TURNERS FALLS WATER DEPT WILL BEGIN READING METERS ON MONDAY APRIL 2nd, 2007

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Fight outside Jake's; Larceny at Rau's

Thursday 3-22

8:08 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident on Fairway Avenue near Montague City Road. One car off the road over an embankment. Operator was transported to hospital with neck pain. Vehicle towed from scene.

Friday 3-23

3:42 p.m. Walk-in to station reported problem with loud noise from neighbors at a Millers Falls Road address. Report taken.

9:17 p.m. Report of a disturbance at the shelter on Farren Avenue. Subject put in protective custody.

Sunday 3-25

12:01 a.m. Report of a fight in front of Jake's Tavern on Avenue A.

[Redacted] was arrested on two default warrants and was also charged with possession of a class E drug.

7:29 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a larceny at a Warner Street address. An ATM card was stolen. Under investigation.

Monday 3-26

9:16 a.m. Report of a larceny at Mark's Auto on Federal Street. A license plate was stolen. Report taken.

12:34 p.m. Report of a hit and run accident at the lights on Avenue A at 7th Street. Driver was making a right turn and a car passed and hit side mirror. Subject was contacted and will take care of it.

Wednesday 3-28

6:59 a.m. Report of a larceny at Rau's Sunoco on Turners Falls Road. An impounded car was removed from lot. Owner was contacted and arrangements will be made for payment. If not paid charges will be filed.

DARROW

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musicians who, from the first, took to the violin like a duckling to water. She was born to play this instrument. She says that around the age of four, when she first heard her older sister touch bow to string, she knew immediately she wanted to make music on the violin. She started out with the famous Suzuki method for strings, with teacher Rose Lander, then moved to the tutelage of Van Kaynor of Amherst, who introduced her to a number of traditions including Irish, Scottish, and Swedish styles, all the while keeping the classical training in the mix. Inspired by the music of the Chaisson Family and the Rankin Family on their frequent visits to the Pioneer Valley, she traveled to Prince Edward Island and eventually to Nova Scotia where she found another source of inspiration in the Cape Breton style.

When we spoke last week, Darrow gave a few glimpses into what makes her who she is. Raised in Huntington and Blandford, up among the wild wood flowers and the pines, she exudes the freshness of a young woman thrilled with life in general and with music in particular. Home-schooled, she brings a curiosity and enthusiasm to the conversation that is the very ideal image of a young person whose mind has developed freely and naturally. She's intrigued by languages and travel, is clearly enveloped in a loving and musical family, and bursts with radiant personality that draws the listener in.

This is a concert not to be missed. Zoë Darrow is on the way to town, bringing all the zest and energy of youth to liven up this last day of March. Here's a chance to catch a rising star, and to tap into the flowing bright stream of musical talent springing up on the banks and hills of our Valley.

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