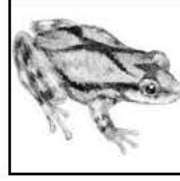




10 MORE ARRESTS
At Vermont Yankee
 see page 11



ARE THE FROGS DYING?
The Neighborhood Toxicologist
 see page 16

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS GILL ERVING WENDELL

Year 4
 No. 25
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The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 30, 2006

G-M Schools Vote \$16.8 Million Budget

\$680,000 Increase from '06
 Montague's Percentage Rises Slightly

BY PATRICK RENNICK

On Tuesday night, March 28th, the Gill - Montague school committee adopted a proposed FY 2007 operating and maintenance budget of \$17,018,836. If the debt service for the high school / middle school renovation project is removed, the proposed operating budget to run the district schools next year will equal \$16,859,956. This represents a savings of \$158,880 from the preliminary budget the school committee approved in January, but still a 7.64% increase over the G-M fiscal '06 budget of \$16,177,204.

Business manager Lynn Bassett said some savings were anticipated pending the outcome of negotiations with three employee unions, and the retirement of seven veteran teachers, whose replacements will likely be hired at a lower salary

figure. Bassett said no firm figures had been finalized for state funding yet this year, but there was reason to hope for 100% reimbursement of the district's regional transportation costs, rather than the 75% budgeted now. Bassett estimated an increase to full funding for regional transportation (an unfilled obligation on the state's ledger for years) would bring in an added \$50,000, or more, to the G-M budget.

"For the last three years we have basically been operating on a level service budget," said superintendent Sue Gee. "If we are not moving ahead, we are really just falling behind." Although the proposed budget is up \$682,752 from last year, rising fixed costs such as energy and insurance account for the majority of that rise. The proposed '07 budget includes new

money for 1.66 art positions in the elementary and secondary levels.

The proposed assessments for Gill (\$1,206,320, after debt) and Montague (\$6,671,411, after debt) reflect a change from last year in the ratio of enrollment for students from the two district towns. Last year, Montague paid 84.81% of the district assessment, and Gill paid 15.19%, according to Bassett. This year, with changing enrollment, Montague will pay 86% and Gill will pay 14%.

A survey about the quality of education in the Gill-Montague district was sent out to 1000 households. Of the 165 people who answered the survey; some did not have children in the school system. The surveys showed five areas of educational priority for local residents: teacher effective- see **SCHOOLS** pg 11

Feasibility Studies for Police, Community Center, Approved



DETMOLD PHOTO

A proposal to study the feasibility of building a community center to house programs of the Carnegie Library, the Senior Center and the Montague Parks & Recreation department passed on a voice vote at the March 23rd town meeting. The fate of the 1905 building that currently houses the library (pictured above) remains unclear. As part of the feasibility study, townwide meetings will be held to gather public opinion about the community center concept.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE - With barely more than half the town meeting members (66) present for duty, and 20% of the absent members not even bothering to excuse themselves from attending, the Montague special town meeting approved feasibility studies for a new police station and a community

center Thursday night, March 23rd. The community center would combine the main branch of the town library with the Gill-Montague senior center and programs of the parks and recreation department.

Discussion was preceded by a PowerPoint presentation given by police chief Ray

Zukowski, parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz, senior center director Bunny Caldwell, and library director Sue San Soucie, detailing the drawbacks of those facilities (see *Montague Reporter: IV #19*). At the close of the half hour slide show, Barry Levine, of see **MEETING** pg 10

Words Spoken at a Wendell Bar

BY DAVID DETMOLD

A bar, especially at the end of winter, is the perfect place to warm to the convivial spirit of humanity at its neighborly best. Hoist a few pints, and the ceiling expands. It would not surprise you to walk out the door and find yourself in County Cork, or Thessalonika; the camaraderie in the pubs, tavernas, and local bars is much the same the world over.

Here in Wendell, the world comes to the door of the Deja Brew and finds a warm welcome, especially on the last Monday of the month, when prose and poetry readings mix freely with



DETMOLD PHOTO

Aaron Tieger was one of the featured readers at Monday's Night of Spoken Word at the Deja Brew Pub.

draft Guinness and Berkshire ale, to the approval of townspeople who crowd the booths and bar stools. More than 30 turned out on March 27th to hear nine see **WORDS** pg 12

Throat Singers at the Shea

BY IVAN USSACH

TURNERS FALLS - The musical group Alash filled the Shea Theater on March 21st with sounds not often heard in these parts, presenting an enticing introduction to *khoomoi*, or throat-singing. The band hails from the Republic of Tuva. Geography for \$300? What is, a republic in south central Siberia, bordering Russia and Mongolia?

In *khoomoi*, a vocalist produces two distinct pitches simultaneously, typically a low droning sound and a higher series of harmonics that constitute the melody. The technique has been compared to a human bagpipe, and produces a sound that car-

ries over long distances. Yak herders, shepherds and horsemen learned to use the music to entertain each other and communicate across the steppes (grasslands) and taiga (forests).

The five-member ensemble plays a full range of traditional wind and stringed instruments, and occasionally an accordion or banjo. One member dedicated himself to percussion duties. Led by veteran Kongarool Ondar, (who was featured in *Genghis Blues*, the 1996 Academy-award nominated documentary about Tuvan music and American blues artist Paul Pena), the group includes four musicians from the younger genera-

tion influenced by global musical trends. All appeared onstage sporting traditional clothing - dark, full-length silk robes (one a bright blue) tied at the waist with a light-colored sash. Ondar alone wore a peaked black and blue hat with a yellow stalk capped by a red ball. Their young, proficient American translator (who lives in Tuva) was also traditionally garbed.

So imagine the scene and the sound as the members of Alash led the packed audience through a demonstration of different *khoomoi* techniques, then played a highly varied set of material. Each musician soloed to

see **TUVAN** pg 9

PET OF THE WEEK**Take Two****Max**

Max is a five-year-old male German shorthair pointer in need of a good home. Max is a friendly dog with lots of that classic Pointer enthusiasm and energy! He would do best in a home with kids over 8. Max is a special needs dog, but that sure doesn't slow him down! He would love to go home with his best friend Star, a female English Pointer, also available at the shelter. For more information on adopting Max and Star please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org.

CORRECTION

In an article on the Reading First Program at the G-M schools in last week's paper, (MR IV #24), an inaccurate figure was given for grant monies received to improve reading skills for district students.

According to Hillcrest principal Christine Jutres, "over a five-year period the district is expected to receive up to \$1 million for Reading First programs."

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LIBRARY NEWS**Underwater Dioramas**

BY LINDAHICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS - Children of all ages and their families are invited to make Fish Eyes' Views, underwater dioramas, at the Carnegie Library, on Saturday, April 8th at 2 p.m. The program is part of the

monthly Children's Saturday Art Series, run by Bev Whitbeck. The program is free and most of the materials will be provided. Some shoeboxes will be available, but please bring one if you have it. For more information, call 863-3214.

"Church of Stop Shopping" Gospel Choir

Nationally-known playwright and performance artist Bill Talen, a.k.a. "Reverend Billy," and his NYC-based "Church of Stop Shopping" Gospel Choir will be bringing their anti-consumerist "Fabulous Worship!" service to Brattleboro, Amherst, and Greenfield, April 7th - 9th. On Friday, April 7th, 7:30 p.m. at The Church, 120 Main St., Brattleboro, VT; Saturday, on April 8th, 8:00 p.m. at Hampshire College Gymnasium, Route. 116, Amherst; on Sunday, April 9th, 3:00 p.m. at the All Souls Unitarian Church, 399 Main St., Greenfield. There will be a suggested donation of \$8.00 at the door for each performance, though no one will be turned away. More info, see: www.RevBilly.com.

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NEXT JURY DATE:
April 10th, 2006

Proceeds from this event will benefit the programs at The Brick House Community Resource Center. For information, call Karen Stinchfield at The Brick House, 863-9576.

Hospice Training

Hospice of Franklin County is scheduling Spring Volunteer Training, to begin Wednesday, April 12th. This is an eight-week training course preparing interested individuals to serve our hospice patients and their families through their life-limiting diagnosis. Trained volunteers assist by providing a range of services to our patients including: respite care, supportive listening, companionship, running errands, assisting with meals and other duties as requested. For those who may find working behind the scenes a more comfortable role, you can become involved in fundraising, assist with projects in the office or in various other program-related tasks and activities. The training will be held at 329 Conway Street, Greenfield, the office area of Hospice of Franklin County. Classes will run on eight consecutive Wednesdays, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. To schedule an interview or for more information please contact Jayne Allen, Volunteer Services Coordinator, at 774-2400 or jgallen@hospicefc.org.

Child Care/Preschool

Child Care/Preschool: The Parent Child Development Center, serving families with children 0-5, is accepting applications for subsidized childcare and preschool in Franklin/Hampshire Counties, and Head Start Preschool and Home Visiting programs in Franklin County. Spanish speaking services available. Call 863-9547.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES April 3rd - 7th

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

Monday, 3rd

10:15 a.m. Aerobics
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics
1 p.m. Canasta

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

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

FACES & PLACES

Father Charles J. DiMascola, pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Church in Turners Falls (left), looks on as auctioneer Douglas Bilodeau of Douglas Auctioneers in South Deerfield inspects a pocket watch. Bilodeau appraised items brought to St. Kazmierz Hall in Turners Falls on March 29th as a fundraiser for the parish, which must remove oil from the ground near the rectory after an old oil tank leaked. More than 100 people brought items to be appraised.

Free Pancake Breakfast

In celebration of National Violence Prevention Week, The Gill-Montague Community School Partnership is sponsoring a free pancake breakfast for Montague and Gill residents on Saturday, April 8th, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. The event will take place at the Montague Elks Lodge, 1 Columbus Avenue (off L Street) in Turners Falls, and breakfast will include pancakes, sausage, bacon, coffee, and juice. Breakfast will be served on a walk-in basis between 8:00 and 11:00 a.m.

In addition to breakfast, fifth-grade students from Sheffield School will be demonstrating "Responsive Classroom Morning Meeting" for attendees. Responsive Classroom techniques foster positive and open communication, which are key components in preventing violence.

The students will also be sharing a "maple syrup song." Additional music will be provided by local DJ Tim Dowd.

The Gill-Montague Community School Partnership

addresses issues that the schools cannot effectively solve by themselves. Partners include the Gill-Montague Schools, Montague Police, the Brick House Community Resource Center, Montague Catholic Social Ministries, the Mediation and Training Collaborative, Montague Parks and Recreation, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and other local and regional agencies. For more information, call the Brick House at 863-9576.

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Charity Chopper Readied at East Coast Chopper Works

BY DAVID DETMOLD
 TURNERS FALLS - Kevin Bourbeau and Peter Graves, owners of the East Coast Chopper Works, the custom motorcycle shop on the corner of 11th and Avenue A, decided to put their design skills to work in a charitable cause this year. They teamed up with the Shriners, at the suggestion of Ralph and Eric Semb, owners of the French King Entertainment Center in Erving, to raffle off a custom bike to support the Shriners' and the 22 children's hospitals they maintain throughout North America.



Peter Graves (left) and Kevin Bourbeau, owners of East Coast Chopper Works, with one of their custom bikes

Eric Semb said the Shriners' hospitals offer free, specialized orthopedic health care for children, including care for burn victims and children with spinal cord injuries, at a daily cost to the charity of \$2 million, so any help from the sale of raffle tickets will be most welcome.

Bourbeau and Graves are creating a machine worthy of the challenge. Graves said, "We've put together a rigid chopper, 11½ feet long, with a springer front end." The partners estimate they have put 180 hours worth of labor into the machine so far. Earlier this

month, they finished preparing the bike for a \$1500 paint job at JD All Customs in Chicopee, and what a sight for sore eyes it will be when that job is complete.

"The mural on the back fender is of a biker babe, draped over the bike, wearing a red leather jacket and stiletto-heeled boots," explained Graves, who said the image came to him in a late night dream. "She'll be looking back at all of us, with green eyes and flaming red hair. We call the bike 'the Wild Child.'"

The bike, which Graves plans to unveil at the Hartford Easy Rider Show on April 22nd, "God willing," will tour the country at bike shows through the summer and fall, but should be available for viewing at the East Coast Chopper Works in between times. Raffle tickets will be on sale for \$10, starting in April, at the Chopper Works, through their website: www.eastcoastchopperworks.com, and at Shriners' outlets nationwide, for the next year. The drawing will be held at the Springfield motorcycle show early in 2007.

"Every inch of the bike will have a mural on it," said Graves. As a nod to the Shriners, well-known for their own custom bikes, the front fender will show Shriners leading a parade of motorcycles on their miniature scooters.

Raffle tickets will also be on sale at the French King Entertainment Center in Erving, where Ralph Semb, the former Imperial Potentate of the Shriners of North America, or Eric, will be glad to tell you more about the Shriners' charitable work for children.

Parenting Ed Sessions at Montague Catholic Ministries

Tuesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. April 25th through May 23rd, presented by: Lorena Norwood. Come learn: the risk factors that face our adolescents and the protective factors that parents (or those who are parenting) can utilize to help teens and pre-teens make healthier decisions.

Guiding Good Choices is a five-week curriculum (two

hours each week) geared toward parents or guardians of children ages 9-14. The curriculum includes such topics as: teen risk and protective factors, setting clear guidelines and monitoring behavior, preparing kids to respond to peer pressure and conflict management. Participation is free, voluntary and confidential.

Dinner, childcare and transportation will be provided.

Space is limited to 10 families, so please register by April 14th to secure your slot.

To sign up for the session: Contact: Lorena Norwood 413-522-9579. Funding made possible through grants from the Executive Office of Public Safety and the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

Public Skatepark Meeting

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that Montague Parks & Recreation Department will be sponsoring a meeting regarding the Montague Skatepark.

The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5th at 7:00pm in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Public participation is welcomed.

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Top Down Planning

Last week, Montague town meeting endorsed a plan put together by the heads of three town departments: the library, the senior center, and the parks and recreation - with a little friendly nudging from the capital improvements committee - to join forces and build a multi-use, multi-generational community center somewhere in the downtown. In order to fund the \$65,000 feasibility study, the library gave back funds town meeting had previously set aside for purchasing the house uphill from the Carnegie Library, when the town was still hoping to expand that historic building. In her presentation to town meeting, library director Sue SanSoucie signaled that the library trustees hopes for preserving the town's original use of the Carnegie are now at an end.

As it stands now, the inadequacies of the Carnegie Library to meet the needs of 21st century patrons have been well reported, here and elsewhere. Similarly, the overcrowded conditions at the senior center and the parks and recreation building are well known. We support these departments in their quest for better

quarters, and improved conditions for the many people who use their services. But we have a problem with how the decision is being made to relocate these departments in one building.

Granted, there are advantages that can be thought of for cross-generational programming, so perhaps having the youngsters who use the parks and rec and the seniors who use the senior center all in the same building may produce benefits for both age groups. But there are also ways in which their use of the same building could lead to difficulties, especially for the senior citizens, and these are not hard to imagine. If a gymnasium is included in the final design, or other areas where noisy play are contemplated, this may pose a problem for library users as well.

But the main problem we have with the process as it is unfolding is the top down method of the decision making, so far. Ideally, town meeting members should represent their neighborhoods, particularly on matters that involve town services that affect such a broad spectrum of the population. These are departments that almost everyone in town,

BORDEAUX WHINE

BY DENIS BORDEAUX 3/18/06

DATELINE: MARCH 1966

DATELINE: MARCH 2006



sooner or later, uses heavily, yet we imagine very few of the people who frequent the parks, the senior center, or the library, have been well informed about the changes being contemplated. Shouldn't the people who use these departments be asked their opinion before, rather than after, a change of this scope is agreed to?

To be fair, town meeting members have been promised that community meetings - known as charettes - will now be forthcoming on the planned community center. But what happens if the people who show up at that meeting have ideas of their own, contrary to the plan? What becomes of the \$65,000 once allocated for library expansion, if library users say they want the trustees to come up with a scaled-back plan to renovate the Carnegie and keep it in

the use for which it was originally intended and bequeathed to the town? Will it be spent on a community center study, regardless?

For another example, residents may say they would like a senior center to become part of a new library, but they would prefer the parks and recreation department stay at Unity Park. Perhaps the current parks and rec building could be renovated and turned over entirely to that department, after a new highway building is located. These are but a few of many possible alternatives community members may choose, once asked.

Another foreseeable problem is the difficulty Montague taxpayers will face in footing the bill for two large building projects simultaneously, if the police station study and community center study

are positively reported at the same time. The need for a new police station is well understood, and 30 years overdue. It should not be held up, nor should its fate be tied to the more ambitious plan to join the parks, seniors, and library programs in one building. Taken together, these two building projects could make a powerful argument for proponents of a landfill on Turnpike Road to accept the environmental risks, heavy truck traffic on Avenue A, and managerial unknowns of that proposed project in order to access the revenue stream needed to build them.

Similar to deciding the fate of widely used town departments like the library or the senior center, a landfill is a project that should be advanced carefully, on its merits, after a fully informed public is consulted.

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as of 3/29/06

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Two-Person Board?

In an earlier editorial, I wrote that the town of Montague was in need of a five-person selectboard, and even though I still hold this opinion I feel I must apologize to the voters of the community for even bringing the matter up.

I am of the opinion now this will never happen, due to the lack of inter-

est in filling these positions in this community.

Perhaps someday a generation will appear within the villages that will be interested enough in the political future of this unique structure of villages to seek office in these positions.

Until then, I want to thank our current selectboard members for the

strenuous schedule they face each week on our behalf, and especially the current selectboard chairperson, Dr. Ross, for seeking reelection, because without him we would have only a two-person board.

- Art Gilmore
Precinct 2 Town Meeting Member



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

GUEST EDITORIAL

Why Should Our Towns Vote Against Genetic Engineering at Town Meeting?

BY BEN GROSSCUP
AMHERST - Since 2002, towns in Massachusetts and across New England have been passing resolutions to oppose agricultural genetic engineering and to correct the failure of federal and state agencies to regulate genetically engineered (GE) crops. So far, 12 towns in Massachusetts -- including Gill, Wendell, and Leverett -- have already passed such resolutions. In Vermont, 83 towns have done the same, and towns in Maine have begun similar initiatives. In 2006, citizens in Massachusetts towns are expanding this effort, and, should the selectboard move to place the measure on the annual town meeting warrant, Montague has a chance to join them. Why are town meetings taking the initiative to exercise their power on this issue?

The Food and Drug Administration, charged with regulating food safety at the federal level, has utterly failed to protect the public from the potentially harmful health consequences of GE technology. It says corporations marketing GE foods can "voluntarily" label their products, which provides no reliable way for people to avoid this untested food and no way to trace the effects of these crops.

GE crops are grown widely

in test plots, and since 1996, they have been grown extensively in commercial fields across the country. Meanwhile, scientists like UC Berkeley professor, Ignacio Chapela, document that the novel gene sequences of these crops are currently contaminating and will continue to contaminate non-GE crops. Regulations are entirely inadequate for sequestering these crops. The result is staggeringly wide-scale genetic contamination of non-GE crops.

Contamination is one way that multinational seed corporations that sell GE crops are taking control over the food supply, thereby threatening farmers' livelihoods. Monsanto, which is the largest agricultural biotechnology company, requires contracting farmers to sign agreements to never save its seed. Then, Monsanto sues farmers who have never bought its seeds for patent infringement simply for the fact that GE pollen drifts onto their land through wind-pollination.

Combined, these tactics are making seed saving a legally insurmountable challenge for many farmers. As the Center for Food Safety reports, no farmer is safe from Monsanto's legal onslaught: "Monsanto has an annual budget of \$10 million dollars and a staff of 75 devoted solely to investigating and pros-

ecuting farmers." As biotechnology companies try to commercialize new varieties of crops, this problem will only spread. We need to take steps at our town meetings to protect our agricultural communities and our food supply, and to foster alternatives to big agribusiness.

Multinational seed and biotechnology corporations like Monsanto concern themselves with how to turn a profit for their shareholders. But at town meeting, we have an opportunity to speak to each other as neighbors concerned about the well-being of everyone in our communities and the integrity of our environment. More than any other political institution available, town meeting provides citizens with a way to speak directly with each other and work on solutions to major problems that confront us. Town by town, we can show the biotech companies, federal and state legislators and regulators, and the world that our communities say 'No!' to genetically engineered foods and crops. We want an agriculture that's safe and supports family farmers - not multinational seed giants.

Since 2002, the other 9 Massachusetts towns that have passed resolutions opposing genetic engineering include Buckland, Heath, Northfield,

Ashfield, Plainfield, Windsor, Chesterfield, Cummington, and Worthington. While citizens of each town decide what these resolutions say, they have often called on state legislators and the congressional delegation to support labeling GE foods and seeds, farmer liability protection, and a moratorium on the growing of GE crops until they are adequately tested. Some communities are using the power they have to address the problem of genetic engineering by making new purchasing policies for their departments of town government -- such as schools and public works departments.

This year, communities all over Western Massachusetts are getting organized on this crucial issue by putting resolutions against genetic engineering on their town meeting warrants, and educating local townspeople about the issue of GE foods. These efforts deserve support because they are steps toward protecting our health, our environment, and the farmers in our communities.

Ben Grosscup is the field organizer for the Northeast Organic Farming Association, Massachusetts Chapter on the Town-to-Town Campaign on Genetic Engineering. He can be contacted at ben.grosscup@no-

famass.org. Approximately a dozen towns in Massachusetts are debating the measure this year.

Although the Montague Selectboard closed the warrant for the May town meeting in February, citizens may still petition the board to place an article on the warrant.

The Montague Agricultural Commission will discuss a possible town meeting article on Genetically Engineered crops at their Tuesday, April 4th meeting, in the upstairs meeting room of Town Hall, at 5 p.m.

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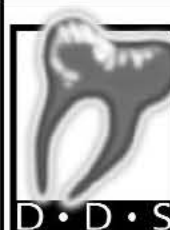
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Early Days of Turners Falls ~ Part IX

From a speech given by Charles Hazelton to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, February 23rd, 1926. In 1867, Hazelton was hired to help engineer William P. Crocker lay out the power canal and streets of the village of Turners Falls.

It may be of a little interest to note that the building of the pulp mill hereinbefore referred to was one of the first in the country to engage in the making of ground wood pulp. An elderly German, Burkhardt by name, had been for some time experimenting in that line at Curtisville, NY, and desired financial aid to further develop and extend his ideas. He became connected with A. Pagenstecher of New York, and they with Col. Crocker, one day in the fall of 1868, came to Turners Falls, and I well remember hearing them decide to locate at Turners Falls and build a mill on the site just above the cutlery site.

The Turners Falls Co. gave

them power at a low price and a large amount of it because an income was desired as soon as possible and also because it was thought then that the supply of water in the Connecticut River was inexhaustible - and the additional inducement was that on the banks of the river just above the dam and on the plains there was also an inexhaustible supply of poplar trees growing. At that time it was thought that only poplar could be used for pulp, it being free from gum and having a long fiber. It was thought that this source of



Early 1904: Excavation of the Power Canal.
Photo by permission from *Montague Labor and Leisure* by Kyle Scott.

supply of wood, with what would be drawn in by the farmers from surrounding towns would keep the mill running for all the years to come. But the end of that supply soon came, and George E. Marshall, who had been put at the head of the pulp mill, as well as the Montague Paper Company, found that under certain treat-

ment, spruce wood could be used. Soon he had a supply coming down the river from Northern Vermont and New Hampshire. As compared with the amount of wood used then, it may be in order to say that the amount now annually used by the mills of the International Paper Company is approximately one million cords.

It may also be in order to take notice of the change made during the past few years in the manner of making use of water for power purposes. Then it was necessary to build the mill on the river and below the dam and canal, each mill developing its own power.

Today, practically all new mills are run by electrical power. The mill may be placed anywhere, and the power carried to it. A good example of this can be given. After leaving Fitchburg by steam cars coming west, when near West Fitchburg, off on a hill to the right, one may see the roof and chimneys of a large mill. This is one of the paper mills of the Crocker, Burbank Co., and is run by electrical power generated by the Vernon dam on the Connecticut River.

It may also be in order to note that Turners Falls has passed through all the stages, changes and developments of the methods of public travel and transportation of merchandise. First the trail and canoe, then the ox team and wagon, then the canal, then the railroad which put the canal out of business, then the trolley which killed the railroad to be killed itself by the automobile.

Continued next week

High School Students Invited to Pursue Writing Dreams

TURNERS FALLS - Janel Nockleby has always loved to write, but never realized it was something "you could just go off and do."

"Everybody gets on their path eventually and I feel like, 'Ooh! I'm doing it now!'" said Nockleby, a resident of 3rd Street, in Turners Falls, who is working towards her master's of fine arts (MFA) degree at UMass Amherst, and interning with the third annual Juniper Summer Writing Institute there.

Through her internship, Nockleby is busy encouraging local high school students to follow their creative writing dreams by participating in the newly developed "Institute for Young Writers" from June 25th to 30th, 2006.

The Juniper Summer Writing Institute offers adults an immersion into six days of poetry and fiction workshops, craft sessions, readings, and manuscript

consultation with world-renowned faculty and writers in residence including Grace Paley, James Tate, Amy Hempel, Dara Wier, Padgett Powell, Dean Young, Noy Holland and others.

Poets and writers of all levels, from around the area and across the country, gather to immerse themselves in their art and advance their craft.

The Institute for Young Writers joins the program for adults, offering specialized workshops and writing seminars for high-school-aged writers. Award-winning poet James Haug will lead the workshop for young writers, and Western Massachusetts Writing Project teacher-consultants will offer special seminars.



Janel Nockleby of Turners Falls is an MFA student at UMass interning at Juniper Summer Writing Institute

Nockleby thinks the experience will provide students who have finished their junior or senior years of high school with a wonderful opportunity for growth and support.

"I did one of these programs

when I was little, in the Portland, Oregon area, and it helped me with a lot of things... I got feedback, which is kind of a hard thing for some young people to ask for and get. It was cool, and you're with a bunch of like-minded people who are thinking about the same things you're thinking about. Look at me now," said Nockleby, whose advice to young writers is enthusiastic: "Just go for it! I've done all sorts of things in my life and it's always more fun to do something that you love."

Applications to the Institute for Young Writers are accepted on a rolling basis. Area businesses and organizations are invited to sponsor local young writers.

Contact juniperinstitute@hfa.umass.edu for more

information. Two undergraduate credits are available for completion of the Institute and related coursework. Students who are interested in earning credit must submit a letter from a guidance counselor stating they are capable of completing college-level work.

Tuition includes all Institute workshops, activities, daily lunch and dinner. A limited number of full and partial scholarships will be awarded based upon merit and need. Scholarship applications are available at the website listed below and must be postmarked by April 10th, 2006. For more information, visit www.umass.edu/juniperinstitute.

For more information, call Lisa Olstein, Director, juniperinstitute@hfa.umass.edu (413) 545-5510, or Alex Phillips, Coordinator, Institute for Young Writers, juniperinstitute@hfa.umass.edu.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Hamilton Found in Conflict of Interest

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - At the March 22nd selectboard meeting, town coordinator Nancy Aldrich passed out copies of an email she received from the state ethics commission; board members read it without comment. The document contained a finding from a state Ethics Commission inquiry of December 14th 2005, and March 9th, 2006, that former board of health member Andrew Hamilton had violated state conflict of interest law in June of 2003, when he told Reverend Adele Smith-Penniman that tests of her newly dug well showed high iron and manganese content, and would require a water filtration system before he, as board chair, would allow work to continue on her house. He then offered to "change hats," and sell her a water filtration system.

The findings of fact said that Smith-Penniman returned the filtration system without installing it, and ordinary use of the well flushed the contaminants out. Further the Commission found that "Hamilton knew he was using or attempting to use his board of health position to influence Smith-Penniman to purchase his water filtration system."

As a result of the inquiry, Hamilton agreed to return the purchase price of the filtration system, \$1,112, to Smith-Penniman, in exchange for the system, and to pay a fine of \$2,000 to the state Ethics Commission.

The selectboard took no action on the matter. Hamilton lost his seat on the board of health to Martha Senn in 2005, in a narrow vote, 156 - 147.

Mahar Groundbreaking

The meeting opened without selectwoman Christine Heard, who was at the Swift River School with a committee interviewing candidates for a new Union 28 Superintendent. Aldrich began the meeting by announcing a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Mahar Track and Field on April 3rd at the gymnasium

doors; she also announced a strategic planning series for the school, involving three nearly whole day sessions, for which the school committee wants a volunteer.

Town Offices Moving

The bid received for moving town office materials to the temporary trailers by the highway department came in at \$2,170, and was rejected as too high. The work will have to be done by office holders and volunteers. Town offices are moving to temporary quarters to allow for construction of a new office building, and the renovation of the old offices, slated to become part of the new public library.

Aldrich said office telephones would be moved to the temporary trailers on March 31st. Selectboard member Dan Keller asked her to write a memo to all departments to have materials in boxes marked for their destination. Through the meeting, Aldrich gave out keys to people who would need them to get into their temporary trailer offices.

Nina Keller Appointed

Dan Keller said the town has no representative to the Franklin County Council of Governments, and that Nina Keller asked to be appointed temporary representative so she could attend the March 23rd session with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Selectman Ted Lewis said the board could only make a permanent appointment, but since that appointment would only be until June 30th, Nina was welcome to take that position, and consider running for the post at the next opportunity. The appointment was confirmed unanimously.

Not Much Flow

Keller reported that drillers at the town well site on Cooleyville Road struck water flowing at 1.5 gallons a minute at 340 feet. The drillers felt that flow was adequate, but just barely, and planned to drill down to 400

feet to provide a larger reservoir.

Bids from subcontractors for the new town office building and library for plumbing, mechanical systems, tile, acoustic tile, and painting were opened earlier in the day; they were higher than anticipated. The septic system bids will be opened Thursday March 23rd and the general contractor bids will be opened on Thursday March 30th. Keller said the building committees will meet on Tuesday March 28th to discuss the subcontractor bids.

The lock on the basketball court has been sprung. Lewis said he would secure the basketball court with a chain when construction started, with a sign so that people would not be tempted to walk through the construction site to play basketball.

Aldrich reported that the planning board wants to give the responsibility of site plan review for changing special permits to the zoning board of appeals. Keller said he thought that would be good change.

Aldrich said that the town needed a reserve fund transfer to pay the last electric bills for current town offices.

Representing Richard Boudreau, owner of the New Salem Road Trailer Park, Michael and Mary Gifford met with the board to discuss identical board of health demands for payment issued to both the trailer park land owners and Mark Seria for the clean up of Seria's trailer and property within the trailer park. The cleanup was done with town money. Michael Gifford felt only one demand should have been issued, and that should have gone to Seria. Both Lewis and Keller were surprised by this information. Keller asked if they had brought the matter up before the board of health, and Michael Gifford said they had, but had gotten no cooperation. Keller agreed that it seemed like the bill was not Boudreau's responsibility, and he and Lewis agreed to attend the next board of

health meeting.

Swift River Agreement

Michael Idoine met the board next in both of his town capacities, as member of the finance committee, and as a Wendell representative to the committee with New Salem whose function is to review the two towns' obligations under the Swift River School regional contract.

As Wendell's representative to the joint committee, he reported that the situation appears to be more complicated than has been discussed at recent town meetings. He showed spreadsheets, one with the amounts paid by each town in excess of the minimum contribution required by the state. The figures show that New Salem has given more than its share. The other spreadsheet showed that Wendell has also given more than its share. He said the picture emerging is that the process itself is flawed, and one goal of the committee is to arrive at a method of assessing towns that does not bring yearly variances. The committee's consensus is that it should meet with both towns' finance committees and selectboards to clarify the agreement before the annual town meetings. It is too late for that to happen this year.

PILOT Funds

Representing the finance committee, Idoine said he spoke with Dennis Rindone of STAR (Small Towns Against Repression), who said that Wendell is not alone in getting hit by reductions in PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) money from the state, and did not even get the largest cut, but we have

one of the higher cuts as a percentage of the town budget. He said perhaps the legislature could create a 'hold harmless' bill for this year. Keller said there was a downside to that, because it could carry penalties in future years. Rindone said it was probably too late to get anything done about the PILOT shortfall this year.

The revised PILOT payment schedule is based on town assessments, and Idoine suggested talking with assessors to find how the valuation (of state land) was reached. Keller said he thought the assessors were given a "fait accompli," and asked Aldrich if the town had any background information.

Idoine said he has asked for department budget requests by April 17th, and hopes to have a rough picture of the '07 budget in two to three weeks.

Aldrich reported that Wendell's Commonwealth Capital score has dropped to 67%, largely because the town ranks low on the state's attempt to locate affordable housing in already built up areas.

Animal Tracking at Wendell State Forest

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Notes from the Montague Selectboard

Update on Greenfield Road Bridge

BY PATRICK RENNICK - On Monday, March 27th, the selectboard reviewed a letter from Mass Highway regarding the Greenfield Road bridge. The bridge was closed and demolished in April 1999, after Guilford Railroad undercut the abutments in the process of lowering the tracks.

"If the bridge is not rebuilt, the road will be downgraded, under state standards," said Abbondanzio. "Mass Highway has said they will pay for a bicycle bridge, but the letter does not clearly address the town's liability." On January 30th Mass Highway spokesman said they would seek to share liability with the town for a new bridge.

The letter also said that Mass Highway will "attempt to accommodate emergency vehicle loading," and that the "actual capacity will be determined during the site's design."

"I don't understand how a bike path can be made compatible for a full-size fire truck and not for a regular truck," said selectboard member Allen Ross.

"That was my reaction as well, when I spoke with Mass Highway," said Abbondanzio. "Their response was, it's not a problem."

New Night Kitchen Manager

Max Brody and Peter Hitchcock of the Night Kitchen approached the selectboard Monday evening to transfer the manager's license for the Montague Center restaurant.

"In the last two years we have seen a lot of expansion," said Hitchcock. "We are currently almost booked for the summer with weddings. One of the reasons we are making the change is to streamline our management." Brody, co-founder of the restaurant and chef, will now be taking on managerial duties.

"The Night Kitchen is one of the highest quality restaurants that Montague has to offer," said selectboard member Pat Allen.

In addition to his new responsibilities, Brody will also be continuing his weekly Wednesday cooking classes. "We recently had a series in the winter that went extremely well," said Brody. "We had classes in French cooking, basic knife skills, and cooking techniques. This April we will be offering classes in Mexican cuisine, *hors d'oeuvres*, and cocktails. People have really been taking to the eclectic options."

Hitchcock has recently begun work with Montague's local cable

network, MCCL.

"As a producer I'm going to start going around Montague and looking at restaurants," said Hitchcock. "We will be airing cooking classes from the Night Kitchen as well." Hitchcock predicts a boom in business in the near future that will eliminate the restaurant's current status as the "best kept secret in Western Massachusetts."

"Outside of people on the selectboard, getting a reservation may become difficult," said Hitchcock, eliciting laughter from the board members.

Sewer News

Water pollution and control facility superintendent Robert Trombley spoke with the board about a revised estimate for a new roof for the administration building. Trombley had received a first estimate on roof repairs of \$50,000 from Camp, Dresser & McGee. But the picture brightened considerably when a roofing contractor out of Worcester offered a \$4,900 bid for the same job, he said. He still needs a third bid for the job.

Trombley said permits are in hand and work ready to go out to bid in May for the first section of the combined sewer overflow repair, on 7th and L Street. That

section of the \$5.6 million project is scheduled to be completed by December of this year. The entire project is expected to be completed no earlier than July of 2008.

The industrial discharge permit for the Esleek paper mill has changed hands to the Southworth Company, with no other changes in the status of the agreement expected, Trombley said.

Railroad Salvage Report

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio received an update on the status of the Railroad Salvage building, which has received a recent engineering inspection due to structural instability following a partial roof collapse this winter. The structural engineer's report outlined three phases of repair the building must undergo. The first phase will be to stabilize the walls of the exterior, to allow Power Street to reopen. The second phase calls for a new roof structure to be installed. Lastly the interior will have to be reconstructed. Property owner Gary Kosuda is currently trying to hire an architect from Springfield to move ahead with these repairs, according to Montague building inspector David Jensen. Kosuda is also currently seeking funds for the project.

Erving Select Notes

MCAS Scores Reviewed

On Monday, March 27th, the selectboard reviewed the Erving Elementary School's "report card" from the state Department of Education, sparking some comments from board chair Linda Downs Bembury. "We're doing bad in math; that's a shame. We should do something about that."

Board member Andy Tessier said, "I don't put much stock in that MCAS test. Too many factors are involved in how the kids are raised. If the parents are home and helping the kid, they do well. If the parents work, and can't be there for the kid, they may not do as well."

The board approved the use of Ethanol-based gas in town vehicles. The 2006 Erving Cultural Council grants were reviewed. The selectboard accepted a bid of \$2400 dollars for the highway department's old Ford F350.

Finally, the Erving Paper Mill would like to set up a recycling program for town employees. The board asked administrative assistant Tom Sharp to look into the matter, and see if there would be any cost to the town.

THE GILL GOURMET

Double Duty Chicken

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

My kids are really responsible for developing this recipe, when they were quite young. While their mother was away attending church, probably praying we wouldn't create any more horrendous a mess than usual, we were cooking Sunday dinner, complete with bread, rolls and maybe even pie, with flour strewn about the kitchen like a heavily limed lawn.

I had planned to roast a chicken, one Sunday, complete with a special giblet stuffing, but the kids wanted chicken noodle soup. So, I first boiled the chicken until it was getting ready to fall apart, put it in the roasting pan, stuffed it and roasted it, cranking up the heat at the end to brown the chicken a bit.

The kids loved the idea, and loved the soup. We made it with a quarter cup of red onion, sautéed until transparent, a few stalks of celery and several carrots. Ideally, for soup, we should have used a stewing hen.

A stewing hen is an o-o-old chicken. If you try roasting one of those, it will be tough beyond belief. But stewed, an old hen can't be beat for flavor.

A roasting chicken is not as old. Another way to put it; a roasting chicken, in comparison, might be old, but still able to keep ahead of the rooster, while a stewing hen is so old it probably is no longer of any interest to the rooster. Since this is a family newspaper, I will not pursue the subject of

roosters in pursuit. By now you should get the general idea. And if you don't know the difference between sex and peanut butter - better stick to peanut butter.

To compensate for the lack of flavor in not using a stewing hen when cheating in the chicken soup department, I add a chicken bullion packet or two. A better bet is a package of Ramen noodles, adding the flavor packet to the soup.

For an outstanding giblet stuffing, first boil the giblets with a



couple of stalks of celery, a carrot or two and about a third of a cup of diced onion. Then mix it into two cups of flavored stuffing mix and a half cup of crumbled ground turkey. Loosely pack the stuffing in the cavity; (and I am hoping that there is a cavity, if you are a first time roaster of chickens. If not; better make a reservation at KFC.) For the excess stuffing, make a little open container with aluminum wrap and roast the stuffing along with the chicken.

Whenever I use the roasting pan, I am reminded of a neighbor who was not the world's best cook, and an even worse housekeeper. She usually got her aunt to help prepare Thanksgiving dinner. I am including this story for

weight watchers.

One memorable Thanksgiving, she bought a turkey and all the fixings, but when it came time to roast the turkey, the roasting pan was nowhere to be found. The house had the appearance of a poorly managed landfill, even before they began the search. Finally, they collapsed in frustration amid the debris. Sitting down to catch her breath in a chair opposite the stove, Auntie got a sudden inspiration and yanked open the oven door. There sat the roasting pan with the decaying carcass of the previous year's leftover Thanksgiving turkey sporting a beautiful bloom of mold. If that doesn't keep your appetite in check, nothing will.

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TUVAN

continued from pg 1

demonstrate one of the five main khoomei styles, though there are many more. *Sygyt* includes a whistling tone above the low droning note. *Humay* induces a middle-register tone. *Karggyraa* produces the lowest tones with high harmonics, the singer utilizing the flaps (false vocal chords) to produce notes an octave below the sung note.

The sounds of nature feature prominently in throat-singing. *Borbangnadyr* or "rolling voice" evokes the sounds of rocks and pebbles moving in a stream. *Ezengileer*, a word derived from the native word for "stirrup," incorporates a riding rhythm reflecting the central role of the horse in Central Asia's nomadic cultures; the high, whistle-like tones produced by the soloist were stunning. It wasn't hard to conjure up images of the sweeping pastoral vistas and semi-nomadic way of life still found in much of Tuva and Central Asia.

As unusual and varied as the set of ensemble material was, the overall effect struck me as almost surprising in its familiarity. The virtuoso vocal effects combined with traditional folk structures to create a pleasantly stimulating sound. Hints of more contemporary musical elements added to the music's accessibility. "Anisea," the first tune, featured a three-foot diameter round drum and three stringed instruments played with bows: two *dosh-poluurs*, a small, round guitar-like instrument, and an *igil*, a two-stringed fiddle whose neck is attached to a round cylinder. Their short, repetitive strokes reminded me of a Phillip Glass composition.

The second tune, utilizing a square stringed instrument, had a title loosely translated as "What are you going to do with me for joking?" - something commonly said by a teenage boy to a teenage girl. Its harmonies were remarkably smooth and tight, the tempo was upbeat, and the net effect, for me, was to realize that Asia too has its cowboys. The next tune had that special energetic quality and powerful repetitive refrain found in so much genuine folk music - it's the music of the people, the music of life, of life lived in



The Tuvan Throat Singers performed at the Shea on March 21st, during their recent visit to Western Mass.

or close to nature.

A solo accordion featured prominently in one song. You could hear the shepherd's lonely call over the countless miles. When the rest of the band came back and joined in, it turned into a romping upbeat blues reminiscent of a late-night Russian drinking song.

The evening's biggest laugh came during a piece showcasing the evolution of the jaw harp. One musician began to play what looked like a stripped animal bone, striking his hand against his jaw. Then his neighbor slyly pulled a more sophisticated version out of his long sleeve and mock interrupted him, until he himself was similarly interrupted by the next fellow. This continued on until Ondar appeared from behind the curtain sporting what looked like a bow and arrow, which he was aiming in mock displeas-

ure at the guy playing a modern juice harp. He aimed it at all of them, feigning to shoot, then sat down and started playing the huge thing, bowing it as he struck his jaw.

A song about youthful wooing featured a double-neck guitar. As in most Tuvan songs, this one contained lines about a horse, the audience was told. I think Jimi Hendrix

would have dug this stuff, with its eerie sounds reminiscent of his dreamy tape effect experiments from *Electric Ladyland*.

Other songs took as their themes "in praise of our brave and beautiful girls," a famous tractor driver, and the movement of the wind, which you can either struggle against or surrender to. The natural

influence in the music is woven indelibly with the culture's spiritual values. And yet, this all seems so familiar. We in the West have ancestors who also once lived wild. These musicians are our brothers. They remind us of where we came from, which is our universal connection, as well as where we might, together, be going.

It is no surprise the Alash show was generously sponsored by Colrain's Rebecca Tippens and her Roundhouse Center for Cultural Evolution. As one of the premier cultural bridge-builders active in the region, Rebecca has developed a long, fruitful relationship with artists, teachers and groups from many nations. The Tuvan musicians visited schools, held workshops and just plain hung out with folks during the week. They loved their trip to Western Mass., Rebecca said, and are already planning their return next year. I hope they bring some CDs with them!



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MEETING

continued from pg 1

Precinct 3, said, "The presentations were very compelling. I don't think we have a choice in pursuing this."

But the measures did not pass without debate. David Jensen, Precinct 2, said, "Wow! We're studying them again. In my experience with these studies, there's been a reality check problem. Some of these studies, as worthy as they may be, once the study is completed it so far exceeds our ability to pay for these projects it almost makes the study useless."

Pam Hanold, Precinct 5, said, "I'm concerned about cost effectiveness and the quality of the study. Obviously, all of these things are extremely important, or critical to the life of this town. But I don't see any particular need for a feasibility study for the police department. I think the police department already

knows what they need, and I'd like to see the money go directly into moving forward on that project."

Zukowski explained his department had been assessing the feasibility of various parcels in town for a new police station, and a new study could lead directly to a design phase, once they settle on a preferred location. A strong contender is the possibility of adding onto the fire station at Turnpike and Turners Falls Road, to create a joint safety complex in easy reach of all five villages. Zukowski noted that, "Since 1979, this is the fourth committee saying the same thing," about the need to correct the deplorable working conditions his department is forced to work with in the basement of the town hall.

Hanold continued, "For the combined facility, since one of the things mentioned was the idea of holding community

meetings - or charettes - I would rather see us do that first, rather than paying other people money to put their time in while we talk. It seems to me it would be more cost effective and probably generate more ideas [to hold the community meetings first]. I'm very impressed by the breadth of knowledge in the town, and I think we ought to tap that."

Emily Brewster, also representing the downtown precinct, followed up. "Is there a disadvantage to having a townwide meeting, open to anyone that's interested, and certainly to the people who made presentations here tonight? Is there a disadvantage to having a discussion before the feasibility study, to guide how the feasibility study is done?"

Selectboard member Patricia Allen, who as a member of the Capital Improvements Committee has been a driving force behind the meetings held in recent months between the three

departments considering the plan for a joint community center, replied. "I think we could have a townwide meeting to discuss that if we hire someone who's got the expertise and the knowledge. This person would be able to facilitate such a meeting and guide us, so we get some positive results."

With that, the motion for a \$65,000 feasibility study for the community center passed on a voice vote, although many of the members present remained silent. Approval for the police station, or safety complex study, pegged at \$25,000 followed shortly thereafter.

The \$90,000 for both articles came from a warrant approved by town meeting on December 6th, 2000 to purchase land and a building behind the Carnegie Library on 7th Street, in the hope of expanding the century old town library at its present location. That money, never spent, was originally appropriat-

ed from free cash.

Although the proposed landfill for Turnpike Road did not formally appear on last week's warrant, still the landfill hovered in the background of discussion about the town taking on two ambitious building projects at once.

Speaking from the stage, selectboard chair Allen Ross spoke of the town's "renaissance," with downtown revitalization, a new high school, and sewer improvements, among others. "We are moving forward," he said. However, "I don't think we can easily pay for our wish list right now," he said. "There are some potential revenue sources in this town. We have some industrial sites that can potentially be developed. When people cite downsides of some of the revenue generating possibilities, just to be clear, we're talking about subtracting some of these items."



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Unsafe Crossing

Thursday, 3-23

12:57 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Turners Falls Road address. Found to be verbal only.

5:44 p.m. Report of an assault at Food City. Unfounded.

Friday 3-24

1:43 p.m. Caller reports that crosswalks on Avenue A are unsafe due to speeding cars and inconsiderate drivers.

Saturday 3-25

6:21 p.m. Report of a larceny at the Montague Center Library. Two bikes were stolen. Officer located them a few days later and returned them to owners.

Sunday 3-26

2:28 a.m. After a motor vehicle stop on L Street, [redacted] was arrested on a default war-

rant.

9:27 p.m. Report of a larceny at a 4th Street address. Caller advised to seek complaint in court.

Tuesday 3-28

1:39 a.m. Caller reports suspicious vehicle across from airport on Millers Falls Road.

[redacted], was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license and operating a motor vehicle under the influence of liquor (2nd offense).

8:44 a.m. [redacted], was arrested on a straight warrant.

9:11 p.m. Caller reports neighbor causing a disturbance at an 11th Street address.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with possession of a class A drug and possession of a hypodermic needle.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Suspicious People and Cars

Wednesday 3-22

9:30 a.m. Report of large telephone outage on River Road. Telephone company contacted regarding the problem.

5:31 a.m. Officer sent to Riverview Drive for harassing telephone calls, under investigation.

6:20 p.m. 911 hang up call from Mount Hermon Campus, all o.k.

7:05 p.m. Welfare check requested on pedestrian on Route 10, all o.k.

11:33 a.m. Welfare check requested on Grove Street.

Thursday 3-23

12:55 p.m. Report of dog complaint at Oak Street address, no problem found.

7:15 p.m. Assisted Bernardston Police with motor vehicle accident on Rt. 10 at town line.

7:45 p.m. Report of suspicious vehicle on West Gill Road, all o.k. Found to be subjects looking at a house for sale.

Friday 3-24

8:15 a.m. Responded to Lyons Hill Road for a possible breaking and entering. Under investigation.

12:30 p.m. Report of loose cows on Main Road, unable to locate.

3:10 p.m. Report of suspicious vehicle in area of Green Hill and Franklin Road, all determined to be o.k.

5:10 p.m. Assisted BHA ambulance and fire department with medical emergency on Munn's Ferry Road.

Saturday 3-25

7:30 a.m. Report of loose cows on West Gill Road.

12:35 p.m. Assisted fire department with brush fire on West Gill Road.

3:45 p.m. Report of suspicious person on Main Road near Mountain Road south, unable to locate.

4:00 p.m. report of a larceny from a French King Highway

business. Under investigation.

5:56 p.m. Report of a possible domestic disturbance on Walnut Street. Officer responded and investigated situation.

11:56 p.m. Responded to Erving to assist with medical call.

Sunday 3-26

1:11 a.m. Responded to Erving to assist with a wanted person search.

Monday 3-27

11:31 a.m. Assisted fire department with brush fire on Ben Hale Road.

12:40 p.m. Report of a dog complaint on South Cross Road, referred to animal control officer.

Tuesday 3-28

9:30 a.m. Report of past ATV complaints on West Gill Road, officer will investigate, advised to call when violations are occurring.

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Ten More Arrested at Vermont Yankee HQ

FROM STAFF REPORTS - Stephen Cobb, longtime resident of Avenue A, was arrested at the corporate headquarters of the Entergy Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant on Tuesday, March 28th. "We celebrated the 27th anniversary of the partial meltdown at Three Mile Island by doing a three mile walk from the Brattleboro town common up to the offices of Entergy," said Cobb, who cooks at a local food coop. Ten people, including a number of Franklin County residents, were arrested for disorderly conduct and trespassing, and released with a summons to appear in Brattleboro District Court on May 9th.



Marchers prepare to leave the Brattleboro town common for a three-mile march to Entergy Headquarters on Tuesday, 27 years to the day after Three Mile Island Unit One suffered a partial meltdown outside Harrisburg, P.A.

"This is the first time I've been involved in a demonstration or civil disobedience action against nuclear power," said Cobb. "I was motivated by conscience, which told me, especially now with a power uprate in the works for an aged

plant, there is a clear and present danger that needs to be responded to. Since our democratic process has been thwarted, and neither the legislature,

the NRC, nor Entergy seem to be willing to assure public safety or the common good, then you have to resort to measures like civil disobedi-

ence. Civil disobedience may be considered unlawful, but it is directed toward a higher law, toward the common good. We resort to civil disobedience because the democratic process has broken down."

Prior to their arrest, John Ward, 45, of Gill, said, "With my background in automotive and all things mechanical, I understand metal fatigue, unexpected component failures and the fact that materials and component aging is not an exact science. I am very aware of the exponential rise in failure rate when components and systems are pushed beyond their original designed capacity. I would no sooner uprate and relicense a 34-year-old reactor without an independent safety assessment, than I would race a 34-year-old car without putting it on a lift and doing a thorough check of every component."

Erik Schickedanz, 40, of Guilford, VT said, "The aging reactor in Vernon is a money making venture for a few who profit from its continued operation. At the same time, all the

people of New England assume the risks, which are colossal. It is time I risk my liberty and do my part to shut this reactor down."

Tom Wilson, 72, of Shelburne Falls, said, "The scientist in me knows that there is no safe amount of low level radiation. The results of exposure are cumulative and unpredictable. We learn about the damages of ionizing radiation in the laboratory of our own bodies."

Also arrested Tuesday were Walter Schwarz, of Brattleboro, Daniel Sicken, of Dummerston, VT, Jane Newton of Londonderry, VT, Eric Wasileski of Erving, MA, Tom MacLean of Greenfield, and Sandy Streeter of Bernardston. They were taken into custody after wrapping the corporate headquarters of Entergy Vermont Yankee in yellow caution tape and reading a list of 'indictments' against the nuclear plant's owners, including assault and battery with a dangerous weapon (a nuclear reactor), conspiracy to subvert the democratic process with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and reckless endangerment of school children in a school zone. The Vernon elementary school is 1000 yards away from the reactor building.

Brushing off the protests, Entergy plant spokesman Rob Williams said Vermont Yankee was prepared to continue increasing power at the 33-year-old plant. After analyzing vibrations in a main steam line, VY had paused at 105 percent power production for the NRC to corroborate data on the unusual vibration. The plant spokesman said Entergy is confident a further power boost can be accomplished safely. Their goal is to produce power at 120 percent of the plant's original design capacity.

SCHOOLS

continued from pg 1

ness, small class sizes, challenging academic programs, a strong presence of the arts, and a climate of respect and a code of decency in all of the schools.

"We keep these five things in mind when drafting the budget," said Gee. A long-standing priority list was also mentioned. "Many things from the list were not included on this year's budget. But we have restored the elementary and middle-school art programs, by adding teachers," Gee said.

"This is a great first step," said committee member Ted Castro-Santos. "But, we are not where we need to be with our art program."

"It will be quite a stretch for an elementary [art] teacher to cover three schools," said Gee. "We are applying again for a

Mass Cultural Council grant, for which an excellent proposal has already been prepared."

"The frustration we all feel is from the constant increase in fixed costs every year," said committee chair Mary Kociela. "It seems we are always pleading for an amount of money that will not get us where we need to be."

"This is not the way to create an excellent school," said Castro-Santos. "We are just keeping our heads above water. The town needs to step in to help plan how we are going to fund these schools."

"I really respect the dedication and professionalism of our staff," said Gee. "Even with the budget the way it has been, the children are still learning."

Jim Loynd, manager of Food Services approached the committee with news on the status of his program, which is running in the red. To improve upon the Food Service's \$15,000 deficit, Loynd elimi-

nated two part-time positions from the Turners Falls High School cafeteria staff, in addition to cutting down the hours of another cafeteria worker. He also spoke with consultant Frank Mahar about changes that could be implemented.

"I met with Frank and we discussed a reduction in junk food and items that don't meet USDA standards or nutrition guidelines," said Loynd. "I have also added more reimbursable meals to the menu that meet USDA standards." Every USDA approved meal served in school cafeterias receives a reimbursement from the state. "As of yesterday the debt has been reduced to \$1671.72," said Loynd. "I am confident that I can bring this even lower."

Lori Tyler has recently resigned from her position as nurse for Montague Center Elementary in pursuit of a higher paying position elsewhere.

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WORDS

continued from pg 1

poets and readers offer snatches of Dylan and Walt Whitman, short stories of their own creation or the haikus and modern jazz metrics of free verse in the third in a series of readings called ALL SMALL CAPS, organized by a loose collection of local literati and hosted by Patti and Vic Scutari, publicans of the recently opened night spot.

"This is such a wonderful space," said Jesse Mynes, one of the founders of the reading series, who also works as an organic farmer and a librarian at Mt. Wachusett Community College. "This provides people who write an opportunity to read their own stuff for people who are here to listen, and hang out together."

Mynes got together with fellow Wendellites Stephen Broll, Charles Bado, and Paul Richmond and came up with the idea for the last Monday readings over a few beers at the Deja Brew in December, and inaugurated the readings in January. In February, 55 people crowded into the room, at least a dozen more than can be comfortably seated, to hear David Lovelace and Jonathan vonRanson read work as featured guests, along with the democratic offerings of the open mike.

On the 27th, Bado began the reading with a few stanzas of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, including "To Foreign Lands," until the sand in the five minute glass ran out.

I heard that you ask'd for something to prove this puzzle the New World,

And to define America, her athletic Democracy,

Therefore I send you my poems that you behold in them what you wanted.

Following him, Charles Bennett read a few lines of Izumi Shikibu, a Japanese liberated woman of the year 1000 whose poetry is said to "mix elements of Eros with the deep awareness that comes from Buddhist meditative practice." Bennett defied the ALL SMALL CAPS dictum (on illustrated cards that doubled as bar coasters) that poetry (quoting Robert Frost) is "what gets lost in translation." He read Jane Hirshfields' rendering of one of Shikibu's tankas:

*Why haven't I
thought of it before?
This body,
remembering yours,
is the keepsake you left.*

He was followed by Jessica Star, who wrapped a long, rhapsodic emo poem around the crowd. She had penned it in 2002, and it dealt with love and its loss,

and Star got points for baring her soul before a crowd who knew her well. She also got a laugh when she accidentally substituted the word 'arse' for 'eyes' in the line "once I knew it in your eyes," followed by the line "now I smell life as I cook." Another example of the unexpected joys of the spoken word.

In a lovely, lilting voice, Iina Singh provided the highlight of the evening's five minute open mike samplings, with her wise, beautifully observed, and heartfelt poems, some dealing with her native India, and this one, titled "August", set in her adopted home of Wendell.

The last green of the year is in its final month. Already the beeches are revealed turning yellow. How the sun streaks along its arc, lower every day. In the house, the light is mellow on the oak floor. In the garden, vegetables ripen in the last warmth. Tomatoes, too weighty for the stem, fall off the twig; their hefty red bodies solid on the ground. Harvest ants quickly carry mouthfuls of their flesh away. In the fields pumpkins turn, hovering between orange and green. Yesterday I saw the first starlings bunch up by the score, swerving in their unified flight like iron filings drawn by some hidden moving magnet. How they rain down into the thousand leaves of the Sugar Maple, and vanish. How empty the sky. In the meadow masses of mayflies hover, a hum of throbbing air in front of my face. In the field the swallows swoop and dive over the yellowing grasses, snapping up the last insects. Later, I came upon the perfect corpse of a mole in the grass. How we are caught between the season's survival, and the long listing into the grave.

A man named Ralph read a haiku about hopping a freight, with his dog, or not. Which prompted Bado to say, "We're setting the bar pretty high here tonight." Then he brought up fellow ALL SMALL CAP-man Paul Richmond, who read a deconstructed fairy tale of juggling in the post-modern world, called the Sky is Falling.

Mynes produced a few gems from a forthcoming work, to be published by his Fewer and Further Press, (www.fewerandfurtherpress.blogspot.com) called *the Breaks*, by Christopher Rizzo.

Based loosely on jazz standards, "So What?" was a standout, with wild bebop riffs of syncopated, alliterative images hovering around hollyhocks in Albany, or elsewhere. At the end, the crowd

unique view on life, for unknown poets, because language belongs to everyone. These readings are a manifestation of the town, which is an incredibly open town, that lives in the spirit of inquiry."

After the break, the featured guests took the floor: poets Michael Carr and Aaron Tieger, who had traveled from Boston and Ithaca, NY, respectively, to read in Wendell.

Tieger read first, spinning finely tuned word-scapes, in which cats and flowers with names like hearts' ease and love lies bleeding figured prominently. He tapped fairly deeply into the café culture's collective unconscious, with lines like,

"Punk is Dead I saw Green Day on the Grammys / Well maybe it's just faking until you Go Home," and a poems like Tension Tamer, that ended with still "more cats.... Snow, Codeine, and Honey."

Carr took the mike, next, and offered a cerebral counterpoint to Tieger's gritty, earthy imagery. His work was intense but abstruse, and the Wendell crowd leaned forward in unison, as if trying to pick up the thread, but it



Nicole Baleno tends bar for patrons at the Deja Brew spoken word event Monday night.

began breathing, and someone in the back was heard uttering a single, "Wow!"

Reflecting on the abundance of riches showering Wendell these days, Jennifer Whitcomb said, "First we get a bar, then we get poets."

At half-time, Singh, making short work of a pepperoni pizza at the bar, said, "I love it that there is an opening here for a completely

April Fool's Day

BY FRAN HEMOND

MONTAGUE CENTER - April Fool's Day is surely the delight of the younger and less busy family members. The older folks will not deign to give it attention and are fair game for the little guys and girls. Mothers and fathers have heavier concerns. They come to breakfast oblivious of the fact that this is the 1st of April. When they investigate their children's dire pronouncement that the car has a flat tire, they are happy it is not true and perhaps appreciate that the little ones are joining the society.

Older brothers and sisters often do not participate unless they have thought up a fairly sophisticated prank. And even an April Fool's Day prankster is not immune to retaliation. But at five years old, it is safe and wonderful to tell your big brother that his shoelace is untied, and glory in his chagrin when he looks down and you yell "April Fools." Perhaps you are not really certain whether it is the name of the day or a demeaning gesture. You are five. And this once you won.

The beginning of All Fool's Day, as it is alternately called,

is thought to be confusions about New Year's Day. And indeed if all of the natural motions in our solar system 'came out even' some of the variations in counting time that countries have had to deal with through the centuries would not have existed. Some early calendars started the year at the Vernal Equinox when the days and nights are equal and Vernal, (that lovely word for spring). The equinox started the northern hemisphere of our Earth on its productive cycle. Southern hemisphere civilizations started their year at our Autumnal Equinox, which made sense for them.

However, in 1564, when the New Year's Day that coincided with the end of the Vernal Equinox on April 1st was changed in the new calendar by the French King Charles IX to January first, the French people reacted. New Year's Day has always been a day to exchange and socialize in France. They were not about to give up a cherished springtime tradition. So, accolades to them. They continued to celebrate the stolen holiday in a mocking manner. The stolid

was difficult. Much of his work recalled an anodyne voice from Radiohead's OK Computer era, but that disc sold two million units, so what is genius, anyway?

The duo, old friends, both have work published through Mynes' press, and they read a long joint poem, or poems, showcasing their contrasting styles, to end the show. For more on their work, see Mynes' website.

As I paid my tab, Richmond buttonholed me and asked me if the reading had convinced me to clear out my schedule and take up creative writing again. I hesitated, and looked him in the eye. I noticed his pupils were horizontal slits, the eyeballs yellow, with a glint of malice or amusement lighting from within. Mist was rising from the floorboards, and the muffled rattle of dice on green felt tables mingled with the clink of coins. With a hairy hand, he motioned me to the bar stool next to him, and I almost joined him there. But suddenly, I remembered I had a deadline to meet. "I have to file my story," I told him. "The news can't wait."

The next Night of Spoken Word at the Deja Brew will happen on April 24th. See you there.



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THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Fevers, Germs, and the Immune System

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. *I remember having lots of fevers as a kid, but, now that I'm older, I don't get them like I used to. What gives?*

The immune system doesn't function as efficiently in older adults as it does in younger people. The body's fever response to infection is not always automatic in elderly people. More than 20 percent of adults over age 65 who have serious bacterial infections do not have fevers.

This brings us to germs, which are defined as microbes that cause disease. Infectious diseases caused by microbes are the leading cause of death.

Microbes are microscopic organisms, and they are everywhere. Some microbes cause disease. Others are essential for health. Most microbes belong to one of four major groups: bacteria, viruses, fungi, or protozoa.

Bacteria are made up of only one cell. Less than one percent of bacteria cause disease in humans. Harmless bacteria live in human intestines, where they help us digest food. Foods such as yogurt and cheese, are made using bacteria.

Some bacteria produce dangerous poisons. Botulism, a severe form of food poisoning, is caused by bacterial toxins. On the other hand, several vaccines are made from bacterial toxins.

Viruses are among the smallest microbes. They consist of one or more molecules that contain the virus's genes, surrounded by a protein coat. Most viruses cause disease. They invade normal cells then multiply.

A fungus is a primitive vegetable. There are millions of types of fungi. The most familiar ones are mushrooms, yeast, mold, and mildew. Some live in the human body, usually without causing ill-



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

ness. In fact, only about half of all types of fungi cause disease in humans. Penicillin and other antibiotics, which kill harmful bacteria in our bodies, are made from fungi.

Protozoa are a group of microscopic one-celled animals. In humans, protozoa usually cause disease. Some protozoa, like plankton, are food for marine animals. Malaria is caused by a protozoan parasite.

You can get infected by germs

from other people in many different ways, including transmission through the air from coughing or sneezing, direct contact such as kissing or sexual intercourse, and touching infectious material on a doorknob, telephone, automated teller machine or a diaper.

A variety of germs come from household pets. Dog and cat saliva can contain any of more than 100 different germs that can make you sick.

Mosquitoes may be the most common insect carriers of disease. Mosquitoes can transmit malaria. Fleas that pick up bacteria from rodents can then transmit plague to humans. The tiny deer tick can infect humans with Lyme disease.

We become immune to germs naturally and artificially. Before birth, we received natural immunity from our mothers. Once we are exposed to a germ, we develop natural immunity to it from special cells in our immune sys-

tems. Artificial immunity can come from vaccines.

Most infections caused by microbes fall into three major groups: acute infections, chronic infections and latent infections. The common cold is an acute infection. Hepatitis C, which affects the liver, is a chronic viral infection. Chickenpox is an example of a latent infection that can emerge many years later and cause a disease called "shingles."

Handwashing is a simple and effective way to stop the transmission of germs. Health care experts recommend scrubbing your hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds with soap and water.

It is especially important to wash your hands before touching food, after coughing or sneezing, after changing a diaper, and after using the toilet.

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

FINDING BALANCE: HEALTH TIPS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

Extending Happy Hour



BY JENNY CHAPIN

MONTAGUE CITY - A recent article in the *Boston Globe* noted that the class at Harvard University with the highest attendance (855 students) is called "Positive Psychology." The course is about shifting focus from what's wrong with us and the state of the world to what we like about ourselves and what is working well in our life.

In this culture, we are overwhelmingly geared toward dissatisfaction and lack. "What I don't have, what I need more of..." the underlying assumption is if I only had "more" and "better," then I would be happy. Much wiser people than I have written reams on the subject of finding happiness with what is in front of us, not to mention within us; they observe that "happiness is not having what you want, but wanting what you have."

We're told that fulfillment comes from the things we acquire. I believe that, in a constantly changing world, material possessions give us a sense of safety and security: "I don't know what will happen tomorrow, next month, or in five years, but at least right now I have a good music system in my car." Yet I have also found that acquiring things often leads to upping the ante: suddenly I can no longer live a decent life without that new thing I had been OK living without before.

Positive psychology concerns asking questions about what makes life worth living. Is it enough to get through a day at work so we can make it to the bar for Happy Hour (free snacks!), and then go home and collapse into bed, just to go through it all again the next day?

It's easy to get lulled into just

going along with things as they are, and easier still to avoid the hard questions. Ask yourself if you're happy, enjoying life, loving what you do. Notice your responses. Do you come up with rationalizations and excuses for why your life has to be the way it is, even if you are discontented and possibly depressed? Maintaining status quo (the existing condition or state of affairs) may seem to take less effort than letting go of what's familiar and moving out of your comfort zone - but if the status quo is making you miserable, it takes a toll on you nonetheless, not to mention those around you.

The process of extending our own 'happy hour' can be frustrating because of our human tendency to resist making the changes necessary to shift from sadness and pain to satisfaction and delight. It's not an easy

process, for sure. Before we can begin to make different choices, choose different responses, we have to believe, even a tiny bit, that other possibilities exist. Then we have to sustain our will power so we can persevere through the hurdle and struggle of transforming our outlook.

What do you truly need? What makes your life worth living? What brings you joy? What's already good? Everyone is different, so it's not what anyone else says or needs, but what you yourself say you do.

What if our happiness isn't limited to an hour or two, squeezed between work and sleep? What if, as the sages say, it's not anything outside of us, but what's inside that gives us strength, hope, comfort, self-knowledge, and contentment?

We can focus on what's negative and painful, or we can high-

light experiences of joy and tranquility. Consciously choose that which you would like to create in your world, and you will increasingly see it around you. It's not as trite as it sounds.

Jenny Chapin has been a holistic health practitioner in Franklin County for many years. Suggest a question or topic for her column at: jgchapin@crocker.com

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 31st
 Photographer Maryanne Russell will give an informal gallery talk at the Vermont Center for Photography at 6:00 p.m. She will speak at the gallery on the last day of her exhibit, "Cambodia: Light After Darkness". Through her stunning color photographs the exhibit portrays the beauty of Cambodia and the dignity of her people. There will be ample opportunity to ask Ms. Russell about her travel photography, commercial work and her life in photography. Vermont Center for Photography is located at 49 Flat Street, Brattleboro Vermont; adjacent to the lower level of the new municipal parking garage. Gallery hours are Fridays, 1:00 to 7:00 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, 12:00 to 6:00 p.m..

FRIDAY, MARCH 31ST/SATURDAY, APRIL 1ST
Movie - Network Starring Faye Dunaway and Robert Duvall A TV network cynically exploits a deranged ex-TV anchor's ravings and revelations about the media for their own profit. With stunning prescience, Sidney Lumet's searing satire of television and the contemporary moment chronicles media corruption and the way that the public buys into the myths the media creates. This is certainly a film for the history books. Who could have predicted that this 1976 film might someday influence an even more contagious trend in television broadcasting: the reality show 7:30 pm Media Arts Cinema (In the Green Trees Gallery) 105 Main St. Northfield 498-2100

SATURDAY, APRIL 1ST
 Rally and speak-out will be held on the Greenfield Town Common to kick off The Week of the Young Child, an annual nationwide event to focus public attention on the needs and rights of young children. In conjunction with the Greenfield Weekly Peace Vigil, this event will bring together local peace activists and child care advocates to honor all members of the child care community and to raise issues of equity, peace, and justice for children, families, and child care workers. 11 a.m

The Pioneer Valley Symphony & Chorus, Paul Phillips, Music Director and Conductor, presents SHOSTAKOVICH CENTENARY. This concert presents works by BARTOK, MENDELSSOHN, and SHOSTAKOVICH and features violinist NURIT PACHT. 7.30pm, Greenfield High School Auditorium. Advance tickets are \$18.00 general, \$14.00 senior, \$10.00 student and \$5.00 children, available at World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield; Broadside Bookshop, Northampton; and

online at www.pvso.org. Door prices are \$20.00 general, \$17.00 senior, \$10.00 student and \$5.00 children. Info: www.pvso.org or (413) 773-3664

SUNDAY, APRIL 2ND
Animal Tracking at the Wendell State Forest with Paul Wanta. Sponsors: Friends of the Wendell Free Library and the Wendell Cultural Council. Blessed with an abundance of both predator and prey, Wendell State Forest is The perfect place to learn to recognize physical evidence of the wild animals we share the woods with. Join Paul Wanta as we explore and search for tracks and sign of the animals who roam our local area. This will be a moderate walk, sometimes off trail. Children are welcome if accompanied by an adult. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free. To register please call Paul Wanta at 978.544.2399 or sign up at the Wendell Free Library.

Mill Street Art Works, an exhibit of works by artists who live or work in the Mill Street neighborhood, will be featured in Artspace's gallery from April 2 to 28. The exhibit will open with a reception on Sunday, April 2, 3 - 5 p.m. Participating artists are Frank Gregory, Laura Garrison, and Louise Minks, painters; Daryl Fitzgerald, basket maker; Greg Aubin and Nancy Uchman, potters; and Karen Gaudette, printmaker. The reception is open to the public. The Gallery is open Monday - Friday from 1 to 6 p.m. Artspace is located at 15 Mill Street, Greenfield. 413-772-6811 for more information.

Richard Shindell with guest, Anais Mitchell, will perform at Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$23 at the door. Tickets are available at The Hempest, Boswell's Books, World Eye Bookshop, and online at www.hilltownfolk. For more information, call (413) 625-6878.

NOW THRU APRIL 2ND
Inaugural Exhibition at The Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography: Photographs by New York-based portrait and fashion photographer **Barbara Bordnick**. The museum is located at 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Hours: Thursday to Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. (413) 863-0009.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH
 At 9 a.m., a Vernal Pool Trip will begin at the Millers River Environmental Center at 100 Main Street in Athol. Join Lynn Harper for this look at

the wonders of our local vernal pools. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main St., Athol. For more information, call 978-248-9491.

The **River Rat Race/Festival** will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come to the Millers River Environmental Center Open House and Show. Watch the parade and participate by carrying one of the parade puppet characters created in our Puppet Building Workshops. Volunteers needed. Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main St., Athol. For more information, or to volunteer, call 978-248-9491.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH
 Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish in Turners Falls will have an auction of celebrity items in conjunction with its April 8 Easter Bazaar and Spring Gaik. The silent auction will include photographs, books and other items signed by such celebrities as Tom Bodett, Jimmy Carter, Barry Gibb, Earl Hamner, Nancy Kerrigan, Natalie Merchant, Pat Robertson, Andy Robustelli Antonio Sabato Jr., Pat Sajak and Vanna White, and Travis Tritt. In St. Theresa Catechism Center at 84 K Street from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, call 863-4748.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH & SUNDAY, APRIL 9TH
 Hampshire Shakespeare auditions for Young Company will be held. This summer, Hampshire Shakespeare will present *Much Ado About Nothing* on the mainstage, followed by the HSC Young Company version on July 28, 29 and 30. Auditions for the Young Company will be held April 8 and 9 from 1 - 4 p.m. at The Hartsbrook School, 193 Bay Road, Hadley. Young actors (teens) will be cast in smaller roles in the mainstage production and will then step into the principal roles for their own production. Additional

young actors will join this company for one intensive week (July 24-28) of rehearsal culminating in a fully produced weekend of performances at the Hartsbrook School. Space is limited and restricted to actors between the ages of 10 and 17. Auditioners should memorize a short classical monologue or sonnet to perform (no more than one minute), preferably from Shakespeare. The cost for participation in the Young Company program is \$150. To schedule an audition appointment, call 413-587-9398, or e-mail us at lucindakidder@hotmail.com. Further information about past Young Company performances may be found at www.hampshireshakespeare.org.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 12TH
 Dr. Kellom will discuss how a handful of colleges, including GCC, are seeking to improve the educational experience of college men and address men's roles in today's society. The event is sponsored by the GCC Men's Initiative Committee is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Lewis Bosler at (413) 775-1276.

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
 March 31 & Apr 1
Sense and Sensibility
When Mr. Dashwood dies, his wife and daughters are left in dire straits. Matchmaking and relationships are sorely tried. But through hardships and heartbreak, true love will find a way. Jane Austen's novel adapted. Kate Winslet, Emma Thompson, Hugh Grant. Directed by Ang Lee 1995 7:30 p.m. Music at 7: Fri - The literati, jazz, Sat - Matthew Ruby Shippee, jazz Guitar.
 51 Bridge St., Shelburne Falls 625-2896

Country Players Presents
 the comedy drama,
First Monday in October
 by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee
 April 7, 8, 14, 15 at 8 pm
 The Shea Theater.
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 World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield
 The Shea, Turners Falls.
 More info call 413-863-2281

Mabel Zobel
 By
 Sandra Facto

Please Lord, let me prove that winning the lottery won't spoil me.

Jeff Bridges at Maezumi Institute & Academy of Music



Long-time supporter of the Zen Peacemakers, actor Jeff Bridges, will host the Massachusetts premiere of his new movie, *The Amateurs*, at the Academy of Music in downtown Northampton on Saturday, April 22nd, from 4 - 6 pm. General admission is \$20.

Bridges will be spending the weekend of April 22-23 in the Pioneer Valley to support the Maezumi Institute Center for the Arts, or MICA. With arts programs ranging from Traditional Eastern Arts, such as Calligraphy and Kirtan, to Modern Dance and Film Studies, the Center for the Arts is creating a path of artistic expression based in relevancy and liberation. Founder of Zen Peacemakers, Roshi Bernie Glassman, will be sharing the stage with Bridges.

Wine & cheese reception with Bridges at the Academy of Music, from 2 - 4 pm for \$85 admission, including both reception and film screening from 4 - 6 pm. Open discussion after screening. RSVP: for events 413- 367-2080 ext. 4# or e-mail laura@zenpeacemakers.org.

HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER
MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3-6, • TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project,
 3 - 6 Tues. Skate Park Public Meting 7:00 @ Discovery Center
• THURS - Drop-in, 3 - 6, Movie Night, 6 - 8
**These programs are free (except some trips) and open to local teens. Some require permission slips. For more info: Jared at 863-9559.*
 Hot Spot Teen Center is in **The Brick House**
 24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376.

GREENFIELD GARDEN CINEMAS
 Main St. Greenfield, MA 413-774-4881
 www.gardencinemas.net
 Showtimes for Fri, Mar. 31st - Thurs, Apr. 6th

- 1. THE SHAGGY DOG** PG DAILY 7:00 9:10
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:00 3:00**
- 2. ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN** DAILY 6:45 9:00 PG in DTS sound
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:00 2:15 4:30**
- 3. SHE'S THE MAN** PG13 DAILY 7:00 9:10
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:00 3:00**
- 4. FAILURE TO LAUNCH** PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:15 3:15**
- 5. THE HILLS HAVE EYES** R DAILY 6:45 9:15
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:15 3:15**
- 6. INSIDE MAN** R in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:30
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:30 3:30**
- 7. V FOR VENDETTA** DAILY 6:30 9:30 R in DTS sound
- MAT SAT, SUN, WED 12:30 3:30**

THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOXICOLOGIST

Are The Frogs Dying?

Peepers calling from vernal pools are a perennial harbinger of spring. But now, as we tune our ears to catch the first murmurs of that high-pitched chorus, we can almost hear them asking...

Are the Frogs Dying?

BY EMILY MONOSSON

MONTAGUE CENTER

Scientists agree that frog and toad populations in the United States and around the world are in decline. Of about 100 different species in the U.S., twenty-two are listed as threatened or endangered. Worldwide, there are thousands of species with hundreds nearing extinction. Yikes!

But there is hope. If scientists can figure out why so many species are threatened, then maybe we can save all those peepers and croakers from singing their last tune.

Frogs and toads are amphibians, spending part of their lifecycle in the water, and part on



land.

And, unlike most land-lubbers, they have very thin permeable skin that absorbs both water and air. Because of this feature frogs and toads are good indicators of changes in the earth's environments and for this reason are considered the global version of the 'canary in the coal mine,' only this coal mine is the planet earth! So far scientists have identified sever-

al possible changes that could impact survival of frogs: global warming, pollution, disease, and habitat destruction.

From eggs, through the tadpole stage, frogs are surrounded by water. These early life stages are considered the most sensitive to environmental change. Recent studies have found the most commonly used weed killer in the U.S., atrazine, wreaks havoc on the developing sex organs in male frogs, so much so that some male frogs end up with both male and female organs.

Additionally, parasitic infections in developing frogs are thought to be responsible for formation of excess limbs, and fungal infections in adults have been

linked to amphibian population decline in other parts of the world. Scientists think other factors such as global warming, ozone depletion and toxic chemicals may make frogs more vulnerable to infections

insurmountable problems. Understanding toxicity of pesticides to frogs and toads may lead to greater restrictions on their use. It worked for the Bald Eagle! There are currently treaties in force to

prohibit the release of ozone-destroying chemicals. But with over 200,000 acres of land cleared daily - an area equivalent to New York City - habitat destruction seems a thomier issue.

So it's up to all of us to get on the ball, and help save our amphibious friends. A good way to begin is to check out the National Wildlife Federations Frog Watch Program on the web at: www.nwf.org/frogwatchUSA.

that otherwise would not have bothered them.

Finally there is widespread habitat destruction. As mentioned above, frogs and toads require both aquatic and terrestrial habitat, and reduction in either one or both of these habitats could contribute to the decline of frog and toad populations.

But don't despair! These are not

Spring Migration: Metal on the Move

BY STEVE WINTERS

TURNERS FALLS

Look around. It's spring, the time of year when things are on the move. Sap is weeping from trees; geese are flying overhead; squirrels are rummaging around bushes; salamanders will soon be making their annual march to vernal pools. Even the neighbors are out walking around the neighborhood.

Of course, I had to get out too, and the first place I went was Cabot Woods, off Migratory Way in Turners Falls. What a treasure this place is - especially in early spring! I love hiking this time of year not just because I can safely abandon my winter hat and coat, but because of what you can see in the woods and streams as they emerge from winter. Observations at this time of year are easier because the obstructions are fewer. It's too early for weeds and grass, so the underbrush is still bare and leafless.

And what will you see? It may not seem like a big deal, but Cabot Woods is rich this spring (as in any spring, I imagine) in moisture. Walking through the woods can be a little springy (no pun intended), particularly where the moss builds up to create little mounds, like mini-peat bogs. These vegetative mats lock in water, and if you stand on small hills of moss you'll see water squeezed a few inches below your boots. It's like walking on a big sponge.

Now, keep walking along the path to the Cabot Woods Fishing

Access and you'll see a small geological wonder made possible by all that water. At some picnic tables in a clearing near the river, you can (carefully!) approach the steep and rocky bank that leads down to the river. Peer over the bank and you'll likely see pools of orangey colored water, rocks, and gravel at the river's edge. You may even see feathery orange material seeping out of the bank. That material is iron (iron embedded in bacteria, to be precise). It's probably there all year, but now is a good time to see it because no vegetation hides your view. How did the iron feathers get there?

The iron you see coming from the bank is actually the same kind of iron that stains your porcelain (and sometimes your clothes) when your tap or well water contains too much dissolved iron. But the presence of iron in the seeps or springs at the Cabot Woods picnic

area indicates something more. During the spring, when the water level in the Power Canal to the east is high and the water in the river to the west is much lower, water leaks from the Power Canal, under the woods, through the

the river.

The water making its underground and airless passage through sand and buried plant material is clear - no orange in sight. But as the water emerges, it immediately reacts with oxygen in the air. As it does so, the iron changes from a form that can dissolve in water to a form that is stubbornly insoluble. The insoluble form immediately becomes a little solid particle that falls, or precipitates, out of the water.

And here is a small wonder of geochemistry: The precipitating reaction is possible only because a certain kind of bacteria loves dissolved iron. To survive, these tiny creatures "steal" energy (in the form of an electron) from the dissolved iron. The theft makes the iron an insoluble particle, which means we can see it in the water (sort of like a wizard whose invisibility cloak has been stolen). The particle and the iron-loving bacteria settle out of the

water and form the orangey filaments and fuzz you see lining the bottom of seeps and pools along the river near Migratory Way.

This process of iron migration is as common in the geological past as it is in our neighborhood today. Over geological time (which is to say, very slowly over millions of years), deposits of iron-bearing orangey bacterial filaments and fuzz may build up to form the common iron ore mineral called bog iron or Goethite (the mineral ore is named after its discoverer, the German Romantic poet Goethe, who was also a notable mineralogist). Huge deposits of Goethite are found near Lake Superior and in the Appalachian mountains of western Massachusetts. It's a major form of the world's iron ore - an essential building material for our tallest skyscrapers.

So, in addition to sap, birds, rodents, salamanders, and the exercise freaks next door, metals are also on the move this spring. Make way for the humble iron particle and its magic-making bacteria.

Steve Winters is a hydrogeologist and environmental science educator. Through Boston University's Prisoner Education Project, he teaches geology to prisoners at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute at Framingham. Steve lives in Turners Falls. Reach him at science_matters@yahoo.com.



Shopping Carts are Amphibious.
(Photo taken near rock dam)
Courtesy of Nina Bander

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