

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 30

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 1, 2008

HISTORIC NORTH LEVERETT SAWMILL SAVED . . . FOR LAST

BY DAVID DETMOLD
More than 60 people turned out for a local history talk at the Leverett Public Library on Thursday, April 24th. The

young and old, were there to hear Lee Glazier speak about the water-powered sawmill in North Leverett, which his family owned from 1919 to

of Leverett voted to fund renovations to the building at annual town meeting. Work has already commenced.

But on Thursday, it took Lee the better part of an hour to even mention the sawmill. He was too busy recounting tales of fires at the charcoal kilns, barn fires, and Leverett's first fire truck, (a '34 open cab Ford from the city of Natick, "pretty nice in the winter"), and other facets of local lore.

Lee started his talk by offering, "If any of you want to walk out, go ahead."

Up on Hemenway Road, Walter Jones had bought out the previ-

see LEE pg 10



DETMOLD PHOTO

Lee Glazier, (left) and Dan Bennett at the Leverett Library urging people to vote to save the North Leverett Sawmill. On Saturday, at town meeting, they did.

meeting room didn't hold them all.

The history buffs,

1965. The mill roof collapsed a few years back, but on Saturday the town

Anctil Buys Strathmore Mill



PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER CLARK

and Montague Energy Group Property

BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO
TURNERS FALLS - "We've got a long way to go, but we can get there," said the ever-optimistic John Anctil, when asked about his plans for the

Strathmore and the former Montague Energy Group property - where the Indeck co-generation facility once stood - on the west end of the mill complex. According to a deed

filed with the Franklin County Registry of Deeds on Tuesday, Anctil, of Lowell, operating under the limited liability corporation Swift River Development Corp, pur-

see MILL pg 12

THEATER REVIEW

The Music Lesson

Produced by Arena Civic Theater, at the Shea

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS - In April of 1992, the Bosnian Serb army surrounded the city of Sarajevo, a beautiful multi-cultural metropolis lying in a valley in the mountains, in the middle of the newly independent nation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and began the longest siege and bombardment of an urban center in the history of modern warfare. By the time the siege was lifted in February of 1996, 12,000 people had been killed in a rain of heavy artillery and continual sniper fire, and 50,000 were wounded. It is estimated that 85% of the casualties were civilians.

On May 27th, 1992, several high-explosive shells lobbed from Serb positions in the mountains landed on a bread

line outside a bakery on Vase Miskina Street, killing 22 people who were seeking government rations in the face of the dwindling food supply, and wounding more than 100 others.

Twelve days later, a cellist in the Sarajevo Opera, Vedran Smailovic, described in the *New York Times* of June 8th, 1992 as "a disheveled, stubble-bearded man in formal evening attire," brought his cello and a folding chair to the pedestrian mall in front of the bakery, and began playing Albinoni's *Adagio in G*, a haunted, yearning



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARENA CIVIC THEATRE

piece supposedly composed from a manuscript found in the ruins of Dresden after the Second World War.

Whatever its origins, Smailovic offered the piece in public concert in the middle of Vase Miskina Street for 22 consecutive days, damning the snipers to stop him from honoring the humanity of those who had fallen, and those who remained holed up in the cellars of the ancient city that had seen the fall of Archduke Ferdinand, the rise of the '82 winter Olympics, and the harmonious marriage of Croat, Serb and Muslim nations for

centuries.

As Smailovic's biographer, Robert Fulgham, notes, "Sometimes history knocks at the most ordinary door to see if anyone is at home." A similar knock at an ordinary door in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania sets in motion the drama of *The Music Lesson*, by Tammy Ryan, directed by Robert Freedman in a production by Arena Civic Theater at the Shea Theater on May 2nd, 3rd, (at 8 p.m.) and May 4th (at 2 p.m.), bringing an American family together with an émigré couple fleeing the war in Bosnia, for weekly lessons in violin and piano.

Irena, (Vivien Weiss) and her husband Ivan (Daniel Popowich) have left behind the ruins of their cosmopolitan city for the de-industrialized Pittsburgh of 1996. Learning English, and seeking to adjust

see MUSIC pg 13

The Music Lesson features Lauren Wilfong (Kat), who here endures a music lesson at the piano, while Vivien Weiss (Irena) stands over her and Maddy Stern, (Maja) rear, looks on.

PET OF THE WEEK

One Foxy Lady



Foxy

My name is Foxy and I'm a nine-year-old female Pomeranian in need of a good home. There is nothing in the whole world like a Pomeranian's smile. When I tilt my fluffy little head at you and flash you that amazing grin, you just have to feel like the world is alright. Just think — if you take me home, you can see my fabulous little smile every single day!

I am a sweet, affectionate older girl that is looking for a new best friend to take me home. Imagine the adventures we could have together, you and I! For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email lev-erett@dphs.org.

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The Montague Reporter

Published weekly on Thursday, (Every other week in July and August. Wednesday paper fourth week of November. No paper last week of December.)

PHONE (413) 863-8666
FAX (413) 863-3050
reporter@montaguema.net
Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Montague Reporter
58 4th Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376

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CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Preschool Story Hour

BY RUTH O'MARA
TURNERS FALLS- Preschool Story Hour at the Carnegie Library is held on Wednesday mornings at 10:15 a.m. Young children and their families are invited to come and enjoy stories, crafts, music, activities and snacks with artist Ruth O'Mara. On Wednesday, May 7th, the theme will be spring tales. May

14th we will be reading stories about butterflies. On May 21st, the theme will be rainy days. May 28th, we will be reading stories about bees. The weekly free series is designed for ages 3 to 5 and their parents, grandparents, and other caregivers. Siblings of any age are welcome. For more information, please call 413-863-3214.

Emus at Carnegie Library

BY BRIDGET SWEET
TURNERS FALLS - Emu chicks from the Songline Emu Farm in Riverside traveled across the bridge to visit with the children at the Carnegie Library on Wednesday afternoon, April 23rd. Sixty children of all ages watched on the lawn while Dee Mares and her niece Jasmine showed a pair of two-day old Australian emus. It was a busy hour for them.

Mares read excerpts from *Feathered Dinosaurs* that traced the ancestry of emus back to the dinosaurs. She said emus are cousins to the ostrich of South Africa. When Pangaea broke apart, the birds became separated across the continents.

"The three types of emus are island, coastal and inland," said Mares. Most farmers have inland (emus); the blue necked emus are island-type."

At Songline, they have a mixture of island and inland emus. There are many cages of breeding emus, with names such as Cary Grant and Josephine.

Holding up a large blue emu egg, Mares explained, "Females lay a clutch, six to eight eggs," at a time. The male emus sit on the

eggs for about fifty days.

At Songline, the eggs are put in an incubator and then in a warmer. After the babies are born, they are put in their own pen. Mares keeps detailed information on each egg.

Mares explained how the Australian aborigines utilize the entire emu. She displayed a dyed



photo: www.songlineemufarm.com

blue leather emu hide that would be turned into purses or clothes. The feathers can be used for dream catchers, dusters and lures for fly fisherman. The emu oil is said to heal sunburns, psoriasis and arthritis. "Emu meat is 97% fat-free and tasty," Mares said.

Mares took out the two emu chicks and let the children pet them. "I liked it. It was tweetin'

FACES & PLACES



MATT ROBINSON PHOTO

Turners Falls native Sonya Lamonakis (right) connects with left hook to her opponent, Shayna Hargraves of Brownsville, NY at Madison Square Garden on April 18th, successfully defending her world female heavyweight championship title in the 81st Annual Golden Gloves Championship Finals

away," said Storm, age 6, of Turners Falls.

Songline Emu Farm has been open since 1995. Mares said she started the farm with her brother-in-law, Stanley Johnson and sister, Geri Johnson because she wanted "a nest egg" for retirement. No pun intended.

Songline Emu Farm is located at 66 French King Highway in Gill. It is open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m.

Call: (413) 863-2700 or (866) 539-2996 for more info.

Historical Walking Tour
of Downtown Turners Falls
Tuesday, May 6th, 6 p.m.
The walk will begin outside of the Great Falls Discovery Center on Ave. A, near the Gill-Montague bridge. Susan SanSoucie, library director and historical commission member, will lead a slow-paced trip in time down Avenue A. The walk is one of the Crabapple Blossom Festival events, which runs from May 3rd - May 18th. For more information, contact the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

Turners Falls Tree Walking Tour

Tour of the downtown Turners Falls trees on
Sunday, May 4th at 2 p.m.

The program starts in front of the Carnegie Library. Alan Snow, Community Forester of the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, will lead the walk down Ave. A. Identification, selection, planting and care of urban trees will be discussed. This is one of the many events of the annual Turners Falls Crabapple Blossom Festival, which runs from May 3rd - May 18th. The program is sponsored by the Montague Public Libraries. For more information, call 413-863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- May 5th - 9th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Council-on-Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Mealsite Manager is Chris Richer. The Center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. A reservation is necessary and transportation can be provided. Trips: Call the Senior Center 863-9357 or 863-4500

Monday, 5th

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:30 p.m. Council on Aging Meeting

Tuesday, 6th

10 a.m. Brown Bag

Wednesday, 7th

11 a.m. Planning Documents/
May is Elder Law Month this year's speaker is Attorney Pam Stobierski. She will explain

which documents we need and why. Her presentation includes: Wills, Trusts, Power of attorney, homestead act and more. This is a program every senior and family member will benefit from, bring your questions on any elder issue.

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics

12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 8th

10 a.m. Coffee & Conversation
10:30 a.m. Michelle Miner from Harborside Healthcare Facilities will speak on Asthma and Allergy Awareness; Asthma is a disease of the lungs in which the airways become blocked or narrowed, causing breathing difficulty. This chronic disease affects 20 million Americans. Allergies are responses of the immune system that cause an overreaction to substances called allergens. Learn about the different types of allergens and how people who have allergies and asthma can live healthy and active lives.

1 p.m. Pitch

Friday, 9th

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1 p.m. Christmas Crafts

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

Monday, 5th

9:00 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
12 Noon Pitch
12 Noon SERVE deadline

Tuesday, 6th

9 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Brown Bag
12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday, 7th

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Diabetes/Cholesterol Clinic; Blood Pressure Clinic
12 Noon Bingo

Thursday, 8th

9 a.m. Aerobics
10:15 a.m. Pool

12 Noon Shopping - Turners

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

THE SHADY GLEN

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Sat: Yankee Pot Roast

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EARTH DAY IN WENDELL

BY JOSH HEINEMANN - In spite of a mailing that went to every household in Wendell, the attendance at Wendell's first townwide Earth Day event was only moderate. It was the last sunny day of school vacation.

Activities went on through the day, starting with the annual roadside litter pick up. The volunteers for the litter patrol met at 9:00 a.m. at the town hall. People broke into small groups, chose a section of road and picked up trash, from empty coffee cups, beer cans and bottles, to car seats, and springs, and a rolled up carpet.

Some people had already gone out on trash pickup during the prior week, and left their collections by the side of the road. Anne Diemand and Ted Lewis drove a town truck and collected the bags of trash and the piles of junk and brought them all to the Wendell Recycling and Transfer Station, where they were accepted for free.

Kate Nolan of the Community Garden committee stayed by the garden, behind the new town office building, most of the day to meet interested people and help them pick the location of their plot in the new garden. Additional soil preparation is planned, so it was impossible to mark the plots on the ground, but several people picked their pieces either on a site map, or by reference to the large stones that will not be moved this year.

From 9:30 to noon Sharon Gensler taught a workshop in organic gardening at the community garden. She and workshop participants created a garden bed where the weeds were mowed

last fall and the soil had been lightly turned earlier this April, and they planted lettuce and kale seedlings, and Chinese cabbage seeds, and lettuce seeds. She talked about soil preparation, bed construction, and planting techniques for seedlings and seeds.

At 11:00 a.m., forester Mike Mauri presented his report on three of the five lots that were deeded to the town by William Phelps in 1888. The deed states, "The above tracts of land I convey to said town for its use forever on the condition that the wood and timber shall be cut from the same, and the proceeds be used toward the support of the common schools in said town, and for no other purpose. Should the Town refuse or neglect to comply with the foregoing conditions the land shall revert to me or my heirs or assigns."

The town Open Space Committee passed out draft copies of articles they are proposing for the annual town meeting that would create the Phelps Conservation Area out of

three of the lots and would add the two remaining lots to already existing town forest and conservation areas. Mauri described the three lots, the first 37 acres in southwest Wendell that is contiguous with other town controlled property, and 68 acres of unknown ownership that together would create 194 town controlled forest. Access to that lot is only through private land. The second lot is 17.5 acres with the power lines that cross Wendell Depot Road, and completely landlocked, and has some old second growth forest. The third lot, 39 acres, is the only lot with frontage on a town road, Farley Road. The selectboard wants to keep control of the front eight acres of that land for active recreation. The best access to the back of the lot is through private land to the east.

No recent logging or thinning has occurred on any of the parcels. Passive recreation and traditional land use including wood cutting, would be allowed on all five Phelps lots.

The town hall was filled with

displays of the Phelps lots, along with displays from other environmental groups. There was also a plentiful table with food prepared by volunteers.

The Open Space Committee needs to update the town Open Space Plan to keep Wendell eligible for state grants, and can use volunteers to help on this task, and in many other capacities.

At 1:00 p.m., the Open Space Committee held a vision circle on the town common, because the day was beautiful, and no one could bring themselves to turn up the heat in the town hall. Consensus was reached that any recreation development on town land should be low impact, family friendly, and low cost.

At 3:00 p.m., Melinda Godfrey led a walk around Fiske Pond, with a view to locating raised walkways to protect delicate wetland plants. Participants were cheered by the sight of

emerging vegetation, once again, as in years past, a delicate spring green.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WENDELL POLICE LOG Brush Fire Sends one on Lifeflight

Saturday, 4-5
Medical emergency on Locke Hill Road.
Wednesday, 4-9
Depot Road resident reported hypodermic needle beside roadway. Removed.
Thursday, 4-17
Resident reporting loud party on Lockes Village Road. Spoke with all parties.
Wednesday, 4-23
Brush fire on Bullard Road. One

individual flown by Lifeflight to UMass Worcester for treatment of burns.
New Salem Road resident reported damage to car when pulling off roadway to allow fire trucks to pass.
Reported breaking and entering on Lockes Village Road between 8:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. Approximately \$170 in change taken.
Friday, 4-25
Car fire at junction of Montague Road and Dirth Road. No injuries. Unknown cause of fire.

Junior Girl Scouts Host Tea Party and Fashion Show

BY PAM GRIMARD
TURNERS FALLS - On Sunday, April 27th, Junior Girl Scout Troop #79 treated 45 young ladies and their mother or grandmother to a Tea Party and Fashion Show. The afternoon started with a light lunch of tea sandwiches, vegetable sticks and chocolate covered strawberries. A variety of teas were available for sampling while enjoying homemade pastries. During the luncheon the Girl Scouts and their American Girl Dolls walked among the tables modeling matching outfits. Night wear, a party dress and a variety of casual and sporty outfits were some of the favorites. The



Left to right: Junior Girl Scouts Emma Johnson, Emilee Felton, Ashley Tetreault, Lauren Grimard, Nichole Voudren and Hayley Westfall. Pictured right: Erika Gavin.

girls ended the show modeling their Girl Scout vests, displaying patches and badges they have earned.

The outfits were created by the girls and their leaders and sewn by Tabby Martinelli. She and other local vendors sold

outfits and accessories after the show.

The Girl Scouts of Troop #79 include: Emilee Felton, Erika Gavin, Lauren Grimard, Emma Johnson, Ashley Tetreault, Nichole Voudren and Hayley Westfall.

Open House for THE NEW SHEFFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL Thursday, May 8th 5:30 - 6:45 p.m.

prior to the 4th Grade UNITY TREE PLAY at 7 p.m.
Special welcome to Montague Center School and Hillcrest parents. Students and families can tour the building, meet teachers. Information Session at 6 p.m. with Principal Wood, Principal Jutres; Jon Dobosz, Parks and Rec; Dan Hescocock, Sheffield Full Day Program Director; Block Party Fund Raising Info, Sue Dresser; Refreshments available; Student guides.

Gill Elementary School Choice Open House Openings in K-6

The Gill PTO invites you to come learn about our small school with its unique 6th Grade Environmental Education-based program and speak with parents, teachers and administrators!
Wednesday, May 7th 5:30 - 7:00 pm
48 Boyle Road, Gill
Call with questions: 863-3255

May is National Foster Care Month

Change the Future of a Child in Your Community. Become a Foster Parent!

Help a child from your community who needs a nurturing and supportive place to live until they can return to family. Your love, patience, understanding and life experiences will give a child a brighter tomorrow.



Right now, the children who are in greatest need of your help are teens. Please help a child from your neighborhood today. You won't be alone; there is support available 24 hours a day. Experienced foster parents and social workers are available to talk with you and answer your questions.

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Assistant Editor Kathleen Litchfield	<i>"The Voice of the Villages"</i>	Technical Administrators Michael Muller Michael Farrick
Editorial Assistants Hugh Corr David Brule	Founded by Harry Brandt David Detmold August, 2002	
Circulation Suzette Snow Cobb Don Clegg	Arthur Evans	

May Day! in Montague

It is an odd season. Sometimes, spring seems to be in full bloom, with trees coming into leaf and bulbs brightening the planters where only a week or two ago remnants of gritty snow still lingered. But yesterday, the winter coats came off the hook, and we shelled out another \$3.77 a gallon for enough oil to eke out another month of heat, until the new natural gas line gets installed. Not a scrap of wood left in the woodpile after five months of bone-chilling cold. We feel like yelling, "May Day!"

And it's an odd sort of season in town, too. Hopeful news crops up, new businesses open and flourish, a visionary buys the old mill and promises to take down the last vestiges of the coal burning plant that once spewed mercury around our Valley. If John Ancil makes good on his dreams to bring hundreds of film production students to the Strathmore, we'll be begging for some of those converted storefront apartments to return to life as commercial space along the Avenue.

If wishes were horses, we'd all take a ride.

But take a walk down to town hall, as we did last evening, and sit in on the deliberations leading up to town meeting this weekend, and the chilling frost

descends again on all the hopeful aspirations of our town.

We've already emptied out the Community Chest; there's been no Bank Error in our Favor, and no one seems to know how to avoid the card that says, 'Pay School Tax of \$150'.

So, we're about to roll the dice again, and take the Chance that Montague voters, already facing hefty increases for sewer repairs and the new police station, will go for the trifecta and plunk down another \$70 dollars a year or so to keep our libraries open, our park programs running, our seniors centered and our recycling hauled away.

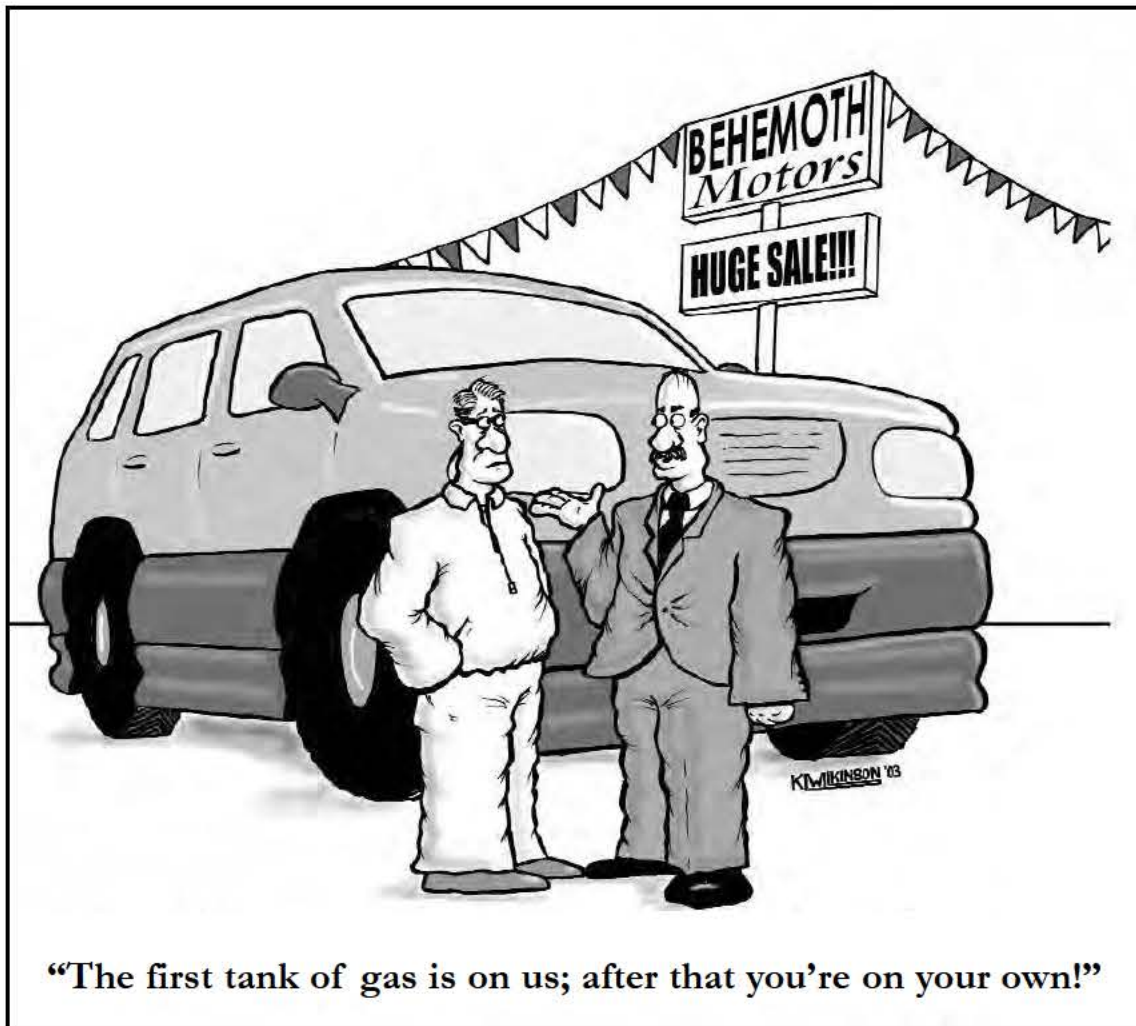
Some town meeting members are sharpening their pencils and eyeing cuts that may still meet with the approval of the town's budget-making body. We wish them well on their efforts Saturday.

We have said it before and we will say it again. The town of Montague needs to tighten its own belt, before it asks the taxpayers to tighten theirs still tighter. Stand next to them in line at the supermarket or at the gas station and see how much room they have left to pull another notch. Not much.

This gamble with our basic town services is not necessary: there are other ways to balance the budget, and however long we stay at town meeting on Saturday, we need to find them.

The sun will shine again tomorrow, crops will grow, and the Farmers Market will open soon. Somehow, we'll figure out how to educate 1100 students without bankrupting the town. And when the snow finally falls again, Tom Bergeron and his crew will plow the streets for us, we trust, and let us make our way to work the next morning.

In the meantime, enjoy the vicissitudes of spring in Montague. And don't forget the May Day celebration on the common in the Center, and the promise of new growth.



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thanks for the Memorial

I would like to jot down a few thoughts as my tenure as chairman of the trustees for the Soldiers Memorial draws to a close. I would like to thank those who provided me with their expertise, when I was elected to the chair during the renovation of the Memorial, most especially those at the town hall who put up with my daily visits for assistance: Wendy, the administrative secretary, Patti and her crew for helping me keep track of the incoming donations, Carolyn for keeping all of the funds in right order for copies of records

for the project, Frank for his professional attitude and generous administrative know-how from start to finish. To all of the people from the highway department who handled my endless calls, for their support during the three years I was called upon to oversee this project and to the selectboard members, all of them, for their support, thank you. Also to Ken Morin who went above and beyond his regular job to do work on the Memorial in his spare time. To Bernie Sadoski for providing all of the electrical work free of charge. To

Veterans Agent Leo Parent for putting up with my almost daily visits for information. Last but not least, to my fellow trustees for their support.

To all of the above, I say, "Thank you." I am sure that every veteran within the town of Montague appreciates your efforts in helping bring this beautiful project to a close.

See you all at the Memorial Day Parade and ceremony on Monday, May 26th, where the old chair will pass the baton on to the new chair.

- Art Gilmore
Miller Falls

Hold the Airport Commission Responsible

BY JOE GRAVELINE

NORTHFIELD - I am writing as a licensed pilot of Native American heritage with an aircraft hangared at Turners Falls Airport for the last fifteen years.

I am going to speak to you on two levels tonight. First as someone of Native American ancestry, and secondly as one of the 160 pilots who signed a petition last year asking for Mr. Sweeney's removal. As this incident happened on Mr. Sweeney's watch, I feel the two levels I am speaking to you on are intimately connected.

After reading David



Joe Graveline reading his letter to the selectboard on Monday, April 28th.

Detmold's April 10th, 2008 article "MAC Director Urges Common Sense Solution to Airport Access Road Impasse" (MR VI #27), I was left with a deep sense of sorrow and a feeling of betrayal, not only by the Airport Commission but also by the State of Massachusetts for not seeking unbiased personnel to oversee this commission and

the airport expansion project.

I see Mr. Welch's comment: "The only thing holding it up is those tree hugging Indians," and Mr. Fairbrother's reply, "They're rock hugging Indians. They already hugged the trees, right onto the lumber trucks," as a chance to look at the racial attitudes of both Mr. Welch and

see AIRPORT pg 6

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 4/30/08

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

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EYE ON TOWN FINANCES

Will You Vote for the Village or the Town?

BY JOHN HANOLD - MONTAGUE is on the brink of the season of meetings and elections: special and annual town meetings, school committee elections, and a municipal election that may include a ballot decision whether to override Proposition 2½. Some years, the season is marked by media articles and forums where residents contend for board seats, but this year the struggle seems to me to bring out a less attractive tone in public discussion. It was something I felt only vaguely until I saw a similarity to a book-on-disc I just finished.

Briefly, the book described a conflict between Saxons and Danes, with the Britons - dislodged from their lands by the Saxons in earlier years - on the edge of the battle. The fact underlying the plot was that there was not yet any sense of a national identity as "England," only affiliation with a neighboring earl, a religion, or (temporarily) with another group unified against someone both disliked. The book was set in the strife-torn year 878, but the conflict suddenly seemed very 2008.

In recent months I have heard, directly or second hand, the following suggestions:

- Montague Center should secede from the town and attach itself to Leverett.

- Precinct 1 voters should use their historically high voter turnout to seize control of a municipal agenda - whatever that may be - and shape it to their interests.

These comments reflect deep and understandable frustration with decisions that trouble the speakers. None of these suggestions were made at the recent gathering of Precinct 1 residents, but the discussion there of "what is happening to us" concentrated on the effects of a Proposition 2½ override, without expanding beyond a local perspective. As such, they revealed a sense of affiliation with only part of the town, not the whole.

Since I haven't attended meetings in other precincts, I don't know if these impressions are widespread, but I hope my worries are unnecessary. I applaud the initiative of Jeff Singleton and John Reynolds to hold the meeting, and the strong attendance, but I left with two chilly impressions of village sentiment.

The first comment concerned an estimated \$17,000 savings that might result if a specific branch library were closed. The speaker's concern was not for the estimated \$35,000 that might need to be cut from the library system as a whole, just for the portion affecting one branch. The second was an extended discussion of how the budget-related articles could be amended to change the content of the override "basket."



Most of the discussion was an educational review of how town meeting members can have an influence on budget priorities - which was very positive - but at the end some attendees seemed pleased that there might be a way to construct a different basket that would fail a resident vote, simply by identifying a different group of jobs to cut.

Montague's seal and self-image emphasize the concept of "five fingers on one hand," but from time to time our identification with the "hand" seems to take second-billing to our allegiance to our particular "finger." I'm not a political scientist, but this sounds like the struggle the formerly-British colonies endured in the 1780s as they progressed from a Confederation to a Union of states. My hope is that town meeting members and voters at large will view town services from a Montague perspective, not as a special-interest or

village-by-village competition, and that the emphasis will be on what to do to preserve and protect services we all value, not on how to eliminate one service in order to increase the chance of saving another.

A speaker at the Precinct 1 meeting observed that everyone in town government has a bias and perhaps an agenda. My finance committee service makes me part of town government, and I had a part in creating the "Frequently Asked Questions" handout about the override, so here is some background to help readers discern my agenda and calibrate my biases. Neither I nor my family members have participated in any Parks & Recreation program; I use the Senior Center only to vote; and Carnegie Library is the only one in town from which I've borrowed books. I don't expect to use the services of a public health nurse directly, and I am a committed supporter of recycling. I also admit to having professional dealings with the police department, town clerk's office, and animal control officer, on my dog's instigation.

With this disclosure in full view, I urge town meeting members to support passage of the proposed override article, whether amended or not, because I think it is needed to continue important town services in Fiscal 2009, and to strengthen our funding base for future years. It is an effort to preserve townwide quality of life with townwide public support.

By the time you read this, the pre-Town Meeting will be past, so I encourage you to come to town meeting on May 3rd to speak for the values of the "hand" without arguing for one "finger" over another.

John Hanold is the chair of the Montague finance committee. The opinions expressed here are his own, and are not necessarily shared by other members of the finance committee, or anyone else in town government.

REMEMBRANCE

Howard F. Feige

April 30, 1920 - March 25, 2008

BY PAM KOSTANSKI

TURNERS FALLS - Howard "Howie" Feige, one of Turners Falls most beloved and visible residents, passed away recently, at age 87. He died, just as he lived, without fanfare, requesting that no services be held in his honor.

I will miss him dearly, as I am sure many others will too. I called Howie the "mayor of Turners Falls" because he was so friendly towards everyone he met. He was a fixture on the Avenue at many places such as the Shady Glen, Subway, Jakes Tavern and the Senior Center.

Howie's kindness will always be remembered. I saw him nearly every day since I opened my store on Avenue A ten years ago. He would come in to buy cigarettes and always greeted me with, "Hello sunshine! Are you doing OK?" He would admire the flowers in my garden and comment on the growth of the northern pine I keep in my store. I even decorated that northern pine on holidays just for Howie, because it gave him so much joy.

Howard, a longtime resident of 4th Street, was raised in Buckland, and attended Arms Academy. He worked at the Eaglebrook School in the kitchen. From our daily conversations, I know he also was a painter and wallpaper hanger, along with his father.



ARIEL JONES PHOTO

We used to talk about the "olden days" he missed so much, with the vaudeville shows, merry-go-rounds, and dancing to swing music. He used to tell me stories about how he snuck cigarettes from his father, thinking he was getting away with it, and was surprised when his dad told him one day he "might as well take the pack." He also told me stories about a peddler that used to walk through Howie's neighborhood selling pot and pans, calling out "A dollar down, a dollar a week!"

Over the last couple of years when I would ask Howie how he was, he would reply, "Oh, I wish the good Lord would just take me." My reply would always be, "Oh no, Howie, everyone would miss you so much, and it's not your time."

Well Howie, the good Lord did take you, and I do miss you.

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Fairbrother Names Caldwell as Originator of Rock Hugging Indians Retort

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS - Turners Falls airport commissioner Mark Fairbrother named Richard Caldwell, 78, of Turners Falls Road in Montague as the man who uttered a racial slur about "rock-hugging Indians" on April 4th, at the airport administration offices. Fairbrother, who has denied a report that he was the one who made the remark in response to Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission executive director Robert Welch's comment that "tree-hugging Indians" were holding up a \$5 million runway extension project at the Turners Falls airport, said others in the room that day had told him it was Caldwell who made the remark. He said Caldwell was standing directly in front of him on April 4th when the comment was made.

at a hearing into the incident before the Montague selectboard on Monday, April 28th.

Last week, Welch issued a letter of denial regarding his quoted remark about "tree-hugging Indians," saying, "I did not make the comment attributed to me."

According to a report in *the Boston Globe*, Welch has only admitted using the phrase "tree-huggers" in his April 4th remarks about the hold-up on the runway project at Turners Falls Municipal Airport.

Caldwell, reached at home on Tuesday, denied he was the one who made the crack about "rock-hugging Indians," which several local airport commissioners and airport manager Michael Sweeney remember being made by someone in the small, open office on April 4th in response to Welch's comment about Indians holding up progress.

"That's ridiculous," said the former Navy pilot and Korean War veteran. "They're trying to pass the buck."

Caldwell is part Native American, on his father's side.

Caldwell said he had been present at the informal meeting between the airport commissioners, Sweeney, and Welch in the administration building on April 4th at the invitation of his friend and neighbor Gary Collins, who is one of the five local commissioners who oversee the municipal airport. Caldwell said he and Collins are both members of the Franklin County Flying Club, which consists of 15 members who share the use of a Piper Warrior. Caldwell flies once a week out of the airport, in good weather.

Caldwell said it was Fairbrother who responded to Welch's remark with the crack

about "rock-huggers."

Another pilot present in the small office that day, Chuck Meyer, has stated unequivocally that it was Fairbrother who made the comment about "rock-hugging Indians" holding up progress, as reported on April 10th in *the Montague Reporter* ("MAC Director Urges Common Sense Solution to Airport Road Impasse," MR VI #27).

On September 10th, 2007, airport manager Sweeney told the Montague selectboard that claims by the Narragansett Indian Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gayhead (Aquinnah), now under investigation by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, that a hilltop stone formation at the airport is a culturally significant ceremonial site, had put the runway project on hold.

Ed Bell, an archaeologist working for the Massachusetts

Historic Commission, said he has examined the site and in his opinion it is simply the abandoned remnants of a modern-era stone boundary wall.

On Monday night, Caldwell was watching the selectboard meeting on cable television, and saw Fairbrother name him as the one who had made the "rock-hugging Indians" remark. He said he called Sweeney at home Monday evening and demanded, "What the hell is going on?"

Caldwell, who is married to Council on Aging director Bunny Caldwell, said he first flight out of Turners Falls airport came in 1938 in a double-winged enclosed Waco, "three in the front, two in the back." He recalled that same plane lost a wing and went down on the Plains, killing two men and two women, a month after he had flown in it.

AIRPORT from pg 4

Mr. Fairbrother. As a pilot, taxpayer, environmentalist, and someone of Native American heritage, I am offended by these two men's cheap shot at getting a laugh at the expense of "those tree hugging Indians," and their spiritual beliefs surrounding the sacred balance stones on the hill.

It takes a lifetime to acquire that level of prejudice, and I judge at this point in their lives it will follow them to their graves.

It is clear to me that this commission has betrayed the trust they were given to be fair and unbiased in the decision making process of the airport expansion project, and that their racial attitudes have soundly been established.

As it appears no one else on the commission stepped in to correct Mr. Welch and Mr. Fairbrother on the inappropriateness of their statements at the time they were made, I feel the whole commission has been compromised, and needs to take accountability for the

controversy. Mr. Golrick's comment that Welch's "tree hugging Indians" statement was "unfortunate" is a disparaging statement meant to diffuse any accountability for someone having made those statements.

It would be appropriate to say to someone, "It is unfortunate that it rained on your family reunion last week." That is something out of our control. It would not be appropriate, however, to say to someone, "It is unfortunate that when Mr. Jones pointed a gun at your dog's head and pulled the trigger, the bullet hit him."

Words are like bullets: when you take aim and pull the trigger you can't take them back, and that is clearly the case here.

I am concerned about the implications of Mr. Sweeney's recent statement addressing the dispute over the ceremonial stone landscape on the hill as being a culturally significant site, when Sweeney said on the record, "Our goal and commitment to our predecessors on the North American continent is to protect [the site] until it is

deemed to be otherwise." My question is, who will deem it to be otherwise? Will it be the Narragansetts or the Wampanoags? Or will it be someone who is not of Native American heritage and not familiar with the sacred practices of the people? Would it even be in question if it were any other cultural sacred site?

I urge you to hold this airport commission accountable for the violation of trust that you have given them, and the fracturing of this commission that has now left them unable to be trusted to carry out the task of doing their work without bias or prejudice.

In my judgment, if the town of Montague ever considered this commission to be an asset, it is now the time to look at it for what it really is, a liability. This whole affair is going to unravel on a number of different levels, and the liability is only going to be magnified if the selectboard doesn't dissolve this commission and rethink the whole process of what it is going to take to make Turners Falls airport a viable self-sufficient aviation enterprise.


HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Loud Noise, Vandalism and Gatherings

Wednesday, 4/23
 8:45 p.m. Report of general disturbance on Federal Street, Millers Falls.
 10:35 p.m. Report of threatening - harassment at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague.
Thursday, 4/24
 12:11 a.m. Report of domestic disturbance at a G Street address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
 12:44 a.m. Report of harassment at a Central Street address, Turners Falls. Advised of options.
 1:27 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at an East Main Street address, Millers Falls. Referred to other agency.
 1:47 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a South Prospect Street address, Millers Falls.
 8:25 a.m. Report of general disturbance at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague.
 10:19 a.m. Report of vandalism at a Main Street address, Montague.
 11:32 a.m. Trespassing at a Randall Road address, Montague. Referred to other agency.
 2:54 p.m. Report of vandalism at a Rod Shop Road address, Turners Falls.
 3:40 p.m. Report of motor vehicle disturbance at a Second Street address, Turners Falls. Advised to contact police if repeated.
 3:51 p.m. Officer wanted at a Carlisle Avenue address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
 4:07 p.m. Report of trespassing behind a Winthrop Street address, Millers Falls.
 8:04 p.m. Officer wanted in parking lot behind Rendezvous, 3rd Street, Turners Falls. Gathering dispersed.
Friday, 4/25
 12:53 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Bridge Street address, Millers Falls. Peace restored.
 1:19 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted] charged with speeding, marked lanes violation and operating motor vehicle under the influence of liquor.
 4:04 p.m. Report of motor vehicle disturbance on Randall Wood Drive, Montague. Gathering dispersed.
 8:10 p.m. Suspicious auto in the area of Turners Falls Road, Montague. Gathering dispersed.
 8:26 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Third Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
 10:06 p.m. Officer wanted at a Church Street address. Arrested [redacted] charged with assault and battery (domestic).
 10:45 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at Second Street Sports Bar, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
Saturday, 4/26
 1:15 a.m. Fight taking place on Eleventh Street, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
 3:06 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance on Chestnut Street, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
 11:57 a.m. Larceny at an East Main Street address, Millers Falls.
 2:59 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance in the area of H Street, Turners Falls. Investigated.
 5:04 p.m. General disturbance taking place on the bike path, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
 5:21 p.m. Burglar alarm sounding at the high school. Investigated.
 7:50 p.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Chestnut Street address, Turners Falls. Investigated.
 8:06 p.m. Fire alarm sounding at a South Lyman Street address, Millers Falls. Investigated.
 9:20 p.m. Loud noise disturbance at a Unity Street address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.
 10:01 p.m. Report of fight in alley behind Fourth Street residences, Turners Falls. Investigated.
 10:02 p.m. Medical emergency in Third Street alleyway, Turners Falls. Report taken.
 11:30 p.m. General disturbance at Exxon/Mobil Gas Station, 3rd Street, Turners Falls. Investigated.
Sunday, 4/27
 8:20 a.m. Report of drug/narcotics violation at an Avenue A address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
 11:12 a.m. Domestic disturbance at a Hillside Road address, Montague. Advised of options.
 3:51 p.m. Report of unwanted person at Farren Emergency Shelter. Peace restored.
 4:01 p.m. Report of vandalism at a Coolidge Avenue address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.
 6:20 p.m. Report of vandalism at a Chester Street address, Turners Falls.
 9:55 p.m. Officer wanted at a Turners Falls Road address. Juvenile arrested. Charged with assault and battery (domestic).
Monday, 4/28
 2:08 a.m. Report of loud noise disturbance at a Second Street address, Turners Falls. Advised of options.
 8:05 a.m. Investigation of possible assault at Great Falls Middle School, Turners Falls.
 8:44 a.m. Report of vandalism at a Fourth Street address.
 11:12 a.m. Report of brush fire behind Montague Center School, Montague. Referred to other agency.
 2:55 p.m. Report of general disturbance at Sheffield Elementary School, Turners Falls.
Tuesday, 4/29
 8:16 a.m. Officer wanted at Sheffield Elementary School, Turners Falls. Investigated.
 1:15 p.m. Report of larceny at a Second Street address, Turners Falls.
 6:30 p.m. Report of trespassing at a Whitney's Way address, Montague. Advised of options.
 6:54 p.m. Report of vandalism at a Morris Avenue address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.



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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Approves Gill Store Liquor License

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK - The Gill selectboard was jammed on Monday afternoon, April 28th, when residents crowded the first floor meeting room of town hall to support Alden Booth and Elisabeth Greenough's plans to reopen the store with a pouring license. While the overwhelming majority of townspeople who turned up spoke in favor of the plan, those who opposed the idea came represented by an attorney.

The Gill zoning board had met around this issue with Booth, Greenough and interested members of the public on February 18th. While several Gill residents had voiced concerns then about having a store that served alcohol in the center of town, no lawyers had been present.

On Monday, representing Jim Tomasi, attorney Kevin Parsons read from a brief in opposition to the plan: "My client has very significant concerns regarding

this. It is a big change for your community to have a drinking establishment. You don't know who could be walking in the door [of the store]. My client reasonably believes it will impact his lifestyle and property values."

Attorney Parsons also stated there had been "conflicting information" between the presentation Booth brought before the zoning board and what he was bringing to the selectboard that night, and that issues with early morning deliveries and lighting had constituted violations of Tomasi's privacy. Parsons referred to Booth's parking plans as "grossly inadequate."

Lynn Tomb, who spoke in favor of Booth and Greenough's plan, was the first of a half dozen residents to respond to Parsons. "It seems to me if you live in the center of town, any town, that it is unrealistic to expect there would be no businesses there.

This is a place of business right here," she said, pointing out the nineteen people who were crowded before the selectboard.

Barbara Watson commented: "We need the store. The people applying for the permit have demonstrated to us that they are people we can trust. Driving by that store with its lights off is depressing. I strongly support it." Several other Gill residents mentioned the fact that there was no local establishment where they could meet with friends and neighbors and buy food.

Besides Tomasi and his wife, also speaking in opposition to the alcohol license was Reverend Gary Bourbeau of the Gill Congregational Church. "I'd love to see the store re-open, but it's the hazards of people consuming alcohol and then driving that worries me. I feel those outweigh the benefits."

Booth spoke up in defense of his proposal. "I'm not interested in opening a bar where you can

buy cheap alcohol and play Kenos. This is about food and community, about getting together with people, a place where you can visit with a friend. Every concern he [Tomasi] had was legitimate, and he and I had discussed them." Booth went on to cite the public houses of European countries that serve as community focal points as his inspiration. Later, he reiterated, "It's not going to be a big, crazy bar." Referring to Bourbeau's concern about drinking and driving, Booth pointed out that as it stands now, many Valley residents consume alcohol in communities four or five miles away from their homes and then drive. The store would provide a local establishment people could walk to.

The mood of the room shifted dramatically when Attorney Parsons mentioned "...concerns my client has related to late night card games. And what is next? It sounds all well and good that this is going to be a neighborly thing now, but what happens next?"

"I think twice friends and I got together and played cards. Is that against the law?" responded Booth, who later mentioned that the store had been closed at these

times and that no alcohol was being sold or consumed during the games, in accordance with licensing procedures.

"People have been playing cards at two in the morning more than once or twice. I heard car doors slamming and thought people were breaking into my car," said Tomasi.

"I don't know who was playing cards at two in the morning, but it wasn't me," responded Booth. At this juncture, an uncomfortable silence descended on the room, until supporters made further comments in favor of the planned re-opening.

After a further twenty minutes of discussion, the selectboard unanimously approved the motion to grant a liquor license, with the provision that all employees of the Gill Store take the TIPS course, and that questions about the hours and services of the store be addressed in concrete terms by Booth and Greenough.

The controversy may not end soon, however. "If you want to argue about hours, you're looking at an appeal," stated attorney Parsons near the close of the meeting.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

Vandalism on West Gill Road

Wednesday, 4-23

6:34 p.m. Report of a disturbance at Center Road residence.

7:03 p.m. Arrested

Charged with domestic assault and battery, destruction of property, and assault with a dangerous weapon

Thursday, 4-24

7:03 a.m. Report of a larceny on Main Road.

8:01 a.m. Two reports of vandalism at a West Gill Road address.

5:05 p.m. Report of a property dispute on Main Road.

8:59 p.m. Assisted Erving police with fight in progress.

Friday, 4-25

11:30 a.m. Animal complaint on Grove Street: report of two dogs fighting in street.

3:32 p.m. Report of larceny from French King Highway business.

9:20 p.m. Well-being check requested for resident on Main Road.

Saturday, 4-26

1:10 a.m. Assisted Montague police with fight.

8:35 a.m. Assisted Erving police with disturbance and arrest.

1:31 p.m. Report of larceny from French King Highway business.

2 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency on Mount Hermon Campus.

3:50 p.m. Report of a disturbance on Walnut Street.

7:08 p.m. Criminal complaint application sought against

Charged with operating after suspension of license.

10:55 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with disturbance.

Sunday, 4-27

12:01a.m. Recovered stolen

vehicle with Erving police on French King Highway

4:31 a.m. Report of suspicious activity at Myrtle Street residence.

9:10 a.m. Report of vandalism on West Gill Road.

10:33 a.m. Report of suspicious subjects at Boyle Road residence.

10:45 a.m. Report of mail being tampered with on West Gill Road.

11:03 a.m. Report of a possible breaking and entering in progress at Myrtle Street residence.

10:35 p.m. Loud noise complaint at state boat ramp on French King Highway.

Monday, 4-28

11:25 a.m. Report of vandalism on West Gill Road.

11:45 a.m. Report of suspicious subjects at Main Road residence.

Tuesday, 4-29

11:20 a.m. Report of larceny from Main Road residence.

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Montague Center Holds Budget Caucus

BY DAVID DETMOLD - More than forty people turned out for a Precinct 1 meeting at the Grange in Montague Center on Sunday evening, April 27th, for an informational discussion in advance of Saturday's town meeting. The proposed \$250,000 Proposition 2½ override to keep a number of town services running next year - including the Montague Center and Millers Falls branches of the public libraries - was much on the minds of those in attendance. A majority of Precinct 1 town meeting members were present.

Montague registrar Kathy Peura reminded the audience that Precinct 1 historically has the highest voter turnout of any part of town, and the most registered voters, and could therefore play a major role in determining the outcome of the town's present fiscal crisis. The town is seeking to raise a quarter million dollars in property tax revenues above the levy limit this month to keep the doors open at the senior center, pay the dog catcher, the town nurse, keep the curbside recycling program running, and provide low cost parks and recreation programs for town residents. And that does nothing to deal with Montague's \$650,000 shortfall with the Gill-Montague schools for the coming budget year.

"Town elections are usually very poorly attended," said Peura. "There's registered voters, and then there are the registered voters who come and vote."

Peura suggested developing a phone bank and contacting registered voters and "telling them what we want to do."

But that led to the obvious question: What exactly do the voters in Precinct 1 - or in Montague for that matter - want to do with the approximately \$900,000 town and school shortfall for the budget year that begins on July 1st?

Dropping in from Precinct 5, finance committee chair John Hanold, who said he felt like a finance "piñata", commented, "The town has not had a successful override in 26 years," since Proposition 2½ became law in Massachusetts in 1981.

"Anyone who suggests one is looking down the barrel of a cannon. But it seems to be the best solution for this year and for next year as well."

Selectboard member, and Precinct 1 town meeting member Allen Ross backed him up. "I'm a liberal Democrat," said Ross. "I think property taxes should not fund town government" so heavily, "but they do." Ross said passage of the override would add approximately \$100 to the average property tax bill per year. He said, on average, Montague citizens spend approximately \$700 a year on lottery tickets, an indication that there is still a bit of discretion in average household income. "The override is very necessary at this time," he added. "It distributes some of the pain of this budget quite broadly."

Precinct 1 town meeting member and capital improvements committee chair Les Cromack said he was neither advocating for or against the override, but noted, "The police station and sewer projects are going to create a significant jump in your taxes. That needs to be made plain before we vote on this override. There are a lot of people who cannot afford it."

Stacey Langknecht asked what the affect of the override would be on commercial and industrial owners in Montague. In response, Mark Beaubien, owner of Yankee Environmental Systems, an industrial park business with 24 employees, said with Montague's split tax rate already weighted against industry, a further hike in property taxes coupled with a loss of local services - like the village school in Montague Center - would make it more difficult to persuade prospective businesses to locate in town.

On Monday, Montague's director of assessing Joanne Greenleaf said the \$250,000 override would add approximately 32.5 cents per \$1000 of assessed value for residential property owners, and 47.5 cents per \$1000 of assessed value for industrial and commercial property owners. Town accountant Carolyn Olsen estimated the impact of the override on the average residential tax bill at \$70 a year.

"The override is very necessary at this time. It distributes some of the pain of this budget quite broadly."

- Allen Ross, Selectboard member, and town meeting member from Precinct 1

The estimated impact of the debt exclusion override for the police station, passed in November of last year and yet to appear on residents' tax bills, (ground has not been broken on that project yet) was estimated at \$115 a year. According to Hanold, if the expected savings from grants materialize, taxpayers may see no more than a \$92 a year increase on the average tax bill for the new station.

In August of 2005, when voters approved an \$2.2 million debt exclusion for upgrades to the sewer system and water treatment plant, the estimated impact to the average property tax bill from that project was estimated at \$76. That impact, which is only beginning to show up on taxpayers' bills this year, is not likely to change much as the

second phase of that project draws to a close, and sewer rates will also rise approximately 40%.

Precinct 1 town meeting member Deb Radway suggested amendments could be offered from town meeting floor to reduce the hours of various clerical or departmental assistant positions at town hall, and add back "essential services that we cherish" to the regular budget. She said support staff salaries could be attached to the override article, instead of the senior center, parks and recreation, and other departmental services, a proposal that met with loud acclaim.

Mary Melonis said she was no fan of overrides, but, "If we want to keep our town viable, we have to keep a small town atmosphere, which includes a library. The value of our homes has a lot to do with what a town has to offer."

Precinct 1 town meeting member and Montague library trustee Veronica Phaneuf said the \$35,000 cut proposed for the library department would result in more than just the likely closure of the branch libraries. It would also disqualify Montague from being part of the regional inter-library loan system (CWMARS) and from receiving state funds for new library materials.

For the record, a search of recent town election results by town clerk Deb Bourbeau on Monday revealed the following statistics: Montague Center (Precinct 1) outpolled all other precincts in town at the annual town election of May 7th, 2007, with 43.5% of 1075 registered voters turning out to vote. The nearest runner up was Precinct 3 (east side of the Hill), with 38.1% of 908 registered voters going to

the polls. At the February 3rd presidential primary this year, Montague Center again topped voter turnout in town with 56.4% of 1102 registered voters casting ballots, with the nearest runner up again Precinct 3, with 44.3 percent of 941 registered voters showing up. However, for the November 6th, 2007 debt exclusion vote on the new police station, Montague Center trailed Precincts 3 and 4 (west side of the Hill) in voter turnout, with 31% of registered voters going to the polls in Montague Center as compared to 43.7% in Precinct 3 and 38.6% in Precinct 4.

Although all six precincts in town are roughly equal in population, Montague Center maintains a roll of registered voters that exceeds its nearest rival in this category, Precinct 2 (Millers Falls and Lake Pleasant) by almost exactly 150 voters. The precinct with the lowest number of registered voters, perennially, is tenant-heavy downtown Turners Falls, where only 718 people were registered to vote in the presidential primary in February, compared to 1124 in Montague Center.

Each precinct maintains an equal number of elected representatives on town meeting, 21 per precinct.

Annual town meeting takes place this Saturday, starting at 8:30 a.m., in the high school auditorium in Turners Falls. Residents of town are entitled to speak at least once on any item on the agenda, but only elected precinct representatives may vote.

For a full list of precinct representatives, with contact information, go to: www.montaguema.net and click on the link to town meeting members.



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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Bridge Work, Dog Bites and Denials

BY DAVID DETMOLD & ALEX GOTTSCHALK - At the meeting of Monday, April 28th, the Montague selectboard heard some possible good news about the pace of reconstruction of the Gill-Montague Bridge (construction is possible by next spring), brought a dog hearing to an amicable conclusion (the owner was bitten by her own dog, after trying to restrain him from behind, and has since installed a chain link fence in her back yard to further secure the animal) and heard diametrically opposed versions of events at an informal meeting of the airport commissioners on April 4th at the Turners Falls Airport where racial slurs were uttered against Native Americans. Local Native Americans were present in the meeting room on Monday, and two spoke to the board about the seriousness with which they view the comments made.

As the meeting began, three representatives of Mass Highway stood before the board with design plans for the long-awaited reconstruction of the Gill-Montague Bridge. The most recent estimate for the cost of reconstructing the 1,733-foot bridge is \$34.5 million.

"It's a very long bridge," said one of the Mass Highway spokespeople, apologetically.

The selectboard signed a land damage agreement for a 20-square-foot parcel of land on the Montague side of the bridge, on which Mass Highway needs an easement for the upcoming bridge repairs. The Mass Highway representatives said one lane of the bridge would remain open for traffic coming into town throughout the course of construction, and traffic leaving town will be detoured up Canada Hill towards the French King Highway. The bridge may be put out to bid this fall.

The board approved a warrant for \$10,500 for Tighe and Bond to continue their 30-year

monitoring of ground and surface water down gradient of the unlined former municipal solid waste landfill off Turnpike Road. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said Randall Brook showed very little impact on water quality, while ground water tests revealed "a little iron and manganese" with smaller amounts of arsenic, cadmium, copper, zinc and other elements.

Abbondanzio emphasized that modern landfill regulations require impermeable double liners and leachate controls, unlike the regulations that governed when Montague's former landfill was constructed.

The board approved use of the sidewalk area for an outdoor café in front of the 2nd Street Sports Bar, on several weekends dates. The bar will soon change its name to "Between the Uprights at 2nd Street," as Lew Collins assumes the role of owner and operator of the establishment. Collins received permission for use of the sidewalk for charitable fundraising events on May 25th, July 5th, July 20th, August 9th (in conjunction with the Downtown Block Party) and on August 23rd. A wheelchair access route will be kept open at all times, and no outdoor alcohol sales will be permitted, Collins said.

Katie Rosewarne came before the selectboard to deal with a complaint of a dangerous dog at 22 Chestnut Street, following an incident which took place on April 8th. Her bull mastiff, 'Notorious,' bit her on the right arm, and grazed her left hand, sending her to the hospital, after Rosewarne came from behind to restrain him, after seeing a neighbor's dog loose nearby. Rosewarne said she was to blame for her dog's sudden response, and had since erected a 10' tall chain link fence in the back yard to make sure Notorious and any loose dogs in the neighborhood would be kept separated in the

future. The board closed the hearing with no further recommendation for action.

Reported by Alex Gottschalk:

Two men of Native American ancestry told the selectboard of the seriousness with which they viewed the statements made at a meeting on April 4th at the airport administration office, where members of the local airport commission, the airport manager, pilots, and Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission director Robert Welch were present. All present agree comments derogatory to Native Americans were made that day and left unchallenged.

Montague Reporter editor David Detmold, who initially reported the racial slurs in an April 10th article, and attributed them to Welch and Turners Falls airport commissioner Mark Fairbrother, stuck to his original account of the meeting, saying, "I take very careful notes. Our newspaper's reputation depends on accuracy." He gave his original notes from the April 4th airport meeting to the selectboard, and called on them to dismiss Fairbrother from the airport commission.

Fairbrother read a statement in which he again denied making a comment about "rock-hugging Indians," which he said had been attributed by others in the room that day to a pilot named Richard Caldwell. Caldwell, reached at home, denied that he had made any derogatory remark about Native Americans at the April 4th meeting, and blamed Fairbrother for the remark.

Selectboard member Patricia Pruitt, after hearing out the various speakers, said, "We count on the veracity, the credibility, and the good will of the people who come before us to tell the truth. That's the only fabric that holds a community together in a situation like this."

The board agreed to take the issue up again in executive session.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Fire Chief Seeks Added Funds

BY NICHOLE CLAYTON - The Erving fire department is looking to pull money from other expense accounts to cover payroll for April, May and June, when the current fiscal year comes to an end. Chief Mick LaClaire said 41% of his department's payroll budget was used on the Usher Plant fire. LaClaire came to the selectboard prepared with suggestions of how to cover the shortage, which the board took under advisement, as they are not able to authorize line item transfers until the last two months of the fiscal year. LaClaire said he needs an additional \$4500 to cover personnel expenses till the end of June. If the board takes his suggestions for line items transfers, LaClaire will be able to find \$2500 from other areas of his own budget, and is seeking approval for an additional \$2000 transfer from to the fire department budget from reserves.

Erving spent \$8000 on hiring Clayton Davenport to handle excavating at the Usher Mill following the July, 2007 arson fire, in addition to the direct cost of fighting the fire.

Two new up-and-coming ventures are being launched in Erving. Sharon Porlier is opening a diner type of restaurant in the location of the old Box Car Restaurant on Route 2 in Erving Center, and

Angela Lake is opening the Olde Time Market at 7 Lester Street in Erving. Lake will offer candles, soaps, and home decor.

Town elections are coming up on Monday, May 5th, from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Selectboard member Jeffery Dubay, of Mountain Road is running for re-election, in a race for the three-year selectboard seat with Andrew Goodwin, of Swamp Road. Two members of the recreation commission are running for re-election to three year seats, Bill Bembury, of Church Street, and Jacquie Boyden, of Northfield Road. Marty Garcia of North Street is hoping to unseat one of them.

Highland Avenue resident Debra Reynolds came before the selectboard for a second time to plead for some action on nuisance cats that are coming onto her property and disturbing her peace in her own home. The cats spray and cause damage to her property and also disturb the peace of her own cat, which she keeps indoors.

The board said it would look into the possibility of amending the new dog bylaw at a future town meeting to include a section about "nuisance animals," including fines for owners who allow nuisance animals to stray onto and cause damage to private property.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Illegal Dumping and Disorderly Conduct

Tuesday, 4/22

6:45 a.m. While on patrol, observed illegal dumping on Northfield Road at high tension wires. Large pile of debris.

10:15 a.m. Complaint of sidewalk blocked by brush on River Road. Spoke to resident.

11:50 a.m. Medical emergency at French King Entertainment Center. Woman fell from ladder. Assisted at scene until ambulance arrived.

Wednesday, 4/23

10:55 a.m. Report of past breaking and entering into wastewater treatment plant.

Thursday, 4/24

4:00 p.m. Assisted Montague police on Winthrop Street, Millers Falls; four male subjects in the woods.

10:45 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police at park in center of town; subject with possible bat or pipe.

Friday, 4/25

2:30 p.m. Two-car accident with no personal injuries on Route 2 at Bridge Street.

8:50 p.m. Noise complaint on Mountain Road. Spoke to resident, one intoxicated male verbally loud. Parties advised to keep it down.

Saturday, 4/26

7:47 a.m. 911 call to French King Motel for out of control male. Arrested.

[REDACTED] for disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace and resisting arrest.

3:55 p.m. Assisted Gill police at Walnut Street for disturbance in progress.

11:42 p.m. Criminal application issued to

[REDACTED] for failure to return motor vehicle and receiving stolen property.


Monday, 4/28

3:05 p.m. Report of subject going through "Everything Goes" piles on Forest Street leaving debris all over. Subject agreed to clean up mess.

3:30 p.m. Report of illegal dumping on Northfield Road.

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LEE from pg 1

ously bankrupt owner of several charcoal kilns. Walter was in the habit of buying any distressed property in those days, "buying low and selling high," said Lee, and in fact he wound up buying the sawmill from Lee's dad, Perry, in 1965, although he never operated it, and sold it again soon after.

One of the brickwork kilns on Hemenway Road had been poorly constructed, and when the person tending it lit the 75 cords of wood on fire, things got out of control and the fire department had to be called in.

"We got down there," said Lee. "The fire was going pretty good. It blew the door right over our heads."

Gordon King used to be the fire chief in Leverett in those days. Lee said the volunteer firefighters showed up and formed a bucket brigade, and set up a portable pump to establish a water supply to fight the blaze. But a fire with that much fuel can burn for a while, and along about 7:10 in the morning, people starting saying, "I've got to get to work."

"Leave 75 cord of wood for me to put out. That's our volunteer fire department," said Lee. "Don't ask me. Volunteer to go home, I guess."

Lee said he adjusted the nozzle on the hose to a fine spray and tended the hot spots of the fire that way, all by himself. "I had it under control pretty good."

A few hours later, Walter Jones himself shows up. "Where's the rest of the fire department?" he asked. Then he told Lee he'd go and get him some coffee and doughnuts. "I'll be right back," Jones told him.

"I'm still waiting," Lee said. David Field broke in at this point in the talk to remind him, "We flooded that thing with about three feet of water before we left."

That's the way storytelling goes in Leverett. But as Lee would say, and did, at every opportunity, "That's all right."

With place names like Coke Kiln Road, it's plain North Leverett used to be a center of charcoal production, but Lee recalled someone along the Sawmill River complained to the Environmental Protection Agency about the smoke and the runoff from the kilns in the 70s. A bureaucrat came by to investigate, took one look, and told whoever was operating the kiln, "Shut that thing off!"

"Seventy-five cord of wood," said Lee. "How do you shut that thing off?"

Told they would need to install million dollar air filters to continue operating the kilns, the owners said they weren't interested, and charcoal production passed into local legend. They still produce charcoal in Union, CT.

Marjorie, Lee's wife, recalled her grandfather telling her that during World War II most of the charcoal produced in North Leverett was sold to the army for use in gas mask filters, ironically. "We had three kilns going all the time," she said.

Lee remembered they used to make charcoal over in North Dana, too, before that town was flooded to make way for Boston's water supply. "I go back a ways."

Lee is 80, and still cuts a prodigious amount of cordwood, even if there's no kilns left in Leverett to supply. Like Lee himself, the Glazier family goes back a ways in Leverett.

"Glaziers were one of the

first settlers on Brushy Mountain, over here," said Lee. "Jonathan Glazier, who came from Oakham, down by Worcester, built the house in 1790. Jonathan had ten children, and one of his children, Ebenezer, had eight, all on that Brushy Mountain.

"I went to a one-room schoolhouse, down by the coke kilns on Hemenway Road." It was later pulled a half mile up the hill by 16 team of oxen, and Lee lives in it now, with his wife Marjorie.

His father, Perry, had a portable sawmill up on Brushy Mountain, and used to truck the lumber down to the Box Shop on North Leverett Road, near the railroad trestle. According to Dan Bennett, who styles himself the Leverett Historical Society's 'Official Roustabout,' the Box Shop is located at the site of the oldest of the many sawmills that one time lined the river from Lake Wyola down to the Connecticut.

That sawmill was established in 1716, "before Swampfield was divided, first into Sunderland, 1718, then Montague, 1754, Leverett, 1774, and, finally, Wendell." The privilege of using the water power at that site was granted to Daniel Beeman, Edward Alling, Benjamin Munn, and Nathaniel Frary, but the sawmill apparently pre-existed the deeding of that privilege in 1716.

After a lengthy digression on the topic of power lines along the M&M Trail, and how the power company managed (by helicopter) to put up the huge poles that carry the lines, Lee finally brought his talk around to the North Leverett Sawmill, as the clock advanced toward 8:30 p.m. The number of the crowd had swelled; no one had gone for a walk.

"I probably worked there longer than anybody else," said Lee. "I started there in '42 or '43. If I was old enough to drag a slab of wood, I was old enough to work there."

Lee recalled in '43 how the mill took on an order for the Boston shipyard, where mine

sweepers were under construction for the war effort. The keels were constructed from 45-foot-long lengths of oak, milled from huge oak logs trucked down from Shelburne Falls.

"There'd be three logs on a truck. I remember they had big, husky boys offloading them."

Trouble was, the sawmill's carriage was only 40 feet long, so the mill workers had to execute a complicated pirouette to get the huge logs seated properly and squared off. "There was no high tech loaders in those days."

Lee used to get off the bus from high school and walk down and help his father at the mill until late at night. With all the men off to war, "He didn't have no help, and there was no getting help."

Marjorie recalled the kids in North Leverett did a lot of walking in those days. On winter afternoons, they would walk all the way past Moore's Corner to Lake Wyola to go skating in the afternoon, and walk back home by moonlight.

Winters at the mill were warmed by a round three quarter inch thick top-loading stove, fueled by half bushel baskets of wet shavings. That produced clouds of smoke enough to fill the whole valley.

One time, a bureaucrat dropped by to tell his father he could no longer dump sawdust into the river.

"That's all right."

Perry would pile the sawdust up until dusk settled at 5 o'clock, and then open the trap door and shovel it into the river, with no one the wiser. "Same with the shavings. Remember that, Arnold?" he asked his brother.

Arnold said, "No."

The mill was equipped to make clapboard siding, and had a planer and edger to produce tongue and groove pine boards. But Lee mostly remembers turning out tobacco lathes for drying tobacco in the farms along the Connecticut, and similar useful stock. One time his

see **MILL** pg 13

MCTV Schedule: May 2nd - May 8th

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Friday, May 2

8:00 am Pre Town Meeting (4/30/08)
10:00 am Carlos Anderson: Right Here All Along
11:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Mass for Robert M. DeVito
12:00 pm Coffee House Series: Joe Graveline
6:00 pm Common Man: Eric Goodchild
7:00 pm GMRSD (4/22/08)
9:00 pm Pre Town Meeting (4/30/08)
11:00 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Thomas Merrigan

Saturday, May 3

8:00 am All Day Town Meeting (Live)
6:00 pm Coffee House Series: Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen, Bruce Kahn Trio
7:00 pm Community Land Trust Meeting
8:30 pm Encore Body Art #5
9:30 pm Emu's
10:30 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Mass for Robert M. DeVito

Sunday, May 4

8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Mass for Robert M. DeVito
9:00 am Cities and Towns Build our Economic Future
9:30 am Coffee House Series: Fabulous Maurice
10:30 am Open Mic Night
12:00 pm Eaton Sue Mono Giri
6:00 pm Tiny Tim
7:00 pm Senses of Place
8:30 pm Tapping Maple Ridge
9:30 pm TF Block Party

Monday, May 5

8:00 am TFHS National Honor Society
9:00 am Sustainable Energy
10:00 am Songs for Wee People
11:00 am Silly Wizard Sharpy Show
6:00 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Thomas Merrigan
6:30 pm Women Girls & HIV
7:00 pm Select Board (Live)
9:00 pm Medication Assisted Therapies
10:00 pm On The Ridge: Fins, Feathers and Furs
11:00 pm Amanda

Tuesday, May 6

8:00 am All Day Town Meeting (5/3/08)
6:00 pm Dancing Princess
7:00 pm GMRSD (Live)
9:00 pm Montague Update: Susan Shilliday
9:30 pm Ovarian Cancer
10:00 pm People's Harvest

Wednesday, May 7

8:00 am Over the Falls: Kris Holloway
9:00 am Naturalist Laurie Sanders
9:30 am Montague Update: Russ Brown
10:30 am Tiny Tim
11:30 am Underground Railway Concert
6:00 pm All Day Town Meeting

Thursday, May 8

8:00 am UN Panel
10:00 am Veteran's Day
11:00 am Wisdom Way Solar Village
12:00 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks
6:00 pm Over the Falls: Kris Holloway
6:30 pm Montague Update: Lisa Enzer
7:00 pm Select Board (5/5/08)
9:00 pm Preachin the Blues
10:00 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Thomas Merrigan
11:00 pm This is Montague

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Warm the Veterans: the Blanket Project

BY SHAWN WOOLSEY

MONTAGUE CITY - Donna Bezio (left) and Leo Parent (right) from the Central Franklin District Veterans Services office in Turners Falls presented warm fleece blankets to army veterans Thomas George, Donald Derosiers and Wallace Bradley at the Farren Care Center on Wednesday, April 23rd. Bezio has made 30 blankets so far, with the help of money for materials donated by members of the Mohawk Ramblers motorcycle

club, including (l - r) Hank Fisk, John Dobias and David Dobias.

Bezio, the assistant administrator at the Veterans Services office, said blankets have been donated to veterans in care of nursing homes in Athol, Shelburne, and Sunderland. More blankets for veterans will be donated, with the help of concerned citizens, who may contact Bezio at 413-863-3205 to donate money to defray the cost of materials. "When you see how happy the veterans are, we really enjoy doing it," she said.



SHAWN M. WOOLSEY PHOTO

SEVERAL, SPARKLING, SIXTH-GRADE SCHOOL CHOICE OPENINGS IN GILL!

Gill Elementary School is pleased to announce the creation of a unique opportunity for parents of current fifth graders in the Gill-Montague Regional School District to consider an intra-district choice placement for their child next year in 6th grade at the Gill Elementary School prior to their transition to the fine middle school program at Great Falls Middle School. This opportunity is available due to a small combined 5-6 combination class currently in Gill this year, resulting in a large number of openings in next year's sixth grade class. This program is also secondarily available to the general public for INTER-DISTRICT CHOICE and the general public will be cordially invited to the Open House on May 7th listed below.

The Gill Sixth Grade Program provides standards-based learning grounded in the culturally and scientifically rich Connecticut River Watershed. As our class community is thoughtfully developed to foster cooperation, communication, and caring, students begin to learn through projects based on our real-world environment. Through authentic studies of our vernal pool, studying the land and imagining how the river valley came to be, we can actually follow Ashuela Brook a short distance to the Connecticut River. As our students study the health of our ecological niches, the Mass.frameworks are brought to life. We move between the indoor class room and the outdoor class rooms of Gill to keep learning real and rigorous. Connecting with the Sargent Center for Outdoor Education (affiliated with Boston University) provides a series of academic events both at their Hancock, NH, home and at Gill School. This includes a weeklong, traditional stay for sixth graders in New Hampshire. Local experts bring richness to the curriculum as they share their knowledge and passion from around the county. Novel studies and local author studies provide the basis for meeting educational goals in language arts while tying into the world geography and science curriculums. Purposeful writing opportunities such as developing a newspaper and memoir writing provide authentic opportunities for language learning. Math concepts are learned and practiced throughout the science work in conjunction with the district curriculum. Sixth graders at Gill also have the opportunity to serve as student leaders at School Sings, plays, field days, and other traditional school events and service learning opportunities.


An Open House is being held Wednesday, May 7th from 5:30 - 7 p.m. at the Elementary School on Boyle Road. Come meet parents, teachers and administrators to learn more. For more information call: 413-863-3255.



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MILL from pg 1

the Strathmore Mill from Fabulous Investment Properties, LLC for \$50,000.

Fabulous Investments was the holding corporation set up by James Bent, of New York, who acquired the mill from Jerry Jones for \$1 on March 29th of this year. Bent had threatened to knock down the Strathmore and sell its bricks for salvage.

At a land court hearing in Boston Tuesday before Judge Charles W. Trombley, Jr., Anctil, through his lawyer, attorney David Singer of Greenfield, agreed not to contest payment of \$469,900.33 in back taxes, penalties, and costs associated with securing the building this winter to the town of Montague, plus legal fees and court costs, in return for a pledge by the town's lawyer, Kathleen O'Donnell of Koppelman and Paige, that the town of Montague would "work with him" on a payment plan, rather than press for foreclosure of the property.

When Trombley asked Singer, by speaker phone, if his client had the money to make good on the back taxes, Singer said, "I want to be honest with you. I do not know."

Last week, Anctil also purchased Ste. Anne's church and rectory on Sixth Street, for \$325,000, with the intent of opening a music hall there.

But first, as Anctil admits, he needs to get his financing in place. Now he is the owner of the 1871-vintage 244,482-square-foot Strathmore Mill, he believes he has a fundraising advantage he did not previously enjoy.

Anctil's plan is to use a combination of public and private funding, and make liberal use of tax credits to undertake the extensive redevelopment necessary to realize his dream of establishing a major film and video production center and school for cinematic arts in Turners Falls.

"We're planning to apply immediately for federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits," said

Anctil. "This will enable us to move forward on preliminary site development."

Anctil's also hoping to obtain New Market Tax Credits from the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation. He also named off a number of other possible sources for funding, including the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (the Strathmore Mill was placed on Preservation Massachusetts' list of Ten Most Endangered places last year) and the Massachusetts Motion Picture Infrastructure Tax Incentive that provides an income tax credit of up to 20 percent for the construction, conversion, or equipping of a film facility. He is also looking to attract private investors, and has prepared a detailed business plan.

Anctil is going to need all the financial assistance he can get. By his own estimate it will take upwards of \$5 million to renovate the complex, and that doesn't include the approximately \$486,000 in back taxes and construction costs owed to the town. According to Montague treasurer and collector Patti Dion, Anctil has 60 days to come up with a payment plan with Montague.

Dion says at this point the town intends to follow the letter of the law in arranging a payment plan, which demands that the entire amount owed the town

be paid within one year. What this means is that Anctil will have to pay one-fourth of the amount owed up front (between \$125,000 and 130,000), and the rest in quarterly installments over the one-year period. The last payment, according to Dion, will be higher, as it will also include all attorneys' fees (now running at \$20,000). Interest on the back taxes owed is also accruing at a rate of 16% per annum, which means the amount owed today is less than what will be owed tomorrow.

Dion also noted that the Montague Energy Group property, while now owned by Anctil, is a separate parcel, and is up to date with its taxes.

Anctil, for his part, said he feels confident his attorney can negotiate a plan with the town. He's working to have liens on the Strathmore Mill removed.

The Strathmore property, while not quite derelict, is hardly in the shape it was just a few years ago. Former owner Jerry Jones (Western Properties, LLC) stripped most of the copper plumbing and wiring out of the building to sell for scrap. And then, of course, there was the devastating fire of May 26th, 2007, which consumed one 19,000-square-foot building and damaged others in the complex.

Even with these setbacks, Anctil has held fast to his vision for the property, going so far as to pay the last owner, James Bent, to remove the remaining paper from the plant. Anctil also said he has contracted with Bent to dismantle the power tower at the MEG property, as well as clean up the fire rubble from the Strathmore site.

While Anctil is at the moment quite preoccupied with raising the necessary cash to begin renovations, he said he continues to keep his ambitious vision for the complex front and center. His ultimate objective is to create a multi-level media complex that will include a teaching institute for film and television production, a state-of-the art film and digital media production facility, as well as his own film production company.


Anctil wants to launch the Swift River Institute in the fall of 2009, or perhaps in early 2010.

He hopes to attract students who want to pursue a career in the development, production, and distribution of media content (including film, video, gaming, and online digital media content). He also intends to offer continuing education workshops for professionals who want to enhance their skills. Anctil sees the institute not as series of lectures and film study but as a hands-on learning experience with students immersed in all phases of media production.

As a complement to the institute, Anctil plans to create Swift River Studios, including two sound stages, two multi-camera broadcast stages, a recording studio, multiple insert stages, and post production suites. The facility will be the central hub of equipment and resource management catering to the Swift River Institute faculty, staff, and students. Anctil believes the success of the studios will enable the Swift River Group to attract the high profile talent needed to develop the film school.

As for the production company, Anctil sees Swift River Entertainment as focused on producing film and media that creates a positive social impact. Typical projects might include music videos, infomercials, and commercials.

Anctil also dreams of eventually bringing to town the Swift River Film Festival, an annual event designed to foster a sense of community amongst Swift River alumni, affiliate organizations, civic leaders, and partner organizations. This festival will include fiction film and documentary programming from around the globe, with a commitment to screening films related to social issues and environmental activism.

Anctil admits he is dreaming large. His dream has so far carried him for almost two years, with little progress until now. He said he's now reinvigorated, and is prepared to convert his dreams into reality: "Even if only one-tenth of what I hope to do can be achieved in the next couple of years, I still feel it will be very positive for Turners and the larger community. I see a new era emerging for this town." 

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. I was told that a copper bracelet can help relieve arthritis pain? True?

I've also heard that you can get relief by rubbing WD-40 on painful joints. I'm not being facetious; there are people who believe this multi-purpose liquid is an arthritis fixer.

There is no scientific evidence that copper bracelets do anything more than make a fashion statement. However, there is no proof that the bracelets don't provide relief to arthritis sufferers.

Copper bracelets for arthritis have been around for a century or

more. Many people swear that they work. Some doctors suspect the positive reports are based upon symptoms going away by themselves.

For the record, there's no proof that WD-40 helps either, but it will make you smell like lubricated door hinge.

Folk remedies like copper bracelets seem to be harmless. However, they often delay effective medical treatment, so these so-called "cures" are not completely benign.

This brings us to today's topic — health frauds, which are malignant.

Con artists tend to target people who suffer from serious diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's, AIDS, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and arthritis. They also tend to go after the overweight with quick-loss schemes, and seniors looking to battle the effects of aging. A government study found that most victims of health frauds are over age 65.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Health Frauds

The products these thieves are selling can be very harmful to your body. They are rarely covered by insurance, so many of them hurt your wallet, too.

Because there are so many weight-loss schemes out there, let's address that subject first: To lose weight, you must burn more calories than you take in. Any shortcut is baloney. Period.

And now here are some tips for avoiding scams.

Beware of claims of:

- Quick results
- Cures for multiple conditions
- Scientific breakthroughs
- Secret ingredients
- Miraculous anything
- Ancient remedies
- Revolutionary innovations
- Painless treatments
- No dieting

And here are some expressions that should sound alarm bells in your brain:

- Limited availability
- Advance payment required
- Exclusive product

- Send a check now
- Money-back guarantee
- No questions asked
- Only available by mail
- Not yet understood by medical science
- Natural
- Simple
- Free gift
- Like magic
- Fountain of youth
- Folklore

If you are confronted with a pitch for a remedy that seems too good to be true, it probably is. Your first step is to contact your personal physician for advice. Treating yourself with an unknown product without consulting a doctor is simply nuts. And *never* give your Medicare, Medicaid or Social Security number to anyone you don't know.

In addition, if you want to be a good citizen, there are ways you can help prevent frauds from succeeding.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) shares

federal oversight of health fraud products with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The FDA regulates safety, manufacturing and product labeling, including claims in labeling, such as package inserts and accompanying literature. FTC regulates advertising of these products.

You can report suspected frauds to both agencies.

To report a product that you believe is fraudulently labeled, call your local FDA office. The number is listed in the blue pages of your telephone book. For more information, call toll-free, 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332), or visit the FDA website, www.fda.gov.

Contact the FTC by phone, toll-free, at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail to Consumer Response Center, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580; or online at www.ftc.gov.

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

MUSIC from PG 1

to their new homeland while holding to the cultural roots that strengthen them in their solitude, Ivan and Irena agree to tutor the children of Mrs. Johnson (Jean Koester) after a chance encounter at the Giant Eagle supermarket. Ivan, a benevolent father figure eager for new wards, is happy to take the young violin prodigy, Eddie (Alex Koester) under his wing. Popowich imbues the tutor with his generous, engaging energy, providing a rock of urbane sanity for a shoal of troubled souls.

But Irena is less willing to work with Kat (Lauren Wilfong), a pouty teenager who takes her frustration out on the keyboard. Bereft of children of her own, Irena has a full nest of ghosts of past music students from her life in Sarajevo, particularly the vivid Maja, (Maddy Stern) who makes a preternatural appearance in eerie counterpoint to each lesson Irena

attempts to impart to Wilfong's contrary American brat.

Without giving much away, for this is a play to be savored in its slow build-up and rich textural cross currents, I will say that the adults are wonderful, but the children - particularly Kat and Maja - who steal the show with a fantastic verbal duet in Act II - are magnificent. Sit back, relax, watch and learn how war wounds scar and heal across oceans, across cultures, across blighted American schoolrooms and blasted Balkan cathedrals.

Of particular delight is the accompanying score, performed by Amy Bateman on violin and Holly Havis on piano. Their renderings of Bach's *Prelude in C Major*, Dvorak's *New World Symphony*, Bach's *Ave Maria*, Mendelsshon's *Violin Concerto*, and the Bosnian folksong transcribed by Havis as a *Lovesong to Sarajevo* were absolute standouts of the evening, and

worth the price of admission alone.

Freedman, on opening night, was justifiably proud of his actors' work, and had especially effusive praise for 12-year-old Maddy Stern, who "had blossomed in the last few days." Stern really took the emotional center of the stage. She was beautiful and powerful in her portrayal of all that is blighted in war.

On that note, Freedman said he had chosen the play because, "Bosnia is a forgotten war. We've moved on to other wars." But audience members will know life under siege in any theater of combat after an evening at *the Music Lesson*.

Critics love to criticize, and therefore let me repeat the old maxim, "It is better to show than tell," despite its applicability to the beginning of my own review. This maxim comes to the fore occasionally as Ryan tries to incorporate the cold

facts about the Siege of Sarajevo into the play's dialogue. But the weight of war lying heavy on Irena's shoulders and the pain of experience stitched in her brow speaks more clearly than any statistics about the 3000 children killed or the 676 days of continuous bombing of a cultured capital.

If there is a fundamental flaw in the play, it is in the measure of the schism real war creates in the dynamics of a marriage when placed in the balance with the petty sibling rivalries and parental shortcomings of the average pre-9/11 American family. In this sense, no matter how the refugee experience attempts to mingle with and inform the host culture, it is destined to remain apart. Or united, perhaps, only in the universal things that can bridge the con- claves of humanity: words spoken on a stage, or rendered from a sheet of music, on a street corner anywhere.

MILL from pg 10

brother, Arnold, turned out a baseball bat using the sawmill's equipment. "But it was too heavy to swing."

The mill was always powered by the flow of the river, just below the dam, where the bridge carries the cross road up to Cave Hill. Flotsam carried down the river in the flood of '36 took out part of the dam, Arnold recalled, but the mill survived.

The mill was never a noisy place; only the whine of the saw carried across the valley.

In summer, village children would prop a board against one side of the pitched roof, run up to the ridge and prepare to dive into the mill pond. The far side of the roof was always hot from the sun, so once you started down there was no turning back..

"It was a nice dive," Lee recalled.



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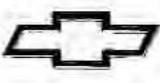
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JEP'S PLACE Part LXXVI

Baked Goods and Dentists

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL - Pa failed the paper mill physical again because of his heart condition. Seeing his friends become prosperous embittered Pa. He lashed out in anger at minor things.

Earlier, when he'd come home from work, my younger sister Lora and I would run out to open the garage doors. Pa would beam, and let us carry his woven birch lunch basket into the house.

We'd open the basket tainted with the smell of caustic paper mill chemicals. His sandwiches tasted

different, despite having been made with the same rye bread as our sandwiches at home. The rye bread we found in Pa's lunch basket was no longer the bread he brought home from the bakery.

Maybe it was the paper mill smell or the bread having had the crust cut off. But the bread seemed to have transformed in his lunch basket like the bread and wine at Holy Communion. Though the bread didn't taste very good with the paper mill taste, we still wanted to partake of it.

Ma cut the hard crust off the rye bread when she made his lunch because Pa had only a few teeth left. He pulled his own teeth, one by one, as they

decayed.

Pa loved sour dough rye bread, especially when it was fresh and easy to chew. He bought it from a Polish immigrant who operated a bakery in the Polish settlement called "The Patch" in Turners Falls. Rye bread was common in much of Poland because rye would mature in the country's short growing season, when wheat would not. The crusty bread had caraway seeds, throughout, with a few extra sprinkled on top.

When Pa worked the graveyard shift, he'd stop at the bakery on his way home to bring us bread for our breakfast, still warm from the oven. The baker sometimes gave Pa stale bakery goods to feed to the pigs. Ma made them

into bread pudding. I discovered that heating the rock hard crescent rolls made them soft again. They were delicious with a pat of butter.

"Leave it to Joe to find it out," Pa said with a smile. It felt good to get praised, for a change.

One day, I brought a cupcake to school in my lunch bag. It looked delicious, frosted in pink icing and topped with a maraschino cherry. Unknown to my envious classmates, it was as hard as plaster. I ate the cherry and the frosting with great gusto. Then, as the others turned to walk back to the schoolhouse, I pitched the stone hard cupcake into the bushes.

- Continued Next Week

Valley Idol & Valley Idol Jr. at the Shea

TURNERS FALLS - "VALLEY IDOL" a Karaoke singing contest with a grand prize of \$1,000 will take place May 16th, 17th, 24th and May 31st at the Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Auditions will be Friday, May 17th, 6:30 p.m. for the first 100 applicants only; a \$35 registration fee applies to all contestants. Contestants must be at least 18 years old to audition. Singers will need to prepare a 90-second musical karaoke selection for audition. First night cut will be to 25 singers. Go to www.theshea.org to download registration and view contest information, or leave a message at 413-863-2281.

Tickets will be \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. Advance tickets may be purchased at World Eye Book Store, Greenfield; on-line at www.theshea.org or at the Shea Box Office at 863-2281.

VALLEY IDOL JR.

"VALLEY IDOL, Jr." - A Singing Contest for Kids & Teens will take place Saturday mornings May 11th, 24th & May 31st at the Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls. Contest begins at 9:30 a.m. A \$20 registration fee applies to all contestants. Singers will need to prepare a 90-second a cappella selection for audition. First cut will be to 10 singers from the following age groups: 8-10 yrs; 11-14 yrs; 15-17 years. There will be prizes for everyone! Go to www.theshea.org to download registration form and view contest rules, or leave a message at 413-863-2281.

Tickets are \$5 for everyone. Advance tickets may be purchased at World Eye Book Store, Greenfield; on-line at www.theshea.org or at the Shea Box Office at 863-2281.

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Calling All Songwriters

Looking for great songs about the Connecticut River

"Living Along the River" songwriting contest is seeking entires. Deadline is July 15th, 2008.



The Connecticut River Watershed Council, Inc. will hold an information session for songwriters at its headquarters in Greenfield, at

15 Bank Row (across the town common from the Town Hall) on Tuesday, May 20th, 2008 at 7 p.m.

Interfaith Council Upcoming Events

May will be a busy month for the Interfaith Council of Franklin County with presentation of four public events. Those events include:

- A Holocaust Remembrance Service on Thursday (May 1) at 7 p.m. at Temple Israel, 27 Pierce St., Greenfield.

- A Peacemaker Awards Ceremony, in collaboration with Traprock Peace Center, on May 7 at 7 p.m. at 1st Congregational Church, 43 Silver St., Greenfield, to honor students from Franklin County high schools who promote justice and peace in their schools and communities.

- An Interfaith Peace Service on May 11 at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Peace Church, 90 Seventh St., Turners Falls, featuring speakers offering prayers of peace from a variety of faith traditions.

- A Memorial Service for those who died homeless last year in Massachusetts on May 21 at 4:30 p.m. on Greenfield Town Common.

Answers to last week's crossword puzzle will appear in next week's paper. Some readers are still trying to solve it.

LEGAL NOTICE

GILL SELECTBOARD TO REVIEW APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC GATHERING PERMIT During their regularly scheduled meeting on May 12, 2008 at 5:00 p.m., the Gill Selectboard will review an application for a permit for several public gatherings at Schuetzen Verein at 55 Barton Cove Rd, Gill, MA. Dates of gatherings run from May 17, 2008 through September 21, 2008.

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JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

THURSDAY, MAY 1st
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Sign up for Fishing Class! A Free two-session fishing class will be held at Great Falls Discovery Center. Call 413-863-3221 for details and to register. Summer Hours begin on May 18th: Open 7 days, 10 - 4 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 2nd
At the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Thoze Gize*, local yokels play upbeat bluegrass, old-time favorites & originals, 8 p.m. Who are those guys?

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Green Thumb Brothers* - Reggae, 9 to 11 p.m..

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 2nd & 3rd
Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: **BORN AGAIN**. This personal documentary chronicles Markie Hancock's slow and painful break from her born-again Evangelical Christian family & faith, as she gradually grows into her life as a lesbian and explores the larger world. 2007. NR, 7:30 p.m. Music before the movie, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, MAY 2nd TO 4th
Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts presents *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Turners Falls High School. Fri. & Sat. at 7 p.m., Sun at 4 p.m. Continues 5/9 to 5/10. Call for

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The Dust Poets perform at the Montague Book Mill on Wednesday, May 7th at 8 p.m.

reservations 863-0001. Adults \$12, 12 & under and 65 & older \$10.

SATURDAY, MAY 3rd
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Deja Jazz* - Jazz Standards, 9 to 11 p.m..

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls: TBA, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 4th
At the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *Dave Lamb with Audrey Ryan*. A special blend of dark folk/Americana. Subtly disturbing lyrics dressed up in smooth harmonies. 8 p.m.

Annual Montague May Day Celebration on the commons. Starts with a parade from the post office to the commons. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Turners Falls Downtown Walking Tour: Starts at 2 p.m. from the Carnegie Library. Alan Snow, Community Action Forester of the Department of Conservation and recreation, will lead the walk down Avenue A. The identification, selection, planting and care of urban trees will be discussed. Part of the Crabapple Blossom Festival, which runs from May 3rd - 18th. Info. call Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

MONDAY, MAY 5th
At the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: Malian kora master *Balla Tounkara*, bringing both virtuosity and warmth as he performs the music that his family has been playing for 24 generations. Balla began to play the kora as a child. The kora is a 21 string harp, made out of a calabash gourd, with a sound both soothing and grooving. Masterful on the kora, Balla is also a beautiful singer, and the warmth of his presence draws everybody in.

TUESDAY, MAY 6th
At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Craft Night, 7 p.m. on. Carefully mixing knitting and drinking, though - remember, it's all fun and games until somebody loses an eye.

Historical Walking tour of Downtown Turners Falls: Starts in front of the Great Falls Discovery Center at 6 p.m. Join Susan SanSoucie, Library Director and Turners Falls Historical Commission member, for a slow-paced trip in time down Avenue A.



The Fabulous Maurice entertains at the Great Falls Coffeehouse, 7 p.m., Discovery Center, Turners Falls on Friday, May 9th

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7th
Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: *The Dust Poets*, a genre-hopping acoustic roots band from western Canada. Hailed as "inventive instrumentalists" and "ingenious songwriters" and one of the fan favorites at last year's Falcon Ridge Folk Festival. 8 p.m. \$10. www.montaguebookmill.com.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Green Drinks* - 5-7 p.m. An informal gathering in 349 cities worldwide for anyone interested in talking about how we can help keep this planet a good place to call home. Meets monthly on FIRST Wednesdays at eateries around Franklin Co. All meeting locations at www.GreenDrinks.org

THURSDAY, MAY 8th
Open Women's Singing Circle: sharing songs and chants of healing, inspiration, and women's empowerment. 7 to 9 p.m. at the Second Congregational Church, Greenfield. Ongoing each Thursday, contact: Joy Kaubin (413) 367-0114 stillwaters3@verizon.net

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Free Range* - Jazz Standards. Rock out with Betsy, Mark and Bruce to Oldie Cover Tunes from the 60's & 70's, 8 to 10 p.m..

FRIDAY, MAY 9th
The Fabulous Maurice at the Great Falls Coffeehouse, 7 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

At the Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: Fiddle player *Anna Falkenau* and singer/songwriter/guitarist *Ivan Murray* present an exciting evening of original and traditional songs and tunes, rooted in both Irish and American music traditions. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Kellianna* - Acoustic Rock, 9 to 11 p.m..

SATURDAY, MAY 10th
The St. James Coffeehouse, Greenfield: *Root Cellar*. Benefit performance for Habitat for Humanity - a wide-ranging repertoire from traditional Celtic to Americana to contemporary originals. 7 p.m. Refreshments Available. Tickets: Adult/child \$14/\$7. Reduced for advanced. Available at World Eye Bookshop. Info (413) 772-2213 Or www.stjames-gfld.org

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Richard Chase Group* - Acoustic Folk/Singer Songwriter, 9 to 11 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 11th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Don McAulay* - Warped Americana, 7 to 10 p.m..

ONGOING
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. On display: Lili Almog, Studio 52 - *Perfect Intimacy Revealed Through Photographer's Eyes* & Linda Butler - *Meditations on Simplicity*, Studio 56.

UNTIL MAY 31st
On display at the Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Wild about Nature*: WGBY Photo Contest, photographs of nature in Western Mass.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 TH & 21ST
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TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 - 6 p.m.
THURS - Drop-in, 3 - 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 - 8 p.m.
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2. IRONMAN
DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG13 in dts sound
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
3. NIM'S ISLAND PG
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
3. FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO
DAILY 6:30 9:00
4. HAROLD AND KUMAR ESCAPE FROM GUANTANAMO
DAILY 6:45 9:15 R
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
5. FORGETTIN SARAH MARSHALL
DAILY 6:45 9:15 R
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
6. BABY MAMA in dts sound
DAILY 7:00 9:30 PG13
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
7. MADE OF HONOR PG13
DAILY 7:00 9:30 in dts sound
MAT FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30

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WEST ALONG THE RIVER

Spring Homecoming

BY DAVID BRULE

ERVINGSIDE - This has been an unusual April: good for curing firewood and for nest building. The first task pretty much takes care of itself and the second takes a lot of know-how and the right genes.

The phoebes took charge of the nest building part. The same pair, or their look-alikes, has set their nest cup under various eaves here for years. This April, they've set their '08 edition on a shelf under the woodshed roof, working at it all morning every morning, and taking it easy in the

hot afternoons.

These are grey, soft-spoken New England birds: modest yet voracious in their appetite for mosquitoes. So of course they are welcomed with great ceremony when they come home in April.

I like to think that they, like me, share the sense of place here. I like to think that their ancestors first nested in my great-grandfather's barn when it went up in 1872. They most likely watched Judah with their sharp bright eyes as he took out the horse in the morning, and brought him back after a day's work at dark.

I know that when the barn fell down in 1972, they moved across the road to Stafford's abandoned garage. And when that was torn down, they moved back in with us, finding the woodshed to their liking.

They went about nest building early this year, encouraged by the unusual warm temperatures. They finished just around Patriots Day. No doubt timing this to coincide with the anniversary of the Shot Heard Around the World, and when the last runners in the Boston Marathon crossed the finish line, they quietly celebrated their new nest

built to phoebe specifications.

We've inherited a flock of 30 redwings who have lingered here, mooching cracked corn and gurgling all morning draped in the pale-green-budded trees.

They're good musical company to keep oneself entertained while hauling the aforementioned wood from the overgrown pasture along the river.

A lot of us are used to felling our trees in full winter so that by early spring we can get to the wood-drying part in the warmer weather. To drop my supply of trees I use a Stihl Farm Boss 290, bought at Sirum's down the road in Montague, a Swedish bow saw (same handle for 25 years, new blade from time to time) and three beavers.

The beavers came with the place, and my grandfather Abe introduced us one evening when I was 11. We went down to the edge of the pasture and sat on a log at dusk to wait. A bird flew up the river making a rattling racket. "Kingfisher," said Abe. A winnowing call came from the pines on Mineral Mountain. "Screech owl," said Abe. Then two dark blunt heads floated purposefully down the river. "Beaver," said Abe, out of the corner of his mouth, in between draws on his corn cob pipe.

At that, he got up to go back to the house to his glass of Narragansett and the Yankees - Sox ballgame, both in progress. So, like the phoebes, the beavers

and I have developed a relationship. They knock down trees and limb them; I cut up the trunks they



delightful liquid warbling and trilling, in exchange for having kept them plump and well fed during this past record-breaking winter.

The brown thrasher has already dropped in, this genuine northern mockingbird bursting forth with his birdcall imitations with the same virtuosity as his more famous southern cousin. Another old-fashioned looking bird, the towhee, dropped in too, as beautiful and eccentric-looking as anything Jean-Jacques Audubon ever painted, and I don't have to shoot him to appreciate his coloration like old Jean-Jacques used to. Binoculars are a good substitute for the gun.

The three Canada geese raise a racket all day long from the marsh, honking and trumpeting in the springtime and pre-nuptial silliness. The three of them are going to have to work this one out before they get serious about starting a family. There's no *ménage à trois* in the goose world.

Their trumpeting up and down the river echoes with the wail of the trains that pass through Millers Falls, then along the edge of Lake Pleasant and the Montague Plains. Sometimes geese and engine whistles are in harmony, but more often they ring out in post-industrial dissonance.

So with the phoebes safely ensconced in their ancestral home, the stage is set for the more gaudy crowd coming home soon: the orioles, the tanagers, the rose-breasted grosbeaks. We'll take it as it comes, one arrival at a time.

Late at night, a strange pinching and burning on the skin. The first tick! Pinched painfully off and crushed between thumbnail and forefinger. Yep Spring has come home to the Valley!

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