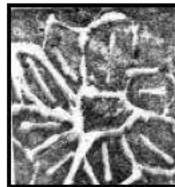




**RODNEY'S SKINK**  
at Powertown/  
Page 2



**WILDFLOWERS**  
in Barton Cove/  
Page 20

Daisy block print:Chloe Castro-Santos

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 31

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

50¢

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 10, 2007

## Intra-District Choice Approved in Montague ...

BY JOANNA FRANKEL

Montague held a special town meeting on Thursday, May 3rd to deal with the Gill Montague Regional School Committee's proposals to open Montague and Gill elementary schools to intra-district choice. Also on the agenda were a number of bookkeeping articles transferring sums of money to cover shortfalls in various departmental budgets. Although the meeting was predicted to be a short one, with less than the usual number of questions to debate, conversation lasted for two solid hours.

Articles one through six, appropriating funds for a variety of different budgets, all passed quickly, with few questions and little conversation. Article one appropriated \$17,000 for the Public Buildings Utility Budget. As Tom Bergeron, highway superintendent explained, utility bills have gone "through the roof," and despite energy saving measures (such as replacing bulbs in signal lights with LED lights and using energy saving light bulbs in town buildings), costs have outpaced the budget.

The next article, appropriating \$3,000 for the town clerk's budget, also passed unanimously. Deb Bourbeau, town clerk, explained that when she had to have emergency surgery, the former town clerk was hired to fill in while she recuperated. The \$3,000 would cover the cost of this substitution during her sick leave.

Article three, which also passed easily, appropriated \$28,000 to cover a

see CHOICE pg 9



## May Day in Montague

*Hart's Brook Garland Women dance beneath the Maypole in Montague Center. The annual May Day celebration was held Saturday, May 5th and was attended by local residents who joyfully celebrated Beltane.*

MICHAEL MULLER PHOTO

See MAYDAY story on Page 3

## ... and in Gill, Sixth Grade to Remain in Town

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

Emotions ran high at the Gill special town meeting on Thursday, May 3rd, where 67 voters decided to keep the Gill 6th grade at the Gill Elementary School, defeating an amendment to the regional school district agreement backed by the school committee to move the sixth graders to the Great Falls Middle School. Voters then joined town meeting members in Montague in agreeing to adopt the school committee's recommendation to implement intra-district choice between the two towns, to allow elementary students from either town to choose in to an elementary school in the other.

The first item on the agenda was the proposal to amend the district agreement by giving the school committee the power to move the Gill sixth graders to the middle school. In a fact sheet passed out before the meeting, the school committee supported the move, calling the Great Falls Middle School a larger, newer facility with "state of the art" technology. The amendment was defeated by a landslide, 53 to 14.

Several Gill parents stood up and delivered impassioned testimonials to the Gill School, urging voters to leave it as it was, sixth grade and all. Noreen Lemieux asked the assembly, "Do we understand the kind of environment [the children] are going into? My son suffers from low self-esteem and anxiety, and I'm constantly trying to get him to understand the challenges of a new school. Some kids may be ready and prepared, but many are not." A

see GILL pg 8

## Erving Approves \$6.4 Million Sewer Plant Upgrade

BY KEVIN FOLEY

Erving held its annual town meeting on Wednesday, May 9th, with more than 50 residents and elected officials present. All 25 articles on the warrant passed easily, although some articles generated lively debate.

A proposal to authorize the town to borrow \$6.4 million for upgrades at the Ervingside Wastewater

Treatment Plant prompted lively discussion. Resident Andrew Goodman supplied a paper handout urging residents to ask questions about the upgrade, and to carefully consider their vote. During the meeting, Goodman sug-



KEVIN FOLEY PHOTO

*Voters at the annual town meeting, by a vote of 47 to 1, approved borrowing up to \$6.4 million for upgrading the Ervingside Wastewater treatment plant (above).*

gested the possibility of passing over the article until July in the hope of holding an information session to inform residents in more detail about what the upgrades would include.

see ERVING pg 15

## Superheroes Take the Stage at Sheffield Musical

BY ANNE HARDING

**TURNERS FALLS** - With all the pressure about MCAS test results and No Child Left Behind mandates, it is no surprise that the recent musical "Mighty Minds" resonated with students, parents and teachers alike at the annual Sheffield School play. The auditorium was packed Thursday night, May 3rd, with friends and family and Friday morning, May 4th, with students from Sheffield School, as well as visiting students from Hillcrest and Montague Center Schools.

The play opened with a procession of the 79 students in the 5th and 6th grade chorus - an impres-

sive 70 percent of the students in those grades who voluntarily participated in this extracurricular activity. Once the chorus settled into their places, the fun began with an announcement by principal Chip Wood (both on-stage and off) about the upcoming week of testing, followed by a rollicking version of "Test Anxiety" ("What a mess! I'm totally depressed. A week of tests. I can't believe the stress!")

Classroom teacher Miss Sweet's (Kaylannah Frost) unsuccessful attempts to ease the fears of her students about the upcoming testing, prompts her to call for help

see SHEFFIELD pg 8

**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Looking for You**



**Lucy Lu**

Lucy Lu is a two-year-old female short hair cat in need of a good home. This sophisticated lady is all in black with a pure white bib and whiskers. However, Lucy Lu drops all pretense of sophistication when it comes to snuggling with her toy monkey (that must go home with her!) Lucy Lu likes the peace and quiet of indoor only living, though she does love to gaze out windows. Her family is no longer able to care for her but she used to love to run around in front of them as they walked from room to room. She is a happy and friendly cat who is quite approachable and good natured. For more information on adopting Lucy Lu please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

**GFMS Students of the Week**

- Grade 7**  
Aria Roberts  
Brandyn Boroski
- Grade 8**  
Kenny Rounds

NANCY L. DOLE  
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**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Historical Walking Tour**

**BY LINDA HICKMAN**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - A Historical Walking Tour of Downtown Turners Falls will be held on Saturday, May 12th, starting at 2 p.m. The walk will begin outside of the Great Falls Discovery Center on Ave. A, near the Gill-Montague bridge. Linda Hickman, author of the new Turners Falls Historical Walking Tour brochure, will lead the tour. The program will include information on the geological and Native American history of the area, as well as the industrial heritage of the town. The walk is one of the Crabapple Blossom Festival events, which runs until May 20th. For more information,

contact the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

**Children's Festival**

The Crabapple Blossom Children's Festival will be held on Tuesday, May 15th, from 9:30 a.m. - noon on the Carnegie Library lawn. Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson of Montague will perform a bilingual concert from 10 - 11 a.m. during the event, which will also include arts and crafts activities and free refreshments. If it rains, the festival will be held inside the library. The Community Partnerships for Children is sponsoring the event. For more information: 863-3214.

**Spring Planting at Carnegie Library**

**BY LINDA HICKMAN**  
There will be a Spring Planting program at the Carnegie Library on Sat., May 12th, from 10 - 11 a.m. Children and their families are invited to join Bev Whitbeck in

a fun, free program. The children will decorate planting containers and plant a flower in them to take home.

For more information, contact the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

**Gill School Carnival**

Saturday, May 19th • 10 am - 1 pm  
Gill Elementary School • 48 Boyle Road, Gill

- Can Raffle • Firetruck • Pony Rides • Plant Sale
- Coin Draw • Wheel of Fortune • Dunking Booth
- Bounce House • Sand Art • Cookie Decorating
- Bake Sale • Hamburgers • Famous Firemen's Fries • Hotdogs • and More!

Proceeds benefit Gill School General PTO Fund, which helps support Library Fund, Field Trips, Special Projects and more.

**Elder Law Education Program: "Taking Control of Your Future"**

Bay State seniors can learn all about a wide range of legal issues affecting their lives as part of the Elder Law Education Program presented by the Massachusetts Bar Association. This year's topic is "Taking Control of Your Future: a Legal

Checkup." Some of the topics covered may include:

- How to protect your home and assets
- Power of Attorney and Health Care proxies
- Reverse Mortgages
- Medicare and Medicaid

changes

- Alternatives to nursing home care

On Wednesday, June 6th at 11:15 a.m. attorney John Greene will speak on these issues at the Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street in Turners Falls.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES May 14th to May 18th**

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

- Monday, 14th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
1 p.m. Canasta
- Tuesday, 15th**

- 9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi
- Wednesday, 16th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Social Security Presentation with Dan Moraski, public affairs specialist.  
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 17th**  
1:00 p.m. Pitch
- Friday, 18th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

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

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

- Monday, 14th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch
- Tuesday, 15th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting
- Wednesday, 16th**  
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing  
12 Noon Bingo
- Thursday, 17th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Shopping

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

**FACES & PLACES**



DETMOLD PHOTO

Rodney and his Blue-Tongued Skink at Powertown

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# May Day Celebrated with Music, Dance and Song



Wake Robin Morris Dancers Beneath the Maypole



PHOTOS BY FLORE

The Sun smiled on the May Day gathering.

BY FLORE

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - This is, perhaps, how spells work.

I have watched over and over again, fascinated by the sudden metamorphosis! Take Montague Center, an apparently dormant village, most of the year.

Except for Hallowe'en and May Day.

The perfect setting, this vale of beautiful land, for New England families to settle, to lead quiet, fruitful lives.

In the morning, their children walk to the little red brick schoolhouse.

Notice, how they skip happily on the streets, returning home.

Then the dogs appear. They are part of the community, showing a bouncy *allegresse*. They roam freely, or explore the jogging tempo of their favorite two-legged partners.

One often wonders, who is really leading whom?

Place an impressive gleaming white church, sitting where it

should, right in the heart of this village.

Its bells record the time. Its high perched clock captures the full rays of the sun at mid-day.

When May Day comes? Bang! With no further ado, people invade the common with floral headdresses, bells and hankies. They come from all over the county. Further even... the world, who knows? For sure, from Vermont and New Hampshire!

T'is time to put winter to

This year, the celebration was scheduled for Sunday, the 6th of May, a day when the cares of the workaday world fled far away..

One could see as far as Court Square, the giant puppets, undulating their heads against the sky, as I walked down the hill.

Close by, children comfortably nestled, hiding on the fully blossomed cherry tree.

As I arrived, the hoisting of the Maypole was taking place, so everyone under it could take a turn in dancing, and celebrating the coming of Spring!

And they did. From maidens fair to wise elders, wearing flowers on their heads.

Delicate and beautiful all, honoring this long established Celtic tradition.

The Puritans, I am told, banned the whole ceremony as being a rite of "pagans"...

Having a good healthy time was not on their agenda.

It was to be banished under all circumstances!

They sure missed a lot of innocent, happy playin' around.

In France, the Maypole was to be climbed on May first, by unwed young men to catch a present placed at the top for the young maiden of his choice who would find the next day, at her door, the precious gift. This would announce their engagement to be married.

Here in Montague, the

pened, the music swelled higher than the wind.

It hit the windowpanes where lingering cats were the first ones to stretch.

Now, they pressed their noses against the French doors, to see the goings on from safe inside!

Cars were tightly parked, resembling a giant caterpillar, all aligned for the day.

Blankets were laid on the ground to share the traditional picnic with family and friends.



Young and Old Break Bread



Children play on a blossoming tree.

Maypole's rainbow colored ribbons flew as they wove to and for in the hands of Morris dancers!

Bells on legs and feet, they stomped the ground with their heavy soles, making the earth tremble. Each time it hap-

And thus, holding hands and chanting, the public closed this magic celebration, calling to all:

"Unite, let's Unite, summer is a-coming, in the Merry Month of May!"

Let it be everywhere, thus!

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### On Keeping the Sixth Grade in Gill

The following speech was read aloud at the Gill special town meeting, on May 3rd

**BY SORREL HATCH** - I have grown up in Gill, gone to Gill School and to Turners. I think both the high school and middle school are good schools and I feel a lot of loyalty towards them, but it is the Gill Elementary School that really made me who I am.

I don't think the sixth



Sorrel Hatch

grade should move to Montague. I know that the new middle school has lots of technology we don't have here in Gill, but I don't believe that new computers and smart boards are what makes a good education, or a good class, or a good teacher. I know the kids might say they are "so ready to get out of Gill," but I wouldn't expect them to say any different. I think that's how they should feel: impatient, eager, and... ready. Is it wise to take them away from the Gill before they feel that way?

I have no doubt they can handle it. I do not fear for their safety or happiness at Great Falls. What I do fear for is what they will have lost, and what we will have lost, and what we will never get back.

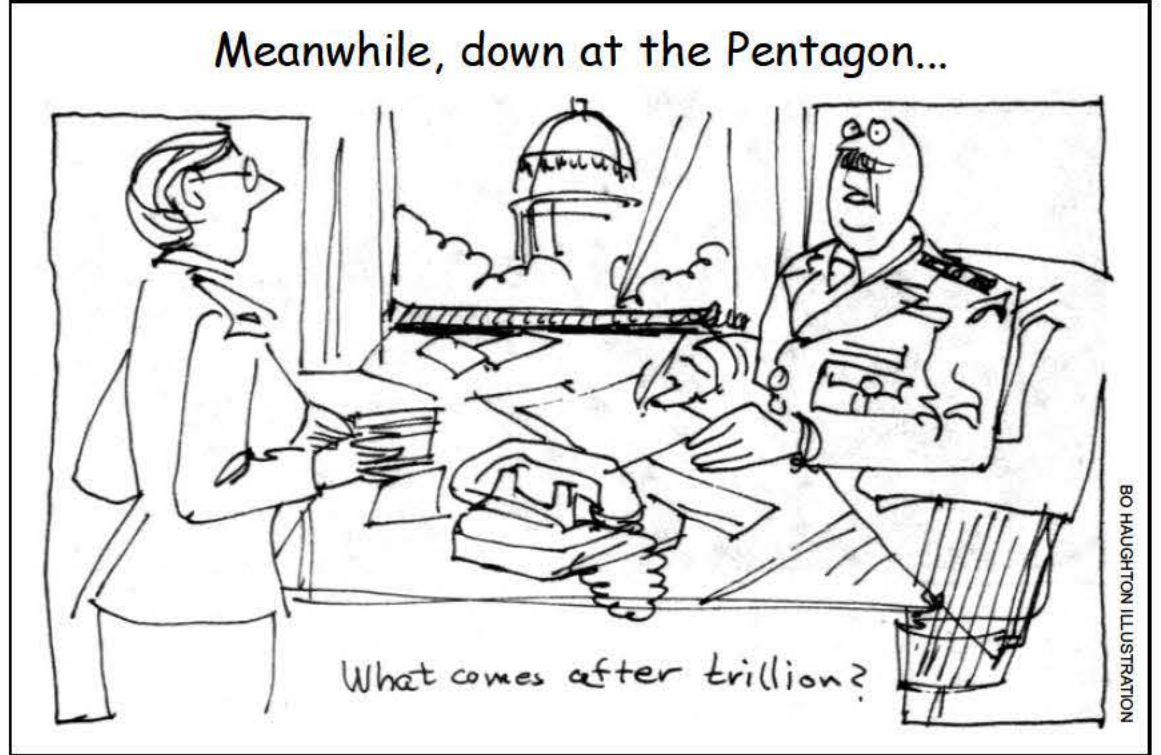
Gill School has been reduced before, the seventh and eighth grade won't be coming back; we all know that. We are making a decision about our school that will change it forever. If I thought this decision was based on some pressing budgetary need

or necessity, I would more easily accept the change. But it is not, and I feel that the school works well as it is.

It is not only the welfare of the sixth graders that hangs in the balance right now, but the welfare of the whole school. Every younger child looks up to those sixth graders. They are the big kids. When I was at Gill there were privileges and responsibilities that came with being sixth graders. Back when we had the wooden structure, it was the sixth graders that were in charge of pushing the younger kids on the tire swing and making sure they stayed safe. At family style lunch, the sixth graders were the servers at the table, they were the ones allowed to leave their seats and fetch more food, the ones that helped clean up a spilled drink, or stop a fourth grader from shooting a spit-ball. And during special times of the year the big kids and the little kids got paired off and for half an hour the two would find their own corner and the older read aloud to the younger. The younger kids looked up to and relied on the older kids. The older kids began to learn what it meant to be an adult. Looking back I realize just how important that was.

When I graduated the sixth grade and went to Turners, I did not leave feeling a child; I left feeling grown-up. I was proud of where I came from, of being a Gill-billy. Being a Gill kid was part of our identity at Turners, for all of us.

This is my home. This is my community. This is my school. I feel very much a part of it. If we want our kids to grow up feeling the same, we need to keep the Gill School intact and whole and worth being proud of, so that to our kids this is not just the place they went when they were little, but the place where they grew up.



### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Kociela for School Committee

As parents of students in the Gill-Montague Regional School District we are in full support of Mary Kociela for school committee. She has been and would continue to be a hard working and dedicated member, bringing with her the strengths of commitment, common sense, dedication and deep concern for the students and families of this district. Her ability to listen and lead through

turbulent times has helped ease the resolution of many challenges.

This year alone Mary has facilitated the organization of public forums, the intra-district choice amendment to the regional agreement, and the hiring of an interim superintendent for the district. In addition to serving on the school committee for six years, she has actively helped

with high school musicals, the TFHS Chorus and Band Boosters, parent teacher organizations and school community council. Mary's knowledge and understanding are assets too valuable to lose. We urge residents of the Gill-Montague community to vote - Mary Kociela for school committee on May 21st. - Janet and Ken Garber Gill

### Kociela Provides a Moderating Influence

Along with the annual election of Gill and Montague town staff, and Montague town meeting members, on May 21st voters in our two towns will vote for members of the Gill-Montague Regional School District's school committee. During the last year, the school committee has wrestled, with varying success, with many issues: elementary school configuration (including which building sixth graders should attend), intra-district choice, operating budget levels, and response to state evaluations of our students' educational progress. The towns have now settled the question of

intra-district choice and the formal building assignment for sixth graders, but the other more difficult issues will be with us for some time to come.

Given these continuing challenges, it is important to retain the experience and perspective of Mary Kociela. I'm neither a parent nor part of the administration or teaching staff, but I've watched and listened to her in her role as school committee chair, and I think she encourages and facilitates the expression of divergent opinions while seeking practical solutions that will work for the district as a whole. On a committee representing

wide differences in approach, she provides a moderating influence.

I do not expect to agree with Mary on everything, but I do believe she keeps her eye on the right goal and tries to unify people across the district in pursuing it. Like the two towns, the GMRSD does not have the option of choosing ideal solutions -- we all must settle on the solutions we can afford. Mary's continued service will help move the school committee in the right direction.

- John Hanold  
Precinct 5, Turners Falls

### Vote for Phillips

Joyce Phillips is running for the Gill-Montague Regional School District school committee, and I plan to vote for her.

Ms. Phillips seems filled with energy and enthusiasm equaled only by her organizational skills and good ideas on how to enhance education for all of the students in the district. She is informed about the issues and willing to speak up about them.

Ms. Phillips is committed to the best interests of students district-wide. Whether she is attending a special event to support a student, sending a congratulatory card for some job well done or publicly acknowl-

edging the good things a student does, she is ever conscious of highlighting the positive while working to enhance and improve that which needs to be enhanced and improved.

A former member of the school committee and producer of three Gill-Montague Education Fund galas to raise

continued next page

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**3,376**

Afghanistan **382**

Wounded in Action **30,797**

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GUEST EDITORIALS

# Entering Montague, Lower Your Expectations

BY JOSEPH JANIKAS

**TURNERS FALLS** - As I was recently driving down the hill on Turners Falls Road in Greenfield and approached the White Bridge near the paper mills in Turners Falls, I couldn't help but wonder what kind of impression one gets as they enter our town from that entrance.

The impression could be important to a parent considering opting their child into our school system through school choice, or perhaps a businessman seeking to locate in our town, or even someone looking for housing in our community.

Before one crosses the bridge, there's a large, faded, rusted, graffiti marked sign that says "Entering Montague" (I think). I say that because the word Montague is barely visible. The reverse side of the sign that says "Entering Greenfield" is in good condition.

Proceeding across the bridge, there's another large



DETMOLD PHOTOS

sign, barely visible, that's knocked over at a 45 degree angle that welcomes people into the Village of Turners Falls. At the stop sign on the bridge that spans the Power Canal, if one looks straight ahead, there's a sign that has lost its message and is bent over so as to obstruct the view of another sign.

These are not very inviting sights for anyone who enters our community. To me, it doesn't say much good about our

own expectations for order and basic upkeep.

Town officials are trying to attract people into our Industrial Park, yet a concrete monument that is positioned at the intersection of Industrial Boulevard and Millers Falls Road is dirty and neglected. It says a lot about us and the way we expect things to be maintained. It also doesn't speak positively to a prospective business.

A stop sign at Dell Street and Turners Falls Road was knocked down by a car several years ago. The post that carries the sign was bent at the base into a "v" shape. Instead of replacing the post, the sign was positioned upright using the same post and its bent "v" at the base. The "Dell Street" sign across the way is faded and very rusted. Both are examples of the low expectations of our public officials

and, to some extent, ours. It wasn't that many years ago when citizens of this community wouldn't have tolerated these examples.

I watched a year ago as the "Sixth Street" sign next to the Post Office remained bent over for three weeks at a 30 - 45 degree angle on the town's Avenue A. Someone finally straightened it, but it was bent back over in a couple of days and remained that way for weeks before it was removed, instead of doing the job correctly to prevent reoccurrence. The sign is presently positioned on the opposite corner and is still far from plumb - on our "showcase" Avenue A.

I find it hard

to believe that our town officials, both elected and appointed, don't notice these things and get them remedied. Is it apathy? Is it a case of low (or no) expectations? I'm not sure.

What I do know is that unless we make our town more appealing visually and give the appearance of one that sees order and neatness as impor-



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## Whose Children Are Less Desirable?

At last Thursday's special town meeting in Montague, there was a discussion about intra-district choice for Gill Montague students. Brian Costa, a member of the community running for public office, stood up and said that if this option had been available when his son was in grammar school he would have sent him to attend school in Gill because of the "less desirable" students

his children had to go to school with in Turners Falls. My question is which of these children does Mr. Costa deem less desirable? The ones that live downtown? The ones with different color skin or who speak a different language? Any of the children that are different from him or his children?

Just for Mr. Costa's information there are many children involved in the programs at the

Parks and Rec Department. There has to be room for all of them. Yes, even the ones that he considers "less" desirable."

I am urging the voters of Montague to re-elect Linda Ackerman to the Parks and Recreation Commission at the town election on May 21st.

- Jean Hebden  
Turners Falls

**PHILLIPS** from pg 4  
funds for enrichment programs in the district's schools, she has maintained her interest in the district and continued to attend meetings both on local and state levels to stay informed. She is knowledgeable and

articulate, and I believe she will serve the school district well.

Her extensive experience will be valuable to the school district as it faces budget, personnel and configuration issues. She knows our school

system and our community, and she has proven her dedication and capability to serve.

Please join me in casting a vote for Joyce Phillips for Gill-Montague Regional School District school committee.

## Lost on the Barricades

BY FLORE MONTAGUE CENTER - What on Earth has happened to the legendary French *bravoure*?

It must have got lost, back on the barricades?

If you followed closely the election for president last Sunday, you must have held your breath! The obvious call to change the vision for France, went berserk!

Not only did the high number of voters going to the polls pass the record of 83 per cent. Too bad 53 per cent gave their vote to Nicolas Sarkozy, choking off the 47 per cent margin of Segolene Royale.

It was a close run, as the French would say: "du jamais vu, en bataille politique!"

But what was "unseen before in the political battle," the women themselves voted conservative! Who has heard of such dissident behavior?

I mean, "Ladies, are you too

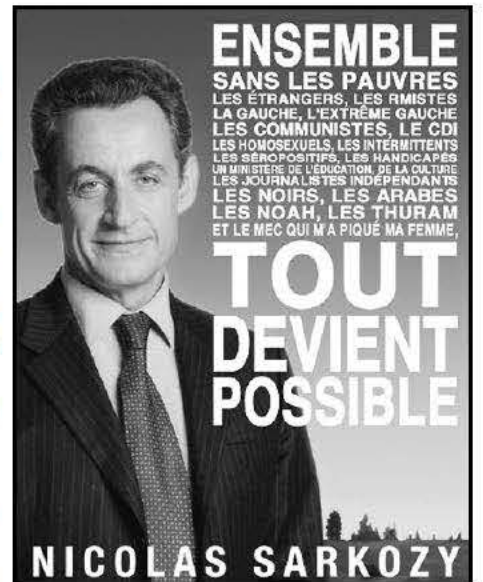
scared to elect one of your kind?"

Even here, dames vote as their "hubby." Servitude did you say? Try to analyse this...

Anyway the UMP, which has been flourishing during Chirac's two mandates, is back in the saddle. In fact has never left the saddle!

It's like banging one's head against the wall!

When will people realize, we are all brainwashed by media of all forms.



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# Meals on Wheels Walkathon a Great Success

BY ANNA VIADERO

**TURNERS FALLS** - Thanks to sponsors, walkers, and businesses that supported the program, this past Saturday's event was the largest Meals on Wheels Walkathon ever, raising nearly \$26,000, enough to supplement the funding coming through the federal programs and keep Meals on Wheels going.

The prizewinner for the most funds raised this year went to Dot Black, age 87. Helped by her crew at the Erving Senior Center, she raised over \$1800. And second prizes certainly must be credited to Regina Curtis, our board chair, and Marian Holbrook, of Northfield, our Meals on Wheels Walkathon Chair, who has been the top fundraiser for the previous 11

years! Finally, the Supportive Souls, hard working staff of Franklin County Home Care, turned out in force!

The oldest walker was Jenni Rossi at age 89, and there were three "strollers" under a year old, but the youngest of these was Sedonna Williams, age eight months and six days.

Major sponsors deserve special thanks, in particular Rice Oil, Greenfield Savings Bank, Renaissance Builders, Athol/Orange Rotary, Yankee Candle, Bete Fog Nozzle, Cherewatti Family Fund, and Baystate Visiting Nurses and Hospice. We also had support from Freedom Credit Union, Bateman Caterers, New England Extrusion, and Baystate Franklin Medical Center. Prizes for walkers were donated by Green Fields Market,



PHOTO: ANNA VIADERO

As usual, Linda Ackerman (left) of Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls, was the first to start and finish this year's walkathon for Meals on Wheels, which took place May 5th at the Franklin Tech School. Ackerman was one of more than 100 walkers who raised in excess of last year's total of \$18,000. She is pictured here with Jane Severance, Meals on Wheels director.

China Gourmet Restaurant, Foster's Market, Copper Angel Restaurant of Erving, Eddie's of Athol, Burger King, Dunkin Doughnuts which helped supply

the coffee and doughnuts, Family Dollar stores donated water, and hundreds of volunteers pitched in to make the day a success.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR



### Postal Service Food Drive

I have not seen much advertisement for this, but on Saturday, May 12th the National Association of Letter Carriers of the U.S. Postal Service will hold their annual food drive across the country. The letter carriers will be picking up non-perishable food items, which can be left by your mailboxes. You may also drop off non-perishable

food items at your local post office. Your donations will then be distributed to local food pantries. Last year, the letter carriers collected more than 70.5 million pounds of food for the hungry during their 14th annual drive.

- Don Clegg  
Montague City

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

### Assaults in Turners Falls

#### Thursday 5-3

7:50 p.m. Report of an assault at a 7th Street address. Caller reports being assaulted by his landlord. Caller states he will file his own charges at the courthouse.

#### Friday 5-4

7:44 a.m. [redacted] was arrested at the bus stop on 3rd Street and Avenue A on a default warrant.

3:39 p.m. Report of an assault on L and 4th Street. Woman reported being assaulted by two people. Reporting party went to station to file written statement.

#### Sunday 5-6

12:19 a.m. Report of a runaway at a 3rd Street address. A 15-year-old female juvenile was arrested and charged with possession of a class D drug, disorderly conduct, and two

counts of assault and battery on a police officer.

1:24 a.m. While on patrol an officer observed suspicious people at the cemetery on Millers Falls Road.

[redacted] was arrested and charged with being a minor transporting alcohol. A 15-year-old juvenile was also arrested and charged with possession of a class D drug.

9:58 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident at a Federal Street address.

[redacted] was arrested for operating under the influence of liquor, negligent operation of a motor vehicle, marked lanes violation, speeding, being a minor transporting alcohol, and possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle.

#### Monday 5-7

10:52 a.m. Report of vandalism at the laundromat on 3rd Street. Caller states it looks like cash box had been pried. Owner says no problem.

3:59 p.m. A call requesting an officer at a Canal Street address resulted in [redacted]

[redacted] being arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license (subsequent offense), operating an uninsured motor vehicle, and operating an unregistered motor vehicle.

#### Wednesday 5-9

6:50 a.m. Walk-in to station reported suspicious activity at Unity Park near the basketball court.

[redacted] was arrested on two default warrants.

## MCTV Schedule

### Channel 17: May 11th - May 17th

#### Barton Cove Eagles:

\*Eagle Broadcast is dependent upon working Equipment at Barton Cove\*  
7A-8A (Daily); 12P-530P (Tuesday, Friday); 1230P-530P (Sunday); 1P-530P (Monday, Thursday, Saturday); 2P-6P (Wednesday)

#### Friday, May 11

8:00 am School Committee Candidates Debate  
9:00 am Farmers Market: Stephanie Marshall  
10:00 am Discovery Center: Curious About Creatures  
6:00 pm Nasa Destination Tomorrow #21  
6:30 pm Let's See it Again  
7:00 pm GMRSD meeting 5/8/07  
10:00 pm Montague Update: Arts and Blooms

#### Saturday, May 12

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #21  
8:30 am Let's See It Again  
9:00 am GMRSD meeting 5/8/07  
12:00 pm Montague Update: Arts and Blooms  
6:30 pm The Well Being: "Parents Helping People"  
7:30 pm Discovery Center: "Pop Rockets"  
9:00 pm Special Town Meeting (5/3/07)  
11:00 pm Montague Update: Chris Mason

#### Sunday, May 13

8:00 am The Well Being: "Parents Helping Parents"  
9:00 am Discovery Center: "Pop Rockets"  
10:30 am Special Town Meeting (5/3/07)  
6:00 pm Discovery Center: "Importance of Pollinators"  
7:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: "Right Here All Along"  
8:00 pm Over The Falls: Robert Strong Woodward  
9:00 pm School Committee Candidates Debate  
11:00 pm Coffee House Series: Michael Nix

#### Monday, May 14

8:00 am Discovery Center: "Importance of Pollinators"  
9:00 am Carlos W. Anderson: "Right Here All Along"

10:00 am Over The Falls: Robert Strong Woodward  
11:00 am School Committee Candidates Debate  
6:00 pm Montague Update: Arts and Blooms  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board (Live)  
9:00 pm Carnegie Library: Emu's  
10:00 pm Discovery Center: "Tracking The Wily Coyote"

#### Tuesday, May 15

8:00 am Montague Update: Arts and Blooms  
9:00 am Carnegie Library: Emu's  
10:00 am Discovery Center Tracking The Wily Coyote  
6:00 pm GED Connection #1  
6:30 pm Independent Voices #28  
7:00 pm GMRSD (5/8/07)  
10:00 pm School Committee Candidates Debate

#### Wednesday, May 16

8:00 am GED Connection #1  
8:30 am Independent Voices #28  
9:00 am GMRSD (5/8/07)  
12:00 pm School Committee Candidates Debate  
6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #21  
7:00 pm GED Connection: Language Arts: Writing  
7:30 pm The Well Being: "Parents Helping Parents"  
8:30 pm Plains Walk  
9:30 pm Special Town Meeting (5/3/07)

#### Thursday, May 17

8:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #21  
8:30 am GED Connection: Language Arts: Writing  
9:00 am The Well Being: "Parents Helping Parents"  
10:00 am Plains Walk  
11:00 am Special Town Meeting (5/3/07)  
6:00 pm Discovery Center: "Songs For Wee People"  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board 5/14/07  
8:30 pm Discovery Center: "Birds of Prey"  
9:30 pm Farmers Market: "Pat and Tex LaMountain"  
10:30 pm People's Harvest

## Turners Falls High School Band Wins Awards in Toronto



PHOTO: ALI URBAN

**TORONTO, CANADA** - Brenda McGurk, Turners Falls High School music director, directs the TFHS choir at a

Music Showcase Competition near Toronto, Ontario, May 5th. Both the choir and symphonic band received

second place awards. Junior Aaron Cappucci also received an award for piano accompaniment.

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# Student Art Enlivens the Halls of Sheffield

BY BRIDGET SWEET

**TURNERS FALLS** - Sheffield Elementary School is buzzing with creativity. Tour the halls and see the students' artwork posted by Nancy Meagher, art teacher for the Gill-Montague schools and the (work-in-progress) mural led by Ruth O'Mara, Artist-In-Residence. It is a wonderful sight to see!

Nancy Meagher is a busy art teacher. This month, to celebrate her students' creative output, she posted their artwork on the first floor, and some on the second floor, with the help of parent volunteers Amy Lang and Clarice Baker. The student work includes pencil drawings, charcoal sketches, and works in crayon, marker and batik depicting animals and people. In the past month, Meagher has taken all of Sheffield's students

on field trips to the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst. There they viewed storybook art and spoke with real curators. The students learned how to frame and mount their artwork, and how to write captions for it.

For example, a Sheffield fifth grader named Kalbe wrote, "The Man in the Field," to accompany his artwork. His poetic caption reads as follows:

The man of wind  
Who whistles the grass  
Of open fields when  
All is silent.

The students themselves double matted their work, Meagher explained. Their work varies from portraits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Eric Carle to more abstract works of art. All of the student work will be posted on the walls until May 15th.

"The students learned from the curators how important the lobby display is to set the tone for the school," said Meagher. Therefore, the lobby mural is an ongoing effort, with even the old couch, chairs, and table revamped in the school entryway with new slip covers. It does indeed set a warm tone as one enters the building.

After a second performance of the student musical, "Mighty Minds" I talked with Ruth O'Mara and seven of her mural students. O'Mara is well versed in the world of art, as she has exhibited her work at the Sorrento School of Art in Italy as well as in local galleries. She chose about thirty students to create the mural in the Sheffield after school program. Sheffield received a grant from the Massachusetts



Artist-in-Residence Ruth O'Mara shows off a mural created by fifth graders at Sheffield School.

Cultural Council to undertake this wonderful group effort, based on the theme of Turners Falls and Nature.

O'Mara said she "liked how the students' ideas helped inspire other students' ideas." The students explored using color, without black. The students sketched, drew, and painted the mural themselves. They are currently making clay leaves to attach to the "Tree of Knowledge."

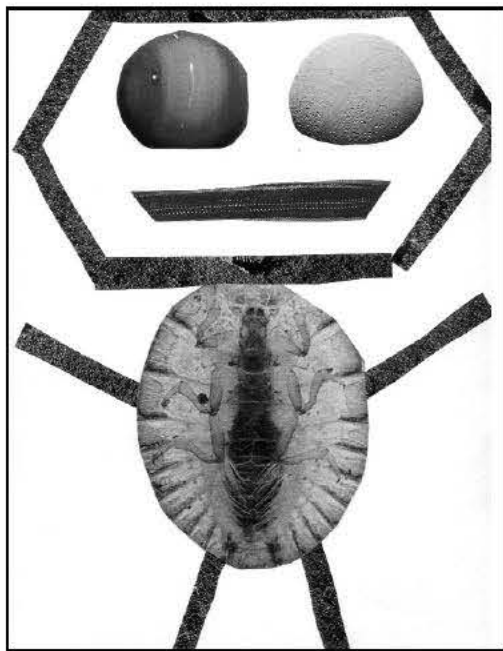
One fourth grader in Mrs. LeBlanc's class named Aimee painted the "Tree of Knowledge," and the Great Falls Discovery Center. Aimee liked creating the clay leaves best, shaping them and using toothpicks for the details. Another of Mrs. LeBlanc's students, Ken, thought painting was easier than drawing. Among his contributions to the mural is a painting of a happy boy walking. Alex, a sixth grader in Ms. Gunnison's class, painted "the Pot of Learning," and assisted in painting the pond and tree. Brittany, a sixth grader in Ms. Diani's class, was extra busy this past spring as she was also a chorus singer in the play. On the mural, she contributed the chipmunk, the owl, and assisted with the trees. Gabrielle, a fourth grader in Mrs. Hazlett's class, painted the flowing pond. She thought it was harder drawing from the paper to the wall. Trevis, a fourth grader of Mrs. LeBlanc's class, made the two

flying bluebirds and the outline of the butterfly. Jessica, a fifth grader in Ms. Guy-Greene's class, thought painting was the most fun; she made the wise owl in the tree. Another student, named Ben, depicted the strutting heron.

Together, the staff and students of Sheffield are working hard to increase their proficiency in the arts, while

building a creative and colorful school community. Superintendent Gee, Hillcrest and Montague Center School 2nd grade students were also able to view these sights after the play on Friday morning.

Please call Principal Chip Wood, at (413) 863-9326 to arrange a walk through the school if you have not yet seen the students' art.



"The Man in the Field" by Kalbe, a fifth grader at Sheffield School



"Eric Carle" by Danielle, a fifth grader at Sheffield School

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## GILL continued from pg 1

parent of an older boy mentioned that her son had dropped out of school since entering the upper grades in Montague: "There was poor communication between myself and the teachers; there was no community feel. There were detentions and in-house suspensions that I was not told about. We're told to think about the district as a whole, but no one in the district is thinking about Gill."

Sorrel Hatch read in a printed statement that: "It is the Gill school that made me what I am...I don't think technology makes a school. [With this proposed move] the welfare of our school hangs in the balance."

Joanne Rabideau, Gill's sixth grade teacher favored the change. "This is a high pressure situation for everyone, but in order to educate our children better, I think they need to be moved up. Collaboration needs to happen for educational challenges and mandates to be met. I appreciate the good things that people have to say about the Gill school, but in my heart I believe that the middle school is where we can best meet the mandates. It may not be as dif-

ferent there as people think." Another voter who spoke in favor of the move added: "The point of education is that everyone learns at a different time. You need to think about what's good in terms of the whole picture. Not just in terms of 'your kid' or 'my kid'."

Rabideau addressed the idea that Montague schools offered poor educational outcomes. "My blood is boiling over the way schools in the district are being talked about. We have good teachers and good students. Bad scores do not mean that schools, teachers, or programs are not functioning." Rabideau was referencing the fact that both Sheffield Elementary and the Great Falls Middle School are on the Massachusetts Board of Education watch list for underperforming schools, according to the guidelines of

the No Child Left Behind Act. The second proposal on the evening's agenda was a proposal to allow intra-district choice between Gill and Montague. Most who spoke to this proposal felt the potential to have children from Montague elementary grades attend the Gill School - which has classes as small as 9 or 10

students - would be a positive development. However the lack of clarity of the proposed policy was cause for some concern. "We shouldn't overwhelm our school before we know all the guidelines," said one Gill parent, echoing several other statements to this effect. Nonetheless, the proposal passed, 48 to 11.

A Gill parent of two seemed to speak for many when he acknowledged the raw emotion in the room. "We parents care about our children. I know our school board cares about our children. There are no villains in this room. Unfunded mandates are the true villain."



Left to right rear: Leland Stevens, Phil Maddern, Ann Banash, moderator Ray Steele and Lynda Hodsdon-Mayo overlook (left to right) school committee chair Mary Kociela, an attorney for the Gill-Montague Regional School District, and superintendent Sue Gee, at the Gill Special Town Meeting on Thursday, May 3rd.

## Annual Spring Clean Fling

There will be a downtown spring cleanup in Turners Falls on Saturday, May 12th from 9 a.m. - noon. Interested individuals will meet at the Great Falls Discovery Center's Great Hall at 9 a.m. Refreshments will be served and a prize will be given for most trash collected. There will be a short safety discussion followed by sweeping, raking, pulling weeds and picking up trash. Tenders and sponsors of the planters along Ave A are also invited to participate and will be given updated planting information. If possible, please bring gloves, rakes, brooms and water. Bags will be provided. For more information, please contact the Brick House, 863-9576 or the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

## SHEFFIELD continued from pg 1

from the Mighty Minds superheroes. With plenty of fanfare, the six Mighty Minds make their appearance chanting their mantra, "We are Mighty Minds! We go everywhere, promising to learn and love every minute of it. We are curious! We are smart! And we are Very enthusiastic!" Enthusiastic they were.

The subjects represented by the Mighty Minds included math (Elyssa Carner), spelling (Kaieeca Pabon), reading (Sam Peabody), history (Jonathan Rawls), science (Mikey Whiteman), and music (Austin Hurley). Decked out in bright capes made by Sue Guy-Greene the superheroes had

their work cut out for them, because the students were convinced they would not be successful on the upcoming tests.

There were plenty of one-liners for comic relief as students (including Kathryn Austin, Danielle Bassett, Eric Ferguson, Jessica Fuller, Cameron Jacques, Emma Johnson, Briana McCaffrey, Alyssa Rockwood, Brett Sirum, Marcel Ortiz, Tasheen Wanzio) let us know the high stress issues. Words were not enough, of course, since this was a musical performance and each time the students lamented their problems the heroes managed to come up with a song to help them out.

Concerns about reading led to "Give Me a Book" and math woes were resolved by the

infectious "Conga Math," where audience members had a hard time staying in their seats as the entire chorus conga line moved throughout the auditorium. The students' fears were eventually relieved when they were reminded they had the support of parents and teachers and most importantly their own mighty minds.

Nan Sadoski has her hands full as the music teacher for all four elementary schools in the Gill-Montague district (K-6), but it is clear she enjoys the extra work involved in the annual plays as well. She generally seeks a classroom teacher at each school to help with productions, and notes this year Guy-Greene volunteered to co-produce the musical. Sadoski credits Guy-

Greene's work with the success of this year's production. The enthusiasm Sadoski exudes when talking about teaching music must have a lot to do with why so many students sign up for chorus in the first place!

Audience members leaving the auditorium were raving about the quality of the production as well as the art displayed throughout the school. Both were part of the fabulous gala Arts Festival at the Sheffield School. Let's hope the music and visual arts programs at the school are not jeopardized as budget discussions move forward.

Lyrics and music for the play were written by Cristi Miller and John Jacobsen.

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## Stroller Strut and Senior Stroll at Northfield Mountain

Fri., May 11; 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
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continue social strolls in other beautiful natural areas. Program is designed for caregivers with children in strollers or backpacks.

Looking for a place to fitness walk with your stroller sized child or grandchild? Come introduce your little one to the touches, sounds, and smells of the natural world. Program activities will show caregivers entertaining and safe activities they can share with babies in the woods and fields around Northfield Mountain and beyond. Caregivers will also learn what poison ivy looks like. Activities will be mixed with the chance to move along the carriage width ski trails and socialize with other caregivers who enjoy being outdoors. The group will share their favorite stroller hike destinations and, if desired, contact information to

Senior Stroll at Northfield Mountain  
Fri., May 18; 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.  
For ages 55 and older  
No fee, Pre-register by calling 800-859-2960

Come get that spring back in your step! The carriage width ski trails make a nice even walking surface and a great place to socialize with other active seniors as we walk some of the lower trails on Northfield Mountain. Enjoy the beautiful colors, smells, even tastes of spring as we discover spring wildflowers nestled in the newly green woods and share inspiring quotes from poetic lovers of spring.

## Turners Falls' Derrick Zellmann "Best in Show" at College Exhibit

TURNERS FALLS - Derrick Zellmann, art major at Bridgewater State College in Bridgewater, MA, won "Best in Show" in the Graphic Design category for his piece titled "Personifying September" "Self Preservation"



depicting the events of Sept. 11th, 2001. The 43rd Annual Student Art Show was held on April 25th. Zellmann also received the

Anthony Dimingos Award for best overall display of paintings or drawings for his painting series "Bridging Montague" (acrylic and newsprint on paper) and for his painting titled, "Self Preservation" (acrylic and duct tape on paper).

Zellmann was also recently selected as the Class of 2007

Student Commencement Speaker at Bridgewater State College. He is from Turners Falls.



PHOTO: JOHN ZELLMANN

Derrick Zellmann of Turners Falls

## CHOICE

continued from pg 1

deficit in the dispatch budget. When asked about the cause of this deficit, police chief Ray Zukowski responded that three dispatchers were lost to Greenfield this year, forcing him to hire and train new people. He explained that Greenfield pays dispatchers \$2 more per hour, a difference in salary that can be hard to compete with.

Quickly passed with little discussion were articles four, five, and six. Article four appropriated \$1,700 for the board of registrars budget to cover the cost of hiring an additional person during the election period. Article five appropriated \$10,000 for the reserve fund budget, covering any potential shortfall that may have resulted from the low reserve fund for the rest of the fiscal year. When Mike Naughton of Precinct 2 asked what the reserve fund has been used for, town accountant Carolyn Olsen explained that money has been drawn from the fund to cover utilities, police dispatch, and tax title proceedings, among other things. Article six transferred \$21,000 from the snow and ice budget (which showed a positive balance this year due to the mild winter), and moved it to the general DPW account.

Mary Kociela, school com-

mittee chair, then took the podium to address the remaining articles on the warrant. The first article proposed amending the regional school district agreement to allow sixth grade students from Gill to move to the Great Falls Middle School in Montague. Kociela explained that the school committee had already voted to move the sixth grade from Sheffield School to the middle school, to provide a broader span at the middle school, and allow sixth graders and sixth grade teachers to access the technology, programs and collaboration available at that facility. The amendment to allow Gill sixth graders to attend the middle school as well needed to pass in both Gill and Montague to be enacted.

In comparison to the "lively discussion" Kociela described taking place the same evening at the Gill town meeting (where the measure went down to defeat), the amendment passed unanimously, with no discussion, in Montague.

However, lively conversation ensued, devoted to the intra-district choice articles. Kociela began by explaining what intra-district choice is and why the school committee feels it will benefit children in Gill and Montague. Intra-district school choice differs from inter-district school choice in that 'inter' choice means choice between school dis-

tricts, whereas 'intra' district choice means choice within a school district. With the passage of intra-district school choice, provided space is available, Montague residents could send their children to any of the Montague elementary schools or to Gill, and Gill students could attend Montague elementary schools, Kociela said.

She explained to town meeting that this is different from the school choice that has been mandated through the No Child Left Behind Act. This type of school choice directs schools that have been deemed underperforming - including, this year, Sheffield Elementary School - to offer the choice to students who would be attending to go to another school in the district that is meeting No Child Left Behind benchmarks. The school district must cover the cost of transportation for these children. This year ten or eleven families with children at Sheffield Elementary have opted to go to Gill Elementary, and the district will provide a bus for them to do so.

Beyond this federally mandated intra-district choice, the school committee is hoping to achieve greater equity and more options for students and families through optional intra-district choice. The committee hopes by making more options available within the district, they will be able to retain more students and keep them from

choosing out to other school districts. This would keep more money in the district as well, for when students attend other districts' schools, state funds go with them.

Immediately, town meeting members had many questions about the specifics of the new intra-district school choice policy. How would students be chosen? Would there be a lottery? What about families who wanted to take advantage of the system but weren't chosen? When would the program begin? What about transportation for voluntary intra-district choice students and how would the costs of transporting them be paid for?

Kociela, with the help of school committee member Mike Langknecht, tried her best to answer these policy questions, but fell short in the eyes of some town meeting members. Precinct 1's Les Cromack stood up to say that though he came into the meeting intending to vote 'Yes' on the articles, the lack of specific answers about policy shifted his vote to the negative. Mike Naughton echoed this sentiment, stating, "It feels funny to vote on policy that we don't know about yet."

Others disagreed, and expressed confidence in the school committee to make decisions in the best interest of students and families in the district. Jeff Singleton of Precinct

1 said, "We're not here to micromanage school policy." Paul Kaufman, also of Precinct 1, argued that it's the job of the school committee, not town meeting, to set school policy. Town voters influence policy by voting for school committee members, he maintained, and when these members change, policy can change with them.

Precinct 6 town meeting member Brian Costa supported a lottery system for students who might want to take advantage of choice within the district, and warned there might be more of them than the school committee might think. He said if intra-district choice had been available earlier, he would have sent his son to Gill Elementary, rather than have him go to school with "less desirable students."

Despite all the heated conversation surrounding intra-district choice, the way children will be chosen, and the policies surrounding its inception, when the time came for voting, a majority voted yes. A standing vote count was not needed. Whether or not intra-district choice will be put in place for next school year, how many families will opt to take advantage of it, and whether or not town meeting members and residents will feel their policy-related questions have all been answered, we'll have to wait and see.



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# TF Fire District Prudential Committee Looks at Finances

BY DAVID DETMOLD

The Prudential Committee of the Turners Falls fire and water district reorganized on Monday, May 7th, with new member Mark Allen present, along with Joe Janikas and chair Doug Starbuck. Janikas distributed financial information comparing the cost of operating the Turners Falls fire department to the cost of operating fire departments in other towns in the Commonwealth.

"I tried to take towns of comparable size, and in some cases that are larger," said Janikas.

"Athol, Greenfield, Gardner.... They're a lot larger than we are." In each of these communities, in 2005, Janikas' chart showed that overtime pay for a larger contingent of firefighters was less than the amount spent on overtime in the sample year (2006) for Turners Falls. In 2005, Athol, with 13 employees spent \$12,600 on overtime pay, while Greenfield, with 28 firefighters, spent \$89,000 on overtime pay. In 2006, Turners Falls, with eight fulltime firefighters, spent \$198,000 on overtime pay, according to Janikas' figures,

which he said he took from the town of Montague's 2006 annual report.

A number of the Turners Falls firefighters were present at the meeting. One of them, John Zellman, took issue with Janikas' figures in a follow-up phone call, saying Janikas' figures for overtime pay in Turners was inflated. But Janikas subsequently defended his research, citing end of year total wages documents, saying the union contract's average base pay for firefighters and captains in Turners Falls was \$37,078 in 2006, but the actual average pay for firefighters and captains in Turners Falls that year was \$65,805. The average difference - \$28,727 - represents overtime and incentive pay, and 'out-of-grade' pay for firefighters filling in when captains are on vacation, Janikas said.

"One hundred and ninety-eight thousand dollars a year is far more than any of the other towns" [of comparable size] pay for overtime, Janikas asserted. "Our salaries are far more. East Longmeadow (population 16,104) operates their fire station

from 7 a.m to 6 p.m. I believe they seem to get by just fine. I think we owe it to our taxpayers to form a committee and look into this. If we can save some money and achieve an acceptable level of service, I think it's incumbent on us to do so."

The committee unanimously supported Janikas' motion to form a committee to "look at alternative schemes for performing fire and health services for the community."

Allen pointed out that more than half the calls that come into the fire department annually are health related calls. He thought the department should explore billing for those calls.

Chief Ray Godin said the department billed out whatever they could, for attending to oil and fuel spills for serious car accidents, for example. But he said, "We don't transport patients. As for billing for medical supplies or our overtime costs, we're not going to get anywhere with it."

Allen responded, "Then we should look into forming an ambulance service. It will

increase our costs," but enable the department to bill for medical calls, he said. "There must be a fair reimbursement for the services rendered."

Godin countered, "Historically, this committee has not been inclined to get into an ambulance service in any way shape or form." He said feasibility studies have been proposed on that topic for years, and had gone nowhere.

Allen and Janikas asked Godin to present figures for potential costs and savings involved in forming a town ambulance service at the next meeting of the prudential committee. Janikas complained that the prudential committee "seemed to get bogged down and accomplish nothing" because it only met once a month. He made a motion to increase the prudential committee's meetings to twice a month, for the foreseeable future. That motion also passed unanimously. The next meeting of the prudential committee will be at the Water Department office on Millers Falls Road at 5:15 on May 21st

## Volunteers Needed

The Prudential Committee of the Turners Falls Fire District is seeking volunteers to serve on a committee to explore and investigate alternatives for providing Fire and Emergency Services to the District.

Anyone interested can contact any Prudential Committee member: Douglas Starbuck, Mark Allen, or Joe Janikas. They can also call (863-4552) or stop in at the District Office at 226 Millers Falls Road in Turners Falls. A brief note, expressing interest may also be sent to the Millers Falls Road address.

The Prudential Committee hopes to form the Committee as soon as possible and will be meeting at the Fire District office on May 21st at 5:15 P. M. All District residents are welcome to attend.

## NOTES FROM THE GILL TOWN MEETING

### Most Gill Budget Items Await Outcome of \$300,000 Override

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK - The first half of Gill's annual town meeting convened at the Gill town hall on Monday, May 7th, with discussion of the \$300,000 budget override scheduled for May 21st dominating the meeting. Town department heads say they need the override to pass in order to provide services at the present level.

Mick LaClaire, head of the highway department, asked rhetorically, "What price is a man's life worth?" in regards to getting a new truck for the public works department. "Our newest truck is twelve years old, and it is literally falling apart. That could have life or death consequences in a snowstorm when one of our men is driving

downhill plowing. I have no control over [the rising costs of fuel and truck maintenance] ...but I think you'll agree that the services are good. I'm called a tightwad; if I can save you money I will."

The DPW was just one of several departments in need of the budget override to keep operating at the present level of service. After his presentation on the budget for public safety, police chief David Hastings was asked if there was any way the police department could cut down on fuel expenditures for their cruisers. "Yes, we could always patrol on foot," he quipped. "Cutting patrols is not the way to do it," Hastings continued. "I think our officers conserve as much fuel as possible.

Everyone has a right to a police presence."

Superintendent of G-M schools Sue Gee echoed the sentiments of the DPW and police department during her presentation to the assemblage. "Similar to what you've heard, this is a level budget, to provide the services we already have. If the override is not passed, we would have to cut the equivalent of twenty teaching positions. [Editor's note: Gee's statement implies Montague will pass a budget for the schools in proportion to the one Gill is considering. The Montague selectboard, on Monday May 7th, said there are at present no plans in Montague to seek an override for the schools. There is a \$978,000 gap between what

the town of Montague has said it is able to pay and what the schools have requested this year, according to Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton.] We don't have twenty positions to eliminate. Everything is on the table because we're so bare bones as it is, to the extent we could lose our school accreditation." Gee pointed out that the Gill Elementary School only has a half time principle and a "very part time" nurse.

Fire chief Gene Beaubien wearily commented, during his presentation, "It's the same as everyone else. Expenses are going up, oil is going up, parts are going up. We have hoses that are twenty years old and no community fire grants. There is

nothing we can do. We need to keep our trucks up to date and our gear up to date."

Selectboard chair Ann Banash, presenting the budget to the crowd, stated: "This budget will allow us to do business in the way we do it now. If [the proposed override] fails on May 21st, we return with a drastically reduced proposition." If the override fails, at least \$77,000 will be cut from town services, which Banash said would be "devastating."

Not everyone present was convinced the override would be beneficial to the town. Tupper Brown asked those present: "Is the town in financial crisis? I personally would expect to see some slashes: a

see OVERRIDE pg 16

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**NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD**

# Forest Management and Land Use Discussed

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN** - At its May 2nd meeting, the Wendell selectboard met with Deidre Cabral of the planning board, and Wayne Feiden, a consultant working with the planning board on the Pelham Hills forest conservation grant. Feiden, who is not from Wendell, wanted to get an idea of the board members' perspective on land use and conservation in town, and for Wendell's town owned land.

Selectboard chair Ted Lewis first said he thought the forest should be kept open for hunters, fishers, and for people who hike, walk, ride horses, bike, or collect wild foods. Tree cutting should be allowed so the forest can be managed for its best health, and best use. Fires will burn slower and not as deep into the ground in a managed forest, and fighting fires that do occur is easier in a managed, less tangled forest.

Board member Christine Heard agreed, but added it is good to leave some of the forest alone so that succession can continue uninterrupted. She said she does not like motorized recreational vehicles in the forest because they tear up the ground wherever they go. The state prohibits them on state owned land, but enforcement of the ATV ban is difficult.

Board member Dan Keller told Feiden more than half the land in town is protected. He said agriculture is important in town, but farming here is marginal, very little of the land is good for growing crops, and it is difficult to support politically. He said the town is divided between people who want to stop development, and people who see a need for more development in town.

Heard said the Swift River School needs more children; enrollment is down almost 100 students from 250 ten years

ago. She said there was a big influx of people into town in the 1970s and 1980s, and the children of those families have gone to school, but few of those grown children have stayed. Young people are not coming to town with children. The population is aging. Living in Wendell is expensive; the tax rate is high.

Lewis said the town is off the beaten path, has no industry, and is not likely to attract any. He said the tax rate is high, but the actual homeowner's tax bill is not far off other homeowner tax bills in the state.

Cabral said that Wendell allows home based and cottage industry by right. Heard said people are more connected to the land in town, and more likely to get some of their livelihood from the land, as cordwood, a garden, or simply time spent outside. Wendell is less of a suburb than Pelham, and does not have a great number of second homes, although there are still old camps around town. Keller said more people are commuting from town, and Lewis said Wendell is an easy drive to Amherst, Northampton, and Brattleboro.

Shared town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said at New Salem town meetings, people argue and argue, and then vote down the middle according to the ideas they came in with, whereas at Wendell town meetings, people argue and talk, and then the vote is usually unanimous.

Heard said the town has a real community, with sharing at the Freebox, and the Free Store at the transfer station. After the tornado hit town last July, people came to their neighbors' aid within minutes, with no selectboard or town oversight.

Cabral said that on June 2nd, at 9:00 a.m. in the town

hall there will be a kickoff meeting for committees involved with the Pelham Hills grant: the open space committee, planning board, selectboard, and conservation commission, to discuss what can and can't be done for open space protection. At the end of the grant period, in December, there will be a wrap-up meeting.

The meeting opened with Boo Pearson who rented the town hall for Friday, May 25th for a concert by Simon White's band, GTB. The band recently performed at the Route 63 Roadhouse, and was such a success the Roadhouse asked them back. Admission will be \$5, and Pearson expected fewer than 25 people to attend. He agreed to act as a parking monitor, and to call police chief Ed Chase, just to let him know. Pearson said he does not live in town year round, and said that Bob Rosser was willing to have his name on the rental agreement.

The selectboard looked at a draft of the annual town meeting warrant for June 6th. Kate Nolan has submitted an article to create a committee to oversee a community garden behind the new town office building. The town will not be able to close on the USDA loan for the building construction in time for the meeting, so it will not be necessary to authorize payment for that, but it will be necessary to authorize payment on the short-term loan. The town open space plan is expiring, and will need to be extended for self help grants.

Keller said that the town garage loan has been paid, and Aldrich said there is one more payment due for the Swift River School construction. The board felt it was time to start putting money back into the capital stabilization fund.

Cleaning and maintenance

of the new town buildings will be a job large enough to require a custodian. Joy Gorzokowski, who cleans the town hall, has suggested her husband, Bob Hudson, for a job of about 19 hours a week, at \$15 an hour. He has already done work for the town without pay, helping Gorzokowski. Keller said the position should be posted, but Aldrich said it was not necessary to advertise in the newspaper, which is expensive.

The town's insurance company inspected the town highway garage and fire station, and made recommendations for repairs. The roof has leaks and the ceilings below have water damage. They said the fire station is cluttered, and the drains in the floor should be connected to a tight tank. Gas and diesel fuel lines should be replaced with breakaway hose before the EPA requires that repair.

Lewis said the roof leaks have been addressed, although the ceiling damage has not. Keller said the floor drains were connected to a tight tank in the original construction, one of the few things done right on the original construction. (Lewis said that was an accident.) Road boss Dan Bacigalupo can have the hoses replaced at minimal expense.

Howard Labs of Hatfield will pick up monthly samples from the town's new water system, test them and keep records for \$10 a month.

Handford Construction's

new project manager for the new town buildings has had a hard time keeping up with the history and change orders on those construction projects. Bill payment is more than a week late. But town accountant Janet Swem is holding money back until she is satisfied with documentation. Reimbursement for the insulation panels that were brought to the site but not used has been held up. The library got its occupancy permit from the building inspector, and a certificate of substantial completion from the architect on Friday April 27th, but the town is not accepting it until the library can start to move in. The water accumulating in the cellar has lessened, but the library drainage problem is not fully resolved.

Minor punch list items still need to be addressed, and there is a skylight that still has not arrived on site. Grading, seeding and drainage still need to be taken care of, and there is still rubbish to be removed. Lewis said the highway department has done a lot of work at the building site without submitting a bill, and Heard said they have been more of a public works department. Some contingency money may be spent for trees and plantings between both buildings and abutters. Any more planting should be done by volunteers.

Board members agreed to drive through town again on May 7th looking for excess unregistered vehicles.

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

# Montague Saves on CSO Project

BY DAVID DETMOLD

The town of Montague has received two grants, totaling \$849,000, from the United States Department of Agriculture, to reduce the cost of the combined sewer overflow remediation project now underway. The project, in two phases, was projected to cost the taxpayers and sewer users of Montague \$5.7 million, but town administrator Frank Abbondanzio told the selectboard on Monday night, May 7th, the grants, received under the USDA's rural development community facility loan program, will reduce the amount the town will have to borrow to approximately \$4.85 million. Although town meeting had approved the higher level of borrowing for the project, Abbondanzio said the town would not borrow to the authorized ceiling without going back to town meeting for approval of further add-ons to the project.

The scope of the project had been reduced substantially last year to meet the \$5.7 million ceiling. Wastewater treatment supervisor Bob Trombley told the board the items removed earlier from the project - some of which would have resulted in long term cost savings for sewer users - "will have to get addressed at some time. But we need to get that bid done. This is a 400-plus-day project," he said.

Reached after the meeting, Trombley ticked off a list of items that had been dropped from the second phase of the CSO project to bring it in at the approved cost ceiling. They include: correcting the negative pitch to the influent pipe between the Greenfield Road CSO and the treatment plant; a parallel screening and grit removal system at the headworks; heating, ventilation and cooling repairs at the plant; a new roof on the operations building; a new solids handling and dewatering system; electri-

cal upgrades to meet fire code issues, and a new supervisory control and data acquisition system in the operations building.

Trombley said Ludlow Construction would return to Avenue A and 7th Street to remove temporary trench patching laid down last year during the course of sewer repair work. He said they would put down permanent patching during the course of two days, this week, and then clean up the lot to the west of Food City where they have stored material for the last six months or so.

He said the second phase of sewer repair work, to take place in the vicinity of the treatment plant in Montague City, had reached the 100% design phase. "We will be moving shortly toward bidding it," in June or July, Trombley said.

**Progress on Australis Odor**

Board member Allen Ross took the opportunity to ask Trombley about progress on alleviating a persistent bad odor that had been traced to a sewer line leading from the Australis fish farm in the industrial park. The odor had been the subject of ongoing complaints from residents and businesses in the neighborhood downstream of the sewer line.

Trombley said the Australis plant had been phasing out use of a 200,000 gallon manure storage tank last week, and

applying the stored manure on farmers' fields in Gill. Having nearly completed that task, he said, the plant had measured "zero readings in the sewer for hydrogen sulfide," the gas causing the rotten egg smell. He said the plant no longer intended to store manure in the tank, and there would be no more land application of fish farm fertilizer in the future.

"It does seem they were responsive to the citizens," said board member Pat Allen.

Ross termed the smell in the area during last weeks transition period "fragrant."

**Mural in Millers Falls**

The meeting began with Sara Campbell, leader of Girl Scout Troop #328, based in Millers Falls, coming before the board with one of her scouts, Bethany Zera, 14, of Grout Circle, to ask permission of the selectboard to paint a mural on the abutment of

a railroad bridge on Newton Street. Campbell said verbal approval to paint the mural had already been secured from Vermont Central Railroad, and she was awaiting a formal letter of approval. The colorful mural will include the words, "Keep Our River Clean."

The girl scouts had been assigned the stretch of the Millers River near the railroad bridge during last year's Source to Sea Cleanup, Campbell explained, and they have since adopted that area as an ongoing project.

Zera said her troop had found many interesting illegally dumped items in and along the Millers River during their clean-up. She mentioned a bike, a kiddie pool, "lots of little beer bottles, probably left there by kids having a party," a television set and an oil can, among other things.

"It's amazing how much

trash you pick up down there," said Campbell. "It's a long way from McDonald's."

Ross said, "I think it is fantastic that you've done that. It's one of those special spots. There are beaver living there. There's a new water park in Athol, and a beautiful access park in Orange. There are people using that stretch of the river for whitewater and flat water canoeing. The Millers has a history for a great many years of not being taken care of, but that's changing now. So your efforts are very appreciated."

The girls plan to paint their mural on Saturday, June 2nd if all goes well. The board approved letting them use traffic cones to block off part of the roadway underneath the railroad bridge while they worked. Campbell, who oversaw Ludlow Construction's sewer project last year on 7th and

continued next page



Engineer Sara Campbell keeps watch over pavement removal by the Carnegie Library on Wednesday. She reports that the 7th Street trench shows no signs of settling, and was solid when the roller passed over it.

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continued from p.12

Avenue A in her capacity as consulting engineer for Camp Dresser & McGee, has some experience diverting traffic in work zones.

**Labor-Management Meeting**

Abbondanzio announced a tentative date for a joint labor management meeting between all unions representing town of Montague and Gill-Montague Regional School District employees, to talk about budget issues on Tuesday, May 29th at 7 p.m., at the Turners Falls High School auditorium.

Ross said, "That idea came up during meeting between the selectboard and the finance committee where we all realized, with Frank [Abbondanzio]'s historical analysis of the town budget, we were in a situation where we couldn't afford what the schools legitimately felt they needed for their operating budget. The whole town and the schools are in a major bind, which would involve curtailing the percentage of health insurance or annual raises employees get. Rather than coming at this adversely to the participating individuals, we thought it would be best to include them, to involve the power of the unions in certain lobbying efforts..."

Abbondanzio said a pre-construction meeting would take place Thursday, May 10th, at 10:00 a.m. at town hall to go over the schedule for crosswalk and sidewalk improvements along Avenue A. He said the construction schedule will necessarily involve some rerouting of traffic and inconvenience to businesses along the Avenue.

On another inconvenient construction project on the Avenue, Abbondanzio said the pathways in Peskeomskut Park, temporarily closed for the last two months while negotiations have been underway over how to best resurface them to satisfy ADA requirements, would soon be paved over with a colorized asphalt. The pea stone surface met with objections from the Massachusetts Architectural



Girl Scout Troop #328 cleaned up along the Millers River in October of last year. (Bethany Zera, far right.) The Newton Street railroad bridge abutment is in the background.

Access Board. Abbondanzio said some town funds would have to be expended to fix the problem, but did not mention a figure.

The town administrator said the Montague Community Band's June 11th concert with the United States Marine Band from New Orleans scheduled for 7 p.m. in Peskeomskut Park may have to take place at the Turners Falls High School if the new grass has not become sufficiently established by then. "We'll play that by ear," he said. "The grass has been growing well lately."

**Elks and the ZBA**

Building inspector David Jensen, who works with the zoning board of appeals, came before the board to outline a conflict of interest on the ZBA, and to propose a remedy for it. The Montague Elks have applied to the ZBA for a permit to construct a smoking porch in back of their lodge in Turners Falls. Three of the members of the ZBA are also members of the Elks, and if all three of them recuse themselves from the hearing, the board will lack a quorum to act. Having consulted the state ethics commission, Jensen said the selectboard could invoke the "rule of necessity," and allow the members with conflicts to act on the matter.

The board took Jensen's advice, and invoked the rule of necessity for two of the ZBA members, Dennis Booska and Robert Sojka, to act on the Elk's application at the hearing scheduled for May 9th. They did not invoke the rule for the ZBA chair, Ernest Brown, who happens to also be an officer of the Montague Elks, because the selectboard felt his involvement with the Elks was greater than the other two members'.

Jensen said the Elks had discussed their plan to build a smoking porch with neighbors on 7th Street, and had decided to withdraw and resubmit their application, moving the proposed porch to the Elks Avenue side of the lodge, away from most of the nearby residences.

**Kislyuk and Kosuda**

In other matters involving the office of the building inspector, Jensen said a civil warrant for the arrest of Belchertown developer Mark Kislyuk had been issued by the Greenfield Housing Court, after he failed to appear for a hearing on November 24th, 2006. That was the sixth Housing Court hearing in a row Kislyuk had failed to appear for, according to Jensen. The building inspector and the board of health have ordered Kislyuk to return

\$3600 in unpaid taxes on the property at 181 Avenue A.

Jensen said state building code did not allow construction sites to remain incomplete with open excavations for long periods of time. He said the open pits around the foundation walls remain an attractive nuisance, although protruding metal rebar have been removed, and an open manhole covered. He said the site, across the street from the post office, was littered with construction debris and accumulated trash.

Montague police chief Ray Zukowski said he had notified the Belchertown police regarding the warrant for Kislyuk's arrest. "If we don't get anything from

Belchertown in the next week or so," said Zukowski on May 8th, "I'll probably have to send my own guys down and see if we can bring him in front of housing court again."

Jensen said his department had the authority to return the site to level grade and bill Kislyuk for the work, if the court and the police were not able to enforce the order soon.

On a similar, if slightly more positive note, Jensen said Gary Kosuda, owner of the former Railroad Salvage Building on Power Street in the Patch, had appeared in Greenfield Housing Court on April 20th and agreed to the town's demands on how to proceed to secure the property and stabilize the walls of that structure, so Power Street can be reopened. Power Street, one of two entrances to the insular residential neighborhood on the Patch, has been blocked off for a solid year since portions of the brick walls tumbled into the street.

Jensen said Kosuda, a Florida resident, had agreed to strengthen the security fence around the property, and top it with barbed wire. The court ordered Kosuda to "demolish and remove all internal and external debris from the property," and to "demolish and remove floor and roof sections that are in danger of collapse" in the four-story section of the building, and to hire a structural engineer to assess the stability of the walls. Jensen said the court gave Kosuda 30 days to complete those tasks.



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**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG**

**Drinking Party in the Woods**

**Wednesday 5-2**  
 11:50 a.m. Assisted Northfield police with involuntary committal.  
 2:15 p.m. Assisted fire department on Wood Avenue with brush fire.  
 5:02 p.m. Report of possible domestic situation on side of River Road, investigated same.

**Friday 5-4**  
 2:00 p.m. Assisted business owner with employee dispute at station.  
 5:45 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency on the Mount Hermon campus.

**Saturday 5-5**  
 12:30 a.m. Assisted Bernardston police off of Bald Mountain Road with large party in the woods; underage youths consuming alcohol.  
 11:30 a.m. Stolen cellular phone report taken at station.

**Sunday 5-6**  
 1:00 a.m. Assisted with medical emergency on the Mount Hermon campus  
 1:45 a.m. Checked area of West Gill Road for possible vehicle crash, related to incident in Bernardston.  
 9:50 p.m. Report of possible breaking and entry in progress on Meadow Street. All OK, caretaker checking residence.

**Monday 5-7**  
 12:40 a.m. 911 abandoned call from Mount Hermon Campus. Unable to locate where call initiated from.  
 4:46 p.m. Report of subject below Gill - Montague bridge attempting to launch raft into river. Unable to locate subject.

**Tuesday 5-8**  
 8:20 p.m. Assisted removing a disabled motor vehicle from intersection of Main Road and French King Highway.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG**

**Car vs. Skateboard, Loose Dog, Semi Crash on Route 2**

**Wednesday 5-2**  
 10:50 p.m. Report of a suspicious vehicle on Mechanic Street. Gone on arrival.

**Thursday 5-3**  
 9:10 p.m. Report of a suspicious vehicle at the Usher Plant. Area searched; gone on arrival. Subject might have been searching through everything goes piles.  
 10:17 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Route 2, criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating after suspension and a marked lanes violation.

**Saturday 5-5**  
 6:37 p.m. Report of an erratic driver traveling west on Route 2. [redacted] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor, marked lanes violation, no license in possession.

**Sunday 5-6**  
 3:40 p.m. Passing motorist reports young man riding down Lester Street on a skateboard on his stomach like Superman. States she hit him because she didn't see him. Spoke with young man who admitted his involvement. Brought him home and spoke with his mother about the incident.

**Monday 5-7**  
 7:30 a.m. Report of soot emitting from Erving Paper toward residences on Prospect Heights Lane. Furnace problem. Erving Paper to handle.  
 8:15 a.m. Report of tractor trailer crash on Route 2 near Erving Paper Mill. Assisted Massachusetts state police with traffic. Extensive damage to truck and shoulder of roadway.

**Tuesday 5-8**  
 8:50 a.m. Report of loose dog on Briggs Street. Located dog and secured in kennel. Notified owner.

**Katie Got Her Ride**



*Katie Parzych gets a ride in John Black's open cab 1920 Autocar dump truck.*

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH**  
**SOUTH DEERFIELD** - The Western Mass chapter of the Antique Club of America antique truck show at the Hardigg Industries in South Deerfield drew a large crowd on Saturday, May 5th. Steve Puffer, 93, founder of the club, drove two of his six antique trucks to the show from Amherst. (Not at the same time.) Katie Parzych, who waited in vain last year, got her ride. John Black gave her a tour of the show in his open cab 1920 Autocar dump truck. Black bought the Autocar from Don Arnot of North Orange, who found it in Dufort's Junkyard there.

radiator ornament at a N.J. flea market. The seller said Chase could buy the rest of the truck and three others stored in a barn. Chase bought them. Show trucks from Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut and Rhode Island crowded Hardigg's parking lot. Jimmy Restanio from Westport, CT, a collector of Bulldog Macks, has a detailed knowledge of the snub nosed trucks. "Mack put the radiators back by the cowl to keep the radiators from getting smashed by horse carts backing into them at farmers markets. Trucks could carry so much more than the horse carts that the drivers backed into them to put them out of commission. The radiators back by the cowl kept the drivers warm in the open cab of the truck in winter, but especially so in summer."

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**Religious Services**

**Baptist**  
 Faith Baptist Church, 331 Silver Street, Greenfield, 774-6438  
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., Wednesday Adult Bible Study 7 p.m. Youth Bible Club at 6:45 p.m.

First Baptist Church of Turners Falls, 10 Prospect, Turners, 863-9083  
 Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

**Christian Science**  
 First Church of Christ Scientist, 110 Federal St., Greenfield, 773-9765  
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons)  
 25 Bank Row, Greenfield, 772-

8514 Sunday at 10 a.m.

**Congregational**  
 Gill Congregational Church, Main Rd., 863-8613 Sunday at 10 a.m.  
 First Congregational Church, 19 Bridge St., Millers Falls, 659-3430 Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Bible study Wed. at 7 p.m.

**Episcopal**  
 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Seventh and Prospect St., Turners, 863-4602  
 Sunday at 9 a.m.

**Friends (Quakers)**  
 Mount Toby Monthly Meeting of Friends, Rte. 63, Leverett, 548-9188  
 Sunday at 10 a.m.

**Jewish**

Temple Israel, 27 Pierce St., Greenfield, 773-5884  
 Friday at 6 p.m. (first weekend of the month) and Saturday at 9:30 a.m.; schedule does vary, it is advisable to call in advance

**Lutheran**  
 St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 23 Long Ave., Greenfield, 773-5242  
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

**Nondenominational**  
 Grace Church, 41 K St., Turners, 863-2771  
 Sunday at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

National Spiritual Alliance  
 2 Montague Ave., Lake Pleasant, 367-0138 Sunday at 1 p.m.

Unity in the Pioneer Valley Church  
 401 Chapman Street, Guiding

Star Grange, 625-2960; Sunday at 10 a.m.

**Roman Catholic**  
 Our Lady of Czestochowa, 84 K St., Turners, 863-4748  
 Saturday at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.; Sunday at 8 and 10:30 a.m.; Monday at 8 a.m.; and Tuesday-Friday at 5:30 p.m. (Confession one half hour prior to mass)

Our Lady of Peace  
 Weekend Liturgies: Saturday 4:00pm; Sunday 8:00am & 10:00am; Daily Mass is at 7:00am Mon. - Thurs., Communion Service Fri. at 7:00am

**Salvation Army**  
 72 Chapman St., Greenfield, 773-3154 Sunday at 11 a.m.

**Unitarian Universalist**  
 All Souls, 399 Main St., Greenfield, 773-5018 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

First Parish Unitarian, Main St., Northfield, 498-5566  
 Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

**United Church of Christ**  
 Evangelical Congregational Church (UCC), 11 Church St., Erving (978) 544-8658

First Congregational Church (UCC), 4 North St., Montague Ctr., 367-9467 Sunday at 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church of Turners Falls (UCC), 148 L St., Turners, 863-9844, Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

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**NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

# School Committee Chooses Interim Superintendent

BY LISA MERKEL

The G-M school committee began their May 8th meeting with a surprise farewell celebration for superintendent Sue Gee, who is leaving to become the superintendent of the Quabbin Regional School District at the end of the school year. Committee chair Mary Kociela presented Gee with a plaque on behalf of the committee, in recognition of Gee's contributions to the district in her four years of work for the Gill-Montague schools.

Later in the evening, Kociela introduced interim superintendent candidate Kenneth Rocke to the community. Rocke spent some time sharing his experience, strengths, and aspirations regarding education administration, emphasizing the difficult issues currently facing the Gill-Montague school district. The committee voted unanimously to accept Rocke as interim superintendent. Rocke and Gee plan to work closely together on a smooth and productive transition.

At the invitation for public participation, parent Patrick Pezzati spoke about the non-binding referendum calling for the closing of Montague Center Elementary, which will

appear on the ballot for Montague's annual town election on May 21st.

He expressed strong concern about the prospect of closing a school he called "the highest testing school in Franklin County." With the approval of intra-district choice, Pezzati argued it is not wise to force the children of Lake Pleasant, Millers Falls, and Montague Center to go to Hillcrest or Sheffield elementary schools, with the latter now on the DOE watchlist as an underperforming school. "We are hemorrhaging money to school choice," Pezzati said.

Sheffield 5th grade teacher Donna Klaiber responded to Pezzati by arguing, "There is a \$900,000 gap in the budget." If teachers are laid off, more parents will choose their children out of the district, she said. Klaiber said Montague Center school will cost a lot in the next five years in capital improvements, and that it would help the budget significantly if the school were closed now. She reaffirmed her stand, "It is not the building that is important; it's the people in it."

High school technology coach Nancy Daniel-Green

also responded to Pezzati, in reference to his comments about Sheffield being an underperforming school. "The notion of under-performance is based on test scores," Green stated. "We need to look at all the pieces of the puzzle." She emphasized one of the most important factors to look at when considering a child's quality of education is the "community that the teachers create for the children that they have for 180 days." Daniel-Green encouraged people to visit the schools, sit in on classes, and see the teaching going on there. Then "make decisions about your children's education for yourself."

Under old business the committee discussed the elementary school configuration for 2007. Mike Langknecht proposed that Montague Center School expand to include a 4th grade next year, in keeping with what he called the preference of the community for a broad grade span, and to avoid the loss of any more students to school choice while the committee delays making a decision. Ted Castro-Santos inquired about the financial impact of moving the 4th graders to Sheffield versus

retaining students at Montague Center for 4th grade. Gee stated the extension of Montague Center to 4th grade would not be a significant financial increase, especially since a bus already transports students to the school from other parts of the district.

Kris Boyle argued that adding a grade would "put a strain on the building, a building already needing improvements." The district is currently having trouble meeting the budget, and the community does not want the burden of more building expenses, she said. Boyle added that instead of spending resources on the Montague Center school building, they should be used to "concentrate efforts to help underperforming students at Sheffield." Langknecht explained that building work needs to be done whether or not the 4th grade is housed at Montague Center. "A few more kids aren't going to knock it down," he said emphatically.

Castro-Santos pointed out that if Montague Center added a 4th grade, then students would have to transition to Sheffield for one year only, 5th grade, before moving the next year to the middle school for 6th grade.

He asked if the committee was talking about a "preamble to 5th grade at Montague Center too." Gee said that the expense would be greater to expand Montague Center to the 5th grade.

Valeria Smith exhorted the committee to vote on the configuration that night, to give parents, teachers, and students adequate time to plan. "I don't think it's fair to do this to the children we're entrusted with," Smith stated. At least two new members will be added to the school committee following the May 21st elections, she noted.

While Smith expressed the importance of deciding right away, with the current committee line-up, Castro-Santos countered it makes sense to him for the new members who will be responsible for continuing the work to have a say in the decision. Other committee members felt that although the task force report on capital needs for the elementary school buildings is complete, final corrections and documentation needed to be furnished before voting on configuration.

Also on the agenda was the announcement of a principal search for Gill and Montague Elementary Schools. The deadline for applications is May 18th.

## ERVING

continued from pg 1

Selectboard chair Andy Tessier said he believed it was important to vote on the article that night in order to speed up the borrowing process, and because of procedures the town would have to take with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The proposal to improve conditions at the treatment plant was framed as coming partly in response to a Notice of Non-compliance from the state DEP regarding the facility.

Jacque Boyden, assistant assessor, asked Tessier why the \$6.4 million figure wasn't presented to the town at an earlier date. "It's almost like we have to vote on it tonight, and I don't feel like I have enough information on it."

"You're probably going to get all the same information tonight as you're going to get in 60 days," responded Tessier.

Jeff Dubay, the one selectboard member who previously opposed the article, presented a conflicted case to the audience. "One of the main problems is that government is sticky and redundant," he said. Prior to the annual town meeting, Dubay suggested that some of the upgrades included in the plans, such as new windows and doors at the plant, could be installed by town employees to save money. But his colleagues persuaded him otherwise. "The longer you wait, the more costs are going to go up," he told the meeting.

The need for upgrades at the treatment plant is indisputable, by most accounts, including Stanley Grudowski's, a member of the finance committee. He said, "I personally have been down in the sewage plant, and it needs help."

Selectboard member Linda Downs-Bembury has also visited the plant, on more than one occasion. "The last time (I visited), I had the opportunity to see

them delivering sewage... It was an experience to say the least. I would never want to work there."

Goodman also opposed the article that would set aside funds for the newly created position of Environmental Supervisor, to oversee procedures and compliance at all three wastewater treatment plants in town, assuring they meet environmental regulations. The position would pay up to \$56,000 annually, with benefits boosting the price tag to a possible \$72,800, according to Goodman.

"This is very important. If you have any idea of the environmental rules we have to go by, you'll know we need this position," Tessier said.

The elementary school budget for fiscal year 2008 will be \$1,925,000, to provide services to Erving's 186 students. This sum was not approved without lengthy discussion. "I think this budget is so full of extracurricular fat that it's ridiculous," said

Grudowski. The police department has level funded for the past four years, and the selectboard and finance committee have requested other departments to operate on "bare bones" budgets as well, Grudowski said. "If you approve this budget, what does it say to all of the other departments in town?"

The vast majority of the increases in the school budget are due to state mandated services, countered Eric Overgaard, school committee member. "Basically what they are, are SPED (special education) costs." The school budget passed.

Other articles included the purchase of a new fire truck, purchase of new turnout gear for the fire department, the purchase of a new police cruiser and reauthorization to print and sell copies of the *History of Erving*. All were approved, as the three and a half hour meeting drew to a close.



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## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

## A Flurry of Activity in the Garden

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - Spring finally arrived mid-April. While it was still cool and damp, with the river rushing high in its banks, the daffodil buds appeared and the grass began a hesitant transition

from yellow to green. The resident winter cardinal was suddenly staking out his territory, chasing off another pair that checked out the real estate. The titmouse sang of nest and partner, his voice three times bigger than himself. Then the cool days were followed by warmth and sun.

The bulbs opened, yellow, white, white and yellow, bending gracefully on long stems. The apricot blossoms shone like little stars before the rising full moon. The raised beds dried out and warmed up; I planted out the leek and onion seedlings and set in a double row of peas. The red maple buds were visible against the skyline, but no more than that.

Then, equally suddenly, we stepped seamlessly from early spring into mid-season. The edges of the yard were massed with daffodils, the forsythia blossoms opened, yellow as the brilliant goldfinches. The wild honeysuckle leafed out; so too the lilacs, showing also the beginnings of the floral clusters to come. The white-throated sparrows breezed through, stayed long enough to try out their songs, first upside down, then properly up the scale, then left for the northern woods. The bloodroot came

and went in the woods; the violets appeared in the lawn. Also, too, the weeds in the garden, the flower beds, the grass that clamors for mowing.

This spectacular season, food for poets, is also an incredibly busy one for gardeners. The tomato and pepper plants in the sunroom have outgrown their one-inch trays. I have spent a couple of hours transplanting them to heartier soil in the four-inch pots that will nurture them until late May or early June, when risk of frost will pass and they can be set out into the garden. I am regularly feeding them with a mix of a tablespoon of seaweed fertilizer to a half-gallon of water. I am also feeding the young leeks and onions weekly.

It's time to plant carrot and lettuce seed. Plant a bed of carrots and mix in radish seed if you enjoy them. The radishes will be ready in a few short weeks and will keep the soil loosened up for the carrots as they grow. Plan on a space that

you can set aside for the whole season. Carrots take a long time to mature and will be all the tastier if left in the garden until we've had a light frost in the fall. Spinach can go in now, although it's better started in the cool damp days of April. Since I've missed that opportunity, I'm going to wait for late summer and early fall. But if you live in a more elevated area where spring is a little later, try to get in some spinach seed. The early

spring crop is the best and will give you something green and tasty to harvest long before any of the summer crops come along.

Speaking of missed opportunities, believe it or not, now is the time to order daffodils for next fall's planting. Naturalized daffodils don't require specially prepared beds and are one of the few bulbs that moles and other rodents avoid. Plant them about six inches deep with a little bone meal and they will reward you for years to come with an expanding display of flowers in early spring. These beauties are on sale now. At Breck's Holland bulbs you can order fifty bulbs for \$29.95; White Flower Farm will send you a hundred bulbs for \$58. Reserve your order now and they'll arrive in the fall in time for pre-frost planting.

The rose bushes had a tough winter with little snow protection until it was too late to matter. These freeze and thaw conditions are especially hard on

the roots. I'm afraid I will lose some. They are slow to leaf out though, so hold off on pruning until you are sure that you have all the growth you are going to get. Then prune dead stems down to the new growth and remove canes that show no signs of life. Weed a good circle around your plants. Feed them weekly now through the blooming season. If you like a liquid fertilizer, use it well diluted at first. Or you can sprinkle a couple of table-spoons of Epsom salts around the drip line of the plant and let Mother Nature water it in a bit at a time.

Epsom salt adds magnesium to the soil and will increase flower production. Plan to keep the plants free of weeds or mulch them with dry grass clippings or other organic materials. Roses appreciate regular levels of moisture so mulching will help keep them both weed-free and damp. If you plant roses known for repeat blossoming, you can enjoy flowers from early summer to fall with only a little tending on your part.

Planting vegetables is satisfying to the gardener's soul if not to his wallet. If you tally up the cost of raising your own produce, you won't necessarily find it to be cheap. However, because you can grow the varieties you choose and harvest them fresher than any market, in some ways you are ahead of the game. If gardening also provides you with a pleasurable, restorative hobby as well, the value cannot be measured. Don't forget to also plant some daffodils to feed your late winter soul as well.



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## VERRIDE

from pg 10  
smaller police department, a smaller fire department and a smaller school department. We have to face the fact that we're out of control."

Gill taxpayers were presented with a detailed financial summary with the warrant, which included eighteen articles ranging from the budget for general government and the schools to accepting a gift of 516 square feet land (where the stop sign at the intersection of the back road to Northfield Mount Hermon is located on North Cross Road) from Gary Stevens. Thirteen of the articles were approved,

most unanimously with little discussion. The remaining budget items will be taken up at the continuation of the meeting on June 6th at 7 p.m. The purchase of a \$140,000 single axle dump truck for the DPW was the most hotly debated article of the evening. Contingent on passage of a second override question, for \$125,000, the voters decided to buy the truck outright, rather than finance it over several years. The remaining \$15,000 for the truck will come from Chapter 90 funds, if the override passes.

Along with the dump truck override, the \$300,000 override to fund the town and

school omnibus budget, will also be voted on May 21st, during the annual election of town and school officials. Polls are open from noon to 8 p.m. at the fire station.

The meeting, which began at six o'clock and ran for two-and-a-half hours, filled the town hall with over sixty citizens. Phillip Maddern presided over his last annual meeting as a member of the selectboard. He will step down on May 21st after serving the board for 15 years.

Nancy Griswold, of Walnut Street is running unopposed for the three-year selectboard seat being vacated by Maddern.

## Gill Budget Informational Forums

Selectboard chair Ann Banash will host three informal forums at the town hall to provide explanation on the FY '08 budget as presented at Annual Town Meeting, along

with resultant town finances and the Proposition 2-1/2 referendum questions that will appear on the Gill annual town election ballot, May 21st.

**Monday, May 14th**  
at 3:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, May 15th** at  
10:00 a.m.

**Thursday, May 17th**  
at 6:00 p.m.



TO THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH

# What You Should Know about Tick-borne Disease



BY JOAN PAJAK

Tis the season for ticks and all of the annoying inconveniences associated with them. Ticks can carry and transmit many pathogens including bacteria, protozoa, and viruses. In fact, a single tick bite can also transmit multiple pathogens. In North America alone, ticks are known transmit Lyme disease, Babesiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Tularemia, Q Fever, tick paralysis, and Ehrlichiosis to humans.

Despite this, most tick bites do not result in illness. For

example, in the case of Lyme disease, even in endemic areas only about two to three per cent of all people bitten by the *Ixodes scapularis* tick actually develop the disease. It is possible, though, to get secondary infections or to have allergic reactions to proteins in tick saliva.

The best way to prevent tick-borne diseases is to avoid being bitten by ticks in the first place. Here are some basic guidelines to follow to avoid tick-borne disease.

Take extra precautions in May, June, and July, as ticks are most prevalent during these months.

Ticks prefer wooded and bushy areas with high grass and a lot of leaf litter. These are areas to avoid. If you do enter a "tick area," walk in the center of the trail to avoid contact with overgrown grass and brush.

Use appropriate insect repellent. Wear long pants and long sleeves to keep ticks off your skin. Light-colored clothing will help you spot ticks more easily. Tucking pant legs into socks or boots and tucking shirts into pants help keeps ticks on the outside of clothing.

Remove ticks from your clothes before going indoors or you just may find one in your bed some evening.

Perform daily "tick checks" after being outdoors, even in your own yard. Inspect all parts of your body carefully including your armpits, scalp, and groin. Don't forget to "tick check" any pets as well.

Remove a tick from your skin as soon as you notice it. Use fine-tipped tweezers to firmly grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Fine-tipped tweezers are best because there is less chance of

squeezing the body of the tick in the process of pulling it out. Pull the tick away from your skin using firm but steady pressure. Do not use petroleum jelly, heat, or other methods to remove the tick. Clean your skin with soap and warm water.

If you've been bitten by a deer tick but are unsure of how long it's been on your body, then watch for any signs or symptoms of infection. Generally, in Lyme disease, the most common and first signs of infection are fatigue, chills, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, swollen lymph nodes and a rash. The rash, occurring in approximately 70-80% of infected people, is distinctive in that it is circular and gradually expands over a period of several days while the center of it clears, resulting in a bull's-eye appearance. It begins at

the site of a tick bite within 3 - 30 days. Most cases of Lyme disease can be cured with antibiotics, especially if treatment is begun early in the course of illness, so it is important to consult with your health care provider for proper testing and diagnosis.

The good news is that to get Lyme disease, the deer tick first has to be infected with it, bite you, and then feed on your blood for approximately 48 hours after securing itself to your skin. The probability of contracting the disease is real but small. Visit [www.emedicine.com](http://www.emedicine.com) for more information on ticks and tick-borne disease or stop by the town hall and pick up a tick ID card from the board of health office.

*Joan Pajak is the public health nurse for the town of Montague.*

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# C-Reactive Protein Explained

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. *The report on the blood tests for my annual physical included "C-Reactive Protein, Cardiac." What is this?*

C-reactive protein (CRP) is made by the liver. Elevated CRP in your blood indicates you have inflammation or a bacterial infection. CRP levels do not always change with a viral infection.

The CRP in a healthy person is usually less than 10 milligrams per liter (mg/L). Most infections and inflammations produce CRP levels more than 100 mg/L.

CRP is a general test that may indicate a variety of ailments including rheumatoid arthritis, pneumonia, cancer, tuberculosis, appendicitis, bacterial meningitis, inflammatory bowel disease and urinary tract infection. The test is used to monitor patients. CRP tests don't diagnose a specific disease; they warn that more testing may be required.

There is a high-sensitivity version of the CRP test (hs-CRP) that is used to assess the

risk for heart problems. It measures CRP between 0.5 and 10 mg/L. The results of this test were what you saw on the report of your blood evaluation.

Most studies show that heart-attack risk rises with hs-CRP levels. If the level is lower than 1.0 mg/L, the risk is low. There's an average risk for between 1.0 and 3.0 mg/L. A level higher than 3.0 mg/L, indicates a high risk.

Some studies have found that, if your hs-CRP level is in the upper third, your risk is twice that of someone whose level is in the lower third.

**High levels of hs-CRP:**

- Consistently predict new coronary events in patients



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

who've had a heart attack.

- Are linked to lower survival rates of heart-attack victims.

- May increase the risk that an artery will reclose after it's been opened by balloon angioplasty.

- Seem to predict recurrent events in patients with peripheral arterial disease.

However, the connection between high CRP levels and heart-attack risk is not completely understood.

There is evidence that suggests inflammation is involved in atherosclerosis - hardening of the arteries. It's possible that an infection might cause atherosclerosis.

There's a theory that inflammation contributes to heart disease by working with cholesterol that is deposited

in the plaques on blood-vessel walls. Inflammation may damage the plaques, allowing tiny portions to break off into the bloodstream. These small fragments can lodge in small blood vessels in the heart or brain, causing a heart attack or stroke.

The CRP test is ordered when inflammation is risky, such as after surgery. Because CRP levels drop when inflammation abates, the test is ordered to determine whether treatment of an inflammatory disease is working.

In addition, CRP tests are used to monitor the healing of wounds, organ transplants and burns.



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# JEP'S PLACE: Faith, Hope and Other Disasters Part XXXII

## Helen and Hard Times

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - I was always glad to see Helen when she came to visit. When I was younger, she read me the funnies. While I could figure out Henry, because there was no writing, I really needed someone to read me my favorite, the *Captain and the Kids*, the strip of the two Katzenjammer Kids who got

into all kinds of trouble and invariably were spanked by the Captain.

I could readily identify with those two boys. The comic strip was supposed to be funny, but I always felt sorry for them and saw nothing to laugh at. My mother said I was as naughty as they were. My father also said I was bad - not bad enough to be

labeled a black sheep, he said, but bad enough to qualify for a grey sheep label.

Pa was right; I was always in trouble for something, real or imagined. His policy was to hit first, investigate later. Sometimes, punishment was a sharp word or a slap. Other times it was a lot worse. Often, I had no idea why I was being thrashed and would get hit again for 'talking back' if I asked.

"Who else but the Joe would


do such a thing?" he'd say when he found something amiss. Sometimes my sisters were hit, too. Ma used her hand. What I hated most was getting slapped in the face. But Pa often used his belt, instead. He'd unbuckle it in a flash, pulling it off and whacking, all in one motion, as swiftly and painful as a striking snake. Then Pa found a better way. He'd bought a new double razor strap for sharpening his straight razor. Driving a nail in

the kitchen wall, he hung the old single strap where it'd be handy, he said. "There'd be no misbehaving, now."

This was the era of the sage expression, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." And no one could accuse Pa of that.


"I won't have you kids growing up a disgrace. You are going to learn to behave. And if you don't, I'll beat you like an animal until you do."

- Continued next week



**Rte. 63 Roadhouse**  
proudly presents  
**Friday, May 18th • YARN**  
9:30 PM • Cover \$4 gents; ladies no cover

Yarn's organic blend of alt-country music has the warmth of old vinyl. This newly formed Brooklyn based band has used their songwriting, guitars, mandolins, and shining vocal harmonies to capture a passionate following throughout the East Coast. They've been compared to Neil Young, Gram Parsons and Johnny Cash.



## Golf Tournament & Montague Mile Saturday


**BY STACEY LANGKNECHT TURNERS FALLS** - Don't forget to mark your calendar to be at the Jack Bassett Golf Tournament and Montague Mile this Saturday May 12th at Thomas Memorial Golf Club!! Golf tee off is at 8 a.m. and the

Montague Mile begins at 10 a.m. at Turners Falls High School Track. There has been a change in time for the kids' activities, games, raffles, and bake sale: they'll start at 10:30 at the golf club and go on into the afternoon. Also Mr. C and his band, Sounds

Unlimited, will be there, providing entertainment, so don't miss it!

We hope to see lots of folks there to Support Our Schools! For questions, please call Stacey at 367-9408 or Bob at 863-9502.

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## Bat Explore! at the Great Falls Discovery Center

**Thursday, May 17, 7 pm Bat Explore! Learn about and try to Detect Bats!**

Program led by naturalist John Foster will include a slideshow on the natural history of New England bats, and a field portion in which participants use bat detectors to locate bats along the canal. Program cosponsored by

Silvio O. Conte NFWR, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Montague Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. John

Foster is an expert on the importance of local culture and the lore in relation to species protection and conservation. Please visit his website at <http://www.nentc.com> Held at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA. Accessible facilities. For more information, call 413-863-3221.

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**HELP WANTED** - RiverCulture project looking to contract graphic designer to create project print materials. Please call Lisa 413.230.9910 or email [riverculture@montague.net](mailto:riverculture@montague.net) or send samples by May 9th to:

Lisa Davol, Turners Falls RiverCulture, One Ave. A, Turners Falls, MA 01376. [www.turnersfallsriverculture.org](http://www.turnersfallsriverculture.org) for RiverCulture background info.

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**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE • Town of Wendell Planning Board**

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A Section 5 and Section 9 of M.G.L., the Wendell Planning Board will hold a public hearing on May 15, 2007 at 7 p.m. in the Town Offices at Morse Village Road to consider changes to the Wendell Zoning Bylaws described in the details below. Proposed changes to the Zoning Bylaws include revisions to:

(1) Article III (Definitions) change definition of 'Dwelling, Secondary' from 600 sq ft to 800 sq ft;

(2) Article VI (Special Permits and Site Plans), Section F, 8. delete in its entirety to ensure extension of Secondary Dwelling provisions beyond June 7, 2007;

(3) Article VI (Special Permits and Site Plans), Section J, 2. delete in its entirety to ensure extension of Secondary Dwelling provisions beyond June 7, 2007;

(4) Article III (Definitions), and Article V (Lot density and Dimension), Section A, 6. and Article VI (Secondary Dwelling), Sections F, 1. and Section J, to keep the language allowing secondary dwellings consistent with the above proposed changes;

(5) Article III (Definitions) add 'Common Driveway' definition

(6) Article V (Density and Dimensions) change title to 'Access, Density, and Dimensional Regulations' and Section C, Common Driveway Access;

(7) Article VI. (Special Permits, Use Regulation and Site Plan Review), Section D Special Permit and Site Plan Review Procedure: site plan appeals to be described and will be identical to special permit appeals so appeals of site plan decisions no longer go before the Zoning Board of Appeals and instead go to the District or Superior Court.

The proposed text of the bylaw changes under consideration are posted outside the Town Offices for review and are available from the Town Coordinator and the Town Library during their regular business hours.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**FRIDAY, MAY 11TH**

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Free Radicals*-covers from Dylan to Zeppelin. Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Radio Free Earth* Acoustic Duo. 9 to 11 p.m.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 11TH & 12TH**

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall Theater, Shelburne Falls presents *An American In Paris*. 7:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, MAY 11TH TO 13TH**

Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts presents *Suessical the Musical* Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. *Suessical the Musical* boasts a cast of 250 performers in a program of entertaining dancing, singing and acting that will leave you wanting more. Directed by Nick Waynevovich with choreography by Kimberly Waynevovich and produced by Lisa McCarthy. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$10 12/under and 65/over. Reserve tickets by calling the Shea Theatre at 413-863-2281 Ext. 2. Tickets are also available at the World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield.

**SATURDAY, MAY 12TH**

Downtown Turners Falls Spring Clean-up, 9 a.m. to noon. Meet at The Discovery Center.

Open mic at Cup O' Joe, Turners Falls. Sign-ups start at 6:30 p.m. and usually last til 10 p.m.

CD release party at The Pushkin. Veteran Valley performers Pat & Tex LaMountain celebrate the release of their sixth recording over the span of three decades. Concert and dance featuring Tex on acoustic guitar and Pat playing rhythm guitar, with other area musicians. Sliding scale entrance fee of \$6 -10 at the door. CDs available. 8 p.m.

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: *Electric Junkyard Gamelan*, original rhythm-driven music on invented instruments. 8 p.m. Food and drink available at the Lady Killigrew Pub and Café. \$10/\$12.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Richard & Hilary Chase*, acoustic originals. 9 to 11 p.m.

Route. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Love Bomb* - rock. Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY, MAY 13TH**

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Adam Bergeron*, classical piano. 7 to 9 p.m.

Folk musicians and singers Cindy Kallet and Grey Larsen, two of the most original contributors to American contemporary folk and world music, and Annie Hassett with a big heart and a tremendous repertoire will perform a



*YARN, a quintet that takes a turn toward rootsy territories with a bluegrass-influenced, harmony-laden sound. Performs at Rt. 63 Roadhouse on Friday, May 18th, 9:30 p.m.*

benefit for Traprock Peace Center, hosted by the Woolman Hill Conference Center, Deerfield. Seats for \$12 at the door. www.TraprockPeace.org for more info. 3 p.m.

**MONDAY, MAY 14TH**

FREE public screening of *Enjoy the Ride in the Connecticut River Valley* at the Academy of Music Theatre, Northampton. The film features local cyclists from Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties who tell their story of how, when, and why they choose to bicycle instead of drive. A Q&A to follow. 5:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY, MAY 17TH**

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Dave Robinson & Tommy Filault*, blues, 8 to 10 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MAY 18TH**

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Two Man Gentleman Band*, NYC duo swings Vaudeville, ragtime & jazz. 8 p.m. \$10/\$12.

Pioneer Valley Cappella: *J.S. Bach, His Forebears, Family and Followers*. Geoffrey Hudson conducts this choir. 7:30 p.m. at Amherst Unitarian Society, suggested donation: \$12 general, \$6 students/seniors. Info: users.crocker.com/~unitar

Route. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *\*\*YARN* - warmth of old vinyl, the soul of Gram Parsons, alt. country, bluegrass, folk rock from Brooklyn, N.Y. 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie*, Johnny Cash covers. 9 to 11 p.m.

**SATURDAY, MAY 19TH**

Gill School Carnival at Gill Elementary School, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pony rides, plant sale, dunking booth, famous firemen's fries, bake sale and more!

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: *David Jacobs-Strain*, Acclaimed guitarist plays roots and blues on the edge. 8 p.m. \$10/\$12.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Mawwal* - World Music. 9 to 11 p.m.

Route. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Turn it Loose* - rock & roll, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

Echo Lake Coffee House presents Erica Wheeler. Town Hall, Leverett. Refreshments for sale. Doors open at 7 p.m. concert 7:30 p.m. \$10/\$8.

Annie Patterson & Eduardo Reyes in concert at Mt. Toby Friends Meeting, Leverett. Annie (co-creator of *Rise Up Singing*) performs contemporary & traditional folk songs from Appalachia & the British Isles. Eduardo performs Latin American folk songs & Brazilian jazz with vocals and classical guitar. Benefit for Quaker Blivia Link, donation requested. 6 p.m. potluck, 7:30 p.m. concert.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 18TH & 19TH**

"Valley Idol" is back! Karaoke singing competition, \$1000 for grand prize winner, cash prizes for runners-up. At the Shea Theater, Turners Falls (May 18, 19, 26 and June 2). Proceeds benefit the Shea. Auditions **Friday, May 18th**, 6 p.m. for the first 100 applicants only. \$35 registration fee. Must be at least 18 years old. Prepare a 90-second musical selection. First night cut will be to 25 singers. www.theshea.org for info or call 863-2281.

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 19TH & 20TH**

Turners Falls Open Studio and Downtown Walking Tour - a tri-annual extravaganza! Tour artists' studios, museums, and scrumptious eateries. For more information call Karen at 863-9576 or Eileen at 863-9499.

**THURSDAY, MAY 24TH**

Film screening and discussion. *Unnatural Selection*, an award-winning film that shows the impact of genetically engineered crops and animals. Held at Equity Trust, 177 Ave A, Turners Falls. Free, 60 min. film, discussion to follow. Guest speakers Ben Grosscup and Jack Kittredge, NOFA/Mass. 7 p.m.

**FRIDAY, MAY 25TH**

Concert at The Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Lonesome Brothers*, the Valley's favorite brothers rock the mill with danceable alt-country full of swagger and pathos 8 p.m. \$10/\$12.

**SATURDAY, MAY 26TH**

Coffee & Soul concert with *Jim Scott*, at All Souls Church, Greenfield. *Dan Tinen, Ferne Bork and Bruce Kahn* trio will open. Admission \$10 at the door, 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, MAY 29TH**

Common People Concerts on the Gill common. *Metro Sax Quartet*-eclectic class from the Boston area. 7 p.m., free. Sponsored by the Gill Cultural Council. For more info contact Steve at damons\_of\_gill@yahoo.com. Concerts continue each Tuesday through August.

**THROUGH JUNE 17TH**

Exhibit: John Willis' and Tom Young's "Recycled Realities and Other Stories". Haunting and surreal series of black and white images at Erving Paper Mill. Also images from "View from the Rez" and "Timeline". Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. Thursday to Sunday 1-5 p.m. 863-0009.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JUNE 1ST & 2ND**

Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall Theater, Shelburne Falls presents *Ball of Fire*. 7:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 9TH**

The Second Annual Goddess Festival at The Art Bridge, Shelburne Falls from noon until 9 p.m. Features many local and regional musicians, belly dancers, fire twirlers, craft vendors, a silent auction and loads of kids activities.

**THEATRE WORKSHOPS**

At the Shea throughout the summer. Contact the Shea at 863-2281 or visit www.theshea.org.

**Memorial Hall Theater**  
**POTHOLE PICTURES**  
Friday, May 11th & 12th 7:30 p.m.  
*lavish, joyous Gershwin musical*  
**An American in Paris**  
Gene Kelly dazzles as ex-GI tom between Leslie Caron and Nina Foch in this imaginative, original film of astonishing music and breathtaking choreography. Directed by Vincente Minnelli, 1951, NR., 115 min., color.  
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2. SPIDER-MAN 3
DAILY 6:30 9:30 in DTS sound
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
3. FRACTURE R
DAILY 6:40 9:30
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
4. HOT FUZZ R
DAILY 6:45 9:15
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
5. DISTURBIA PG13
DAILY 6:45 9:15
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
6. SPIDER-MAN 3 PG13
DAILY 6:00 9:00 in DTS sound
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
7. 28 WEEKS LATER R
DAILY 7:00 9:20 in DTS sound
MATINEE FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00

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*Richard & Hilary Chase*  
**Friday 5/18**  
Johnny Cash Covers-Josh Levangie  
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<b>FRIDAY, MAY 11TH</b> Build-A-Bird: Learn about the anatomy of a bird & bird adaptations. Geared for young children and will include a craft. 10:30 a.m. <b>SATURDAY, MAY 12TH</b> Crabapple Blossom Festival: A Sense of Wonder spring program, 1 to 2 p.m. Also Linda Hickman leads an Historical Downtown Walking Tour beginning 2 p.m. at the Discovery Center. <b>THURSDAY, MAY 17TH</b>	Bat Explore: Learn about & try to Detect Live Bats! Led by naturalist John Foster; includes slideshow on the natural history of New England bats. John Foster is an expert on the importance of local culture and the lore in relation to species protection and conservation. Please visit www.nentc.com. 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. <b>THROUGH MAY 30TH</b> Nature Photography by JD Keating on display in the Great Hall. JD Keating has lived as a	musician and artist in Western Massachusetts for over 20 years. He has produced an extensive body of photographs encompassing the Pioneer Valley. <b>WEDNESDAY, MAY 30TH</b> Save the evening! Great Falls Coffee House, 7 p.m. Entertainer TBA. <b>SATURDAY, JUNE 2ND</b> Annual Family Fish Day! Free fishing day with fly-tying and spin cast demonstrations, and raffle for fishing poles and tackle boxes. 10 to 2 p.m.
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# Wildflowers on the Cove

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**RIVERSIDE** - On Saturday, May 5th, a slightly cool May morning, Northfield Mountain's environmental program coordinator Beth Bazler met parents and children at Barton Cove for a self-guided nature walk, to see what wildflowers were out. "Hepatica is really prolific," she said, directing us to wooded banks where the white, blue or purple flowers could be found.

Hepatica, sometimes called liverwort, is characterized by three-lobed liver-shaped basal leaves. It was once widely cultivated as a medicinal herb; its name means: 'of the liver.' And indeed, we did come upon some good examples of this plant along the paths that line the Barton Cove peninsula.

Looking down from the wooden deck that juts out above a rocky spit of ledge, different colors caught the eye: the royal red and yellow of wild columbine, which grows in that spot in profusion. It's a festive wildflower, the blossoms recall the motley hat of a court jester. But the Latin genus name, *Aquilegia*, refers to eagles, because the five upended points on each pendant blossom resemble eagles' spurs. Just across the cove, the genus's namesake nests on Eagle Island, in sight from the same lookout.

The humble but beautiful bluet grew in clusters here and there, cheering the scene as it does many a homeowner's lawn this time of year. As the handout Bazler provided states, "Bluets have two types of flowers - one has short stamens and long pistils and the other has short pistils and long stamens. Bluets grow in patches that contain only one style of flower. They must cross-pollinate with flowers from a patch of the opposite style." Who knew?

There were a few other wildflowers blooming in the chilly river breeze. Bloodroot was found along a south facing bank. A single wild strawberry in bloom was noted. Also broom-like clumps of feathery white flowers with yellow centers; what were these? Bazler abandoned her post at an entrance picnic table long enough to hike down a dangerous bank with a field guide in one hand. She eyed the plant carefully, determined how many and what type of leaves it had, consulted her guide, and determined it must be a kind of saxifrage. The name means stone-breaker in Latin, and indeed the feathery thing seemed to be growing almost directly out of rocky ledge.

The throttle of engines announced the overflight of planes from the airport across the river while anglers cast along the cove. The placid beauty of the spot was broken by frequent litter, including a trail of Busch beer cans leading down to a waterlogged cardboard 30-pack floating in an inlet. Still, the adventurous sound of children's voices could be heard leading their parents on a merry chase through the woods, over wooden stairs and bridges that look as if they might harbor trolls beneath, as families looked for ancient dinosaur prints and wild spring blossoms in the pine woods.



Beth Bazler of Northfield Mountain works with Chloe and Maya Castro-Santos on carving rubber blocks for ink stamps at the Barton Cove wildflower walk on Saturday, May 5th. Chloe's work, a representation of a daisy, appears on page one.



Specimens of wildflowers in bloom at Barton Cove: Saxifrage (left) and a lone wild strawberry (right)

## AFTER A FALSE START, SPRING

BY FRAN HEMOND

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - It came. After a false start or two, spring burst forth. The hundred ring-necked ducks that have found Migratory Way by the canal a fine source of food and afternoon sun have left for points north. The mallard drakes on the pond are no longer showing off with wing flapping and fancy dipping and sailing to gain the favor of their more or less attentive little brown counterparts. No one has told the girls of the time and effort it takes to properly bring up ducklings, and they are off

sitting on eggs in hidden nests. Now the resident drake and a couple of buddies hang out together, everybody dipping together, red feet and white bottoms to the sky, and lunch the issue at hand. Perhaps Emily, the mother mallard who for several years gave diving and flying lessons to her ducklings by the Breakfast Club, will appear in proper time.

Finally, color is appearing. The weeping willow is drooping green branches to the ground, the shadbush have blossomed white at the pond's edge, too briefly. The



Asparagus on the way

grass, syringa, and skunk cabbage are bright, and the daffodils, narcissus and the flowering quince are putting on an exceptionally lovely ode to May. In town, where the winds do not sweep so briskly, the fruit trees and

magnolia are handsome.

Almost every year, spring seems late, to my mind. Every March it creeps up from the South, incrementally, much as migrating birds like snow geese move up along the Atlantic shore. In years past, we went south on my spring vacation to Assateague and other bird refuges that assure the travelers of safe havens on their trip north. And we dragged spring back north with us, once in a big spring snowstorm. So a late spring, now and again, is in the cards.

Asparagus by May 1st is a

hope not realized this year. Cutting-size rhubarb by Mothers Day, a wish not to be fulfilled. A little more warmth for the May Day festival in Montague Center would have been appreciated by lightly-clad folks last Sunday, but the bright sun and happy spirits erased the bit of chill, and the Morris Dancers probably preferred the cool morning.

Every day now, new plants and trees leaf out. And the handsome red cardinal that just settled in the newly green willow shows that colorful spring is here.

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