

**LONG PLAIN ROAD**  
One Lane thru the Past  
Page 5

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 32

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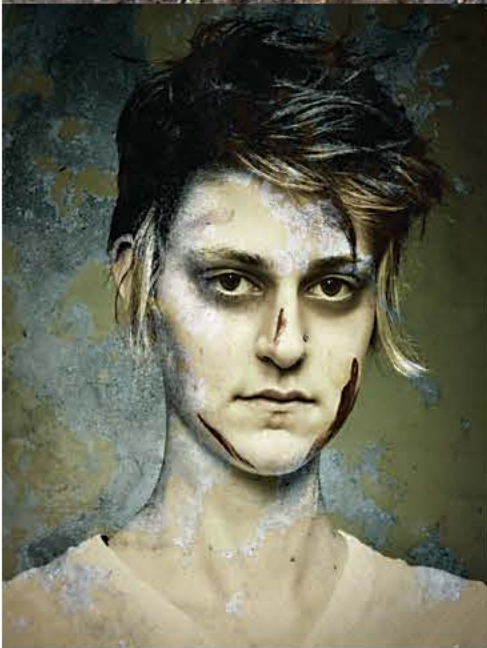
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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 13, 2010

## No Cover Photo Show at Rendezvous



*Punky Girl by Neesa Biblyk*

BY JOHN FURBISH

**TURNERS FALLS** – River Culture is so alive and happening in downtown Turners Falls it can occur spontaneously, without months of elaborate planning and preparation.

An instance in point is the *Beyond Portfolio* photo show at the Rendezvous, which is a simple case of “1 + 1 = 21”.

The first one in this equation is Jamie Berger, co-owner of the Voo in charge of entertainment. Thinking the Voo’s recent touch ups offered a *tabula rasa*, an opportunity for further embellishments, Berger approached

Christine Kennedy, fiancée of one of the cooks and a student at the Hallmark Institute of Photography.

So, Kennedy is the second one in the equation, and the one who approached a circle of her fellow Hallmark students to add their ideas together and see what might develop.

It’s a not too hidden asset of the downtown cultural scene that Turners boasts one of the nation’s premiere commercial photography training institutes. Some say Turners is the most photographed village in the land. But these young photographers cover more ground than the familiar environs of Power Town, and they do so with consummate finesse and skill.

Seven soon-to-graduate Hallmark students decided to put together a group show at the Rendezvous, 78 3rd Street, showing three photographs each, which equates to 21 images well worth your time to drop by for a gander.

The 21 photos are professionally printed and elegantly framed see PHOTO pg 9

## Brown and Oakes in Running for G-M School Committee Seat

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – There is one race in the offing for a three-year seat on the Gill-Montague regional school committee in the election on Monday, May 17th. Jane Oakes, a retired Gill Montague teacher, is challenging the incumbent, former Gill finance committee chair Sandy Brown, for a three year seat on the school committee.

Polls are open in Montague from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. In Montague, voting takes place at precinct polling stations, including the Montague Center fire station for Precinct 1, the former Highland School in Millers Falls for Precinct 2, the Hillcrest School for Precincts 3 and 4, the Gill-Montague senior center for Precinct 5, and the community room at the new police station on Tumpike Road for Precinct 6.



TUPPER BROWN PHOTO

*Sandy Brown*

In Gill, the polls are open from noon to 8 p.m. on May 17th. Voting takes place at the fire station.

Voters in Gill and Montague are able to cast ballots for school committee candidates from either town.

We posed a number of questions to the candidates, to better inform voters of their positions on the issues. Here are their responses:

*What would you do over the next three years to provide excellence in education for students at the Gill-Montague Regional School District, and to ensure the school budget is affordable to the member towns?*

*Sandy Brown:* “I would continue what has been started over the past three years. We were one of the first districts to join the state health insurance group. We have been actively involved in collaborating with other districts. We have adopted a detailed budget approach and accepted the new superintendent’s strategic vision for the district. We have accepted a \$200,000 grant over three years to increase the number of advanced placement courses and the number of students taking AP courses. We are developing a long term plan for fiscal stability that meets educa-

tional goals and is affordable to the towns. I would like to continue to strive for excellence in all areas.”

*Jane Oakes:* “I think in terms of providing all students with an excellent education, the district at present is attempting to be really responsive to the changing needs of the population. I think that is critical with such an emphasis these days on school choice. Even more time and



*Jane Oakes*

energy should be spent on providing the kinds of opportunities that the new grant on advanced placement courses at the high school will provide. The school district and the teachers association are approaching that opportunity in such a manner that it will really benefit the students.

“It’s important to show the

see RUNNING pg 11

## FLASHING YELLOW WILL WARN DRIVERS APPROACHING SOUTHWORTH



PARZYCH PHOTO

Engineers from Mass DoT and SPS New England project manager Mark Pelletier (facing camera second from right) meet with Southworth employees on May 6th to discuss traffic control.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

**TURNERS FALLS** – Engineers from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (DoT), an installer for North Electric, Southworth employees, and SPS proj-

ect manager Mark Pelletier met to solve the truck entering problem presented by anticipated increased traffic passing by the Southworth paper mill during the upcoming years of traffic detoured over the White Bridge to

Greenfield. When the Gill-Montague Bridge becomes one-way into Turners, traffic over the White Bridge by Southworth Company will increase substantially.

see DRIVERS pg 13

## Developers Tour Turners

BY DAVID DETMOLD – “Turners Falls is exciting now,” with its broad boulevards and burgeoning arts scene, photographer Gregory Heisler, artist-in-residence at Hallmark Institute of Photography told a bus tour of 55 real estate developers visiting Franklin County from the Boston area on Wednesday morning.

Heisler, a Manhattanite whose website shows him photographing Bill Gates and Bono with their arms around the globe, knows from exciting. He said he bought a country house in Catskill, NY when homes there were going for “\$30,000 to \$50,000.” A few years later, “the same homes were selling for ten times that amount,” the dapper portraitist related.

“Ten years from now, it



DETMOLD PHOTO

Franklin County Chamber president Ann Hamilton (front) gives a pep talk to Boston area real estate developers visiting the Gallery at Hallmark in Turners Falls on Wednesday.

will be a little late to be starting stuff in Turners,” warned Heisler, who is now looking to purchase a place in the Turners area for a second, or perhaps a third, home.

After viewing the sights of downtown Orange, the developers took a guided tour of Turners from the

Discovery Center down the canalside trail, to get a close look at the Strathmore Mill in all its rustic glory. Or rusted glory. They tramped up 5th Street to see firsthand the success of Turners’ commercial homesteading pro-

see TOUR pg 14

**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Manx Mix**



**Oreo Delgado**

My name is Oreo Delgado and I am a one-year-old male Manx mix cat looking for a good home. Don't gobble me up! I'm not that kind of Oreo! However, I am black and white and sweet all over! I get along with all people, so I'm sure you and I will get along great. Do you like kids? Me too! My previous family had a lot of kids, and they were so fun to play with! I need a nice home where I can romp and play and hang out. Please come meet me and find out if your family is the right one for me. I'm sweet just like a cookie! Just try to resist me! For more information on adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: [info@dprvhs.org](mailto:info@dprvhs.org).

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**The Montague Reporter**

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

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Local Subscription Rates:  
\$20 for 6 months

**WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS**

**Web Presence Workshop, Bike Clinic for Teens**

*The How Tos of Setting Up a Web Presence For Your Business or Organization Cheaply, Reliably, Effectively* is the name of a workshop scheduled for Tuesday, May 18th, 7 to 8 p.m. This free, hour-long workshop, given by Robert Heller, owner of Deepwoods Software, will cover the basic things one needs to do to get a website up for their business or organization. Topics covered include: What a website can do for an organization; what a domain name is and how to register it; how to intelligently shop for a web hosting service; and low-cost options for building a good-looking and smoothly working website. No pre-registration required.

For more information go to

[www.wendellfreelibrary.org](http://www.wendellfreelibrary.org) or call (978) 544-3559.

The library's Sci/Fi-Horror Movie Night film is *Carrie*, Saturday, May 15th at 7:30 p.m.

"If you are going to take *Carrie* to the prom... make sure you treat her right." Rated R. People under 17 must provide permission from a parent or guardian. Admission is free.

Spring Bike Clinic for Teens and Tweens scheduled for Sunday, May 16th, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Teens learn to get your bike road-ready as Eli Chastic teaches you how to clean and grease your chain, fix a flat tire, and adjust brakes. Adults welcome but teen bikes and questions will take priority. The library opens at 2 p.m.

**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Crabapple Blossom, Cinco de Mayo Festivities**



**TURNERS FALLS** – Some of the children danced at the Crabapple Blossom Festival Family Concert with 3Potato4 on Saturday, May 8th. The concert was going to be held in Peskeompskut Park, but due to the rain, it was relocated to the Carnegie Library. The concert was sponsored by the Montague Cultural Council, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



**TURNERS FALLS** – Atticus of Turners Falls and Joah and Noah of Greenfield assisted Laurie Davidson and Tom Carroll of Montague Center with puppets during the bilingual concert in Peskeompskut Park during the Cinco de Mayo Festival. Around eighty people attended the festival, which was sponsored by the Montague Public Libraries and the CFCE.

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – May 17th to 21st**

**GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Meal site manager is Becky Cobb. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. For information or to make meal reservations, call (413) 863-9357. Call the senior center for information on any programs.

Sign up now for the June 23rd Pickety Place & Clydesdales Trip.

**Monday, May 17th**  
SENIOR CENTER CLOSED  
Town Election  
**Tuesday, May 18th**  
9:00 a.m. Walking Group

10:30 a.m. Yoga  
1:00 p.m. Canasta  
**Wednesday, May 19th**  
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, May 20th**  
10:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
1:00 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, May 21st**  
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
NO LUNCH SERVED TODAY (this Friday only)  
1:00 p.m. Scrabble  
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

**ERVING Senior Center**, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be

**FACES & PLACES**



**Flying Object Sighted Over Leverett Field**  
DETOLD PHOTO  
*Ultimate Frisbee took over the playing field at the Leverett Elementary School on Tuesday evening under clear skies*

**Women's Resource Center Offering Two Ongoing Groups**

The Greenfield Women's Resource Center is a safe, welcoming space for women to come together to heal themselves, empower each other and build community. We offer four days of open hours and women are invited to have a cup of tea or coffee, read, use the computer, browse our resource literature, explore your artistic self with a wide range of available art supplies, just sit quietly, etc.

We have two open and ongoing peer support groups available: *Women's Relationship to Nourishment and Body Image Group* that gathers on Wednesdays from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at the Women's Resource Center at 278 Federal Street in Greenfield. This program is free. For more information please call Lorena at (413) 774-4307, ext. 1

or email [lnorwood@wmtctinfo.org](mailto:lnorwood@wmtctinfo.org).

The other group is a Walking Group that meets for an hour Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. We carpool to a destination for a low stress walk. If you have questions please contact Donna Covino at (413) 775-0010.

**Eighth Annual Health and Wellness Fair**  
Sponsored by Green River House and Quabbin House at the Energy Park at the end of Miles Street in Greenfield.  
**Wednesday, May 19th**  
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Come join us. Enjoy music, food, fun and friends.

**LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS**

**Local Poets to Read**

Join us on Tuesday, May 18th, at 7 p.m., for a poetry reading with local poets Mary Delabruere and Luke Henshaw. After a summer break, the monthly poetry readings will resume in September. Let us know if you are interested in reading from your poems.

Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road, (413) 548-9220.

Directions available at [www.leverettlibrary.org](http://www.leverettlibrary.org).

*Happy Sweet Sixteen*  
*Katie Parzych*  
*Love Grandad, Dad and Joey*

**Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week**

**Grade 6**  
Richard Whiteman  
Allison Cooke  
**Grade 7**  
Kyle Jarvis  
**Grade 8**  
Tyler Richardson

**THE SHADY GLEN**

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

# Local Briefs

**COMPILED BY**

**DON CLEGG** – Buy, sell, or swap vegetable and flower plants and locally grown products at the Second Annual **Backyard Gardeners Fair** in Montague Center on Saturday, May 15th, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. Baked goods for sale, music jam, baby goats and garden talk on the Montague Grange lawn. Call: (413) 367-9747 for more info.

Each spring, New Englanders have the opportunity to view the return of the American shad. The underwater viewing windows at the **Turners Falls Fishway facility** at Unity Park will open Saturday, May 15th and close Sunday, June 20th, Wednesday through Sundays from 9 a.m.

until 5 p.m.

Celebrate the **Civilian Conservation Corps** day at Wendell State forest on Saturday, May 22nd, from 10 til 3. This Depression-era work initiative built many of our state forests and parks during the 1930s. Wendell State Forest is located at 392 Montague Road in Wendell.

The Great Falls Discovery Center on Avenue A in Turners Falls is now operating on **summers hours** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week. Go to [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org) for upcoming events, and say 'Hey there!' to the newest interpreter, Janel Nockleby.

The **Deerfield Valley Arts Association Gallery 38** has

opened for the spring season on the corner of Avenue A and Second Street in Turners Falls, right by the farmers market. The art gallery will be open on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m.

On Saturday, May 22nd, the **Rendezvous**, 78 3rd Street in Turners, will host a benefit concert, produced by Power Town Music, to support the **Round Here Café** to recover costs lost during a recent dispute with the Western Massachusetts Electric Company over a past due bill.

The Avenue A coffee shop and café recently lost inventory and business during a 10-day shut down after WMECO demanded payment of the entire back due amount, calculated at nearly \$4,000, after not reading the café's meter for seven months.

**D'Angelo Nieves** and Friends will perform, along with Goddess Rock goddess **Kelliana**.

Send brief items to [reporter-local@montaguema.net](mailto:reporter-local@montaguema.net)

funds from other projects to build the new senior center, Dan Hammock said, 'We just don't think the taxpayers of Erving should spend \$2.4 million on it.'

**Gill Selectboard Race**

In the article dealing with the two candidates' views (MR VIII #7: Questions for the Candidates for Gill Selectboard), Randy Crochier's name was inadvertently omitted in front of his reply to a question about the Gill operating budget. We apologize for the resulting confusion over who said what.

The complete back and forth between Randy Crochier and Nancy Griswold on the budget question is reprinted below, with Mr. Crochier's name appearing where it should have the first time around:

*What concrete steps should the town take to either cut expenses or raise new revenue?*

*Nancy Griswold:* "Cutting expenses – I believe we're truly at very bare bones. All of our departments are running on the minimum. I don't think it's sustainable over the long run.

*"We need to be creative. Boston does-*

*n't seem to be coming up with anything new. Adjusting Proposition 2½ just puts the onus on the taxpayers, and we have a lot of senior citizens in Gill.*

*"We're in a Catch-22 situation. I don't want to lose any more services. We're going to have to buckle down and see how to make the right decisions."*

*Randy Crochier:* "I'd have to look at the budget line by line, and talk with department heads. I'm not sure there is a lot left to cut. On the other hand, I'm not sure there is a lot of new revenue available for us to tap into. We can't keep increasing fees on local residents; they have a limited amount of money. You may have to make some difficult cuts. But if you need to cut, you have to be ready to make that decision."

**Deja Brew Still in Wendell**

Finally, two weeks in a row, in the Arts and Entertainment section, the **Deja Brew** pub was inaccurately listed as being located in Millers Falls. Now undergoing an expansion, but open for business as usual, the **Deja Brew** pub is still located in the heart of beautiful downtown Wendell.

## ONE MORE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Planets Vandalized

During a bike ride on the lovely trail in Turners this week, I was surprised to find signs along the way with information about the planets.

"What a cool project," I thought, wondering which of the local schools was responsible for this piece of public science benefitting the whole community. Reading "Local Briefs" in the *Montague Reporter* later in the week, I learned the project was the work of the students of the Four Winds School in Gill, and that their solar system model was even to scale.

Today I ran into Steve and Eloise, director and teacher of the Four Winds School, on the trail around Unity Park. I complemented them

and their students on the project and was dismayed when they told me the signs have been vandalized on a daily basis. In fact, the reason they were out on the path at the end of the school day was to put back any signs that had been torn from the ground, a practice they have had to undertake daily. Stakes have been taken from the ground and on this particular day, the entire sign for Saturn was missing.

How disappointing for the students of the Four Winds School and frustrating for their teachers! What a shame that something so valuable given to our community has been treated so poorly!

– Joanna Frankel, Riverside, Gill

### Continuing the Move Forward

## Please Re-Elect Sandy Brown

Gill Representative on the School Committee

### My Agenda For Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

- Educational excellence
- Fiscal sustainability
- Support for our new Superintendent
- A dialogue among our legislators, towns and district
- County-wide collaboration
- Balanced funding for the arts, sciences and humanities
- An active program for volunteers
- Attention to environmental issues

## Montague and Gill Residents, Please Vote Monday, May 17th

Thank you to the following Town officials for their endorsements: Ann Banash, John Ward, Patricia Pruitt, Pat Allen, John Hanold and Mike Naughton.

Paid Political Advertisement

## CORRECTIONS

**Erving Senior Center**

A late night article (MR VIII #31: Erving will Build New \$2.4 Million Senior Center) about the results of the Wednesday night town meeting vote in Erving on May 5th, during which the new senior center was approved, contained two errors.

The vote in favor of the new senior center was not 135 - 31, as reported. The vote was 104 in favor, 31 opposed, out of 135 votes cast. We apologize for that factual error.

Also, a mistake during final layout caused a few words to be chopped off from a sentence explaining the majority view of the finance committee on the new senior center. The complete sentence should have stated, "Speaking for the majority of the finance committee, which opposed spending a combination of \$1.25 million from free cash, \$500,000 from taxation, and \$650,000 transferred from unspent

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# The Montague Reporter

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"The Voice of the Villages"

## Mother Lode of Media

BY MICHAEL MULLER  
MONTAGUE – One thousand years ago, European civilization had only recently begun using the rotary grindstone. We still weren't using hops to brew beer, hadn't yet thought of hitching horses in tandem to a wagon, dug an artesian well, constructed a windmill, invented spectacles or the all-important rat trap.

It would be another 400 years before any news was reported in print, and then only sporadically. One of the first known news pamphlets was printed in Germany in the 1400s about the atrocities against Germans in Transylvania perpetrated by a sadistic warlord named Vlad Tsepes Drakul, the likely source of Count Dracula of later folklore.

Back before the printing press, how would you tell your community about the evening of quiet chamber music you have planned at your pub? And with all those rats and warlords running loose, who would have time to read it?

Well, times are different in 2010. Even our little towns have our own weekly newspaper, TV station and community websites. And soon, possibly a radio station too.

Yes folks, if you have news to share, or an event to announce such as an upcoming concert or play, you have a plethora of places to post your plans.

First and foremost, we have the very paper you hold in your hands. The *Montague Reporter* is now in its eighth year, going strong, and available in Montague, Leverett, Erving, Gill and Wendell. You can send in press releases and articles about almost anything and they'll print it if they have space. Advertising rates are quite reasonable, and 2,600 readers pick it up each week. Call the friendly staff at 863-8666 with leads, or email them at [reporter@montaguema.net](mailto:reporter@montaguema.net). Show them your support. They do it all for you.

Secondly, we have some wonderful community websites. You can post events for

free in the calendar and on the corkboard and be guaranteed to reach a wide audience, both from people who visit the website and those who subscribe to it. And even if you already have your own website, having your event listed in multiple places increases your Google rankings as well as the number of places people will find out about it. And a critical point: if your website sports only an image of your beautiful calendar flyer, it is essentially invisible to all search engines, as they cannot read text in image files. These community websites are visited by over a thousand people a day, every day, and it's free for you to post: *MontagueMA.net*, *LeverettMA.net*, and Wendell's *W-Folk* list. They're there for you.

Lastly, but by no means leastly, is our very own public access TV station, Channel 17, MCTV, available in Montague, Gill and Erving. They have cameras. They have editing stations. They have training. They provide it all for free. And they enthusiastically accept content handed to them on DVD or tape. How simple would it be to take your own camera, put it on the kitchen counter, sit down in your cozy chair, and read off your events or news. Edit it if you like, but by all means hand it in. They'll play it, free for all! At least 3,500 cable subscribers in Montague flip by or watch MCTV on a regular basis. You can call the station at 863-9200 or stop by 34 2nd Street in Turners Falls to find out more about the station. Or email [psa@MontagueTV.org](mailto:psa@MontagueTV.org).

And what about radio? There is a small group of people slowly but steadily working on a low-power FM radio license for Montague and surrounding air waves. We should know within the next month or so whether we can make this long held dream a reality. How great would that be? Local radio! Just think of it. What would you do with a local radio station?

Who would have thought that our little hamlets had so many media outlets?

And so few rats.

Another important cellphone conversation:



"The moon!  
The moon!"

"And then the cow jumped over what?"

TIM VIELMETT CARTOON

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Re-elect Sandy Brown

I am writing to urge the voters of Gill and Montague to return Sandy Brown to the school committee on May 17th. Sandy has been a strong advocate for educational excellence for all students and has been able to balance the need for that quality education with the need for fiscal stability.

Over the next three years I believe there will be some major and difficult decisions that will need to be

made – our towns continue to struggle with fiscal issues and the constraints of Proposition 2 ½, the district is facing the probability of continued state oversight and less money, and the state continues to advocate for more regional collaboration and possible consolidation. I believe we need innovative thinking. We need someone who questions the status quo, someone who understands the fiscal realities of both the school dis-

trict and the towns, and who also believes that all our students deserve an excellent well-rounded educational experience. I believe we need Sandy Brown on the Gill-Montague school committee, and ask that you join me and vote for her on May 17th.

– Ann Banash  
Gill

### Bourbeau for Town Clerk

Montague's town election is Monday, May 17th, and I am supporting Deb Bourbeau for town clerk. Deb has worked in the Montague town hall for the past 14 years. She has served six years in the tax collector's office and eight years in the clerk's office; four years as the assistant clerk, and four as town clerk. While in the clerk's office, she has overseen several town, state and national elections, always in an organized and professional manner.

Deb is also a graduate of the prestigious New England Municipal and Clerk's Institute & Academy, a three-year training program making her eligible for certification.

Deb not only possesses the knowledge and experience necessary for this position but, equally important, she possesses the personal qualifications. Deb is highly respected and trusted by many as a person of integrity. She loves her job and is always friendly and willing to

go the extra mile to answer questions and offer support.

There is no question that Deb is the most qualified individual, both personally and professionally, for the position of town clerk.

Please join me in casting your vote for Deb Bourbeau for town clerk on Monday, May 17th.

– Mary Kociela  
Montague

### Backs Phillips and Oakes

I would urge voters in Gill and Montague to join me in supporting Jane Oakes and Joyce Phillips as candidates for the Gill-Montague School Committee.

I have personally known Jane (Petrin) Oakes and her family growing up as a child in Montague City. Jane is and was a solid, well-liked and respected student, neighbor, and a much treasured teacher (retired) in the Gill-Montague School system. Having the opportunity over the years to visit in her classroom, it was consistently apparent her classroom children were engaged and creative in their activities and attentiveness.

I believe that Jane Oakes will continue to carry that care and concern for all children in the Gill Montague public school system.

Jane has the insight and education that allows her to make judgments that will be crucial in making fiscally sound decisions regarding the educational opportunities for our children while working with financial restraints and affordability. Jane is a resident of Gill and is acutely aware of meeting the needs of the students in the GMRSD and the financial responsibilities to fellow residents in Gill and Montague.

Joyce Phillips and I have served together on the Gill-Montague School committees both in the early '90s and at present. Joyce has

always impressed me with her knowledge and ability to understand state mandates and requirements that drive public education. There is no one on the (GMRSD) board that has a better perception of the legal requirements that are needed in guiding the public education forums in our community and the state of Massachusetts. Joyce, through her work and commitment on the boards of the GMRSD School Committee and Gill Montague Education Fund, works tirelessly to enhance opportunities to all children in the school district.

Joyce also is a resident in Montague and is keenly aware of the crucial balance needed between funding education and the financial limitation of the communities she serves.

Through conversations with both candidates, they believe that our tax dollars fund public education for all the children in the GMRSD and do not support sending funds out to charter schools. I ask you to join me in supporting these two strong candidates for fiscal and educational progress and responsibility.

– Douglas Brown  
Turners Falls

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**American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 5/8/10**

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**4397**

Afghanistan **1067**

Wounded in Action **31,790**

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

**MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Vote Brown for Fiscal Responsibility, Educational Opportunity**

On May 17th, the towns of Montague and Gill will be holding town elections. Candidates for the Gill-Montague school committee will appear on the ballot in both towns.

I am asking the voters of both towns to consider re-electing Mrs. Sandy Brown to represent the town of Gill on the Gill-Montague school committee.

Sandy Brown has dedicated

many hours on behalf of the taxpayers in both towns in attempting to develop fiscal stability for the school district, affordable to the member towns. She has been a leader in promoting dialogue with our legislators, and in bridging the gap that has existed between the towns and the school committee.

In my discussions with Mrs. Brown she has indicated her primary

concern is to enable every student to fully develop his or her talents. It is my opinion that with her past experience on the committee, her concern for fiscal responsibility, her educational background, and dedication, she is the best qualified candidate for the position. I urge you to consider her when voting.

– Art Gilmore  
Millers Falls

**Montague Voters Make Your Ballots Buzz  
B's have it on May 17th : Bourbeau, Boutwell and Brown**

Vote for Deb Bourbeau for Montague town clerk. Continue Ms. Bourbeau's excellent service to our town. Knowledge, efficiency, friendliness, and extraordinary public service are among her merits.

Vote for Chris Boutwell for selectboard. Mr. Boutwell is knowledgeable about the many issues facing our town, and has some constructive ideas to grow the town in the right direction. A long-time Montague res-

ident, he's proven his dedication to Montague by serving for more than fifteen years on town meeting and other boards. He has chaired the board of health, been a vital member of the veterans committee, and has also been chair of the Franklin County Solid Waste District. Put his experience to work for you on the selectboard.

And vote for Sandy Brown for the GMRSD Committee. Sandy has

been impressive in her one term on the school committee as an extremely intelligent, hard working and diligent member. She's not been afraid to make tough decisions and has worked for both the schools and the town. She should be reelected to continue the constructive work she began three years ago. Vote for stability; vote for Sandy Brown.

– Patricia Pruitt  
Turners Falls

**Oakes for Educational Success**

We support and recommend Jane Oakes for the Gill-Montague school committee.

Jane is now a retired Gill-Montague teacher, where she was an outstanding and respected educator for 34 years.

Jane understands the educational needs of our students and the spirit of our communities.

Jane is a dedicated, positive person who would help bring our schools forward for our students' educational success, with an understanding of the fiscal reality of our taxpayers.

Please vote for Jane Oakes.

– Barbara & Chuck Kuklewicz  
Turners Falls

**Oakes has Experience, Dedication**

I am urging all Gill and Montague voters to make their voices heard on Monday, May 17th, by voting for Jane Oakes for school committee.

For over 34 years, Jane has demonstrated excellent overall teaching skills at Hillcrest School in Turners Falls. Retiring in 2008, Jane has an honest and deep interest in children, and has developed strong relationships with students, parents and staff. She has taken every opportunity to be involved in the educational process, understands curriculum and individual learning needs.

During her career, Jane was named Teacher of the Year. She served on curriculum and staff development committees, negotiations, PTO, and the school improvement council.

As a veteran, seasoned teacher, her overall experience, education, and dedication make her my choice for school committee.

– Susan Colgan  
Gill

**Support Sandy Brown for School Committee**

Please vote May 17th in Gill and Montague to re-elect Sandy Brown for school committee.

Sandy's first term has demonstrated her focus and perseverance:

Sandy was on the negotiating team to transition district employees to the state insurance plan (GIC), saving the district hundreds of thousands of dollars in health benefit costs.

Sandy proposed and succeeded in passing a school committee goal for educational excellence enabling every student to achieve his or her full potential.

Her economics background and experience with budgets and fiscal management provide the analytical skills required to rein in school

spending and target critical goals: educational excellence and attracting students into district schools.

Sandy's independence from past or current financial ties to district schools gives her the objectivity to challenge the status quo.

Sandy is a supporter of the Equity in Funding the Massachusetts Frameworks policy, which requires equitable funding of all the academic frameworks in all the schools.

Sandy is an advocate for well-rounded education, holding the visual and performing arts and music on an equal plane with other academic subjects, as required by the Massachusetts Frameworks.

– Sally Shaw  
Gill

**GUEST EDITORIAL Looking Back on Long Plain Road**

BY LLAN STARKWEATHER

LEVERETT – Route 63, or rather Long Plain Road, has fascinated me for its reflection of the town since I built my home, Edgehouse, at the intersection of Long Hill Road in 1966. Since then, I estimate I have travelled up and down Long Plain Road 24,000 times, always passing through a narrow pass between Leverett bedrock that long ago halted the Continental glacier, and the waterway of Long Plain Brook, where a bridge over the railroad has been being rebuilt this last year.

This one-lane traffic control has given many pause to observe the importance of this ancient *thermopylae* to the North, which before and after colonial settlement has been shared by all forms of travel and transport, for thousands of years.

In 1966, before I-91, Route 63 was a major three-lane truck route up the east side of the Connecticut River, with a solid center line switching sides as it went (providing good width for bike travel today).

Thousands commute daily over this passage from Montague and Greenfield to Amherst and Hadley. From earlier times, on the geodetic maps the contours of the original corduroy road edging the water are

clear. That road had to find a way up the two and a half mile valley confined between Mount Toby and Leverett bedrock.

The glacier that laid down deep sand and tumbled gravel in the field where I live, behind Toby Dell, and at Roberta's horse farm, created sand locations all the way up to Millers Falls in a succession of peneplains.

Of course, it also deposited the long plain delta of Leverett, which only rises 50 feet up that two and a half mile bedrock cleft to Cranberry Pond. The giant aquifer reaches into Sunderland, with deep sand sectioned at Warner's on Route 116, where the outflow can be seen in the sand pattern from the time when the settling accumulation had been at the edge of an enormous delta.

The giant aquifer of Montague Plain is also a sand peneplain from the Continental Glacier, and supports the largest pitch pine forest west of the Cape.

For thousands of years the only way from one end of the Long Plain to the other was along a narrow strip at the water's edge just above the crossing, where traffic now waits patiently for the one lane light. The first title recorded in what became Leverett, just south of this narrow passage, was in 1727 for a lot of ten acres to Samuel Montague, described as "laying on Fishpond Rocks, lying on ye east side of ye ash swamp at ye north end of Juggle Meadow, bounded at ye northwest corner on a witch hazel staddle..."

Carlyle Field said Long Plain Road before 1938 was not plowed in winter. Before the new road, the Fields took milk along the water's edge and across the track to the Leverett depot on Depot Road by sleigh.

In 1867, the railroad had to fill half a mile of bed for the track that now carries Amtrak up the middle of the beaver-augmented Long Plain Brook pond, over two islands, bisecting a 900-foot-long prehistoric rock structure in order to get through this narrow water-dominated passage.

In 1938, road builders carved and sliced into the bedrock all along this route, traversing Leverett's steep bedrock slope to create Route 63 to replace the difficult terrain Long Plain Road once had to travel. Before the building of the bridge now being rebuilt over the railroad, Long see PLAIN ROAD pg 9

**Oakes for School Committee**

Gill and Montague voters, I would like to ask you to vote for Jane Oakes for the Gill-Montague school committee. I have known Mrs. Oakes for six years and have the utmost respect for her knowledge and understanding of education. She taught in our community for 34 years. She was born and raised in Montague. When she married, she moved to Gill.

I have worked with Jane Oakes on the PTO and seen her determination to provide an excellent education to her students. I have seen how her students respond to her and how much they respect her.

Mrs. Oakes is very fair and compassionate in her work with children and adults. We could not have a better representative for our community. I hope you will join me on May 17th to vote for Jane Oakes for Gill-Montague School Committee.

– Jane Foster  
Gill

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**NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD**

**Fire Department Must Wait for New Turnout Gear**

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** – The town of Gill will not be buying four new sets of turn-out gear for the fire department just yet.

Going over the numbers for various purchase orders for the fire department on Monday afternoon, the selectboard came to the conclusion that the town could not afford to spend \$9,200 for four new sets of turnout gear. Not yet, anyway.

Board chair Ann Banash said spending that amount on turnout gear would draw the fire department's budget down to about \$3,000, which would have to see them through to the end of the fiscal year, June 30th.

"Three thousand dollars for two months is too close," she said, considering salaries for call firefighters responding to any calls would have to also come from that amount.

After several years of tight budgets, the town has only a minimal amount of money in reserves to meet unanticipated overages in departmental budgets, so the selectboard is watching expenditures very carefully.

Administrative assistant Ray Purington had this bit of additional fire department news for the selectboard on Monday.

"This weekend, aside from mutual aid calls and wind related

emergencies, the fire department's brush truck is at Riverside Radiator with an undiagnosed problem."

"Obviously, it was a radiator problem, because it overheated," said Dennis Underwood, proprietor at Riverside Radiator, reached later in the week. "We were able to get them a new radiator on warranty, even though the warranty was past. We were able to take care of the boys."

Underwood added, "Hopefully, someday, they won't have to take care of me."

The selectboard approved purchases totaling \$6,060 for a new hydrant assist valve, new air bottles, and eight fifty-foot lengths of one-and-three-quarter inch attack hose for the department.

But the request for new turnout gear was tabled until the end of the fiscal year.

In other news, the Gill highway department will begin repaving work in Riverside next week. Walnut Street, and parts of Meadow, Myrtle and Riverview Drive, will be repaved, and through traffic will be limited to residents only. There will be no parking on the street in Riverside from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The highway department plans to do the job themselves in order to save the town some money.

The used bucket truck purchased by not long ago by the town of Northfield, which is intended to be shared with the towns of Vernon, VT and Gill, has been checked out by Raymond's Repair in Bernardston and declared 'Good to Go.'

Purington said a contract is being drawn up describing the terms of joint use of the vehicle, which will enable highway department employees in Gill to perform side-of-the-road tree limbing without balancing on the extended bucket of the front end loader any more.

The town's insurance company is relieved to hear about the new arrangement.

Northfield will garage the vehicle and own title to it, and Gill and Vernon will contribute a sum for maintenance around \$500 to \$750 annually, and be able to borrow the truck on a regular schedule.

"We will adjust the second and third years based on how the first year works out," Purington said.

Boston didn't call Franklin County a model of regional col-

laboration for nothing.

The decorative iron fence being donated for the West Gill cemetery with the assistance of Ted Graveline will be stored at the highway garage until department employees have time to install it, probably in the fall. Banash said she had a post hole digger the highway department could borrow if they needed one.

The board appointed Laurie Lankowski as a part time police officer. Lankowski, a resident of South Deerfield, is trained as an EMT and a paramedic, and comes with the recommendation of police chief David Hastings.

Her appointment doubles the number of part-time officers available to fill shifts in Gill, while two other officers attend police training academy.

"This will take a little load off our full-timers," said board member John Ward.

The town of Gill may be able to qualify for community development block grant funding for one municipal infrastructure improvement program in the next grant cycle, Purington told the board. In addition to the regular housing rehab zero interest loan program, Gill may be able to apply for funding to replace pumps for the sewer system in Riverside. But in order to qualify, at least 90% of the residents of Riverside will have to return forms stating their range of family income, and of those, 51% will have to be low to moderate income families.

Board member Nancy Griswold encouraged this approach. "It's only going to help them if we get the grant."

**PLEASE SUPPORT THESE COMMUNITY COMMITTED DEMOCRATS ON MONTAGUE ELECTION DAY, MONDAY, MAY 17th**

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Town Clerk	Debra A. Bourbeau
Treas/Tax Collector	Patricia A. Dion
Assessor	Teresa A. Miner
Bd. Of Health	Jay DiPucchio
Library Trustee	Karen Latka
	Cynthia Tarail
Soldier Memorial Trustees : Veteran	John Murphy
Montague Housing Authority	Paula Girard
GM School Committee	Marje Levenson

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**NOTES FROM THE MAHAR REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Mahar will meet May 27th on Alternative Assessment Methods**

BY KATIE NOLAN

**ORANGE** – The Mahar regional school committee met on May 4th and considered the method for assessing costs to member towns, cafeteria finances, archery classes, merging the special education departments of Mahar, Orange elementary schools and Petersham Elementary, the dam at the school pond, the rain date for graduation, and other issues.

Superintendent Michael Baldassarre told the school committee he had invited the selectboards and finance committees of the four member towns to attend a discussion of the assessment methodology used to assign regional school costs to the member towns.

Over the last three years, the Wendell finance committee and selectboard have been protesting the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) statutory assessment method for Mahar, because Wendell's per-pupil costs have been consistently higher than the per-pupil costs of the other towns in the region, although in aggregate wealth it is the second-poorest town, after Orange.

Wendell representatives have asked the school committee to switch to an alternative assessment method.

The meeting to discuss assessment methods will be held on Wednesday, May 27th at the Eileen Perkins auditorium at Mahar. Baldassarre said, as of May 4th, he had received positive responses from the Orange town administrator and finance committee, as well as from the New Salem finance committee.

An assessment methodology subcommittee was voted into existence at the April 4th school committee meeting with a mission to explore methods for assessing costs to the four member towns. At the May 5th meeting, the subcommittee was formally set up, and Dick Baldwin of Wendell and Peter Cross of Orange volunteered to serve as the school committee members on the assessment method subcommittee.

Cross and Baldwin were in the minority when the majority of the school committee again approved

using the statutory method of assessment on April 5th.

Baldassarre told the committee that, as a result of a price increase for school lunch, revenues from the school food service have increased. However, the food service department is still showing a loss for the year.

The food service manager is considering other ways to reduce losses, such as using biodegradable disposable trays and plates to save money spent on washing trays and plates.

Committee chair Maureen Donelan of Orange said she had heard that lunch portion sizes were smaller now, and wondered about the wisdom of increasing prices and reducing portions.

Student representative Ben Simon said sometimes the portions seemed small to him, but when that happens, he just buys a second lunch.

Baldwin asked, "What is the philosophy for the lunch program? Nourishing students or running a business?"

Michael Roche of the Massachusetts Teachers Association said Mahar is lucky to have a food service manager "who knows how to put meals out. I have never seen food I thought was healthier, or where there is better management of resources."

At the next school committee meeting, June 7th, the committee will discuss increasing prices for school lunches for the next school year.

Roche reported Mahar had been selected as one of ten schools in Massachusetts to participate in the National Archery in Schools Program (NASP). Mahar will offer archery as part of the physical education curriculum. Several physical education teachers from Mahar will attend either one-day basic archery instruction training or three-day instructor trainer training provided by NASP. Mahar will receive free archery equipment, including targets, bows, and arrows.

Baldassarre told the committee he had participated in a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education web-based seminar on the state's second round application to the US Department of Education Race to

the Top program. The federal Race to the Top initiative will provide funds to schools for innovative programs in selected states. The DESE reviewed comments from their first round application and is determined to improve in the areas considered weak.

Mahar was one of the schools that supported the DESE application in round one, along with almost two-thirds of schools in the state. The application is due to the US Department of Education June 1st.

Baldassarre reported he has been meeting with representatives of the Orange elementary schools and Petersham Elementary School to discuss consolidating their special education programs with Mahar's. So far the representatives have worked out an organizational chart for the consolidated program. Issues still to be worked out include how to pay for the consolidated program, because there will be costs across the region, and Wendell and New Salem are not participating in the consolidation.

Baldassarre said he expected to be asking for committee approval for consolidating at a future meeting.

Baldassarre said a consultant was preparing a feasibility estimate for removing the dam at the school pond under the state's Office of Dam Safety (ODS) program. He told the committee the work could take as long as three years to complete, but the ODS has been liberal in granting extensions as long as dam owners are making progress on determining the future of their dams.

Baldassarre is looking into grants to help pay for the dam removal.

Patricia Smith of Orange reported the educational programs subcommittee had evaluated retaining the current long block schedule or changing to an alternate class schedule. The committee favored retaining the long block schedule. Smith noted the teaching staff is mostly in favor of the current schedule.

Baldwin reported the Franklin County School Committee Caucus will draft a letter to state senators about regionalization.

Baldwin said, "We are all for collaboration to cut costs, but we want local control over how we fit that into our local schools."

Mahar's 2010 graduation ceremony is scheduled for Friday, June 4th, with a rain date of Saturday June 5th. Several parents attended the meeting and told the committee that changing the date of the graduation, even for rain, could be a problem for families that have already scheduled travel and celebrations based on the Friday date.

Roche said some of the Mahar teachers also had concerns about holding the graduation ceremony on Saturday.

Baldassarre said using the rain date is at the superintendent's discretion. He told the committee and visitors that this year, the graduation will be on Friday, June 4th. If the day is rainy, the time of the graduation might be changed to later in the day, or an indoor location might be used. For next year, the graduation ceremony scheduled date and rain date will be publicized at the beginning of the school year, so families can make plans accordingly.

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# Local Nature Notes *May: Things to See, Hear and Do*

**BY JEN AUDLEY**  
**TURNERS FALLS** – Stargazing will be best on clear nights around the time of the **new moon** on May 13th. Look for the **full moon** on May 27th.

**Water and woods are exploding with life** right now, as leaves burst from buds, insects hatch out, and migrating birds and fish pass through our area en route to their breeding grounds. Spring energy often involves excess and death – many living things die in this exuberant season.

**Animal babies:** Ducks, geese, squirrels, chipmunks, skunks and white-tailed deer have their young this month. Many of the flying insects that appear in May are “babies” of a sort, too, having spent the the colder months underground or underwater in egg, larval, or pupal form.

**Summer resident birds** such as whip-poor-wills, northern orioles, bobolinks, swifts, thrushes, vireos and catbirds, who winter down south but nest here, return about now. Hear them singing during the “dawn chorus” at sunrise, and visit [pioneerbirding.blogspot.com](http://pioneerbirding.blogspot.com) to

see photos and reports from our area. (Thanks Barbara Stewart!)

**Snapping turtle** females leave the water at this one time of year to lay a clutch of eggs on land. If you come across one crossing the road (or the bike path), please treat her respectfully!

**Many wonderful flowers bloom in May**, from jack-in-the-pulpit to mountain laurel, lily of the valley, elderberries, and black locust.

The sun sets now at about 8 p.m., and by the end of the month at about 8:20. Sunrise comes earlier each day – now around 5:30, by the end of the month at 5:15.

*Learn more:*

**Bobcats of Massachusetts**

*Wednesday, May 12th, 7 to 9 p.m.*

This presentation at the regular monthly meeting of the Athol Bird and Nature Club features Laura Hajduk, who will cover the basics of the bobcat, *Lynx rufus* – the biology, ecology, and habits of this secretive and elusive predator. Laura is the Furbearer and Black Bear Project Leader for the Division of Fisheries and

**Wildlife.** At the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.

**Migration Celebration**  
*Saturday, May 15th, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

A time for the whole family to



Mountain Laurel

learn about the birds we see in our skies and neighborhoods. Where do they stay in winter? How do they know how to get back here? If they are endangered, what can we do to help them? There will be games and challenges to help you find out. Build a birdhouse (materials provided), play games, make a craft item to take home with you, have fun! In English and Spanish.

**Food and drink, too!** At the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

**Hike Along the Bike Path**  
*Saturday, May 15th; 9 a.m. to noon*

Join us for a brisk walk along the canal-side bike trail in Turners Falls from Unity Park to East Deerfield. Participants will be searching for blooms in a landscape that contains clues to the fascinating industrial history of the village that still generates hydroelectricity to power local communities. Walkers can choose to carpool for a 3.3 mile linear walk, or walk out and back for a 6.2 mile trip. Bring lots of water and hearty trail snacks. For ages 12 and older. Free, but pre-registration required – call (800) 859-2960. Presented by Northfield Mountain Education Center.

**Introduction to Song Birds**  
*Thursday, May 20th, 7 to 8:30 p.m.*

“Songbirds of the Northeast”

is a 90-minute Powerpoint presentation by John Root, featuring both recordings and photographs of native and introduced songbirds. Learn how to recognize birds by their songs and calls and discover the roles of these entrancing vocalizations in birds’ lives. Habitat, migration, diets, life cycles, and survival strategies will also be explored. At the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls.

**It’s Fishy Out There**  
*Saturday, May 22nd, 1 to 2:30 p.m.*

Do you know that fish are migrating up the Connecticut River right now? Turners Falls offers an exceptional chance to see this fascinating part of the life cycle of special kinds of fish, called anadromous fish, who are born in fresh water, live part of their lives in the ocean, then come back to where they were born to spawn and start the cycle all over again. Come to the Great Falls Discovery Center for a Migration Challenge, then stroll with us to the Fish Ladder, and watch shad and the amazing lamprey swim up the river to their spawning grounds.

## TALKING PICTURES **IRON MAN**

### Lacking Something in the Middle



1 eagle = The Pits  
 4 eagles = The Heights

**TODD DETMOLD**  
**CHICAGO** – In many ways the antithesis to the Batman of Christopher Nolan’s films, the Tony Stark of Jon Favreau’s *Iron Man* franchise is everything a billionaire playboy should be.

Compare him to Christian Bale’s somber, sober Bruce Wayne – the men are equals in their respective comic book universes. Both are rich, both are surrounded by beautiful women and fancy gadgets, both lost their fathers at a young age, and both are mortals entering into the superhero game behind sheer chutzpah and a lot of armor. The difference is that Stark immediately shuffles off the onus of secret identity, going public with his superheroism at the first chance he gets. For a rich, fun-loving, womanizing alcoholic sociopath, this actually makes a

lot of sense. Tony Stark is a damn likable guy and he adores the attention, which makes it all the more remarkable how depressing an experience it is to sit through *Iron Man 2*. The central foundation to the franchise’s success is the idiosyncratic narcissism Robert Downey, Jr. brings to the lead role. The actor has more fun with his words than his character does with his gadgets. So, I’m baffled at the choice to send Stark into a depressed funk through the majority of the runtime, slowly dying due to his worsening condition, drinking more and more heavily and itching from a severe flare-up of Daddy Issues.

The light bulb in his chest is no longer doing its job, and several enemies (foreign and domestic) want to either steal or copy the Iron Man weapon-suit. This

means the film will climax with a lot of Iron Man-like machines having it out with Stark – just like the last one, except now there’s a plurality of evil iron men. I find myself wondering, knowing so little as I do about the Iron Man mythos, if there will ever be any bad guys in this series that aren’t iron men trying to steal Stark’s thunder.

The plot is incidental, though, really. We’re here to watch Downey snark around and to see stuff blow up, and frankly there’s not enough of either. There’s a plethora of new characters – some interesting, some not, all rushed on and off the screen, all requisitely sexy – and the process of juggling them while seeing the second act through to the third proves an arduous task for director Favreau and his hired gun screenwriter Justin Theroux.

Theroux can pun with the best of them, but I get the impression he didn’t have a lot of room to get creative with anything besides wordplay. There are triple agents, lovers’ spats, DUI Iron Manning,

winking references to other Marvel superheroes, hot chicks, big guns and a cast of stellar underutilized actors, from Clark Gregg and Don Cheadle to supposed “lead” villain Mickey Rourke. Rourke has maybe thirty lines: he’s there to look foreign and evil, and I suppose he does get the job done.

Maybe the only actor who does get his due is Sam Rockwell, playing an American arms manufacturer named Justin Hammer with some mean Tony- envy. He tries to build his own suit and he tries to sleep with the same women as Tony, and he fails in both cases.

Preening and peacocking without any feathers to show and armed with a supply of bizarre, hilarious non-sequiturs courtesy of Theroux, Rockwell manages to steal the film from Downey. This is no small feat, but it’s not something that should’ve been allowed to happen.

The audience of cheering fanboys gave up their biggest hollers of the night to the trailers for



Robert Downey, Jr. as Tony Stark

*Inception* and *The Last Airbender*, and to the post-credit sequence exposing half-of-a-second of imagery promising a future release from Marvel Studios. The entire machine is geared to be about not what we’re watching now but what’s coming next. “*Iron Man 2* was great,” they want us to say. “And it was so cool how there’s going to be more.” Second verse, same as the first.

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PHOTOS from page 1

in black, and arranged sequentially by Kennedy along three of the Aztec Brick colored walls in the Voo.

The show is titled *Beyond Portfolio* as the exhibitors wanted to convey the sense that their offerings would be more free-ranging than their course requirement work at the Institute. Much of the work is set in New England (many of them are here for the first time), and particularly reflects "the vibes of the Voo."

What is most refreshing about this show is how the chosen photos also reflect the sensibilities of the young men and women who snapped the shutters to capture these images. No longer are they trying to complete an assignment, impress a teacher or a client. They wanted to merely express themselves, how they perceive and feel about the world, in their chosen idiom. Not incidentally, they hope to entertain denizens of the Rendezvous, but they don't crimp their style to do so. They show us the best of who they are and how they work.

The results are spectacular. The first photograph as you come through the door is a black and white study, "Sounds of Zefron" by Joshue Plotke. Stand for a moment to view this photograph of an Israeli violinist, and perhaps the notes he is playing will waft across the

Mediterranean to fall upon your ears in the midst of the bar clamor or live music on the Voo stage. Two frames further, spot Plotke's "Finding the Right Combination" in muted color, and further, "The Light from Behind."

Plotke's three photographs seem to span a wide range of material, but they actually have one essential mood, the "true look," as the camera and thus the viewer encounter each scene. Plotke's work achieves an aesthetic, almost spiritual, unity.

Photographs 2, 9 and 12 - a New England harbor scene, a human figure in nature, and a parade of religious figures, all in color, are taken by Blu Hartkopp. He thinks viewers can see themselves, their own individual moments, in his challenging images. We have to consider the transition from darkness to light, says Hartkopp, and think of greater elemental powers like the human spirit and the beauty of the natural universe.

Over by the jukebox, you'll find Neesa Biblyk, the group's finest portraitist, and the first of her three photographs. I am most impressed with Biblyk's dark, atmospheric portrait of a man in black (10). Because of its presence and position, perhaps the most-viewed photo in the show will be her spectacular portrait of a punkish woman (16), hung just to the right at the entrance to the restroom. Talk about hitting

the vibrations of the Voo.

Justin Nunnick has three pre-modern fine-art offerings, landscapes 5 and 7, as well as 15, a portrait of a woman on a horse.

Christine Kennedy offers local scenes most hikers would never see: three well-composed and exquisitely-detailed studies of local flora, taken on the sides of the roads here in the villages of Montague. Her harlequin masque with milkweed fluff is one to remember, or perhaps take home and hang on your own wall. (All images are reasonably priced).

The *Beyond Portfolio* show went up on May 2nd, just in time for a return performance by one of the region's premier underground bands, the Cave Bears. After moving from New Orleans to Easthampton, the beloved cavers have played the Voo several times. Vocalist and keyboard maestro Nick Williams was very impressed with the arty backdrop on May 2nd.

"We've never seen the place look so good," he said. "If we had known that we'd be in such an aesthetic setting, we would have brought some cymbals, a choir, and an out-of-tune clarinet."

To the left of the bathroom door, the photos on the west wall were dominated by Eric Hubball, who incorporates a refreshing mix of abstraction and realism, sometimes in the same image. It's no surprise he



Mask in the Field by Christine Kennedy

has studied artists like Kandinsky and Jackson Pollock. I personally was delighted to look into his current source of inspiration - the whimsical images of Brooklyn photographer Joshua Dalsimer.

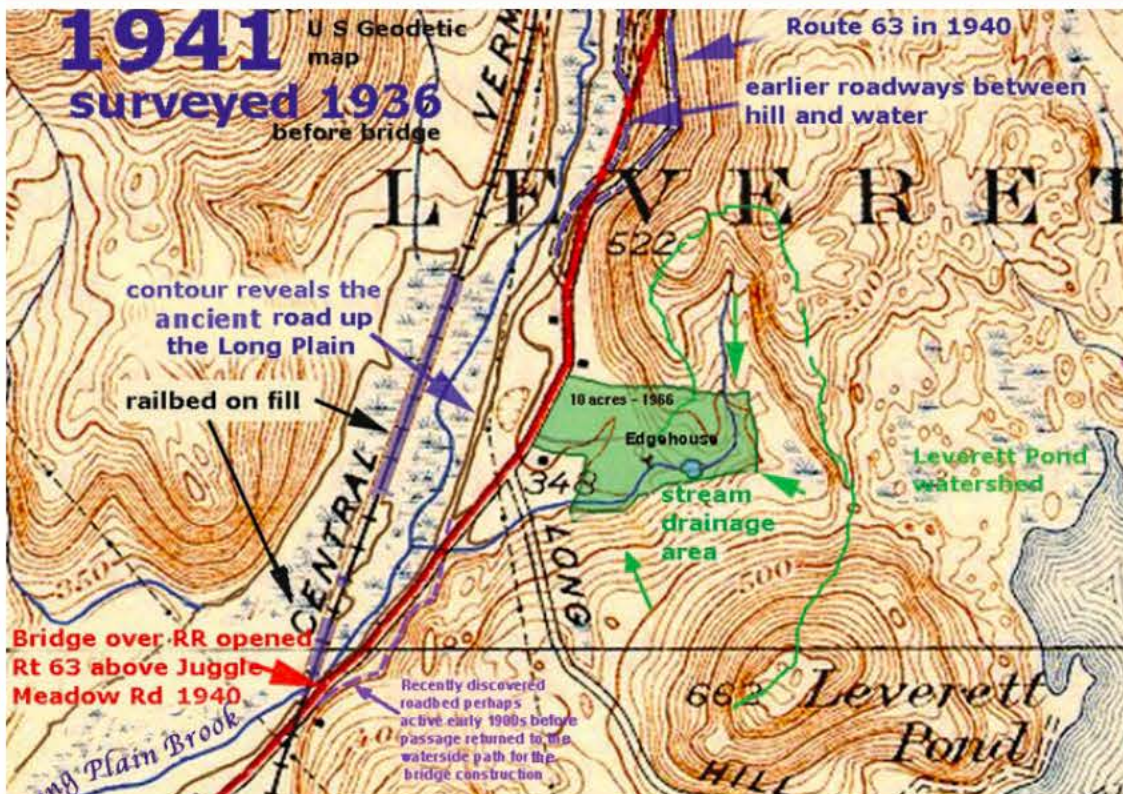
Hubball's delightful and provocative images evoke a nostalgia for early wonderment with scenic viewfinders, parking meters, and distant lights - objects we once may have found fascinating to stare at, seeing beautiful mysteries in their workings. Hubball's photos are like our own memories brought back in black and white and color.

Don't leave without checking out the one of a kind "Crushed Tomato" by Adam Caron. Red

runs through his work as an unmistakable motif. "Red Wheel" (13), of a grist mill in Rockingham, VT, serves as counterpoint to the starkness of the New England palette, and his can't get there from here "Lost Fisherman" (18) waits nearby

Caron's biggest influence is the nature and travel photographer Rick Sammon, who motivated Adam to attend Hallmark and acquire the skills necessary to work as a photographer.

The *Beyond Portfolio* show will hang at the Rendezvous through the Hallmark graduation date of June 25th. Then, the photographers will take down their pictures one by one as they leave town over the next few days.



PLAIN ROAD from pg 5

A section of U.S. Geodetic Map notated by Llan Starkweather

Plain Road took a number of different routes, which can still be traced.

A good way to follow the remnants of the old road is found opposite Toby Dell, leading over the top of the ledge that had to be cut down to excavate 63 for about a quarter of a mile before returning to 63, where careful stonework shows the road's former eight foot width and constructed drainage. Another can be seen just leaving this Field valley northward, as the old road ascends on the east to climb and crest and return to the present route, shown by reentering stone walls. Stone walls also show where Long Plain Road descended to rail grade and passed east of the glacial pothole pond to come back to the route just short of the North Leverett Road juncture.



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NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ladd Proposes New Assistant Principal Position

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE - At the last meeting of the Gill-Montague regional school committee before the May 17th elections usher in at least one new member from Montague...

Marje Levenson of Lake Pleasant is running unopposed for a three-year Montague seat being left vacant by the retirement of Doug Brown. In Gill, Jane Oakes is challenging incumbent Sandy Brown for a three-year seat.

In the superintendent's evaluation, completed this week and accepted at the May 11th meeting, school committee members graded Ladd as "very good or better" in performance. On Tuesday, May 18th, the members of the newly elected school committee will gather at 7 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School television studio for a reorganization meeting...

school buildings in the energy plan for the town. The school district has been working with Siemens Building Technologies to complete an agreement for a professional grade energy audit of school buildings, but the fact the town owns two of the school buildings has been an impediment to completing the contract.

approaching, the school committee voted to approve the town's request. On the issue of creating a new elementary school that combines Hillcrest and Sheffield, superintendent Ladd said he felt it was necessary to increase administrative staff to handle the newly formed school by adding an assistant principal position.

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Town Clerk Race!

BY DAVID DETMOLD MONTAGUE - Deb Bourbeau has been the town clerk in Montague for almost the last four years. She served as assistant town clerk for three and half years before that, coming to that job from the tax collector's office. Bourbeau is running for reelection in the May 17th election, facing a challenge from South Prospect Street resident Michael Henry.

I've graduated from the New England Municipal Clerks Institute and Academy, a three-year course, and I'm a member of the town clerks' association, working toward my state certification. "I love the people in this town. I have to say, I've been working with our new website that went live this week. Now we have online dog registration, and vital records requests online.

of Millers Falls, said he is running for town clerk out of a desire to make town government more open and accessible to town residents. "I don't like that I have to go down to town hall and look at the bulletin board to find out what is happening in town hall. I don't think we are informed enough about meeting dates. If I were elected I would do a better job informing people about meetings, and elections, and try to get better turnout.

clerks' bulletin boards to somewhere outside the building so it can be accessed 24 hours a day, particularly with the town hall closed now on Fridays." Henry, who has two children, including a first grader in Sheffield, said he and his wife both work at Crocker Communications, where he is a client technician. "I have a background in retail customer service on the phone, both in my current job and as a former insurance representative.

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**RUNNING** from page 1

community what they're getting for their investment in the school system. It's been the focus of the school district for a number of years to access all the avenues for income to support the schools. We've been excellent at pursuing and getting grants to support programs, and the state has been closely involved with our district.

"Even some of the ways we're approaching it that are a little bit out of the norm - like the Gill Montague Education Fund - that can be accomplished locally, each area helps a bit. The problem has to be approached jointly by the school committee and the town, with the help of all the players, including the state. The economic times are very difficult; that won't change overnight."

*How should the GMRSD address the high dropout rate at the high school?*

**Sandy Brown:** "Part of the answer is to strive for excellence in all areas. That could reverse the trend."

"The district is really at a crossroads. We must either take up the challenge to improve or just scrape by. I'd like to see every student inspired, energized, and recognized for their talents. I'd like to foster that approach. That will spread and make students value being in school. That will actually help the dropout rate. They'll realize this is a district that likes to be on the forefront."

**Jane Oakes:** "We need to investigate the dropout rate and examine the numbers carefully. The research shows that students who start in our public school system in the early grades tend to be retained through their educational career. A proportion of students in the dropout rate were students who had come into our district at a later date in their education. The district has already been providing students who start at an early age what they need to complete their education."

"At the same time, the district needs to utilize and improve programs such as the Reconnecting Youth program for at-risk students, and develop particular programs that would help at-risk youth to remain in school. It's a complicated area, but needs to be given a lot of our attention."

*What specific steps, if any, should the Gill-Montague schools*

*take to pursue regionalization or collaboration with neighboring school districts?*

**Sandy Brown:** "We've started with the Franklin County School Committee Caucus, which is very exciting. The districts in Franklin County are really working together instead of waiting for the state to tell us what to do. We've started collaboration with the business end, and technology. We ought to continue the dialogue with our legislators, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the towns, because we all have to work together."

"The towns and the school will have to find a way to meet the goals of the school without bankrupting the towns."

**Jane Oakes:** "The emphasis most recently at the local level is to collaborate as much as possible with other districts on any cost-saving measures, group purchasing, and streamlining of services that are needed in all the districts that could be shared. Looking at the larger question of regionalization, research has shown there really wouldn't be a savings in expenditures due to the difficulty of scale: the school districts in this area are so spread out geographically. It's hard when the state attempts to compare our schools with a similar number of students in a city where the geographical area is much smaller."

*How would you encourage community volunteerism in the regional schools, and in what ways could volunteers be helpful to teachers, staff, and students?*

**Sandy Brown:** "From the time I've gotten on the school committee, I've pushed for volunteers, and not just to bake or do fundraising. One way would be tutoring math and reading. Or coming in and giving classes."

"If we could get the community and the parents more involved, that would again help the dropout rate and reduce school choice out. Parents are the first teachers. You want them to continue being that, and to bring the community in also."

"That's one way of decreasing costs in the school."

**Jane Oakes:** "One step would be to make community members feel they are welcome to attend school committee meetings and provide input. I know over time there have been many programs

where volunteers have been helpful with everything from assisting in the libraries at the schools to doing particular workshops with the children, reading with children. We've had some pretty good programs, including a senior citizen volunteer program, where seniors volunteered with reading, writing, and one-to-one tutoring. We had high school students from the Tech School who served as interns. Those are really valuable programs. There is always opportunity for volunteers."

*Is the present configuration of elementary schools sufficient to provide educational options for all Gill-Montague families, or should other options be made available to reduce the outflow of school choice students that is depriving the Gill-Montague district of roughly \$1 million a year in state aid?*

**Sandy Brown:** "I think the school committee should always be open to all possibilities. They shouldn't automatically reject anything. They should weigh all the pluses and minuses."

"I'm a firm believer in mission driven schools. I could see a Horace Mann school in the district. It's the 21st century, and we should be open to new ways of doing things."

**Jane Oakes:** "Given the constraints of the budget, what we have available should meet the needs of the students in the district well. Again, we're dealing with the fact that the number of students in general has declined over time in the towns. So that limits what the options will be. You don't have the need for as many small schools as we once did. Both the elementary schools I went to as a child are now closed, in Montague City and the South End."

"There is a survey the district is currently completing to give us information on why families choose out their students. That information could be extremely valuable to see if there is an unmet need."

*What is the GMRSD doing well, and what would you like to see the district schools do better?*

**Sandy Brown:** "I think we now have a new superintendent who's really shaking up the whole school district. It's no longer business as usual. We are looking at every program, every expense,

and we want to bring the district up to be a district other districts can look to for guidance. It's very exciting to work with Carl [Ladd]."

"I admire the teachers. With the new \$200,000 grant, they are spreading it collaboratively to all advanced placement classes so students will get the benefits of the grant even in the already established AP classes. I think the whole district is getting energized."

"I would like to see the school committee working more than as the sum of its parts, but as a real team. I'd like every area of the district to be carefully analyzed: 'Is this a way we could go forward or should we change?' I'd like more parent involvement, and more thorough evaluation of teachers and administration."

**Jane Oakes:** "From my experience - and I've been involved in the local schools since I was five, 34 years as a teacher after graduating from the Montague public schools - we have really an excellent educational system. I've always felt the same. I think sometimes people lose sight of that fact."

"Initially, we need to better recognize the excellence we already have, and promote that. There's always room for change and developing new programs, but recognizing the positive is sometimes overlooked."

*What strengths will you bring to this position to advance your priorities for the GMRSD?*

**Sandy Brown:** "I've entered in wholeheartedly to this. It takes a while to learn everything you need to know, to become truly effective. I have had experience now, and I want the district to improve."

**Jane Oakes:** "This really is my home. I've always lived either in Montague or Gill. I have a really broad knowledge of the educational system in this district from the inside, as a student and an educator. I'm also a taxpayer who understands the needs of fiscal responsibility."

"I think one of the strengths I could bring to the committee is I have a great deal of experience in many kinds of committee work as an educator, and I have training as a facilitator where the goal is to help keep focus on problem solving in a constructive manner."

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## Montague Plans for Energy Upgrades

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** – The Montague energy committee met with Siemens Building Technology project manager Roland Butzke in town hall on Tuesday afternoon, to go over details of the impending energy performance contract for town buildings. Montague's technical advisor for the project, Beth Greenblatt, of Beacon Integrated Solutions in Boston, participated by conference call.

The town of Montague has received town meeting approval to borrow up to \$750,000 to finance energy improvements in town buildings. Siemens, under contract to provide energy performance contracting for a number of towns and school districts in the county, will perform the building upgrades, and guarantee resulting savings on utilities. The savings on utility bills will provide the funds to repay the loan over a period of time, up to 20 years, or longer, depending on the building and the work being performed.

Montague has also received a grant of \$150,000 from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources to replace the boiler at town hall.

Regarding that aspect of the energy performance contract, Greenblatt said, "The energy savings are going to be significant. The low efficiency oil fired boiler is at the end of its useful life, and will be replaced with a high efficiency gas boiler."

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio had told town meeting members on April 1st that due to the town's plan to build a new facility for the highway department rather than invest in major retrofits to the existing garage, and also due to the high cost of meeting historic preservation guidelines for replacement windows at the Carnegie Library, per-

formance contract work on those two town buildings would be limited, and the overall cost of the energy performance contract would be kept to about \$202,000, not counting the \$150,000 grant.

Since then, the focus of the project has expanded to include upgrades to the heating system at the highway garage, where the present heating system so poorly distributes heat that the superintendent says he keeps his office windows open in the winter in order to let out excessive heat, while the garage bays remain too cold for employees to work in efficiently.

The energy committee is also contemplating some work on system controls at the new police station, along with more major energy saving efforts at the town's wastewater treatment facility.

In addition, Siemens will work up cost estimates for installing new heating controls, replacement windows, and other building envelope improvements at the Hillcrest and Sheffield elementary schools.

The Carnegie Library, despite comments by library director Sue SanSoucie at recent meetings that the century-old windows are drafty and the ancient boiler inefficient, leading to energy waste and uncomfortable conditions for workers and patrons, is apparently in line only for weatherization measures and lighting upgrades.

Energy committee chair Chris Mason said his committee is working against the clock to meet the end of May deadline to complete Montague's application for Green Community status, and to apply for up to one million dollars in additional state grant funding for projects ranging from a photovoltaic array on the new police station to a new fine-bubble aeration system or at the wastewater treatment plant.

## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Montague to Apply for Green Community Status

**BY WILLIAM DRAKE** – The town of Montague took the final steps on Monday to become a Green Community recognized by the state Department of Energy Resources, and with hardly a moment to spare, as the paperwork must be into the DoER by the afternoon of Friday, May 14th.

"The application is being mailed today," said town energy committee chair Chris Mason on Wednesday afternoon. "We've met all the criteria."

Achieving Green Community status will allow Montague to immediately apply for up to \$1 million in competitive grants for the installation of energy saving measures or green energy generating equipment on town buildings, or even for energy conservation measures in private homes in town from a state pool of \$7 million, Mason said.

On Tuesday, Siemens Building Technology representative Roland Butzke told the energy committee 31 communities in the Commonwealth so far had approved passage of the voluntary stretch energy building code, one of five criteria necessary for a town to receive Green Community designation. Butzke did not know how many of those 31 communities intended to meet the May 14th application deadline, but he said he knew of at least seven that intended to do so.

On Monday, Walter Ramsay, town planner, presented the selectboard with a draft of the Montague energy committee's energy reduction plan. The ERP is intended to map a course toward reducing the town of Montague's energy consumption by 20% over the next five years.

Fiscal year 2008 will provide

the baseline for the town's energy consumption, as town officials look to reach their goal over the next few years.

"So that includes all municipal buildings, all vehicles, all traffic lights," said Ramsay. Ramsay identified the Sheffield Elementary School and the town's wastewater treatment plant as the "heavy hitters" with regard to the town's energy usage.

"Schools are often the largest energy users," said Chris Mason, chair of the energy committee.

On Tuesday, Mason indicated that the committee hopes to include proposals to improve energy efficiency at the wastewater treatment plant and to produce solar photovoltaic electricity at the police station or one of the elementary schools in the town's bid for Green Community grant funding.

Patricia Allen of the selectboard asked if there were any surprises Ramsay and Mason found in compiling the report. Both Mason and Ramsay pointed to the amount of gas used by the town's police cruisers as well as the diesel use by the department of public works.

In coming up with a baseline for the town's energy use, "We were allowed to account for some energy conservation projects we've done since 2008," said Ramsay, "and those include instituting a four-day work week here at town hall and the geothermal heating for the public safety building."

In related news, Mason received selectboard approval to adopt a fuel efficiency vehicle policy, which would create guidelines for future purchases of town vehicles. The exemption list is wide ranging and includes

police cruisers, ambulances, heavy-duty DPW vehicles, and fire trucks. New purchases of a 2-wheel-drive sedan must meet 28 miles per gallon as set by the EPA. The lowest requirement is for a 4-wheel-drive, manual transmission pick-up truck, which must achieve at least 16 miles per gallon on the highway.

In the town administrator's report, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio released the appointments to the town planner selection committee: Abbondanzio, building inspector David Jensen, planning board member Donald Valley, conservation commission member Sean Werle, Montague Business Association president Chris Janke, RiverCulture coordinator Lisa Davol, and community member Greg Garrison.

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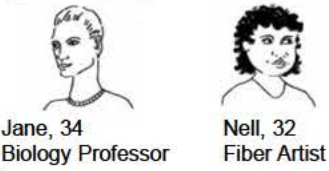
## Episode 11: Where's the Meat?

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – Deciding to take advantage of some child-free time, Jane Robbins-Levine threw together the fixings for the night's dinner: curried soybean soup, and lentil split pea loaf fortified with wheat germ. Next, she zoomed around the house vacuuming and picking up, before stopping at the kitchen table to catch up on bills and recordkeeping.

When Nell finally arrived home at 6:45, Jane was ready and waiting with their latest bank statement. "What's up with these debit card charges for Randy's Ribs?" she demanded. "And

### Robbins-Levine Family



Jane, 34  
Biology Professor

Nell, 32  
Fiber Artist

look, here's one for Little Mo's Burgers. Even friggin' MacDonalds! How Could You!!!!"

"Ummm," Nell mumbled.

"You realize this blows our whole strategy for the food challenge out of the water, right! What were you thinking?"

"I just got these cravings, Jane. At first I thought I'd just fudge a little on the food diary

and the judges would never know, but, then, well...some people saw me eating at Little Mo's. I'm really sorry," Nell confessed sheepishly.

Still in her pajamas, Jayden Bartlett scrunched herself into the couch with a bag of chips and plugged in her iPod to tune out her brother's shouts. Connor was frantically firing his lazer gun at an army of slime-coated aliens on the family's giant plasma TV screen.

Listening to the Dumpster Divers crank out their hit tune "I'm Licking My Lips" reminded Jayden for the tenth time of Alex Tinker and that huge smile

he had given her at the Go Green Family kickoff. She decided to give in to her curiosity, and grabbing her laptop, typed "Alex Tinker" into Google's search engine.

Cripes. No hits at all. But what about Facebook? She did a quick search on "Dumpster Divers" and was rewarded with a list of group members. Up popped a photo of Alex. Damn, he was cute.

Jayden was considering whether to give him a poke or send him a message when the television screen went blank. Connor sat down beside her and

yanked off her earbuds.

"Jayden, do you realize we haven't had any bacon, chicken, pork chops – actually any meat since we've been eating off dad's new menu? He never said we were turning into vegetarians!"

"Yeah, it took me a week to realize he had us going meatless," admitted Jayden, grabbing back her earbuds. "The food has been fabulous."

*Continued next issue.*

Missed an episode? Want to learn more about the Go Green families? Visit [www.montague-ma.net](http://www.montague-ma.net).

### TOUR from pg 1

gram, in the form of Ristorante DiPaolo, a handsomely renovated addition to the Avenue A district, purchased for \$1 from the town of Montague as a derelict wreck a few years back. Now it

is a successful night spot featuring top-of-the-line Italian dining.

They continued down the Avenue, admiring the restored brick buildings that once housed choice regional water-

ing holes like the Montague Inn and the American House, now part of the tidily maintained Power Town apartment complex. They continued past the beauty and nail salons, did not stop at the AB Plus auction house, and took in the renovated Moultenbrey and Crocker Bank Building before crossing back to the Hallmark Gallery for a pep talk from Franklin County Chamber of Commerce president Ann Hamilton.

The developers' tour was arranged by Mass Development, the state of Massachusetts' financing and development authority. Mass Development's Robert Culver said his agency was working with the legislature in Albany to pass a visitors tax to bring in much-needed revenue from all the New Yorkers who have been

moving north to the Bay State recently. Good luck getting anything through the legislature in Albany.

Lisa Robinson of Hallmark said the photography school has been "growing by leaps and bounds," although she later admitted the student body at Hallmark was now 180, ten more than the size of the graduating class six years ago.

Still, the developers seemed impressed that a steady pool of photography students returned to Turners each year to bolster the occupancy rates at downtown rentals. "We don't have dormitories," Robinson stressed.

And town administrator Frank Abbondanzio pointed through the ceiling toward the 30-plus office workers at the Northeast Foundation for

Children as another anchor tenant in the downtown creating foot traffic for shops and restaurants.

Abbondanzio started to explain how the brick building to the rear in the 2nd Street alley had also been part of the town's commercial homesteading program, sold to the NEFC for \$1. "They put a half million dollars worth of renovations into that building, and now it's used as a seminar space," he began, but John Waite of the Franklin County Community Development Corp took that moment to cut in.

"Let's get over to Greenfield!" Waite cried, and the developers packed themselves back on the bus and headed off across the river.



**AVAILABLE POSITION**  
**Manager for Senior Meals Program**  
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**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG**  
**Trees Down, Unlawful Drivers Cited**

<b>Tuesday, 5/4</b> 4:30 p.m. Assisted Montague police on Highland Street with a tree on the wires. Montague highway removed same.	Montague police with an unwanted male at a Bridge Street address.	All OK. 3:00 p.m. One-car motor vehicle accident at Route 2 and 2A. Orange ambulance and fire on scene.	wire at a Northfield Road address. Found to be phone wire, advised homeowner.
<b>Wednesday, 5/5</b> 5:00 p.m. Assisted Montague police on Lake Pleasant Road with a tree on the wires. Roadway shut down due to blockage.	<b>Thursday, 5/6</b> 7:40 a.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration, uninsured and unlicensed.	11:30 p.m. Assisted Northfield police with an alarm at Pioneer High School.	7:03 p.m. Report of a tree down on East Main Street, blocking eastbound lane. Removed tree, Mass Highway notified.
<b>7:32 p.m. Assisted</b>	<b>Friday, 5/9</b> 10:59 a.m. Report of a disturbance at a French King Highway address. Spoke to Northfield Road resident.	<b>Friday, 5/9</b> 3:10 p.m. Report of a low	<b>Saturday, 5/10</b> 12:28 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle without insurance, revoked registration and failure to wear seatbelt.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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### THURSDAY, MAY 13th

Internationally-acclaimed cellist **Matt Haimovitz** performance to benefit The Food Bank and Rachel's Table. Renowned for his fearless and virtuosic performances, Haimovitz performs with his eight-piece cello ensemble *Uccello*, comprised of top students from Montreal's McGill University, for a program of new arrangements of Jazz classics including arrangements by David Sanford. 7:30 p.m. at the National Yiddish Book Center, Amherst. Tickets: \$18; \$5 for students.



*The Haymakers: Rani Arbo and Marl Erelli team up for Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, a rare duo performance on Saturday, May 15th, 7:30 p.m.. \$8 - \$15*

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Peter Siegel, Rose Sinclair and Lyon Graully** play Western Swing. 7 p.m.

### FRIDAY, MAY 14th

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: **Steve Nelson** with local favorite **Dave Dersham** opening. Nelson has enjoyed an eclectic and award-winning career. 8 p.m. [www.stevenelson.org](http://www.stevenelson.org).

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

Great Falls Coffeehouse, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Green River String Band**. 7 to 9 p.m. Alternative country originals, bluegrass and old-time

fiddle tunes by Mark Koyama, Eveline MacDougall, Charlie Conant, & Doug Reid.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: **Francie Jones**, an Amherst-based, solo singer/songwriter. She's spent the past year in England performing in venues ranging from pubs in London to the Jericho Tavern music room in Oxford. Her shows consist of mainly original songs, with covers from Martha Wainwright, Shawn Mullins, the Mountain Goats, and others. 7 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Groove Shoes** (funk from Ghost Quarteters and friends) with **Flabbergaster**. \$3

### FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, MAY 14th to 16th

JaDuke Inc. presents **Noises Off**. Hilarity and mind-boggling mayhem written by Michael Frayn, *Noises Off* premiered in London in 1982, winning both the Evening Standard and the Olivier awards for Best Comedy, and ran in the West End for nearly five years. It opened on Broadway in 1983 and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play. Friday & Saturday at 8 p.m. Sunday at 2 p.m. At the JaDuke Black Box Theater, 110 Industrial Blvd., Turners Falls. \$12; \$10 for 65 and over or 12 and under. [www.jaduke.com](http://www.jaduke.com).

**SATURDAY, MAY 15th**  
Athol Bird & Nature Club outing: **Northfield Birding Trip**, led by Mark Taylor and Bob Coyle (978-249-6083). Participants should meet at the Center at 6:30 a.m. or join the group at the country club parking lot in Northfield at 9 a.m.

**Valley Idol, Jr.**, an a cappella singing competition for students 8 to 17 years old at The Shea Theater. Second round 9:30

a.m. Audience admission for all dates: \$5. Continues 5/22. [www.theshea.org](http://www.theshea.org).

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Nexus**. harmonic eclectic rock. 9 to 11 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Migration Celebration!** Build a birdhouse (we'll have all the materials you'll need), play games, make a craft item to take home with you, have fun! Also in Spanish. 11 to 2 p.m.

Free Saturday hot lunch (bbq turkey, salads, dessert) with a family-friendly focus (puppets, games, gardening, alpacas!) noon to 3 p.m. at the Montague Farm Zen House, 177 Ripley Road, Montague. Free. Transportation available! Please call Karen Werner at 367-5275, or send her an email at [Karen@zen-peacemakers.com](mailto:Karen@zen-peacemakers.com).

**Backyard Farm and Garden Fair**, Montague Center Grange lawn (on the common), 10 to 1 p.m., rain or shine. Buy, sell, or swap vegetable and flower plants and locally grown products. No fee. Everyone is welcome. There will also be baked goods for sale, music jamming, and baby goats!

The Wendell Free Library presents an exhibition of mixed media paintings by **Morgan Mead**. On display through the end of June. Artist's reception, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Wendell Library's monthly series of Science Fiction and Horror movies shows the 1976 classic horror film *Carrie*, rated R (98 min.). at 7:30 p.m. Free admission but seating is limited.

Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: **The Haymakers: Rani Arbo and Marl Erelli**, a rare duo performance, 7:30 p.m.. \$8 to \$15 Info: (978) 544-5557 or [www.wendellfullmoon.org](http://www.wendellfullmoon.org). Partial proceeds to benefit the Wendell Fire Department.

Echo Lake Coffeehouse in the town hall, Leverett: **Joe Jencks**, award-winning singer/songwriter, entertainer, and educator performs. 7:30 p.m. \$10 to \$12. Info: (413) 548-9394 or [www.joejencks.com](http://www.joejencks.com).

The Shea Theater's Fifth Annual **Valley Idol** continues, 7 p.m. [www.theshea.org](http://www.theshea.org) Audience Admission: \$10, \$12 at door. Grand Finale: 5/22 at 8 p.m.

**SUNDAY, MAY 16th**  
Museum of Our Industrial Heritage Open House, 11 to 4 p.m. The museum's artifact collection of Franklin County of cutlery, tools, and machinery is located at 2 Mead Street, Greenfield. Hands-on activities for children, free admission. [www.industrialhistory.org](http://www.industrialhistory.org).

Deja Brew, Wendell: **An Irish Session with Amanda Bernhard and Jonathan Hohl Kennedy**. 8 to 10 p.m.

### TUESDAY, MAY 18th

Performances for Young People Series at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Theatreworks USA presents **Junie B. Jones!** Fast paced, full-scale musical is adapted from the children's best selling series, *Junie B. Jones* by Barbara Park. Singing, dancing and loads of life lessons circle around Junie's adventures with new friends, new glasses, kick-ball tournaments and all of the angst ridden situations that a grade-schooler might write of in their journal! Two shows: 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Info or reservations, call the Shea Theater: (413) 863-2281.

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 19th

Great Falls Farmers Market. On the lawn near the Discovery Center, Avenue A, Turners Falls. 2 to 6 p.m. Rain or shine every Wednesday.

### THURSDAY, MAY 20th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Songbirds of the Northeast** a 90-minute power point presentation featuring both recordings and photographs of our native and introduced songbirds. Habitat, migration, diets, life cycles, and survival strategies are also explored. Handouts with information about bird clubs, nature centers, recommended books and websites, and instructions on attracting songbirds are made available at the conclusion of the program. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, MAY 21st

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: **Cabinet**, a mix of bluegrass with a rockin' good time attitude. The six piece band from Scranton Wilkes-Barre features eclectic instrumentation, including a fiddle, mandolin, and upright bass. 9:30 p.m. [www.cabinetmusic.com](http://www.cabinetmusic.com).

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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

# Rough Winds of May

I think of myself primarily as a vegetable gardener, and it's true that in the garden plots my focus is generally small crops of homegrown organic vegetables chosen both for fresh taste and known origin. But the yard and the veggie plots are ringed with flowering of a low-maintenance kind.

The edges of the yard sport fruit trees: apricot, apple and blueberry. Also flowering quince, azalea, dogwood, laurel, and beauty bush.

The vegetable plots are ringed with roses, lilies, iris and peonies. These non-demanding bouquets give a feast to the eyes long before much produce for the tongue is ready.

Blossoms of all kinds break up the visual monochrome of the greens much in the way we often add a bright splash of color in cushions or rugs or curtains to change the landscape of our indoor rooms.

Two of my women friends are artists. They both also grow immense floral gardens as an additional palette. Visiting these

gardens is an incredible feast for the eye, with colors chosen for season and compatibility with others. They are spectacular.

My flowers are not so. I prefer the softer shades of lavender, pink, rose, white, and yellow. I do not suffer flowering plants that require extreme care and tending. I am always on the lookout for repeat bloomers that will tolerate the changeable New England seasons, and like the rest of us, grow on despite adversity.

Having said this, I have put much energy into hanging on to the peach-colored azalea we planted some twenty years ago, even though it has been incredibly susceptible of late to defoliation by a voracious green inchworm and its family of relatives. I am thrilled to report that at last the remedy of pre-emergent treatment has worked!

This season I waited for a still evening, and was finally able to coat the bare branches of this bush with an organic soapy mix. The plant has leafed out now, and what leaves there are look healthy. There are also two blossom heads.

If it can survive this season, I will make sure to pretreat it in the

future in hopes of recreating those earlier seasons of lush green growth and many blooms. If not, I will cut it down and find another that is less demanding.

The conditions that have accelerated the seasonal flowering of spring blossoms have also brought out a huge crop of burgeoning weeds. The solution for this problem is mulch, mulch and more mulch of whatever type you prefer.

When the winds recede, I am going to lay out cardboard as an initial intervention to snuff out these invaders. Later I will choose black plastic for the "hot" bed for tomatoes, peppers and squash and newspaper or landscaping cloth for the bed of peas, beans and other cooler crops. I do not plan to spend much time pulling weeds. I'd much rather put my energy into side dressing things with compost and manure and watering when the season requires.

The "lasagna" gardening in the new strawberry bed looks good so far. The grandbaby plants which survived turning under are thrifty and blooming. The new starts are beginning to stretch above the layers of newspaper and are showing green leaves. This bed will still need a mulching top layer of straw or hay, and then will be good to let grow. While there will only be a small crop of pickable berries this season, it will be fun to have

some as I snip the blossoms on the new plants to let them fully develop for next year's crop.

The pre-started lettuce and spinach plants I set out early are doing very well. I've already been able to scissor off a couple of servings, leaving the root plant to produce more. Which they have. This has been much more productive than seeding the earth in early spring.

These plants I started early inside before setting out have been as vigorous as the seed I sowed one fall that came up strong the following spring. The advantage to either of these methods is a New Englander's special. Plant early seed or seedlings and be ready for the right growing time for that particular year's combination of water, sun and temperature.

There are many more gardening conducive environments than New England. On the other hand, at least to my mind, there is no more agreeable human growing environment. I relish the changes of the season and the regular conversations about the vagaries of the climate. Even though I am only an adopted member of this rugged country, I wouldn't choose anywhere else. The people of this space have wrestled with rocky terrain and changeable climate for centuries to grow food and flower. There are powerful reasons of heart and soul that we are still here.

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - After the unseasonable warmth of April, the air is cool, we're in a windy patch, and there's been plenty of rain.

As often seems the case, the loveliest of flowers, as least to my mind, have been extraordinarily lush but also short-lived. My daffodils were early and profuse, but have succumbed to heat and the lashings of wind and water. The lilacs' heady fragrance is waning. They too have not enjoyed the heat, nor the subsequent wind and water.

Even my beloved Lily of the Valley is moving quickly from bright white fragrance to brown.

Luckily, there are many lovely blooms, both perennial and annual, to come.

## Trashy Art Barges into Town

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**GREAT FALLS** - A traveling national art exhibit, consisting of recycled works of art made from materials people once regarded as trash, has picked up a number of works from local artists and will soon be landing at the former Pure Light Gallery, at 37 Third Street, in Turners Falls.

New York City based "Art from Detritus" curator Vernita Nemec said, "This show instills in viewers' minds the value of recycled materials and presents ways to use trash creatively, rather than discarding and polluting our planet.

"Making art with what would have otherwise become trash is the ultimate level of recycling and reuse," added Nemec, "for people rarely throw away art. Transforming trash into art

makes the valueless priceless."

This exhibit, celebrating its 16th anniversary tour, is notable for its local exhibition space as well.

"The Purelight Gallery is located in a recycled building in a recycled town," said gallery owner Vern McLish, Nemec's brother. "Turners Falls was once supported by the logging and paper industries, and then in the '60s hosted a hippie commune and recording studios. After a time, all that faded and fell to pieces. Today the town is re-emerging as an artist community on the timeless Connecticut River."

Purelight Gallery's space was once a grocery store, a plumbing supply and a junk shop. The current owners, Vern and Jan McLish, bought the building

when it was caved in and uninhabitable. They have restored and recycled the building into apartments, and studios. Once they offered a year round gallery at Pure Light, then a yoga studio came and went, and now a creative shared office space is emerging.

The idea of recycling cast off materials into works of art is certainly not new to Turners Falls, nor to the former Pure Light Gallery, where Nina Rossi organized *Re:Work* in 2005, with about a dozen local artists contributing work fashioned out of leftovers of the industrial processes from Montague manufacturers such as Light Life Foods, Judd Wire, Martin Machine, and Heat Fab.

Rossi is one of a number of local artists who will be contributing new work to the Detritus show at the Pure Light next week, where one of her pieces, called *Extinction*, will be on display.

With an artist's intuitive sense of timing, as clean-up workers scour the beaches of Louisiana and Alabama to keep spilled oil away from nesting grounds, Rossi described *Extinction* as "a new piece showing the head of a bird done in roofing tar," representing the snowy egret, a species now extinct. Rossi said the piece is "a negative image" in more ways than one, with mashed-up rejects of old technology, pieces of Kodak cameras and floppy discs sharing space with the negative of a bird no longer there.

See this and other provocative art made from recycled debris at the Pure Light Gallery "Art from Detritus" show through July, with an opening on Friday, May 21st, from 6 to 9 p.m. Schools and other community organizations are invited to schedule group visits at (774) 641-1201.

Whatever you think of this art, you can't say it's garbage.

## Who Will be the Next Valley Idol?



DETMOLD PHOTO

*It's too soon to tell, but Michelle Brooks of Sunderland will be a strong contender. The contest continues, with \$1,000 for the top prize winner, on Saturday, May 15th and May 22nd at the Shea Theater in Turners. Ticket sales support the Shea.*

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

**BY FRED CICETTI**

**LEONIA, NJ** – *Q. I'm 68 years old and I want to know how much Vitamin D you need to be healthy.*

The U.S. Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences has established Adequate Intake (AI) levels for vitamin D. The daily levels in International Units (IU) for

everyone are as follows according to age:

- Under the age of 50: 200 IU
- From 50 to 70 years-old: 400 IU
- Over 70 years-old: 600 IU

The recommended upper limit for vitamin D is 2,000 IU a day. Vitamin D can be toxic when taken in higher doses. Vitamin D is included in most multivitamins, usually in strengths from 50 IU to 1,000 IU. Vitamin D toxicity is rare. There is a greater risk of poisoning if you have liver or kidney conditions, or if you take some diuretics.

There are different forms of Vitamin D. The major forms – the ones important to humans –

are vitamin D2 and vitamin D3.

Vitamin D2 is synthesized by plants. We get vitamin D in our diet. Very few foods in nature contain vitamin D. It is found in eggs, dairy products, fish, oysters and cod liver oil. Foods, such as milk, may be fortified with vitamin D2 or D3. Fortified foods provide most of the vitamin D in the American diet.

Vitamin D3 is synthesized in human skin when it is exposed to sunlight. About 10 minutes of daily exposure to sun is considered enough to prevent deficiencies.

Vitamin D's primary job is to maintain normal amounts of calcium and phosphorus in your blood. Vitamin D helps keep

your bones strong. Research suggests that vitamin D may protect us not only from osteoporosis (loss of bone density) but also from high blood pressure, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and psoriasis.

Populations at a high risk for vitamin D deficiencies include the elderly, obese individuals and people with limited sun exposure. Osteomalacia – also known as adult rickets – is found in older patients deficient in vitamin D. Osteomalacia causes bone and muscle weakness.

People older than 50 are at increased risk of developing vitamin D insufficiency. As people age, skin cannot synthesize vitamin D as efficiently, and the kid-

neys are less able to convert vitamin D to its active hormone form.

Recent studies indicate that vitamin D reduces the risk of falling, which is especially dangerous for seniors. However, to obtain the benefits of the vitamin, you must take 700 to 1000 IU a day. These studies buttress other research that has shown that vitamin D improves strength, balance and bone health in the elderly.

Each year, one third of people 65 and older, and one half of people 50 and older fall at least once. Almost one-tenth of these falls puts their victims in an emergency room. Many seniors who fall end up in nursing homes.

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

**DRIVERS** from pg 1

by Southworth Company will increase substantially. Tractor trailer trucks backing into the mill need to first cut across traffic to turn into the yard of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority before backing up across traffic into either a long driveway or one of two bays to the mill. Neither of these doors is extra wide.

Compounding the problem is that the slope into the doorways tilts as well as slopes, making it a very tricky maneuver, particularly for a driver new to the situation and the pressure of lines of traffic backing up into the next county during repeated maneuvers.

Southworth would have liked a conventional traffic light to stop oncoming traffic and give their trucks time to make the three-point turn. The mill requested a stop light actuated by a button inside the mill, like a pedestrian Walk button.

That is not going to happen. A proposal hashed out by installer Ray Myers from Northup Electric Company, Pelletier, of SPS, John Jablonski, electrical millwright for Southworth, resident engineer Bob Demers of the Mass DoT, and DoT traffic engineers Bao Lang and Trung Vo settled on a flashing yellow light.

According to Massachusetts

law, a flashing yellow light requires drivers to use caution. The proposals first need to be drawn up on paper and submitted for approval. The contract will then be submitted to SPS for cost estimates and sent back to the DoT for final approval.

One light is proposed to be attached to a plate secured on the west end of the traffic bridge next to the pedestrian walkway over the canal. Threaded rods will replace rivets to serve double duty securing the bridge girder, previously secured by the rivets, and the new plate holding the support for the flashing traffic light.

Another flashing traffic light

will be fastened to the guard rail on the south side at the end of the White Bridge on the approach from Greenfield. Both lights will be powered separately by batteries charged by individual solar arrays. The flashing lights will be controlled by separate hardwired timers set to activate the lights from 5 a.m. to 4 p.m., the hours trucks make deliveries.

There was no mention of weekends.

Solar arrays and batteries won out because the presence of ledge eliminated consideration of installing conventional electricity underground from the mill.

Once traffic leaving Turners Falls is diverted to the White

Bridge, trailer truck drivers attempting deliveries at Southworth are in for an even more difficult series of maneuvers.



**NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD:**

**Affordable Housing Consultant Comes to Call**

On Tuesday, Karen Sunnaborg, an independent housing consultant from Jamaica Plain, came to consult with the Leverett selectboard on their plans to invest \$77,570 already set aside in an Community Preservation Act trust for affordable housing. Over time, more money will flow to the CPA fund from a voluntary surcharge on local real estate transactions, and the selectboard has been working to determine the best means of directing that money.

Board members told Sunnaborg they did not favor trying to meet state criteria under

Chapter 40-B for the creation of affordable housing in town, but merely wanted to “go down a road that makes sense to us,” as Peter d’Errico put it.

The board contemplates either a mortgage buy-down program with permanent deed restrictions to maintain affordability, or some similar program that allows the town to institute a lottery that favors present town residents, their children or town employees who may be facing financial obstacles to homeownership in town.

Sunnaborg advised the board on the legalities of such an

approach and said, “When you take away the layer of state [40-B] requirements, things become a lot more flexible.” She promised to forward a housing plan with a scope of services for the board to review in the next weeks.

Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority also discussed housing with the board, in this case the no-interest loan housing rehab program for low and moderate income residents.

Hunter said the town has \$90,000 left to spend in this year’s Community Development Block Grant allotment, enough to typically correct code violations and weatherize three homes. Leverett has a separate account

with \$104,000 in revolving funds from this program, and Hunter said that money could be used to help the town install new wells at homes on Teawaddle Hill Road, downgradient from the former landfill, provided those homeowners meet income guidelines.

Chair Rich Brazeau said the board may seek zoning changes to prevent new homes from being built in this area of town, due to a plume of contaminants threatening groundwater near the former landfill.

The board will seek assistance from town clerks from neighboring towns to fill in as needed while Lisa Stratford is out on extended medical leave, said board member Julie Shively.

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