



TOWN FOREST

Gill Town Meeting Vote June 15th
Page 3



TALKING PICTURES

Star Trek, reduced
Page 10

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 14, 2009

Greenfield Biomass Plant Clears Another Hurdle

BY JOSHUA WATSON

GREENFIELD – The Greenfield planning board met last Thursday, May 7th, at the Greenfield police department public meeting room to discuss zoning waivers requested by the Mackin Construction Co. The waivers were requested to prepare for the construction of a 47-megawatt biomass-fueled power plant planned by Pioneer Renewable Energy LLC, and relate to the subdivision of 208 acres of land owned by Mackin in the I-91 industrial park in

pleted its Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act review on May 1st, when Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles ruled that Pioneer, in its Environmental Notification Form, had adequately addressed environmental concerns around air quality, water supply, noise, clean wood fuel, traffic, and construction activities associated with the proposed plant. (The complete MEPA application is available at www.pioneerrenewableenergy.com). Bowles ruled that an



An artist's rendering of what the site in the Greenfield Industrial Park – presently the Mackin gravel pit – might look like after construction of the 47 MW biomass power plant proposed by Matthew Wolfe/Madera Energy, Greenfield.

Pioneer Renewable Energy is owned by Madera Energy, a year-old Cambridge-based firm with one employee: Matthew Wolfe. Pioneer Renewable Energy com-

Environmental Impact Statement would not be required for Wolfe's firm to move forward to seek the state and local permits needed to build the power plant, and the
see **BIOMASS** pg 10

Stevens vs. Ward in Gill Selectboard Race



Leland Stevens

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Voters in Gill face a choice in the selectboard race this Monday, May 18th between Leland Stevens, a five-term incumbent, and John Ward, a resident of Riverside who is a relative newcomer to town politics. We interviewed both candidates, to give voters their views on some of the major issues facing the town.

Leland Stevens, 78, is a life-long resident of Gill, coming from a dairy farm family, who have lived on North Cross Road by the intersection of the Back Road to Mount Hermon for four generations. Stevens attended grade school at the two-room North School on Main Road, and attended middle school at Riverside, and high school in Turners, on Crocker Avenue. Lee

worked on the family farm, plowed snow for three winters in the early '50s when Warren Hastings was the Gill road boss, and served a hitch in the Army from '53 to '55. After that he went to work for the Farm Bureau, delivering feed around Franklin County and beyond.

In the late '80s, he got on the Gill planning board, and served as chair, before running for selectboard in 1994. He joined Phillip Maddern and Anne Banash on the board, and served with them until Maddern retired in 2007, and Nancy Griswold took Maddern's place.

Stevens said his experience over the last 21 years, on the planning board and on the selectboard, will be crucial to helping the town through these tough economic times, if he wins reelection. With state aid in doubt in the economic downturn, "for the benefit of the town, we have to support an override, if it becomes necessary," he said. "We're down to bare bones to maintain the services we have."

Stevens said the Gill-Montague school district's 1% budget increase (with a 4.5% increase for Gill's assessment) is "out of range," for what the town can afford. "And I'm going to speak out on the pay scale for that



John Ward

new superintendent [Carl Ladd: \$128,000 per year for three years]. It's too high, in this particular time."

Stevens said the idea presented by the Commission on Education in Gill of regionalizing with Pioneer instead of Montague would be "a good fit" for the town, "but we'll have to see where we'll be at before jumping out of the frying pan into the fire."

He said the idea of regionalizing police or even highway services with nearby towns "could work. It's just a question of getting all the towns to agree to something. Everybody wants to be in control. Finances are going to make it happen at some point, it's just a question of when."

see **RACE** pg 11



Two engineers from HNTB Corp. (right), with a MassHighway employee at the extension arm controls, inspect the girders of the Gill - Montague bridge on Tuesday.

Bridge Inspection, not for the Faint of Heart

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GREAT FALLS – Engineers from HNTB Corp. in Boston have been hanging out in the area lately. Specifically, they've been hanging out beneath the Gill-Montague Bridge, wailing on the rusted steel deck truss with hammers, conducting audial and visual inspections of the 1938-vintage welds and girders for cracks and corrosion.

The engineers are riding in a cage on a counterweighted extension arm of a Bridgemaster 'Snooper' truck, parked in the westbound lane. The men work at a dizzying height above the roaring water from the open gates of the dam, and the rock abutments 107 feet below. The articulated hydraulic arm allows three men to ride over the railing, down the north side of the bridge all the way to the abutments, or to ride beneath the deck all the way over

to the south side, to inspect the superstructure there. Do they worry about the truck tipping over, or the hydraulic arm failing, or accidentally falling from those heights?

"You get used to it," said one of the engineers, who declined to give their names, after slowly returning to the surface of the bridge. He said the inspections so far have revealed, "No considerable change from last year" in the conditions of the steel truss deck.

That is, it is still structurally deficient (with a rating of 33.9 out of 100) but 'safe to travel,' as 8000 vehicles a day still do. Due to its condition, Sergeant Chris Redmond, of the Gill police, who has been working traffic detail on the Gill side of the bridge all week, said the engineers have been inspecting the bridge once a year, instead of the usual every-other-year schedule.

He recalled that last year the hydraulics on the Bridgemaster truck failed, stranding the engineers beneath the deck for several hours while repairs were made to bring them back to the surface, cold and shivering, before night fell.

The 1733-foot bridge connecting the towns of Gill and Montague is scheduled to be renovated and restored beginning this year, at a cost of \$42.3 million. One lane traffic will be maintained westbound; eastbound traffic will leave Turners via the White Bridge to Greenfield, then up the French King Highway to Route 2.

Reconstruction of the Route 2 Bridge over the Fall River from Gill to Greenfield will begin in 2010; two-way traffic on Route 2 will be maintained throughout the course of that project. Let's hope everything goes as planned.

PET OF THE WEEK

Tall, Dark & Handsome



Billy

Hi, my name is Billy and I'm a two-year-old male longhair cat in need of a good home. Tall, dark and handsome, that's me.

But I'm not just about good looks. I'm a real friendly guy. I love to have people around and socialize. I'm ready to play any time you are. And if you're not in the mood I'm sure I'll be able to convince you to join me in a game of feather toss or indoor soccer.

Come on! Let's get together! What are you waiting for?

For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email: leverett@dpvhs.org.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Outer Space Supplies Needed

BY LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS—Thank you to all of the helpful people who brought in materials for our Earth Day Party and other events. The children had many wonderful items to choose from, and made many creative projects.

At this point we no longer need any glass or paper items.

Now we are getting ready for our outer-space-themed summer reading program. We need clean shiny items with no sharp edges.

For example, we will be making flying saucers out of aluminum pie tins. Disposable aluminum roasting pans would also be useful.

Items may be dropped off when the Carnegie Library is open, Monday to Wednesday 1 to 8 p.m., Thursday 1 to 5 p.m., and Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The library is closed on Saturdays, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. For more information, call 863-3214.

ERVING LIBRARY NEWS

New Arrivals Available

BY BARBARA FRIEDMAN

ERVING—Here are just a few of the many new materials that have arrived this month...

Kids:

- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*
- *Rodrick Rules* by Jeff Kinney
- *Magic Tree House - Dark Day in the Deep Sea* by Mary Pope Osborne

Young Adults:

- *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup* by Ronald Koerige

Fiction:

- *Change of Heart* by Jodi Picoult

- *Garden Spells* by Sarah Addison Allen
- *Mudbound* by Hillary Jordan
- *Vanishing Acts of Esme Lennox* by Maggie O'Farrell

Nonfiction:

- *Hope's Boy: A Memoir* by Andrew Bridge
- *Outdoor Kitchen Ideas that Work* by Lee Anne White

The Erving Public Library is open Mondays, 9 to 3 and 5 to 8; Tuesdays, 3 to 6; Wednesdays, 1 to 4; and Thursdays, 5 to 8.

For more information, call 423-3348.

Memorial Day Observances

Montague Memorial Day

On Sunday, May 24th, on the Montague Center common, at 11:15 a.m., an observance will be held as part of a long-standing tradition to honor all Americans. Please join us as we pay tribute to the Montague Grange members who placed the Memorial Stone in 1954. All members of the armed forces will also be honored.

Turners Memorial Day Parade

On Monday, May 25th, a Memorial Day Parade and ceremony will be held in Turners Falls. Line up will be at 10:00

a.m. at 2nd Street and Avenue A. Step-off will be at 10:30. The parade will proceed down the Avenue to Veterans Park for speeches and ceremony. The public is welcome.

Gill Memorial Day Observance

In honor of Memorial Day, an observance and ceremony will take place in the center of Gill on Sunday morning, May 24th, starting at 10:00 a.m. at the Congregational Church and continuing across the common at the veterans monument. For more information, call Chet Kuzontkoski, 863-3284.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – May 18th to May 22nd

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

- Monday, 18th**
Center closed for all activities. Town elections
- Tuesday, 19th**
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
1:00 p.m. Canasta
- Wednesday, 20th**
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:00 a.m. Law Program; Estate Planning; MA Health

- Regulations. Attorney Jennifer Schneider.
12:45 p.m. Bingo
- Thursday, 21st**
Lighthouse trip. Last-minute openings are available. \$71 per person; call 863-4500.
1:00 p.m. Pitch
- Friday, 22nd**
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble

Gill/Montague Senior Trips, Call 863-9357 or 863-4500 for more information: Cape Cod Canal Cruise, Tuesday June 16, \$69 per person.

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For info and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director, at (413) 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals,

FACES & PLACES



Linda Downs-Bembury, sporting a tiara and chocolate cake, said farewell to her colleagues May 4th after two terms on the Erving selectboard

WENDELL PLANT SWAP!

Wendell plant lovers will have a chance to swap plants at the annual plant swap on Sunday, May 17th, 10 a.m. to noon, at the gazebo on the common. All types of plants – annual, perennial, vegetables, flowers – are welcome. For info call Katie: (978) 544-2306.

FARM & GARDEN FAIR

MONTAGUE CENTER – On Saturday, May 16th, a backyard farm and garden fair will be held from 9 a.m. until noon at the Montague Grange. Buy, sell, swap, and display seeds, starts, early produce and more. Heirloom tomato plants; 4-H chicks and rabbits, baby goats, and more. All transactions are solely between individual buyers, sellers, swappers. For more information, call: (413) 367-9815.

Montague Public Health Nurse

Montague's Public Health Nurse town hall office hours are Thursday, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and at the Gill-Montague Senior Center, fourth Wednesday of the month 10:30 a.m. to noon. No charge for blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure checks, referrals, medication review & health education. Donations accepted.

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Town Meeting to Vote on Gill Town Forest

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL – Hoe Shop Road turns to dirt after cresting the hill past the turnoff to Bascom Hollow. Travel north a ways towards Bernardston though pine and oak forest, with wetlands to the west and one lone driveway to the east. Head down that drive to where a dilapidated cottage was recently torn down, and look to the north. There lies a wide sloping field of boggy fern brakes, a meandering stream, and green turves studded with violets and wild strawberries. Beyond is Otter Pond, a glacial pothole bathed in spring light. Otters frequent these parts, migrating from the nearby Fall River, a cold water spawning stream.

Look around. If the Gill town meeting approves the gift, in June this will become the new Gill town forest. Protected by a conservation restriction, 162 acres of this land will be available to the public for recreation, and sound forest management.

Dick French, who helped initiate the three-way transaction between the estate of A.R. Sandri, the Franklin Land Trust, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation that has led to the permanent protection of most of the 173 acre parcel on Hoe Shop Road, said the deal will protect two and a half miles of land along the Fall River, connecting with conserved land at the Remillard and Donahue Farms in Bascom Hollow, and leading up to Dole Road almost at the Bernardston town line.

Franklin Land Trust director Rich Hubbard said, "This is a win-win situation for all involved. The trust department at Greenfield Savings Bank, which was a pleasure to work with, ful-

filled its fiduciary responsibilities as trustee. The Franklin Land Trust furthered its mission by protecting a beautiful property in an important conservation area. And the residents of the town of Gill will hopefully be receiving the gift of a very special place to enjoy and, we hope, to call their own town forest."

The May 8th purchase was made possible with the help of a loan from the Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit dedicated to preserving open space, the sale of the conservation restriction to DCR, and generous support from the Clesson P. Blake Trust and Ruth J. Cook Trust, both administered by French. Clesson Blake and Ruth Cook were brother and sister, and left their estates to be used for the benefit of land conservation in Gill. French hopes the town forest will carry their names in honor of their dedication to conservation and the people of Gill.

The Franklin Land Trust held 11 acres in the southern portion of the property separate from the conservation land, and hopes to portion these as house lots for sale, to raise upwards of \$200,000 to repay the loan from the Conservation Fund, according to Alain Peteroy, director of land conservation at the FLT. Peteroy said she hoped one buyer would purchase all four lots, and keep most of that land open too.

"We're hoping the town of Gill is excited about it," said Peteroy of the conservation land. "We're excited. It's a unique parcel, and the size of it made it very attractive for conservation."

If town meeting accepts the gift of forest land, it would be managed by the town's conserva-

see FOREST pg 9

NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE Budget Process Wrapped Up as Election Looms

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE

Two days of meetings to complete the budget process for FY '10 led to a budget approved by a majority of Gill-Montague Regional School District school committee members last week. A lively discussion to consider deeper cuts in the budget preceded the vote on Wednesday night.

On May 6th, as the committee prepared for the final budget vote, Linda Kuklewicz challenged her colleagues to reconsider the 1% budget increase they approved on March 31st, and vote for a 0% budget increase instead. She based her proposal on the fact that, since they had by then spent all their discretionary 'Pothole' funds, and excess and deficiency (E&D) funds, the district was now out of money and could not afford the 1% budget increase.

Her argument sufficiently confused members, and for a while they considered her motion, but could not find any way to enact such deep cuts without impairing educational services.

In the end superintendent Rocke warned the committee that

setting such a low budget could harm its ability to access additional funds from the state. "If you get good news between now and June you could reduce assessments, but if you cut educational programs tonight it will be very hard to put them back," he said.

Gill's Sorrel Hatch said, "Educational quality is my first priority."

Montague's Kristin Boyle said, "These cuts really scare me. What will parents think as we pick and choose between programs? We don't need a math coach? We don't need another

see SCHOOL pg 12

Sat. 5/16 *A day of local films

& music at

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Films:

- 1:00 Eric Carle: Picture Writer
- 1:30 Tomboys! Feisty Girls and Spirited Women!
- 2:00 Louise Nevelson: Geometry and Magic
- 2:30 Doing Time, Getting Free
- 2:45 Dad & John
- 2:50 Danny Cruz of FOOME
- 3:00 Sustainable Lives, Attainable Dreams

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- Raymond Godin: Moderator
- Christopher Boutwell, Sr.: Board of Health
- Barbara Kuklewicz: Park and Rec Commission
- Robert Martin: Montague Housing Authority, 5 year
- Al Cummings: Soldier Mem. Trustee, Vet.
- Don Girard: Soldier Mem. Trustee, non-Vet.
- Karen Schweitzer: Library Trustee
- Barbara Stewart: Library Trustee

Paid for by the Montague Democratic Town Committee; Jay DiPucchio, Chair.

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Sticks and Stones and Names

On the Gill side of the bridge sits an oblong granite marker carved with words in bold capitals: CAPTAIN WILLIAM TURNER WITH 145 MEN SURPRISED AND DESTROYED OVER 300 INDIANS ENCAMPED AT THIS PLACE. MAY 19, 1676.

Why should an event that happened 333 years ago concern us today? Can't the past simply stay in the past, to be remarked upon by historians, if at all?

In truth, the past lives on, in ways plain and mysterious, and still demands a reckoning.

It is hard for us to imagine the settlers of Hadley, themselves the victims of ambush the previous fall, walking the riverside trail north in the night to attack the Native camp at dawn. By the Great Falls, Native refugees from the war for land and resources that had consumed New England from Plymouth Bay to Deerfield for the past twelve months were gathered for the annual shad run. They were by all accounts primarily non-combatant elders, women and children. The colonists fell on them without mercy, putting even the babes to the sword, and driving many into the river where they perished in the falls. Only one of the colonists fell in that surprise attack, shot by one of his own men.

Events like this leave a shadow on the land, and sometimes it is left to later generations to remove the stain of blood. It was in this spirit that the selectboard of the town of Montague invited the leaders and medicine people of the Narragansetts, whose protective sway once extended to the Great Falls, to come to the river on May 19th, 2004 to hold a reconciliation ceremony with the town.

It was the first time in hundreds of years the Narragansetts had performed the ceremony, which they call "burying the

hatchet." Medicine Man Lloyd Running Wolf offered the peace pipe to the four directions, spoke ancient prayers, and touched selectboard chair Pat Allen above her heart with the tip of the pipe.

Following the ceremony, tribal leaders and the town selectboard members affixed their signatures to a "Document of Cooperation and Peace," which included a promise to "commit to a future that will continue the exchange of actions to promote understanding about and between the cultures, increase mutual vigilance for historic preservation, and deepen our appreciation for the rich heritage of indigenous peoples of our region and all who have found respite, sanctuary and welcome here."

As events have flowed in the five years since that historic moment, local boards and committees – and even state and national officials – have had a plenty of opportunity to reflect on those words. After inappropriate remarks about "tree-hugging Indians" holding up progress on the airport runway expansion in Montague, the resulting furor caused the director of the Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission to lose his job last year. Soon after, the National Register of Historic Places ruled in favor of Native claims that a stone formation near the runway was indeed an ancient sacred site, part of a complex of Native stone formations in a 16-mile circumference of the Falls, the first such finding of eligibility for the Register east of the Mississippi River.

In the last two years, tribal representatives have come to Montague to discuss ways in which the Native heritage in our area could lead to Great Falls becoming an innovative center of "preservation tourism," exploring the points of contact between

see **STICKS** pg 6



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Maple Valley Payments Appreciated

Your article concerning the closing of Maple Valley School ("MVS to Close in June," MR VII #31) may have left a misimpression of my comments concerning the school's property tax payments.

To clear up any confusion, I would like to point out that the

school, which is a certified educational institution and may not be subject to property taxes, has been making regular voluntary payments in full for the assessed value of the school, which the town of Wendell very much appreciates. Last year the school paid some \$100,000, a significant

portion of the town's income.

It is however true, as I was quoted as saying, that whoever buys the property will have to pay property taxes, unless the new owner is tax-exempt.

– Daniel Keller
Wendell

A Stone and Two Hedges

In 1954, the town of Montague celebrated its 200th anniversary. In conjunction with this event, members of the Montague Grange #141, Home and Community Service committee, placed a large granite stone on the village common, to honor Montague's war veterans.

Byron and Anna Klaus are the only remaining people who helped place that stone. Byron explained the stone came from an area off Hillside Avenue and was hauled down the CV railroad tracks by Everett Martin's wreck-

er. He admitted the stone got dropped on the tracks. The engraving was performed by Negus and Taylor in Greenfield.

Over the years, the two hedges that flanked the stone grew out of proportion and overshadowed the stone. The yearly trim job could not bring them back to their appropriate size. The stone was lost beneath them.

Last fall, after obtaining permission from town and Grange officials, members of the Montague Center Fireman's Relief Association tackled the job

and removed the bushes. After they were hauled away, Bob Reid of Stewart's Nursery donated a crew and nursery stock to bring the area back as a place of pride.

The annual Memorial Day Observance will be held on Sunday, May 24th, at 11:15 a.m. in front of the stone. I hope you will all come to rededicate this stone of honor.

Lastly, I wish to thank everyone who pitched in and helped with this community project.

– Ann Fisk
Montague Center

We Support the Chief

would we need a three-man police department. People may have that idea because our police department does its job professionally and quietly.

Because of cuts to state aid and community policing grants, we lost our third full-time police officer. Chief Hastings is more than an administrative chief; he is a working chief with regular shifts, and is on call 24/7. With the reduction in full-time staff, and reductions in his department budget limiting the amount of part-time staff he can use for shift coverage, the chief is putting in more and more hours of on-call duty. While most of us in town

were able to enjoy Easter dinner with our families a few weeks ago, he left his Easter dinner on the table to intervene in a domestic dispute.

It is the responsibility of the selectboard to negotiate the chief's contract. We are in the process of doing that. Chief Hastings deserves the very best we can provide. Like our other outstanding department heads, he has had to reduce his budget several times over the past year. He has the selectboard's total support for a job well done, now and in the future.

– Nancy Griswold,
Gill Selectboard Chair

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✧ CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENTS ✧

Qualities that Count

I met Jack Nelson several years ago when we were both volunteering at the Brick House. I got to know him as an enthusiastic and creative person, who is an idea generator. He really cares about the community he lives in; not just the historic buildings and land but also the people who live and work here, especially the kids. I've seen Jack work with area youth with a style that helps all within ten feet of him feel welcome and important. While many adults in our community will cross the street to avoid the youth that gather, I've known Jack to beeline towards them. He has shown an interest in getting to know

who they are. He's even been able to hire some of these kids when he had work they could do at his business.

Jack Nelson is a smart, focused, good-natured person with a lot of energy and drive. My experience with Jack is he always showed up for scheduled meetings, listened patiently, and treated everyone in a courteous and respectful manner. He is generous and hard-working. I think the town of Montague would be well served by a person like Jack Nelson as selectman.

- Jaye Pope
Montague Center



Recommended to the Voters

I would like the voters of the town of Montague – and Gill – to consider the following candidates for office when you vote in the elections to be held on Monday, May 18th.

Montague voters, please vote for John Nelson for selectboard. Mr. Nelson contacted me and asked if I would accompany him to downtown Millers Falls to discuss some of the problems facing the residents. We met in the downtown, and I introduced him to various residents passing by. He took all of their questions with great interest and understanding. He made a sincere attempt to state what his position is in seeking a seat on the board.

I believe this is a first for someone seeking office to meet in this manner, and I understand he met with residents of the other villages as well. Mr. Nelson is a Montague property owner, a business owner, and a man with the financial understanding of how the present economic conditions are affecting our taxpayers and the community.

Voters of Gill and Montague, please cast your ballots in the school committee race for Jeffrey Singleton. Mr. Singleton has been

a longtime member of the finance committee. He has kept all of us well advised as to the financial matters facing this community with his columns in this newspaper. He has been straightforward in his remarks on just what must be done in an attempt to meet the budgetary concerns of both the school district and the member towns. I believe with his background of financial understanding, and his common-sense approach to both the taxpayers and the schools, he is the man for the position and I urge you to vote for him.

Please write-in Linda Kuklewicz, 66 Oakman Street, Turners Falls, for a three-year Montague seat on the school committee. Mrs. Kuklewicz is currently serving on the school committee, where she has displayed a deep interest in the current conditions facing the taxpayers in the structure of the Gill-Montague budget hearings. I urge you to vote for her, and make sure when you do to write in her full name and address and mark an X in the proper place on the ballot.

- Art Gilmore
Millers Falls

Vote the Incumbents

When the focus becomes too narrow in the details to look at the situation as a whole, often expressed as an inability "to see the forest for the trees," the results can mean a loss of opportunities. The Gill-Montague school committee needs members who see the forest, as well as each tree within it.

Serving effectively on a school committee is much like being a valued member of a team. The professional development of growth, skill, ability and knowledge take time and commitment. For school committee, it means learning Mass General Laws, policy, and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations. You can't make up your own rules to win the game. You bring your values, ethics, and vision with an awareness of a need to learn and grow.

The current members seeking re-election have training, experience and diversity. They embody the retired community, parents of school aged children and special education. Each of them is mindful of their communities. They are the voice of the future. Kristin Boyle, Linda Kuklewicz and "Timmie" Smith have taken their responsibility seriously, working collaboratively and effectively towards quality education and financial accountability for their decisions.

The results of their efforts are clear and evident. Many of the initiatives they have supported are on the cutting edge of education. Beginning

with our youngest and most impressionable, this committee approved the implementation of "Tools of the Mind," a state-of-the-art early education program.

The implementation of Galileo, a diagnostic and remediation program for math, along with Math Expressions, now in its second year, have proven to be the most effective elementary math program not only for Gill-Montague but also in the nation.

School committee supported and collaborated with the Middle School and High School administrators for the implementation of the 9th Grade Academy, "Reconnecting Youth," our "Dual-enrollment Program with GCC," and most recently "Apex Learning," an online virtual-credit recovery and learning program. All of these programs are focused on achievement and drop-out prevention.

Mindfully aware of the economic crisis and fiscal responsibilities, the current members have lobbied for changes in Chapter 70, funding of state mandates, regular and SPED transportation reimbursement, and many other issues with phone calls, emails and letters as well in-person participation at the State House – "Day on the Hill", Senator Rosenberg's Municipal Conference, and the MASC Annual Conference. In addition, the school committee has taken action within its own district for fiscal stability and ways to maintain a

viable budget. The GMRSD was the first school district in Massachusetts to voluntarily join the Group Insurance Commission; we consolidated our elementary schools, and negotiated a zero percent cost of living increase for all staff in FY '10.

The work continued with organizational measures to sustain quality education and reach out to other communities as the founding member of the Franklin County Council of School Committees. GMRSD has been an active participant in the Franklin County Public Schools Study Project, and continues discussion with Greenfield Public Schools and Pioneer Valley Regional School on regionalization and collaboration of programs and services.

Our three incumbents were active participants in all these efforts.

In these very difficult economic times, we must look with hope, confidence and optimism to a future we can and must build. We must look at the entire forest. The incumbents are focused on the 'Educational Forest' and work to feed, nurture and maintain every tree. This means being in touch with the work that needs to be done, developing the skills and knowledge to do the work, and keeping a vision for tomorrow.

To do this, Kristin Boyle, Linda Kuklewicz and "Timmie" Smith must have your support and vote on Monday, May 18th.

- Joyce A. Phillips
Turners Falls

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Ward for Selectboard

John Ward of Riverside in Gill is running for selectboard, May 18th. I know John to be a thoughtful, articulate person and a good and caring citizen.

He has lived in Gill for 21 years and has volunteered his services to the town's building committee, helping to put together an RFP for Gill's energy services contract to retrofit town buildings for energy

savings, and reviewing the responses.

His interest in improving energy efficiency will also improve Gill's dollar efficiency, at a time when we need to husband both resources.

I support John in his bid for a seat on the selectboard in Gill.

— Sally Shaw
Gill

Experience Needed in Hard Times

My name is Leland Stevens and I am asking for your vote for another term on the Gill selectboard on May 18th.

In the past 15 years on the board, I have been involved with several projects that have benefited the town. The elderly housing at Stoughton Place was a major project that was mandated by the state. Originally, the state's version was too large for the amount of space it was to be built on, but we were able to downsize to what

is now a landmark for the town. The Main Road reconstruction project was completed last year. I have also been working to maintain the highest level of services that are needed in all town departments.

I was also chairman of the planning board for four years before being elected to the selectboard. I believe that my many years of experience will help to bring the town through the hard times we are presently facing.

I am asking for your vote on May 18th. Please do not stay home and say that your vote does not count, because it does.

— Leland E. Stevens
Gill

Vote for Change for the GMRSD

Over the past year I've become increasingly concerned about the status quo of the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee as it continued to insist on spending levels well beyond what the financial boards of Gill & Montague publicly stated could be maintained without dire consequences to other town services. I attended several Montague town meetings wherein the financial facts were starkly presented to the voters. Time after time, the tax-paying voters rejected the school budget, not out of any animosity against the schools and its students, but rather due to the gloomy financial picture locally, state-wide and nationally.

In times like these we need to squeeze 6 cents out of every nickel. I am convinced that is not happening in our district schools, due to the inefficiencies of both the school committee as well as the administration, which have continued to come up

with budget busting assessments.

In attending several school committee meetings, it became apparent to me that the committee believes their mandate is somehow different than that of the towns they represent. They seem to only be interested in the "school side" rather than the town-as-a-whole. The committee and the administration apparently refuse to acknowledge that the schools are the community, along with the police, fire and DPW departments.

It is this culture of separation and isolation that I intend to change. Change needs to come to the school committee. The committee needs to understand that they do not operate in a vacuum, rather that they are part and parcel of an entire community.

There is no intent on my part to degrade the educational experience of our students. On the contrary, as a well-educated person and a licensed clinical social worker with a

national reputation as a trainer and consultant in child and adolescent mental health, I strongly and emphatically support the public school system. We are doing an excellent job of educating our students. We have sincere, committed staff who daily work to insure the quality of our students' education.

My concern is not with those issues, but the way in which the school committee operates and votes to spend our money in frivolous ways, under the guise of needing more to do more. Now is the time, as it is for everyone, to do more with less.

If elected to this one-year seat, you can rest assured that I will take the entire community into account when it comes to budget matters. If elected, change will come to the school committee. Thank you for your consideration.

— Garry Earles
Turners Falls

Write In Girard

Paula Girard, write-in candidate for the two-year seat on the Montague Housing Authority, was the nominee of the town Democratic caucus. Due to a registration error, she had to be disqualified from receiving the party designation and printed listing on the ballot.

As the chair of the town Democratic committee, and as a registered voter in Precinct 5, I strongly endorse Paula Girard for a position for which she is very well qualified. Please write in Paula Girard for the two year position on the Montague Housing Authority.

— Jay DiPucchio
Turners Falls

STICKS from pg 4

between Natives and settlers, and the cultural traditions and sites preceding European immigration to these shores. They hope to bring federal dollars to bear in the development of that effort.

At the same time, the Gill-Montague school committee has grappled with – and on Tuesday finally ruled against – a tradition of more recent provenance: the use of the Tomahawk Chop fight song by the marching band at school sports events. After passionate and heated dialogue, where proponents of the Tomahawk Chop claimed they were honoring a vanished people who once lived here, a brave and warlike race, the school committee took a step toward acknowledging those who believe the use of Native American names, mascots, and caricatures – no matter how well intentioned – by non-Native schools, is inappropriate, and, in fact, racist.

School committee candidate Jen Waldron said it well during the televised debate on MCTV on May 3rd: "We wouldn't use a black man for a mascot. Why would we use an Indian?"


To restate the obvious, Native Americans are human beings, not mascots. They are not a vanished people; they live among us. The dominant culture has long attempted to expropriate their images and symbols and use them as their own, but they do not belong to us, by force of conquest

or by mimicry. In Montague, we have now promised to live in Cooperation and Peace with Native Americans, and to promote understanding between our peoples. Let us not take this promise idly, like so many broken promises in the past between the Europeans and the indigenous people of this land.

The question of the school mascot – a stoic Indian in profile wearing a Plains headdress – remains to be considered, and we hope the school committee will join the growing list of high schools nationwide that have heeded the United States Commission on Civil Rights in their call to ban the use of Native mascots, and pick a more suitable name for our sports teams next year. Given Gill and Montague's proximity to Barton Cove, may we suggest the Eagles?

And while we're at it, let us note the apparently divergent responses between two candidates – Mark Fairbrother and Jack Nelson – to a question at the selectboard candidates' televised debate on May 7th dealing with the possibility of changing the name of the village of Turners Falls. Fairbrother said that would be a very divisive move, while Nelson said that with enough dialogue, perhaps the town could agree to change the name of the village to Great Falls one day. Oddly, both men may be right.

At least, ask yourself this question: do you think it is right, in a village named after a man named Turner, who led the massacre of local Indians, to name the high school sports team the Turners Falls Indians?

Our civic and scholastic pride is strong, and rightly so, but change comes to all communities in time. In the era of President Barack Obama, Americans are broadly re-examining their nation's history of racial oppression, genocide and injustice, and adjusting their views of what is possible and what is right. Should we forever honor the bloodstained past? Or is it time to raise our sights, and welcome a more inclusive future, where all peoples are truly honored in the integrity of their own cultures? 

If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world.
~ J.R.R. Tolkien

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Montague Selectboard Candidates Debate

BY JEN AUDLEY - On Thursday, May 7th, the three candidates for the open seat on the Montague selectboard convened at the MCTV studios in Turners Falls for their only debate prior to Monday's election.

Candidates Mark Fairbrother, Ed Golrick, and Jack Nelson responded to questions on a wide range of topics posed by David Detmold of the *Montague Reporter*, Arn Albertini of the *Recorder*, and Cori Urban of the *Republican*, and to questions phoned in by viewers, as Ray Godin moderated.

The candidates' opinions on a number of locally controversial matters were similar. All expressed concern about the town's budget woes, and enthusiasm for the prospect of a new industrial park on the Montague Plains. All voiced theoretical support for a municipal swimming area for Montague, but agreed that such a project is beyond the means of the town at present.

A few patterns emerged in the responses that distinguished the candidates from each other:

Mark Fairbrother repeatedly indicated that guidelines, regulations, and professional advice would guide his actions as a member of the selectboard. He said his first step in several situations would be to learn more by seeking information from the town planner or building inspector. He emphasized his experience with town government and his lifelong residence in Montague as assets he would bring to the board. He favored a "go slow" approach on the idea of expanding the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Ed Golrick kept his comments

on many questions to a minimum, frequently saying, "I have nothing to add," or "I agree with what the others said." However, when questions were addressed directly to him, he did respond, repeatedly mentioning a desire to increase community involvement and volunteerism. When asked why he is running, Golrick said he wanted to bring "a fresh set of eyes and a younger person's perspective" to town government.

Jack Nelson emphasized the importance of listening and said that he intended to use his skills in that area to foster dialogue and to seek harmonious and creative solutions to some of the town's more intractable challenges. He pledged to address the town's current financial problems and was insistently optimistic about Montague's outlook for the future. He pointed to the "creative economy" that has begun to emerge in Turners Falls as a model and inspiration. And he promised to drive down to Rhode Island to find the owner of derelict properties on East Main Street in Millers Falls and discuss plans for those properties.

To see the three men speak for themselves, tune in to Channel 17 on the following days and times: Friday, May 15th, 11:30 a.m. Saturday, May 16th 1:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., Sunday, May 17th 9:30 a.m., and 1:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m., and Monday, May 18th 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. or stop by and watch it at the station (34 2nd Street, Turners Falls) on Friday or Monday between 2 and 6 p.m. Copies of the school committee candidates debate are also available, and will be shown repeatedly before election day. Call MCTV for info: 863- 9200.

NOTES from the G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Banned in Turners: the Tomahawk Chop

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE -

At Tuesday evening's meeting, the GMRS school committee agreed, after an extensive discussion, to support interim superintendent Ken Rocke's moratorium on the use of the Tomahawk Chop fight song and accompanying hand gesture by the Turners Falls High School band and cheerleaders at all activities where they represent the school. This decision, made after months of discussion, community input and debate within the school community, reflects the school committee's conclusion that the continuation of this conduct is inappropriate and violates anti-discrimination laws under the Civil Rights Act.

Mary Kociela, outgoing school committee chair, opened the discussion saying she felt the process of discussion between students, committee, and community members had been a good one. Kociela suggested the students who attend band camp this summer could develop a new song to be played at school events and introduce it in the fall.

Several students spoke during the public participation portion of the meeting. TFHS graduate Sean Cromwell said the Chop has become a feature of sporting events around the country, not just here. "It's become a national thing."

Zack Boisvert, a freshman at Turners Falls High School, said he was "one of the minority not for the Chop" but believed the school committee needed to listen to the majority and those who voted to put them in office.

Emily Conlogue, one of several students from the Renaissance School in Springfield who attended the meeting with their teacher, Marisa Vanasse, said "just because it's happening at events in other places is no justification for keeping the Chop in Montague. Any form of racism should be offensive to all."

In response to a question

regarding the mascot, Kociela emphasized the school committee's decision on Tuesday was only about the Chop and not the mascot, although she did agree that at some point the mascot would be something the committee needs to address.

Michael Langknecht proposed avoiding an outright ban, saying he felt the school committee didn't have the authority to ban speech. He then made a motion that said in part, "We do not support any physical, musical, verbal or graphic symbolism that may be construed as a caricature of any culture race or ethnicity." The language of this motion sparked a lengthy discussion among school committee members.

Josh Gammon, student representative to the committee, said

the word "caricature" just adds confusion to the issue. Referring to Langknecht's position on the committee's right to restrict student speech, interim superintendent Kenneth Rocke said the schools have a non-discrimination policy. He said they had the right to instruct the band to not play the song at public events being supported by tax dollars. He said if playing the song is offensive to a racial or ethnic group the committee has the right to ban it. Rocke said, "If it gets to where speech is offensive, the administration can step in."

Sorrel Hatch, member from Gill, then proposed a motion that the Tomahawk Chop is offensive and not in compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

see **BANNED** pg 8

Skate Park Informational Meeting


The Turners Falls Skate Park Committee invites residents of the Patch, and anyone else with concerns or interest in our current skate park location on Avenue A and 11th Street, to come to the Carnegie Library on Tuesday, May 19th from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The Skate Park has been regularly filled with skaters since it was paved, and we look forward to a

busy summer. Before we get too far into the warm season, though, the skate park committee wants to listen to concerns from Patch residents, local businesses and organizations so that we can discuss how to be good neighbors.

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BANNED from pg 7
 "For this reason, the Florida State Fight Song and Chop shall no longer be played or performed by band or cheerleader squad while representing the school." Hatch said it is impor-

tant that the schools not teach [the Chop] to students.

Joyce Phillips, vice chair of the committee, from Montague, said "It is wrong to continually hurt people." She said she believed the feelings in the com-

munity would change over time. Rocke said he hoped the permanent ban would not be seen as heavy handed, that students would develop another way to show school spirit.

Langknecht said, "It was

heavy handed and still is heavy handed. I don't think this has been an educational process."

Linda Kuklewicz, member from Montague, did not support imposing a ban on the Chop, and said, "I was hoping students

would make a decision on their own."

Sandra Brown of Gill said she felt the process would have been better if Superintendent Rocke had immediately released a statement explaining his reasons for imposing a moratorium on the use of the Chop, and the committee had voted quickly, because it was clear from the start that Rocke's position was the correct one. She said they should have then proceeded with the educational process. Brown then read a statement quoting the US Commission on Civil Rights to explain why the committee needed to take this action.

Kristin Boyle of Montague said at first she was surprised at the objections to the Chop, but as she became educated in the history she came to support a ban. Pointing out that discrimination can be insidious and covert, Boyle said, "Once you know it's discriminatory then you have to know it's wrong."

Hatch's motion passed 7-2, with Langknecht and Kuklewicz in opposition.

Superintendent Contract

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved the contract for the new superintendent, Carl Ladd, this week. The three year contract pays Ladd \$128,000 per year, and contains a clause for modification of the contract if the position becomes eliminated due to regionalization.

Ladd has been in the district this week, and attended Tuesday night's school committee meeting.

The teacher's contract, which was approved by the school committee, is still waiting approval by DESE. This contract gives teachers a retroactive increase in the cost of living for FY '09 and a zero percent increase for FY '10. This contract agreement will be reflected in cost of living increases for administrative staff as well. Rocke said he expects the state to approve the contract.

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TOM MAYO PHOTO

Who Will Be This Year's Valley Idol?

A stellar cast of 43 registrants from Holyoke to Bellows Falls confounded the judges on the opening weekend of try-outs and competition. How to winnow this much talent down to just 10 finalists?

Yet, somehow, they did it! Exercising the finely honed discrimination for which they were chosen, the Valley Idol judges - Broadway's Ferne Bork, Amherst Performing Arts' David Grout and WHAI's Dan Guin - conferred and agreed. The top ten finalists have been chosen!

On Saturday, May 23rd, at 7:00 p.m., they will compete for a slot in the top five grand finale. And on May 30th at 8:00 p.m. the top five will return for one last chance to be the one and only valley idol, 2009.

Don't miss this great fundraiser for the Shea Theater, for the crème de la crème of local karaoke talent. With MC Jamie Berger officiating; the stars will be falling in Turners until only one remains.

Be there to catch both shows, cheer them on, and cast your votes for audience favorite!

The top 10 finalists: Matt Latkiewicz, Turners Falls (pictured); Charlie Wing, Deerfield; Troy Parker, Turners Falls; Codey Kolasinski, Sunderland; Scott Kuzmeskus, Greenfield; Jen Tobey, Montague; Jamie Simoneau, Gill; Keleigh Pereira, Greenfield; Jerry Higgins, Greenfield; and Lynn Seard, Montague.

"The contestants for season four of valley idol might be the best yet. I was actually quite amazed at the talent!" said Shea Theater board of director's Suzanne Davis.

Come see for yourself what all the excitement is about, at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls!

FOREST from page 3
tion commission.

The town meeting vote will be held on Monday, June 15th. Before the vote, the Franklin Land Trust will host an informational gathering on Thursday, June 11th, at 5:30 p.m. at the property (fol-

low the signs that day on Hoe Shop Road) to introduce the conservation area to local residents and answer questions regarding its future. The public is invited, and refreshments will be served. Please call 625-9152 for more information.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Otter Pond, in the proposed Gill Town Forest

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Local Residents Join Montpelier Rally to Close Vermont Yankee



Hundreds marched down Main Street in Montpelier last month vs. VY

BY KIP MOELLER
COLRAIN – On Wednesday, April 29th, two dozen residents of Franklin County joined with 300 more from Vermont and New Hampshire in Montpelier, VT, to march from city hall to the statehouse for a rally, calling for closing the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor (VY) in Vernon, VT. Vermont Yankee, originally

scheduled to shut down in March of 2012 when its 40-year license expires, is currently running at 120% of its original design capacity. Following the rally in front of the statehouse, participants spoke with state legislators, urging them to retire the reactor on schedule. Many of the demonstrators from towns within the 10-mile radius

evacuation zone around the reactor dressed as evacuees fleeing a nuclear disaster.

One of the “evacuees,” Loren Kramer of Greenfield, said, “Knowing that VY is not sustainable, that the Entergy Corporation, the owner of VY, is refusing to fully fund the decommissioning of the plant, that maintenance of the old, worn-out reactor is inadequate, and that the risks for potential accidents or attacks would be catastrophic, I would expect shutting down Vermont Yankee would be a ‘no brainer’.”

“I dream that one day, and one day soon,” Natalia Fajardo, one of the event organizers, told the crowd, “our leaders will judge Vermont’s energy sources not by the number of corporate lobbyists in the statehouse, but by the kind of legacy they will leave our children.”

BIOMASS from pg 1
Greenfield planning board was the first stop.

The planning board meeting was open to public inquiry after the presentation, but the questions were limited by the board to those concerning the “Butternut Street Extension Definitive Subdivision Plan,” and excluded more general questions related to the proposed power plant.

The Mackin Construction waiver requests were presented by Eric Nelson and Tony Wonseski, of SVE Associates, Mackin’s consultant on the plan, and focused on the division of the property into three lots and a parcel, and the widening of Butternut Street off Adams Road. Under the plan, one 65-acre lot would be the future home to Pioneer Renewable Energy. After the presentation, several

members of the standing room-only crowd, including two owners of properties abutting the lot, asked questions, mainly related to the potential increase in traffic along Adams Road. Questions on topics deemed by the Planning Board to be irrelevant to the zoning waiver were dismissed.

Geoff Brown, of South Deerfield, said at the meeting that he opposed the waivers because “the roads should be designed with other future uses in mind,” and that the approval of the waivers would be a “tacit endorsement of the plant.”

The planning board granted the zoning waivers, and approved the Butternut Street Extension Definitive Subdivision Plan.

Afterwards, Wolfe made a presentation to the planning board on the proposed power plant. The presentation was

requested by the planning board, according to Eric Twarog, Greenfield’s senior planner, in order to assist the board in their recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and was not open to public comment.

Wolfe’s presentation and subsequent questioning by the planning board described a power plant that would consume about 500,000 tons of wood chips per year. The power plant would divert approximately 250,000 gallons of reclaimed water per day from the Greenfield wastewater treatment plant, which would otherwise be destined for the Deerfield River, although 130,000 gallons per day would then be pumped back to the wastewater treatment plant. The remainder would evaporate. Wolfe estimated that an average of 54 trucks per day would travel

an evening of performance to benefit the **Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society**



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between the power plant and Route 2 and I-91, from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., seven days per week.

Wolfe also outlined some of the immediate benefits the Pioneer power plant would bring to Greenfield, such as 250 temporary construction jobs until the plant was completed, and about 25 permanent plant jobs and 150 trucking jobs thereafter, as well as paying about \$250,000 per year in water and service fees and taxes to the town of Greenfield.

Opponents of the power plant cite uncertain technology and conflicting claims regarding the amount of carbon dioxide and particulate matter the power plant would emit, noise produced by the power plant, congestion from

resulting truck traffic, and wasteful use of the heated coolant water generated by the power plant. There are also concerns that future supplies of clean, local wood may prove insufficient, and the power plant operators would turn to using chemically processed wood or construction debris to keep the fires burning.

Questions and concerns about the proposed biomass-fueled power plant will be accepted at the ZBA meeting, originally scheduled for Thursday, May 14th, at 7:30 p.m. at the Greenfield Police Department public meeting room, but due to the size of the crowd expected, likely to be continued to Tuesday, May 26th, at 7 p.m. at the Greenfield Middle School.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Loose Dogs, Road Damage

Tuesday, 5/5
 2:00 p.m. Medical emergency on River Road. Assisted on scene.
 5:09 p.m. Three-car motor vehicle accident on East Main Street with no personal injury. Erving fire on scene to assist.

Friday, 5/8
 4:28 p.m. Report of an erratic operator southbound on Route 10 in Northfield. Mutual aid requested for same. Unable to locate.
 9:17 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle on Dorsey Road. Checked same, was a fisherman. All OK.

Saturday, 5/9
 3:58 p.m. Report of two loose dogs on Route 2 in the area of Farley.
 6:20 p.m. Dogs retrieved on Old State Road and brought to pound.
Sunday, 5/10
 3:00 a.m. Alarm sounding at French King Restaurant. Building secure.
 10:50 a.m. Report of road damage on Old State Road to a private drive. Mass Highway to be advised.

Monday, 5/11
 11:30 a.m. Line down on Route 63 at elementary school. One-lane traffic required while standing by for Comcast.
 12:20 p.m. Report of property damage on Lilian's Way.
 12:40 p.m. Speeding complaint on West High Street. Spoke with same, advised about complaints.

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TALKING PICTURES

Change We Can Believe In Star Trek



1 eagle = the pits 4 eagles = the heights

BY TODD DETMOLD

CHICAGO – I haven't written about movies since I was a sophomore in college. My desire to do so was slowly stifled by a variety of external and internal influences; the advent of things like Twitter and the slow decline of things like printed periodicals seemed to signal a national (global? societal? generational?) dumbing-down of American (movie-going) culture. At school, as I began to grow into my slim-fitting twenty-something cynicism, I found myself labeled a contrarian, a misogynist, anti-fun. I was told my freshman year, by the girl I had a crush on: "Oh, Todd, you don't like anything." Well, maybe not anymore, Marisa.

You disagree with enough people and you start to wonder what your opinion is worth. Conventional wisdom might dictate that what plays at the multiplex is crap and what plays at the art house is, you know, fine art. I would suggest that if I've noticed any trend in American movie-going in the past few years, it's that the "independent" movies are getting slowly McDonald-ized and it's in sifting through the 25 movies at the megaplex that you'll find the real gem. You gotta dig to find the gold.

J.J. Abrams' new *Star Trek* can be called many things: a reboot, a remake, a reimagining, a cash-in, a sign of the times. The film is the product of a desperate and flailing studio system that, having been accused of barrel-scraping for at least a decade, has bet 150 million dollars on a geriatric franchise that's been a punchline for almost as long as it was ever taken seriously.

Even if they somehow made a good *Star Trek* movie, how can we expect anybody to go see it? *Star Trek* is for the nerdiest of the nerds. It survives in the hazy glow of nostalgia, swaddled by an older generation. It's a franchise that has spawned a lot more bad

movies and television than good. The heroes of *Star Trek* have spent decades decrying their fate: passed around at lonely science fiction conventions, artists and craftsmen who stumbled into a project from which they would never escape, doomed to be photographed with fake pointy ears for the rest of their lives.

I could barely believe, then, what was happening to me as I sat down to watch the new film this week and found myself weeping ten minutes in. And though nothing in the succeeding 110 minutes actually manages to top the cold open's bleeding vulnerability, I can't imagine there will be a better ten minutes at the movies all year.

Abrams' abilities as a populist filmmaker are unparalleled today. Anyone familiar with *Lost* or *Cloverfield* will see the Abrams stamp in every frame, and yet he allows the film to be a completely collaborative process, bowing frequently to everyone from the effects team to the composer (Michael Giacchino, just knocking it out of the park) to the ensemble of young actors. And speaking of the actors, Abrams and his writing team have sculpted a piece for their on-camera crew that – hard to find in the summer tent-pole action movies – is surprisingly character-based.

Kirk, Spock, Uhura? These weary archetypes-turned-stereotypes all have actual arcs, with beats and wit and timing. They grow and change throughout the film. When was the last time a Hollywood cash-in did that? (Okay, it was last year: *The Dark Knight*) And when was the last time we found a whole ensemble of unknowns, barely-knowns and the occasional oh-it's-that-guy ... and every single one of them was actually good?

There will never be a time when *Star Trek* gets to sit at the cool kids' table, and Abrams' solution is to not want to. Just see **STAR TREK** pg.14

RACE from pg 1

He said he would like to see the Mariamante parcel developed in a way that would increase the town's tax base. "It's a valuable parcel, once we get the problem with the Native Americans cleared up. The big issue is the economy. We can't take a loss on it." He said an assisted living facility for seniors might be a good idea for the property.

Stevens said town meeting had spoken loud and clear on keeping the Riverside Building, but at some point, "It's going to cost some money to keep it up."

He said he did not want to see the town turn into a bedroom community, that it was important to keep a mix of agricultural, industrial, commercial, and residential property, with a tax base adequate to support services.

John Ward, 48, is a 21-year resident of Grove Street, making his first run for town office in the contest for the three-year select-board seat. He said he's running to bring more openness to the board, and to involve more citizens in the process of making town decisions.

He was born in Milton, on the eastern side of the state, but grew up in Shelburne Falls and Conway, where he graduated from Frontier. His father was a state building inspector in Boston, and later clerk of the works for building projects at UMass, and for the construction of G.C.C. Ward was a service manager at Performance Motors in Hadley for 13 years before moving to Labelle and Leitner in Greenfield, as service manager for six years. He now co-owns the Greenfield Solar Store.

"Gill needs to figure out what it wants to be and make a cohesive effort to get there," said Ward. "Not enough people express their interest. More people need easy access to the decisions being made in town."

One way Ward would like to see that happen is by televising the selectboard meetings on Channel 17, the community access station shared by Montague, Erving and Gill. By the recent contract with Comcast, more households in Gill now have access to cable, and the

town is getting small but steady increments of funding to purchase equipment or pay stipends to provide public access broadcasting to the town.

Stevens, who served on the cable access advisory committee when the contract with Comcast was being renegotiated, said he did not believe the town has the money needed yet to equip town hall for live cable broadcasting, and wondered whether enough volunteers could be found to televise the meetings.

Ward said the volunteers who currently serve on town committees are doing good work, but he was concerned their advice and opinions were not always being heeded in town hall. "The select-board needs to carefully consider and look at all sides of the issues. If I get elected, that will happen."

"We need to really carefully look at how we're spending our money and not cut services. If we have to go forward with an override, we have to be thorough enough in the budget process that people who come in to vote know their tax dollars are being spent wisely," Ward said.

Ward said the town should explore regionalizing with Pioneer for K-12 education, but should consider also how that decision affects Montague, with which Gill has long maintained close ties. He believes Gill deserves "an equal seat at the table" wherever it regionalizes education, and advocates improved dialogue between the school committee and select-board.

Regionalizing police or even highway services could be a cost-effective way of delivering services. "We could still have good coverage," Ward said.

He wants to see a more effective use of the Riverside building, to "increase the income to the town from the space." He said he wanted to study the issue of the Mariamante property, to see how it would fit into an overall vision for the future of the town.

"I like the open space preservation and what people are doing to preserve farmland," in town, Ward said. "Yet it's a real balancing act to do that without overburdening the tax base." Still, he

said, "I'd rather keep the rural character of Gill. To do that, we have to toe the line and be efficient with what we collect and how we spend it."





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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Thanks and Chocolates

BY DAVID DETMOLD – The Montague selectboard meeting on Monday was a festive affair, with cupcakes and certificates of appreciation, and words of praise for longtime staff who have – in many cases – reached the highest step on the pay scale after decades of service. There were also kind words for departing selectboard chair Allen Ross, who is returning to private prac-

tice after six years in the klieg lights at town hall.

Ross thanked the assembled longtime staff members, telling them their hard work and dedication has assured continuity of services and made the town function well. "From all of us, this is a shared acknowledgment of thanks for all the people on this list."

There were eleven town employees honored for their long years of service. They were: police chief Ray Zukowski (who has worked 32 years for the town of Montague); Wayne Allen (DPW, 30 years); Sandy Guilbault (dispatch; 30 years); Phil Przybyla (DPW, 30 years, many snowy nights); Pat Saczawa (library, 30 years); Dennis Dobias (DPW, 27 years); Doug Brown (MPD, 25 years); Richard Clough (DPW, 25 years); Brian Dobosz (MPD, 25 years); Sue SanSoucie (library director; 25 years for the town); and Mark Stevens (DPW, 25 years).

After handing out the awards, the selectboard invited the staff to stay for the rest of the meeting, but none of them did.

Except for Zukowski, who asked the selectboard to close an alley leading into the Montague Elks parking lot from 7th Street to two-way traffic. "It's not really a hardship for cars to exit onto L Street," said Zukowski, "and as it is now, when cars are going both ways down the alley they are driving over [an abutter's] lawn. Zukowski said the alley was marked one-way for years, but the sign had disappeared.

The board agreed to make the alley one-way again, and to have the DPW put up a new sign.

At the request of Ann Fisk, the board gave permission for a "Pass the Hat" collection to be taken up on Main Street in front of the Montague Grange to support the family fund for Ruth Helmich and Kathy Simon, whose Union Street house was struck by lightning and badly

damaged in the resulting fire last month. The collection will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 16th.

In response to calls and letters from residents concerned about the impacts to Montague of the proposed 47-megawatt wood-burning plant in the Greenfield Industrial Park, Ross said he had contacted the Greenfield planning office requesting information on air quality impacts, since the prevailing winds blow towards Montague.

Pat Allen then said, "It has come to our attention that this is your last official meeting, Al." She and Patricia Pruitt then heaped encomiums upon their colleague.

Allen said, "You've been someone who has dived right into the depths of every project, finding out what there is to know about it. You're willing to take a strong stand on things, whether or not it's popular. You've worked hard on economic devel-

opment for the town."

She added, "No matter how much you love canoeing, we know there's something else that gets to you." And that turned out to be... Chocolate!

Pruitt said, "I've appreciated your patience in some difficult situations. I've learned from that. I've learned from your ability to always emphasize you can always get along with someone, even when you have a pretty vehement disagreement."

Next, the board agreed to immediately take down a large maple that had dropped a diseased limb onto a house at Court Square and School Street a few days ago, since Ross felt the tree represented an imminent threat to public safety.

Then Ross bade farewell to the board, "I've learned a lot. We do have a special town. It's a special place to live, with a diverse group of residents, and spectacular landscape. I'm happy to live here and work with all of you."

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PLEASE VOTE MONDAY, MAY 18TH

John F. (Jack) Nelson for Montague Selectboard

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SCHOOL from pg 3
counselor? I'm beginning to wonder, are we worrying more about what the towns want? Who are we hurting? Would it hurt the teachers? Yes. But who will really be hurt are the students."

Gill's Timmie Smith pointed to savings already built into the budget: from joining the GIC, the zero percent increase in teacher COLAs for FY '10, collaboration on transportation with other districts, savings from bringing special education programs in house, and so on.

Kuklewicz' motion failed, and a 1% budget increase was reaffirmed. Contrary to a brief report in last week's paper, while the budget remains the same, the assessments are less than the GMRSD's March 31st budget. Assessments for FY10 (less debt) total \$8,572,145, down from 8,601,369 in March. This number still reflects an increase of \$230,168 over FY '09, but is \$29,224 less than the March budget. As of today, the assessments (less debt) total \$7,191,994 for Montague and \$1,409,375 for Gill.

The school committee voted on May 6th to pass on any potential savings in Chapter 70 state aid that may still be forthcoming to the towns.

At the end of the last meeting of this school committee, with chair Mary Kociela and Terry Lapachinski retiring and three other members up for re-election in a crowded field on May 18th, Lapachinski said whoever is on the school committee after Monday is obligated to stand behind the budget as voted – unless they vote to change it before town meeting.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG
Turners Break Ins

Wednesday, 5/6
10:02 p.m. Arrested [redacted] on a default warrant.
Friday, 5/8
7:24 a.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Montague Street address.
8:11 a.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at the church parking lot off of L Street.
8:18 a.m. Report of bur-

glary / breaking and entering at a Marshall Street address.
3:42 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a K Street address.
11:21 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Millers Falls Road address. Investigated.
Saturday, 5/9
1:59 a.m. Report of motor vehicle theft from an L Street address.
11:10 a.m. Report of bur-

glary / breaking and entering at a Marshall Street address.
11:30 a.m. Report of vandalism at a Millers Falls address. Investigated.
Sunday, 5/10
1:46 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted] for operation of a motor vehicle with a suspended license, subsequent offense and speeding.
5:03 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]

[redacted] for motor vehicle lights violation and operation of a motor vehicle with a suspended license.
Monday, 5/11
10:15 p.m. Report of past breaking and entering at a Stevens Street address.
5:45 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Montague Street address. Arrested [redacted]. Charged with two counts of assault and battery, domestic.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Q *I spent many hours at my computer and got this awful pain in my forearm that made me stop. Do you think I have carpal tunnel syndrome?*

I'm not qualified to diagnose, so I suggest that, if that pain persists, you see a physician and get it checked. However, I can tell you about carpal tunnel syndrome.

The median nerve runs from the forearm into the hand. This nerve controls impulses to the palm side of the thumb and fingers, but not the pinky. The median nerve goes through the carpal tunnel, which is a narrow opening at the base of the hand. When tissues in the carpal tunnel, such as ligaments and tendons, get

swollen or inflamed, they press against the median nerve.

If the nerve is compressed, you can suffer the following symptoms:

- Pain in the wrist, palm or forearm.
- Numbness or tingling in the hand and fingers.
- Worse symptoms at night than during the day.
- Intensified pain when you use your hand.
- Thumb weakness.
- Difficulty gripping.

Symptoms usually start gradually, often at night because many people sleep with flexed wrists that compress the median nerve. Some who suffer from the syndrome say they wake up with a need to shake their hand to get relief. Others report being unable to discriminate between hot and cold with their hands.

Worse-case scenario: In chronic and untreated cases of carpal tunnel syndrome, the muscles at the base of the thumb can

degenerate.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, there is little data to prove that repetitive movements can cause carpal tunnel syndrome. A Mayo Clinic study found that heavy computer use did not increase a person's risk of developing carpal tunnel syndrome. However, repetitive movement can cause bursitis and tendonitis.

Carpal tunnel syndrome is probably caused by inheriting a small tunnel. Other contributing factors include: a wrist fracture or sprain; a growth in the canal; rheumatoid arthritis; heavy use of vibrating hand tools; glandular problems, and fluid retention.

Carpal tunnel syndrome usually occurs only in adults. Seniors are more likely to develop the syndrome than younger people. Women are three times more likely than men to develop the disorder. Those who suffer from diabetes are also at high risk.

The first treatment for the syndrome is rest. This includes

splinting the wrist to keep it straight, which reduces stress to the median nerve.

Over-the-counter pain relievers may ease symptoms. Water pills can decrease swelling. Corticosteroids can be injected into the wrist or taken orally to relieve pressure on the median nerve.

The efficacy of acupuncture and chiropractic for carpal tunnel syndrome is unproven. However, yoga has been shown to reduce pain and improve strength.

If symptoms last for six months, surgery is often recommended. Carpal tunnel release is one of the most common surgical procedures in the United States. The majority of patients recover completely.

The operation cuts the band of tissue around the wrist to reduce pressure on the median nerve. The procedure is usually same-day surgery under local anesthesia. There is a minimally invasive form of this surgery.

Occasionally the wrist loses

strength from the surgery. Patients should undergo physical therapy after surgery to restore wrist strength.

Here are some tips for preventing carpal tunnel syndrome:

- Avoid bending your wrist all the way up or down.
- Relax your grip. Most people hold onto things too strenuously.
- Write with thick pens with oversized, soft grips and free-flowing ink.
- Pistol-grips on tools are better than straight-handle tools. Avoid vibrating tools, if possible.
- Don't rest your wrists on hard surfaces for long periods.
- Take breaks from repetitious hand movements.
- At a computer, adjust the height of your chair so that your forearms are level with your keyboard and mouse so you don't have to flex your wrists.
- Keep your hands warm. Wear fingerless gloves if you can't raise the temperature in your environment.

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

NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Dog Hearing Delayed

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL – James Diemand appeared before the Gill selectboard on Monday, to repeat his complaint about barking dogs and what he considers to be an unpermitted business expansion at the Hickory Hill Kennel, owned by Duncan and Jackie Elliot. Board chair Nancy Griswold, who boards her dog at Hickory Hill, and praised the kennel as "an extraordinarily good business," on March 30th, recused herself from the second hearing, which the board agreed to schedule after Diemand contacted the state ethics commission to seek a ruling on whether Griswold has a conflict of interest in the matter.

On April 27th, the full board agreed to hear Diemand's complaint on May 11th, though Ann Banash said at the time she could not attend, and Griswold made it clear she would recuse herself.

Banash asked town administrator Tracy Rogers to make certain town counsel Donna MacNicol could be present on the 11th to hear Diemand's complaint, with Lee Stevens representing the board. Banash said, "If he does come back, I want Donna here."

Diemand did appear on Monday, with MacNicol present, but finding Banash absent and Griswold out of the room, he declined to present his complaint to Stevens as the only board member at the hearing.

"I think the reason we have more than one select [person] is so it's not just one opinion," said Diemand. The board rescheduled the dog complaint hearing for Tuesday, May 26th, at 5:30 p.m. MacNicol told the board not to set aside much time on the agenda for the hearing.

Diemand introduced some neighbors who had come with

him to the selectboard on Monday: Annette Krejmas, and Marlee and Donald Kaplan, all of Center Road. He held a letter or letters from at least one other abutter to the kennel, but did not hand that in.

Jackie Elliot was also present, along with Edie Smith, a tenant of the Elliots.

The board also received a letter concerning Hickory Hill Kennel from Frederick and Nancy Sheard, also of Center Road, who supported Diemand's contention that the peace and quiet of the neighborhood was being frequently impacted by intolerable barking, primarily on summer days and holiday weekends.

In other news, the selectboard changed Tracy Roger's job title from administrative assistant to town administrator, as approved by town meeting on May 4th. Board chair Nancy Griswold asked Rogers to prepare a new job description for her position, for the board to review. Griswold said the new title would come

with additional authority and responsibility, but not higher pay, for Rogers.

Rogers said the position could best be summed up as "chief cook and bottle washer."

Rogers said she had contacted the Franklin Mediation and Training Collaborative to inquire about services that might be available to help settle a dispute between James Tomasi and the Gill Tavern concerning hours of operation of the tavern, and noise. Rogers said the collaborative, a project of Franklin Community Action, recommended against having Gill residents mediate the dispute, but offered to contact the parties directly to see if their services could be useful.

Tax collector Ronnie LaChance said she planned to print a list of delinquent taxpayers in the local papers and in the town newsletter, as other towns do. "It isn't fair to the rest of the townspeople that are paying their taxes," said LaChance, who encouraged property owners who

are experiencing financial difficulty to come into her office to set up payment plans for retiring their overdue tax bills. LaChance can be reached at: 863-2105.

With the board of health in see GILL page 14

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JEP'S PLACE: Part CXXII

Joy Rides



BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL — After a number of evening joy rides, Louis informed me the saw rig gas tank was running low.

I instructed him to alter the ratio — one gallon gas to one gallon kerosene.

Next, it was one gallon of gas to two gallons kerosene.

The Chevy didn't have much

in the way of top speed or pickup with the increasingly poorer mixture. The car acted as if it had a governor and wouldn't go very fast, but we didn't care; we just wanted to ride around.

With no police in town but the constable, who had a zero arrest record, we roamed farther and farther from home — even risking an occasional trip to the adjoining town.

Soon, the saw rig gas tank had little more than a film of gasoline lying on the bottom and we dared drain no more.

We began running the Chevy on virtually pure kerosene. I dumped moth balls in the tank, hoping the naphtha would give

the kerosene a little boost. We could hear them rolling from one side of the gas tank to the other when we went around corners.

Sometimes, the engine was hard to start and I'd have to prime it with a little gasoline to get it going. Pa must have marveled at a car that ran on little more than air and got such good mileage.

I waited for Pa to put a stop to my joy rides without a license, but he had long since given up on me, after failing to send me to reform school.

The day finally came when Louis brought me the bad news; the kerosene drum was empty.

"How you're going to explain that one to Pa when he finds out?" Louis asked.

- Continued Next Week

GILL from pg 13 attendance, Rogers told the selectboard her office had received five calls from residents of West Gill Road and South Cross concerned about the proposed biomass plant in Greenfield, which will border the Fall River. Board of Health chair Doug Edson said he would gather information about the proposed wood-burning plant, with an eye toward such matters as truck traffic and air quality impacts.

Brandon Vickery of the Franklin Land Trust came in to speak to the board about a bequest of land in Harriet Tidd's will. Tidd, who served the town of Gill in numerous capacities, including correspondent to the *Greenfield Recorder*, librarian, and assessor's clerk, left five acres of land to the Audubon Society when she died on April 1st, 2007.

Vickery said, after consultations between their organizations, Audubon agreed to deed over the Agricultural Preservation Restriction on the acreage, in a triangle north of the intersection of Boyle and Main Roads, to the Franklin Land Trust. The property will be sold to Dan Flagg, who will continue farming it, Vickery said, and the selectboard approved this disposition.

The finance committee

approved a number of line item transfers, in small amounts, to help departments make it through to the end of the fiscal year. At the end of that procedure, a brief discussion ensued as to whether the Riverside Water District should be merged with the Riverside Sewer Department, removing this department from the purview of town hall, since the users are the same for both water and sewer in Riverside. The water district is a separate governmental entity.

Another idea was to create an enterprise fund for the sewer department, to manage the revenue and expense of that department separately within the town's general operations.

Finance committee member Ernie Hastings said he thought the time had come to charge rent to the Riverside Water District for their use of office and storage space in the Riverside Municipal Building. "It's a sore subject. I've been bringing it up for 20 years. But if you're going to keep that building, figure out the square footage and charge them. They use that building scot free."

First Light Power contacted the town to say the plexiglass covering the mural at the abutment of the former Red Bridge to Montague is broken, and the mural is getting damaged.

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STAR TREK from pg 11



It's not logical, but who cares? You have to see it to believe.

make a sincere and fun action movie and throw it right in your face. The result may have been conceived as a cash-in for the purpose of profit, but it's been executed by a team of youngsters who are full of heart and brains. Any hint of a studio that was trying too hard is erased by the impressive quantities of talent on display from beginning to end.

Star Trek marks the first time the series has rivaled George Lucas' *Star Wars* franchise (perennially *Trek's* cooler, younger cousin) in several

MCTV Channel 17 Afternoon/Evening Schedule 5/15 - 5/21

visit www.montaguema.net for complete schedule

Friday, May 15th
3:30 p.m. GM Candidates Debate
5:00 p.m. White House Chronicle
6:00 p.m. On With The Show
6:30 p.m. Physicians Focus: Sleep Disorders
7:00 p.m. GMRSD Meeting 5/12/09
10:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Night 2

Saturday, May 16
1:00 p.m. Selectboard Candidates Debate
3:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Night 1
6:30 p.m. GM Candidates Debate
8:00 p.m. Selectboard Candidates Debate
10:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Night 2

Sunday, May 17
1:30 p.m. Selectboard Candidates Debate
3:30 p.m. GM Candidates Debate
5:00 p.m. The Spirit of Lake Pleasant
6:30 p.m. Health Hill: Transfat
7:00 p.m. Selectboard Candidates Debate
9:00 p.m. GMRSD Candidates Debate
10:30 p.m. Preachin the Blues

Monday, May 18
2:00 p.m. GMRSD Candidates Debate

3:30 p.m. Select Board Candidates Debate
5:30 p.m. Luke Massery Live Piano Recital
7:00 p.m. Select Board 5/11/09
7:30 p.m. Reconciliation Ceremony
8:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Semi-Finals

Tuesday, May 19
2:00 p.m. The Looming Crisis in Oil Depletion
4:00 p.m. Shingle The Roof
5:30 p.m. Surviving the Vernon Reactor
6:30 p.m. Teachers at Sea.
7:00 p.m. Select Board (Live); GMRSD Meeting will be joined in progress following conclusion of Select Board
9:00 p.m. Rosner Car Show
10:00 p.m. White House Chronicle #1015-1016
11:00 p.m. Underground Railway Concert 07

Wednesday, May 20
2:00 p.m. Allagash 2007
2:30 p.m. An Inside Look into Iran
4:30 p.m. the epics at the vous
5:30 p.m. The Western MASS Democrat
6:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Night 1
6:00 p.m. Valley Idol Night 1
9:30 p.m. 2009 Valley Idols Night 2

Thursday, May 21
2:00 p.m. Valley Idol Semi-Finals
6:00 p.m. Wisdom Way Solar Village Documentary
7:00 p.m. Select Board 5/19/09
9:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Semi-Finals

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, MAY 15th

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Accident That Led Me to the World*, an all-acoustic, non-percussive chamber folk trio. Mark Mandeville, Raianne Richards (guitar, clarinet, vocals) and Zack Ciras (bass). \$8 adv/\$10 door.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Housetop*, swing band w/Peter Siegal. \$3.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *John Cantalini Band*. Classic, modern, funk, dance rock & roll covers. 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie*, Country Folk Guitar Featuring Johnny Cash favorites, 9 to 11 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 15th & 16th

Pothole Pictures presents: *The Red Shoes*. 7:30 p.m. \$6 in the Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls. Directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. NR, but not suitable for young children.

FRIDAY to SUNDAY, MAY 15th to 17th

Greenfield Community College presents: *An Evening of One-Acts* in the GCC Sloan Theater. Irreverent and irregular theatrical fare with *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You*, a classic, scathing satire by Christopher Durang and directed by Kimberley Morin. *A Day For Surprises*, *The Loveliest Afternoon Of The Year*, and *Something I'll Tell You Tuesday*, three strangely sweet, comic morsels by John Guare, directed by Jodi Baker. 5/15 and 5/16 at 8 p.m., and 5/17 at 5 p.m. \$7, mature content.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MAY 16th & 17th

Turners Falls Open Studio and Downtown Walking Tour, 10 to 5 p.m. Take a tour of artists' studios, museums, and scrumptious eateries. See art in process and enjoy the inner workings and the creativity of the studios in this unique historic village. Brochures and maps available at area businesses. Info: Eileen 863-9499 or Pam (413) 522-7727.

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Anadromous and Migrating Fish Life Histories at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. 11 a.m. Learn about local species of fish that use the CT River and its tributaries!

SATURDAY, MAY 16th

2009 Valley Idol Jr. for Kids and Teens: A Capella Singing Contest, 9:30 a.m. at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Come to see contestants compete to become this year's Valley Idol Jr. Tickets: \$5. Continues 5/23.

2009 Valley Idol Karaoke Contest, 7 p.m. at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Who will be this year's Valley Idol? Come and root for your favorites. Continues May 23rd at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$10 (\$12 at the door), Children 10 and under \$5.

Greenfield Zen Group: 1/2 day sitting from 1 to 5 p.m. Green River Yoga Studio, Greenfield. Led by Melissa Myozen Blacker Sensei, Zen priest and one of the three guiding teachers of Boundless Way Zen. Instruction, dharma talk, and private interviews. Donations. Info and registration, contact Jean at (413) 773-9744 or je88@comcast.net.

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: Jason Bourgeois with guests Jesse Smith (aka King Falcon) (fun retro-rock from Turners Falls) & This Frontier Needs Heroes (gorgeous, stripped down folk from Brooklyn NY) \$6, . 8 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rokit Queer* dance party, \$3, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Evenspeak*, 9:30 p.m. And Relay for Life Bike Run BBQ & music, 3 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 17th

Montague Business Association Pancake Breakfast! 9 a.m. to noon at St. Kaziemerz Society, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Proceeds to benefit the Montague Business Association.

Backyard Gardeners Meeting, 3 to 4 p.m. Join us at 18 Main St. Montague, for our monthly meeting. Bring plants to share and trade.

Scandinavian Dance, Montague Grange, Montague Center, 3 to 6 p.m. This Sunday is Syttende Mai - Norway's Constitution Day! Join us for Norwegian dancing, and we'll do some Swedish also. Open request dancing follows teaching. All levels of experience are welcome! No partner necessary. Clean, comfortable, low-heeled dancing shoes with smooth, non-rubber soles are best.

\$8 donation suggested. Contact scandiasundays@aol.com or Gideon at (413) 253-0525. www.montaguescandia.org.

Sober Sunday Softball. Meet us behind the Greenfield Middle School from 1:30 to 3:30pm! Sober Softball happens every Sunday until June 28th, weather permitting. Bring a glove, a friend, and a positive attitude! Info. contact Patrick at the



Indie Rock, musician Kristin Ford performs at Deja Brew, Wendell on Saturday, May 16th from 9 to 11 p.m. Check her out at myspace.com/kfochicago. "Sounds like she was born with a guitar in her hand. A Multi-instrumentalist with dozens of songs under her belt, she effortlessly glides between pop, rock and roots." - *Diva Magazine*, 10/07

RECOVER Project 774-5489.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Acoustic Open Mic*, All welcome, 8 to 10 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 18th

Town of Montague Election Day, vote for town boards and school committee.

Evening Sing-Along, 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. At the Montague Center Library with Children's Librarian, Linda Hickman. Guitar and banjo with a variety of children's music. For more information, call the Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week, or the Montague Center Library, 367-2852, on Monday evenings.

Evenings with the Birds. Meet at the Bearsden Conservation Area, Adams Road, Athol for our last spring evening excursion. Rain date: Wednesday, May 27. 6 to 8 p.m. Info: Joan Duprey, (978) 249-4964.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo Night!* 8 to 11 p.m. free, zany prizes!

TUESDAY, MAY 19th

What do you think about the Skate Park? Come tell us your thoughts at the Carnegie Library from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.. Info. Ruth at the Brick House, 863-9559.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Knit & Craft Night*, free juke box, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20th

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Knitting & Crafts Night*, 7 to 10 p.m. Any craft/skill level.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quizmasta Chad's Quiznite!* Begins at 8 p.m. bring a team, join a team!

THURSDAY, MAY 21st

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Discovery Science: Fascinating Frogs* with Rachel Roberts, 10 a.m. FREE workshop for families with young children. No pre-registration is required, so pop in! For more information on this program and others call (413) 863-3221 or check out www.greatfallsma.org.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *All-Star Variety Benefit* for the Dakin Animal

Shelter. \$5 to \$20 suggested donation.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Wailing Dave Robinson, Tommy Filault and Company*, Blues Based Roots music, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 22nd & 23rd

Ashfield Community Theater presents: *The Voyage Inheritance*. A collision of money, family, corruption and conscience. A tale for our times. Directed by Martin Shell at the Ashfield Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.. \$12/\$6 opening night.

FRIDAY to SUNDAY, MAY 22nd to 24th

33rd Annual Flea Market & Gas Engine Show. Food booth, raffles, gas engine show & awards. AUCTION!! 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday a benefit for the United Church of Bernardston. www.unitedchurchofbernardston.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 30th

4th Annual Family Fishing Day! Arts and crafts, fishing lessons, flytying lessons, free raffle and plenty of fish to catch! Come share the joy of fishing with children of all ages! 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

SUNDAY, MAY 31st

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: A Reading: by Susan Campbell from her work *Dating Jesus*. By the age of twelve, Susan Campbell had been flirting with Jesus for some time, and in her mind, Jesus had been flirting back. Why wouldn't he? She went to his house three times a week, sat in his living room, listened to his stories, loudly and lustily sang songs to him. So, one Sunday morning, she walked to the front of her fundamentalist Christian church to profess her love for Jesus and to be baptized. In this lovingly told tale, Susan Campbell takes us into the world of fundamentalism - a world where the details really, really matter. And she shows us what happened when she finally came to admit that in her faith, women would never be allowed a seat at the throne. 7 p.m., free.

ONGOING

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls: In Gallery 52: *Blake Fitch - Expectations of Adolescence*, a ten-year photographic project documenting the emotional and physical growth and emotional maturation of two girls. In Gallery 56: *Founder & Museum Collections - Selections II*. In Gallery 85: *Stan Sherer - Life Studies*. Three documentary projects. 'Albania' and 'Shopkeepers' studies of people & places. 'Lantern Slides' a personal visual interpretation and construction by Mr. Sherer. On display through June 14th.

Historic Deerfield Exhibition: *Stimulating Beverages, Tea, Coffee, and Chocolate Wares*. Explore the fascinating role played by tea, coffee, and chocolate in New England through an examination of Historic Deerfield's vast collection of hot beverage wares. Open daily. 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Through Saturday, May 23rd

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Regis Paris Landscape Photography* Exhibit on display in the Great Hall through May 31st.

HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER
MONDAYS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m.
TUES & WEDS - Ongoing Music Project, 3 to 6 p.m.
THURS - Drop-in, 3 to 6 p.m. & Movie Night, 6 to 8 p.m.
Free (except some trips), open to local teens. Some require permission slips.
Info: Jared at 863-9559.
Hot Spot Teen Center is in The Brick House
24 Third Street, Turners Falls, 01376

Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES
Friday & Saturday
May 15th & 16th at 7:30 p.m.
THE RED SHOES
Hans Christian Anderson ballet fairy tale. Haunting, stylized, tragic, metaphorical tale of a young ballerina, so consumed by her will to dance that she tears down the world around her. 1948. NR, but not suitable for young children. Color. 133 min.
Ballet Reverse students perform 7 p.m.
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2. ANGELS AND DEMONS DAILY 6:30 9:30 PG13 in DTS sound FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
3. X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE PG13 DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN 12 3:00
4. FIGHTING PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
5. HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE G FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
5. THE SOLOIST PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15
6. STAR TREK PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
7. EARTH G in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 UNTIL WED. FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
7. TERMINATOR SALVATION PG13 5/20 MIDNIGHT SHOW

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Saturday, 5/16, 9 to 11 p.m. Indie Rock: *Kristin Ford*
Sunday, 5/17 8 to 10 p.m. Acoustic Open Mic
Thursday, 5/21 8 to 10 p.m. Blues Based Roots Music: *Wailin' Dave Robinson, Tommy Filault & Co.*
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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

BY LESLIE BROWN
MONTAGUE CITY —

*"Rough winds do shake the
darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all
too short a date..."*

William Shakespeare, Sonnet #18

I, for one, was glad to see the end of the recent hot, summery weather. As it is, the flowering plants of spring are short-lived and were made more so by the spell of sultry heat. The daffodils were spectacular but faded quickly. Luckily, through no cleverness of mine, the mix of bulbs I planted included some that bloomed later, once we had returned to the cooler temperatures.

One day when I returned home from work, the Manchurian apricot was lush with fluffy pink to white bloom. Three days later, the flowers had browned off. The lilac buds grew several inches almost overnight.

So did the weeds. It's almost impossible to keep up now. It's time to weed and prune, to plant and thin all at the same time.

If you have spring flowering bulbs, it's a good idea to "dead-head" or clip the flowers that have faded. Do not, however, cut back the green leaves. They are still at work, feeding the bulbs for another blooming season, so wait to clip or mow them until they are yellow or brown.

You can also judiciously prune flowering shrubs once their blooming is over. Forsythia, lilac, flowering quince and the like will benefit from a gentle trim (not a major haircut), and will respond next spring with more flowering.

In the vegetable garden, it's time for peas, leaf crops, broccoli, and the root crops like carrot, beet and radish. If you mix radish seed in with carrot and beet seed, your radish crop will mark the row of the slower crops and loosen the dirt so that the beets and carrots will have more root room. Sprinkle some wood ashes in the planting area if you have some. Above all, don't wait much longer to plant these crops,

because they love the cool, damp weather. As we know, it won't last much longer.

While you're waiting to plant the heat-loving crops like beans, tomatoes, peppers, squash and corn, you can take some time to prepare those garden spaces.

If you lay a mulch of black plastic, cardboard or newspaper now, you'll save yourself weeding later and also reap the benefit of additionally warming the soil.

Consider rotating your planting areas. One of the simplest methods for disease and pest control is changing the sections of your garden every couple of years. Over the years we've had some problems with soil-borne tomato diseases. Crop rotating has helped, as has allowing a periodic rest for a garden bed, which has then been treated with doses of hydrogen peroxide (a bottle per gallon of watering), covered with dark plastic and baked for the whole of the summer season. Incidentally, since I've been laying black plastic before planting my tomatoes, I've had much less difficulty with the diseases that kill the plants before

you've been able to harvest a crop. Planting vine crops where you last had legumes can give you a fresh start.

Now for the four-legged critters. Rabbits and woodchucks have never shown any interest in my tomatoes or peppers. However, the tender plants of squash, bean or melon are another matter. Since I grow my tomatoes and peppers in wire cages, I've decided to ring a square of the garden with these cages and put the pole bean tepee and squash hills in the middle. I think the wire cages should help to put off the invasion of these varmints into my tasty tender plants.

As for the tender peas, leaf crops and root tops, I've planted closely-set marigolds near these. Their scent is strong, and they will develop into a low but sturdy fence which will hopefully discourage browsers.

We once put a five foot chicken wire fence around the entire garden and subsequently learned

that a large woodchuck could happily climb it and use bulk gravity to drop in or dig happily and enter from underneath. The next year we reinstalled the fence, burying it several inches as well. This worked until the metal rusted and broke up. I have no time now to repeat this venture.

The apple trees are in full bloom now and are still holding. Our resident oriole thinks they

are a splendid perch. He is right; seated in the sea of white, his bright orange plumage stands out spectacularly.

I'm glad things have cooled and slowed down. As the poet lamented, summer will come soon, with all too short a lease. For me, I'm savoring the combination of a cool, damp day scented by the wood fire and the opening lilacs.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG Animal Complaints

Wednesday, 5/6

10:10 a.m. Animal complaint on W. Gill Rd.

Friday, 5/8

6:00 p.m. Erratic operation complaint of vehicle on W. Gill Rd. Vehicle stopped, investigated.

Saturday, 5/9

8:45 a.m. Assisted Deerfield police department with investigation on Center Road.

7:31 p.m. Assisted disabled motorist on French

King Highway.

7:45 p.m. Numerous power lines and branches down on West Gill and Main Road. Roadway closed until power company arrives.

9:15 p.m. Assisted state police with investigation on Munn's Ferry Road.

Sunday, 5/10

12:30 a.m. Wires down on North Cross Road and Gill Road.

12:35 p.m. Assisted with

fire alarm on Mount Hermon campus.

3:30 p.m. Investigated suspended operator at state boat ramp, all OK.

Monday, 5/11

12:40 p.m. 911 mis-dial on Mount Hermon campus. All ok.

8:40 p.m. Vehicle operation complaint on Trenholm Way.

8:55 p.m. Suspicious activity on N. Cross Road, area checked OK.

Tuesday, 5/12

6:53 p.m. Animal complaint on River Road.



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