



EYES ON OWLS

A Saw-whet Owl (left) an Eastern Screech Owl, and four other species came to roost for the day at the Great Falls Disco Ctr. **Page 9**



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 9 - NO. 33

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

75¢

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 19, 2011



DETMOLD PHOTO

Joel Benjamin, a Revolutionary War veteran, lies among the brush at the inaccessible Dry Hill Cemetery

BY DAVID DETMOLD
MILLERS FALLS - It is lonely up at the Dry Hill Cemetery. Four tall white stones stand beneath a bare oak tree on the ridge against the gray clouds - the family plot of the Paynes. Further on, in the tangle of blueberries, small maple trees, and overgrown brush toward the northeast corner of the one acre burying ground, a small, tattered American flag flutters forlornly by the headstone of Joel Benjamin, who died in 1839 at the age of 80.

According to Montague library director Sue SanSoucie, Benjamin fought in the Revolutionary War, as did Lieutenant Ezra Anderson, whose grave lies somewhere nearby. Ezra was a selectman in Montague in 1802, and again from 1804 - 1806. SanSoucie, the only current member of Montague's cemetery commission, normally a three person board, provided records this week showing at least seven Andersons lie buried in Dry Hill Cemetery. Their family

plot is marked now by a tumble of four broken slate headstones, leaning against each other in a jumbled heap, with a good sized maple sapling growing in their midst. You can make out the names of Charlotte (died 1819 at 23), George (died 1831 at 30), and Isabella (died 1806 at 85), but Lieutenant Ezra's grave is not so easy to find. Indeed, it is hard to find the cemetery itself, which is not marked by any sign. Even though the highway department sent a crew a see **CEMETERY** pg 8

Gill Voters Share Concerns about Gill-Montague School District



DETMOLD PHOTO

Peter Conway said, "I would like to see less school choice... The school committee needs to really probe as to why people send their children elsewhere, to districts such as Pioneer and Frontier."

BY DAVID DETMOLD
GILL - "I'd like to see change," said Jake Giknis, stopping on his way to the parking lot after voting at the booths set up inside the fire station, on a drizzly Monday afternoon in Gill. The only contest on the ballot was a race for an open three year seat on the Gill-Montague school committee, and both candidates - Patricia Crosby and

Sandy Brown - had served on the school committee in the past. But by the end of the day 69% of the voters in Gill had tapped Brown to represent them in a district where change is now solidly on the agenda, as superintendent Carl Ladd and a number of top school administrators prepare hastily planned departures. "The schools aren't running the way they should,"

said Giknis. "We lost our superintendent - he resigned. He said it's hard to change people's minds." Giknis paused, before continuing, "They need to be more flexible. People don't like change. They think, 'This is the way it was in my grandfather's day; this is the way his father did things.' But things are tight. There's more than one way to do a job." Sue Kramer alluded to another problem the school district is grappling with, the departure of so many students to other nearby districts on school choice, when she said, "I appreciate all the time and hard work anyone does for the school committee. It's a pretty thankless job. I think they are trying to figure out what's going on with the loss of students." Last year, Gill-Montague lost 222 students to other districts through the school choice program, and gained just 109 from students choosing to attend Gill-Montague from neighboring districts, for a net see **VOTERS** pg 14



TANYA CUSHMAN PHOTO

The 18 by 36 foot greenhouse frame took shape on the grounds of the elementary school after a volunteer work party this month.

BY JONATHAN von RANSON - An issue currently being considered as the new greenhouse is about to rise at the Leverett Elementary School is whether and how to share the facility with local gardeners. The greenhouse traces back to one person's conviction, five years ago, that it would be possible to bring better food to the town's schoolchildren. School neighbor Susie Chang got involved, and her work helped seed a policy now in effect of more locally-oriented purchasing

of food by the school. It also produced a school "courtyard garden" that children help tend, and now the 18 by 36 foot greenhouse being built for teaching as well as for growing fresh, local lettuce for the lunch line. There's now a dedicated committee meeting, shepherding a small flowering of ideas that's expanding to include local food production and food security, as well as healthful food and learning. Work on the greenhouse site started last weekend see **SHARING** pg 12

Ekstrom Recommended for Interim G-M Super



BLANCHETTE PHOTO

Nadine Ekstrom, former special education director, has expressed interest in the post of interim superintendent at the GMRSD.

ELLEN BLANCHETTE
GILL-MONTAGUE - Superintendent Carl Ladd recommended former Gill-Montague special education director Nadine Ekstrom to take over as interim superintendent for the district, as Ladd formally announced his own resignation to the school committee on Tuesday. Ladd had already let that news break last Thursday, after meeting over coffee with about a dozen parents

in downtown Turners who came to talk to him at the senior center at his request, as the district seeks to understand why so many students have been leaving the district on school choice. (See Ladd's letter of resignation on page 5.) The school committee meeting was brief, intended only to elect new officers. Michael Langknecht of Montague was elected chair, and Sandy Brown, of see **EKSTROM** pg 10

Brown Sweeps in School Committee Race



DETMOLD PHOTO

Sandy Brown

BY DAVID DETMOLD
GILL-MONTAGUE - Sandy Brown of Gill cruised to an easy victory on the G-M school committee, the only race on the ballot in the annual elections in the towns of Gill and Montague on Monday. Brown, a former member of the Gill-Montague school committee, faced Patricia Crosby, a former Gill-Montague school committee chair, for an open Gill seat and won that

race 439 - 180, taking 71% of the overall vote, sweeping all six precincts of Montague, and winning 106 - 47 (69%) in Gill. The contest may have turned on the two candidates' differing statements in a May 3rd debate broadcast live on MCTV, when Brown offered unqualified support for the recent budget compact arrived at between the towns, the school district and the state, see **BROWN** pg 10

PET OF THE WEEK

Adopt me Please!



Bella

My name is Bella and I'm a six-year-old long hair female cat in need of a good home. I've had a rough go of things lately, but it's nothing that the special love of a new family won't get me through. I get along with all people, and have lived well with other cats. I'm a sweet, beautiful girl with love, entertainment, and companionship to give. Are you the special someone for me? I'm in foster care because I was not happy in a cage. To find out more about adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email at info@dpvhs.org.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week
Grade 6
 Madison Currier
Grade 7
 Richard Whiteman
 Lindsey Mailloux

RECYCLE PAPER!
 Week of May 23rd in Montague

more info? call: 863-2054

NANCY L. DOLE BOOKS & EPHEMERA

32 Bridge Street,
 2nd Floor
 Shelburne Falls
 413-625-9850
 ndole@crocker.com closed Mondays

The Montague Reporter

Published weekly on Thursday. (Every other week in July and August. Wednesday paper fourth week of November. No paper last week of December.)
 PHONE (413) 863-8666
 reporter@montaguema.net
 Postmaster: Send address changes to
 The Montague Reporter
 58 4th Street
 Turners Falls, MA 01376
 Advertising and copy deadline is Tuesday at NOON.

This newspaper shall not be liable for errors in advertisements, but will print without charge that part of the advertisement in which an error occurred. The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter copy or graphics to conform to standards of the newspaper, such as they are.

Local Subscription Rates:
 \$20 for 1/2 Year

MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

Montague Center Evening Sing - a - Long

BY LINDA HICKMAN
MONTAGUE CENTER - Children of all ages and their families are invited to join Children's Librarian Linda Hickman for a fun informal live music program at the Montague Center Library on Monday evenings around 6:30 p.m. Linda plays a variety of children's music on the guitar and banjo,

and there are an assortment of age appropriate instruments for the children to play. For people who find the very popular Music and Movement with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. too crowded, this is a more relaxed alternative. For more information, call the Carnegie Library at (413) 863-3214.

Athol Bird and Nature Club

"Spring Birds with the Springs," meeting at Bicentennial Park on Holtshire Road in Orange, on Saturday, May 21 at 7:30 a.m., led by Ann and Jeff Spring. This outing is sponsored by the Athol Bird & Nature Club, an

active group of people sharing an appreciation of nature's many forms. More information about the club is available on the web at www.millersriver.net. New members are welcome.

Land Trust 25th Anniversary Benefit

Benefit dinner and auction on Thursday, May 26th honoring the 25th Anniversary of Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust at Bella Notte Ristorante, 199 Huckle Hill Road in Bernardston, with a stunning view of the Connecticut River Valley. The event begins at 5:30 with seating at 6:15 p.m.

towns in Franklin and Worcester counties. It protects significant natural, agricultural and scenic areas and encourages land stewardship throughout the region. In 25 years through collaborations and partnerships, Mount Grace has protected 25,000 acres.

Work by local artists and craftsmen and the bounty of local farms will be on display before the meal, and will be auctioned to benefit the trust.

Tickets are \$40 with tax and tip included. Tickets are available at www.mountgrace.org, or from Mount Grace Directors or staff. For more information or to call for tickets contact David Kotker at (978) 248-2055 x19 or kotker@mountgrace.org.

Upcoming Events at Great Falls Discovery Center

Exhibit in the Great Hall, now through May 30th, *A Sense of the Refuge: Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 50th Anniversary Exhibit*.

to get your family interested in migrating fish, which you can view for free across the Avenue at the Turners Falls Fishway, now open for the season.

- Young Children's Story Hour on May 27th from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Join Discovery staff the fourth Friday of every month for a story hour especially for children ages 3 to 6. After the story, staff will lead an age appropriate activity: on the 27th they will read *Rainbow Fish Finds His Way* by Marcus Pfister, and then lead an activity making rainbow fish. This program is a great way

- Investigation Station on May 28th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The fourth Saturday of every month, come into the Discovery Center to learn something new about the environment. An investigation station will be set up at the front desk with interesting items for you to see. In May, we will investigate birds' nests. Appropriate for all ages.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES - May 23rd - 27th

GILL-MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11:00 a.m. The meal site manager is Kerry Togneri. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging director is Roberta Potter. Reservations are now being taken for our July 24th trip to Warren's Lobster House and the Broadway musical *Hairspray*. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call (413) 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

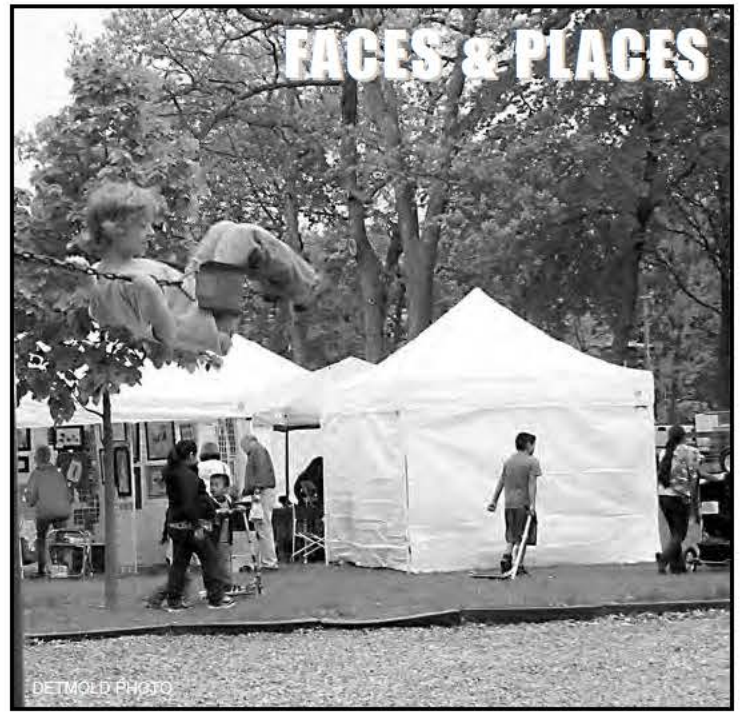
1:00 p.m. Canasta Lessons
Wednesday, May 25th
 10:00 a.m. Aerobics
 10:30 a.m. Health Screenings
 12:45 Bingo
Thursday, May 26th
 9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
 1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, May 27th
 10:00 a.m. Aerobics
 10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

10:00 a.m. Osteo-exercise
 12:00 p.m. Pitch
Tuesday, May 24th
 8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
 12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, May 25th
 8:45 a.m. Line Dancing/Zumba
 12:30 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, May 26th
 8:45 a.m. Aerobics
Friday, May 27th
 9:00 a.m. Bowling
 11:30 a.m. Lunch - Chef's Salad

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For information and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Mealsite Manager is Jim Saracino. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Please call the Senior Center to find out when the next blood pressure clinic will be held.

LEVERETT Senior Activities
 • Take-It-Easy (Chair) Yoga - Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$4.00 (first class free).
 • Senior Lunch - Fridays, 12:00. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.
 • For more information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, extension 5 or coa@leverett.ma.us.

WENDELL Senior Center is located at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760 for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center if you need a ride.



Children played and parents strolled at the Peskeomskut Park Music and Art Festival in Turners Falls to benefit the Shea Theater on Saturday.

Historic Bridge Facts

PROVIDED BY ED GREGORY, OF GREENFIELD - from documents relating to the original construction of the suspension bridge between Turners and Greenfield in 1871.

- On June 17th, 1872, the Lower Suspension or 'White' Bridge between Greenfield and Turners Falls was completed. The entire cost of the bridge is \$34,933.57, for which the parties involved are agreeable to adjudication.
- The County Commissioners show this cost disbursement: Montague pays one-third, \$11,644.52. Of the two-thirds paid by Greenfield, the town pays 17,416.79 and the county \$5,822.26.
- The *Gazette and Courier* print this... "The bridge has not yet been accepted by the County Commissioners and it is only by common consent and a wish to accommodate the public that travel is allowed."

More bridge facts next week!

Sunday Series Hikes in Northfield

Sunday hikes continue on June 5th and June 19th; both will take place in the Northfield area.

Meet at 1 p.m. behind the Northfield town hall for carpooling to the trailhead. Children are welcome. Sponsored by Northfield Trails Association and Northfield Open Space.

Trip leader is Sam Richardson.

For info, questions and weather cancellation notification call (413) 498-5931.

Please shop locally. Tell them you saw it in the **Montague Reporter**

LIVE IN MONTAGUE?
 EST. 1754
 www.MontagueMA.net
 local gossip, news & business listings

Feel Like a Brand New Person!
 With a Haircut at **Ed's Barber Shop**
 74 Avenue A • 863-2085
 Crew Products • Gift Certificates
 "56 Years on the Ave"

WE HEAT FRANKLIN COUNTY

- System 2000 (Energy Kinetics)
- Thermo Pride
- Weil-McLain
- Other Major Brands
- Expert Burner Service

MACKIN FUEL TRUCKING SAND & GRAVEL
(413) 773-3622



Local Briefs

JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

AS COMPILED BY DON CLEGG - There will be a **roast pork supper** at the Montague Congregational Church, in Montague Center, on Saturday, May 21st, starting at 5:30 p.m. The menu consists of roast pork with gravy, red roasted potatoes, Belgian carrots, homemade applesauce, breads, strawberry upside down cake, and beverages. For reservations and take out orders, please call (413) 774-7256. Walk-ins will be seated as space allows.

The annual **Wendell Plant Swap** will be held on Wendell town common, near the gazebo, Sunday, May 22nd, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Bring your extra perennials or annuals you'd like to swap. Folks without extra plants sometimes bring home-baked goods or other food items to swap. Some come just to visit. The plant swap is sponsored by Wendell Community Garden; call (978) 544-2306 for more info.

The **Coop Concerts 2011 Summer Series** begins Thursday, May 26th, with Devlin Miles, Roland Lapierre and the Falltown String Band. Performances will take place every Thursday through August 25th, plus Sunday concerts on June 26th and August 14th. The free performances take place from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Station Pavilion in the Greenfield Energy Park, 50 Miles Street, Greenfield.

The **Turners Falls Congregational Church**, 148 L

Street, will sponsor a huge **rummage and tag sale** on Saturday, May 28th, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be TVs, radios, good condition clothing and collectibles for sale. Plus free coffee as you browse. Please contact Helen Stotz, 863-2670, for more info.

You are invited to the first ever **"Peep Show"** at Greenfield Savings Bank on Saturday, May 28th, at 10:30 a.m., in the Community Room, 282 Avenue A, in Turners Falls, with Sorrell Hatch from the Upinngil family farm in Gill as the featured speaker. Stop by and find out how to raise fresh, organic eggs at home. It's fun, easy, economical and good for the environment. Hatch lives up to her name, and will provide a wealth of knowledge on how to get started. There'll be a small gift for everyone attending. Seating is limited; call Linda at (413) 863-4316 to reserve a roost.

Memorial Day Poetry **Spoken Word Festival 2011** will be held Monday, May 30th, at the Deja Brew Pub, 57 Lockes Village Road, in Wendell. Doors open at 1:00 p.m. with the first reading beginning at 2:00 p.m. In case of good weather bring a blanket, lawn chair and umbrella; rain will move the event inside. For more info or to reserve a reading slot email paul@humanerrorpublishing.com.

Real Pickles is going Solar! Come celebrate their 10 year anniversary on Thursday, May

26th, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at 311 Wells Street in Greenfield. Sip a People's Pint ginger brew, snack on a pickle and learn about solar power from the installer, PV2. Plus dance to the Valley's best honky-tonk music from Girl Howdy. Monte from WRSI flips the switch to solar power at 5:15 p.m.

In a race to the bottom, downtown Turners Falls (Precinct 5) usually wins when it comes to having the lowest percentage of registered voters heading to the polls for town, state and national elections. But in Monday's annual town election, Precinct 6 (Montague City and the Patch) took the **Booby Prize** for lowest turnout. Precinct 5 had a stunning 6.68% of voters show, but Precinct 6 beat all with 5.0%.

Overall, turnout in Montague was a disappointing 8.5%; with the show-offs in Montague Center (Precinct 1) distorting the Bell Curve of Apathy with a 14.78% showing.

If you want **Girl Scout Summer Camp** information, come to GCC's downtown center on Monday, May 23rd, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., to explore summer options.

Girl Scouts of Central & Western Massachusetts operates day and overnight camps with bus service included. Meet the camp directors and camp counselors, view a slide show about camp and get answers to your questions. Girls do not need to be in a Girl Scout troop or have prior Girl Scout experience in order to attend camp. Find a list of sessions and map of locations at www.gscwm.org. For more info contact Mandy Anderson at (800) 462-9100.

Send local briefs to: reporter-local@montaguema.net.

Memorial Day Parade
TURNERS FALLS - On Monday, May 30th at 10 a.m., the annual Memorial Day Parade will take place, stepping off from the 2nd Street parking lot and proceeding down Avenue A to the Veterans Memorial Park. All servicemen and women are invited to join in the parade.

Speakers and wreath placing ceremonies will follow at the Veterans Park, sponsored by the Montague Soldiers Memorial Committee.

DANIEL GILMORE

Daniel W. Gilmore, age 24, died Friday, May 14th, 2011 in Norfolk, VA in a motor vehicle accident. He was the son of Michael and Karen (Letourneau) Gilmore of South Deerfield. He was a graduate of Frontier Regional High School and Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY. He was employed as a nuclear engineer at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

In addition to his parents and sister Kayla and brother Trevor, he leaves family members in the immediate area including aunts and uncles, Debra and Michael Letourneau, Mark and Diana Letourneau, and grandparents Arthur and Mary Ann Gilmore. Daniel also leaves his devoted partner for life, whom he loved dearly, Katherine Gawrys. Our sympathy goes out to all his friends and relatives.

Cromack to Speak at Memorial Observance

MONTAGUE CENTER - There will be a Memorial Day observance on the Montague Center common on Sunday, May 29th at 11:15 a.m. Leslie Cromack will be the main speaker. Members of the armed forces will be remembered.

This event has been held for 60 years on the green in front of the veterans memorial stone, and is hosted by the Montague Center fire association. All residents of the town are welcome to attend.

Gill Memorial Day Service

On Sunday, May 29th a Memorial Day service will be held at the Gill Congregational Church, starting at 10:00 a.m. Following the service, participants will proceed across the common for a ceremony at the Veterans Memorial, honoring those whose lives were lost in past wars.

Red Fire Farm
Organic Plants for your Garden!
Get a Farmstand Membership for 10% discount on everything and access to our NEW PYO fields on Meadow Road!
Open April 30th
Old Depot Gardens 413-467-7645
504 Turners Falls Rd, Montague
www.redfirefarm.com

Because the lingerie is really for you, Guys

Imagine Jewelers
38 Bank Row
Greenfield
413-473-1310

The Jewelry is for Her

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$8.00 PER WEEK (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

BASICALLY BICYCLES

New England's Recumbent Headquarters

413-863-3556
88 Third Street,
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Electric Bikes starting at \$499.95

Order online at www.BasicallyBicycles.com

413-256-6217

fine instruments bought and sold repaired and restored

Fretted Instrument Workshop
49 So. Pleasant St., Amherst, Mass. 01002

RENAISSANCE PAINTING

SINCE 1970
LICENSED, INSURED
INTERIOR/EXTERIOR PAINTING, ALL PHASES
POWER WASHING

BRIAN MCCUE, PRESIDENT
240 GREENFIELD ROAD • MONTAGUE, MA 01351
PHONE & FAX: 413-367-9896 • RENAISSANCEPAINTINGCOMPANY.COM

Sokolosky Realty

(413) 863 - 4393
159 Avenue A,
Turners Falls

GREENFIELD FARMERS COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE
Locally Owned Since 1918

Local Farmer-Owned

Shop with your neighbors
Support local agriculture

Products for your animals, home, farm, garden & yard

269 High St. Greenfield (413)773-9639

CRUISE & TRAVEL COMPANY

30 Montague St.
TURNERS FALLS

413-863-3143 | 888-763-3143
www.cruiseandtravelcompany.com

Site Work

- Bulldozer and Backhoe Work
- Driveways
- Land Clearing
- Septic Systems

Residential and Commercial

L & D Builders
413-648-0110

LAPINE MULTIMEDIA

DVD~ MINI DVD~DVC~VHS/VHS
C/SVHS~BETA~REGULAR/HIGH &
DIGITAL 8 MM~HOME MOVIES/SLIDES~
CD'S/REEL TO REEL/8 TRACK/WIRE
AND OTHER FORMATS.

"MULTIPLE COPIES QUICK AS A BUNNY"

WILLIAM & KATHY WHITE (413-773-7747) | LAPINE MULTIMEDIA
21 MOHAWK TRAIL BOX 259 GREENFIELD, MA 01301
LAPINE@VERIZON.NET

AJ'S CYCLE

274 Rt. 2, Gill

- clothing • used bikes • tank bags
- boots • gloves
- accessories
- gift certificates

(413) 863-9543
Allan • David
email: AJCYC@CROCKER.COM
WWW.AJCYCLE.COM

The Montague Reporter

Editor
David Detmold

Layout & Design
Claudia Wells - Art Director
Katren Hoyden
Janel Nockleby
Boysen Hodgson

Photography
Claudia Wells
Joe Parzych

Editorial Assistants
Hugh Corr
Shira Hillel
Gloria Kegeles

"The Voice of the Villages"

Distribution Manager
Don Clegg

Circulation
Janel Nockleby

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August, 2002

Technical Administrator
Michael Muller

Change at Gill-Montague

If there was ever a time for the Gill-Montague school committee to unite behind a creative program to reinvigorate our schools, that time is now at hand.

We join the many voices expressing sorrow and dismay at the unexpected departure of Carl Ladd, a superintendent who brought much needed balance to the budget making process at the Gill-Montague schools these last two years. Under his steady hand, the district emerged from state fiscal oversight with unanimous votes, unprecedented in recent years, approving the last two school budgets at district and town meetings.

Ladd also kept his eye on the neediest students, and demanded excellence from staff and administrators as he attempted to turn around one of just four districts in the state marked down by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as Level IV - "Needs Improvement."

Here, he came up short, but not through lack of effort on his part. More, according to Ladd's own letter of resignation, which does not mince words, he ran into "those who feel threatened by any challenge to the status quo and will do - or say - almost anything in order to maintain business as usual."

We agree with sentiments expressed by Patricia Crosby, who fell short in her campaign for a seat on the school committee this week. She rightly focused on the academic achievements of our schools and their graduates, many of whom go on to attend prestigious colleges with difficult acceptance standards. Our schools are clearly providing an excellent education for the many students who graduate from them to succeed in their higher education and career goals.

But the GMRSD, by any measure (and the measure seems to change from year to year at the DESE) continues to struggle to reach all students, as Gill-Montague's stubborn failure to graduate rate shows. Moreover, the district has failed in other ways to attract and retain hundreds of students who by right should be attending schools in their home communities, but instead choose to go to other nearby public or charter schools.

They take with them more than a million dollars each year in state aid and charter school tuition, a loss that will make it progressively more difficult to turn our own district around.

With a multi-year contract signed, benefits assured, and the overarching budget impasse solved at least for the time being, taxpayers in the district have every reason to expect redoubled effort on the part of all teachers and staff to guide each and every student in a district this size toward academic achievement. No student should fall through the cracks in a district this small.

Gill-Montague enrollment, if you were wondering, has declined from 1418 students in 2002 to 1118 in 2011.

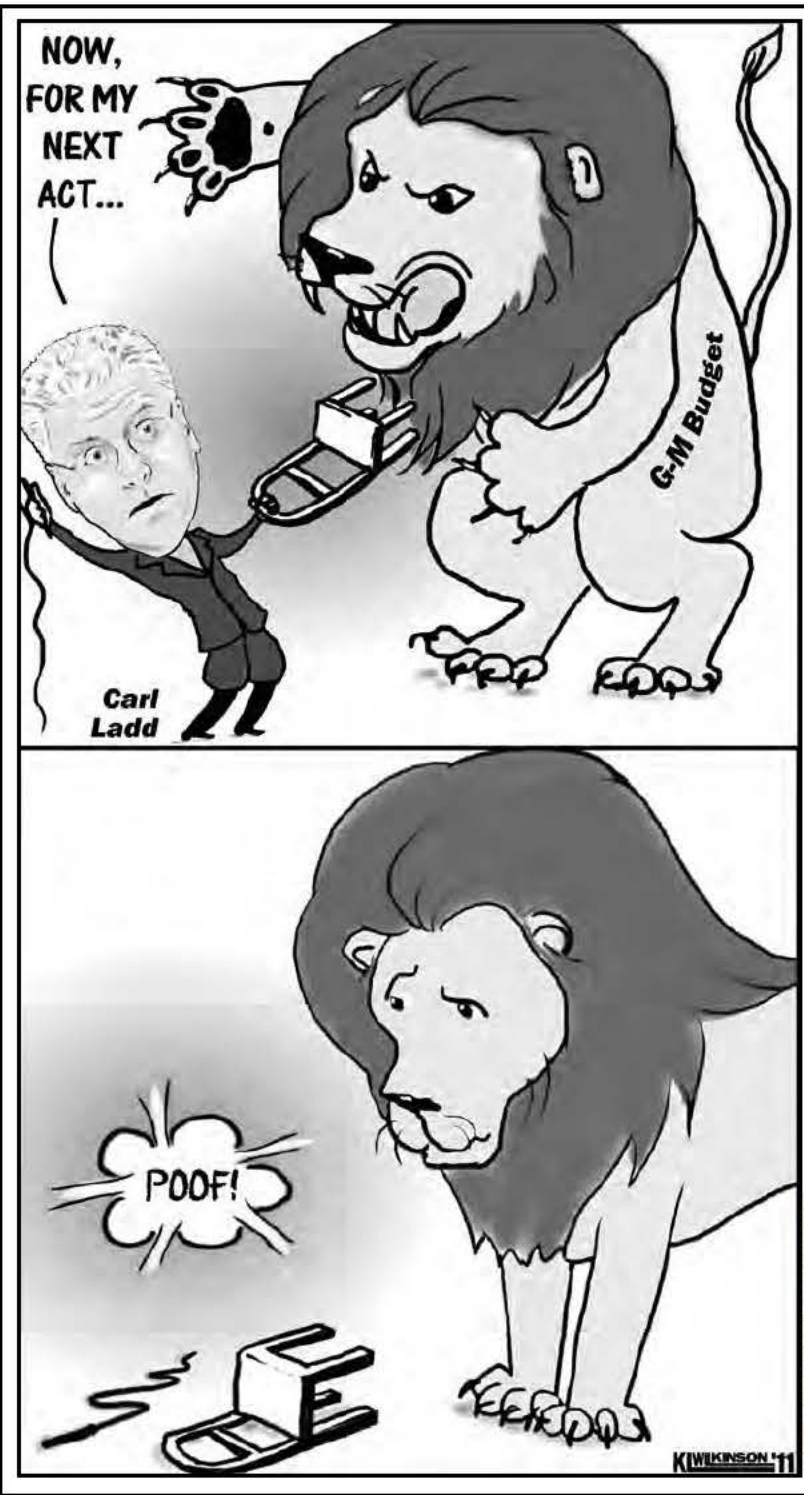
School choice losses are crippling our ability to provide programming to attract and retain our own students. We must reverse that trend if the district is to remain viable.

One proposal all the candidates for school committee this year agreed they could support was the idea of establishing an in-district charter school - a Horace Mann school - to cut the losses and bring our students back.

This is an idea that may not go down well with those who insist everything in the district is just fine the way it is, those who insist the problem lies with parents themselves for deserting our schools. This way of thinking will result only in more losses to the district over time, and the diminution of educational programs for all students at the GMRSD.

There are today more than 200 students leaving town for other districts, not counting charter school losses, home schoolers, and private school students. Putting aside the likelihood of attracting additional students from other districts, that is more than enough students to start up an in-district Horace Mann charter school, if an empty school building could be found somewhere in town.

In an era of declining state aid and increasingly strapped taxpayers, it is time to put old animosities and old defenses aside, focus on bringing in new revenue for our district, and bring our students home.



Visiting Her Old Home Town

I grew up in Montague Center, from 1947 to 1970 (I lived on Central Street, now Center Street), then moved to Beverly, MA when I married. Yesterday, my husband and I came to visit and had a wonderful time. This

town has not changed at all! It's still a beautiful and quiet town.

Now that we have subscribed, we'll be looking forward to reading the *Montague Reporter*.

- Linda Ellis Symmes
Beverly

Sorry to See Ladd Go

The citizens of Gill and Montague are faced with the prospect of losing one of the finest school administrators, Carl Ladd, we have had in the district for many years.

It is my understanding that this loss is due in part to his support of the Band Boosters, a group of parents who support the schools' music programs, criticized by certain members of the school committee for not having been registered with the state.

At one time I, along with just about every music director in Western Massachusetts, had a Music or Band Boosters parent group supporting us, and none of these groups were registered with the state. My support group consisted of selectboard, school committee members, and parents of children involved with the various school music groups. One of the parents was a builder, and he organized a number of people to build a stand to sell food and hot coffee at home football games. This gave us funds to take the band and chorus on exchange concerts with other schools in and out of state. The Boosters held meetings in the high school music room, and I attended every meeting.

I suppose members of today's

school committee thought we could be facing charges for not upholding state law if the Band Boosters were not properly registered. It would be a good idea for certain members of the school committee to remember they are elected to represent us, the voters that put them on the committee, and not to just pursue personal agendas without informing the rest of the committee.

I am very sorry to see Mr. Ladd leave. He faced a tough situation when he arrived, and he handled the position in a highly commendable manner. He is one of the best administrators to have ever graced our community, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

My next question is, who will ever want to accept this position at the Gill-Montague district now, and how will this loss stack up when it comes to parents considering school choice?

- Art Gilmore
Millers Falls

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Clarifying my Position on the Compact

Congratulations to Sandy Brown on her successful run for Gill-Montague school committee. She will do a great job.

Just in case I ever want to run again, I want to clarify my position on the Town/School Budget Compact, in response to the bewildering array of letters against me in two different newspapers in the last few days before the election, when it was too late to respond.

I actually don't think I ever said I didn't support the current Compact, although I can see now, reading through the not-inaccurate accounts of what I did say, how that might have been inferred. But for the record, it would not have been at all my style to barge in with an explicit agenda to overturn an agreement that the towns and schools had struggled over and finally come together on, even if I wasn't among its early supporters back when I was last involved in school committee busi-

ness.

What I was saying is that I have concerns about the Compact. I am worried that the school administration and committee might feel forced by the Compact's constraints to cut quietly but steadily into the essential core components - not the luxuries and "extras" - but the core essentials of a good public education.

I still believe it is the job of the school committee to support the administration in finding a way to honor that compact that doesn't radically and irrevocably shortchange the children and parents (my family among them) who are relying on them. And if the school committee can't find a way to do that, I still believe it is their responsibility to let the public know. I hope the members currently aboard will.

Thank you to those who understood where I was coming from in my comments, and for the opportunity to clarify. What a commotion!

- Patricia Crosby
Gill

U.S. Casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 5/18/11



We Welcome Your Letters!
Montague Reporter
58 4th St Turners, 01376
reporter@montaguema.net

Sign Me Up!

\$20 for half year subscription
 \$25 out-of-area subscribers

The Montague Reporter
58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Name: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

GUEST EDITORIAL

Leaving the GMRS

THURSDAY, MAY 12TH – I met today with Emily Monosson, chair of the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee, and submitted my resignation as Superintendent of Schools of the Gill-Montague Regional School District effective June 30th, 2011. I had a great deal of difficulty reaching this decision, and have done so with substantial regret, as I have developed a strong affection for the district and have been impressed with the communities' support of the district during my tenure here. Both within the district and the two communities there are tremendously good and dedicated people who truly want what is best for students, rather than what is best for them.

I have arrived at this decision for two reasons – personal and professional. On the personal side, it has been difficult being separated from my family for the past two years. While we knew this was going to occur in the first year, for reasons I have explained many times, with the bottom dropping out of the economy and the real estate market in our area it made our moving here extremely problematic.

In addition, we have learned that my wife must undergo surgery this summer. It will be incredibly trying on both of us for me not to be with her to support her through the procedure and recovery.

At the same time that we were grappling with how we were going to deal with that news, I was approached by my former district to consider returning, as there was an opening and they were unhappy with the course of the district since my departure. I met recently with the New Hampshire SAU 58 Board to explore the possibility, and they have offered me a contract beginning July 1st. That seemed to be an answer to our prayers, so I have accepted, pending notification to the school committee and to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

On the professional side, it has become increasingly clear

to me that while we have made tremendous strides in stabilizing the fiscal and enrollment issues, and while we have laid out a clear course of action to continue to move the district forward, there are those who feel threatened by any challenge to the status quo and will do – or say – almost anything in order to maintain 'business as usual.' This approach is couched in the sentiment of only doing what is best for children along with a great deal of hand wringing, but in reality it perpetuates a system in which the children and staff are victims.

The business as usual syndrome too often allows its sponsors to avoid the simple truth that in fostering victimization and low expectations we continue the cycle of poverty for our children rather than help them break it. The extent that these voices are allowed to continue behind the scenes and out of public view will determine whether this district can ever truly turn itself around.

I am proud of the work we have accomplished over the past two years. I arrived in a district that would not pass an operating budget due to the inability or unwillingness of many to listen to the voices of the community. The town of Montague just passed the proposed assessment for FY'12 unanimously on Saturday – a major accomplishment by any measure – because we did listen. We had a meaningful conversation with the towns, and we worked collaboratively. We have worked to expand the possibilities for our high school students by offering more Advanced Placement courses and opening and encouraging enrollment by all students, not simply the highest achievers. We have increased our capacity to provide alternative paths to graduation with credit recovery programs and plans to expand them to provide more options for at-risk students. We have increased summer credit recovery options for middle school students, so we don't lose them during these critically important years. And we have begun

to address the elephant in the room – School Choice – which has been one of the most consistently damaging and draining aspects of the district's finances.

I realize that the timing of this decision – and of its announcement – could not be worse, and that there still is much work yet to be done. I have the utmost respect for the dedicated and committed members of the administration, faculty and staff who work so diligently under difficult circumstances to do what is best for children, and I want to thank them for their support and assistance throughout my time in the district. I know that it has not been easy, and my only regret is that I cannot remain to see the work through to completion. Life, however, sometimes gets in the way of the best laid plans.

I also wish to thank the members of the school committee who have supported the work I have done in the district to lessen the tension between the district and the member towns, to identify areas of concern and develop strategies to

address them, and to challenge the assumption that things must remain this way and that we should not expect anything better. I wish them continued success and also wish for them a new era of civility and mutual respect toward one another in order to better advance the cause of the district and its students, rather than maintaining the status quo.


I have met and befriended some wonderful people in the communities and within the district, and I thank those people for their support, guidance and friendship. Their help and support have been invaluable to me over these past two years.

As I have maintained since my arrival, this district has all the potential to be an outstanding example of innovative and exciting educational opportunities for children. We have made strong progress in achieving that goal, and with assistance from the department and the support of the communities I believe a clear plan can be laid out that will build upon that work and bring the district out of Level 4 status, and allow

it to move on toward ever strengthened educational excellence. I wish only the best for the district as it moves forward.

- Carl Ladd, Ed.D.
Gill-Montague

ORGANIC COMPOSTED MANURE
Made from the very best our local cows, sheep and horses have to offer.
 Well cooked and cured naturally on bare ground. \$6.00 per 30 lb (approx.) bag or \$2.50 per bucket (measured into your own containers); \$150 per truckload (5 yds) delivered locally; \$35 per yard loaded into your truck.



Hunting Hills Farm
 Route 63 Montague Center
 Call Brad for more information call (413) 773-0670 or brad@nearbyfarms.com

Weatherization Installer Course


Brought to you with the support of the MassGREEN Initiative funded by the MA Clean Energy Center

September 28 – November 20, 2010 - Franklin County Technical School

COURSE DESCRIPTION	SCHEDULE
 <p>After completing this course, students will be qualified to work as professional air sealing technicians and insulation installers by learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine thermal boundary • Identify potential air leakage points • Identify appropriate insulation materials, seal and test their seals for air-tightness • Install house ventilation components as directed 	<p>September 28 – November 20, 2010 Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday 4:30-7:30PM Saturday, Oct. 16 & Nov. 20 from 9am-3pm 78 hours—approximately 8 weeks</p>
	<p>REGISTRATION</p> <p>Registration is required with GCC Cost: \$450.00 To register call 413-775-1803 or register online at gcc.mass.edu/shopcreditfree</p>
 <p>Prerequisites for enrollment in the course include: GED min., basic math, English language proficiency, basic carpentry.</p>	 <p>GREENFIELD Community College</p> <p>For more information call 413-775-1660.</p>

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR \$8.00 PER WEEK (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

THE TEXTILE CO. INC.
Retail Fabric Store
 • Cotton • Silks • Polyesters • Vinyls • Upholstery Material
 • Quilting Supplies • Patterns • Calicos • Notions
CASH & CHECKS ONLY
 Mon. - Sat. 9 - 5, Fri. til 7
 Power Square Greenfield (413) 773-7516

RAVEN

USED BOOKS
 5 BANK ROW (RT 5&10)
GREENFIELD, MA
 413 - 772 - 1968
 4 OLD SOUTH STREET
 DOWNTOWN
 NORTHAMPTON, MA
 413 - 584 - 9868
2 LOCATIONS • USED & DISCOUNT BOOKS
OPEN DAILY • RAVENUSEDBOOKS.COM


PETER WATERS
HOUSE PAINTING
 Interior Exterior 978-544-6534 Wendell MA

B. RUBIN & SONS INC.

COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS
 Shocks • Tires • Batteries • Starters
 Struts • Tune-ups • Brakes • Oil Change
 194 MILLERS FALLS RD. • 413-863-2236
10% SENIOR DISCOUNT **FREE ESTIMATES**
MASS INSPECTION STATION, NO. 13051

bioyoles
 unlimited

 • BIKE TUNE-UP \$35.00
 • FULL SUSPENSION MOUNTAIN BIKES
 ON SALE 20% - 40% OFF
 • TENNIS STRING AND RACKET SALES
 322 High St., Greenfield 413-772-2700
www.bikes-unlimited.com

KESTREL RT-900
 ROAD BIKE
 WAS \$5700
 NOW \$3800

Locally owned since 1941

 Full service market
 Fresh Local Produce
 Beer & Wine
 70 Allen Street Greenfield, MA 413-773-1100
 FAX 413-773-1105

REPORT FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD**Heard again Selectboard Chair**

JOSH HEINEMANN
Following the May 2nd election, the selectboard reorganized: Dan Keller nominated Christine Heard for a second consecutive one year term as chair, a nomination which was quickly seconded by Jeffrey Pooser.

Heard was reappointed and will serve another term as selectboard chair.

Charles Smith, representing the conservation commission, opened the meeting by reserving the town hall for Saturday, June 25th from noon to 9:00 p.m. to hold a Clamshell Alliance No Nukes party, open to the public.

Herrick RFP

Selectboard members discussed the Request for Proposal for the 30-acre Herrick property on Wickett Pond Road, and offered differing opinions on what the minimum asking price should be. The assessment on a three-acre building lot is \$48,000; the rest of the property would be assessed at \$1,400 an acre as open developable land. The RFP calls for a conservation restriction on the land other than the building lot, which would reduce the open land assessment to \$90 an acre.

Heard said the lot is not just a lot, but an old house that will require money, even if only to take it down.

Treasurer Carolyn

Manley said that the amount owed at the time of tax foreclosure was \$7,820.

Heard said she wanted to keep the asking price for the Herrick property low enough so as not to discourage someone who would want to restore or renovate the house, but high enough to discourage less serious respondents.

The selectboard came to agreement to ask for \$25,000, along with details of what the buyer expects to do with the property.

If the selectboard gets no proposal it likes, it can reject all of them and write another RFP.

40-B Reform Abandoned

Several months ago the Warwick selectboard undertook an effort to get the state to amend chapter 40-B, a law pertaining to affordable housing. The law states that in any town that has fewer than 10% of its housing affordable, by state definition, a developer may bypass aspects of local review if the development built includes a defined percentage of affordable homes. The Warwick effort would have made any town with over 35% of its land area owned by the state exempt from that part of 40-B, but Warwick has now given up its effort, and sent letters of thanks to selectboards of other towns that supported the effort, including Wendell.

Repairs Needed

Aldrich read from a recent insurance inspection that enumerated corrections the town should make to its facilities, including bulges in the flooring of the office building that could be a tripping hazard, and steps on the north side of the library that need repair. The report says the following: the highway garage should have a roof over the fuel pumps, the doorways to the furnace room in the highway garage should be kept clear, and equipment bays should have a dust and exhaust extraction system, which is an expense the selectboard was not ready to commit to.

Aldrich relayed a report that a pole of the recycling and transfer station fence had been damaged by vandals. Repairing that is another job for the road crew.

While he was reviewing the bills selectboard members must sign, Pooser commented on a \$900 charge for programming the handicapped accessible computer voting machine used in the town election. This software must be updated for every town vote. He suggested it would be more cost effective for a person to be available to assist voters who need help standing to fill out a paper ballot, but Keller pointed out the voters' privacy would be compromised.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD**Draft Precinct Map Approved**

BY JANEL NOCKLEBY

While Montague town meeting members rejected the idea of reducing the number of precincts in Montague from six to three at the May 7th annual town meeting, there is still a need for an updated precinct map, now that the 2010 census numbers are in.

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau said Tuesday that each precinct, by state law, has to contain roughly the same number of people, so the current draft of the six precincts' map shows just a little bit of shifting of voters from Precinct 6 into Precinct 4, with some voters also shifting from Precinct 3 into Precinct 2.

The selectboard approved the draft in principle, and a new official map from the state will be available in a couple of weeks for final selectboard approval. The updated map will not need a town meeting vote.

Fairbrother Chair

The selectboard approval of motions had a slightly different rhythm this last Tuesday though. While Pat Allen won her fifth selectboard term unopposed on Monday, her first motion of the night was to appoint Mark Fairbrother as chairperson of the selectboard, which Fairbrother and Chris Boutwell approved.

Boutwell is now the selectboard clerk, relieving Fairbrother of those duties.

While the selectboard got used to the new pattern of who makes a motion, who seconds it, and who

asks if there is any further discussion, there were no surprises with the reorganization of the board. Everyone said "aye."

A new WMECO utility pole off North Leverett road was approved to allow the utility an alternate backfeed option to get power from Amherst, in the event of a power outage in the Montague or Leverett, up to the Judd Wire facility on Turnpike Road.

The new selectboard chair signed an application agreement with the Hampshire Council of Governments Municipal Aggregation group, to allow for (hopefully) cheaper electricity rates in the town of Montague for residents and businesses. The town meeting vote on May 7th in support of the measure allowed the selectboard to approve the contract.

Solar Landfill

The board backed town planner Walter Ramsey's grant application for a feasibility study to move forward on the idea of installing solar power generation on the town owned former landfill and burn dump off of Turnpike Road. Ramsey has been a proponent of a combination solar park and industrial park in the 163-acre area; town meeting recently approved spending \$58,000 on pre-development work for the project.

There is a newly approved summer selectboard schedule. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be May 23rd. After

that, meetings will be held every other week until September 12th. The July 5th meeting will be on a Tuesday, due to the holiday.

The selectboard signed a letter of approval to apply for grant money for a MASS DOT initiative for tri-state 2011 bike facilities and a Connecticut River scenic byway map, including the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire.

And in other news, there will be a joint hearing between the selectboard and the board of health on railroad noise and pollution complaints in the Millers Falls and Lake Pleasant areas on Tuesday, May 24th at the Great Falls Discovery Center's Great Hall.

Susan Levine has resigned from the Montague Cultural Council, citing "life got too busy," and the selectboard approved Jeri Bannister to fill the rest of Levine's term on the council.

Another letter of complaint from Peter Golrick was received by town hall, this one requesting public access to annual performance reviews of town building inspector David Jensen and police chief Ray Zukowski. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio explained to the selectboard that the work performance records of these two town employees were "not subject to full evaluation by the selectboard." See MONTAGUE pg 10

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$8.00 PER WEEK (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Domestic, Asian & European Ron Kelley, Owner



Eagle Automotive
147 2nd Street, Turners Falls
(413) 824-8111

Engine Light
ABS/Brake Light
SRS/Air Bag Light

Complete Car and Truck Repair

EDWARDS TREE SERVICE
Matthew Edwards
Certified Arborist

Tree Climbing Specialist • Pruning And Removals
Stump Grinding • Practicing Fine Arboriculture
Residential / Commercial / Municipal
60 Ft. Aerial Lift • Brush Chipping
Fully Insured With Workers Comp. • Insurance and Liability
WWW.MATTEDWARDSTREE.COM
Wendell, MA
Serving Hampshire And Franklin Counties

413-325-7823 or 978-544-7452

Dan's Veggies & Camp Wood & Poplar Mt. Maple
Northfield Rd. (Rt 63N) Erving
Maple Syrup & Maple Cream For Sale!
Call 423-3242 for more information

Coming Soon: Fresh Lettuce, Swiss Chard, Spinach and Radishes!

Now Serving



• Homemade Ice Cream
• Daily Specials
• Fresh Salads
• Delicious Burgers

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER
7 days a week
Route 2, Gill • 413-863-8210

\$250 CLOSING COST CREDIT
Expires June 30, 2011

MetLife MetLife Home Loans

Credit at Closing Toward Closing Costs
on Any Loan Originated by Tim Prevost

TIM PREVOST - Mortgage Consultant
413-773-8984 tprevost@metlife.com

All loans subject to approval. Certain conditions and fees apply. Mortgage financing provided by MetLife Home Loans, a division of MetLife Bank, N.A. Equal Housing Lender. ©2008 METLIFE, INC. PEANUTS © United Feature Syndicate, Inc. L09095294[exp0909][All States][DIC]

CARSENSE AUTOMOTIVE
Your Automotive Answer

CHECK ENGINE LIGHT EXPERTS

TELE: (413) 772-8862 **U-HAUL**

409 DEERFIELD STREET • GREENFIELD

SKIP'S ROADSIDE DINER
POLISH, ITALIAN & AMERICAN FARE
Open 10:30 AM - 3:00 PM Daily • Closed Sundays
Boston Globe States:

Best Polish Food this side of Krakow!
24 French King Hwy @ TF Bridge
863-9991



Leslie Matilainen, LMHC
Holistic Psychotherapy
creative & expressive techniques

children, adults, families, groups

(508) 451-2403
located in Millers Falls
LKM9092@YAHOO.COM

on Facebook

Since 1895

On the Common
Greenfield, Massachusetts
Turners Falls, Massachusetts



McCarty FUNERAL HOME
www.mccartyfuneralhomes.com

(413) 774-4808
John C. Davis
Director

U-28 Superintendent Strong on Management, Needs Improvement on Communication



DETMOLD PHOTO

U #28 Superintendent Joan Wickman

BY TANYA CUSHMAN

LEVERETT - The Union 28 Joint Supervisory Committee, meeting in Leverett on May 10th to evaluate superintendent Joan Wickman, found the superintendent to be strong in management, but weak in communication.

Union 28 is the 100-plus-year-old superintendency union of four elementary schools: Erving, Swift River, Leverett and Shutesbury. It is unique in the Commonwealth for sending students to three different middle and high schools, with Erving sending students to Gill-Montague for upper school, Swift River sending to Mahar, and Leverett and Shutesbury sending to the Amherst-Pelham region.

Committee members praised superintendent Wickman for her overall management skills; she is well organized, efficient and flexible, has a good sense of humor, but is also serious, and has the ability to listen to comments and follow through on suggestions. Some committee members were pleased with Wickman's fiscal management as demonstrated through her ability to develop and execute budgets with no overruns.

However, Leverett school committee chair Farshid Hajir said the Leverett finance committee and selectboard were unhappy with the form in which the budget has been presented in recent years and recommended that the new Union 28 finance director, Michael Kociela, revamp the format before the next budget cycle and also make sure to present the budget to relevant town boards earlier in the season. In Wendell, it was noted, a member of the finance committee makes a point of attending every school committee meeting to keep the town informed.

Weakness in communication, and the 'branding' of Union 28, were cited as areas where the superintendent needs to make improvements. Wickman attends many school functions, but few people appear to know who she is. It was suggested that maybe a photo of her in the *Montague Reporter* would help.

Wickman was asked to speak more at events she attends, but she replied her intention is to support the students and staff, not call attention to herself. However, as the 'education leader' of the schools, some on the committee

felt that her presence should be known, at least so people start to recognize her.

As for effective leadership, Michael DeChiara of Shutesbury commented that during last year's evaluation, morale problems and lack of cohesion in the Shutesbury Elementary School were brought up, and that he had not noticed any improvements in these areas since. Hajir noted that some parents, including a school committee member, had decided to remove their children from the Leverett school and that ultimately this problem rests with Wickman - as education leader, she needs to take responsibility for all that happens in the schools.

Superintendent Wickman said she would be glad to improve the Union's lines of communication with the member towns. She said each time she receives information pertinent to the towns, she sends it out to different boards and board members, but it is hard for her to know if all the bases are covered or if board members in the various towns have changed. DeChiara said he believes the responsibility of each school committee chair is to make sure that all members of a board are informed, so at least the school committee chairs should be on her list to receive pertinent information.

Additionally, it was decided that Wickman should take the initiative and contact the five town administrators on matters she considers important to the towns. Wickman expressed the hope that administrators will likewise inform her of matters considered important to the schools.

Before the evaluation, the committee had to decide whether to proceed in an open meeting or executive session. Two opposing views on the matter were dis-

see U-28 pg 10

REPORT FROM THE WENDELL SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Swift River School Building Repairs Pass Unanimously

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

About 20 Wendell citizens came out on a cold rainy Monday evening, May 16th, for a special town meeting with a warrant of only three articles, two of which passed unanimously.

The third article was passed over on the recommendation of the finance committee, effectively defeating it.

Article One rescinded the vote of the 2010 annual town meeting that took \$500,000 from stabilization to pay down the debt owed for the new library and town office building.

As it happens, the town can only pay off that loan early if it pays the entire amount owed. The finance committee intends to build up the loan repayment fund and do just that once reimbursement from the state for Article Two is received.

For now, returning \$500,000 to the stabilization fund allowed voters to support Article Two, for Green Repairs at the Swift River School, taking \$608,782 from stabilization fund to pay for Wendell's share of renovations to the school building, shared with the town of New Salem. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has stimulus money it needs to spend or return to the federal government by December 31st, 2011, and the town's Green Repair committee asked for this special town meeting to keep the school renovation project moving. Wendell and New Salem will pay the costs up front, and the MSBA will repay the towns for up to 69.7% of eligible work.

Finance committee chair Michael Idoine said the town was looking to the MSBA to reimburse \$548,563 of the \$608,782 Wendell is taking from stabiliza-

tion for the Green Repair project at Swift River. The exact amount will depend on how much of each component of the total construction project the MSBA approves.

School principal Sheila Hunter said the boiler at the school is 36 years old, and the flat roof on the addition has not been replaced since the addition was built in 1985. She said each time the roof is patched a new leak shows up nearby.

Finance committee member Doug Tanner said roofing materials have improved since 1985.

The roof and the boiler are the two largest items on the list of repairs. After voters were satisfied with the details provided by the finance committee and school personnel, the article passed unanimously.

Article three would have taken \$2,000 from stabilization to pay for the cost of a scope of work for improvements to the playground at the library. Voters agreed to pass it over after Margo Culley, speaking for the Friends of the Wendell library, said the Friends supported the improvements and had found other ways to pay for the scope of work. Financing the playground renovation will be discussed at the annual town meeting, which will take place on June 6th at 7 p.m.

EXCAVATING

Thatching • Aerating
and Slice Seeding
Fencing - Patios - Walks -
Walls Installed - Tree Work
Loam - Compost - Mulch

81 Years of Combined Experience

DEMERS
LANDSCAPING
413-863-3652

DILLON CHEVROLET INC.
54 Main Street
P.O. Box 729
Greenfield, MA 01302

Avalanche • Colorado • Suburban • Tahoe • Equinox • Traverse • Vans

Johnny Austin Sales Representative
Bus. Phone (413) 773-3678
Fax (413) 774-5746

**CREATIVE HAIRCUTTING
PERMS & COLORS**
Men, Women & Children

CASITINE'S HAIR CREATIONS

Gift Certificates Available
863 - 2022

74 PROSPECT ST. TURNERS FALLS

HARTWOOD TREE SERVICE
Licensed and Insured

Christopher J. Morin, owner
7 Kimberly Lane
Turners Falls
413-522-6119

EXCELLENCE IN TREE CARE

Montague Mini Storage | Mike Fuller - owner

The Best Hiding Place in Town

48 Randall Road | 413-863-4680

**Bryan G. Hobbs
Remodeling Contractor**

Blown Cellulose Insulation • Airsealing • Energy Audits
Replacement Doors & Windows • Roofing • Siding
Home Repairs • Spray Foam Insulation

Call Now for Free Roofing Estimate
413-659-0250

Bryan G. Hobbs
94 South Prospect St.
Millers Falls

Great Rates, Fully Insured!

Greenfield Co-operative Bank
A Great Financial Partner

BestLocalBank.com
Reach All Locations 772-0293
Greenfield • Northfield • Sunderland

MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER SIF

Carol's Beauty Nook
29 G Street, Turners Falls
Open Tue, Thurs, Fri
Ann Bagnell & Carol Demers

Gift Certificates Available
413-863-2888

**DOLAN & DOLAN
ATTORNEYS AT LAW**

174 AVENUE A
TURNERS FALLS MASSACHUSETTS
01376
413-863-3133

PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

Overwhelmed by stuff? Try Franklin County's Most Convenient

IN-TOWN SELF STORAGE
UPPER END OF WELLS STREET, GREENFIELD
413-883-7323

Easy in-town location
Secure 24-hour access

VARIETY OF SIZES THE BEST PRICES

OFFICE AT 50 CHAPMAN STREET, GREENFIELD, MA
Contractors, Flea Marketers, Tradeshow Vendors and Artists encouraged to inquire

from **CEMETERY** pg 1
few years ago to mow the brush, and selectboard chair Mark Fairbrother has been back a number of times since to provide what volunteer maintenance he can, the cemetery is easy to miss and nearly hidden in the overgrowth behind tumbled stone walls.

Massachusetts has a law, Chapter 115, Section 9, regarding the care of veterans' graves. That law states that the selectboard of every town in the Commonwealth shall appoint a resident, who shall be a veteran, to be the veterans' graves officer, to clear "weeds and other unseemly growth from said graves," and also to "cause to be placed on such veterans' graves a flag of the United States on every Memorial Day."

Al Cummings is the veterans' graves officer in Montague, and he flags the private cemeteries in Turners Falls. But when he was reached by phone this week, Cummings said he did not know where the Dry Hill Cemetery was located. That's not surprising. Few people in Montague seem to know where the town's cemetery on Dry Hill is located, and those who do generally despair of reaching it.

For years, the landowner who owns the fields and hills surrounding Dry Hill Cemetery, Jim Senn, kept the town-owned Dry Hill Road barricaded from public use, with a cable stretched across the public right of way, and No Trespassing signs posted on trees around the cemetery. After a legal battle between the town and Senn, that cable came down in about 2006, but public access to the cemetery is no easier now than it was then. The historical roadway has been obliterated at the intersection of Wendell Road, between Senn's house and shop. The land is graded steeply upward on Senn's pastureland and fields now, former boundary stone walls are long removed, and only from the cemetery up to the Dry Hill Crossroad can the original road still be followed.

But it is not a road any regular vehicle could traverse; and most four wheel drive vehicles would be unable to travel it either, in its current condition. The culvert just above the cemetery is completely washed out, with a fast running stream crossing a six foot wide, three foot deep gulch in the



DETMOLD PHOTO

Nearly a hundred stones - many broken, some with saplings growing up among them - mark the graves of the inhabitants of Dry Hill Cemetery. The town of Montague owned burial ground is inaccessible to descendants, and the graves of veterans buried there are untended as Memorial Day approaches.

roadbed now.

Who will care for these veterans' graves now?

"It's really a deplorable situation," SanSoucie told Montague town meeting on May 7th. "We seem to get nowhere. We pay lawyers. We run into a stone wall every time."

"When we first had it all surveyed," about five or six years ago, recalled Montague DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron this week, "we planned to put in a simple dirt road," from Wendell Road up to the cemetery. At the time, Bergeron gave an optimistic estimate to the selectboard of the ease with which this project could be accomplished, and calculated it would cost about \$80,000 to achieve public vehicular access to the public cemetery on the public right of way.

Then he talked to Senn.

"Jim Senn told me any stone that got into his fields and damaged his equipment," from runoff on the steeply pitched grade, "he would be sending his bill to the town," said the DPW super.

Reached by phone, Senn said he wouldn't mind people walking up the historical roadway, which

runs between his house and shop, to reach the cemetery, but he would prefer it if people drove around via the Cross Road. He said it was the town's fault the culvert below the Cross Road intersection with Dry Hill was washed out, but that fixing that wash-out and maintaining the Cross Road would be the cheapest way in.

That route, which features steep areas of solid ledge protruding near East Chestnut Hill, is about a mile and quarter long, and had streams of running water crossing it this week, even on its level stretches.

Five years ago, with the threat of legal action from Senn still hanging in the air, Bergeron revised his approach, and said it would take a paved road, with culverts and drainage pipe, to provide vehicular access up to the cemetery from Wendell Road, a quarter mile distance, and his cost estimate tripled, to around \$240,000 - \$250,000 today.

Although Montague, like other towns in the Commonwealth, got an unexpected state windfall in the form of a 29% increase in Chapter 90

aid this year, Bergeron said it would take about half of what he had available in state aid for roads and bridges to build that kind of access road up to a cemetery no one even visits now.

Yet, Montague has a "legal and moral obligation" to restore access and maintain the Dry Hill Cemetery, as town administrator Frank Abbondanzio told the selectboard.

Trouble is, he made that statement on August 30th, 2004.

That was the day Lawrence and Ursula Ellis came to the selectboard to complain they were unable to visit their grandfather's grave on Dry Hill.

The Ellises are both dead now. Fifteen years earlier, the selectboard received a letter from a Father Constantine (Charles Christopher Arnold) of Heliopolis, Egypt, who wrote that he had, "visited the cemetery that used to be on the estate of my great grandparents Alured Benjamin and Miranda Shufelt Anderson of Dry Hill, Millers Falls this past summer. I had wished especially to visit and pray at the tomb of my paternal grandmother Maud Alice Cooke

Arnold (1889-1914) which I was last able to visit in 1971. I think you might imagine my stupefaction to discover that in 19 years all trace of my grandmother's grave had disappeared!"

Father Constantine's letter continued, asking who was responsible for the upkeep of the Dry Hill Cemetery, and whether a diagram of the graves there existed. There is no record of whether his letter was answered.

"Hark! Angels whisper me away

*My partner dear, adieu
In the sweet realms of endless day*

We will our loves renew."

So reads the epitaph of Eliza Anderson, who died in 1840 at the age of 36, and was buried on Dry Hill. Her grave is but one of about 100 marked by stones still visible amid the bearberry bush, birch saplings and brambles on this high and lonely spot. It was perhaps wise for these departed to imagine reuniting with their loved ones in the sweet hereafter, for it seems less and less likely, as time goes by, that their relatives will ever be able to visit them here.



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$12.00 PER WEEK. (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666

mww **ROCKET FUSION**
Montague WebWorks . com

Now powered by RocketFusion

413.320.5336 info@montaguewebworks.com

make the web work for your business

Smart Computer

PC / MAC Repair
Virus Removal
Networks & 'The Cloud'

Residential
& Small Business

OPEN MON-FRI 9-6, SAT 9-5

345 Main St.
Greenfield, MA
413-475-3727

MYSMARTCOMPUTER.COM

FULL LINE OF
New & Re-manufactured
TONER & INK JET
CARTRIDGES

As Good If Not Better
Prices Than The
Big Box Stores

Repair Service
on Printers &
Copiers

BAKER 310 Main Street, Greenfield
Office Supply 413-774-2345

SOLAR STORE
SOLAR ELECTRIC

Solar Store of Greenfield
2 Fiske Ave, Greenfield • 413-772-3122
www.solarstoreofgreenfield.com • Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5

HOPE & OLIVE

SERVING HOME GROWN
FARM-INSPIRED Food & Drink

44 HOPE STREET, GREENFIELD, MA 01301
PHONE 413 774 3150

Mary Lou Emond
Certified Residential Specialist

COHN & COMPANY
Real Estate Agency

117 Main Street • PO Box 638
Greenfield, MA 01302-0638

413-773-1149 x142 • HOME: 413-863-4568
EMAIL: MARYLOU@COHNANDCOMPANY.COM

EYES ON OWLS



Marcia Wilson with an Eurasian Eagle Owl

BY DAVID DETMOLD
GREAT FALLS - A tense air of expectancy filled the room, as more than 50 young people and their parents, along with a scattering of others sat staring fixedly at six wooden boxes lined up at the front of the Great Hall of the Discovery Center on Saturday.

Saturday was the 108th birthday of the National Wildlife System, with its 544 refugees from the Alaskan tundra to the Hawaiian atolls, and it was also national Migratory Bird Day. But the kids were interested in only one kind of bird - the kind that flies silently through the woods at night with all seeing eyes, hunt-

ing mice and other hapless creatures that fall prey to its outstretched talons.

They were there to see the owls, and soon enough, six owls came out of their boxes to see them.

First out of the box was an Eastern Screech Owl, less than a foot tall, and though it would no doubt be offended to hear it said, as cute a little critter as you could wish to meet. The screech owl peered backwards and forwards at the crowd peering at her, turning her head 270 degrees without moving her body as she perched on the glove of her handler, Marcia Wilson.

Wilson explained that owls can't move their eyes, but they are able to turn their heads incredibly far in either direction to make up for it. All the owls that migrated to the Discovery Center for the Eyes on Owls presentation that day were either disabled (most had been hit by cars or trucks and nursed back to health, with broken or twisted wings) or were born into captivity, and hence were unable to be set free in the wild.

Wilson said screech owls usually live in holes in trees, or in crevices of some kind, and they don't really screech. Their call resembles more the whinny of a horse than the hoot of an owl as we commonly think of it. Screech owls like to eat moths, and june bugs, and salamanders, but they would not turn up their noses, or rather their nares, at a bite-sized mouse.

Next up on the glove, a Northern Saw-whet owl, even shorter in stature than the screech owl, with the same surprised stare. The saw-whet emits a repetitive call that sounds like 'Hoop!' during courtship season (March through May) and otherwise mostly keeps silent. The saw-whet owl's head seems overly large for its small body, and the great round circles of radial feathers around the eyes bring even more emphasis to these bright yellow orbs. Saw-whets consider shrews, mice and voles fine dining, and subsist almost entirely on small mammals.

Wilson removed the next, larger bird, from the next, larger wooden box - a Barred Owl - so named for the stripes of feathers running like bars from shoulder

to shoulder. Barred owls, quite common in New England, give the classic eight note call that resembles "Who Cooks for You?" repeated twice, with a hoarse descent on the final note.

Unlike the other owls in the program, the barred owl has brown eyes, which are boldly accentuated by the round pattern of feathers coming together in a peak above the owl's beak.

Everyone got very quiet as Wilson showed how the whorled pattern of feathers around the barred owl's eyes helped to funnel sound into the owl's ears. She moved aside the feathers on each side of the barred owl's face to show the narrow ear openings. Owls use keen eyesight as well as keen hearing to pinpoint their prey on nocturnal hunts.

The fierce, fixed stare of a Great Horned Owl confronted us as she opened the next box. This bird is sometimes called the Tiger of the Woods, but bears no other resemblance to the famous golfer. Wilson told the children, "He's not a touchy-feely kind of guy." Great horned owls have no natural enemies, they can exert 200 pounds per square inch of pressure with their talons, and they can see in almost total darkness. If you are a deer mouse in the forest at night, think twice about venturing from your burrow when this bird is close at hand. Indeed, if you are a house cat, an opossum, or a woodchuck, you might consider the joys of interior decorating rather than the virtues of an evening stroll when a Great horned owl is near.

Snowy owls pass through New England in winter, but they are nesting now in the Arctic Tundra, where their white feathers flecked with brown

provide a natural camouflage. They give a whistling, cackling call. The one that emerged from the second largest box on Saturday only pretended to settle on his handler's glove for a moment; once free, he attempted an explosive flight, thrilling the spectators, until his jess and leash brought him back to hand. Then he stood and stared with wide open beak in an attitude of complete astonishment at the equally surprised children staring back at him.

There are 225 kinds of owls in the world, but arguably the largest of all is the Eurasian Eagle Owl, and one of these visited the Discovery Center with his lesser cousins on Saturday. Weighing in at eight and a half pounds, with bright orange eyes, this owl was truly a sight to see. Characteristic owl calls are fairly well known to most humans; but what sound does a room full of humans make when they first catch sight of a Eurasian Eagle Owl?

They say, "Who-o-o-ah!" in one long, awe-inspired exhalation of amazement. That sound filled the Great Hall on Saturday, at the Eyes on Owls presentation.



DETMOLD PHOTOS

Snowy Owl

Your Local STIHL Dealer
 413-367-2481

Sirum Equipment Co., Inc.

Sales, Parts & Service
 310 Federal Street (Route 63)
 Montague
 Weekdays: 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

magpie
 woodfired pizzeria

- Pizzas
- Entrees
- Salads
- Full Bar & Patio

magpiepizza.com
 21 Bank Row, Gfd.
 413-475-3570

CopyCat PRINT SHOP

We Specialize In Impossible Deadlines!

Diemand Farm

- Farm Fresh Eggs
- Whole Roasting Chicken
- Pot Pies
- Home Made Soups
- Desserts

Products Vary Weekly

Farm Store Hours: Monday - Saturday, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Closed Sundays

Mormon Hollow Road, Wendell • 978-544-3806

Dennis L. Booska
 Dennis L. Booska, Jr.

Phone & Fax
 413-863-3690

Booska's Flooring

169 Avenue A, Turners Falls

Member
 The Flooring Network.

Tile Lino Carpet

GREENFIELD@COPYCATPRINTSHOP.COM
 413-774-3500

Please visit our website for printing tips and online services:
copycatprintshop.com

UP TO THE MINUTE TECHNOLOGY
 OLD-FASHIONED PERSONAL SERVICE

Gardens

Llani Davidson
 Home Vegetable Garden
 Consultation and Installation

P.O. Box 35
 Montague MA 01351
 413-367-0047
localgardensforchange.com

for Change
 Fresh Food Forever!

Geri Johnson, Realtor
 ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, SRES
 413-863-9736 • GeriJohnson@Realtor.com

Don't settle for less
 Choose a CRS (Certified Residential Specialist)

Only 4% of all REALTORS hold this prestigious designation. The CRS is my badge of expertise and your shield of assurance. Put your trust in the best to get the job done. Whether buying, selling or referring, always choose:

GERI JOHNSON, CRS 30 years of experience.

Gerri Johnson & Associates REALTORS
 66 French King Hwy., Gill
 (413) 863-9736 • WWW.GJAR.COM

Kubota Your Local Kubota Dealer
 413-367-2481

Sirum Equipment Co., Inc.

Sales, Parts & Service
 310 Federal Street (Route 63)
 Montague
 Weekdays: 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

U-28 from page 7

cussed; a legal advisory from the Mass Association of School Committees said the meeting must be open per open meeting laws, and advice from the Union's counsel advised that an executive session as employees have the right to privacy. The supervisory committee decided to openly evaluate the superintendent without writing anything down, but to create the actual evaluation document in executive session.

EKSTROM from page 1

Gill, fresh from her victory in Monday's election, was tapped for vice chair, both on a 5-4 vote that seemed to epitomize the divide that has characterized the school committee over the past year.

After reading his resignation letter on Tuesday, Ladd went on to say he had spoken to Ekstrom, the district's former director of special education and student services, about taking the position of interim superintendent at the Gill-Montague schools. He said Ekstrom was interested in that post, and he recommended the school committee consider hiring her.

Some school committee members expressed concerns because Ekstrom, when she resigned last June, left saying she needed to be closer to home and family. Ladd said those issues had been resolved.

Ekstrom lives in Rutland, MA.

A motion was unanimously approved that the GMRSD consider hiring Ekstrom as interim superintendent, with the understanding Ekstrom would first come to speak to the school committee about her plans.

The resignation of the superintendent has led to concern in the community, expressed in emails, phone calls, and corkboard posts,

Later in the evening, the Union 28 strategic development subcommittee reported on the status of the survey they are creating to find out what people know and don't know about Union 28. They are trying to keep the survey short enough so people will actually fill it out.

Following the survey update, Farshid Hajir, chair of the Leverett school committee, reported on the status of the state regionalization commission, of which he is a member. Bill 1079

since there are top administrative positions presently unfilled in the district, including principalships at Gill Elementary and Montague Elementary, in addition to the superintendent's position.

In an interview prior to the meeting, Ladd said he was confident he could fill both elementary school principal positions before he left on June 30th. He said there are screening committees in place at both schools made up of school staff and parents, and he is currently interviewing candidates.

Ladd said he believes he has plenty of time to fill both positions, and he may be ready to announce his choice for principal at Gill Elementary by the next school committee meeting on May 24th.

In the appointment of school committee chair and vice chair, Langknecht won out over Kristin Boyle, and Brown was chosen over Joyce Phillips. Boyle was re-elected as secretary by unanimous vote. Peter Roy-Clark, current district treasurer, was confirmed by the school committee unanimously to continue in that position. No decision was made on who the assistant treasurer would be, now that Sorrel Hatch has left the committee, leaving that post vacant. The committee will wait until next meeting to pick an assistant treasurer.

is now before the statehouse, and it states that every district under 1000 students will be evaluated by the commission. A report will then be sent to the district, which will have 60 days to respond. Then, the commission has 30 days to follow up. "Then it gets fuzzy," said Hajir, who added he is not worried at the moment about the state forcing regionalization on small districts.

BROWN from page 1

while Crosby began her response by saying, "The starting point is not what the towns can afford, it's the quality of education we want our children to have."

On Monday night, Brown reacted to her win saying, "Thanks to all the voters for such great support. I will work for educational excellence, and to raise the bar and challenge every student with higher expectations."

Brown will take her seat amid

MONTAGUE from page 6

board," and therefore were not a part of selectboard public records. A letter was signed by the selectboard and sent to Golrick to that effect.

Dog Hearing

Chris Roberts and Sergeant Charles Dodge came before the selectboard on Tuesday for a dog complaint hearing, regarding Roberts' barking dogs. The main culprit, "the yapper," as described by Millers Falls resident Roberts, is a toy fox terrier who is quite excitable when left outside unsupervised, and neighbors have complained about the barking problem off and on since 2006.

Recently, Roberts has had a full time job in Chicago, and he has been commuting back and forth from there to Millers Falls via airplane, making it difficult for him to personally make sure the problem is addressed. To compensate for his complicated life, Roberts has since implemented a plan of surveillance

"Incentives for regionalization work well; mandates for regionalization don't," said Hajir, who noted that the state does not have the money to pursue regionalization right now, so incentives are lacking.

The ongoing inquiry into who has the authority to set retiree benefits for Union 28 employees, which are shared by the member towns, was the next focus of the

administrative upheaval at the district, as superintendent Carl Ladd announced his resignation late last week, after two years at the helm of the GMRSD. Ladd recently accepted the resignation of Montague Elementary School principal Elizabeth Musgrave, who cited "irreconcilable differences with the superintendent" in stepping down. Ladd also terminated former Hillcrest Elementary School principal Chris Jutres' position, along with

discussion. An attorney for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) told superintendent Joan Wickman that they are working on the question and intend to issue an advisory soon. Such advisories are rarely issued, and Wickman said the DESE is proceeding cautiously as the resolution will affect every school

see U-28 page 16

the administrative posts occupied by former TFHS principal Jeff Kenney and elementary curriculum coordinator Chip Wood, even as he works to hire a replacement for retiring Gill Elementary principal Rita Detweiler. This leaves Turners High principal Donna Fitzpatrick almost alone among the top district administrators continuing in position heading into the next school year.



video cameras, housemates, house sitters, an alternate home for the yapper in Orange when no house sitter is available, and more backup dog monitoring emergency contacts.

Sometimes the terrier will bark at a leaf or a squirrel, said Roberts, so it was quite unfortunate for the neighbors that his house sitter accidentally left this one dog, on Federal Street, outside and then left the residence one night in April.

Roberts was unable to contact his house sitter by phone that night, so the "high pitched" barking continued all night long.

Since that incident, Roberts has implemented a policy of the yapper not being allowed at his Millers Falls residence if there is no one present on the property (the terrier will visit Orange instead), and many more backup contacts so that the barking will cease sooner. Roberts explained that within a year he hopes to move his household to the

Chicago area permanently.

Dodge requested that Roberts provide all of those emergency contact phone numbers to the police department so the police could be able to help make sure the dog is quieted in a timely manner should an incident happen again. Dodge described the problem as a legitimate complaint, that sometimes the dog is found to be barking outside at two or three in the morning, and that there have been many calls of complaint since 2006.

In response, the selectboard voted to have the issue revisited at the June 6th selectboard meeting to see if any progress has been made, and they required that Roberts have a muzzle placed on the terrier whenever it is outside at the Millers Falls property, even for a quick potty break.

Roberts agreed, and Allen stated the neighbors will be notified of the current resolution, so they are able to comment on June 6th as needed.




411 MAIN ROAD, GILL
OPEN 7 DAYS, 8 AM - 7 PM
413-863-2297
WWW.UPINNGIL.COM

UPINNGIL

Food You Need from the Land You Love

It Figures!

Kate McGrath, MBA
Accountant
413-768-9095



For all your accounting needs
Accountant Specializing in QuickBooks
Now accepting new accounting clients

AUTO RATES GOING UP?

Count on us for LOW RATES!

SINCE 1888
A.H. Rist
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

413.863.4373 www.ahrst.com
159 Ave A Turners Falls

Good Dirt Pottery Studio



38 Main Street, Montague
413-367-0155
www.gooddirtpottery.com

TNT PRODUCTIONS
DJ & KARAOKE SPECIALISTS
We Know Entertainment



Steven Therien
413-522-6035
www.tntproj.net

- * Free Consultation
- * State of the Art Sound
- * Best Music for all Ages and Occasions
- * Rental Karaoke System

Pipione's
SPORT SHOP

- Fishing supplies; Live bait
- Fishing & Hunting Licenses
- Paintball & CO₂ Refills
- Guns & Ammo

Open 7 am 7 days a week
101 Ave A, Turners 414.863.4246



mww
Montague WebWorks . com

make the web work for your business

michael muller
owner
413.320.5336

28 Center Street
montague, ma 01351
info@montaguewebworks.com

COUTURE BROS.

Celebrating 101st Anniversary

Professional Painting & Decorating
Contractor - Retailer

www.couturebros.com
187 Avenue A Turners Falls, MA • 413-863-4346

Community Yoga & WELLNESS CENTER

affordable classes morning, noon and night
free class every Sunday 4-5 pm

change your body... change your mind... change your life

beginners welcome
www.Community-Yoga.com
413 774-4700



ELEVEN WAYS TO WALK *Fourth in a Series of Walks around West Gill*



HASTINGS FARM OVERLOOK
BY P. H. CROSBY

Suddenly, there are flowers everywhere! Despite the fact the town mowers have passed, eating up the trash and obliterating the poison ivy that creeps stubbornly forward every year into the border, there are still plenty of flowers to be found at the roadside as I head north on West Gill from the corner of Center Road.

This is a walk that must be taken early, at this time of year no later than 5:30 a.m., and weekends are better than weekdays. One of Gill's major thoroughfares (said only half-facetiously), West Gill Road at just about any other time of day can be a cacophony of trailer trucks, delivery trucks, pick-up trucks, SUVs, school buses, Harleys, scooters, and just plain commuter cars hell-bent for work.

For those who don't like Route 91, or whose business requires stops along the way, the road is a pass-through from Turners and Gill to Bernardston, Vernon, Northfield, Winchester and points north.

But at the crack of dawn, on an early May morning, nothing (as the old song goes) can be finer. Every apple tree – craggy and wild, pruned and domestic – is gushing fragrant petals.

A roadside flower I don't know the name of is scattered along the roadway, small leafy towers capped with soft white blossoms waving in the breeze, joined by bluets and wild strawberry and the crisply gilded umbel of golden Alexander – not to be confused with tansy, which will bloom later.

Farther along, wild grasses will add a cranberry note to the

spreading east to the swamp, a long low mist hanging below the tops of trees in the bordering forest, and the horizon rich with pink and gold.

The early morning mist rises slowly and solely from where there is water, so channels of moisture are traced by long, wavering paths of white above the meadow, following each little stream, each small ditch and gully, then swirling around a kettle pond, another glacial feature, before vanishing into the mother mist hovering in the swamp. At the near edge of the swamp, a silhouette of small trees and shrubs – aspen, birch, sumac – stands out against the fog like a row of cutouts on black paper.

On the left, at the foot of a steep, wooded hill, only partially cleared for pasture, is a

carved stone post, inscribed HWB. That would be the start of Hastings land.

I don't think I am imagining a memory of Warren B. and a team of horses pulling logs out of that woods, a place too steep for most tractors back then. That would have been the 1960s. But this land has been farmed continuously by the Hastings family for much longer than that, since at least the early 1800s, probably earlier.

And it's still being farmed. A small herd of glossy black Holstein heifers come to greet us, looking oh-so-friendly but ducking away if you raise a hand to touch a wet, freckled nose. They are really just curious about the walker and the dog and have no interest in being petted.

Soon they'll be bred and sold for dairying. These are their carefree teenage years.

Past the Hastings farm, at a small white walnut on the right (dying but still picturesque), is the turnaround point. From here you can look south over the old, well-kept house and barns, the steep incline of the back pasture leading to another pasture on top, dotted with more cows.

As you walk back, a knoll comes into view with a knot of small trees on a little crest of hill in the lower pasture south of the house, and a small creek gurgling past the foot on its way to the swamp. Further down the road, back along the ditches that have been dug for drainage in the odd cleavage of this hilly piece of land, are Canada geese, a heron, and a single turkey – must be a Tom. Coyotes cross

here as well. Once I got a really good look at one that for some reason was really taking its time.

But the traffic is heating up now. It is amazing how fast some people will drive by a middle-aged roadside walker with bad feet and a small unleashed (albeit well-trained) dog. I think half of them don't even see us, they are so focused on work, the radio or their own preoccupations.

People didn't used to be able to drive this fast on this road, not when it was a rolling, curving, tree-lined route that followed the landscape naturally, instead of the broad belligerent racetrack it has become. Yes, there are probably fewer accidents than when I was a kid. But is the definition of a 'safe' road one on which you drive twice as fast as you used to without getting killed?

As always, there are winners and losers in these musings on growth, development and change. The last farmhouse I pass – once another early Hastings farm, I believe – definitely came out a winner when this rambling country road got straightened. These neighbors now sit well back from the busy road, serene and safe, and their glorious front yard maples have never had to be cut into to protect power lines.

As I return home, the sun is well over the horizon. But since I left early, it is now behind me instead of blinding me as I walk. The mist has turned into a long creamy blanket of fog well above the small tree line. Soon it will disappear altogether. There is nothing quite like walks at dawn.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Larceny, Vandalism, Vehicle Theft, Break In

- Monday, 5/9**
8:14 a.m. Larceny at Covenant Church on Bridge Street. Report taken.
2:40 p.m. Vandalism at Turners Falls High School. Report taken.
- Tuesday, 5/10**
12:23 p.m., 12:25 p.m., 3:40 p.m. and 3:46 p.m. Neighbor disturbance on Old Sunderland Road. Peace restored and services rendered.
2:37 p.m. Motor vehicle theft on Fourth Street. Advised of options.
- Wednesday, 5/11**
4:34 p.m. Neighbor disturbance on Old Sunderland Road. Investigated.
5:34 p.m. Motor vehicle theft on Avenue A. Investigated.
5:46 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Griswold Street. Services rendered.
6:12 p.m. Harassment order served on Old Sunderland Road.
11:17 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Hillside Road. Services rendered.
- Thursday, 5/12**
9:01 a.m. Officer wanted on Old Sunderland Road. Advised of options.
- 11:30 p.m. Vandalism at kennel on Sandy Lane. Services rendered.
- 3:30 p.m. Illegal dumping behind Route 63 Roadhouse on Federal Street. Services rendered.
- 4:00 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] on a default warrant.
- 9:56 p.m. Trespassing on Old Sunderland Road. Advised civil action.
- 11:12 p.m. Suspicious other at Route 63 Roadhouse on Federal Street. Report taken.
- Friday, 5/13**
4:40 p.m. Loose dog on Davis Street. Services rendered.
6:37 p.m. Domestic, harassment
- 6:55 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Old Sunderland Road. Investigated.
- Saturday, 5/14**
2:10 a.m. Suspicious auto at Route 63 Roadhouse on Federal Street. Investigated.
3:21 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle and failure to use care in starting, stopping, turning, or backing up. Accident with personal injury at Avenue A and Montague City Road.
8:21 p.m. Threatening, harassment on T Street. Advised of options.
- 9:25 p.m. Suspicious person at Unity Park. Verbal warning.
- 10:02 p.m. Domestic disturbance at Cutlery Block parking lot on Third Street. Investigated.
- 11:05 p.m. Loud noise disturbance at Rendezvous on Third Street. Services rendered.
- Sunday, May 15**
12:39 a.m. Suspicious auto at Turners Falls Airport. Services rendered.
10:40 a.m. Suspicious auto at the landfill off Turnpike Road. Services rendered.
- Monday, 5/16**
6:36 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Eastern
- Weatherization on Federal Street. Investigated.
- 9:20 a.m. Animal complaint at Kennel off Turnpike Road. Services rendered.
- 11:16 Burglary, breaking and entering on L Street. Report taken.
- 8:38 p.m. Disorderly conduct on East Main Street. Services rendered.
- Tuesday, 5/17**
2:56 p.m. Larceny on Old Sunderland Road. Investigated.
3:44 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Services rendered.
4:39 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Avenue A. Investigated.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$12.00 PER WEEK. (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666

T.L.C.
TURNS LAWN CARE
Specializing in all aspects of Lawn and Property Maintenance.
Located in the Heart of Montague Center.
"Going Away for Vacation?
Leave the Lawn Care to Us"
Residential & Commercial - Fully Insured
45 Main Street, PO Box 926, Montague, MA 01351
Gary Turn, Owner Phone: 367-0230 Cell:522-2563

Rau's Auto
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIR
(413) 367-2475
531 Turners Falls Rd. Montague
24 hour emergency towing
Best service licensed Mechanics

Patrick Smith
CSSL # 100236
Insured
Montague, MA 01351
EASTERN WEATHERIZATION
Specializing in Cellulose Insulation and Vinyl Replacement Windows:
Toll Free 866-262-5361
413-367-2228
FAX 413-367-2212

Simply Computing
Onsite Software Support on PCs and Macs from Windows to Office to QuickBooks

Debbe Dugan
863-5030

Jonathan Abbott
SSI / Disability Attorney
If you can't work, let me work for you.
tel: (413) 253-0052 Amherst, MA
In Home Appointments
jabbottesq@verizon.net

COUNTRY OIL
SINCE 1966
HEATING-COOLING-PLUMBING
Prepaid & Budget Programs Available
CALL for Details
Air Conditioning Service & Installation
540 Northfield Rd., Bernardston 1-800-327-9992
www.countryoil.com 413-648-9912

Free Legal Advice

FREE LEGAL ADVICE FROM MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION LAWYERS WILL BE AVAILABLE ONE DAY ONLY, ON **DIAL - A - LAWYER DAY** WEDNESDAY, MAY 25TH, FROM 3:30 - 7:30 P.M. BY CALLING 413-782-1659. A PUBLIC SERVICE OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAR ASSOCIATION



Stop by Our Farmstand for Transplant Vegetables
Six Varieties of Tomatoes
Bell Peppers • Broccoli
Cabbage • Brussels Sprouts
Turn South on River Road
One Mile from Tavern
119 River Road, Gill
508-397-4304

SHARING from page 1

when 15 volunteers showed up, plus a couple of excavators, to dig a trench and lay footings. The structure will be taking shape in the next work days, dates to be announced.

"We're looking for volunteers," said Chang, who's still spearheading the effort. "Hopefully the depth of expertise and willingness will be as great next time as it was last."

The greenhouse structure, its \$7,800 price paid in full by a grant from People's Bank, is basically intended to serve school purposes during the school year, but during school vacation, Chang said, "It seems to me it might work to have it be a community garden facility."

The school day is relatively short, she added, and there might even be time during the school year for community use, outside school hours.

School principal Anne Ross is comfortable with the idea that "a community garden would get started, and maybe use the greenhouse for starts in the spring."

The selectboard is interested in taking full advantage of the greenhouse and assisting local food production in other ways too. It failed in an effort to secure Community Preservation Act funding for a paid individual to handle teaching duties in the greenhouse and coordinate the proposed, adjacent community garden. As Rich Brazeau, selectboard chair, explained, "We were hoping we could get money so Dawn Ward, a master gardener in town, might continue doing her library kids' program, plus maybe maintain the greenhouse and handle growing for the lunch program. The idea was she could oversee the community garden."

The turndown "kind of killed that," Brazeau said.

Instead, a request was placed in the town newsletter for a volunteer to take on the garden coordination role. But no one has responded.

Work on creating the community garden continues, but establishing the plot awaits final clearance in order not to conflict with work on a geothermal heating system for

the library.

Whatever cooperation happens between the garden and the greenhouse operation "is largely up to what the school and community desire," said volunteer Lydia Peterson. "We don't have an agenda we want to push through; we want to have it available."

Peterson works closely with Chang as a member of the committee overseeing the project. That committee is also composed of principal Anne Ross, school lunch coordinator Molly Sneddon, school parent Cindy Tarail, and Pam Stone of the Leverett school committee, who is taking Aaron Samoza's place. (Chang emphasized that "special praise" should be reserved for Sneddon, and for John Kuczek, facilities supervisor for the elementary school, who "donated a lot of his time and considerable expertise" to the project.)

Regarding how the school itself will use the facility, Chang said that is "pretty clear cut. The greenhouse curriculum was drawn up by AmeriCorps [volunteer Amy Ryan]. She did a fantastic job

working with teachers, finding out about their units and tailoring a proposed curriculum. There will be students from UMass in the fall - half a dozen I was connected with by Dan Gerber at Plant and Soil Sciences. I hope they'll be coming in and giving a little of their time each week.

"So we've got the manpower, we've got the curriculum - which may be used to a different extent by different teachers. But we've also got this greenhouse, so students would grow salad greens. We're trying to do it in a way that doesn't take away from school time - it will be a lunchtime or recess arrangement. We already do that [in the courtyard garden Chang herself started in 2006]. We have garden recesses where kids have the option of taking a normal or a garden recess where they do weeding, harvesting, composting and the like. It's become increasingly popular. It doesn't take away from the time teachers need. It's worked out really well."



Mutton & Mead Medieval Festival
Saturday, June 18
10:00am - 6:00pm
COME, Drink and be Merry!
See the JOUST! Taste the Food!
Play the Games! Browse the Market!
Meet Robin Hood and his Merry Men!
www.MuttonAndMead.com
at the Millers Falls R&G, 210 Turners Falls Road, TF
A fundraiser for the Montague Grange and the Foodbank of Western Mass.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG		
Domestic Disturbance, Traffic Complaint		
Sunday, 5/8	OK.	alarm at Bela Nolte Restaurant.
9:05 p.m. Domestic Issue on Main Road. Information provided for court follow up.	5:25 a.m. Suspicious activity on Center Road. Checked OK.	Thursday, 5/12
Monday, 5/9	Wednesday, 5/11	7:50 a.m. Assisted Bernardston police with suspicious motor vehicle on Deacon Parker Road.
7:10 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle in area of River and Grist Mill Road. Checked OK.	11:05 a.m. Traffic complaint on Main Road. Construction company removing pole on a dangerous corner.	2:10 p.m. Tractor Trailer Unit stuck on Gill Montague Bridge. Assisted with traffic.
10:50 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle on West Gill Road. Operator given ride to friend's home on Main Road.	11:35 a.m. Resident reports an Internet Scam via her computer.	6:00 p.m. Subject reported to be en route to jump from Gill Montague Bridge. Subject not located.
Tuesday, 5/10	8:08 p.m. Medical assistance for a pregnant female at Green River Power Sports.	Friday, 5/13
1:35 a.m. Suspicious activity on West Gill Road. Checked	10:10 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with	5:52 p.m. Animal complaint of aggressive dog in Riverside area, same removed. Owners picked up later.
		7:50 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Ben Hale Road, one party removed for evening.
		Saturday, 5/14
		12:30 p.m. Spoke with resident regarding follow up investigation of vandalism on Main / Boyle Road.
		5:30 p.m. Animal Complaint on Main Road. Cow interfering with traffic.
		7:40 p.m. Family disturbance at Barton Cove. Counseled family members.
		9:30 p.m. Located motor vehicle in Gill, Riverside area, wanted for harassment in Erving.

PLACE YOUR BIZ CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$8.00 PER WEEK (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Doug's Auto Body
Doug Smith - Owner
PRECISION REPAIRS
MA Reg. #RS2190
Ph: (413) 863-2785 39 Center Road
Fax: (413) 863-0120 Gill, MA 01354

Beijing Station
Chinese Restaurant Eat In, Carry Out & Catering
Free Delivery
10% off for Pick up Only
51 Avenue A, Turners Falls
413-863-8988 | 413-863-2666

Omnibus Designs
Plans & Designs for Residential Construction
Charles Bado C.A.D.D. Certified Drafter
PRACTICAL DESIGN SOLUTIONS FOR NEW HOMES REMODELS & ADDITIONS
22 Checkerberry Lane, Wendell MA
Phone: (978) 544-9922 Cell: (413) 824-2318
Email: bado@crocker.com www.omnibusdesigns.biz

"I'll Buy Your Timber"
Hillocks Logging
7 Rastallis Street - Turners Falls
Jim Hillock Phone 413-863-2203
Licensed & Insured Cell 413-834-0023

RIVERSIDE RADIATOR
General Auto Repair
RADIATORS for CARS - TRUCKS and HEAVY EQUIPMENT
Foreign and Domestic
Propane Filling Station Route 2, Gill 863-4049 1-800-439-4049 8-5 Mon-Fri (closed Sat.)

Leaf Busters
Gutter Cleaning and Repairs, Spring Cleaning, Power Washing, Lawn Maintenance and Odd Jobs
Call for a FREE Estimate
Justin Hanecak
413-512-1553

Private Room Available
THE CHURCH STREET HOME
24 Church Street, Greenfield, MA 01301
A retirement home for independent senior women of Franklin County since 1942.
Family-style meals, beautiful surroundings, and the security of a hostess on duty at all times.
Visitors always welcome!
(413) 773-7252

BARLOW
• Paving • Power Sweeping
• Excavating • Landscaping
• Demolition • Seal Coating
• Septic
Turners Falls
413.772.2155
cell: 325.5596
www.barlowpavingexcavating.com

Negus & Taylor, Inc. Monuments
NEGUS & TAYLOR, INC. fine memorials since 1893
We engrave memories that last forever
People often come to see us because their parents and their grandparents did. We're proud to have that kind of loyalty, and we work hard to keep it.
- Gary and Nancy Melen
MAIN OFFICE 773-9552
10 Mill Street, Greenfield, MA
"The perfect remembrance"



JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER: Fructose Intolerance

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. Fruit juices give me a stomach ache. Do you think I'm allergic to them?

I never diagnose because I'm not a physician; I'm just a journalist. If you have a problem digesting fruit juices and this is getting in your way, you should

get a check-up.

Meanwhile, you might want to keep a diary of the food you eat and when your stomach hurts; this will isolate foods that are giving you digestion problems. The intensity of your reaction can help determine whether you are allergic to certain foods or are suffering from a food intolerance.

A food allergy is an abnormal response to a food triggered by the body's immune system. An allergic reaction to food occurs quickly — sometimes within only a few minutes. Reactions include oral itching, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain. You may have a drop in blood

pressure, asthma and skin reactions such as hives or eczema. Allergic reactions to food can cause serious illness and, in some cases, death.

Sometimes, a reaction to food is not an allergy but a "food intolerance." Food intolerance is more common than food allergy. The immune system does not cause the symptoms of food intolerance, though these symptoms can look and feel like those of food allergy.

Many people think they have food allergies. However, most symptoms are caused by intolerances to foods such as wheat and other grains, sugar found in fruits and honey, dairy products, and

corn products.

If fruit juices are giving you a stomach ache, there is a possibility that you have fructose intolerance.

Fructose is a sugar in fruits, honey and some syrups. Fructose is also a basic component in table sugar (sucrose), and it's used to sweeten many processed foods and beverages.

In addition, sorbitol — a sugar alcohol — is converted to fructose during normal digestion. Sorbitol is a sugar substitute often used in diet drinks, ice cream, mints, cough syrups, and sugar-free chewing gum.

You might try avoiding foods with fructose in them. In addition to fruits, honey, syrups and table sugar, you should watch out for high-fructose corn syrup, powdered sugar, regular sodas, fla-

vored water, sports drinks and sweetened milk. Read food labels carefully to avoid fructose.

The term fructose intolerance covers two conditions: hereditary fructose intolerance and fructose malabsorption.

People with hereditary fructose intolerance, a rare genetic disorder, lack an enzyme that breaks down fructose. This is a serious disorder that can lead to liver and kidney damage.

Those who have fructose malabsorption have difficulty digesting fructose. This is a less serious disorder because it doesn't cause organ damage. But it can cause abdominal pain, gas, bloating and diarrhea. Either condition should be confirmed by a doctor.

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

Senior Nutrition Notes

Spring Greens are Rich in Vitamins

BY CYNTHIA ROTHSCHILD

GREENFIELD - Dark green leafy vegetables are rich in vitamins C and K, folic acid, potassium, magnesium, iron, and calcium. Leafy greens are low in fat and calories and high in fiber. They are useful in reducing the risk of cancer and heart disease and can assist in weight management. The high levels of Vitamin K help in the production of the protein osteocalcin, a component of bone health. In one study, middle-aged women who consumed one or more servings a day had a 45% decreased risk of hip fracture.

Leafy greens are also a treasure trove of phytochemicals—beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin, and other carotenoids. Lutein and zeaxanthin are found in the eye lens and in the macular region of the retina. A diet high in leafy greens can reduce your risk for cataracts and macular degenera-

tion. The phytochemicals in greens also have cancer-protective properties.

I had a hard time choosing which lettuce seeds to plant in my garden — so many choices: bright green, frilly leaves; bright red leaves; and speckled leaves. Even if you don't grow your own, there are many different leafy greens available in the Farmers' Markets right now. Try some of the following:

Swiss Chard, which tastes similar to spinach, is rich in vitamins K, C, and calcium. Swiss chard can be eaten raw in salads if young, chopped and stir-fried in a bit of oil, or cooked with water. Add sautéed onions and flavorings. Delicious!

Chicory, which has a slightly bitter flavor, is rich in vitamins K, C, and calcium. Chicory is best eaten with other greens in salad or in soups and pasta sauces.

Arugula belongs to the mus-

tard family and has a distinctive peppery flavor. Arugula is best eaten raw in salads, or in stir-fries, soups, and pasta sauces.

Watercress is a pleasing addition to salads and the spicy, robust leaves are also good on sandwiches.

Mizuna (Oriental greens) has a tangy flavor and deeply cut, fringed leaves.

Green Leaf Lettuce forms a loose bunch and is known for its mild flavor.

Red Leaf Lettuce makes a colorful addition to salads and sandwiches and is very high in antioxidants.

Romaine is a Caesar salad favorite, with elongated, sturdy leaves that store well.

Bibb (butterhead or Boston) has mild buttery flavored rounded leaves which form into a soft head.

Enjoy!

Cynthia Rothschild is the consulting nutritionist for the Franklin County Home Care Corporation.

Valley Idol Competition Narrows to Top Five

Competition has narrowed to the top five finalists who will compete for a \$1000 grand prize in the Shea Theater's Sixth Annual Valley Idol. The finalists are Jerry Almedina of South Deerfield, Amber Fox of Montague, Martha King-Devine of Turners Falls and Rick Cloutier of Northfield. The theater's largest fundraiser, the Grand Finale of Valley Idol 2011

is Saturday, May 21st, at 8:00 p.m. The evening's featured audience event is the Shea's version of "Minute to Win It" with prizes. Advance tickets at the World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield, the Wagon Wheel Restaurant in Gill or online with PayPal at www.theshea.org, or may be reserved in advance by calling the Shea box office at (413) 863-2281. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LEVERETT POLICE LOG

Lost Hikers Found by Collaborative Effort

Sunday, 5/8
6:00 p.m. Officer requested at the area of Rattlesnake Gutter Road near the Village Co-op. Received a cell phone call from a male subject stating he and three other hikers were lost on Brushy Mountain. Hike started at 1:00 p.m. Officer requested Leverett fire department for assistance. Mass State police air wing and Mass environmental police also requested. Subjects located and escorted out of the woods off Old County Road by Leverett fire department and environmental police at about 10:30 p.m. Subjects located by GPS technology using hiker's cell phone. Hikers located approximately 1 mile into the woods behind Rat Hollow Farm on Old County Road. No injuries reported. Subject #1: Eric Fiedler, age 35, Northampton MA. Subject #2: Rebecca Sweger, age 37, Northampton, MA. Subject #3: Stephen Fiedler, age 60, Galloway, N.J. Subject #4: Barbara Fiedler, age 60, Galloway, N.J.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$12.00 PER WEEK. (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666

2ND STREET BAKING CO.
Now Open Sundays!
Tue - Sat 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Check out our Great Lunch Menu
Sundays 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Cakes, Pastries, Coffee, Soup and Bread
69 2nd Street
Turners Falls
863-4455
Closed Mondays

SCAPES BUILDERS
Your Green Building Company
110 North Hillside Road PO. Box 469 South Deerfield, MA 01373
T: 413.665.0185 F: 413.665.0186
Scapes Builders & Landscaping, LLC

Brian R. San Soucie Locksmith - CRL
Serving the Area for over 30 years Certified • Bonded • Insured
We Install all Types of Locks & Entry Devices for Businesses and Homes
28 Montague Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376
863-2471
• Dead Bolts
• Household Lock Sets
• We Master Key & Re-Key
• Safe Combinations Changed

REAL PICKLES
Naturally Fermented & Raw
Served at
The Lady Killigrew,
Holy Smokes, &
The Wagon Wheel!
www.realpickles.com
(413)774-2600 Greenfield, MA

Pam Veith Real Estate
75 Main Street
Northfield, MA 01360
Office: 413-498-0207
Ofc. Fax: 413-498-0208
Barbara A. Edson-Greenwald Home Phone: 413-863-9166
ABR, CRS, e-PRO, GRI, SRES, CBR Home Fax: 413-863-0218
REALTOR® Email: bedson1@comcast.net
"My Office is Always Open to You!"

PARTRIDGE-ZSCHAU
CONSULT US
25 Millers Falls Road
Turners Falls, MA 01376
(413) 863-4331
www.pzinc.com
Visit Our Tip of the Week at www.pzinc.com
INSURANCE

LOGOS & BRANDING
GRAPHIC DESIGN
ILLUSTRATION
WEB SITES
COPY WRITING
BUSINESS STRATEGY
INTERNET MARKETING
MISSION & VISION
H₂O
BOYSEN HODGSON
413 303 9193
www.h2-om.com

Renaissance Builders
Quality, Craftsmanship, Original Thought
www.renbuild.net
863-8316

Greenfield Imported Car Sales
Formerly LaBelle & Leitner
SALES • SERVICE • PARTS
WHERE ECONOMY IS KING
AFFORDABLE, SAFE, RELIABLE PRE-OWNED CARS
Toyota, Honda, Subaru, Hyundai
413-774-5517
335 High Street, Greenfield
greenfieldimportedcars.com (sales)
GICP.com (parts: 774-2819)

VOTERS from page 1
loss of \$565,000 in state aid, according to figures Ladd presented at the Montague town meeting on May 7th.

Jeffrey Klein echoed Kramer in a way, when asked if he had a message for the school committee. "Good luck. From what I understand there's a lot of turmoil there. With the financial situation, it's tough on the

school committee."

"People have to put aside their own agendas and they need to accentuate the positive," said Eileen Palumbo, who speaks from experience as a former member of the G-M school committee. "Gill-Montague is a good school district. They need to be cohesive. The school committee is there to promote the good in the school district. When my kids were there, it was the only school district in the county with Latin, and when they said we want Latin III, the administration said, 'We'll work with you on that.'"

She added, "Cut the teachers a break. If you have such strong personalities on the school committee, they can't even agree on anything. They should agree to disagree, but they have to share the common goal - what's good for the kids of the district."

"As a parent with a child going into 7th grade... I kept him at Gill Elementary for 6th... we were looking at other schools. But I really had a lot of faith in Carl Ladd, and I really



DETMOULD PHOTO
Cathleen Ambo with her 4th Grader, Paige Molongoski. Ambo called superintendent Carl Ladd's resignation "a real heavy blow."

supported the changes that were happening," said Cathleen Ambo, pausing outside the fire station with her fourth grader in tow. "But his resigning was a real heavy blow. I'm considering the charter school now."

Fourteen percent of Gill's registered voters (153 of 1042) turned out for the annual election on Monday, and a number of them spoke in support of the collaborative budget process that Ladd championed, with school committee members and finance committee members hashing out a budget compact with the support of local legislators and state education officials.

"I feel like this compact, that took so much work from the finance committee and school committee, is so crucial," said Joanna Frankel, who brought her pre-schooler with her to the voting booth. "We saw that at

Montague town meeting when the school committee budget went through unanimously. We just need to continue that momentum."

And Cheryl Clark said, "I just hope they continue on the trend they've been on this year, collaborating with the towns."

Ted Graveline looked at the impact of the school budget on other town needs, when he commented, "The schools get the majority of the budget. That really hurts the police, and fire department and the DPW."

Joe Elliott said, "There's a bit lacking in the school board. Now the superintendent, who was doing a fairly good job, he had to get out. There has to be more cooperation between the towns and the district in respect to the budget."

Barbara Elliott said, "They need more than money. They need people, too. They have all

the bells and whistles. They need more parent involvement." She added, "Having seen Greenfield come back so beautifully, there is reason to be optimistic."

Former Greenfield teacher Peter Conway talked about the common problem facing both Greenfield and Gill-Montague when he said, "I would like to see less school choice. That's an antsy issue. No one can put their finger on what the problem is. The school committee needs to really probe as to why people send their children elsewhere, to districts such as Pioneer and Frontier. I don't know whether people have really grabbed a hold of it. They've surveyed people. They can hash it out and create new programs and classes, and a year later they still haven't changed the balance on school choice."

Conway added now the question for Gill is, "Should we stay with Montague or go somewhere else? Why did we go with Montague in the first place, when the more natural choice was Pioneer?" Conway served on a study committee that put an extensive report together examining educational options for the town of Gill two years ago, but he said, "We submitted it, and like a lot of committees it kind of goes into limbo."

Conway concluded, "It's frustrating when you're hurting so much for money, and people keep talking about their taxes going up. The school budget is the prime mover. In a town without much industry or commerce, who gets hit? The homeowner."

Stewart's
Nursery and Garden Center
135 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls
50 Years Growing Experience
175 Acres of Nursery Plants
Garden Center & Gifts
Container Plants
Residential Plants
Trees & Shrubs
Annuals & Perennials
• **Landscape Design**
• **Mulch**
• **Deliveries Available**
• **Nursery Stock Arriving Daily**
COLOR IN THE YARD!
Impatiens, Geraniums, Annuals, Vegetable Plants, Hanging Baskets, Fruit Trees, Cemetery Pots
Open Seven Days
Mon to Sat 7am to 5:30pm
Sunday 9am to 5pm
Tel: (413) 863-2510

at **Stewart's**
\$10 Off any Purchase of \$50 or more with this coupon
1 Per Customer
Not valid with any other offers or on prior purchases.
Offer Expires 6/1/11

TOWN OF ERVING
Tax Collector
The Town of Erving seeks a Tax Collector. Part time; 10 hr/wk. Requirements: Town of Erving resident, must seek election to this post in May 2012 Town Elections. Send resume to Town of Erving, 12 E. Main Street, Erving, MA 01344. Attention: Andrew N. Goodwin, Selectboard Chair. Call: 413-422-2800 x100 for application.
Deadline to apply: 6-2-11.

TOWN OF ERVING
Deputy Emergency Management Director
The Town of Erving seeks a Deputy Emergency Management Director to assist with emergency planning and response. Part time; 5 hr/wk. Requirements: Town of Erving resident. Familiarity with incident command system and NIMS a plus. Send resume to Town of Erving, 12 E. Main Street, Erving, MA 01344. Attention: Luke Hartnett. Call: 413-422-2800 x100 for application.
Deadline to apply: 6-17-11.

TOWN OF MONTAGUE
DIESELING TRAINS PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday, May 24th, 2011
6:30 p.m.
Discovery Center, Turners Falls
The Montague Boards of Health and Selectmen will hold a joint hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 24th, 2011 at the Turners Falls Discovery Center to discuss dieseling train problems in Millers Falls and Lake Pleasant. Residents desiring to comment on this matter will be given an opportunity.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Disorderly Conduct, Arrest For Break In
Tuesday, 5/10
9:30 p.m. Breaking and entering into International Paper Mill on Papermill Road. Under investigation.
10:20 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle in Central Street area of the park. All set.
Wednesday, 5/11
10:52 a.m. Report of subject on Pratt Street refusing to return motor vehicle to owner.
7:55 p.m. Report of loose dogs in area of Old State Road. Located same and returned to owner.
Thursday, 5/12
1:30 p.m. Report of disorderly subject at Central Street residence, yelling and using vulgar language. Subject fled north on Moore Street.
10:40 p.m. Report of light on in the library. Checked same. Building secure.
Saturday, 5/14
4:20 p.m. Suspicious activity at Central Street address. Report taken.
9:12 p.m. Car vs. deer in area of Route 2 and Wendell. Checked area by Erving and Orange. Gone on arrival.
9:20 p.m. Report of suspicious subject possibly following teenage girl. Investigated.
Sunday, 5/15
5:25 p.m. Report of dispute in Renovator's Supply area. Verbal argument between a father and daughter.
Monday, 5/16
11:30 a.m. Report of runaway from Old State Road area. Juvenile located.
6:15 p.m. Arrest of [redacted], for trespassing and breaking and entering.

SECO CONSTRUCTION
Paul Seco
-residential & light commercial
-remodeling & repair
-roofing, siding, decks & more
-licensed & insured
no job too small!
413.863.9171 secoconstruction1@hotmail.com

Simons & Simons
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
Gerry G. Simons
Estates • Wills • Real Estate
Personal Injury
P.O. Box 9 • Turners Falls
(413) 774-3239 gerrygsimons@yahoo.com

About-Face
Computer Solutions
Computer Sales & Service
We've Moved!
Phone: 413-863-5447
Find us at:
151 Avenue A, Turners Falls!
www.about-facecomputers.com
Turn your computer troubles puno:e

NEEDFUL THINGS
SELLING QUALITY USED FURNITURE AND COLLECTIBLES
~ NEW ITEMS ARRIVE WEEKLY! ~
Open Monday-Saturday • 413-774-7430
199 Deerfield Street (Rtes. 5 & 10), Greenfield

Jack Nelson
• Clay/Stone Sculpture
• Pottery
• Fine Art Drawings and Paintings
BY CHANCE OR APPOINTMENT.
TELEPHONE 413.863.9299
email: carriagehouse@signedinstone.com
65 CANAL STREET • TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE
KUSTOM AUTOBODY
MA Reg #RS2066
48 Randall Road
Montague
Phone/413-863-3780
Mike Fuller, Owner

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

Society. Plant and book donations are needed to make this event happen. For more info or to help, call Dawn Marvin Ward 367-9562. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rokit Queer*, the dance party, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Zydeco Connection*, 9-11 p.m.

Memorial Hall Theater, Shelburne Falls: Pothole Pictures presents *Striking a Chord*, which follows Nell Bryden and her band on a USO concert tour through the war zone as she performs and visits with U.S. soldiers in the field, 7:30 p.m.

Arts Block Cafe, 289 Main Street, Greenfield: *Joy Kills Sorrow*, 7 p.m.

Old Depot Gardens, Montague Center: *Heirloom Tomatoes for the Home Gardener Workshop*, with 20-year tomato farmer Ryan Voiland of Red Fire Farm. We'll be gathering at the Old Depot Gardens farmstand in Montague to go over how to grow really good tomatoes in your garden. A tomato planting demo and talk about best growing conditions. Our farm has been growing heirlooms for many years and we have our latest list of favorites to share with you. Many of these specialty tomato varieties are also for sale at our farmstands, so you can pick some up when you come for the workshop. Free. 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.



Zydeco Connection at the Burrito Rojo on Saturday, May 28, 8 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Flabberghaster*, 8 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Tracy & Company*, 9:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Valley Idol Finals*, 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *The Sun Parade*, indie folk rock 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Bunny's A Swine, Banditas, Mountain Interval, and H. Nathan Hobbs*, 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 22nd
Thrive Project, 37 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Thrive Show!* A monthly series dedicated to performance and cultural exchange. Readings, music, light refreshments, and a whole lot of fun. This month Thrive Staff and others will perform, featuring *Josh Platt, Zoe Salls, Janel Nockleby, Jamie Berger, Sonam Sherpa, and Mikele Deziell*. 4 p.m. Free.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 8 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Sturdy Temple, Featuring Jim Henry, Guy DeVito & Doug Plavin*, 9-11 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 24th
Thrive Project, 37 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Music Exchange!* Bring your instrument and play some songs, practice, teach, learn, share. Led by Steve "Coolio" Koziol. See our Facebook page for our songs of the month to learn and come in ready to play. 7 - 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Knitting & Craft Night*, any craft, any skill level, 7 - 10 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 26th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Francie & Lillian Jones* (folk/pop) and *The Feel*,

8:30 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Larry Kopp*, country and city blues guitar and vocal, 8 - 10 p.m.

Greenfield Energy Park: *Coop Concerts 2011 Summer Series Devlin Miles, Roland Lapierre, and the Falltown String Band*. Bring a blanket, lawn chairs, food, and drinks, 6-8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 27th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Mo Ambesa* (hip hop, jazz, reggae), 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Ottomatic Slim*, Chicago-style blues band, 9 - 11 p.m.

Arts Block Café, 289 Main Street, Greenfield: *Leah Randazzo Group*, 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Prana*, rock, 8 p.m.

Moore's Corner Schoolhouse, North Leverett: *Music of the Gaslight Era* (1890-1920), the Leverett Historical Society presents an evening of musical history with local musician *John Root*. The audience will learn how America's ethnic and racial diversity created unique musical styles. Everyone is invited to sing along. 7 - 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Lonesome Brothers*, solo and together, *Jim Armenti & Ray Mason* will both be performing solo sets followed by the two of them performing a *Lonesome Brothers* set. 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 28th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Nobody's Fat*, jazz trio, 9 - 11 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Andrea Paquin*, singer, songwriter, with special guest Corretta Sellars, acoustic rock, 7:30 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Fancy Trash and Goldwater Trio*, 8 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Zydeco Connection*, 8 - 11 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 30th

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Open Mic with Dada Dino, 8 p.m. Free.

TUESDAY, MAY 31st

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: An evening of acoustic music with Mohawk Alumni, an event fundraiser for the families that lost their home to fire on Mechanic Street in Shelburne. Feature performers are: *Randy Smith, Agona Hardison, Barbara Cassidy, Bill DeSanty, Helen Arbour, Michael George, Eric Chasalow, and Kenny Butler*. 7 p.m.

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Great Falls Farmers Market, Turners Falls: *Great Falls Farmers Market* located at Avenue A and Second Street.

EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT

Between the Uprights, 23 Avenue A, Turners Falls: *Acoustic open mic*, every Thursday night, *Dan, Kip and Shultz* from *Curly Fingers DuPree* host. All are welcome. Instruments provided or bring your own. 8:30 - 11:30 p.m.

EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT

Montague Inn: *TNT Karaoke*.

EVERY SUNDAY

Thrive Project, 37 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Franklin County Drawing Posse*, an informal drawing group led by Anja Schutz. All skill levels more than welcome. 1 - 4 p.m.

NOW THROUGH MAY

Franklin Medical Center Cafeteria, Greenfield: Oil paintings on display by *Ted Graveline of Gill*. All sales proceeds will benefit St. Jude's Children's Hospital.

NOW THROUGH JUNE

Wendell Free Library: exhibition of recent paintings by *Heather K. Lenz*, these ten oil paintings present the viewer with an unusual combination of beautiful, rich imagery and stimulating content focused on transformation, regeneration and growth.

THROUGH SUNDAY, JUNE 5th

Hallmark Gallery, Turners Falls: *I Was There: Stories of War and Homecoming*.

THURSDAY, MAY 19th

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Third Thursday Speakers Series presents *Lamar Gore on Birding*. Join biologist Lamar Gore to learn some beginning birding skills. 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Thrive Project: 37 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Ping Pong*, Free, 7 - 9 p.m.



THE LADY KILLIGREW:
still proudly serving
BROWN RICE SALAD



440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA
7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least)
(413)367-9666

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sandy Bailey and Ryan Hommel*, 8 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Wailin' Dave Robinson & Tommy Filault*, blues-based roots music, 8-10 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Theaterworks USA presents, *Charlotte's Web*, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Limited seats available.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Celebrating Entrepreneurship in Franklin County*. The CDC is hosting an event to celebrate entrepreneurship in Franklin County in honor of Dick Haas, former owner of Hillside Plastics, founder of Sugarhill containers, and community, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 20th

North Quabbin Film Series Begins! *Chariots of Fire, Mission Covenant*, 53 Pleasant Street, Orange. 7 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Elizabeth and Sandy LaPrelle with Nicholas Francis*. The Bookmill is thrilled to present Elizabeth LaPrelle, an inspiring young singer from Rural Retreat, Virginia, who has made her mark with a captivating voice and her devotion to the ancient and deep art of Appalachian unaccompanied singing. She performs with a sense of conviction, honesty, and emotional force that evokes the great Appalachian ballad-singers of generations past. Joining Elizabeth is her mother Sandy, who lends her strong voice to close mountain harmonies and soul-satisfying gospel. Their two voices, interspersed with old-timey banjo tunes, can lift and carry the listener away to another time. Nicholas Francis sings and plays old-time inspired contemporary folk music. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Patty Carpenter & Friends*, jazz, pop, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & The Mud, Blood & Beer Band*, singing all your Johnny Cash favorites and many more, 9-11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Reprobates*, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 21st

Wendell Town Hall: Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, *barnRocket*, strong song writing, is where the emphasis lies here. With a melting pot of American roots influences, *barnRocket* is bound to bring you original tastes of Cajun, Rock, Folk, Country, Funk, Bluegrass, World Beat and who knows what else. With John Monthei on Banjo and Pedal Steel, Sean Kimball on Bass and vocals, Leslie King on Mandolin, Guitar and vocals and Peter Nabut on Guitar, Accordion and vocals, 7:30 p.m.

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center: *Underwater Organisms: Amazing Diversity*, ages 12 and up, 2-4 p.m. Free.

Leverett Town Hall: *Plant & Garden Book Sale*, hosted by The Leverett Historical

GREENFIELD GARDEN CINEMAS
Main St. Greenfield, MA
413-774-4881

www.gardencinemas.net

Showtimes for
Friday May 20th to Sunday May 22nd

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: ON STRANGER TIDES PG13 DAILY 12:00, 3:00, 6:30, 9:30
PRIEST PG13 DAILY 12:15, 3:15, 6:45 9:15
THOR (IN 3D) PG13 DAILY 12:00, 3:00, 6:30, 9:30
SOMETHING BORROWED PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15
FAST FIVE PG13 DAILY 12:00, 3:00, 6:30, 9:30
RIO G DAILY 12:15, 3:15

Deja Brew Pub
Cafe & Pub

Draft Beer **Fine Wine** **Great Food**

Friday, 5/20 9 to 11 p.m.
Josh Levangie & The Mud, Blood, and Beer Band
Saturday, 5/21 9 to 11 p.m.
Zydeco Connection
Sunday, 5/22 8 to 10 p.m.
Sturdy Temple
Thursday, 5/26 8 to 10 p.m.
Larry Kopp
country & city blues

978-544-BREW
57A Lockes Village Road
Next to the Wendell Country Store
www.DejaBrewPub.com

The Rendezvous
get outta the rain!

THURS 5/19 8pm FREE
Sandy Bailey & Ryan Hommel

FRI 5/20 9:30 \$5 (jazz-blues)
Patty Carpenter & Co.

SAT 5/21 9:30pm \$3
ROKIT QUEER DJ Greg 2000!

SUN 5/22 8pm FREE
TNT KARAOKE!
(you know you wanna!)

78 THIRD STREET
TURNERS FALLS
THEV00.NET 413-863-2868

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$8.00 PER WEEK (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Montague BOOKMILL
Open Daily 10 - 6

413-367-9206
www.montaguebookmill.com

Renaissance Excavating, Inc.

COMPLETE SITE WORK

Septic & Drainage Systems | Sand, Gravel & Loam

Main Road, Gill
Douglas Edson 413.863.4462

HK Power Town Apartments

152 Avenue A
PO Box 48
Turners Falls, MA
413-863-9433

professionally managed by:
HallKeen Management, Inc.
rental office on the corner of Ave. A & 4th St.

Sharon Cottrell
Property Manager



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

*Deer Dine al Fresco,
Why not We?*

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY - The spring drama continues to rapidly unfold. Mere weeks ago, the tree tops were capped only with rosy buds. Now they sport full-sized leaves of green, ranging from pale to dark, and the pollen supply is at its peak. Only the ash and oak leaves remain to fully unfurl.

The early flowers are gone, first the daffodils, then the fruit tree blossoms. Now the yard is splendid with rhododendron, lilacs of all shades of purple and white, and the dogwood is in full bloom. The lily of the valley scents the yard and the rooms of the house delicately. Peonies tremble on the edge of bloom.

In the garden the asparagus spears are appearing. Baby lettuces will soon be ready for cutting, and the garlic shoots are tall. The pea sprouts should be show-

ing soon.

The little kale plants had been growing nicely.

As it is the gardener's custom to survey the yard at the end of each work day, one recent afternoon's survey revealed that every kale seedling had been munched off at the soil line. I do not begrudge the deer her lunch because she is so beautiful and because I know I can replace these plants readily by visiting the farmers market. This time I will fence them in. Kale started in spring will continue to provide delicious crops even in an early snow, so replanting is well worth the effort.

In the sunroom the tomatoes are hale and hearty, about six inches tall, with several sets of true leaves. They have been transplanted a second time as I hope to give away and plant seedlings that are a sturdy eight to ten inches high, ready to put out as soon as the weather allows at the end of the month, or early in June. One year recently, I planted half my crop on a warm sunny

Memorial Day weekend only to have the next two days turn cold and very windy. These plants were set back considerably and never performed at maximum level.

It is worth planting tender crops a bit later than the traditional time because it will be stronger and more productive for it. Somehow these plants catch up to nature's timetable and produce crops when expected, even if their debut was a little later than those in my neighbor's garden.

This is a busy season with much to do. The bed with its remaining strawberry plants and the new pea crop needs further weeding to allow space for a bean tepee and a hill or two of squash. The roses are ready for pruning as it is easy to see now which stems are dead, with no sign of future leaf buds. This is a great time to plant iris or daylily for the coming summer, to tie up the burgeoning peonies, reseed bare spots in the lawn and curb the weeds growing anywhere.

Nonetheless, vacation for the gardener is timely too, while the growing season is young and there is no pressing need for watering, heavy weeding nor

picking of ripe crops.

And so we left for a weekend of ocean therapy.

It seems odd to admit that in 50 plus years of living in New England, I've never visited the state of Rhode Island. But there it is, just a little to our southeast. Ironically, it is both small and readily accessible once you have traveled past Worcester.

Even given a comfort stop and another for refueling, in less than three hours we were enjoying fish and chips in Woonsocket. After an overnight with family, we drove to Newport armed with water and sandwiches to hike the famous Cliff Walk.

This preserved trail along the eastern shore of Rhode Island offers spectacular proximity to the ocean, as well as a free view of the historic district of the Gilded Age of mansions, whose property faced and ran down to the sea cliff. This beautifully maintained and mostly paved walk extends for 3.5 miles. While the parts that are paved provide easy walking, there are also the more challenging spots on rocks and earth bordering the sea, and a few tunnels passing underneath properties and cliffs. However, there are exits to boulevards as well, so it is possible to bring your family and choose a short, more accessible section to walk.

It is of course an experience to view these huge and ridiculously opulent estates, but the focal point remains the water, the sea birds and the restorative air. We completed almost three miles and turned back to the starting point at the beach, famished for our sandwiches and a fresh bottle of water. We took a rest at our motel and then ordered a late snack and enjoyed the rest a day at the ocean can bring.

In the morning, we traveled a short bit to Galilee on Point Judith. This is the departure spot for the ferry to Block Island, and also a lovely beach of white sand which, in the off season, provided very quiet walking.

It was an exceptional weekend of beautiful weather, the joy of family and the restoring power of the oceanside, all the more enjoyed because it was the last weekend before the start of the busy tourist season, and only a few travel hours away.

You will enjoy your garden more if you indulge yourself in a few breaks like these. After all, the garden is not like a farm with a herd of animals. It will keep on growing, with or without you, and you will be a much better shepherd if you tend to your own cares as well.

Enjoy the beautiful spring and happy gardening!

from U-28 page 10

superintendency union in the state.

Currently, benefits are set by the "lead town," the town with the most students attending a Union 28 school. Presently, the lead town is Erving, and Erving's retiree benefits are considerably more generous than the benefits other towns in the union provide to their own retirees. This discrepancy has led to protests, a series of meetings between member town and district selectboards and treasurers, withheld payments, and a joint effort to seek special legislation to regu-

larize the process in order to conform with each town's level of benefits.

While competing interpretations of state law on this issue have been cited, it may be that state legislators and the DESE will agree that the decision on what benefits the Union and its member towns shall set for retirees may ultimately rest with the Joint Supervisory Committee, under statute 7153A.

Hajir warned the committee that if 7153A is considered the final say on the matter, the committee should be ready to work

on the issue immediately. Leverett had just sent a check to the Union 28 central office for the outstanding balance on benefits for a recently retired employee, but with that check, they also informed the office that as of July 1st, the town will go back to paying for a 50% single plan as they do for other retired town employees.

Hajir suggested that town finance committees and selectboards be invited to participate in the process of setting the Union's benefit policy. If not, this issue could "break the union," Hajir warned. The two

obvious options Hajir sees are to either adopt special legislation allowing Union 28 benefits to be apportioned in line with each member town's benefits, or to set a new policy every year.

The last agenda item was requested by Wickman herself regarding the number of meetings scheduled. She listed the number of night meetings she attended over the last five years, with 106 meetings in 2007 being the lowest number. When she realized she had attended 18 night meetings this past March, she decided to ask the committee to look into the issue.

It was suggested that meetings have definite end times and also that Wickman use the flexibility of her schedule to perhaps not come into the office once in a while. It was also suggested that school committee meetings be scheduled every five or six weeks instead of once a month. Officially, the group decided to have the strategic development subcommittee look into a way of streamlining the number of school committee meetings in Union 28, once they have tabulated the results of the Union 28 survey.



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE FOR ONLY \$12.00 PER WEEK. (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666

intuit
Rachel J Roy
QuickBooks Works
 Setup & Troubleshooting
 Report Development & Initial Data Entry
 Training
 Reasonable Rates
 Specializing in Small Contractors
 Certified ProAdvisor
 QuickBooks
 5 Pleasant Street, Turners Falls MA 01376
 racheljroy@comcast.net 413-863-5459

SHANAHAN CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY CO. INC.
 SCSC "Rock solid service with level advice"
Complete Masonry Supply
 Offering a complete line of pavers, wall stone, retaining wall block and more. **Ideal**
 298 Avenue A., Turners Falls 413-863-4322
 and at our new location or 802-579-1800
 529 S. Main St, Brattleboro www.shanahansupply.com

Huge Selection of Passenger, Light Truck/SUV, Truck, Farm, Off Road, Industrial, Trailer, Lawn & Garden, ATV

Tires for Work. Tires for Play.
 www.petestire.com
 Northampton • 186 North King St. 413-586-8815
 Brattleboro • 220 Old Ferry Rd. 802-254-3628
 Orange • 275 E. Main St. 978-544-8811

Turners Falls Pizza House
 119 Avenue A
 863-8000
 We Deliver
 Grinders • Dinners • Beer & Wine
 Open 7 days • 41 years on the Ave
 It's Pizza Time!

TURN IT UP!
MUSIC & MOVIES
 BOOKMILL | MONTAGUE CENTER | 367.0309

Mike and Tony's Pizzeria
 @ the Green Emporium
 Thursday - Sunday 5 - 9 p.m.
 fabulous dining,
 great music, neon art,
 full liquor bar,
 and the best pizza!
 www.greenemporium.com Colrain Center
 413-624-5122

RISTORANTE DiPAOLO
 Wednesday Wine Specials • 1st & 3rd Thurs Jazz
 Glass \$5, Bottle \$20, Appetizers \$10
GREAT ITALIAN FOOD
 Open Daily at 5:00 | Closed Monday & Tuesday
 413-863-4441

Wood and pellet stove change out program
 Vouchers from \$1500-\$3000 to swap your old, tired wood or pellet stove for a new EPA certified cleaner burning stove!
 Stop by and see our selection of Thelin stoves
Solar Store of Greenfield
 2 Fiske Ave
 413-772-3122
 T-F 10-5:30pm, Sat 10-2pm
 info@solarstoreofgreenfield.com

The Gill Tavern
 Come For a Drink, Stay For a Meal
 www.thegilltavern.com Open Wed - Sun at 5 PM
 326 Main Road, Gill, MA 413-863-9006