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The Montague Reporter

YEAR 7 - NO. 33

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 21, 2009

Fairbrother Cruises to Victory



Mark Fairbrother

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE has a new selectboard member and his name is Mark Fairbrother.

"I'm excited," said Fairbrother, standing in the hall outside the town clerk's office as the final ballots arrived at 10:35 p.m. from Precinct 1, his home precinct, where he racked up another big vote margin to add to his totals around town.

Fairbrother beat John (Jack) Nelson by 209 votes, with Joshua Gammon and Ed Golrick running a distant third and fourth in the race for a three-year selectboard seat.

Fairbrother won in every part of Montague but downtown Turners, where Nelson, a resident of Canal Street, edged him out 53 to 38.

"It's a big honor. I hope I do well. I'll try my best. There are hard decisions to be made, and I'm sure we will make them together," said Fairbrother, who added his top priority would be working on the budget. "Everything else is dependent on

that."

He expressed confidence in Montague's ability to weather the economic downturn that has affected the entire country. "I remember what the town - especially the downtown - was like 20 or 30 years ago. This town is resilient."

Conservation commission chair Fairbrother takes the selectboard seat left vacant by Allen Ross, retiring after six years on the board.

The victory in the race to fill Ross's seat represents something of a political comeback for Fairbrother, who failed to win reappointment to the Turners Falls airport commission last year, after a dust-up over a disparaging remark he made about Native Americans blocking progress on the airport runway project, and public sparring with Ross at the selectboard and at town meeting over the make-up of that commission. Ross and Patricia Pruitt did not vote to reappoint Fairbrother last year, although Allen supported his re-appointment.

On Monday night, Fairbrother received congratulations from selectboard members Pruitt and Pat Allen, and town meeting members gathered at town hall for the election results.

Fairbrother took 55% of the vote, besting John Nelson 535 to 326, with Joshua Gammon (who had dropped out the race after deciding to attend college in Washington DC next year) coming in third, with 56 votes, closely trailed by Ed Golrick at 53 votes.

The top vote getter of the night was town moderator Raymond Godin, who sailed into another three-year term for see **FAIRBROTHER** pg 7

Ward Wins Big in Gill



John Ward

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL - On Monday, with 25% of the town's eligible voters showing up at the polls, John Ward, a 21-year resident of Grove Street, unseated five-term incumbent and lifetime resident Leland Stevens of North Cross Road for a three-year seat on the Gill selectboard. The vote was 197 to 73.

"It was a big win," said Ward, after the results were in. "I feel good."

Ward said his top priorities would include "working with the commission on education in Gill," to consider the future of public education for the town's K-12 students, "dealing with the town budget, and one of the big things I hope to take on early is seeing what we can do with the Mariamante property."

Asked how he interpreted the large margin of victory for his first foray into town electoral politics, Ward said,

"Certainly, from what I've heard from a lot of people, the police chief's contract turned the election. Word did get out through the grapevine, and it caused a backlash."

Ward was referring to the fact that Stevens joined selectboard chair Nancy Griswold four days before the election in outvoting Ann Banash to offer a three-year contract extension to the town's long time police chief, David Hastings, over the objection of the finance committee, which had sought a one-year contract extension in consideration of the town's uncertain finances.

"The people have spoken, and that's what a lot of it is about," said Ward. "They want a change."

Ward, who campaigned door to door in Riverside and by bicycle in other parts of town, said he picked up support, "Just starting up Main Road, on my bike, with my helmet on and all. I pulled up and introduced myself to a lady in her yard, and she said, 'You're out campaigning on your bicycle? You just won my vote.'"

For Ward, there will be other hills to climb, certainly, over the next three years. "It's interesting to think about how much work I have ahead of me now," he said. But on Wednesday night, at a celebration at the Gill Tavern, he was still basking in the glow of victory.

300th Series



300th Combat Engineer Battalion repairing the under piling of a bridge destroyed by enemy fire along the Carentan - Cherbourg Road in France - June 30, 1944.

BY BRAD PETERS

ERVING - More than three years ago, Jan Ross of Old State Road in Erving began the journey of learning what her father, Donald Ross, did when he served in World War II in the European campaign. He passed away 25 years ago without sharing his experiences in the war with his

Part 1 Dispatches from England, May, 1943

family. Donald Ross, from Springfield, MA, enlisted in the Corps of Engineers in 1943. He trained in Virginia as a water supply specialist, going to England in March of 1944 for additional training. He became a member of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion in May of 1944.

Ross and I have researched the history and activities of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion in battle through a variety of resources, including thousands of pages of government documents about the 300th and hundreds of photographs of the 300th in combat in Europe. In addition, we have attended five reunions of the 300th in Texas and recorded hours of interviews and scanned hundreds of photographs and documents from the veterans. The result of this research is post-

ed on an extensive website to honor the men of the 300th and their service to our country,



Donald Ross of Springfield in May 1943, just before shipping out for engineer training

see **300th** page 10

Valley Idol Full of Surprises



Troy Parker with Go-Go Girls Rebecca Caplice & Debra Schechterle doing "Mustang Sally"

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - This year's Valley Idol contest at the Shea has been full of surprises, even more so than in past seasons. No matter how quickly the artists change to meet the judges' expectations, still the favorites seem to fall at the slightest whim to be replaced by undiscovered stars, who suddenly emerge from the shadows to shine before the

red velvet curtain.

Abraham Oyola, winner of the first Valley Idol award in 2006, got gonged before the final ten were tapped this year. MC Jamie Berger got released from duty three hours before showtime on Saturday, for supposedly meandering with his monologue. He was replaced by hyper-kinetic host Tom Mayo, of Shining Star productions, who definitely kept the proceedings moving at a fast clip. But more surprises were in store.

Among the top ten finalists Saturday night, there were many standouts. Turners Falls' Troy Parker pulled Greenfield Savings Bank's Rebecca Caplice and Debra Schechterle up on stage with him, and turned them into impromptu go-go girls during his gut-bucket soul stomp through Wilson Pickett's "Mustang Sally", see **IDOL** pg 8

PET OF THE WEEK

Purrfectly Kitten Soft



Chase

My name is Chase and I'm a ten-year-old female Siamese mix declawed cat. I was found as a stray and lived with a nice family for a month. They couldn't keep me long-term, so I am here looking for a new home! I like to curl up in the sunshine and nap. A little catnip here and there wouldn't hurt, either! Mostly, I'm just hoping for a loving home with someone who will give me the affection and attention I deserve. I am very loving in return! I've got kitten-soft fur and a purr that'll knock your socks off. Are you the one who will take me home? For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: lev-erett@dpvhs.org.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Free DCR Park Pass

BY LINDA HICKMAN

TURNERS FALLS – The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of State Parks and Recreation has given the Carnegie Library a free annual ParksPass. This pass may be borrowed by individuals or families and allows a vehicle to park at a state park for free.

Examples of local parks that would be covered include Lake Wyola in Shutesbury and Ruggles Pond in Wendell. The pass does not cover camping. The DCR made the free passes available to libraries across the state.

For more information, contact www.massparks.org or call the library at 863-3214.

MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

Summer Hours at the Carnegie Library

SUSAN A. SANSOUCIE

MONTAGUE – The Montague Center Library and the Carnegie Library will be closed Monday, May 25th, in observance of Memorial Day. Beginning this week the Carnegie Library will begin our summer schedule. The library will be closed on Saturdays from now until after Labor Day. This is a usual occurrence and is not related in any way to budget reductions.

Except for this Monday's

holiday, the Montague Center Library is open Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00 to 5:00 and 6:00 to 8:00. The Carnegie Library is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 1:00 to 8:00, Thursday 1:00 to 5:00, and Friday 10:00 to 5:00 p.m. The Millers Falls Library is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 to 5:00 and 6:00 to 8:00.

Susan A. SanSoucie, Director Montague Public Libraries contact (413) 863-3214

Memorial Day Events

Memorial Day Parade in Erving on Saturday, May 23rd. Parade leaves Renovator's Supply at 10:00 a.m., arriving at Veterans Field by 10:30.

Memorial Day Observance in Montague Center on Sunday, May 24th at 11:15 a.m. on the Montague Center Common. Rededication of memorial stone placed by the Montague Grange in 1954 to honor all veterans. Featured speaker will be Lieutenant Colonel Leslie Bridges, US Air Force, Retired.

Everyone welcome to attend.

Memorial Day Observance in Gill on Sunday, May 24th, 10:00 a.m. Proceeding across the common to the veterans' monument.

Memorial Day parade in Turners on Monday, May 25th. Step-off from 2nd and Avenue A, 10:00 a.m. Proceeding to the veterans' memorial by the Carnegie Library for speeches and ceremony.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – May 25th to May 29nd

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

Monday, 25th Memorial Day center closed for all activities.

Tuesday, 26th 9:00 a.m. Walking Group
1:00 p.m. Canasta

Wednesday, 27th 10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Blood Pressure and

Blood Sugar Screening 11:00 a.m. Taking Care of Your Future, Attorney John Green 12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 28th 1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 29th 10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:00 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble

Tickets on sale \$2.00 for musical program by Ruth Harcovitz "Cole, George, Jerome, and Irving."

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

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For info and reservations call Polly



HANDCRAFTED TABLE FOR \$10 A CHANCE

BY KIM SPRANKLE

GILL – The Gill PTO is excited to offer you the chance to own a piece of fine, locally made furniture, crafted and generously donated by master craftsman Tony Mathews of Gill.

The first piece is an entry or bedside table (pictured left) measuring 32.5" by 25" by 19.5" with a retail value of \$500.

The second piece is a sideboard table (pictured right) measuring 32.5" by 45" by 19.5" with a retail value of \$800.

Each was crafted from native cherry and pine harvested from Mathews' property on Boyle Road adjacent to Gill

Elementary, with birdseye maple panels from Forest Products of Greenfield. They can be viewed at Gill Elementary during normal school hours.

Each \$10 ticket enters you in the drawing for the table of your choice. Tickets are on sale at Gill Elementary (863-3255), the Gill Tavern, and the Slate Memorial Library. On your ticket, please circle your choice of table. We are selling only 150 tickets to better your odds of winning. The drawing will take place at the Gill Elementary Carnival on May 30th. (If you are not present, you will be contacted immediately after the drawing.)

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Users Guide to Town Meeting 101

A How-to Guide for Active Meeting Participation

Annual town meetings throughout Massachusetts, including Wendell's town meeting, have a shared set of rules, procedures and terms. Developed over the years by the Massachusetts Moderators Association, their purpose is to insure that all participants have an equal voice at the table and

that complicated discussions can unfold in a fair and orderly manner. The process and language, however, can seem confusing for new attendees, and even at times to the seasoned participant.

On Monday, June 1st, at 7 p.m., join Wendell town meeting moderator Kathy Becker for an evening talk and discussion about

town meeting. Topics will include a brief history and the basic rules, key players at the front table, key procedural terminology and when and how to use it, hand votes versus ballot votes, and of course town meeting etiquette. There will be plenty of time over the course of the evening for questions and discussion.

This workshop is meant solely as a how-to guide for active meeting participation, and will not address specific issues on the Wendell town meeting warrant.

As Wendell's town meeting moderator since 1984, and as an avid student of the process, Becker has developed a wealth of knowledge and experience. She is an active participant in the Massachusetts Moderators Association and has worked at adding a more feminist perspective to the rules.

For more information, call (978) 554-3559.

Bicyclist Returns Wallet with \$652



Anatoliy Kovrizhnykh

BY DON CLEGG

TURNERS FALLS – Anatoliy Kovrizhnykh, 78, rides his bicycle, with fishing poles strapped to the carrier over his back tire, to the Franklin Area Survival Center in Turners Falls from Greenfield every weekday morning, arriving before 10:00 a.m. to pick up bread and what else is available at the food pantry. On Friday, May 15th, Kovrizhnykh, a Russian immigrant, seemed upset when he arrived at the pantry. Since he does not speak English well, it was difficult for the volunteers at the Survival Center to understand what was the matter.

Kovrizhnykh is a quiet man who generally speaks to the workers only in 'Hellos', 'Thank yous' and 'Goodbyes'. By a stroke of luck, a young Moldovan woman also happened to be at the pantry on Friday morning, and she was able to interpret his predicament for us.

It seemed Kovrizhnykh had found a "pocketbook" on his bike ride from Greenfield, and wanted to turn it in to the Survival Center because he knew we would be able to help, and he trusted us. What Kovrizhnykh had found was far more than a pocketbook. When I asked him to show me

the item he found, he passed me a wallet full of cash. We asked him to turn it into the police, but since he does not speak English and didn't know where the police station was, he asked that we take it there instead.

Before we turned the wallet over to the police, another Survival Center volunteer, Jean Thurber, the Moldovan woman and I counted the money together and found there was \$652 in the wallet, along with the owner's drivers license.

Kovrizhnykh told us it was the right thing to do when we shook his hand and patted his shoulder and thanked him for his honesty and kindness. I again asked him to accompany me to the police station, but he would not, so I headed off to return the wallet.

Over on First Street, the police dispatcher was extremely busy and apologized for making me wait. When she turned to me, no sooner had I started to tell her what had happened than she said, "You found his wallet! The man was just in here." It appeared the owner of the wallet had just cashed his paycheck and was off to pay some bills.

On Friday, \$652 was found on Avenue A in front of the post office on a busy Friday morning by a man that speaks little English and rides his bicycle to the Survival Center each weekday morning to get free bread. He returned the wallet to its owner. If that doesn't restore your faith in humanity, then what would?

Biomass Hearing Rescheduled Due to Significant Public Interest

BY JOSHUA WATSON

GREENFIELD – In the face of rising public interest over plans to build a biomass-fueled power plant in the I-91 Industrial Park, the Greenfield Zoning Board of Appeals moved to continue its meeting to Tuesday, May 26th at 7:00 p.m., in the cafeteria of the Greenfield Middle School at 195 Federal Street, to consider the required special permits for the proposed plant.

The motion to continue was requested in a letter to the ZBA from Matthew Wolfe. Wolfe is the principal of Pioneer Renewable Energy LLC of Cambridge, the company proposing to build the plant, with special permit requests before the board. In the letter, Wolfe cited "significant public interest" in his request to postpone

the meeting until it could be moved to a larger venue.

About 35 to 40 citizens were present for Thursday's meeting at the police station meeting room, which seats 40. Many came with specific questions for the ZBA about the potential impacts of the power plant to the region's woodlands, traffic, and air quality. At nine o'clock, when the hearing was scheduled to begin, the attendees filed in, filling the room to capacity. The board then read Wolfe's letter into the record, and voted to postpone the meeting.

Tuesday's meeting is open to public inquiry on the details of the proposed power plant. A super majority, or four out of five ZBA members, is required to approve any special permits.

Practically Raw

MONTAGUE CENTER – A new raw food discussion group and recipe swap facilitated by clinical nutritionist Diana Allen meets at Montague Integrative Health (next to Book Mill), and is free and open to anyone interested in learning about a raw or living foods diet.

To register, call 413-205-6971 or eat2evolve@gmail.com.

to all the Montague residents who shared their time, and who voted,

Thanks for your support
John F. (Jack) Nelson

Help! Support Girls Field Hockey

Efforts are underway to provide opportunities for local athletes to play girls' field hockey, regardless of their ability to pay for equipment and summer hockey camp. You can help.

Unlock The Mystery Dinner & Theater Show Saturday, May 30th

at St. Kaziemerz Hall
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Fast Track Biomass

The 47-megawatt wood burning power plant proposed for the I-91 Industrial Park may be sited in Greenfield, but the downsides of the project will be felt in the towns surrounding the county seat, particularly the towns situated downwind.

Proponent Matthew Wolfe, the principal and sole employee of a one-year-old Cambridge based company called Madera Energy, proposes to build a state-of-the-art electricity generating plant on the site of the Mackin gravel pit. Though he and his company have never built a power plant before, he has consulted on a similar biomass plant proposed for Pittsfield.

To his credit, Wolfe appears committed to conducting an open process as he seeks permitting for the Greenfield plant, sending letters out to residents who live in proximity to the site on three different occasions, inviting them to meetings and question and answer sessions. He called for a delay in the ZBA hearing on special permits for the plant last week, because the expected crowd would have overwhelmed the police station meeting room in Greenfield. He is working with the town planner of Montague to set up a Q&A session at the Turners Falls High School for Gill and Montague residents in the coming weeks.

But none of this has stopped "BioMass? No Thanks!" lawn signs from sprouting like mushrooms in the vicinity of the proposed plant. They are especially thick along West Gill Road, just a stone's throw from where the plant and its 250-foot tall smokestack would be located.

Residents of towns around Greenfield will not enjoy the financial benefits the proposed plant will provide to the host community (estimated at up to \$1 million annually from property taxes and \$300,000 from sewer and water fees). Though Wolfe and his consultants insist that only clean wood products – slash and tops of trees, harvested dur-

ing the course of responsible forestry management – would be chipped and burned in his power plant, critics doubt that much clean biomass could be available over the long haul in proximity to Greenfield, without destroying a good percentage of the woodlands and the view that attracts so much tourism to the rest of Franklin County. A steady supply of fuel will be needed in all seasons. If pallet wood, chemically treated wood, or construction debris is eventually used to feed the fires at the biomass plant, it would be downwind communities like Gill, Montague, Erving, and Wendell that would be inhaling the byproducts, even with the safeguards and scrubbers Wolfe believes would help keep the stack emissions clear of particulates and chemicals like dioxin.

Wolfe plans to pipe treated water from the Greenfield wastewater treatment plant up to the industrial park to use for cooling at the plant. The Franklin Regional Council of Governments, in analyzing Wolfe's plan, called attention to some of the harmful byproducts that could be released as airborne contaminants if he follows through on this part of the plan: "We are concerned that constituents of the wastewater, such as pharmaceuticals, personal care products, household hazardous waste, and other possible contaminants from the significant amount of infiltration/inflow the Greenfield sewer system receives are not accounted for in the air quality monitoring results presented by the project proponent," noted the FRCOG, in written comments to Massachusetts Environmental Secretary Ian Bowles. "Also," their report added, "it is not clear whether chlorinating these compounds (if present) and then heating them to high temperatures may create even more potential air quality contaminants."

The plant will also draw from an on-site deep rock well to provide up to 50,000 gallons a day to

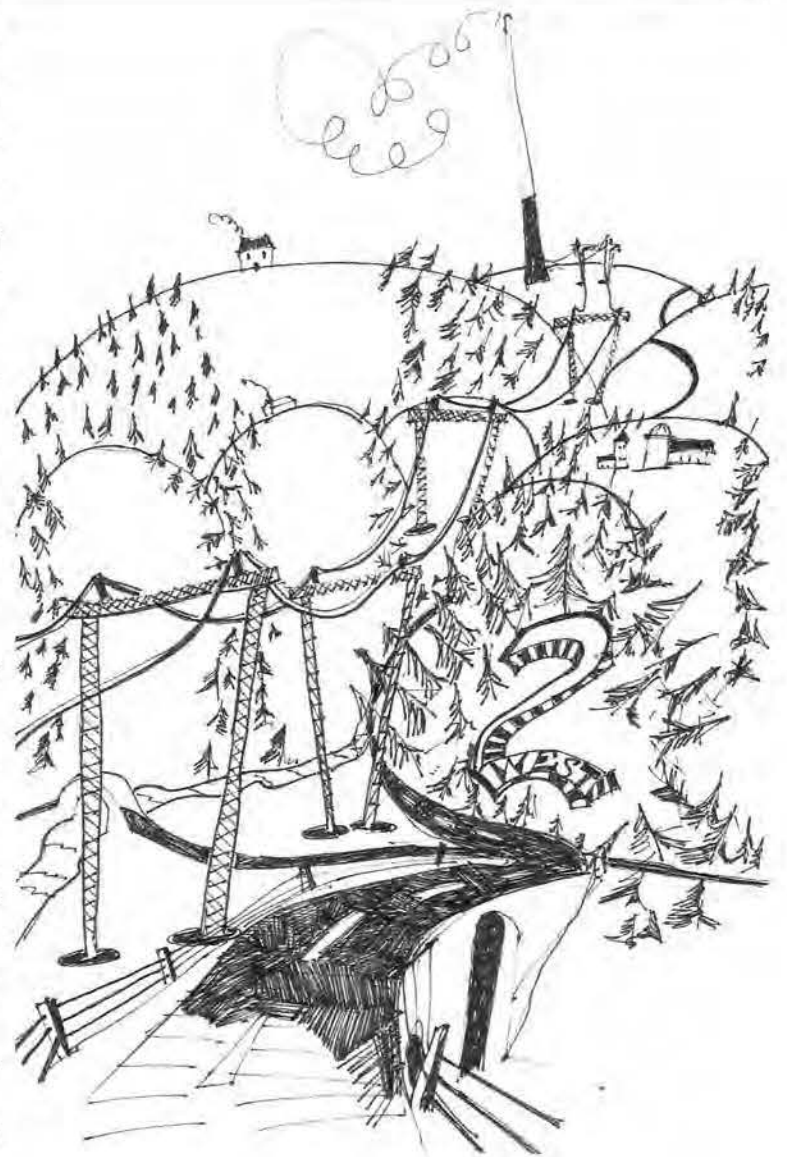
augment the treated wastewater for coolant. What will this do to the water table for those who use nearby drinking water wells? What would its effect be on the adjacent Fall River, a vital spawning stream?

Then there is the problem of truck traffic. Certainly, the site appears well-designed to handle the anticipated 114 tractor trailer trips a day estimated to keep the plant supplied with fuel, but traffic on certain of the feeder routes, specifically Route 2 west from the Gill-Montague bridge, will rise to "unacceptable levels," the FRCOG analysis said, if the plant gets built.

The region needs jobs, and the plant would provide hundreds of these in the \$250 million construction phase, and 25 steady jobs at the plant thereafter, with up to 150 more processing fuel in the forests for miles around Greenfield. The region also needs clean, renewable sources of power, and Wolfe argues his plant would provide just that: enough electricity to power 45,000 homes.

But critics point to the loss of 85% of the heat the plant would produce as an inefficient waste of precious natural resources. They say the plant is scaled at a size intended to benefit investors, while a smaller, far more efficient district heating biomass proposal for the same site languishes in its shadows.

However, with Secretary Bowles' May Day decision to fast track Madera's proposal without a full Massachusetts Environmental Impact Review, the Wolfe is already at our door. Our air quality, our health, the sustainability of our forests, the beauty of our region and its tourism potential all hang in the balance. The appearance, from this side of the river, is that Greenfield is greasing the skids to ensure swift permitting of an out-sized power plant for an untested developer, keeping an eye on the potential economic windfall for their city without allowing the impacts to surrounding communities to be fairly and fully weighed. There are certainly pros and cons to this proposal, and we all need to weigh them, carefully, before the rubber stamp is applied.



Scenic Biomass ROBERT BENT ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Support Lyme Research Bill

Thank you so much for printing my letter about Lyme disease a few weeks ago. I forgot to mention a very important step that anyone can take – it takes less than two minutes – to prevent what happened to me from happening to others.

There is a federal bill right now that needs everyone's support. H.R. 1179 – the Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases Prevention, Education, and Research Act. It will also soon be introduced in the Senate by Senator Dodd.

I encourage everyone to please call, email, write, or fax Representative Olver and Senators Kennedy and Kerry, and urge them to cosponsor this bill. Currently, the only Mass. co-sponsor is Rep. Delahunt (of Cape & Islands).

Anyone who wants to take action or learn more about the Lyme Disease Bill can go to www.cwork.com. The site provides easy-to-read information about what to say and how to contact your legislators (including all their phone, fax, and email information), sample blurbs and letters, as well as a summary and complete text of the bill.

Massachusetts has consistently ranked in the top five states of Lyme incidence, according to the Mass. Department of Public Health. It's endemic in the state, especially on the Cape, Islands, shore, and around the Quabbin. All Bay State legislators should be on board with HR 1179.

– Sharon Wachslar
Wendell

**We Welcome
Your Letters!**
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reporter@montaguema.net

**American Dead in
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MARINE CORPS LOGO

David Felton, R.I.P.



PARZYCH PHOTO
David Felton bends to guide the paver over a catch basin while paving the Green River Power Sports parking area some years ago in Gill.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH
MILLERS FALLS – On Monday, David Felton, 53, owner of Felton Construction

Co. in Millers Falls, parked his pick-up truck by the side of the French King Bridge and jumped to his death. He left a grieving family, and many friends, and employees to mourn his passing.

He was an intelligent and thoughtful man; someone who could be counted on. He was as diligent in his work as in guiding the paving machine, as in the photo to the left.

David had a sense of humor and it was hard not to like him. He will be sorely missed by all who knew and loved him.

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GUEST EDITORIALS

Sympathy for "Captain" Turner

BY KATHY BECKER

WENDELL - Our historical memories are dimming and we don't have time for storytellers to remind us of who we are. Even so, we walk in the footprints of those whose boots and moccasins trod forest paths and meadows long before we came. When we do think to remember the past, often it is to simplify events that no longer make sense, and to judge in order to satisfy our appetite for heroes and villains.

"Captain" William Turner has suffered just such a fate. It is somewhat fashionable and politically correct to vilify him as "the man who led a massacre upon local Indians." If this is all there was to his life, we would not have to be disturbed by a much more complex tragedy.

William Turner was not a military man. He was a peaceful Baptist tailor from Boston who fell into the jaws of a Puritan church-is-state system that offered no forgiveness for the formation of "irregular churches."

Erroneous religious practice was then a crime worthy of severe punishment. Baptists believed in baptism as a sacred rite to be chosen by free will when a person reached an age to understand that the path of Christ led to God. Puritans, fearful of the toll of original sin, believed that everyone should be carried from the womb to the baptismal font, that allowing children to grow up unbaptized was a blasphemy of corruption.

During the course of the

Puritan persecution of Baptists and Quakers, William Turner was one of the many men and women arrested and imprisoned in jails that were squalid, unheated, crowded, and often unsurvivable. After 30 weeks of confinement in the most horrid of condi-

being property herself. His wife died without him during the birthing of their ninth child.

The Turners' widowed landlady took over care of the youngsters. Hearing of this news, William Turner found a way to sneak into Boston to marry the



Francis Back's sketch of the attack at Peskeompskut.

tions, William Turner was given the option to end his incarceration if he would choose instead a lifetime of banishment. To entice him to a decision, he was given a three-day leave to visit his beloved wife one last time.

He went to her and then opted for banishment with other Baptists on an island in Boston Harbor, probably hoping that God would one day turn toward him in mercy. He had to leave her knowing that she would have to fend for herself and their eight children, something unimaginable in those times when a woman could own no property,

landlady, but he was found out, seized, and imprisoned. It was about a year later when his second wife died, his children once again orphaned.

A third woman, also a widow, proposed to William Turner in the fall. He was given another three-day leave to marry her and thus ensure that she would care for his children. During the three years of imprisonment that followed, William Turner frequently appealed for his release, without success. His efforts only made the Puritan power structure more aware of him as a stubborn dissident.

William Turner might have remained in misery unto death had not King Phillip's War broken out in June of 1675. English colonists were under severe and devastating attack by native tribesmen under the leadership of the brilliant avenging Chief Metacom. The colonists, lacking enough volunteers to raise a sufficient army, turned to new sources of manpower to face the terrors of tomahawk and arrow. Whose scalp would be better lifted than a free-thinking trouble-maker?

Governor John Leverett offered William Turner the chance for freedom if he would assume the title of Captain and find 70 men to form a company. Some might say William Turner sold his soul for the chance of liberty and the hope of looking after his children. He succeeded in finding 46 who would stand with him. Weakened by prison life, which had resulted in painful chilblained joints caused by freezing cold and a poor diet, "Captain" Turner and his sorry company marched out of Boston to fight tribesmen in the Connecticut River Valley.

During their march, other companies joined them. They came upon the smoking ruins of Medfield, the breached palisades of Northampton, and the destruc-

tion at Deerfield. They crossed the Bloody Brook, and in the darkness of a storm, the superstitious men crept upon a fishing encampment at Great Falls.

What happened there on May 19th, 1676, is well known. Turner's men were not very fit, but they fell upon the old men, women, and children who lay in their beds without menfolk that night. They made a bloody mess of it, and there was much chaos. When dawn came, the colonists were almost out of powder. An encampment of nearby Indians arrived and began to fight back. The colonists fled in disarray. William Turner's joint injuries caused him to fall behind and he was shot. He was left for dead that day beside the Green River. Forty-five others were lost or missing. Five men later found their way back to the army.

Of course Turner was not the only Captain at the falls fight, but he was the one made famous by dying at it. There were other companies, commanded by real military officers who did not care for their names to be attached to a Baptist infidel or to a debacle. One of them is an ancestor of mine who has passed into peaceful obscurity, so I am sure of this.

I do not like it when other people preach, nor when I do it myself, but it bothers me that little more sympathy was shown for William Turner in his day than is being extended now. Surely "Turner's" falls became so known because of the dramatic nature of the event that happened there, not as any kind of commemoration for glory, because there was no glory.

So, isn't the story of Turners Falls ironic given these days of war and fear, when men and women still go off to fight for their families in a world where religion, government, and the marketplace are not very separate, and the lines of victim and aggressor are not that clear? Shouldn't we be careful to remember, when we make our wars, that what our warriors do in our name can not be stripped away or disavowed at our convenience? We can learn to light the flame of peace and come to an understanding, but we can not walk away from the blood that has been shed; not without losing the worth of our own blood.

If we should ever change the name of Turners Falls, we should not forget the lessons that are seeped forever into the land. We should never forget the hope that all peoples have of becoming a better people.

Frederick Lego, 74, Dies at Home



Freddie Lego, with members of the Montague Elks Little League Team he helped to coach in 2008

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - Freddie Lego died on Tuesday, at home on Fourth Street, surrounded by friends and family. He was 74 years old. The cause of death was complications from pneumonia.

"He was in and out of the hospital three times," said in-law Larry Couch, who helped care for Lego in his final days. "His goal was to get up to the Little League field to receive that award."

That award was for 30 years of coaching for the Newt Guilbault League, and Freddie made it up to receive it on May 3rd.

"He had a big heart," said his niece, Candace Couch. "He loved to help people and volunteer where he was needed."

Lego worked for the town of Montague DPW for 29 years, as an equipment operator and truck driver.

Frederick Lego was born in Athol on March 24th, 1935. His

mother came from Kent, England. His father and paternal grandparents were farmers in Dana, a town that now lies beneath the Quabbin Reservoir. His grandparents' house was dismantled and shipped to an historical museum in the Midwest.

When he was growing up, Freddie lived in Boston for a time, and delivered newspapers as a boy. His son, Matt McMullen, remembers his dad telling him about the day in November of 1942 when he dropped 10 papers off at the Coconut Grove and returned later that evening to see the place in flames - the deadliest nightclub fire in the nation's history.

Freddie Lego moved to Turners Falls in 1970. He was a member of the board of directors of Mohawk Beach Estates in

Heath, a three-season resort where he owned a lot. He was involved with the Swift River Historical Society. He volunteered to maintain the grounds for the Newt Guilbault League.

After he retired from the DPW, Freddie volunteered as a "telecommunications officer" at D&D Motors in Millers Falls, answering the phone in the office, and tinkering with the jalopies.

He was a member of the Montague town meeting for many years, and always willing to sign a petition for a good cause or candidate.

Freddie is survived by five children: Freddie, Ella, Earl, Owen and Matt, and his ex-wife Ella Lego, of Connecticut. His second wife, Lillian Lego, predeceased him, as did his son Billy.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Contemplating a Worst Case Budget



Jim Slavos, and Michael Idoine (left) displayed charts showing the relative wealth of Wendell and the other member towns to the Mahar school committee last month.

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - Wendell's May 13th selectboard meeting was the first one with new member Jeffrey Pooser occupying the seat that longtime chair Ted Lewis held for decades. The board's first order of business was to reorganize, and board member Dan Keller nominated Christine Heard to serve as chair for the next year. Heard was elected unanimously.

The meeting was dominated by finance committee business: first when the committee came into the selectboard office to discuss the annual town meeting warrant, and later when the finance committee and the selectboard moved across the hall to the meeting room to discuss the

Mahar Regional High School budget, and Wendell's contribution to it, with outgoing Mahar superintendent Reza Namin and incoming superintendent Michael Baldassarre. Several Wendell citizens attended that part of the meeting, along with Wendell school committee member Dick Baldwin, and Orange representative to the Mahar school committee, Peter Cross.

In their discussion of the upcoming town meeting warrant, finance committee chair Michael Idoine said it is possible, but not inevitable, that the finance committee will request tabling the warrant article for general government to a later date, until there is some idea of whether the state of Massachusetts has any money

to give to Wendell this year, in local aid.

Keller asked, "What about [proposing] a worst-case budget?" But Idoine said the committee would rather work with real numbers. Finance member Jim Slavos said there is as yet no convergence between the Senate Ways and Means committee and the House, implying that it might even be difficult to finish the town meeting by June 30th, as the law requires.

If the town meeting goes beyond June 12th, moderator Kathy Becker will be away. During the evening, Becker nominated Kate Nolan to act as deputy moderator, and Nolan was sworn in by the town clerk, Anna Hartjens.

Idoine opened the discussion with Mahar representatives, saying the Senate Ways and Means Committee has proposed to cut the state budget by \$2½ billion, and it is hard to imagine how that will affect towns and schools, especially those that already have an approved budget.

Namin said Mahar had cut their budget by 12%, and accomplished that without impacting classroom delivery of services. The state has talked about reducing its share of regional transportation funding to as low as 44%. Mahar expected 65% reimbursement, and budgeted for 60% reimbursement. The Senate is recommending a reduction in Chapter 70 payments to school districts, and a reduction of cir-

cuit breaker payments from as high as 73% to 60% for the expense of sending a special education student out of the district.

Namin spoke of the excellent education that Mahar offers, and mentioned a 2008 Silver Rating by US News and World Report, which was based on MCAS scores and AP (Advanced Placement) Scores adjusted for the scores of disadvantaged students, and an award given by the state for a low dropout rate. He said, "Every school district is uncertain regarding the revenue they will get," and, "We may have to make some hard choices." He distributed copies of a power point presentation that described Mahar's program priorities and innovations.

Idoine did not address those points, but said the finance committee had met with DOE (now DESE, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) representatives and state legislators with a model for assessing towns for their regional school obligations that did not change total assessment numbers for the district, but should result in a more equitable distribution of costs through the so-called "alternative method" of assessment. He said that Jeff Wulfson, DESE associate commissioner, considered the Wendell finance committee's proposal legitimate.

Namin said the school had hired a consultant who considered the present method of assessment to the towns, under

the so-called "statutory method" to be the correct way to go. He said that Wendell's assessment had gone down \$6,000, but he did not add that the number of students Wendell sends to Mahar has also gone down.

Wendell's finance committee disputes the effort by the Mahar school committee to include debt service on the school building, retirement costs, and the expense of tuition for students who leave Mahar for a charter school or for school choice in the category of school expenses assessed to the towns.

Namin, looking at the new office building, and considering Wendell's relatively large stabilization fund and excess levy capacity, said Wendell seems relatively wealthy. Finance committee member Jim Slavos said that in 1983, with the advent of Proposition 2½, Wendell responded by creating a stabilization fund, while other towns applied free cash to lower their tax rate. He said Wendell has consistently taxed itself at a relative high rate, has been financially responsible and paid for education. The town's tax rate is around \$17 per \$1,000 of valuation, almost 50% higher than Orange's, at \$11 per \$1,000. After 35 years, Wendell has excess capacity, not more wealth.

Wendell has historically approved the Mahar school district's budget requests, until it became obvious the town of Orange would not do anything that might raise its per student cost to make it more equitable with Wendell's. In the past two years, Wendell changed its approach and voted a payment that would reflect an alternative method of assessment, more as a protest to the extra \$3,000 per student that the town pays (compared to Orange) than as an attempt to lower the Mahar budget. Both years the town then had to hold a special town meeting to authorize payment of the full assessment at a rate determined by the school budget passed among the four district towns.

Namin, considering the first vote, said, "You have a legal obligation to contribute to the see BUDGET pg 7

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

All Secure on Hoe Shop Road

Thursday, 5/14

1:50 p.m. Checked residential burglar alarm on Hoe Shop Road, all secure.

Friday, 5/15

1:12 p.m. Assisted with motor vehicle lock-out on Main Road.

5:25 p.m. Assisted Easthampton police with investigation in town.

5:40 p.m. Arrested

of Mountain Road, Gill. Charged with violation of restraining order.

Saturday, 5/16

9:20 a.m. Larceny report taken from West Gill Road business.

10:05 a.m. Report of

speeding vehicles on Main Road.

6:06 p.m. Report of possible medical emergency involving a bicyclist on French King Highway. Checked on same, all OK.

6:31 p.m. ATV and noise Complaint on West Gill Road. Spoke with involved subject.

Sunday, 5/17

4:30 p.m. Neighbor dispute on Meadow Street.

5:31 p.m. Burglar alarm on Hoe Shop Road, all secure.

5:41 p.m. Found dog on Main Road, unable to determine owner, finding party will hold onto dog

until owner located.

6:25 p.m. Request for officer for subjects sleeping in a vehicle at French King Highway business.

Monday, 5/18

7:50 a.m. Assisted Erving police with investigation on French King Bridge.

3:45 p.m. Assisted with medical emergency at Mountain Road Estates.

6:20 p.m. Assisted Main Road resident with abandoned dog, owner located.

Tuesday, 5/19

3:07 p.m. Assisted disabled motorist with tow on French King Highway.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Trespassing on O Street

Friday, 5/15

7:12 a.m. Report of trespassing at an O Street address.

10:04 a.m. Arrested

on a straight warrant.

2:00 p.m. Report of identity fraud at a K Street address. Referred to an officer.

5:02 p.m. Report of vandalism at the Railroad Salvage building, Power Street. Investigated.

Saturday, 5/16

2:39 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested

assault and battery at a K Street address.

Arrested. Charged with marked lanes violations, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, and driving to endanger.

12:19 p.m. Report of public drinking on Avenue A at Turners Falls Pizza.

3:00 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at an Avenue C address. Investigated.

Monday, 5/18

1:29 a.m. Officer-initiated investigation of vandalism at Turners Falls High School.

11:42 p.m. Report of

assault and battery at a K Street address.

Arrested

Charged with assault and battery, domestic, intimidation of a witness and threatening to commit a crime.

Tuesday, 5/19

6:16 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Ripley Road address.

6:37 p.m. Officer wanted at a Fourth Street address. Arrested

Charged with disorderly conduct and open and gross lewdness.

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from **BUDGET** pg 6

education of your children.”

“Which we have met.” Idoine answered.

Slavas said that according to the several criteria used by the state to determine a town’s aggregate wealth, Wendell is richer than Orange by a little bit, and poorer than New Salem and Petersham, yet Wendell’s payment per student is now the highest of the four member towns. The assessments are thrown off because Wendell sends fewer students to the school relative to the town’s population.

Baldassarre said an underfunded budget will lead more students to choice out and that will cost the district more. He said school choice should make a profit.

Idoine said, “We have not supported any reduction in the budget. We have funded [every year] at the requested amount.”

Finance committee member

Barbara Caruso said, “We did take your suggestion and went to Boston,” and found it is possible for the towns to agree to use the alternate assessment method. “We are talking about moving ahead, without overtones that we are not contributing. [Our proposal for setting assessments] is viable, and will cost Orange nothing.”

Baldassarre had a chance to look at the proposal and graphs of different measurements of town wealth that the finance committee prepared, rating Orange, Wendell, New Salem, and Petersham. He said, “This is impressive work.” But he added, “We need the four towns to agree” for the proposal to be adopted. He continued to say that Petersham Center School has furloughed teachers, and is only paying them for 160 days of a 180 day school year. He concluded, “I will do anything to make a partnership. Call me July 1st,”

when he takes over as superintendent.

Slavas said for the past three years Wendell has raised the issue of unfair per-pupil assessments; “We knew [a change] would not happen, but we need to start a conversation [early enough in the budget process to make a difference].” The four towns can negotiate and can take some years to create a more equitable solution, but a serious conversation has to start, he said.

The finance committee had to leave then, to meet with Wendell’s fire chief, and the hearing ended; the selectboard returned to their office to continue their meeting, and Namin and Baldassarre departed into the night.

The selectboard meeting opened with Phyllis Brooks reserving the town hall for both weekend days, September 26th and 27th, to hold a training in

Shambala multi-dimensional healing.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich read from a letter to the Wendell selectboard from the Palmer selectboard asking for Wendell’s support for Palmer’s effort to re-open the Union Railroad Station in Palmer, and to make favorable comments on the radio. Heard thought that Palmer is far enough from Wendell, and that an east-west railroad connection there would be of little use to Wendell citizens. She said she would send an email to the Palmer board declining the invitation to comment.

Marianne Sundell and Mason Phelps of the open space committee met the selectboard with Jay Rasku, project coordinator of the North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership. Sundell opened her remarks by saying the open space committee needs new members, since it is down to four members, and there is a short

window to refine the process in the sale of land under Chapter 61.

Presently, the town has right of first refusal in any sale of Chapter 61 land, and the landowner must inform the selectboard when offering a piece Chapter 61 land for sale. She offered a draft of a new procedure that would have that information go to the planning board, the assessors, the conservation commission and the open space committee, as well as to the selectboard. The plan is too long for selectboard members to review in time to enter it into this year’s annual town meeting warrant, and Sundell said she would be away after June 10th. Phelps said he would answer the board’s questions as best he could, and invited Pooser to liaison with him, as Pooser ran as a conservation candidate.

Keller said he wanted to acknowledge the 39 years Ted

see **BUDGET** pg 10

from **FAIRBROTHER** pg 1

town moderator unopposed, with 859 votes.

Four New Faces on G-M School Committee

The make-up of the Gill-Montague school committee changed markedly as a result of Monday’s election in Gill and Montague, with incumbent Kristin Boyle returning for three years, joined by Jeff Singleton from Montague and Jen Waldron from Gill.

Doug Brown cruised to an easy victory for the one-year seat from Montague on the school committee, while Emily Monosson, running unopposed for the two-year seat in Montague, was the top vote getter for the school district, with 745 votes in Montague alone.

In the race for two three-year Montague seats, Jeff Singleton garnered 790 votes, to incumbent Kristin Boyle’s 644, with Linda Kuklewicz’ write-in bid falling short at 164.

In the race for a three-year school committee seat in Gill, Jen Waldron trounced Valeria ‘Timmie’ Smith on her home

turf, outpolling her 182 to 78 in the town of Gill. Adding Montague’s totals to that tally, Waldron beat Smith 605 to 443.

In the three-way race for a one-year Montague seat, Garry Earles (85) and Patrick Pezzati (346) came out short against Doug Brown (731).

Far down the ballot in Montague, Paula Girard’s write-in campaign for a two-year seat on the Montague Housing Authority pulled in only 58 votes against Matt McMullen, who won with 676.

All other incumbents for town-wide office in Montague faced no opposition and were easily re-elected, with 1005 (18%) of the town’s 5668 registered voters going to the polls under cloudy skies.

In the precinct races for town meeting, incumbent Larry Peters lost his seat, with Patrick Pezzati and Sue Dresser joining incumbents Paul Kaufman, Les Cromack, Linda Ackerman, Allen Ross, and Jeff Singleton to represent Precinct 1. Top vote getters in that race were Ackerman (209) and Singleton (201), with Peters (147) trailing

Cromack (163) and Pezzati (167), and the others ranged in between.

Kathy Burek swamped Malcolm Clark for the one-year seat in Precinct 1, 158 to 45.

And in the only other town meeting race in town, perennial candidate John Donahue came up short in his bid to reclaim a seat on town meeting in Precinct 5, losing out to Laura Thorne, 19 to 56.

Several write-in candidates have accepted seats on town meeting, including Ed Golrick, Precinct 2 for a three-year seat; Kerri Lapoint, Precinct 3 for a three-year seat; Kenneth Burke and Lyn Godin, representing Precinct 3 for two-year seats; Carol Demers, representing Precinct 6 for a three-year seat, and Brian Costa and Dan Rosenberg, representing Precinct 6 for two-year seats.

As usual, Precinct 1 saw the heaviest turnout, 278 voters, followed by Precinct 3 (195), Precinct 4 (178), Precinct 2 (136), and Precinct 6 (123), with Precinct 5 bringing up the rear with a dismal showing of 95 voters.



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Ben Kilham on Bears



American Black Bear

BY TARA GORVINE

GREAT FALLS – Those who turned up at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Thursday,

May 14th enjoyed an entertaining and informative talk from Ben Kilham, New Hampshire's resident black bear expert. And

who isn't just a little curious about the beautiful and rather mysterious *Ursus Americanus*?

Kilham's lively and informative talk was illustrated by a slide show of the many bears he's raised and released over the years. There were plenty of adorable cubs, as well as shots of full grown male and female bears caught in the act of eating, scratching their backs on trees to leave their scent, testing plants for edibility, and just goofing around. We also saw that female bears will pick out "babysitting trees" in which to leave their young cubs while they go off for hours at a time. They may also be found at the foot of these trees, guarding the cubs.

Most of New England is second growth forest – forest that has grown on land that was once agricultural. Logging increases light to the forest floor, thereby

increasing vegetation and food for bears. In consequence the bear population continues to grow, so it's likely that more and more people in the Valley, particularly in more rural areas, will spot a bear at some point in their lives.

Originally, Kilham was interested in carnivores in general. But an orphaned bear cub brought to him for rehabilitation sixteen years ago started him on a more specific path. Together with his sister, Kilham has raised and released 65 bears since then.

In order to understand and better care for the bears, he carefully documents their behavior and the foods they eat. Each bear only has contact with one handler, so they do not become too comfortable with people in general. A typical day might mean a nine-hour walk in the

woods while followed by a bear cub more obedient than any dog he's owned. It is this immersion that has allowed him to understand them so well.

Though Kilham didn't set out to discover anything in particular about bears, his close attention to their behavior led to some surprising finds, such as an olfactory organ that allows bears to recognize edible vegetation by holding it in their mouth, as well as to recognize foods on their mother's breath in order to know what they should be eating. Kilham grazed clover himself in order to test this theory. This same organ also allows bears to sniff out markings left up to eight months earlier.

Since bears are oriented olfactorily rather than visually, it's possible for a bear to see a person and not actually recognize

continued next page

from IDOL pg 1



DETMOLD PHOTO

Lynne Seard

prompting one of the judges, WHAI's Dan Guin, to gush, "I think that's going to make the cover of *Bank Presidents' Weekly*."

Greenfield's Kaleigh Pereira, singing a song about an unborn child that took everyone in the hall, including apparently herself, by surprise, came in on the wrong beat and fumbled her way through the first verse before dropping the tune entirely. Though a neutral observer might have concluded this

would be more than enough to disqualify her, judge Ferne Borke came to her rescue, told Mayo to start the music over again, told Pereira to take a deep breath, and let her run through the number one more time from the beginning. She made the top five.

But the biggest surprise of all came next, when a young lady with a beautiful voice took her turn at the microphone for one last shot at top ranking. Lynne Seard, of Montague, with her unpolished, unpretentious stage manner, stood in front of the crowd and sang "Ave Maria" – the Beyonce version, but still. From the first note, she transported the crowd, the judges, the camera crew, everyone watching at home, as if an angel of an entirely different order of magnitude had descended to light up the stage and delight us for three stunned minutes with her ethereal presence and seraphic voice. So sure were we that she would make the final five that we went home without bothering to listen to one more tired country western honk by Deerfield's Charlie Wing, who underwhelmed his first time out with his low-key

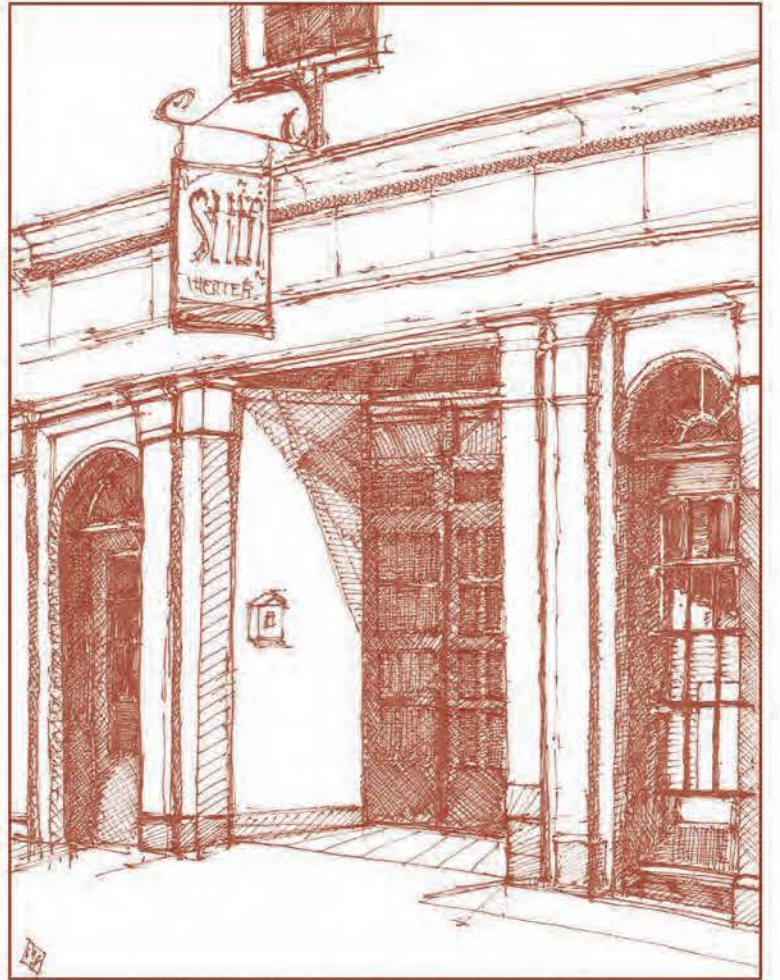
delivery of one more generic Nashville knock-off and a quaver in his voice that seemed to say, "Life's a bitch, but what the hell can I do about it?"

But surprise, surprise, when the final curtain fell and the judges totted up their scores, the Angel from Montague was nowhere to be found amid the finalists, and Charlie Wing was propped up there where by all that is holy in show biz Seard should have been – a travesty that had everyone in the audience buzzing and twittering the next day over their Sunday morning pancakes.

The other finalists turned in totally creditable performances: Matthew Latkiewicz with his herky-jerky Elton John send up, and his strangely compelling, stripped-down version of Ryan Adams' "O My Sweet Carolina", inviting everyone into his brooding internal world. And Jerri Higgins worked the stage like a pro, with flounces and flaming red tresses, doing her darndest on Alannah Myles' "Black Velvet." But none of them could erase the lasting impression left by the audience's darling, that graceful fall-

en idol with a voice like silver: Lynne Seard. You can still catch her on Channel 17 reruns, well worth a visit. Catch the final five

in competition next Saturday, May 30th, 8 p.m. at the Shea Theater. You'll be pleasantly surprised.



The Shea Theater – illustration by Robert Bent

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from previous page
nize him at once. If you speak, it will understand what you are. And if it smells you coming, you'll never see it. They are not a bit fazed by loud noises, so clapping your hands, shouting, or crashing your garbage can lids won't affect them one way or the other.

One of the confusions surrounding bears is what exactly they eat. As Kilham explained, black bears are omnivorous, but not predatory. Their diet consists of 85% high quality vegetation and 15% meat, usually in the form of bees, grubs or ants. As opportunistic eaters, they may occasionally kill a deer fawn or moose calf if they come across it.

A bear must put on 30% of its body fat before hibernation, a nursing bear 50%. Human food garbage is three or four times more nutritious than a bear's natural diet, so if it's easy to come by, a bear will eagerly consume it. High-risk human food is dependable and available in huge quantities, whereas their natural food supply is unpredictable.

As Kilham points out, all black bear nuisance problems are due to affluence. Not every

country has so much food they can afford to throw much of it away. And what bear wouldn't take advantage of our offerings? Bears are food sharers, meaning they will share excess food with each other. When they obtain food from our yards, they think we're sharing our leftovers.

Female black bears living on human food are more productive, meaning they birth and raise more cubs. However they also die earlier than bears that don't live so close to humans. For those who've heard stories of bears being shot when they wandered down a main street or near a school, you know what he means. So do the bears a favor and don't feed them. You'll just get them into more trouble by bringing them regu-

larly into a populated area, and not everyone will be so eager to have them around.

Kilham feels that most bear killings meant to protect people are unnecessary and he wishes police officers, were educated in how to handle such situations. Often times, a bear could just be led away from a town center or school. One thoughtful audience member suggested that he make an educational DVD that could be played as part of police academy training. Kilham agreed that was a good idea, but one that would take money to carry out.

As many of us can attest, the bears we see around here tend to be very used to people and take us in their stride. What becomes problematic is

if the bears or their cubs get scared. But Kilham stressed that these need not be dangerous situations if handled correctly. So if you do have a close encounter with a black bear, try to de-escalate it. Maintain a strong stance and eye contact and speak softly so the bear understands there is nothing to fear. Like any animal, it recognizes fear and weakness, so don't be a shrinking violet and don't play dead. As Kilham said, bears are predictable: it's humans that act unpredictably.

That said, the biggest ursine problem any of us are likely to

encounter are bears at the bird feeder or bears in our compost. When asked whether a bird feeder, recently torn down by a visiting bear, could be replaced high up a tree and out on a weaker limb, he replied, "Everyone tries to beat the bear, and the bear always wins." In other words, give up on the feeder until the bears go back to bed.

For more on Ben Kilham, and for books and videos by and about him, visit: www.BenKilham.com



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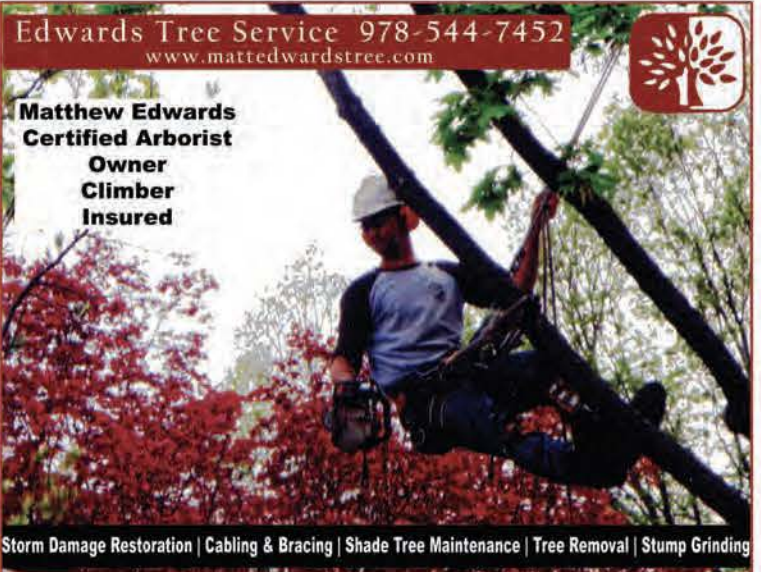
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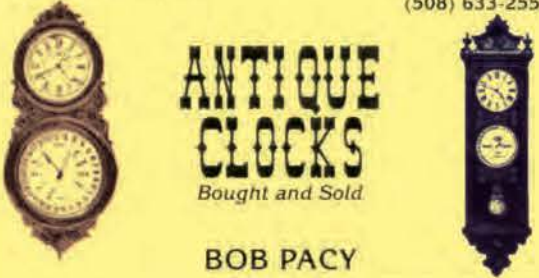



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from **BUDGET** pg 7

Lewis spent on the selectboard.

"He knows every nail in every building," and he did not campaign as hard as he might have because he was dealing with excavation to change drainage to deflect water from the town office building while the election was taking place. With this in mind, Keller suggested that a town position of supervisor of grounds and buildings might be created.

Pooser said he had called both Lewis and Anne Diemand, "to assist in the transfer of some of his knowledge to me."

In November the finance committee asked town departments to stop all discretionary spending, but the planning board has an account, authorized at last year's annual town meeting but not yet spent, to improve the town's website. A committee formed, and advertised a Request for Proposals to improve the website, but the money has not yet been spent, nor has the website improved.

Keller said he would recommend holding off for now, but later in the meeting when the finance committee was back in the selectboard office, Idoine maintained that it is time to have a functional town website. He suggested the process go forward step by step, that it would serve the town well to get a proposal, investigate fees and expenses, and continue the process. The informal town list serve does not reach everyone, as many people do not use the internet, and Keller said that is an important issue in how democracy works.

Pooser said, "There is a meeting [held May 14th, of the website committee], and my background is in that area. I could put some time and energy into it, find out how far along the process has gone, and at least remove blatant inaccuracies [in the current website]." He asked about the computers in the office building, the links to the internet, and what backup there is for records on hard drives. He said with computers, failure is not a matter of "if," but "when." He said he would be willing to survey the present system, considering issues of security and privacy.

Keller suggested that Pooser could also check the heating system, which is controlled through

the town coordinator's computer and has never worked properly.

Pooser commented on the proposed Greenfield Biomass electric generating plant, and called the public relations campaign for that effort a "greenwash," but said there is serious controversy about the impact the plant might bring. Since Wendell is close to the site, and has plenty of the required fuel, the town should stay aware of developments.

Building inspector Phil Delorey came into the meeting to request that his hours at the town office building be changed to open hours by telephone. The two long-term selectboard members asked if he had met Jeoff Pooser, the new board member. The two had met before the election, and Pooser said, "I did have you kiss my ring." Delorey said that open telephone hours have worked in Warwick, where he is also building inspector, and would save people from having to wait for Thursday office hours to ask questions. He said, "Not much building is going on in Wendell now, or anywhere else."

The selectboard approved his request, and Heard asked that he check back in a couple of months to confirm that things are going well. Keller asked if the timing had anything to do with golf season.

The selectboard received official notice that Maple Valley School will close at the end of June. Being an educational institution, the school has been exempt from paying property tax, but they have voluntarily made equivalent payments to the town, a significant portion of the town budget. Either the owners or the manager of the property will now be making those payments as taxes, or else Wendell could end up owning the property.

Back in the selectboard room, the finance committee talked a little about the budget hearing, and then Slavas said the committee is going to recommend no salary increases for town employees this year. Caruso said everyone understands the difficulties. Idoine said the highway commission has cut their budget, and has held off on hiring a third full-time employee. Caruso said the finance committee wants to make sure the highway department is not using the budgeted salary for routine expenses, and that the department is not cutting essentials.

Idoine said there are two growing problems in the department: a backhoe that should be replaced for \$200,000, and a 20-year-old dump truck that needs \$5,000 in repairs to pass inspection. He proposed shopping for a used backhoe, with \$50,000 from stabilization, retiring the old dump truck, calling the 12-year-old dump truck the backup sander, and looking for a newer truck for the town's first plow and sanding truck.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said there is \$220 million in stimulus money for fire stations, and Slavas said that the supervisor of buildings and grounds could bring issues facing the fire station and highway garage forward. Caruso said she was torn by the contrast between no raises for town employees and the creation of a new town position. Aldrich said when the Full Moon Coffeehouse had no heat, the coffeehouse committee called Lewis, and he knew how to get the heat working.

Materials to replace the fence around the basketball court have been located, but with the highway crew short one full-time worker, they will not be able to replace the fence without delaying other work. Keller suggested hiring the company that sold Wendell the parts. Labor costs for the project cannot come from the community development block grant, but Slavas suggested the police department has money, and police chief Ed Chase has said the basketball court could be a good use for some of it.

Heard said that Larry Ramsdell, the town maintenance person, had drawn up plans for a trellis to support a perennial sweet pea vine that would shade the town office entryway in summer when heat builds up, and then die back in the winter when solar gain is welcome. She laid out the plans on the selectboard table, and said that material cost to make the trellis out of copper pipe was \$225 to \$250, and that labor would be covered by Ramsdell's salary. Aldrich said Greenfield Glass has an adjustable window replacement that would allow warm air to leave the vent to the outside in summer, at a price of \$110. Payment might come from the selectboard's account, or from money remaining in the building account.

from **300th SERIES** pg 1



Donald Richer of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion

which now has more than 70,000 words of narrative, 700 photographs, a roll of those who served in the 300th, an interactive map and 53 separate audio segments of the men sharing their war experiences.

In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the Normandy Invasion and the U.S. campaign in Europe, the Montague Reporter will follow the men of the 300th as the battalion moved through France, Belgium and Germany from their landing in Normandy in June, 1944 to VE Day on May 8th, 1945. Most of the accounts will be in the words of the men of the 300th themselves.

In England, in May of 1944, the more than 600 well-trained men of the 300th knew that an Allied invasion of Europe was imminent. They were ready to move into combat, performing their various jobs as engineers while under fire and likely at times in direct combat. Donald Richter, 300th veteran, recalled his memories of the days in England before the Normandy Invasion.

"In mid-May of '44, I believe, we were assembled with all of our trucks loaded with men and equipment. We were told that we would receive assault landing training in preparation for an invasion somewhere in Europe. We

waited and waited, and finally were ordered to dismount, since we would not be receiving assault training as the assignment had gone to our sister outfit, the 299th. We were relieved, but somewhat disappointed.

"Each night we witnessed aircraft taking off, pulling large gliders and later returning. We

assumed that this was training for an invasion on the continent. The number of aircraft towing gliders was much greater on the night of June 5th, and the aircraft returned without their tows. This was a sign to us that the invasion had begun without us.

"Later in the morning, radios in the company area carried the address of General Eisenhower telling his troops in England that D-Day was indeed at hand, and that a huge armada of ships along with airborne troops had begun to invade France. He said that all of us would soon be joining in the battle to free Europe from the control of Nazi Germany.

"Most of us, I believe, had mixed feelings. While we were relieved at not having to participate in the initial landing on D-Day, we were also just a bit let down for not being called upon to participate in the greatest military assault in the history of mankind.

Note: Donald Ross received an honorable discharge as a TEC 4 on November 5th, 1945. He returned to the Springfield area where he married, had children and worked as a second generation journeyman plumber for 40 years.

The website of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion can be found at: www.300thcombatengineersinwwii.com

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD Going Over the Warrant

BY DAWN MONTAGUE

TURNERS FALLS – The Montague selectboard officially welcomed newly elected member Mark Fairbrother on Tuesday, May 19th, and appointed Patricia Pruitt as selectboard chair for the next twelve months.

The board held two liquor license hearings on Tuesday. Burrito Rojo and the Montague Performing Arts Center each applied for permission to serve beer and wine.

John Keating, a resident of K Street, presented the case for Burrito Rojo, a new Mexican restaurant he is planning to open in June on Avenue A and 3rd Street, in the former VFW post. Keating said serving beer and wine would complement the spicy foods there, and "A couple of taps is all we're looking for."

Jordan Quinn requested a liquor license for the Montague Performing Arts Center, to be housed in the former Ste. Anne's church and rectory. Selectboard member Patricia Pruitt recused herself from the hearing, because her husband is involved in the project.

Quinn's proposal included

three outdoor and four indoor spaces where beer and wine would be served, though she acknowledged the facility would not be fully operational for at least a year. Selectboard member Patricia Allen asked Quinn when she expected the first part of the complex to open, and Quinn said the rectory should be open this fall, and there have been many requests coming in to schedule events already.

Both liquor license requests were approved by the selectboard, and forwarded to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission for final approval.

Brooke Hastings, of the Turners Falls High School student council, gave a brief report on a band trip to Hershey, PA. Joshua Gammon mentioned that the high school awards ceremony is next Thursday, and graduation is Friday, May 29th. Since Gammon is graduating, Hastings will be the liaison from the TFHS student council to the selectboard for the next school year.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio requested the use of program income funds for two projects: \$2000 for downtown

beautification, including mulch and compost for the planters along Avenue A; and \$12,850 for paving and repairs at the Town Hall, following the April 23rd crash of a van driven by Melody Hillock, of Rastallis Way, which collided with the front entrance of town hall after failing to negotiate a turn onto First Street. The disbursement was approved.

The 18-article warrant for annual town meeting was read. Town meeting will be held Saturday, June 6th, at 9:00 a.m. at the Turners Falls High School.

Here are the highlights of the warrant. The finance committee and selectboard are proposing to spend \$6,815,376 for general government operations on the townside of the budget, a 1.3% increase over last year, mostly to cover a rise in excluded debt. In consideration of the dire state of the national economy, and the collapse of revenues on the state and local level, the town is anticipating at least a \$350,000 decline in state aid this year. That number may still get worse.

The proposed \$6.8 million town operating budget reflects no cost of living increases for town employees, a shift over the past year from employee contribution to their health plans from 15% to 20%, and a one-time negotiated health insurance off-

set for employees of 1.3% to compensate for that shift. The proposed town operating budget also reflects a \$50,000 savings in the DPW department for switching to a private contractor to handle curbside recycling pickup, and a \$65,000 increase in the police department budget to accommodate the increased operating costs of the new police station.

The warrant will also seek approval to borrow \$1 million in anticipation of federal funds to pay for new equipment and other improvements at the waste water treatment facility, to allow for more cost effective sludge handling. These improvements, which will come at no cost to the town, will eventually save an anticipated \$100,000 a year in operating costs at the treatment plant.

The town will be asked to authorize spending in anticipation of receipt of \$385,180 in Chapter 90 highway funds from the state, which will allow the DPW to repave the remainder of Turners Falls Road to the Montague Book Mill.

The warrant seeks approval from town meeting members to appropriate \$25,000 to pay continuing maintenance costs for the Montague Center School, to heat see MONTAGUE pg.12



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Police Chief Contract Finalized for Three Years



PARZYCH PHOTO
Chief David Hastings

BY DAVID DETMOLD

GILL – On Thursday, May 14th, the Gill selectboard approved a new three-year contract for police chief David Hastings. Hastings, who is reportedly at the top of the personnel pay scale

after 13 years as Gill's chief, will receive standard longevity pay increases of \$250 per year above his salary of \$59,457, according to Gill finance committee chair Tupper Brown. Brown said a clause in the chief's contract entitling Hastings to a lump sum payment equivalent to the balance of the term of his appointment, but in no event less than twelve months' salary and benefits, should he be terminated for any reason other than just cause, remained in force in the new contract.

Residents and finance committee members had objected to this clause at a brief open hearing on the chief's contract on Thursday, April 23rd, and had

also called on the selectboard to limit the term of the chief's contract renewal to one year, rather than three, in consideration of the uncertain financial position of the town in the present economic downturn. The town has pursued off-and-on discussions with the towns of Bernardston and Northfield about the possibility of sharing a police chief, and for this reason, too, some residents had called on the board to limit the chief's contract renewal to one year, to see how those discussions progressed.

But after numerous closed-door meetings, the selectboard finally voted 2-1, with Ann Banash in opposition, to approve the renewal of the chief's contract. The vote came just prior to Monday's town election, where five-term selectboard incumbent

Lee Stevens was defeated more than two-to-one by political newcomer John Ward. Stevens supported the three-year extension of the chief's contract.

Selectboard chair Nancy Griswold also backed the three-year renewal for the chief. "Since the beginning, the contract has been for three years at a time," said Griswold. "I saw no need to change it because the finance committee felt we should."

She continued, "David has done an outstanding job for the town of Gill, and he will continue to do so. He has never asked for these terms. My feeling was if David had gotten a one-year contract, come July 1st, he'd be giving notice."

She added, "He deserves to have that contract, and I'm very pleased he got it."

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One Hallmark Museum for Rent

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS — Last month, Premier Education Group, a private east coast career-training organization that owns 22 schools from Maine to Delaware, purchased the Hallmark Institute of Contemporary Photography. The purchase, for an undisclosed sum, gave the 35-year-old photography school a new lease on life, but did not necessarily include a new lease for either of the Institute's downtown photography museum galleries, anchors of the Avenue's revitalization effort.

Last Thursday, a large sign appeared in the picture window of Hallmark Gallery 52, on the corner of 2nd Street, (the former Crocker Bank building) advertising Commercial Real Estate for rent, and confirming the town's fears on the future of the museum



Prime Space for Lease on the Avenue

galleries on that side of the Ave. The Crocker Bank building was renovated by Rural Development Incorporated, a non-profit arm of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Agency. FCRHRA director Robin Sherman said that Hallmark owed five months' back rent on

the gallery space in the Crocker building. "We're interested in negotiating," with the new owner of Hallmark, Sherman said on Wednesday, to see if the lease can be salvaged.

But by this Thursday, the photography displayed in the windows had been taken down, along with the bold black letters speel-

ing Hallmark Museum on the building facade.

On the other side of the Avenue, in the Colle Opera House, which is owned by the town of Montague, Hallmark Gallery 85 is even further in arrears. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said Wednesday that Hallmark had not paid rent on the 2300 square feet of gallery and storage space in the Colle since "September or October." The rent for that space had reportedly been \$3,000 a month.

Abbondanzio said the town was weighing a number of considerations, including the difficulty of finding a suitable tenant for that key storefront location in a down economy, and the importance of the Hallmark Museum to the success of the town's strategy for downtown revitalization through arts-based economic development and tourism. He said the town was negotiating a reduction in the lease with the new owner of Hallmark, and appears to have struck a two-year deal to extend the museum's lease that will

leave a deficit of about \$2,500 a year in the Colle's cash flow.

Gary Camp, president and CEO of Premier Education Group, reached at his Springfield office on Wednesday, "We did meet with the town administrator, and we are enthusiastic about the museum that operates in the town of Montague's building."

He said Hallmark president George Rose had confirmed on Wednesday after speaking with the town administrator that a deal had been struck for a new two-year lease on the Colle museum, as of June 1st.

Abbondanzio said he would seek additional program income money from the selectboard to supplement the Colle's capital stabilization fund, which would lack steady cash flow under the new lease arrangement.

Patti Dion, town tax collector, said \$105,000 in back taxes owed to the town of Montague had been paid in full for the Hallmark Institute's buildings on Industrial Boulevard and Millers Falls Road, following the April transfer of the property to Premium Education Group.



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from MONTAGUE pg 11 and secure that vacant building for another winter, while a re-use plan is being completed.

Town meeting will be asked to approve a 5.7% decrease in its assessment for the Franklin County Technical School (\$640,076) for the coming fiscal year, and a 2.4% increase in the assessment for the Gill-Montague Regional School District

(\$7,363,135). The finance committee is recommending a lower assessment figure for the GMRSD — \$7,125,199 — to preserve more of the town's dwindling reserve funds in an era of economic uncertainty and state aid shortfalls.

The final two articles will seek approval to set up a study committee to recommend changes to the Gill-Montague Regional School District, including the apportionment of capital costs between the member towns, alternative assessment methodology, and school committee structure and function. Article 18 would set up a Regional School District Planning Committee to consider the advisability of merging with other school districts, or adding towns to the GMRSD.

The selectboard voted to approve the rezoning of the Montague Center School building, from a recreational/education zone to a neighborhood business zone. The designation would allow a mixed-use approach to development on the property.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG Dog Bites and Break-Ins

- Tuesday, 5/12**
12:35 p.m. Report of dog bite on Old State Road. Animal control officer advised.
- Wednesday, 5/13**
6:30 a.m. Report of breaking and entering into a motor vehicle on West High Street. 7:45 a.m. Report of breaking and entering into a motor vehicle with larceny over \$250 on Gunn Street. Under investigation.
- 8:40 a.m. Report of breaking and entering into a motor vehicle on Gunn Street.
- 10:33 a.m. Report of breaking and entering into a motor vehicle with larceny under \$250 on Gunn Street.
- 12:55 p.m. 911 hang up call from a North Street address. Found to be child playing with a phone. All OK.
- 1:15 p.m. Report of breaking and entering into two vehicles with larceny under \$250 on Pratt Street. Under investigation.
- Monday, 5/18**
6:40 a.m. Report of car vs. deer on Route 2 at Erving / Orange town line.
- 7:05 a.m. Report of person jumping off of the French King Bridge. On scene, under investigation.
- 9:29 a.m. Report of dog bite on State Road. Animal control advised.
- 1:30 p.m. Report of past breaking and entering on Pratt Street.
- Tuesday, 5/19**
9:00 p.m. Assisted Montague police with car crash into pole on Millers Falls Road at Lake Pleasant.
- 11:45 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after revocation of license and license not in possession.
- Sunday, 5/17**
1:50 p.m. Report of past breaking and entering into a motor vehicle with larceny on Old State Road. Under investigation.
- Thursday, 5/14**
7:50 p.m. Officer to Fisher Road, Northfield with Northfield police regarding trespass order.
- Saturday, 5/16**
6:30 p.m. Report of suspicious vehicle and noise at Usher Plant in Erving Center. Found male subject fishing, who stated noise sounded like tin roof moving in the wind.
- 7:07 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle after revocation of license and license not in possession.
- Sunday, 5/17**
1:50 p.m. Report of past breaking and entering into a motor vehicle with larceny on Old State Road. Under investigation.

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Postcard from France Rambling in Paris

BY DAVID BRULE – There are days here when the light is just right, and the mood coincides with the light, when it's just enough to be in Paris, to take a hike around town.

Rambling in a city like Paris doesn't have any rules, that's the good part, much like just ambling, whereas, if you'd like to saunter like Thoreau in Concord, you'd actually have to pay attention, take notes, measure things, or find deep philosophical meaning in the light upon Walden Pond. So no splitting hairs today, it's a ramble for sure.

On go the walking shoes and a backpack – you never know what you may pick up along the way, and need to carry. You're set for the open road, or rather, the open streets. There's certainly no need to pack a lunch, and when your thirst overcomes you, there's a café on every corner, and a glass of wine will do you just fine. And there's plenty of chances to fight off starvation; pastry shops were invented just for that!

The train from the outskirts brings me to St. Lazare station, and I find myself following my feet, angling up the winding

streets to Montmartre. Easy enough to keep oriented, with the white Basilica of Sacre-Coeur high up on the hill overlooking the city, seeming quite Byzantine and out of place as though it should be in Constantinople rather than Paris.

When I walk, my mind rambles like my feet and being fascinated by history, I can't help thinking about the curious events that put the basilica up there. Seems that the Emperor Napoleon III, having gotten France into a war with Prussia in 1870, managed to get himself captured on the battlefield in northern France, which put a quick end to the Franco-Prussian War, as you can imagine. The Prussians showed up in Paris,

bring their word bistrot with them, when ordering in cafes, so that eventually cafes also became known as Bistrots, which means "quick," "tout de suite" in their language.

Taking advantage of the power vacuum, the working classes of Montmartre and surrounding quarters rose up and proclaimed a workers' republic in 1871, which was shortly thereafter put down by a new French government, after executing tens of thousands of Parisians. Talk about class warfare! At any rate, it was decided to put a basilica on top of the rebellious neighborhoods, to symbolize redemption of the Marx-inspired atheists who revolted. You don't find that in

many history books, but I have it from reliable sources and apparently, it's true.

So as I said, when you're rambling you have license to do whatever you please, and to think about whatever you want, since on a day like this there are no rules, no agenda. When you're out walking you see things you'd miss if you were in the underground Metro or even on a bus. You see other walkers and other denizens of the streets.

Most Parisians, like New Yorkers, seem to be in a rush to get somewhere else. But there are plenty of others with little to do but pass time on the streets. There are Edith Piaf-like street singers, a violinist, or even entire quartets playing Mozart or Bach. There are flute-players from the Andes, or gypsies from Central Europe playing mad, intricate jazz variations.

Parisians are prone to open see **PARIS** page 16



THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Does Booze Give You Gout?

raises the uric-acid level in the blood.

- It leads to the production of lactic acid, which can increase the level of uric acid.
- It stimulates enzymes in the liver that break down proteins to produce more uric acid.

Often, gout affects joints in the lower part of the body such as the ankles, heels, knees, and especially the big toes. However, it can also attack the elbows, wrists and fingers.

Pseudogout has similar symptoms and is sometimes confused with gout. But it is caused by calcium phosphate, not uric acid.

Gout is more common in men. Men are more likely to develop gout in their forties. Women generally get gout after menopause.

Early attacks usually subside within three to ten days, even

without treatment, and the next attack may not occur for months or even years. Uric acid buildup can lead to kidney stones. Untreated gout can cause permanent joint and kidney damage.

Most people with gout are able to control their symptoms with treatment. The most common treatments are high doses of oral non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or corticosteroids, which are taken by mouth or injected into the affected joint. Patients often begin to improve within a few hours of treatment.

More than two drinks a day for men, and more than one for women, increases the risk of getting gout. Other factors include family history of gout, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, narrowing of the arteries, thiazide diuretics, and low-dose

aspirin.

No specific dietary changes have been proven to reduce your risk of gout. However, even though there is no absolute proof that a gout diet works, it seems like a sound idea to avoid purines. Foods high in purines include organ meats, anchovies, herring, mackerel, asparagus and mushrooms.

Some iffy stuff:

There are studies that show an association between coffee drinking and lower uric acid levels. The current evidence isn't strong enough to begin a coffee habit.

Vitamin C may reduce uric acid in your blood. However, vitamin C hasn't been studied as a treatment for gout.

Cherries have been linked to reduced uric acid in your blood, but it is unclear if they affect gout symptoms.

If you have a questions write to fred@healthygeezer.com

JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION
BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ – Q *Can drinking alcohol give you gout?*

Gout, which is one of the most painful forms of arthritis, is caused by a build-up of crystals of uric acid in a joint. Alcohol can lead to increased production of uric acid so it puts you at a higher risk of getting gout.

Alcohol leads to gout in multiple ways:

- It contains purines, proteins that are broken down into uric acid. Purines are found naturally in your body and in some foods.
- It promotes dehydration, which

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JEP'S PLACE: Part CXXIII

Driver's Test



BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GILL – The dreaded day arrived. I came home to find the kerosene drum, standing upright with the end chopped out. The axe leaned against it. I knew I was in deep trouble when I saw the grim look on Pa's face.

"Look at that! Kerosene's all gone."

I didn't know what to say, knowing he must have been in a blind rage to go at the drum with an ax.

"That drum's no good – it's got a hole in it. All the kerosene leaked out," he said. "I'll use it for a rain barrel."

I don't know what he thought the Chevy had been running on, but I figured it was time to register the car and apply for a ration book.

Registering the car, at 15, was easy. The insurance agency asked no questions about age. Since they got the plates from the registry for me, I didn't have to answer any questions there, either. The Gill ration board issued me an A book. I got a friend with a license to drive to D.O. Paul's general store to fill up the tank.

Learners could drive at age 16 when accompanied by a licensed driver. My friend knew the test

route. We drove the route, over and over, until I had all the required maneuvers down pat. On my 16th birthday, I drove to the Registry of Motor Vehicles to take the test during the noon hour.

"Age 16, today; are you?" the Registry official asked, reading my application. "How'd you learn to drive? You didn't learn just this morning."

"Oh, I learned on the farm, driving tractors and stuff."

He may have been tipped off that I was familiar with the test routine when I went on to the next part of the test before he instructed me. He cut the road test short. I figured he'd flunked me and have me arrested for driving around the test circuit before I was 16. But apparently he could see I could drive with a fair amount of skill, and he issued me the license.

– Continued Next Week

Burrito Rojo Coming Soon... in June



J.D. Keating, his wife Christina Sheppard, daughter Maddie and young Andrew plan a family style Mexican eatery in the former VFW hall

BY BRIDGET SWEET

TURNERS FALLS – His second child, Andrew, was only one month old when J.D. Keating got the word. His next baby, a fast-food Mexican restaurant on the corner of Avenue A and 3rd Street named Burrito Rojo, had just been given the green light for a construction loan from the Western Massachusetts Enterprise Fund of Holyoke, and was cleared and ready for takeoff in June!

"Good Food Fast" is the motto. Keating wants his patrons to be able to walk in, order, and eat a great meal within half an hour. He claims, "The burrito is the new American hamburger," and we will gladly pay him Tuesday for one of them today.

Burrito Rojo will offer California-styled burritos at a

reasonable price. Keating is fortunate to have Seth Licata, formerly of Armadillo Burrito in Keene, consulting on the ramp up. Their menu is posted online at <http://burritorojo.com>, and it looks mouth watering! (Skipping the Tofu anyway.)

Burrito Rojo will have Wi-Fi, the work of local artists displayed on movable screens separating off a special kids' space, where birthday parties and other private functions can take place. Keating plans to use local produce from local farms, and will seek a beer and wine license too.

The whirlwind renovations under the direction of Carsten Dahl have transformed the old back room of the VFW faster than Mickey with a Sorcerer's cap on could have. Can't wait til June!

- 1:00 p.m. Naturalist Laurie Sanders
- 2:00 p.m. Montague Update: Stephen Kulik
- 3:00 p.m. Valley Idol Semi Finals 2009
- 6:30 p.m. Over The Falls: Italy Comes To Heath
- 7:00 p.m. GMRSD (Live)
- Wednesday, May 27**
- 1:30 p.m. Safe and Green Campaign
- 3:00 p.m. Seabrook 1977.
- 4:30 p.m. Seneca Falls

- 5:00 p.m. Senses of Place
- 6:30 p.m. Shingle The Roof
- 8:00 p.m. 2009 Valley Idol Finals
- Thursday, May 28**
- 2:30 p.m. All About Bars
- 2:50 p.m. Discovery Center: Northern Bats
- 4:00 p.m. Downtown on Ice
- 5:00 p.m. Dodging The Bow
- 7:00 p.m. Select Board 5/19/09
- 9:00 p.m. Valley Idol Finals 2009

MCTV Channel 17 Afternoon/Evening Schedule 5/22 - 5/28 visit www.montaguema.net for complete schedule

- Friday, May 22**
- 1:30 p.m. Why or Why Not Nuclear Power?
 - 4:30 p.m. Wisdom Way Solar Village Documentary
 - 5:30 p.m. Women and Aids
 - 6:00 p.m. Over The Falls: Maintaining The Strength
 - 6:30 p.m. Montague Update-Susan Shilliday
 - 7:00 p.m. GMRSD 5/19/09
- Saturday, May 23**
- 1:30 p.m. Health Hill: Transfat
 - 2:00 p.m. Full Circle Adoptions
 - 3:00 p.m. Francis Doughty
 - 4:00 p.m. In Liew We Trust pt1
 - 5:30 p.m. Over The Falls: Tree Steward Project
 - 6:00 p.m. Valley Idol Semi Finals 2009
 - 9:30 p.m. Franklin County Matters Community Action
- Sunday, May 24**
- 1:30 p.m. Allagash 2007
- Monday, May 25**
- 1:30 p.m. Coffee House Series Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen, Bruce Kahn Trio
 - 2:30 p.m. Exploring New Worlds in New England
 - 3:00 p.m. Falls Table 4-14-08
 - 4:00 p.m. Fate of the Stallion
 - 4:30 p.m. Francis Doughty
 - 5:30 p.m. Franklin County Matters Domestic Violence
 - 7:00 p.m. Select Board 5/19/09
 - 9:30 p.m. In Liew We Trust pt1
- Tuesday, May 26**
- 2:00 p.m. An Inside Look into Iran
 - 4:00 p.m. Athol to Orange River Rat Race 2009
 - 6:00 p.m. Back In The Day Night Variety Show
 - 8:00 p.m. Baystate Franklin Medical Center Health Beat
 - 9:00 p.m. Both Sides of the Bridge
 - 10:00 p.m. Athol to Orange River Rat Race 2009

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



THURSDAY, MAY 21st
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *All-Star Variety Benefit* for the Dakin Animal Shelter. \$5 to \$20 suggested donation.

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

FRIDAY, MAY 22nd
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Unit 7*, jazz, funk, soul, 9:30 p.m. \$5 cover.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Mike Stetson Band*. Rock & roll, 9:30 p.m.

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: *Drew Hickum & the Colonels*, \$5 at 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Blame It On Tina*, Wendell's fav's, Jen Spingla, Bob Rosser and of course Tina, 9 to 11 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 22nd & 23rd
Ashfield Community Theater presents: *The Voysey Inheritance*. A collision of money, family, corruption and conscience. A tale for our times. Directed by Martin Shell at the Ashfield Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.. \$12/\$6 opening night.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, MAY 22nd to 24th
33rd Annual Flea Market & Gas Engine Show, Rt. 10, Bernardston. Food booth, raffles, gas engine show & awards. AUCTION!! 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday a benefit for the United Church of Bernardston. www.unitedchurchofbernardston.org.

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

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Wild Wood performs at Mocha Maya's Coffee House & Espresso Bar, Shelburne Falls on Friday, May 29th at 7:30pm. With foundations in folk, bluegrass, and old-fashioned rock and roll, the group melds sweet vocal harmonies with the sounds of fiddle, upright bass, mandolin, drums, guitar, and piano to create a sound that appeals to people of all ages and musical tastes. Also performing: 5-Alone, a jazz a cappella quintet, as special guests.

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

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Love Bomb*. Dance, dance, dance, 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *DJ Fern* plays dance hits of the 40's to today, 9 p.m. no cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Eric Love*, Singer/Songwriter playing Covers from the 60's & 70's, 9 to 11 p.m.

Tophill presents Memorial Day Extravandance with Tidal Wave, Lisa Greenleaf, and Linda Leslie with TBA fiddle, Mary Cay Brass piano/accordion, Stuart Kenney upright bass and banjo, and Matthew Kenney percussion.. Admission \$16. Starts with waltzes at 6:30, with contras 7 to midnight. Guiding Star Grange Hall, Greenfield, 773-1671.

SUNDAY, MAY 24th
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Charlie Bondy's* book release party and reading, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*, Memorial Day Reggae BBQ Bash, 9 to 11 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 25th
Evening Sing-Along, 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. At the Montague Center Library with Children's Librarian, Linda Hickman. Guitar and banjo with a variety of children's music. For more information, call the Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week, or the Montague Center Library, 367-2852, on Monday evenings.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Open Mic*. Music, words, you name it: come out and play. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 26th
Deadline to enter the Relay for Life Golf Tournament at Oak Ridge Golf Club, Gill, held on May 31st. Four-person scramble format with a 8 a.m. shotgun start. For info and to register, see www.thecomicalmysterytour.com.

calmysterytour.com.

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Knitting & Crafts Night*, 7 to 10 p.m. Any craft/skill level.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Montague Phantom Brain Exchange*, \$5 cover, 9 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 28th
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Lady Bright I Sway* grunge/indie from NYC & Boston, \$3 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Larry Kopp*, Country and City Blues Guitar with vocals, 8 to 10 p.m.

Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls: Live jazz every Thursday, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. (413) 863-4441.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY,

MAY 29TH & 30th

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Nobody's Fool*. Irresistibly appealing Paul Newman embodies the spirit of Sully Sullivan, a 60-ish loner in small town America looking for reconciliation with his estranged son and everyone else he has upset along the way. Jessica Tandy, Bruce Willis, Philip Seymour Hoffman. Directed by Robert Benton. 1994. R. color. 110 min. Easthampton resident Ed Check, who was art director on this film, will be at Saturday's show for Q & A. Music before the movie: Fri. 7 p.m., tba; Sat. 7 p.m., *The Ambiguities* (literate rock). Shown at Memorial Hall Theater, 61 Bridge Street, Shelburne Falls. (413) 625-2896.

FRIDAY, MAY 29th
Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Caitie Kelly Band*. Rock & roll, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 30th
4th Annual Family Fishing Day! Arts and crafts, fishing lessons, flytying lessons, free raffle and plenty of fish to catch! Come share the joy of fishing with children of all ages! 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Of Roots an' Rocks: A Natural History of Cabot Woods and the Rock Dam of Turners Falls Cabot Woods and the nearby Rock Dam are two of the places most special to nature-loving residents of Turners Falls. But unless you're from



Jerri Higgins, one of the five finalists competing Saturday, May 23rd to be the next Valley Idol! At the Shea Theater, Turners Falls, 8 p.m.

"the Patch" of Turners Falls, you may not even know they exist. Join Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center naturalist Dawn Marvin-Ward and geologist Steve Winters for a spring walk they call "Of Roots an' Rocks." Dawn will share her expertise on the flora and fauna of Cabot Woods. Steve will explain the geology and history of the Rock Dam, as well as the significance of the mysterious ironed seeps. "Of Roots an' Rocks" will be an easy hike along a level trail, but the short descent to the Rock Dam on the river may be slippery. Please wear appropriate footwear. Hikers should meet at the USGS parking lot at 9 a.m. at the south end of G Street. Bring water, bug repellent, and sun screen. We will return to the parking lot around noon. Rain date Sun., May 31. For ages 12 and older. Optional \$5 to \$10 donation. Pre-register (413) 775-1671 (Pioneer Valley Institute)

The Comical Mystery Tour presents: *Unlock the Mystery*, dinner and theater show, 6 p.m. at St. Kazimierz, Turners Falls. Tickets: 863-4075.

SUNDAY, MAY 31st
At The Bookmill, Montague Center: A Reading: by Susan Campbell from her work *Dating Jesus*. By the age of twelve, Susan Campbell had been flirting with Jesus for some time, and in her mind, Jesus had been flirting back. Why wouldn't he? She went to his house three times a week, sat in his living room, listened to his stories, loudly and lustily sang songs to him. So, one Sunday morning, she walked to the front of her fundamentalist Christian church to profess her love for Jesus and to be baptized. In this lovingly told tale, Susan Campbell takes us into the world of fundamentalism - a world where the details really, really matter. And she shows us what happened when she finally came to admit that in her faith, women would never be allowed a seat at the throne. 7 p.m., free.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3rd
Movie and discussion: *Consuming Kids, The Commercialization of Childhood* at the Greenfield Middle School at 5:30 p.m. View this documentary about the multi-billion-dollar youth marketing industry and its devastating impact on the health and well-being of kids. Produced locally by the Media Education Foundation.

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

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

The Turners Falls Fishway will open for the season! The fish viewing facilities are open Wednesday to Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., through June 14th.

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

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Showtimes for Friday, May 22nd to Thurs., May 28th

1. ANGELS AND DEMONS PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 3:00
2. NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: BATTLE OF THE SMITHSONION DAILY 6:30 9:30 PG in DTS sound FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:00 3:00
3. X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE PG13 DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12 3:00
4. DANCE FLICK PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15 FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:15 3:15
5. EARTH G FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:15 3:15
5. OBSESSED PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15
6. STAR TREK PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:30 3:30
7. TERMINATOR SALVATION: THE END BEGINS PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 UNTIL WED. FRI, SAT, SUN, MON 12:30 3:30

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Saturday, 5/23, 9 to 11 p.m. 60's & 70's covers: *Eric Love*
Sunday, 5/24 9 to 11 p.m. Memorial Day Reggae BBQ Bash *The Equalites*
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FRI: 5/22 9:30PM | \$5 Unit 7 (jazz-funk-soul)
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Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway Plan Nears Completion

BY DAWN MONTAGUE

TURNERS FALLS – Widely recognized for its natural beauty and rich historical heritage, the section of Route 2 that runs from Athol to Williamstown known as the Mohawk Trail is designated by the state as a Scenic Byway. That designation, and a completed corridor management plan, are required to apply for funding from the National Scenic Byway Program.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments began researching and writing the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway east corridor management plan over two years ago. It covers the towns of Athol, Orange, Erving, Wendell, Gill, Montague, and Greenfield. A management plan for the western section was completed in 2002, and a number of projects detailed in that document are currently being implemented.

The plan will be published at the end of June. A May 14th meeting at the Montague town hall marked the beginning of the 30-day period of public comment on the document. Beth Giannini, senior transportation planner at FRCOG, gave a presentation that highlighted key issues in each section of the plan.

For example, the natural resources chapter documents the areas of the byway that are home to 74 species of rare animals and plants – including bald eagles, peregrine falcons, wood turtles, and adder’s tongue fern – and the ways in which the management plan can help preserve their habitats.

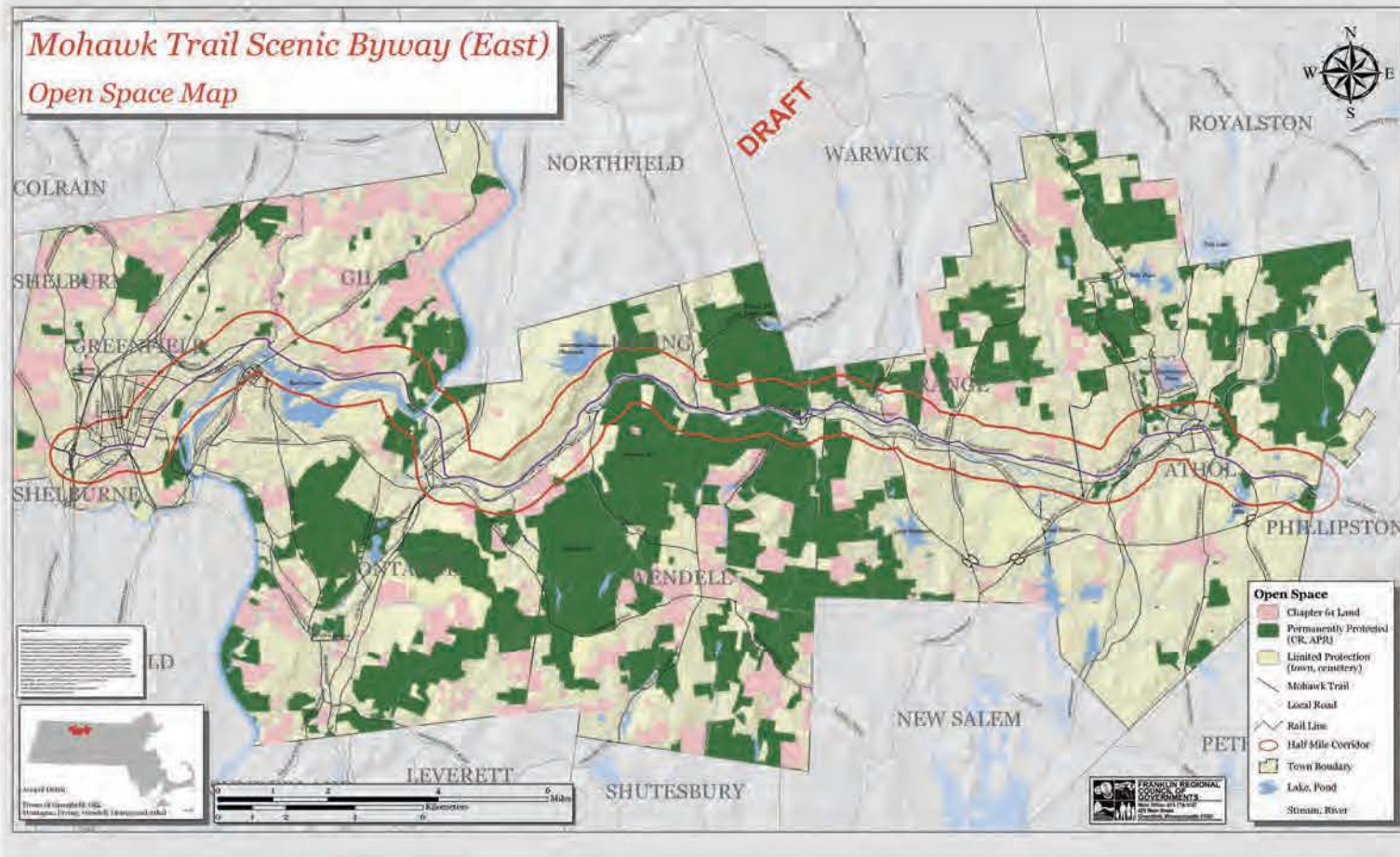
Another area of focus is how

to highlight the region’s industrial heritage, and increase the public’s access to information about this history. The plan suggests adding signs to show where notable sites are located, and creating pamphlets and internet resources.

Many comments were focused on how the byway and management plan might help

draw tourists to our region. During the question-and-answer period, Witty Sanford pointed out that “defining ourselves as Western Mass is self-defeating – what does it even mean?” The Pioneer Valley was named by a group of businessmen as a marketing campaign in 1939, to increase tourism in the area. Branding this region as the Mohawk Trail may be part of a similar strategy to

bring more visitors this way. Giannini emphasized that the draft is a work in progress, and is open to changes and additions by members of the communities in the region. A draft of the Mohawk Trail east corridor management plan is available online at FRCOG’s website, or by calling their office: www.frcog.org; or (413) 774-3167.



PARIS from page 13

displays of affection in public – it is, after all, the City of Love as well as the City of Light – so you get used to all the necking in public. Little children out walking with their teachers file by two-by-two, singing and speaking impeccable French, for six year olds!

Parisians seem to have a lot of time on their hands, what with lunches that last an hour and a half, and although the American concept of the 20-minute sandwich in between job tasks is unfortunately catching on, the cafes and parks are usually full during the noon hours. Kids still have time to sail their little sailboats in the reflecting pools in the Luxembourg Gardens, in front of the Senate, and you can sit as long as you like on a bench in the sun if you can wrestle one away from the couples in deep embrace.

In the past, you had to pay five pennies to a war widow who had the privilege and the duty to collect the charge from you and give you a ticket good for a seat for as long as you wanted it. Kind of a welfare system with dignity that lasted for decades after the last

war. But little old ladies don’t collect anymore.

After a respite in the park, and a self-satisfied doze in the sun, the desire for espresso becomes overwhelming. Any café will do: you don’t have to spend the equivalent of \$5 for a cup at the Deux Magots when you can have a pure drop of that essence of coffee, standing up at any café counter down a side street, for \$1.50! Although you don’t get the atmosphere and the enjoyment of watching the spectacle of the promenade on the Boulevard St. Germain, you can eavesdrop easier at the counter.

The politicians, of course, get raked over the coals: Sarkozy gets points for stealing issues from both the Left and the Right, the Socialists are fighting among themselves, frustrated by their inability to develop a new political formula, infuriated by the bobbing and weaving of President Sarko. Meanwhile, everyone has an opinion about the various strikes: university professors and students are on strike, hospital workers are on strike, a few wildcat strikers working for the government-

controlled gas company shut off gas for a number of neighborhoods over the weekend to protest the economic slowdown, office workers have taken to bossnapping, keeping the executives locked in their offices overnight. And so on.

Outdoors at the sidewalk tables, clouds of cigarette smoke rise up during the debates. The French are far from giving up their cigarettes. No smoking indoors, but outside it’s just fine, as a matter of fact, it is a right, almost recommended. Takes some getting used to, all over again.

Moved by the caffeine-fueled inspiration, and the growing dark clouds indicating the arrival of the daily downpour, the Impressionist Museum seems just the right thing. The Orsay museum is crowded, full of foreign tourists. It’s certainly hard to imagine there’s a global economic crisis going on, judging by the number of people who have the time and means to spend a weekend in Paris!

I head to the upper floors, where the crowds are thinner and where some of the more beauti-


ful canvases are located, up near the top floor skylights, where the natural light can bring out the feel of the painting as the artists intended. These painters made a reputation for themselves by breaking the Classic rules: they painted outdoors, depicting ordinary people doing ordinary things, and capturing the fleeting moment on canvas.

This drew the wrath of the painting establishment in the 1860s, so that the rare few who bought these paintings were the Japanese, and ... the Americans. So many Renoirs and Monets have wound up in our local museums back in the States. The subjects of the paintings are caught in time, in evocative light, while the world outside – our world – keeps changing.

After coming here on a yearly visit to view some of these works that have evolved now into old acquaintances, you develop a rapport with a Pissarro, a Sisley, a Monet or a Van Gogh, it’s like visiting old friends who never age. They’ve remained the same, captured in time; it’s the viewer, the visitor who is forced to recognize the toll of time. Then two

little girls in pig tails and matching red-framed glasses take a picture of a Renoir with their digital camera, giggle, and move off to another painting and to continue their growing up.

The rainstorm outside having passed, the late afternoon sun shines on the bright wet pavement, and it’s high time to be getting back to the quiet suburbs. One last spot down my street brings me to a plaque on the wall next to the playground where the neighborhood children play on swings and see-saws. This being May 8th, celebrated in France as the day the War ended in 1945, the plaque is decorated with a bouquet of flowers for an American soldier who died here on this spot in 1944, in the effort to push the Germans out of Paris. It’s always the last stop on my rambles, and I make it a point to thank the young man who ran down this street so many years ago, and was stopped by a bullet, just here.

It’s important that the French have not forgotten, and that I be the one to brush over his name with my fingertip, after such a fine day in May. 

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