



## TFHS Helps Reipold Family

High School Highlights  
Page 6



## COMMUNITY NIGHT

At New Sheffield School  
Page 3

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 34

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 29, 2008

## Historical Society Finds a New Home

BY LILLIAN FISKE  
MONTAGUE CENTER - Several times over the years there have been attempts to organize an historical society for the town of Montague. Around 1900, a group formed at the Montague library. Uncle Delbert Whitney wrote that a trunk full of slates and

ings. Since then, Mary Melonis and I have stored historical artifacts of Montague in our homes, until we were able to occupy the second floor of the Masonic Hall on Main Street for many years. When that building was sold in 2004, every-



The Montague Grange is the new home of the Montague Historical Society

school supplies in the attic of his home was donated, but was not accepted because the society had no place to store it.

Part of the Whitney home was the little brown schoolhouse that was located between the Congregational church and the Moseley home, where North Street runs now.

Many things have been lost, as the society has had no storage place.

Lionel Girard, from Montague Center, was the first president of the present society, about forty years ago, and stayed in office for eighteen years. During his tenure, donations were stored in his home and one of his outbuild-

society's collection was moved into our old schoolhouse, the East District School, on Federal Street. That building, where we continue to house large bulky items, is not suitable for long time storage, has no electricity, water or bathroom facilities.

Recently, the Montague Grange agreed to allow us to use a large room upstairs, above the entrance to the hall. Our members and friends have been generous in helping to raise the funds for extensive renovations to this room. The painting is done, lighting has been installed, and our artifacts are being moved see GRANGE pg 13

## Airport Budget Trimmed; Residency Requirement Fails



### Report from Montague Town Meeting

DETMOLD PHOTO

BY DAVID DETMOLD  
MONTAGUE - The Turners Falls Municipal Airport emerged from annual town meeting on Thursday, May 22nd, the third and last day of town meeting, with a budget reduced by \$8,000, (a little more than 15%), from \$50,687 to \$42,687. The airport commission had sought a compromise figure of \$47,485, but town meeting approved the lower figure on an amendment proposed by Precinct 5's Chris Sawyer-Laucanno.

Sawyer-Laucanno's amendment also changed the funding source for \$15,000 of the airport's budget from general taxation to the airport's retained earnings fund. The remainder of the airport's budget for the coming year will be paid for from airport user fees; no money from the general tax levy will be used to support operations at the airport.

According to Laucanno, town accountant Carolyn Olsen had advised him prior to the meeting that the airport had a balance of \$16,668 in retained earnings. At the meeting, Olsen said the majority of that fund derived from recent "timber management" at the airport in advance of the planned runway expansion project.

Sawyer-Laucanno said, "If we can reduce

\$19,000 and change from the tax levy, that is significant." He took issue with the fact that town meeting had approved \$20,000 for new mowing equipment at the airport in January, to reduce the expense of subcontracting, but no savings in the mowing line item had appeared in this year's airport budget.

"We put out \$20,000 for mowing equipment. Now we're being told it's not going to save anything. Why did we do that?"

Airport manager Michael Sweeney argued against the deeper cuts, and the change in funding source, saying, "This is an operation that needs some kind of cushion for the future."

Airport commission chair Peter Golrick asked town meeting to treat the airport "no better, no worse... in line with other departments," but the meeting rejected that argument, and voted 44 to 30 to accept the deeper cuts.

Later in the meeting, a petitioned article brought forward by airport commissioner Mark Fairbrother, seeking to enact a residency requirement bylaw, to limit voting members of all town boards and commissions to Montague residents, failed on a standing vote of 45 to 22.

In March, the selectboard had set policy to allow two of seven members of the airport com-

mission to be chosen from people who are not Montague residents.

Precinct 2's David Jensen called the proposed residency requirement, "a solution searching for a problem." He said, "If we accept this, this is going to affect every board and committee. There are occasions when we might want to go beyond the borders of the town for an appointment."

In a fact sheet signed by Fairbrother and distributed before the meeting, Fairbrother argued, "This proposed bylaw would simply make official what has been, and currently is, the long standing general practice for appointments to board and commissions

see BUDGET pg 11

## Memorial Day Observed



MATT ROBINSON PHOTO

Rich Colton fires a salute on the Montague Common

MATT ROBINSON  
MONTAGUE -

A small group of people gathered at the flag pole on the Montague Center Common to observe Memorial Day on Sunday, May 25th, as Richard Colton, a Vietnam era veteran, conducted a short ceremony dedicated to all those who sacrificed their lives in defense of America. The Scouts from Troop 6 stood in a color guard. "I want people to remember the

MEMORIAL pg 10

### PET OF THE WEEK

#### Easygoing Girl



#### Maggie

My name is Maggie and I'm a three-year-old lab mix in need of a good home. I am a sweet and easy-going girl. I love getting outside, and I am looking forward to doing a bit of exercise this spring. I know I will make a loyal friend to a very lucky person, and I can't wait to start a whole new life with someone who will give me all the love I deserve. I would do best in a home with children 10 years or older. I can live with dogs and confident cats after a proper introduction. 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.

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### CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

#### Mother Goose on the Loose

BY LINDA HICKMAN

Mother Goose on the Loose will be held Saturday, June 7th, at the Carnegie Library at 10:30 a.m. The program is an interactive mix of guitar and banjo music, rhymes, stories, puppets, and other visuals. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers and are performed by Children's

Librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix. Monthly Saturday programs will be held through September. The programs are supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. For more information call 863-3214.

#### DCR Offers Adaptive Hiking in Wendell

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Universal Access Program will offer adaptive hiking for individuals with disabilities, their families and friends at Wendell State Forest in Wendell on Saturday, May 31st. Assistive equipment, staff instruction,

and teamwork will help people of all abilities access conventional hiking trails at a leisurely pace. Equipment includes Terra Trek manual wheelchairs, baby joggers, walkers, crutches and gait belts. Cost is \$2 per person, \$4 for families, and \$10 for groups. Call 413-259-0009 for times and to preregister.

### MILLERS FALLS LIBRARY NEWS

#### Titanic Thanks



MILLERS FALLS- Sam of Millers Falls presented librarian Anna Greene with a flowering

plant as a thank you for helping him find interesting books about the Titanic. Sam decorated the pot and planted a petunia in it at the Millers Falls Library Club on Tuesday, May 20th.

#### MPD Bike Auction May 31st

BY DOUG BROWN  
TURNERS FALLS - The Montague police department bike auction will be held on Saturday, May 31st at 9 a.m., at the police station garage on First Street (across from the Shady Glen). Bikes will be

available for viewing at 8:30 a.m. There are over 40 bikes available for auction this year. Cash or check; no credit card sales. For more information, call and leave a message at 863-8911 x156.

### SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- June 2nd - 6th

**GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Council-on-Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Mealsite Manager is Chris Richer. The Center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. A reservation is necessary and transportation can be provided. Trips: Call the Senior Center 863-9357 or 863-4500

**Monday, 2nd**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

**Tuesday, 3rd**  
Meals only  
**Wednesday, 4th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 5th**  
1 p.m. Pitch  
**Friday, 6th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
Trips: Call the Senior Center 863-9357 or 863-4500

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

### FACES & PLACES



JOSEPH PARYCH PHOTO

An employee of James Bent Enterprises sorts Indeck rubble, one brick at a time, a job akin to counting sand granules at the beach.

Montague Historical Society  
**Fund Raising Tag Sale**  
**Saturday, May 31st**  
**8am - 1pm**  
Grange Hall  
Montague Center  
**RAIN OR SHINE**  
*A great tag sale*

**GREAT FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE WEEK**

**Grade 7: Cassandra Huppe**  
**Grade 8: Haley Fiske Josh Ruiz**

**BIKE PATH RIBBON CUTTING**  
**Friday, May 30th**  
Noon, at the Bike Path near the Discovery Center, followed by bike **safety check** in Peskeomskut Park, 12:30 p.m., **bike parade** to Unity Park, 1:00 p.m. and **speeches**, 1:30 p.m.; **bike rodeo** 2 p.m!

**Great Falls Farmers Market**  
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# 200 Attend Community Night at New Sheffield School

BY BRIDGET SWEET

**TURNERS FALLS** - The New Sheffield Elementary School held a Community Night on May 15th, in the field between Hillcrest and Sheffield. About 200 people attended.

As people arrived, Eileen Tucker met them with a warm greeting and a sign-in book, with one raffle ticket per family. The raffle ticket winners received a bucket of summer toys: Jamie Vienik, Catie Reynolds and Sara Bradley.

Robin Whiteman's second graders had two fundraising boxes out, raising money for victims of the recent earthquake in China, a country her class is currently studying. The second graders raised thirty dollars for earthquake relief that evening, with many parents apologizing for leaving their wallets at home and not being able to support the cause.

As always, a real crowd pleaser was provided by Betsy and Bill Burnham's petting zoo. The Burnhams brought their two lambs, with guinea hen and rooster for the students to view and pet. Comments such as, "Yeah, lambey!" could be heard as the students got close.

The Burnhams answered the students' questions and demonstrated how to feed the animals. The lambs seemed to bleat as if on cue to some of the children's questions. Betsy Burnham spun wool on



PHOTO BY BRIDGET SWEET

Karissa, age 6-1/2, colors a white parachute during Sheffield School's Community Night, May 15th.

her spinning wheel, a task the children could try their hand at.

"The wool was very soft and fuzzy," one six-year old boy observed.

Hillcrest principal Chris Jutres was busy holding court at one corner of the parachute, playing a game called 'Popcorn'. The children held corners of the shute and flung balls up in the air like popping corn: a vivid demonstration of group energy and teamwork! Jutres smiled warmly, calling by name children from all three Montague elementary schools she has worked with in recent years.

The bubbles and chalk area seemed to be favorites for the youngsters and their parents. One couple from Turners

Falls stood nearby and chatted while their two-year-old son Theo and five-year-old son T.J. were busy creating masterpieces. They did not know if T.J. would enroll in the New Sheffield Elementary School for fall, as they aren't certain where they will be living by then.

Physical Education teacher Melissa Hunn was much in demand overseeing the basketball free-throw, and the sponge relay race throughout the evening. She came up with the idea to 'Decorate the White Parachute.' Karissa, 6½, of Montague Center School, colored while she sat in the center.

Some parents stood in small groups overseeing their children while others social-

ized. Two Montague Center School parents said they wanted to try holding a sponge relay race for an upcoming party.

Chip Wood, whose tenure as principal of Sheffield will end this June, when he becomes the director of elementary education for the Gill-Montague schools, remarked how, "Excited (he is) the schools are coming together."

Nearby, art teacher Nancy Meagher displayed three community weavings made by the students at all three elementary schools. Whiteman and Meagher

received a grant from the Gill Montague Education Fund to display them. Whiteman plans to have the weavings framed at a local shop and then hang them at the school.

Retired teacher and Hillcrest/Sheffield School Council member Carol Holubecki observed the over-cast sky and said, "We lucked out. The clouds separated. Everyone is intermingling. All the kids are playing together."

Monica Lane, parent of three, agreed, "It's about time. All my kids are here, my 16 and 13-year-old could find stuff to do too," as she sampled healthy snacks from nurse Claire Johnson.

"Together, we are better." is Hillcrest School's motto. On Thursday, May 15th, that seemed to be a motto for all Gill-Montague residents to live by.



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## Why is Wendell Leaning So Heavily on Property Taxes and What Can We Do About It?

BY DANIEL KELLER -

Recently we have heard at least one complaint about Wendell real estate taxes, which prompted a lengthy discussion on the town chatboard about the relationship between assessments, property values, the tax rate, tax bills, and town spending on construction projects.

I do think people can and will attribute their higher tax bills to whatever particular hobgoblin they may see on the economic or political horizon, and I even understand why in the minds of some it may seem that town officials are the culprits, but it is unfortunate that some feel the town building projects are to blame. I don't think it's quite that simple.

Actually the payments for the debt for the construction of Wendell's new town buildings will not begin until next year, so any increases people have seen in their property taxes this year are not related to the projects, with the exception of payments for Fiske Pond, and the Meltzer property, which was purchased to provide space for the new town office building.

Payments on the actual construction debt will begin next year (FY 2009) and taxpayers may well see some impact then, although to some extent the impact will be cushioned because the Swift River School debt has just been retired, and may be whittled down further by actions the finance committee may recommend for the use of free cash or the stabilization fund.

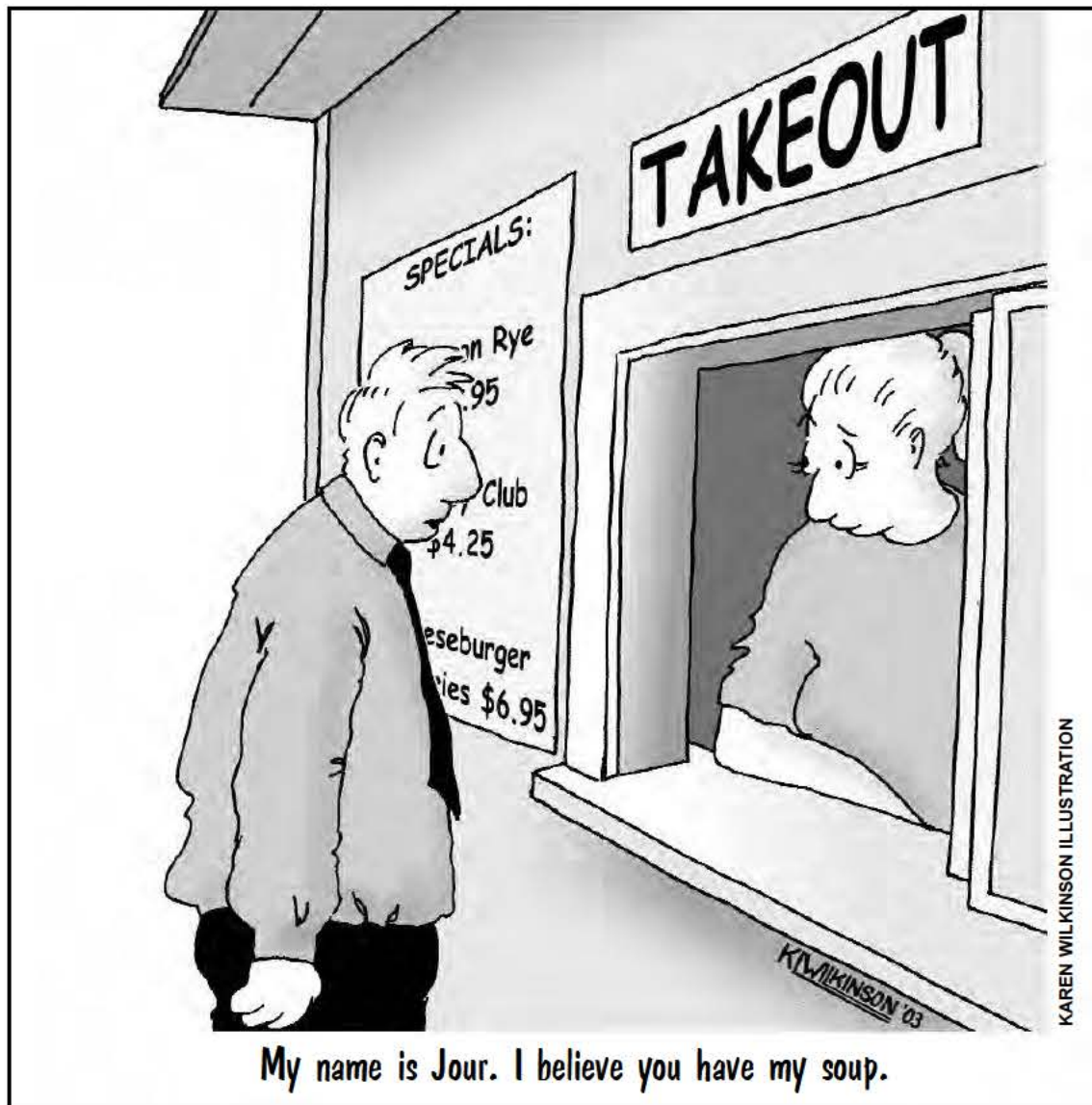
If we really want to look at the root causes of high property tax bills in Wendell, I think we need to focus on some more fundamental inequities. The first goes back to the 1980s. At the beginning of the 80s, Wendell and all

other towns were receiving Federal Revenue Sharing, a sum sent back to the towns as their share of federal revenue. At that time Wendell was receiving over \$200,000 a year. Reagan put an end to all that, and within a few short years our share was reduced to zero. It's been zero ever since. This is a fundamental problem that needs to be addressed, and we are pursuing this inequity with our representatives, and would urge all townspeople to do the same. We deserve a share of federal revenue.

Another structural problem is the dependence on the property tax to fund so many parts of our public life. The town now depends on the property tax to fund the lion's share of all town activities, from education to general government, fire, police, and highway. We know the property tax is a regressive tax, that it impacts lower income people more severely than higher income people. A much larger share of public expenses should be funded by a progressive tax, and this is another movement that we should get behind, even if it's another uphill battle.

A third problem is the decline in payments by the state in lieu of taxes on state owned land. Wendell has so much state owned land that we are heavily dependent on these payments, which have been radically cut over the last 15 years, although they have recently increased somewhat, due to the intense pressure applied on the state by Wendell and many other towns.

An improvement in any one of these revenue problems would far overshadow the cost of the building projects. I, for one, hope townspeople can enjoy the benefits of the building projects, including the drinking water now



My name is Jour. I believe you have my soup.

KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

### Get Down in the Gutter

Leverett Village Coop's Annual Spring Fling! takes place Saturday, June 14th, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. with the music of John Sheldon, Pitchfork, Steve Crowe Trio and others. Music and BBQ lunch provided by the Coop. Starting at 10 a.m. will be tarot readings, local artisans selling their wares, and kids activities. Learn about the Leverett Energy Commission, Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, and the Village Coop itself at booths set up by these and other local organizations. More info: call the Village Coop (413) 367-9794, 180 Rattlesnake Gutter Road, Leverett. Free!

available in all town buildings, and focus our attention on making some progress on these more fundamental problems.

The new town buildings are here to stay, but perhaps the weight of the property tax on our citizens can be lifted with a concerted effort.

- Daniel Keller is a member of the Wendell selectboard. The opinions expressed here are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of anyone else in Wendell town government.

Wendell Annual Town Meeting • Tuesday, June 3rd  
7 p.m. • Town Hall.

### American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 5/21/08



(Casualty sign temporarily located next to Wagon Wheel Restaurant on Rte. 2 in Gill)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Thanks for Town Meeting Coverage

On behalf of the board of directors of MCTV, I would like to thank the staff of both Turners Falls High School and MCTV for their extra efforts that made possible the live airing of the recent annual town meeting, which carried over to multiple days. While the sound has been excellent in the high school auditorium in previous town meetings, it apparently did not transmit as well over the airways, and our viewing public let us know!

When MCTV staff Robin Mide and Dean Garvin were preparing for the live airing of the most recent town meetings, they enlisted the help of the Turners Falls High School staff. Both John Day and Doug Finn went out of their way to ensure that a revised sound system and audio feed were set up for the town meeting. The station has heard from several viewers that

sound quality was much better, so the improvements were both noticed and appreciated.

This year, the setup was complicated by the Ja'Duke Productions performance happening in the high school auditorium on Friday and Saturday evenings, on the first weekend of town meeting. There were multiple sets of cables to be run in a short time, and in spite of some Saturday morning difficulties, many people pulled together to get the meeting started on time. Many thanks to all of them.

I would also like to thank all the folks that gave up their time to operate cameras, as well as the local Girl Scouts who acted as runners with the microphones.

- Anne Harding  
MCTV  
Turners Falls

## Congrats, Raffle Winners

Turners Falls Band and Chorus Boosters would like to congratulate the three winners in our travel raffle. First prize: a \$1,000 gift certificate to Cruise & Travel Agency, went to Liane Basha of Greenfield. Second prize: a \$500 gift cer-

tificate to Cruise & Travel Agency, went to Mary Kociela of Montague. Third prize: two tickets to Foxwoods, generously donated by Travel Kuz, went to Nancy Underwood of Gill.

We would like to thank everyone for participating in this raffle, with special thanks to Foster's, Food City and Stop & Shop, for their support.

- Barbara Kuklewicz  
Turners Falls Band and  
Chorus Boosters

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EYE ON TOWN FINANCES

# Montague's Override: New Form, Same Urgency

BY JOHN HANOLD

**MONTAGUE** - Montague's annual town meeting, continued to two additional sessions for the first time in memory, is now behind us -- but one major challenge still has not been met. Town meeting members finally approved a budget with substantially different assumptions from the one recommended by the selectboard and finance committee, but retained a smaller, revised override of Proposition 2½ to help fund it.

The original override was proposed for \$250,000 in an article by itself, linked to a specific "basket" of town services. This meant the majority of town services, contained in a separate article, would continue on if the override failed, and only the services itemized in the "basket" would automatically be eliminated if the override were turned down by the voters at large.

Now, the approved general operating budget for the town was contained in a single article,

and depends on a smaller override of \$150,000 to balance it. Thus if the override fails, Montague has no budget, and town meeting must re-convene to consider how to change the spending (or funding sources) in order to operate in the new fiscal year.

In other words, the override is no longer a way to save certain services; it is now an essential part of funding all town services.

The meetings of the selectboard and finance committee earlier in 2008 considered using reserves to balance the budget versus recommending reductions in already-modest department requests. The recommendation presented to town meeting relied on the use of reserves, but also contained smaller salary increases than in previous contracts and no change in the pattern of benefits cost increases. The changes approved by town meeting both froze employee salaries at 2008 levels and established an ambitious objective for contract nego-



tiations: to reduce the town's cost of benefits by over \$95,000 (equivalent to reducing the town's share of workers' health plans from 90% to 80%).

Although negotiations with Montague's employee unions have begun, there is no prediction of when they will be completed. Wages and benefits for all three unions are on the table for agreement.

As I see it, there are four possible outcomes this summer. First, an override passes and the negotiation objectives are reached. In this case, no further action is necessary for fiscal 2009 on the town side of the budget. Second, the override passes and the negotiation falls

short, leaving a gap between zero and perhaps \$150,000. Third, the override fails but the negotiation objectives are reached, and we have to close a \$150,000 gap. In the fourth case, the override fails and the negotiation does not provide the expected cost reduction. In this case the shortfall would lie somewhere (very roughly) between \$150,000 and \$300,000.

Town voters will probably settle the override question before the contract negotiations are complete, and so will narrow the alternatives for the budget outcome. At our May 21st meeting, the finance committee and selectboard discussed briefly whether a "what if" discussion of a failed override represented negative thinking or lack of support for it, but finally looked at some alternative actions if the June 16th townwide override vote falls short.

Until we have a final budget, I feel we should present clear alternatives to town meeting rather than simply hope for a positive vote.

We did not reach a decision on May 21st, and I don't expect we'll have a final recommendation until the special town meeting on June 17th. However, if voters do not support their part of the solution laid out by town meeting, the boards will certainly start by revisiting the portion of the original "basket" that was restored to the budget on May 3rd and 7th. Those services have been widely discussed in town, and their elimination would meet a funding shortfall of up to about \$200,000.

In the absence of any significant change in the Gill-Montague budget since January 24th, I have not speculated on

what the school committee will present to the June 17th meeting, nor what town meeting may say in response.

Furthermore, I haven't speculated about the results of contract negotiations with the town unions. It is certainly possible that the combination of the over-

**"The override is now an essential part of funding all town services."**  
- John Hanold

ride vote on June 16th and special town meeting action on June 17th will solve only part of our potential problem, but a successful override vote reduces the possible impact on townspeople

and tells our neighbors and town meeting members that we value the services we've enjoyed in the past.

I am mindful of the dilemma of voting a property tax increase that preserves only the bare continuation of basic services by employees urged to accept a wage freeze and higher insurance costs. However, just as households cope with the rising cost of energy and food, our town deals with the rising cost of public services and inadequate funding from state and federal sources. We can't quickly affect the out-of-town part of the gap, so if we want these services to continue we must authorize the money to preserve them locally.

Many of our neighbors, of all ages, are on limited income, but often they are the ones most in need of the services in question.

I urge voters to do their part on June 16th and support town meeting's recommended override.

*John Hanold is the chair of the Montague finance committee. The opinions expressed here are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of anyone else in town government.*

## Racist Memorabilia on Display

I enjoyed attending the Gas Engine Show and Flea Market in Bernardston this weekend, an annual benefit for the United Church of Bernardston.

However, among the many vendors selling interesting and memorable items, there was one who made a different impression on me. Along with a typical array of old tools and historical memorabilia, his booth displayed a number of Jim Crow era signs such as "Colored Waiting Room" and "Colored served, take out only," as well as an entire case devoted to Ku Klux Klan knives, belt buckles and such. This odious display was capped by a framed photo-

graph of a lynch mob with three bodies hanging from a tree overhead.

Some friends and I brought our concern about this booth to the pastor of the church, who was also concerned, but felt unable to take any immediate action, though he said that the church would institute a policy to prevent vendors from selling "offensive" material next year. Indeed, it is not solely the responsibility of the church who sponsored the event to deal with a situation like this. All of us who attended the event and saw this booth are responsible for taking action to show our intolerance of this kind of racism.

This is not to say we should

forget or disregard history. To the contrary, it is our responsibility to own up to our past deeds. More importantly, we must realize that the racism of the past as represented by this kind of junk still pervades our society today; it's not "just history". Profiting from the sale of racist signs and weapons only reinforces its continued acceptance today.

I am disappointed in our collective ineptitude, fear and unwillingness to take a strong stand against the racist values we claim to deplore, even when they manifest in such an obvious form.

- Toby Briggs  
Gill

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# TFHS Community Aids the Reipold Family

BY JOSH GAMMON & LINDSEY WILSON

Recently, a student at Turners Falls High School and his family suffered a tragedy. On April 18th, just over a month ago, the Reipold family home caught fire on Montague Road in Wendell. The cause of the fire is still unknown, but it is believed to have started from an electrical short in the adjoining shed.

Ethan Reipold, an eleventh grader, tried in vain to put out the raging flames enveloping his home, but was unable to, as the fire had advanced too far.

Although he managed to save the life of one of his beloved cats, he could not save his house, or anything in it.

Upon learning of this tragedy, Ethan's class, the Class of 2009, immediately donated \$250 to the family, which they had earned the following day from a pancake breakfast. They continued their effort to help their classmate and his family by bringing several bags of clothing and toiletries to them at the same time they presented the money.

The following week, the Turners Falls High School Student Council held a coin drive for Ethan and his family, under the name of, "Coins for a Cause." A box was placed in every room, and during the last class of the day, students

donated all they could. Every member from the student council was in charge of motivating a specific class and monitoring their progress. Through the efforts of the students and the Student Council the school succeeded in raising over \$1,400 in four days to benefit the Reipold family.

On May 13th, the Student Council called a schoolwide assembly to present the earnings to Ethan. The assembly was opened by Student Council members Abbey Daniel-Green and Lara Ames, who explained the purpose of the assembly, and proceeded to present the check

to Ethan. As Ethan walked down to receive the check, "the students burst into a spontaneous applause," Student Council advisor Hannah Neville recalled. "Everyone felt good about helping Ethan."

Neville was pleasantly surprised by how, "our school had become a community, and showed that [Ethan] is loved by the rest of us." Advisor Deb Partridge said Ethan felt, "included and honored by the school," and added, "It was truly amazing that in only four days the school was able to raise over \$1,400 in change."

The Reipold family has been in the process of starting over, with help from various community members. Although



LINDSEY WILSON PHOTO

Ethan Reipold received a check from the Student Council on May 13th for over \$1400, raised in donations at the high school after fire destroyed his family home.

this tragedy happened to the family, the community has come through. "It truly shows," Neville added, "that we really do look out for each other."



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## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

### Park Gathering Dispersed

**Sunday, 5/18**  
12:44 p.m. Report of shoplifting at Exxon/Mobil, 132 Third Street, Turners Falls. Investigated.  
1:35 p.m. Report of unwanted person at a Chestnut Street address, Turners Falls. Services rendered.

**Monday, 5/19**  
12:40 p.m. Report of larceny at a Third Street address, Turners Falls.  
2:37 p.m. Reported general disturbance at a Grout Circle address, Millers Falls.

2:48 p.m. Report of a fight on Tumpike Road, across from Turners Falls High School. Investigated.  
3:46 p.m. Report of trespassing at an L Street address, Turners Falls. Advised of options.

**Tuesday, 5/20**  
12:43 p.m. Brush fire investigated near Old Northfield Road by the high tension lines, Montague.  
6:48 p.m. Report of runaway from town of Greenfield.

### Wednesday, 5/21

1:09 p.m. Report of fight at Unity Park, Turners Falls. Investigated.

### Friday, 5/22

8:56 p.m. Officer wanted at an L Street address, Turners Falls. Peace restored.  
2:38 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Main Street address, Montague.  
7:07 p.m. Report of vandalism at Our Lady of Czestochowa. Investigated.  
7:55 p.m. Report of accident with personal injury at Ninth Street, Turners Falls. Arrested

Charged with operating motor vehicle under the influence of liquor, marked lanes violation, minor transporting alcoholic beverage, failure to use care starting, stopping, turning or backing and failure to notify Registry of Motor Vehicles of address change.

10:28 p.m. Report of runaway at a Bridge Street address, Millers Falls. Investigated.

### Saturday, 5/23

4:26 p.m. Report of possible suicide attempt at an L Street address, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

9:44 p.m. Report of a possible suicide attempt at General Pierce Bridge, Turners Falls. Subject removed to hospital.

10:28 p.m. Report of unwanted person at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague. Peace restored.

11:00 p.m. Report of runaway at a Fourth Street address, Turners Falls. Returned to home.

11:10 p.m. Report of unwanted person at a Turners Falls Road address, Montague. Arrested

Charged with vandalism of property and resisting arrest.

### Sunday, 5/24

3:34 p.m. Report of narcotics violation at the far end of Unity Park, Turners Falls. Gathering dispersed.

11:31 p.m. Report of fight at Chinatown Restaurant, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Arrested

Charged with illegal possession of Class D substance, assault & battery, disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace and threatening to commit a crime.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

### Unwanted Person at Post Office Lot

### Thursday, 5/8

Disabled motor vehicle at junction of Jennison and Rush Road. Removed by owner.

### Sunday, 5/12

Maple Valley student AWOL. Brought home for weekend visit and did not return.

### Tuesday, 5/14

Door forced open on empty/unoccupied trailer in Mt. Laurel Park.

### Friday, 5/17

Unwanted person removed from Post Office parking lot. Vehicle towed.

### Tuesday, 5/21

Railroad signal light pole reported down at Farley Crossing.

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# Valley Idol: Finalists Will Compete for \$1,000 Prize

**TURNERS FALLS** - Now it's down to five.

The finalists in the Shea's Valley Idol competition are: Tami Brooke, of Turners Falls, Dave Peck, of Greenfield, Erin Richman, of Royalston, Vicki Stankiewicz, of Hadley, and Jen Tobey, of Montague.

They were picked by a panel of three judges from more than two dozen original contestants, and they will now go on to compete in the finals at the Shea Theater on Saturday, May 31st, at 8 p.m. for a top prize of \$1000, second and third prizes of \$500 and \$250.

On the 31st, the finalists will be asked to sing one song from a soundtrack, as well as a song of their choice.

Tobey, who placed third in last year's Valley Idol competition, came on strong on May 24th with her rendering of

*Before He Cheats*, a Carrie Underwood song, and *Save Me* by Shinedown.

On Saturday, she may mix it up a bit with Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*.

Last year, Tobey won the WRSI singer songwriter contest.

Brooke, who moved to Turners five years ago from New Jersey, has not performed locally before. But she impressed the judges on Saturday with *Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue*, a Crystal Gayle tune, and *Some Kind of Wonderful*, by none other

A few years back, Brooke placed 3rd out of 1345 contestants in the Talent America contest in New York City, so look out Turners Falls!



Jen Tobey

Besides Brooke and Tobey, Montague audience members will have another hometown favorite to cheer for on the final night of competition, as last year's Valley Idol, Turners' own Alana Martineau, will kick off

the evening with a song of her own, to set the standard for the evening's competition.

MCTV taped the semi-finals and will also tape the finals of Valley Idol, to air Tuesday, June 3rd at 10 p.m. The five finalists have been invited to perform at the Shea Theater's benefit in the park barbeque fundraiser, "Tines and Tunes," July 12th, in Peskeomskut Park.

Also on May 31st, an "audience favorite," will be selected from among the Valley Idol contestants, and awarded a prize of \$250.

Get your advance tickets by going to [www.theshea.org](http://www.theshea.org); last year's finale sold out!

Earlier in the day, at 9:30 a.m., winners will be picked

from among the top competitors in each age group of Valley Idol, Jr. These youngsters have been giving some amazing performances, so come to support them in their final day of competition. The winners in each age group will receive a \$300 savings bond. The finalists are:

**8 - 10 Years**

Leanna Albanese, South Deerfield; Zach Berquist, Athol; Rachel Howe, South Deerfield; Dane Scott, South Deerfield; and Kirsten Ward, Greenfield

**11 - 14 Years**

Kimberly Ainsworth, Colrain; Una Jensen, Shelburne; Brooke Martineau, Turners Falls; Kiara Sampson, Greenfield; and Kyle Woodcock, Greenfield

**15 - 17 Years**

Zoe Salls, Northfield; Cayla Plasse, Greenfield; and Allison Willis, Charlemont

## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

### Griswold New Chair of Selectboard

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

**GILL** - At the top of the selectboard agenda on Monday night was Lynn Rubenstein from the State Electronics Challenge (SEC). This new program is grant funded by the Environmental Protection Agency to encourage town governments to examine their computer usage, procurement and disposal and see if they can make more environment-friendly choices in these areas. Armed with several handouts, Rubenstein - an energetic presence - pointed out to the Gill selectboard that there were "no sticks" involved in joining the SEC, and the only downside was that town officials would need to spend some time gathering information on municipal computer use.

Selectboard member Ann Banash mentioned dryly, "It's not like we buy a lot of computers. Certainly with the budget cuts we won't be buying one next year."

Nonetheless, the board voted in favor of joining the SEC.

"There are little things that can be done that make a fairly dramatic difference," Rubenstein told the board at the end of her presentation. She mentioned two-sided printing, switching off power strips and shutting down computers for the night as simple but often overlooked ways by which municipalities can save energy and money.

Discussion shifted to the ongoing reconstruction of Main Road. Shirley Flagg and Joanne Rabideau, Main Road residents, appeared before the board to talk about recently installed storm drains there. Both Flagg and Rabideau feel the drains pose a serious hazard to residents, or anyone walking along the road. The construction of the drains includes a gap between the top of the drain and the gutter that someone could easily step into and break a leg or ankle. (Board member Nancy Griswold compared the storm drains to World War II pill boxes.)

Flagg said the gaps were

"treacherous... they really bother me." After some discussion, board member Leland Stevens agreed to take a look at the new storm drains.

Following last week's town election, the board reorganized, with Griswold appointed as chair, and Banash as clerk. Administrative assistant Tracy Rogers was recognized for all her hard work and thanked by Griswold and the rest of the board.

Lastly, in the continuing saga of town hall's heating system, Rogers asked the board what to do with a bill from the Sandri company. As reported earlier this year, Sandri had done some work on the town hall's furnace that would not have been necessary had the company been cleaning the boiler regularly in the first place. They have sent a bill for \$536.60 to the town, but have not been returning Rogers' calls about this disputed amount.

"Don't pay until they return your calls," Banash told her.

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It is difficult  
to get the news from poems  
yet men die miserably every day  
for lack  
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

Poetry Page edited by  
**Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno,**  
**Janel Nockleby and Jamie Berger**

design by Boysen Hodgson

Readers are invited to send poems to the  
Montague Reporter at 24 3rd Street,  
Turners Falls, MA 01376;  
or email us your poetry at  
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### Heart of a Fool

Our lives, and certainly mine, are full of choices,  
There are so many that they could not be re-called.  
Good choices I thought were made, but some how crumbled apart.  
My heart seems to get broken at every turn.

So I choose not to make choices.  
I choose to stay alone.  
Love and trust is not for me.  
My heart seems to be broken all the time.

So I take the chance of trust and new love.  
I hope for the same in return.  
Reaching out as if something has changed for me.  
My heart gets broken every time.

Time goes by, the pain is still there.  
So I listen, watch and try to understand this person I love.  
I go against all common sense.  
I seem to always trust, so I close my eyes and try again.  
Once again, my heart only gets broken every time.

I say to myself, no more shall I trust.  
I say to myself, you are best left alone.  
I stumble and fall.  
Hope for love and affection draws me in  
I feel like the bee to honey.  
Only to have my heart broken every time.

So I wonder and ask, trying not to judge.  
Should I let my heart be broken every time?  
Should I let my heart remain broken all the time?  
Only the heart of a fool can decide.

-Don Clegg  
Montague City

### Spirit of Grandma

Everytime time you see a cricket  
Or you hear the whistling wind say  
Katie where art thou?  
It's Grandma letting you know she is still here

-Katie Parzych  
Gill



### CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

**Katie Parzych** is 13 years old and lives in Gill and Greenfield, MA. She attends the Greenfield Middle School.

**Don Clegg** enjoys involvement in the community. He is looking for a place to heal, then grow again.

**Suzette Snow Cobb** lives in Turners Falls. This poem was inspired by The Montague Reporter's Valentine's Day love poetry night at the Rendezvous last February.

**Lori Shine's** chapbook 'Coming Down in White' was published by Plot Books. Her poems have appeared in 6x6, The American Poetry Review,

Boston Review, Conduit, New American Writing, Tin House, and in the anthology Isn't It Romantic: 100 Love Poems by Younger American Poets. She lives in Easthampton, Massachusetts.

**Betsy Wheeler** grew up in the Upper Mississippi River Valley, received her

MFA in poetry from Ohio State University, and was a Stadler Fellow at Bucknell University's Stadler Center for Poetry. Her poems have recently appeared in numerous journals and her chapbook, Start Here, is available from Small Anchor Press. She is co-editor of Pilot and Pilot Books. The above poems first

appeared in Octopus Magazine.

**Fred York** lives in Turners Falls.

**Don Plante** lives in Gill.

**Emma N. Young**, a native of Martha's Vineyard Island, resides in Northampton, and has just finished her

Bachelor of Arts in poetics at Hampshire College.

**Doug Turner** lives in New Salem.

**Kevin Smith** is 51 years old, a Turners Falls resident, lobbyist and therapist as well as poet.

The editors would like to thank the following for their generous financial underwriting of The Poetry Page

**Anonymous, Klondike Sound, Carlin Barton, Montague Dental Arts, Dr. Robert Koolkin, Harry Brandt, Green Fields Market, Michael Farrick, and Michael Muller.**

### For Deb

An amazing thing to find  
So precious and special  
Is what you are to me  
On those clear evenings  
When I look upon the stars  
I will search to find the brightest  
And pray,  
Love will find you,  
And stay with you,

Always

-Don Plante  
Gill



### Sisyphus Explained

"Sure it's a hard job but somebody's got to do it.

"Besides-at least I'm working outside; it's a little warm but ... Hey Look - there goes Persephone! She sure is a sight.

"But you know what that means, there can't be any outside work above yet, not til the big guy works this thing out with Demeter. Meanwhile, I'm moving this stone.

"By the way, you might want to shift that chariot.

"Anyway, I'm my own boss and it's good healthy labor, not like what I hear Hercules has to do - cleanin' them damn stables - now there's a job you can have.

"Oh, 'Roll another one, just like the other one ... ""\*

\*Traditional rolling song

-Doug Turner  
New Salem

### The Problem of Happiness

A bee futzles bloom to bloom  
flirting, up close hypnotic, humid-

sweetness nods faith  
in a randomness logarithm

familiar, mad. What keeps me  
ratcheting around

the problem of happiness is this  
this-ness we have

in the car on the way to the shore.  
There is sun on the road and terror

never removed. You are  
my favorite cardinal direction.

I touch the insides of your clothes.  
I am a simple carnivore. Keep going

flowers, wending iteration,  
chance of snow.

Your pedaling shoves my agnostic like the moon  
cuts a hole and if I knew

your composition I could sleep.  
You are a picture of a comet actual size.

--Lori Shine  
Easthampton

### Stolen Lines

(for you)

You are my starfish  
You are my glue gun  
You are my skirt

I know you as you walk toward me  
without my glasses on

No introduction needed, i know your  
voice within syllables

A dolphin isn't a fish  
I am not a mermaid  
But as octopuses we swim  
entangled appendages times two  
stuck together

You were my only star  
wished upon at night, twinkling

Who smells each other?  
Skirt and consequence?  
Deep breaths nuzzle in your arm.

I taste you too. Salty.  
How would I know if you have a distinct taste?  
If others I try not.

I can feel your smile, your soft spots  
in the dark, horizontal

Our lips are not shy  
of each other  
Enveloped in the bed folds  
a cave, a womb

We emerge each morning  
retreat back into the fold  
Carrying each other in our skirt pockets.  
Everyone needs a pocket.

Years and years,  
I'm stuck on you.

--Suzette Snow Cobb  
Turners Falls

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**Until the Sun Dies**

He sullied the hall with his presence,  
Infested the den with his leer;  
A fetid, dank deprivate,  
Cheese-rancid, celibate  
Through no purity of his heart, that's for sure;  
What his spirit can't quell, his five fingers will cure:  
A burst of orgasmic excrecence,  
Fermented by skunk urine beer

The family, trembling, stood gaping,  
A hybrid of terror and awe;  
They tried to avert their eyes,  
Languished and hypnotized,  
Believing they weren't of his mold or his kin,  
Though the words weren't persuasive in light of the din;  
With no facade left of escaping,  
They vomited up what they saw

His yang for their yin was convincing,  
A serpentine specter of doom;  
Their souls fully intertwined,  
Locked in a state of mind  
Where primitive bonding cements their aplomb  
And impregnates the fuse of a ticking time bomb  
Whose force leaves the whole cadre wincing  
Inside a lugubrious womb

Their nuclear unit corroded,  
The fission of relative waste;  
Containment, now obsolete,  
Melted in searing heat  
Incurred from the gases of dissolute stress  
Set ablaze by the sight of the impromptu guest;  
Suburbia's pipeline exploded,  
With blinding, mercurial haste

A halcyon horror now hovers  
Where once was the white picket fence;  
Some blessings are Heaven-sent,  
Others are Hades-bent;  
And either seems preferable, in the end,  
To the stagnating limbo whose entrails portend  
The ossified half-life of lovers  
Whose overtures seethe and incense

—Kevin Smith  
Turners Falls

**Non-sonnet for Oranges in Winter & Pears, Pears, Pears**

Waking to Noon spread all over the lawn,  
its eyes glazed-over while softly it hums Silver  
Bells, Silver Bells, and already I cradle  
tomorrow in my mouth. All along Main Street,  
cloth speakers ring O Come, O Come,  
O Come all Ye until nightfall finally comes.

I'm still waiting for a power chord, a Russian bard,  
the triumphant return of lost marbles. Shooters. Cat's-eyes.

Cat's-eyes: the deepest sphere to look to, hardest  
to look at, they look back at you, too true, saying  
it was always you you you. And what now to do.  
Bend down to faithful. Sidle over to soon.  
Believe in the fuss that could spell the bell-ringer.  
Believe in a noon that could bury me whole.

—Betsy Wheeler  
Northampton



**Untitled**

Alone, with shoes,  
I stepped over fences.  
The fields felt this is looking  
And always encouraged toward  
The perimeter where there's more,  
There's another encouragement after these trees.  
I was looking for spaces to know  
Beneath these trees  
When a softball's stitches  
Unearthed themselves,  
And though a black cat with white socks  
Made me nervous for a bit,  
The softball led me to a green spoon,  
To a plastic chair, settled in a field.  
Finally in this place with the most light,  
This heroic light,  
I threw the softball as far  
As I could from the chair and the spoon,  
And looking as far as I could from  
My plastic findings I found  
My recipient.

A male cardinal under the brown barrier,  
Red, soft, ball,  
And another, above, to others  
In the tallest tree and it's most yellow pieces.  
Calling attention to its catch  
The others came down,  
Pointing to me, they became a beard  
In India beneath a beautiful mans turban.  
They rested on his green shirt's breast.

The sight of them and their small consciousnesses  
Concentrating was also so beautiful  
I became cartoon, tears just spouting from my eyes  
When the Indian mans widow  
Put her hands on my shoulders.  
With a small ball of red  
Between her eyebrows,  
She said she knew the beauty.  
A few cardinals returned to their tree.  
It was still, the spoon, the softball,  
And I stopped crying,  
Knowing the field.  
This is what I had been wanting.  
This is what it felt like.

—Emma N. Young  
Northampton



Chickadees calling my name  
Vague pieces of the puzzle mingle  
Sift softly through the mind  
Settling discretely among  
Distinct peaceful solitudes  
The water keeping unseen trout  
Holds the mist like  
A blanket over its  
Sleeping body ... and me.

—Fred York  
Turners Falls

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# "America's Smallest Car"



DETMOLD PHOTO

This Nash Metropolitan found a 'parking spot' in front of Jake's Tavern last week.

## BY JOSEPH PARZYCH TURNERS FALLS

Demonstrating the convenience of a compact car, the owner of this nifty Nash Metropolitan eased into a pint-sized "parking space" in front of Jake's Tavern last week. Good thing the meter maid was busy elsewhere!

The Metropolitan was a grand idea thought up by Mitt Romney's dad when he headed Nash, and later American Motors. George Romney managed to downsize Nash's fortunes, and wound up running the company on a shoestring. He came up with the idea of an underpowered, cramped two-seater that didn't get much better mileage than the Nash Ambassador, the company's luxury car, when gasoline sold for about 18 cents a gallon.

There was a photo of George Romney on the cover of *Life* magazine wearing a tux as he showed up in his dinky Metropolitan at a swank country club, where he lined up for the parking valet, amidst Cadillacs and Lincolns the size of river barges. He really knew how to cut a swath.

Romney farmed out the construction of the

Metropolitan to Austin, the English car manufacturer. The two-seater car used an Austin four-cylinder engine, and the Austin drive train as well.

Nash first came out with publicity and a prototype in the very early 1950s. Production didn't get going until the middle of the decade. The first cars were model 1200s, which may have stood for 1200cc of engine displacement.

The car pictured here has to be a 1956, or later, model, because the zigzag chrome strip along the side came out with the 'all-new!' 1500 series at about that time, as the Austin engine increased in horsepower. The cars were sold in the U.S. and Canada as the Nash Metropolitan, as well as a limited number in Sweden.

Locally, Petrin Motors in Greenfield sold Metropolitans, where the Toyota dealership stands today. In fact, Petrin imported some of the first Toyotas in the U.S. Everyone laughed at the very thought of a Japanese car. But I digress.

Though the Metropolitan was built until the early 1960s, they dropped the Nash name in the latter part of the 1950s.

That was about the time that Nash merged with Hudson. Nash dropped the Hudson name even though the six-cylinder

Hudson Hornet was a top performer in stock car races. It was a big bore six that out-accelerated V-8 engines. Romney knew how to run a company into the ground.

In an effort to save the company, Nash decided to dump the Metropolitan and concentrate on the mid-sized Rambler, a six-cylinder, five passenger vehicle with more horsepower, more room and a more comfortable ride than the Metropolitan, which had about a seven-foot wheelbase.

Austin continued making the Metros, and sold them under the Austin name, which was a blow for honesty in advertising, since the Metropolitan was really an Austin all along.

After the Rambler flopped, International used Rambler engines in their Scout, a Jeep-like SUV. Paul Seamans of Gill owned a Scout, and so did Willy Mayrand, who was a Gill cop. Willy did not have much luck chasing down speeders with his Scout. Scouts had a top speed a little over that of a John Deere lawn tractor. Willy should have bought a Metropolitan. They didn't go any faster, but they had more style.

I could go on. There is no rambler like an old rambler.

## Memorial Day Celebration in Wendell

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - Wendell held its Memorial Day observance at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 25th, in front of the war memorials newly relocated to the bandstand on the north common. It was almost exactly in the middle of the first three day weekend of summer, a sunny warm day, and fewer than 30 people attended.

Steve Rowe of the Orange American Legion gave the opening prayer and read General Logan's Orders, the 1868 promulgation that brought informal observances taking place in towns and cities around the country to honor Civil War dead into a single national holiday.

Selectboard member Dan Keller dedicated the new bronze plaque naming veterans from Wendell who served in Korea and in Vietnam. The plaque is mounted on a new granite wheel that sits next to the wheels that

hold plaques from World War I and World War II. There is a fourth wheel in the semi circle that, ominously, holds no plaque. Red, white, and blue wreaths were placed at the base of the wheels and in the cemetery behind the meetinghouse.

Anna Jean Marsh told of her 2006 visit to Europe, when she, her husband and grandchildren visited the beaches of Normandy. They had brought some soil from Massachusetts and the grandparents instructed the boys to find the grave of a Massachusetts GI and bury the soil around the cross marking that grave. In turn they brought some sand from the Normandy beaches. On Sunday's occasion, Marsh buried it by the World War II memorial with the help of selectboard chair Ted Lewis.

Steve Rowe read the closing prayer and people retired to the town office building for refreshments.

**MEMORIAL** from pg 1 original purpose of this holiday", he said. "We need to remember the price of war."

After the solemn ceremony, Colton concluded by firing a three gun salute under the flag pole. After the gathering, he led

the group to nearby Locust Cemetery where he pointed out the graves of war veterans, some of which dated to the Civil War and even the Revolution. Several of the group then planted flowers at the veteran's graves.



MATT ROBINSON PHOTO

Incoming chair of the Trustees of the Montague Soldiers Memorial Al Cummings addressed the crowd of more than 200 who gathered on Memorial Day in Turners Falls. Montague selectboard member Pat Allen and Trustee Brian SanSoucie are seated behind the podium at right.

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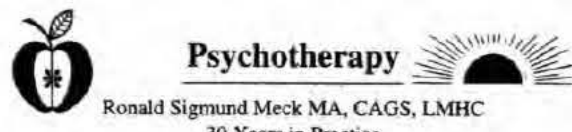
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NOTES FROM THE GILL MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

# Detweiler Hired as Gill Principal

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Gill Elementary School has a new principal. Rita Detweiler, the school psychologist at the Deerfield Elementary School, has been offered the position after meeting with the Gill transition team, and she has accepted. Detweiler has been interning as principal at Deerfield, and should move easily into the administrative role at Gill, according to Chip Wood, who coordinated the transition team.

Wood said the transition team at Sheffield nominated a candidate to become the new principal there, as Wood leaves to become the director of elementary education for the district, but that candidate turned down the post. Therefore, Wood said, the search for a

new principal at Sheffield would be reopened. "We want to find the right person for the position," Wood said.

On Tuesday, May 27th, Joanne Rabideau's fifth and sixth graders from Gill Elementary gave a slide show presentation to the school committee about their trip to the Sargeant Center for Outdoor Education, in Hancock, NH, which they visited for a week-long field trip earlier this year.

Fifth grader James Elliott said a highlight of the trip for him was looking through a giant telescope. "I saw Mars for the first time. That was a really great experience for me."

Rabideau said a low point of the trip was the one a.m.

skunk invasion of the Mary McLeod Bethune cabin, which caused all the students there to evacuate to a neighboring cabin. The evacuees carried out a GPS quest in the morning wearing their pajamas, while their adult chaperones hastily packed up their gear in the skunked cabin.

Sandy Miner, Erving representative to the Gill-Montague school committee, said she was proud of the ten Erving seniors who would graduate with the class of 2008 at TFHS this Friday. But, she said, of the 26 sixth graders graduating Erving Elementary this year, only 5 had chosen to go on to middle school at the GMRSD.

Joyce Phillips said "surprisingly limited or poor support" by local media was to blame

for a lower than hoped for turnout at this year's Gill Montague Education Fund Gala, featuring the Essence of Country with Don Campbell. Last year, the Gala brought in \$21,000 for student enhancement grants at the GMRSD. This year, the Gala brought in \$17,300.

Interim superintendent Ken Rocke thanked Phillips and the GMEF for all the hard work that went into the event. "It was a great concert," he said.

The school committee will hold a special meeting on Tuesday, June 3rd, for the sole purpose of interviewing and choosing a new director of special education. Cynthia Joyce resigned recently after two years in that position.

There is still time to apply for an exciting 6th grade school-choice placement at

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## FAREWELL TO MONTAGUE CENTER SCHOOL

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Bring your memories, stories, a lawn chair and picnic blanket

### BUDGET from pg 1

in the town of Montague. It allows for interested non-residents to offer input and to serve as advisors or consultants on a given board. It simply retains to residents of Montague the final voting decisions."

However, Golrick had told the selectboard on December 3rd of 2007 that out of towners had been permitted to serve on the airport commission, but that "past practice" has been for out of town members of the commission to refrain from voting on budgetary matters.

Selectboard member Allen Ross has served as the board's liaison to the airport commission since a group of pilots formed the Committee to Save the Airport and petitioned the board in February of last year to remove Sweeney as manager, and has since pressed for changes in operating policies and lease structures at the airport. Ross said no more than two members from out of town would be appointed to the air-

port commission, and town meeting need have no fear of out-of-towners taking over the budget setting process on a seven member board. But he said adding new members from outside the town would "enhance our ability to make the airport more viable. A number of pilots have already left the airport."

Selectboard member Patricia Pruitt said she supported allowing two members who were not town residents to serve on the airport commission "in the interest of giving the majority of people who use the airport a voice."

In other business, town meeting unanimously approved spending \$678,881 to fund the town's share of the Franklin County Technical School's \$9.4 million operating budget for '09. Though assessment increases to the nineteen member towns vary widely, depending on number of students enrolled, superintendent Richard Lane said the average increase to towns this year was

2½ percent, while Montague, with a drop of enrollment of three students, would see no increase to fund Tech School operations this year.

"I applaud you to keep your total assessment to zero percent this year," said Precinct 2's Mike Naughton. "That's an amazing accomplishment."

Earlier, acting on an amendment from Naughton, town meeting voted to reduce the budget of the water pollution control facility by about \$4,510, in line with similar amendments town meeting had made in earlier sessions intended to freeze wages for town employees at last year's levels. The meeting also approved \$35,000 for a new pickup truck for the water pollution control facility, and \$50,000 for new security doors at Sheffield School.

Over the course of three days, cuts were made to personnel line items, benefits, and to town departments - including the entire loss of the animal control officer's position - totaling \$227,349.

Those cuts take into account the restoration of partial or complete funding for a number of items that had originally been placed in a so-called "basket of services" article, intended to be funded by a \$250,000 override.

Among the items partially restored from that article, town meeting agreed to add back about \$182,000, to fund the parks and recreation department (which suffered a cut of \$8,400) the senior center, the public libraries (\$11,000 cut), and the curbside recycling program of the DPW (the DPW saw a cut of \$3,786).

Additionally, \$39,000 for the

animal control officer was eliminated, along with \$26,000 for the town nurse position, which will be partially funded with \$19,000 left over in the '08 budget, after the nurse resigned last August.



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BOOK REVIEW

# 'Small Wonder, the Story of a Child Born too Soon'

By Susan Lascala

REVIEWED BY  
LYN CLARK

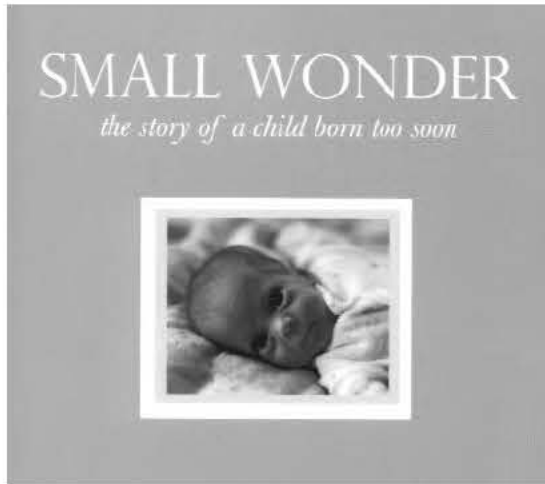
**RIVERSIDE** - Vague but persistent aches and fatigue bothered Susan Lascala in early January, 1986. She wasn't expecting her second child until April, but on January 12th she went into labor. Unable to medicate to prevent it and still save the baby from the uterine infection that started her labor three months early, the doctors were compelled to deliver little Sarah Kate by Caesarian section.

To call her "little" is to understate the situation. This fragile baby weighed in at only one pound nine ounces, a quarter of which she would lose over the next few days and weeks as doctors and nurses worked to keep her alive. She looked, her mother

writes, "like a tiny, featherless bird, stretched out on a warmer. She was attached to IVs, pumps, heart monitor, and breathing machine." All but her head was encased in plastic wrap to conserve precious moisture, and her eyes were blindfolded against the ultraviolet bilirubin lights. She looked, to her mother, "raw and unfinished, as if everything must hurt."

So begins the rollercoaster year that is meticulously recalled in Lascala's dramatic memoir. It was a year in which normal family life was interrupted in response to seemingly unending crises, when 18-month-old Willie spent mornings with a caregiver, while Susan - a nurse practitioner herself - made daily drives from her home in Gill to be with her infant daughter in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

at Bay State Medical Center in Springfield. Her husband, a doctor, was working fulltime, so despite his support and a



physician's expertise, it was Susan who sat beside the tiny infant and eventually held and rocked her week after week for months. It was she through whom news of Sarah's

progress, and - too often - regression, was brought back to Gill each day. She knew that blindness, deafness, and brain damage were all possible outcomes of premature birth. In addition to Sarah's weight loss, the infant developed a heart murmur, and a life-threatening yeast infection; she suffered episodes of apnea (suspension of breathing) and brady-

cardia (unusually slow heart-beat). Even when, at last, it was possible to bring Sarah home, the baby had to be returned to the hospital twice because of fevers and a fungal infection on her kidneys and in her blood stream. As winter gave way to spring, and spring to summer, the long periods of almost constant anxiety continued - a seesaw between hope and bitter disappointment. It would be more than nine months before there would be, ultimately, rejoicing.

One doesn't read the story to learn the outcome. (We know from the beginning, having peaked at the photograph in the back, that baby Sarah is currently a student at Bates College in Maine.) We read for the day-to-day drama, and for the insights that Lascala brings to a life-altering experience. For it is not only infant Sarah's story, but also the story of a mother's anguish as she is forced to watch her child suffer, a suffering she is helpless to mitigate; of her yearning to bring her baby home to a safe, loving environment free from

pain, but forced to wait, interminably. It is her memories of those with whom she dealt and of those who dealt with her, both good and bad, and the important lessons she learned from these contacts. Her support system was limited; she felt cut off from her closest friends whom the family had left behind when they moved to Western Massachusetts, and she suffered from a sense of isolation and depression. She writes, "I was unable to see beyond the bleakness of my own situation."

Lascala writes that she has two wishes. "I hope the parents of premature babies find support and encouragement in the story of Sarah's successes. I also hope readers learn how to reach out to a sister, daughter, friend, or co-worker whose normal pregnancy is unexpectedly interrupted and who finds herself in the hospital with a baby born too soon."

Lascala writes beautifully, and her introspection as she looks back over the years to that tumultuous time is both fascinating and illuminating. This is not a comfortable read; one cannot but cry along with mother and daughter who suffer such physical and emotional pain. However, it was a year that Susan and her husband somehow weathered, bruised but intact; a year when their tiny daughter Sarah - subjected to life-saving procedures that nevertheless could only be described as torture - managed to charm her dedicated caregivers, and to endure and survive against all odds, proving herself a fighter to be reckoned with when up against the ropes. Small wonder, indeed.

*Small Wonder* is available at World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield, on Amazon.com, and through the publisher, Halesantiques.com.

## MCTV Program Schedule: May 30-June 5

<b>Eagle Cam:</b> Friday 1P-6P, Saturday 1P-6P, Sunday 1P-6P, Monday 1P-6P, Tuesday 1P-6P, Wednesday 1-6P, Thursday 1P-6P. If We Have a Signal You Will Have a Picture	10:30 am Amandla 12:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Cost of Freedom 12:30 pm Power Canal Draw Down 6:00 pm Chronicles Volume 30 & 31 7:00 pm Coffee House Series: Ferne Bork, Dan Tinen, Bruce Kahn Trio 8:00 pm Discovery Center Birds of Prey 9:30 pm Eaton Sue Mono Giri 10:30 pm Falls Table (4/14/08) 11:30 pm Franklin County Matters: Sheriffs Office	Helen Okula 10:30 pm Changing Face of Turners Falls 12:30 pm Independent Voices 39 6:00 pm Tiny Tim 6:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks 7:00 pm GMRSD (5/27/08) 10:00 pm Valley Idol Finals 2008
<b>Friday, May 30</b> 8:00 am Valley Idol Semi Finals 2008 10:30 am Wisdom Way Solar Village 11:30 am UN Panel 6:00 pm Falls Table (4/14/08) 6:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks 7:00 pm GMRSD (5/27/08) 10:00 pm Valley Idol Semi Finals 2008	<b>Monday, June 2</b> 8:00 am Mohawk High School Performs at Disney 10:00 am Montague Grange 11:30 am Montague Update: Jamie Berger 12:00 pm Naturalist Laurie Sanders 12:30 pm On the Ridge: New England Brush Wolf Hunting 6:00 pm Peske Park Dedication 6:30 pm The Western Mass Democrat: Lt. Gov. Tim Murray 7:00 pm Select Board (Live) 9:00 pm Poetry Music Jam for Montague Reporter at the Vou 10:00 pm Refusal 10:30 pm Financial Benefits of Treatment	<b>Wednesday, June 4</b> 8:00 am Valley Idol Finals 2008 11:00 am Over the Falls: Public Education 12:00 pm Physician Focus: GI Health 12:30 pm Power Canal Draw Down 6:00 pm Sheffield Play Dancing Princess 7:00 pm Tapping Maple Ridge 8:00 pm Valley Idols Finals 2008
<b>Saturday, May 31</b> 8:00 am Valley Idol Semi Finals 2008 10:30 am Independent Voices 36 11:00 am Living in the Shadow of Vermont Yankee 12:00 pm Montague Machine 6:00 pm Over the Falls: Public Education 7:00 pm Poetry Music Jam for Montague Reporter at Vou 8:00 pm Safe & Green Campaign Forum 9:30 pm Skin N Bonz 11:00 pm Over the Falls: Community owned Retail 11:30 pm Encore Body Art	<b>Tuesday, June 3</b> 8:00 am Peoples Harvest 9:30 pm Chronicles: Mass for Anna &	<b>Thursday, June 5</b> 8:00 am Wisdom Way Solar Village 9:00 am Underground Railway Concert 10:30 am The Western Mass Democrat: Chris Forgey 11:30 am The Spirit of Lake Pleasant 6:00 pm Poetry Music Jam for Montague Reporter at the Vou 7:00 pm Select Board (6/2/08) 9:00 pm Franklin County Matters: Domestic Violence 10:00 pm Falls Table (4/14/08) 10:30 pm Enjoy the Ride 11:00 pm Great Falls Middle School Soccer
<b>Sunday, June 1</b> 8:00 am Town Meeting (5/22/08)		

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION  
BY FRED CICETTI

**LEONIA, NJ - Q.** *I think I have a small hernia in my groin that's probably going to need surgery. How soon should I get this thing taken care of?*

First, if you suspect you have a hernia, get it checked by a doctor immediately. Don't treat it lightly. Eventually, almost all hernias require surgery. Having surgery before complications occur makes sense.

You get a hernia when a sec-

tion of an internal organ bulges through weak abdominal muscle tissue. The protruding organ is usually the intestines. About 80 percent of hernias are located in the groin. The overwhelming majority of groin-hernia victims are men.

Hernias in the groin - called inguinal hernias - get bigger if they aren't repaired. They can cause swelling and pain. They can be dangerous, too.

Most hernias can be pushed back into the abdominal cavity. However, an intestine can be trapped or incarcerated by a hernia. Incarceration can block defecation. Then there is a condition called strangulation, which cuts blood flow to the trapped section of the intestine

and can kill it. A strangulated hernia is a surgical emergency.

About 5 million Americans develop hernias annually, but only 700,000 get them fixed surgically. The common theory for this phenomenon among doctors is that most people fear having an operation. But hernia surgery today is not the ordeal it once was with a large incision and long recovery.

Today, patients requiring hernia surgery are in and out of the hospital the same day. The surgery takes about an hour.

The operation can be done with a small incision or by minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery that employs a slender, tubular, optical instrument with a surgical tool.

Most patients resume their normal lives within a few days after the surgery; they can handle strenuous activity and exercise within four to six weeks.

Besides inguinal hernias, there are femoral hernias in the upper thigh (more common in women), incisional hernias through a surgical scar, and umbilical hernias around the navel.

Some symptoms of hernia are: protrusion; pain while lifting, bending over and coughing; a dull ache; a vague feeling of fullness; a heavy or dragging sensation in the groin, and swelling in the scrotum that holds the testicles. Some inguinal hernias have no symptoms.

People of all ages and both genders get hernias. They occur because of an inherited weakness in the abdominal wall, a strain from lifting, gaining a lot of weight, persistent coughing, or difficulty with bowel movements or urination.

Other causes of hernias are pregnancy that can strain abdominal muscles, occupations that require standing for long periods, premature birth, and a personal history of hernias. If you've had an inguinal hernia, you're at greater risk that you'll get another elsewhere.

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

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**ON THE BEATEN TRACK**

**New York City's Farmers Markets**

**BY FLORE -** In the event you are wondering how city dwellers survive among those skyscrapers, especially at the breathless beat they travel each day, the answers might astonish you! New Yorkers enjoy taking a breather at their parks and relax while shopping for green groceries at their farmers markets.

Just like here in Franklin County, on Saturday mornings in New York, the whole family gets a proper outing, often spending hours at the local market.

Checking their favorite merchants, they will wait in long lines in front of the stalls, because they know something special awaits them. Children, pets, all enjoy the excursion.

In this vast city, its five boroughs, Manhattan, the Bronx, Queens, Brooklyn and

Staten Island, you will find a total of 46 farmers markets! Some of them run all year round; others are just seasonal.

There you will meet growers, who like their New England cousins, take pride in their quality fresh produce.

The concept of "buying local" is relative, in this city of pavement and buildings that scrape the sky, but if you can consider the farms of Westchester County, Long Island, and New Jersey as local to New York, then New Yorkers' reasons for frequenting their farmers market are really quite similar to ours:

To support families who toil the earth.

Buying local preserves genetic diversity.

Supporting farmers preserves farmland as open space, protects natural agri-



RICHARDS STEINBOCK ILLUSTRATION

cultural landscapes.

And, as connoisseurs, New Yorkers will add, "Local produce, even if we pay more for it, tastes so much better. It's healthier you know; it's the real thing!"

In the meantime, before

visiting the Big Apple, enjoy our local Turners Falls and Greenfield farmers markets: buy local!

**GRANGE** from pg 1

in. As more funds are needed to buy archival supplies and shelving, the historical society is holding a tag sale at the Montague Grange on Saturday, May 31st, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. On Friday the 30th, from 5 to 7 p.m., the Grange will be open to receive tag sale item donations. If this time is not convenient, please call: 367-2184 or 367-2280. All items should be clean and saleable; the only items we do not want are electronics, books and clothes, unless vintage.

Remember, the Montague Historical Society covers all five villages, and we can use your help.



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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

## FRIDAY, MAY 30th

A Bouquet of Music Healing Arts Concert Series: this week features Gretchen Saathoff, classical piano. Franklin Medical Center, Greenfield at noon. (413) 773-2573.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Joy Sumberg** - Singer/songwriter combines rock & folk with a hint of mountain flavor, 9 to 11 p.m..

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls: **The Bus Drivers**. Great vocals & harp, come to dance. 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Dance or Die, electro etc dance dance dj dance, \$3 cover, 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, MAY 31st

Bike Auction, 9 a.m. at the Montague Police Station. Approx. 40 bikes available for purchase, bikes are in the condition they were turned in and are final. Cash and Checks payable to the Town of Montague accepted, cash receipts given. Bikes are put on display approximately 1/2 to 1 hour prior to the auction.

**Dragonflies and Butterflies:** Dave Small & Lula Field explore local wetlands and water courses for spring dragonflies and Butterflies. 9 to 3 p.m. Bring lunch and insect net. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.

**Valley Idol, Jr.** Finals 9:30 a.m. Audience Admission: \$5, winners perform at the Finale of Valley Idol!

**Valley Idol!** A benefit for the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Grand Finale! 8 p.m. Audience admission: \$10/\$12 at door. 863-2281

At The Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Exploring Water and Watersheds**, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Hands on activities about water for elementary school students and their care givers. Story, watershed model,

and experiments.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Blame It On Tina** - Folk/Rock, 9 - 11 p.m..

Montague Book Mill, Montague Center: **Swing Caravan**. Show begins around 8 p.m. Food, beer, wine and love available at The Lady Killigrew.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Lower Case g's**, 9:30 p.m., \$5 cover.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls: **Louisiana Red** with David Maxwell & Ottomatic Slim, 8 p.m.

## UNTIL JUNE 1st

**The Barns of Franklin County** show at the Meeting House Community Gallery, Unitarian Church, Bernardston. Thirty area artists showing over sixty works depicting Franklin County Barns of the past and present. Thurs., Fri., and Sat. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Sun. 1 - 3 p.m.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 3rd

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **The LPs interpret Neil Young's Comes a Time**, 9 p.m. \$3 cover.

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4th

The Shea Theater and Franklin County Home Care present **Pantomonium**. A vaudeville style show for seniors starring Jody and Linda Scalise. 1 p.m. at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Pantomonium is a absolutely captivating mix of the George & Gracie era with a European Circus mystique. Jody & Linda Scalise are appealing to all ages! \$5, more info. cal, (413) 863-2281.

Sheffield School Art Opening at The Great Falls Discovery Center, Great Hall, 2 to 4 p.m. Join the students of Sheffield School and view their artwork highlighting Turners Falls buildings and structures.

Great Falls Farmer's Market, rain or shine, 2nd St. and Ave A, Turners Falls. Annuals, perennials, fresh farm products in season. 3 to 6 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Green Drinks** - 5-7 p.m. An informal gathering in 349 cities worldwide for anyone interested in talking about how we can help keep this planet a good place to call home. Meets monthly on **FIRST Wednesdays** at eateries around Franklin Co. All meeting locations at [www.GreenDrinks.org](http://www.GreenDrinks.org) Then at 7 p.m. Frugal - Jazz, free.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 5th

Open Women's Singing Circle: sharing songs and chants of healing, inspiration, and women's empower-



The Miniature hands made of paperclay on wire depict the sign language alphabet. Artwork by Barbara Milot of Turners Falls is included in the group exhibit titled "Features, Studies of the Human Form" on display at Artspace, Greenfield, May 22 - June 20.

ment. 7 to 9 p.m. at the Second Congregational Church, Greenfield. Ongoing, contact: Joy Kaubin (413) 367-0114 [stillwaters3@verizon.net](mailto:stillwaters3@verizon.net)

## THURSDAY, JUNE 5th

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Dave Bartley** - Jazz Piano 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Kellianna** - Acoustic rock, 8 to 10 p.m..

## FRIDAY, JUNE 6th

Vermont Center for Photography: **Journeys**, photographs by Ron Rosenstock. Opening night 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. during Brattleboro Gallery Walk. This is the first exhibit of Ron Rosenstock's color work from his new book, *Journeys*. On display until Sunday, July 27th. Vermont Center for Photography, 49 Flat St., Brattleboro, VT, (802) 251-6051.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **DJ Pushplay**, \$3.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Green Thumb Brothers** - Our own Simon White, Aaron Cox, Gabe & Jake Martinelli and company will wow you with their smooth Reggae style, 9 to 11 p.m..

## SATURDAY, JUNE 7th

Family Breeding Bird Survey at Northfield Mountain, 8 - 10:30 a.m. For ages 6 and older. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960. Mass Audubon is in year two of a five year breeding bird survey of the State. Help gather data for the survey for the block called "Orange-1" at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center. Bring binoculars if you have them.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 8th

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Second Second Comedy. Shane Mauss, Maggie MacDonald (Boston Comedy Festival) and Dave Yubruh (show host) perform. 7 p.m. \$5.

**Eating Local the Wild Way** with Blanche Cybele Derby: Author, artist, life-long forager and cook --

Blanche's thirty years of foraging and preparing wild foods give her an intimate knowledge of plants through the seasons. Take this field walk to learn which plants are in season and how to gather and prepare them at home. 1 - 3 p.m. For ages 12 and older. Free. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 12th

**Whip-Poor-Wills in Montague:** Dave Small will give a talk and lead a walk for the public on Whip-poor-wills. Co-sponsored by partners of the Great Falls Discovery Center and the Athol Bird and Nature Club. Meet at the Discovery Center, Turners Falls, then hike the Montague sand plain to see and hear these unusual birds. 7 to 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 14th

**Earth Wind and Sun Fair,** Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 10 to 4 p.m. Join us for a day filled with activities, workshops, and a Climate Change Geo-walk from 1-2:30 p.m. Info. (413) 863-3221 or stop by the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Paddling Vernon to Pauchaug with the Connecticut River Watershed Council: Join Andrea Donlon, CRWC River Steward and Northfield Mountain's Beth Bazler on this 6 1/2 mile paddle from the Vernon Dam. 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. For ages 12 and older. Fee: \$10 per boat with own boat; \$25 with own boat shuttled; \$50 with rental. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960.

RiverFest in Shelburne Falls. An annual tribute to the Deerfield River, and the role it plays in people's lives and the ecosystem of western Massachusetts. Educational displays and demonstrations, the *Frog & Flower Parade*, art, crafts, tag, book and plant sales. This year's theme, *Celebrating a Working Watershed*, 10 to 4 p.m.

## UNTIL JUNE 15th

Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. On display: Lili Almog, Studio 52 - *Perfect Intimacy Revealed Through Photographer's Eyes* and Linda Butler - *Meditations on Simplicity*, Studio 56. In Gallery 85 - Stella Johnson's exhibit *AI Sol*.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 21st

Public reception for Volunteer Students from Hallmark Institute of Photography: *Annual Spring Exhibit & Benefit Print Sale* to support humanitarian work of Doctors Without Borders. On display June 19th - June 29th.

## UNTIL JUNE 22nd

At Artspace, Greenfield on display-group exhibition: *Features, Studies of the Human Form*. Artwork crafted from a variety of materials, local artists. Artspace, Greenfield. Hours Mon. - Fri. 1 - 6 p.m.

## BRICK HOUSE CONCERT

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## BEGINNING JUNE 27th

Quinnnetuket II Riverboat cruise along the Connecticut River Daily trips narrated by experienced naturalists, Friday - Sunday, 11 a.m., 1:15 p.m., 3 p.m. (800) 859-2960.

## ONGOING

The Leverett Family Museum, 1 Shutesbury Rd., Leverett: open to the public Saturdays 10 - 12 or by appointment. Artifacts, photos and exhibits of early days of Leverett and the surrounding area. Located in the former Bradford Field Memorial Library. (413) 548-9207.

The Turners Falls Fishway is open for the season! Public viewing during the height of spawning season. Open Wed. to Sun., 9 - 5 p.m.



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## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

## End of May Gardening

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - The end of May is the traditional time to put your summer plants into the garden. Summer-like days have warmed the soil and all danger of frost is past. Sensitive plants like tomatoes, squash and peppers can be hardened up preparatory to planting by spending a few days outside and coming back indoors overnight. If you don't choose to do this middle step, you may notice a little transplant shock. This is not usually serious or fatal, but can be observed in temporary drooping of plants and a brief halt in growth. If you've bought plants grown by someone else, the farmer has probably done the hardening off for you.

These plants are heavy feeders. Dig a nice weed-free hole larger than the plant's root ball and drop in some cured manure, compost or bone meal to feed them. Avoid transplanting in the heat of the day, as that will further stress your transplants. Mid afternoon is the perfect time because it will still be warm and the plants can settle in before the evening's chill.

It could be fun to try a "wall of water" around a couple of tomatoes to see if these plants will produce earlier than the others. The wall of water is a clear plastic container with two walls. Filled with water between the walls, it holds the heat of the day keeping your plant warmer overnight.

Because I'm a lazy weeder, I'm going to lay black plastic down where I'm planting my tomatoes. This will limit weed growth and also have the benefit of keeping the soil warmer. The tomato cages will hold the plastic down while they support the growing plant. As the plants become heavy with fruit, I'll tie stems to the cage for extra support.

All but one of the six tomato varieties I'm growing are indeterminate. These plants grow until the garden season ends, so strong supports are essential.

I'm starting two kinds of winter squash directly into the soil as seed. This way I can choose the variety I want. I've found two bush size varieties that take up less room and still produce medium-sized tasty fruit. They are Butterbush, a winter squash and Table King, an acorn. My plants will catch up rapidly to any put in directly, and I'll have fruit almost as soon as my neighbors.

It's also time to plant beans, both bush and pole types. Pole beans are for drying and cooking the seed produced later. They are fun to grow in a tepee; they often have colorful flowers and pods that add to the garden's beauty. Bush beans, green, wax and lima, are easily grown and produce a heavy



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

crop that will allow you to freeze some for future use. Plant these seeds soon, so you can harvest before the Mexican bean beetles arrive and defoliate the crop.

This is an "on" year, and everything has flowered heavily. The lilacs are drooping with many huge blossom heads. For the first year the apricots have fruited well. They are already too tall for covering with netting so I'll have to try hanging foil strips or pie plates to discourage the birds from stealing all of the fruit. It looks as if there will be a fine strawberry crop as well, so as soon as the green fruit is set, I'll net them so I'm only sharing with the occasional chipmunk.

The spinach is coming along nicely and is ready for thinning. I'm also going to side dress these plants with compost,

because spinach is a heavy feeder. If you haven't planted spinach yet, wait now until late summer and plant a fall crop, since this vegetable really prefers cool weather. You can also produce a late summer crop of peas much the same way.

The leeks are getting tall in their trenches, so it's time to add more soil. The onions don't look too thrifty. They suffered a bit from the initial spring drought last month. I watered the young plants, but not enough apparently. I've fed them now and we'll see if they perk up a bit. The garlic tops are thickening up nicely.

This is an exciting time for gardeners: there is the pleasure of planting both flowers and vegetables, the weeds aren't bad yet, and the humid, buggy season still lies ahead. If you mulch now after weeding or planting, you can sit back later when it's hot and sticky and just watch things grow. Mulches can be as simple as grass clippings, hay, and newspaper or plastic.

Be sure to keep handy a bench or chair so as to allow some time for sitting back to enjoy your labors, to watch the industry of bees, birds and butterflies, and to savor the warmth and the scents of the developing season.

Try this pea soup for a more delicately flavored and colorful variation on the winter variety.

## FRESH PEA SOUP

- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 medium potato, peeled and chopped
- 1 small onion or two cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 pound fresh peas, shelled
- 1 small head Boston lettuce, chopped

In a heavy pan, warm 1 tablespoon olive oil to sauté onion or garlic.

Add chopped potato, peas and lettuce with half of the broth, and simmer until everything is tender.


Puree the soup in a blender or put through a food mill. Thin with remaining broth to a thickness of your taste. Season lightly with salt or pepper.

Serve chilled some hot summer night. If used as an appetizer, will feed 4-6.

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