



CRABAPPLE FESTIVAL

Is Never Past its Prime

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NUÑO A FARMERS

Locals Organize Aid

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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 31

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 6, 2010

Erving will Build New \$2.4 Million Senior Ctr.



Confident of victory, the Senior Center Building Committee stands by the plans for the new Senior Center as votes are counted Wednesday. (l-r) Collis Adams, chair, Marjorie Clark, Annmarie Gilbert, Carole Lyman, and Louise Galosh

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ERVING - Third time is a charm, they say.

Twice last year, town meeting turned down plans for a new \$2.4 million, 6,600-square-foot senior center to be built on town-owned land on Route 63, north of the elementary school. The proposal fell just four votes shy of a two thirds majority on May 6th, 2009 (57 - 35) and again on June 22nd, 2009 (64 - 38).

But last night, the same proposal sailed to victory at annual town meeting, with the margin of support for the new senior

center swelling to 77%, as the new senior center was approved 135 to 31.

"The much needed center will contribute to the social, physical, and emotional well-being of our most deserving residents," said Joyce Bissell. "They are Erving's finest. They built this town. They served on all your committees. They fought in all your wars. They're helping to raise your grandchildren. You should give them your utmost respect."

Speaking for the majority of

see MEETING pg 14

Three Vie for Selectboard

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE - On Thursday, April 29th, the three candidates in the running for a three year term on the Montague selectboard took seats at the selectboard table and faced the television cameras for an hour and a half debate, broadcast live on Montague Community Television.

The candidates - Chris Boutwell (D), Margaret Pyfrom (D) and Rachel Roy (R) - answered questions from the press and public for an hour and a half. (To watch reruns of the debate on Channel 17, go to montaguetv.org for a schedule of broadcast times between now and the May 17th election.)

Here is a summary of the candidates' opening statements, and a few of the questions and answers from the debate.

Margaret Pyfrom, a member of the Montague Center volunteer fire department, said she moved to Turners Falls from Shelburne Falls, a town she recalled as "drab, listless and dormant," until its downtown was rejuvenated by "progressive revitalization through the efforts of merchants and cooperative officials."

"During the years I've lived here in Montague, in the village of Turners Falls, I've observed significant changes and improvements, such as the landscaping on Avenue A, the Shea Theater, the Discovery Center, and the bike



Margaret Pyfrom

"I would like to take an active part in furthering the advantages to Montague in attracting new retailers, production companies, and industry - new contributors to the town's vitality, and of course, new taxpayers."

- Margaret Pyfrom

path, to name a few. I would like to take an active part in furthering the advantages to Montague in attracting new retailers, production companies, and industry - new contributors to the town's vitality, and of course, new taxpayers. The town of Montague and its five villages has great potential to increase existing livelihoods and community opportunities. That is why I am here tonight."

Rachel Roy, of Turners Falls, said, "I'm asking you to elect me for your new town selectman. As Montague is struggling to provide needed services and make ends meet in today's troubled economy, there are few decent jobs that pay enough to support our young families and our aging elders. This to me is a huge priority - getting businesses and industry into this town."

"I'd like to help. I'm coming to you with 25 years of business management and ownership, five years of FEMA public affairs and grant reviewing, over ten years on public and private school boards, excellent budgeting, marketing and computer skills, and a depth of experience gained from being a stay-at-home mother and grandmother."

"It's time for all of us to step up and use some of our God-given abilities and help lead our town into the future," Roy added. "I'd like to do this with a renewed sense of hope and prosperity. I'm offering you my best efforts. I hope you will give me your vote."

Chris Boutwell, chair of the board of health and a Turners Falls resident, said, "I have been in public service for Montague for close to two decades, in multiple departments, and also at the county level." Answering a later question, Boutwell pointed out he

see THREE VIE pg 10

Klepadlo Wins for Selectboard; Dubay Ousted from Planning Board

BY DAVID DETMOLD

ERVING - With a tick of the second hand, an era of political dominance ended in Erving Monday night, as the longtime chairs of the selectboard and planning board left office, one on his own volition, one at the will of the voters.

As the long hand of the wall clock in town hall pointed due north at 8:00 p.m., town clerk (and newly elected tax collector) Richard Newton declared the balloting closed. The town election saw the retirement of nine-year selectboard member Andy Tessier, whose long tenure on town and school committees made him the *de facto* voice of authority on the selectboard.

The seat he vacated will now be filled by Eugene Klepadlo, an Erving resident who works as a manager at the HCP cosmetics packaging plant in

Hinsdale, NH, and who serves as a Boy Scout troop leader in town.

Klepadlo beat out two opponents to win the three year seat, with 135 votes to Jeff Dubay's 90, and 53 for Ellie Clark.

Dubay, who has been either the chair or a member of the planning board for 25 years, was also denied another three-year term on that board. In a three-way race for two three-year seats on planning, Dubay came in third, with 100 votes, to Jacquie Boyden's 154 and Carole Lyman's 190.

Dubay led the defense of the town's aquifer protection bylaw last year in a town meeting showdown over Eric and Ralph Semb's plan to build a gas station and convenience store on Route 2, within the aquifer protection zone. That plan fell short of the required two-thirds majori-



Andy Tessier stepped down after three terms on the selectboard

ty needed to modify the bylaw, by a vote of 163 to 117.

In a tight race for tax collector, Newton bested incumbent Shirley Deane, 141 to 136. Newton also captured the only other contested position on the ballot, beating Marisa Dalmaso-Rode 176 to 93 to remain a town constable for another three years.

With just a fraction more than 25 percent (281) of the town's 1093 registered voters turning out under sunny skies to cast ballots in the basement of town hall in Erving Center, poll watcher Joyce Newton described the voting as "steady all day long."

Andreana Garcia cast the last ballot, at about seven minutes to eight, giv-

ing way to a tense wait for the candidates as the last few minutes ticked away.

Upstairs, outgoing selectboard chair Andy Tessier was in an upbeat mood as he opened bids for blacktop (the contract was awarded to Warner Brothers, who underbid Lane Construction \$76,272 to \$83,151), and approved a couple of business licenses, including one for his soon to be successor, Eugene Klepadlo, to operate a snow removal and yard care business in town.

"I feel great," said Tessier. "It's a beautiful day."

Tessier has said he decided not to run again because of time constraints with his busy work schedule.

"I've enjoyed it. It wasn't a burden. The board has worked well together. The town finances are in great shape. We've improved the

infrastructure."

During Tessier's tenure on the board, Erving has built a new police station, repaired and replaced roofs on town hall and the fire stations, and overhauled the treatment plants in Erving and Farley, among many other improvements.

He had one parting word of advice for his successor.

"Listen. Listen to what the voters tell you to do. You can hear a lot at town meeting."

As Monday's selectboard meeting drew to a celebratory close, the board approved a motion to remain in the Franklin Regional Emergency Planning Committee, a collaboration of all 26 towns in the county, to meet the state requirements around listing and making available to the public a com-

see ERVING pg 13

PET OF THE WEEK

Big Foot



Lucky

My name is Lucky and I'm a two-year-old male domestic short hair cat in need of a good home. I'm social; I like hanging out with humans. I'm a big, black, soft, handsome guy with enormous paws. You should see me play!

I've lived with older kids and co-existed with a dog, and I seem to get on OK with female cats but not other male cats. I do sometimes play a little rough, so you'll have to teach me how to have better manners, and learn how I communicate when I'm getting wound up. That should be just fine – the right person for me will know how to work with a boy of my talents and temperament. I'm worth it! For more information on adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

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WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

French Conversation & Carrie

A French Conversation Group will hold meetings on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays beginning May 13th at 7:30 p.m. at the Wendell Library. This is a free event.

Wendell resident Jim Dunn conceived the idea of starting a group where area residents could practice speaking French. The idea is to create an enjoyable, hour-long language immersion environment, in which all agree to communicate with each other solely in French. The goal is to help each other develop fluency.

The first meeting, on May 13th, will be devoted to planning

how the group will function and getting acquainted with participants' interests. Individuals at all skill levels and ages are welcome and encouraged to participate as their schedule allows.

For more info contact Jim Dunn at marigold@valinet.com, or by phone at (978) 544-7896.

The library's Saturday night film in the monthly series of Science Fiction and Horror movies is the 1976 classic horror film *Carrie*, rated R. (98 min.). May 15th at 7:30 p.m. Free admission, but seating is limited.

LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

Sisters Celebration

Explore the unique, complicated, humorous, heartbreaking world of sisters! Her readings from the acclaimed new book *Sisters: An Anthology* and meet Jan Freeman, coeditor of the book and founder of its publisher, The Paris Press in Ashfield.

Share your funniest sister memory! Bring in a photo of you with your sister (as children or adults). Refreshments will be served.

Soon after Paris Press published this highly acclaimed book last December, women began holding events to cele-

brate the book and the shared experience of growing up with a sister. Women are encouraged to bring their sisters to this event.

This celebration of sisters takes place Wednesday, May 19th, at 7 p.m.

For more information contact the Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road, (413) 548-9220. Directions at www.leverettlibrary.org.

For more about sisters' celebrations and a photo of the book: www.facebook.com/pages/Paris-Press/78937308732.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Crabapple Blossom Festival Continues

BY LINDA HICKMAN
TURNERS FALLS – The Turners Falls Crabapple Blossom Festival continues through May 15th. While most of the crabapple tree flowers have already passed their peak, downtown still has many flowering plants to enjoy.

Upcoming Carnegie Library events include a used book sale on Saturday, May 8th from 10 to 2 p.m. Children of all ages and their families are invited to hear the fun band, 3Potato4, on Saturday, May 8th at 10:30 a.m. The lively concert



LINDA HICKMAN PHOTO

Crabapple trees in Unity Park put on a gaudy display for the start of the annual Crabapple Blossom Festival on May 1st

will last an hour, and dancing is strongly encouraged. If the weather is pleasant, the concert will be held in Peskeompskut

Park on Ave. A, across from Aubuchons. If the weather is unpleasant, it will be held in the Library. Very young children and their families are invited to join Rachel Roberts in a fun hands-on science program about frogs on Tuesday, May 11th at 10 a.m. at the library. On Wednesday, May 12th, Story Hour at the library will feature planting pansies to take home. In the afternoon on May 12th, Buds and Blossoms for Homeschoolers with Rachel Roberts is for children of all ages. For more information, call the Carnegie Library at (413) 863-3214.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – May 10th to 14th

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

Sign up now for the June 23rd trip to Pickety Place & Anheuser-Busch.

Monday, May 10th
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment
10:00 a.m. to noon Brown Bag
No Senior Aerobics
No Chair Exercise
Noon: Pot Luck Lunch &

Bingo
No Knitting Circle
Tuesday, May 11th
9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Yoga
1:00 p.m. Canasta
Wednesday, May 12th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Friends' Meeting
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, May 13th
10:00 a.m. Coffee & Conversation
No Tai Chi
1:00 p.m. Pitch
7:00 p.m. Transition Towns
Friday, May 14th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

At Saturday's Western Mass Chapter of the Antique Truck Club of America show in South Deerfield, Sam Browning showed off his unusual cab over tandem dump truck with sleeper. Cab over, meaning cab over the engine, is not unusual on dump trucks in other countries, but rare in the U.S. Even rarer is a cab over sleeper dump truck. Mr. Browning, rumored to have descended from the designer of the Sam Browning belt, uses his unusual truck to haul sod, as well as firewood that he produces with his wood processor, a machine that saws, splits and conveys firewood into his dump truck. The sleeper could come in handy for out of town hauling, or were Mr. Browning to be on the outs with his wife. Other than that, it serves as a topic of conversation.

**Great Falls Middle School
Students of the Week**
Grade 6
Jacob Barboza
Grade 7
Mackenzie Salls
Andrew Renaud
Grade 8
Tyler Peters

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY

DON CLEGG – The Four Winds independent middle school in Gill has focused on Earth Science this year, beginning with geology. Students have followed Gill through 545 million years of geologic time to the present.

As part of their science focus, the school received permission from the supervisor of the Greenway State Park to put up a temporary demonstration model of the solar system along the canalside bike path in Turners Falls. At a scale of 1 to 1,000,000,000 (one millimeter = one thousand kilometers), the Earth, with a diameter of 12,756 Km, is represented by a marble 13 mm wide.

This great science project, which will stay up until late June, was completed at the same time the canalside trail was singled out by Yankee Magazine as the “best urban bike path” in New England.

Volunteers are still needed for the Franklin Land Trust clean up of the former **Beauchesne property** at 97 Main and South Street in Montague. The property will become a state conservation area open for public recreation including fishing and bird watching.

Two more work days are scheduled, rain or shine, on May 14th, from 2 to 5 p.m., and on May 15th, from 10 a.m. to noon. Volunteers should bring gloves, water to drink, and wear long pants and sturdy

boots. Please keep young children at home as the site is not yet child friendly. Call (413) 625-9152, or email apeteroy@franklinlandtrust.org for more info about this or other land trust activities.

Migration Celebration is the theme at the Great Falls Discovery Center from 11: a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 15th. It's migration season, the perfect time for the whole family to learn about the birds we see in our skies and neighborhoods. Build a birdhouse (materials provided), play games, and make a craft item to take home with you. Food, drink and music will help make this a true celebration. This program will be offered in English and Spanish, a first for the GFDC.

Peace Award nominations

for Franklin County High School students who have made a positive contribution towards justice and peace in our community or the larger world are presently being accepted. This award is sponsored by Interfaith Council of Franklin County and Traprock Center for Peace and Justice. Nominations must be sent by May 10th to sueobowman@gmail.com.

The much anticipated ‘soft opening’ of the **Holy Smokes BBQ Delicatessen** at 52 Avenue A in Turners Falls took place last week, to the satisfaction of fans who have waited since June of 2007 (when Holy Smokes’ former location in Hatfield was destroyed by arson fire) to be able once again to walk in Lou and Leslie Ekus’s door and purchase their regionally famous ribs, barbecue sauce, and all the fixin’s. You can join the throng, Thursdays through Sundays, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Send items for local briefs to reporter-local@montaguema.net

Bruce’s Run for Hospice a Huge Success



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUE LA PAN

The response to the benefit event for Hospice on Sunday, April 18th was enormously successful. This first annual Bruce’s Run/Walk for Hospice raised over \$6,000. The weather cleared just in time for the 135 runners and walkers, many spectators, volunteers. The

event is organized in memory of the late Dr Bruce VanBoeckel.

Thank you to everyone who participated. We look forward to next year because of the overwhelmingly wonderful response to this first year of the planned annual event.

Singers Wanted!

TURNERS FALLS – *Valley Idol* a karaoke singing contest with a grand prize of \$1,000, will take place May 7th, 8th, 15th and 22nd at the Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A, in Turners Falls. Auditions will be held Friday, May 7th, at 6 p.m. for the first 100 applicants only. A \$35 registration fee applies to all contestants. Contestants must be at least 18 years old to audition. Singers will need to prepare a 90-second musical selection for audition. First night cut will be to 25 singers.

Valley Idol, Jr. with a grand prize of \$300 for each of three ages categories, will take place

May 8th, 15th and 22nd at the Shea. Auditions will be Saturday, May 8th, 9:30 a.m. for the first 100 applicants only. A \$20 registration fee applies to all contestants. Contestants must be at between 8 and 17 years old to audition. Singers will need to prepare a 90-second musical selection for audition. First cut will be to 25 singers. All entries will receive a prize. Winners will also perform at the Grand Finale of Valley Idol on May 22nd.

Go to www.theshea.org to download registration and view contest information or leave a message at 863-2281. All proceeds benefit Shea Theater.

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August, 2002

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"The Voice of the Villages"

Inch by Inch, Row by Row

Last week, the weather seemed fluky.

A foot of snow fell to our north on Tuesday. On Thursday, winds up to 50 miles an hour blew through the county. By Saturday summer suddenly arrived, with temperatures in the mid-80s.

Three days later, winds gusting up to 70 miles an hour knocked out power throughout Western Massachusetts.

Typical New England weather?

Or the harbinger of coming climate chaos?

In the run-up to Earth Day, weary travelers stranded for six days at airports around Europe and beyond cheered as the ash cloud from an unpronounceable volcano in Iceland dispersed enough to allow them to fly home. That same day, April 20th, an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico blew out, killing 11 workers and initiating an ongoing disaster that continues to pour an estimated 210,000 gallons of oil a day into the waters of the Gulf.

These combined events should give us pause to think about our destructive dependency on carbon based fuels to zip about the planet, indulging in our collective gluttony for excessive consumption of the latest goods and gimmicks, wrapped in plastic and rendered obsolescent in a year.

We are wreaking havoc on the planet that supports our lives. We are fouling our only nest as surely as we are fouling the nests of shorebirds in the marshlands of Louisiana. We have increased the concentration of heat trapping carbon dioxide in our atmosphere by more than 25% since the dawn of the Industrial

Revolution. A mess such as we are making will take centuries to clean up, and affect generations who could they but speak would condemn us for our shortsighted selfishness, waste and folly.

Traditional New England virtues of husbandry and thrift, manufacturing goods with durable value, making do with less and stretching the harvest until spring are undergoing a critical and much-needed reassessment in light of the present global economic and environmental upheavals. There is much each of us, and each of our towns, can do to lead the way to a saner future, by drawing on the heritage of our past.

In recent weeks, we were cheered to see Greenfield, Montague and Leverett pass voluntary building codes to reduce energy waste in new construction, and advance their goals to retrofit town buildings for the conservation of carbon fuels. These towns set the example for all of us to follow in our daily lives.

We do not need legislation to enforce common sense. We simply need to consult our own consciences about the impacts of our choices, large and small.

Would you like paper or plastic? Neither, please. I brought my reusable canvas bag, as I walked or rode my bicycle to the store, improving my health and, ever so slightly, the health of the planet along the way. On the way back, I plan to stop off at the farmers market. And when I get home, I'll work in the garden, growing at least some of my own food, as the gusting breeze and the early summer sun dry my clothes on the clothesline.

attributed the source of a \$100 grant used to purchase a worm bin for the elementary school. The source of the funding was the Greenfield Garden Club, not the Gill Montague Education Fund.

CORRECTION

In the recent article on the Recycled Renaissance Art Show at the Sheffield Elementary School (MR VIII #28), due to a reporting error, we incorrectly

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Missing Trash Bins

I have a simple question. Why is it necessary to walk from Second Street all the way to the post office before one can find a trash basket? And why should the P.O. have to deal with a bit of

trash a civic minded citizen has retrieved six blocks away? We used to have various trash cans for that area.

— Meg Walker
Turners Falls

Backs Brown and Levenson for GMRSD

I am writing to endorse Sandy Brown for re-election to the Gill-Montague regional school committee. During her first term, Sandy has been a clear and consistent voice for both educational quality and fiscal responsibility. I believe the

district needs her to continue helping navigate the difficult times we are facing.

I also endorse Marge Levenson in her election bid. As a member of the Montague finance committee, Marge has tried to balance a concern for

the bottom line with the need to deliver vital services, particularly in education. I think she will bring a fresh perspective to the school committee.

— Mike Naughton
Millers Falls

Mother's Day Memories of My Dungaree Doll

My mother was fearless around spiders. She could scoop up a daddy longlegs from my dresser drawer with her bare hand like it was nothing more than a dust-ball. She was like a guy that way.

Though she was certainly not like a guy in other ways. She was a lady, mostly. She took leisurely baths before going out for the evening. She had her hair 'done' every week at the hairdressers, first washed by one of the girls, then rolled in curlers, then dried under a hair dryer, while she read a magazine or knitted, and then had it combed out and styled and doused in enough hair spray to last until the following week's appointment. She had a matching handbag for every pair of shoes, and a different pair of high heels or pumps to go with every three or so dresses. She drank sophisticated lady drinks like Manhattans and martinis. She had lunch out with her girl-

friends, and wore lipstick and strong smelling perfume from Avon. She went to Broadway musicals. She always wanted to be married again, which she was after four years of single motherhood. She wanted to be taken out to dinner and dancing by a man, as she found nothing more distressing than the idea of a woman alone.

But during those years of single motherhood when she was not alone, but fairly constantly in the presence of at least one of the four children she was raising, she was also the man. The one who scooped the spiders out of my dresser drawer with her bare hand. The one who read us bedtime stories with fake accents or fake speech impediments until they weren't funny anymore and we'd have to beg

her to please stop and just read it straight. She was the one who hated to do housework and so rarely did. She was the one who cooked many a fine meal out of a can and whose specialty was spaghetti. She was the one who drank too much.

And she was the one who got into a screaming match with the woman up the street after I'd had a squabble with her daughter. The girl's mother was scolding me, telling me I was a "bad, bad girl," when my mother arrived on the scene and began scolding the woman back, saying, "She's four years old, for God's sake! How 'bad' could she be?" And the woman retorted, "Listen, Dungaree Doll..."

Whatever was said next was either unnoticed or forgotten, or simply overshadowed by the memory of my mother laughing, muttering "dungaree doll..." and scooping me up in her arms. I sat straddling her dungaree-clad hip, with one arm around the shoulder of her oversized man's shirt (orange and blue stripes, like the color of the NY Mets), staring in awe at the profile of her face, which she turned towards me a couple of times, smiling, as she carried me home to safety.

— Dori McCormack
Greenfield



GUEST EDITORIAL

Stop Tapping, Start Building

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

GREAT FALLS — Rub-a-dub-dub. Three men in a tub. Two men tapping and one listening. Someone needs to caution the inspectors not to tap too hard.

The Gill-Montague Bridge is of the same type of construction as the bridge in Minneapolis that collapsed during rush hour on August 1st, 2007, killing 13 and injuring 145. The only difference being that the G-M bridge has a worse safety rating than the Minnesota bridge had.

There have been a series of inspections: the regular state inspections, a Bechtel Parsons inspection, a Pennsylvania inspection crew, the SPS snooper inspection, the Skyhawk inspection, and now yet another state inspection, leaving little doubt the bridge is in tough shape.

Enough with the tapping, already, before the bridge falls down. Time to start fixing it, or as Marty Yarmac suggests — build a new one.

The Red Bridge abutments could serve to anchor a Bailey Bridge, or a new bridge could be floated on pontoons. Army engineers sometimes put up Bailey

Bridges overnight.

Mackin Construction began taking down the Gill-Montague Bridge railings to paint and spruce up the bridge in October of 1995, but the railings were beyond repair and the anchor bolts too far gone. Jersey barricades were put up end to end to ward traffic away from the rusty fences, and since then the bridge has been inspected to death.

Restoring the Gill-Montague

Bridge is planned to take four years and cost \$40.7 million. The original construction of the entire bridge, at the time the longest bridge in the state, cost \$1 million and took less than one year and four months. And that was before the advent of all sorts of modern construction equipment, huge trucks and transit concrete mixers.

Construction on the bridge began on May 24th, 1937, and the completed span was dedicated on September 10th, 1938. I walked to Riverside over the old red suspension bridge and across the new Gill-Montague Bridge on the day of its dedication.



JOSEPH PARZYCH PHOTO

Yet another inspection of the G-M Bridge took place on Tuesday

Expert on Net Energy and the Economy to Speak in Wendell

BY JONATHAN VON RANSON

— Today we're using more energy to extract a given unit of coal, oil or natural gas than ever before, in a curve that's accelerating. Alone, that curve would spell trouble for society, but combined with the flattening annual production of fossil fuels and increasing global demand, the total effect, economically and ecologically, is unsustainable.

Despite the evidence, governments seem deep in denial about the impending crunch. One agency, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, has been fairly steadfast in warning of climate change. But neither at the state nor national level are legislators or executives seriously fostering the energy savings demanded by the convergence of factors.

It's probably fitting that any provident, effective action should occur at the local level, where the best

options probably lie anyway. What are the implications of declining net energy for beautiful, serene, naturally blessed Franklin County? What do the trends imply for our localities, energy choices and planning?

We'll have a chance to ask an expert on the subject when David Murphy comes to talk on "Understanding Net Energy: How its availability shaped our world, and what its decline means for the Future," in Wendell. Murphy is a national figure in energy and economics at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, an interdisciplinary researcher and doctoral candidate in biophysical economics. He'll give a workshop for public officials and energy committee members earlier in the day. The public is welcome to hear his free evening talk on Friday, May 21st at 7:30 p.m. in Wendell town hall. Refreshments will be served.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Praises Quick Work by Highway Crew

BY DAVID DETMOLD — In a special afternoon meeting on Wednesday, the Montague selectboard praised the hard work and rapid response of the highway department crew clearing up the debris left behind when damaging winds and thunderstorms blew through the county Tuesday afternoon.

Superintendent Tom Bergeron and his crew worked through the night to clear the roads of downed limbs and fallen trees.

"Montague Center was hit hardest," said Bergeron. A tree down across from Elm Grove Cemetery, near Ralph Rau's Sunoco station, knocked over a utility pole, sending a transformer crashing into the road, cutting power at about 4 p.m. to much of the village, including places as far flung as Cold Brook Farm on

Greenfield Road and the entire Chestnut Hill section of town.

"I was heading home for the day at about ten past four," said Bergeron, when the calls started coming in on his cell phone. "I turned around and headed back to work."

Bergeron said tree warden Mark Stevens kept a five-man crew out on the roads until 2 in the morning Wednesday, following Western Mass Electric Company as they cleared downed limbs and trees from power lines. The highway crew then cleared the debris off the roads.

Power was restored to most of Montague Center at about 10 a.m. Wednesday. Chestnut Hill saw power restored by 8 p.m.

Bergeron estimated it would take three more days to complete the clean-up operation.

"It looked like a disaster in front of Rau's," said selectboard member Mark Fairbrother. "The road was still smoking when I went by there. I knew I'd have to get the lanterns out, we wouldn't have any power that night."

"We appreciate all your hard work," Pat Allen told Bergeron.

Allen has been appointed temporary chair of the selectboard in Patricia Pruitt's absence. Pruitt is not running for a third term on the board in the May 17th election.

Besides candidates for town-wide office, the ballot for that election will also include a question that asks voters, "should Montague cease assessing excise taxes on animals, machinery and equipment engaged primarily in agricultural uses."

The board of assessors told the selectboard recently it costs more

money to collect such taxes than they bring in as revenue for the town.

The board granted a one-day entertainment license, pending board of health approval, to Mark Cannon and La Bodega, 104 4th Street, for a Cinco de Mayo festival this Sunday, May 9th, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The street festival will feature food by donation, children's games, and dancing to a Boston DJ.

The board approved a contract with Erving to share the use of the town of Montague's Vactor sewer truck, operated by Montague employees for a fee, and with Montague shielded from liability for any accidents that may occur while Erving is using Montague's truck.

A developers' tour, organized by Mass Development, the state's

finance and development authority, will bring a bus load of about 40 to 50 interested investors from the Boston area to look at specific sites in downtown Orange, Montague, and Greenfield on Wednesday, May 5th, said Allen.

The Montague Business Association has asked to be represented on the hiring committee that will be looking over resumes submitted for the permanent town planner position. Those resumes are due in by May 20th. The hiring committee will also include representatives from the planning board and conservation commission, the EDIC, RiverCulture, the energy committee, and the town manager.

The selectboard went into executive session to discuss collective bargaining at the end of the half-hour meeting.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Warrants Approved for School Committee Election

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE – The Gill-Montague regional school district school committee voted unanimously at their meeting on Tuesday, April 27th to approve the warrants for the upcoming election of school committee members on Monday, May 17th.

There are three positions open for this election: two Montague school committee members, for three years, and one Gill school committee member, for three years. Incumbents Sandra Brown of Gill and Joyce Phillips of Montague will both be seeking another term. Douglas Brown of Montague is not running for re-election. Jane Oakes, a French King Highway

resident of Riverside and former teacher at the GMRSD is challenging Sandra Brown for a three-year seat from Gill.

Residents of both Gill and Montague vote for school committee members from both towns. The polls are open on the 17th from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Montague, and from noon to 8 p.m. in Gill.

Business director Lynn Bassett reported a reduction in the operating budget for the Gill-Montague Regional School District. These changes come from state aid projections reported on the latest Massachusetts Department of Revenue "cherry sheet," which shows some improvement in school choice

for the district and an expectation of a slight increase in the percentage of transportation reimbursement aid.

Bassett also reported a \$20,000 credit from unused funds held as a Revenue Anticipated Note (RAN), meant to be used as a short term loan to cover shortfalls when state aid money is late and the district has to meet financial obligations such as payroll. Bassett has not had to use the money, so an agreement to eliminate the RAN reduces district debt.

Combined, these items produce a reduction in the budget of \$129,626, making the new FY11 operating budget for the school district \$16,408,162.

Also, a proposal is now under consideration in the House Ways and Means committee to supplement Chapter 70 aid with additional funding from a state stabilization fund, which would be given to the district in the form of a grant.

Bassett emphasized her budget report was "just a snapshot in time." All these numbers are just projections that could turn out to be too optimistic, she cautioned.

Michael Langknecht, school committee chair, asked if anyone wanted to consider making a change in the assessments to the towns. No member responded; no action was taken.

A discussion with attorney Russell Dupree centered around a recently settled court case, District Attorney for the Northern District vs. School

Committee of Wayland, that now requires some portion of the school superintendent's evaluation, which is conducted by school committee members, to be kept confidential. This in some ways conflicts with the state's open meeting laws. In the discussion with the school committee members and superintendent Carl Ladd, the problem was resolved, as Ladd said he had no problem allowing the entire evaluation to be made public.

Ladd said a search committee has been formed to select a new director of special education and student services, to replace Nadine Ekstrom, who is leaving the district at the end of the year. Ladd said he hoped the search committee would be able meet to discuss the process and begin screening candidates within two weeks.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Annual Town Meeting to be Held Wednesday, June 16th

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – The Wendell selectboard chose Wednesday, June 16th as the date for the annual town meeting, and spent some time going over the warrant for that meeting at their meeting on April 28th.

The finance committee and the selectboard chose such a late date so firm state aid figures will be in hand and spending projections can be estimated with some accuracy. The draft warrant had blank spaces where final numbers will be filled in for the official warrant.

The meeting's late date means the well-experienced town moderator Kathy Becker will be away, and the burden of moderating will fall to her very capable alternate, Kathleen Nolan.

Jim Slavas and Michael Idoine represented the finance committee at the meeting. Slavas complained that since the finance committee now has a full complement of five members, the two of them no longer make up a quorum.

He said that on May 27th at 6:30 p.m., an assessment methodology subcommittee will meet for the first time at the Mahar High School library. That committee will be formed at the May 4th monthly regional school committee meeting.

Selectboard member Dan

Keller said, "We have to give (Superintendent) Mike Baldassarre credit for pushing."

Beyond the regular annual spending articles, the warrant has an article to see if Wendell will join with other Western Massachusetts municipalities to work towards establishing a "universal, open access, financially self-sustaining, communications system (Wired West) to provide broadband service, including high speed internet, telephone and cable television to residents and businesses within the town."

Another article would allow the town of Leverett to join the Franklin County Solid Waste District, and another article would grant permission for the Ralph C. Mahar School district to borrow up to \$200,000 to remove the dam on school property. A state-mandated inspection showed this dam to be a hazard and also showed that repairing the dam would cost up to \$500,000.

Massachusetts generally favors removing old dams and restoring streams to a more natural state.

The Conservation Development bylaw being developed by the planning board will require a public hearing before it is ready for a town meeting vote. That

hearing has been postponed because the planning board chair has a conflict.

Carolyn Manley and Harry Williston, who are working to revise and update the town's personnel policy, went over changes they have made in the policy since their last meeting with the selectboard. One change would eliminate the ability of an employee to carry vacation time from one year to the next. The new personnel policy will be sent to town counsel, Kopelman and Paige, for review. A public hearing for the new personnel policy will be held at the next selectboard meeting, on May 12th.

The meeting started with Kathleen Leonard securing and paying for rental of the town hall for the evening of Saturday May 1st for a community potluck dinner. The dinner was held as scheduled, a wonderful social gathering, with Diemand Farm turkey and greens from Laughing Dog Farm provided by the organizers, and other dishes brought by citizens. Donation of \$5 were requested, to benefit the Wendell Old Home Day fund. Almost \$500 was raised.

The evening was mild, and after the dinner people lingered well into darkness in front of the town hall and on the common, talking and enjoying one of the

Wendell Election Results

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – On Monday, May 3rd, 263 of Wendell's 688 registered voters (38%) came out to vote in the town election. The votes for the three contested positions tallied as follows:

Three-year term for board of assessors:
Stephen Broll - 227
Tom Mangan - 32 (incumbent)
Tree Warden Peter Zera - 145 (incumbent)
Rich Wilder, Sr. - 93

Three year term on the board of health:
Jenny Fyler - 189
Harry Williston - 73 (incumbent)

No other positions were contested. Patti Scutari received one write-in vote for a three-year position on the selectboard, but incumbent Christine Heard won another term. No votes were cast for the unfilled positions on the planning board.

first soft evenings of the year.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich reported that the Monday evening Capoeira classes in the town hall are taking a break, but the African Dance classes that have paired with them will continue, and Serena Stone, who teaches them, will have to negotiate a payment rate to replace the rate the two classes shared.

Wendell has chosen to carry insurance to cover death benefits for police or firefighters who die in the line of duty, rather than to accept a possible \$500,000 expense of paying those benefits as required by the state law. The company that has been providing that insurance stopped offering it, and the town received two bids from other carriers. Of those, selectboard members chose the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency

(MIA), who gave the lower bid: \$4,450 for the coverage.

The town plumbing and gas inspector, Herb Hoengasser, sent the town a letter stating he needs to raise his fees in order to make inspections pay for themselves. Along with the letter he sent comparisons with the rates Montague charges and the FRCOG charges, which are higher. His new rates are closer to those of Montague, and the selectboard members agreed to accept them rather than use the FRCOG. The increase will be paid by builders and home owners who need inspections, not by the town.

Keller said it seems better not to hurry and change the title on the Herrick property. The historic commission, the open space committee, and the conservation commission all have concerns and interests in the land.

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In the absence of a regular, televised debate between the two candidates for selectboard in Gill, in order to better inform the voters of Gill about the candidates' positions on various issues confronting the town, the Montague Reporter posed ten questions to both the incumbent, Nancy Griswold, and the challenger, board of health member Randy Crochier.

Griswold and Crochier are vying for a three-year seat on the selectboard. The town election will be held on May 17th, from noon to 8 p.m. at the fire station.

Questions for the Candidates for Gill Selectboard

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Do you support the recommendations of the recent Human Resources Services consultant study for staffing and equipment for the major departments of the town of Gill? If so, which recommendations should the town seek to implement first?



Nancy Griswold

Should Gill hire a third police officer? "Yes. How we're going to fund it, I don't know. David and Chris are really stretched. They

are doing an excellent job. But it's a borderline situation for two people to cover this town 24/7."

– Nancy Griswold

anything, a focus, a place to go from here.

"Sitting down and coming up with a capital improvement plan is vital for the town of Gill. Each department needs to sit down and come up with a list of its needs for the next five or ten years."

Randy Crochier: "The study, in my opinion, is incomplete. It doesn't say how they came to their conclusions. They said they spoke with the finance committee, but [7 out of 9 members of] the finance committee said they did not talk with the consultants. That calls into question the validity of the entire study.

"If it is accurate, [the recommendations for increased staffing] still have to be paid for. Supporting it is not the question. Affording it is the question.

"Setting up a capital fund is

something I would like to see happen, so we're not buying equipment in emergencies, but planning for purchases."

What should the town do with the town-owned Mariamante property on West Gill and Main Road?

Nancy Griswold: "I think it is never going to be a buildable, developable lot. If we work out



Randy Crochier

"If elected, I would sit down with our police chief, with police chiefs of neighboring towns, to gather the opinion of people about the appropriate level of coverage, then weigh those factors against the cost of a third officer. Where does that cost come from? Do we take a man off the highway department?"

– Randy Crochier

an admirable and good deal for the town with the Indians... It needs to be conserved, however that conservation piece comes together, whether it be with Mount Grace helping out. The Indians have an issue, and they are right on about it. We can't develop it."

Randy Crochier: "I'd like to see that property developed for business. But there is a question of Native American heritage that needs to be looked at and decided. At the very least, until that is decided, that land should be leased out for haying, or some productive use."

Should Gill remain part of a regional school system with Montague, or should Gill seek another regional school partner?

Nancy Griswold: "That is really a tough question. Part of me says the town should look elsewhere. I am really impressed with the new Gill-Montague superintendent, Carl Ladd, and what he's trying to do. The state has moved away from their regionalization plan. The groups looking into this question have not come back with their studies yet, and they will. It will be one of the very important issues we will be discussing in the near future."

Randy Crochier: "I haven't see GILL pg 12

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Burglaries, Hit and Run Accidents

Thursday, 4/29

1:54 a.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Fourth Street. Investigated.

6:07 p.m. Threatening harassment at Unity Park. Advised of options.

Friday, 4/30

8:08 a.m. Narcotics violation at Franklin County Technical School. Report taken.

7:07 p.m. Hit and run accident behind Turners Falls House of Pizza. Report taken.

8:44 p.m. Restraining order served in hand on Eleventh Street.

8:54 p.m. Brush fire on Whitney's Way in Montague Center. Investigated.

9:59 p.m. Arrest of [redacted], for operating a motor vehicle under the influence, operating to endanger, and trespassing with a motor vehicle.

Saturday, 5/1

3:14 p.m. Unwanted person on K Street.

Services rendered. 3:59 p.m. Hit and run accident near Unity Park. No such person can be found.

8:33 p.m. Loud noise disturbance at La Bodega on Fourth Street. Peace restored.

9:55 p.m. Suspicious person at Sheffield Elementary School. Investigated.

Sunday, 5/2 3:03 a.m. Domestic disturbance on Fourth Street. Protective custody granted.

6:21 a.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Grove Street. Report taken.

9:33 a.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Stevens Street. Investigated.

9:43 a.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Chestnut Street. Services rendered.

12:45 p.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Maple Street. Report taken.

6:12 p.m. Arson reported at Hillcrest

Elementary School on Griswold Street. Summons issued.

9:06 p.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Oakman Street. Referred to an officer.

Monday, 5/3

7:14 a.m. Breaking and entering / burglary on Old Sunderland Road in Montague Center. Investigated.

8:35 a.m. Domestic disturbance on G Street. Peace restored.

8:43 a.m. Hit and run accident at Food City on Avenue A. Investigated.

9:05 p.m. Arrest of Adam [redacted], on a straight

warrant, three default warrants, and for possession of a class B drug, on Avenue A and Seventh Streets.

Tuesday, 5/4

Multiple reports of hazards in roadways in the late afternoon, due to wind storm. Power outage in Montague Center.

Tibetan Earthquake Relief Fundraiser Saturday, May 8th in Amherst

A fundraising prayer service, dinner, and auction will be held on Saturday, May 8th at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

The event starts at 5 p.m. with a prayer service led by The Venerable ZaChoeje Rinpoche*, The Venerable Dechin Tulku*, Geshe Lobsang Wangchuk from Boston, & Kushug Jampa Gomlam. At 6 p.m. a traditional Tibetan dinner will be served by members of New England Chushi Gangdruk – the local chapter of a worldwide Tibetan organization. There will be a silent auction

with items from Tibet, Nepal, and India, donated by Himalayan Views of South Deerfield. 100% of all proceeds will go toward the housing, food, clothing, and medical needs of Tibetan victims. Any amount given will be much appreciated. Thank you!

For information, call Sonam Lama at (413) 325-1663

[* His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama recognized both the Ven. ZaChoeje Rinpoche and the Ven. Dechin Tulku.

The Ven. ZaChoeje Rinpoche was recognized as the sixth reincarnation of one of the highest Buddhist Lamas of Eastern Tibet.]

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Leverett Residents Seek Donations for a Sustainable Future in the Peruvian Altiplano



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROOKE THOMAS

Child warming herself in morning sun. Inset: Nunoan boy taking alpacas to pasture.

BY REBECCA RIDEOUT - NUÑO, PERU - Brooke Thomas has watched the town of Nuño shift and grow over the last forty years, but it's not a place he can visit conveniently. At 13,000 feet above sea level, Nuño, Peru (pronounced Nun-yoa) sits closer to the clouds than to any of the surrounding towns

The region of Peru, known as the Altiplano, provides rich grazing conditions for alpacas, a smaller cousin of the camel habituated to mountain climes. The Altiplano is home to the largest population of alpacas in the world.

When Thomas traveled to this Andean town as an anthropology student in the '60s to research the physiological effects of low oxygen levels on

the human body, the vibrant green highland plains and dramatic mountain peaks stole his heart. Thomas, now retired from teaching anthropology at UMass, has been returning ever since with his wife Shirley, both residents of Leverett.

Thomas has seen Nuño change from a ranch town with no electricity or running water in the '60s to a locale terrorized by the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) revolutionaries in the '80s and '90s.

Peace has since been restored to the area, but one third of the population still lives in extreme poverty.

After years of forming bonds with local residents, Thomas has turned his attention to helping the villagers create a sustainable support system. He and his wife

began the Nuño Project with veterinarian Steve Purdy in 2009.

Purdy, a resident of Deerfield, came to Thomas' attention when he started the nation's first Camelid Studies Program at the UMass Amherst campus. Thomas invited Purdy to visit the mecca of alpaca husbandry - Nuño - in 2008.

Purdy fell under Nuño's spell as well. He learned from local herders about their traditional methods, while bringing modern veterinary research to their aid.

That intriguing connection between visitors' avocations and Nuño's heritage is what makes the Nuño Project unique - it's more of a collaboration between cultures than a traditional charity. The villagers hold a deep

knowledge of alpaca husbandry and textile weaving. The high altitude and low caloric lifestyle fascinate physiological researchers. The pristine environment offers gorgeous views and fresh water from nearby glaciers. In turn, visiting foreigners contribute supplies and skills

that don't often reach outlying Peruvian towns like Nuño, at the end of the supply chain for modern medical equipment and specialists.

The problems that stem from Nuño's out-of-the-way location can be illustrated in all parts of town life. In the alpaca population, Purdy diagnosed the effects of a bacterial disease that had been affecting the herds for years. Up to 30% of the newborn alpacas were dying off annually.

The decline of the alpaca population directly affected the farmers' livelihood, which provides over half the family incomes in the region. The culprit was enterotoxemia, an infection caused by bacteria in the soil that causes death for the alpacas' young.

The problem was not new. Unknown to the Nuñoan farmers, a research group in Lima had recently developed a vaccine for the condition. At fifty cents a dose, the Nuño Project has been able to bring the vaccine to the remote herds in the region and inoculate pregnant alpacas and newborns.

At the local medical clinic, basic equipment is scarce. On a recent visit with the Nuño Project in January, Dr. Tara Futrell from the Greenfield Valley Medical Group attended a birth in the mountains surrounding Nuño. When the baby was born with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck, Futrell grabbed a bag valve mask (or Ambu bag) a simple plastic apparatus she had

brought in her pack. After pumping air into his lungs, the baby and mother were transported to the local clinic via wheelbarrow, where both were checked and found to be in good health. The Nuño Project left three of the simple - yet life saving - devices for future birthing emergencies, and plans to continue bringing doctors and medical supplies to the region.

Father Paul Habing, a priest from Illinois who moved to Nuño after the Peruvian Catholic Church found it difficult to relocate priests from the lowlands to serve in the Altiplano, has since created a center for children in need in the region. The center also provides housing for children who live far from their schools. Habing established an alpaca ranch to support the center, and opened the building to foreign visitors who needed a place to stay.

When Thomas and Purdy visited, their interactions with the children were the highlight of their trip.

Soon after their visit to the orphanage, the local bishop reapportioned the church building as a nunnery, and the children's home Father Paul had worked so hard to establish was disbanded.

Thomas and Purdy responded by raising \$35,000 in donations to buy a plot of land and build a new children's center, which the Nuño Project will co-own. The building will have room for fifteen children, lunch facilities for thirty, two rooms for visitors, and a cultural museum in the lobby. Thomas and Purdy hope to break ground on the project this summer, but still need \$15,000 more to purchase the remaining building materials.

Thomas hopes to watch the town of Nuño grow stronger, and enjoy a self-sustaining future. With the help of modern training and equipment, the residents will take the lead. It's a melding of cultures Thomas thinks will result in the best of both worlds.

You can learn more about the project, see more photos, and make a donation at www.nunooproject.org.

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Illustration: "If I Was Real," Morgan Mead. Photo by Baldwin.

Flaming Snakes on Display

BY RICHARD BALDWIN –

The Wendell Free Library is proud to present an exhibition of work by Morgan Mead of Wendell. This exhilarating exhibition of brightly colored mixed media paintings is Mead's first public showing of his work, all of which has been done this past year.

The artist's statement clearly suggests how the viewer can approach the work. While Mead had done some artwork as a teenager, he has only just resumed painting in the spring of 2009.

Mead writes, "Then, my son Thor, who is in second grade at Swift River, and one of his friends, brought home this huge drawing they had started at school. They were having so much fun with the thing, I thought I would try it again. Having neglected to get my MFA, I can't really say much about any kind of theory behind the paintings. I get ideas from the natural environment, the media environment, my son and his friends... and the flaming snakes in my

skull. Mostly I'm just trying to paint what I want to look at and above all else have fun!"

And a fun show it is. Mead uses acrylic, Mylar and photo prints to make medium to large size compositions that are, in his words, a "jungle gym for your eyes."

The work's vibrancy is the result of several factors. Most obvious is the artist's use of intense primary colors juxtaposed next to one another in outlined shapes. Another is his juxtaposition of lines and repeated small shapes. If the viewer follows the images, what results is a kind of stop and go visual dance.

While the artist draws on nature, experience and imagination for imagery, the way he brings these together results in a sort of high speed neon version of stained glass. There is a kind of theater here. The repetitive small shape-making is in a way meditative and calming, yet when combined

with small pieces of primary colors the result is a high pitched visual experience. The most clearly narrative painting, "A Frozen Moment," presents an historical moment in football history when in December 1967 the Green Bay Packers and the Dallas Cowboys met for the NFL Championship, with Mead's family and friends in the audience. The visual energy in the painting, however, is more than equal to what happened on that field way back when.

Mead, a self-taught artist, reveals an impressive level of competence in arranging visual materials into exciting compositions. Do yourselves a favor and stop in to see his exhibition.

The exhibition will continue for two months until the end of June. The library is open Tuesday from 3 to 6 p.m.; Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. An artist's reception will be held on Saturday, May 15th, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Genealogists Continue their Search at the Carnegie Library

BY SARA CAMPBELL TURNERS FALLS –

Carnegie Library has become home to a diverse group of genealogists who have met monthly since March to share their family history research. A group of 20 came together on Tuesday night to help each other find those elusive ancestors and make preliminary plans for a speakers' series to take place later this summer.

Some of the early maps of Montague were on the table Tuesday night, as David Allen shared his research into the historic records of the town. Working with a grant from the Montague Cultural Council, which will make copies of the historic maps available in the library, Allen asked for help indexing the names found on the 1858 Walling and 1871 Beers townwide maps. Making the names available to other researchers via a website will make it easier for people to find their ancestors at those points in time. Similar studies are underway in Gill and several other area towns.

The group also perused the historic Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, which are currently on file at the library. These very detailed maps show buildings in the developed areas of Montague, as well as Millers Falls and

Riverside, between 1884 and 1919.

Some of the participants arranged a meeting for Friday morning to review resources at the Franklin County Courthouse in Greenfield, to search deeds, probate and immigration records stored there. Reviewing property deeds can often provide clues into the lives of ancestors.

Potential topics for more formal future presentations were under discussion. In conjunction with the RiverCulture theme of "Footsteps" for a series of events this summer, the group will develop a program tentatively called "Footsteps of our Ancestors."

The genealogists are interested in arranging a series of lectures, and the library has offered to provide some funding assistance. Possible topics include holdings of genealogical interest at the National

Archives in Pittsfield, the Massachusetts Archives at Columbia Point, publishing historic information, and DNA studies for genealogical research.

Participants may have some connection to Turners Falls, but many live in surrounding towns, including Buckland, Wilbraham and Northampton. The common bond is interest in family history and an interest in sharing research methods, successes and "brick walls." Several laptops were snapped open Tuesday night and connected to the library's wireless internet, and researchers helped each other track down a few elusive ancestors.

To receive information on future events contact rememberingancestors@yahoo.com. Meeting information will be posted regularly at genealogy-gathering.blogspot.com.

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THREE VIE from pg 1 has served on town meeting continuously for many years, and on the board of health, the veterans memorial trustees, the county solid waste management district, and been instrumental in implementing regional emergency dispensing sites in Franklin County.

"I'd like to see Montague flourish. I feel we've been a little stagnant lately," Boutwell said.

"There are a lot of people who are really hurting in the community. We need more jobs. We need more industry. If we can grab more tourism, that would be great.

"I just want to continue contributing, to serve the public the best I can."

Asked whether they support a proposal by the Turners Falls fire department's prudential committee to establish an ambulance service for the town of Montague, the candidates responded:

Margaret Pyfrom said, "I attended the Turners Falls [fire department's annual] district meeting. I agree with the prudential committee: they need to do considerably more investigating before they continue with it."

Chris Boutwell said, "I have a lot of concerns, like everybody else. Once we get those 5,000 questions answered, we'll be able to make a rational decision."

Rachel Roy said, "I had a person die in front of my home when we lived up in Buckland, and the difference between him living and dying was approximately three minutes before the ambulance arrived. So as I think of the work being done on the bridge and an ambulance trying to get over here from [BHS Ambulance in] Greenfield, I have some really grave doubts about whether or not we can depend on Greenfield to provide ambulance service that will get here in time. Until you've lost a loved one, that amount of time may not seem like much, but it can be the difference between life and death. I support having an ambulance in town."

How would you encourage economic development in town?

Rachel Roy: "Right now there are a lot of irons in the fire. We have a Native American cultural center that's been approved. We have a thriving industrial park. I would need to sit down and hear what people are already consider-

ing, since I am fairly new in town. It's going to take a little time to get that sense. Once I hear what people are thinking, I've been in marketing for years; I'd like to go out to the world at large and see who we can attract to our area, using the strengths we have in this town."

Chris Boutwell: "Yes, we do have an EDIC (Economic



Chris Boutwell

"I would like to see a second industrial park come into town. There's a few locations that are possible and I would like to see whether we could get a railroad spur into one of them."

- Chris Boutwell

Development and Industrial Company] committee in town. We do need to progress. I would like to see a second industrial park come into town. There's a few locations that are possible," and I would like to see, "whether we could get a railroad spur into one of them. We're close to Route 2 and Route 91. There's excellent potential out there."

Margaret Pyfrom: "I concur. We do have the potential; we also have more room for an industrial park. We just need to attract the companies, the businesses to come into this area."

How can we force the state to increase aid for our schools?

Chris Boutwell: "I have a feeling we can't force the Commonwealth to do anything. We can try. As you can see, the state has been overseeing [the finances of] the Gill-Montague district [for the last two years].

I feel very confident we have a superintendent now, Mr. [Carl] Ladd, who is taking a total look at the picture. He's starting to bring

the budget down into reality. He's looking for creative ways to save money and replace programs, whether it be with a lot of volunteers down the road. I think we have a great source of volunteerism in this town. I don't think we've even begun to tap it yet."

Margaret Pyfrom: "I watched the Montague Center School close and I'm curious as to why. I don't understand why we didn't get the resources we needed to keep that school open. It seems to me it was a very well-utilized school, a very important school."

Rachel Roy: "I've been a member of the Greenfield and Mohawk Trail school committees for several years. I'm pretty familiar with the difficulties of the budgeting process, and trying to get the state to come up with resources for the schools. I'd like to start working with the superintendent to form a coalition with other schools in Franklin County, particularly for the regional schools, which are not getting the bus reimbursements they're supposed to.

"That would be the first thing. We need to go after that bus money. The state encouraged everyone to form regional school systems. They swore they would give us the bus money. We had 86% up until last year. Now we're down to 56%. [Editor's note: actual percentages for regional transportation aid: 85% (2009) 54% (2010).] It's time to push them on this."

What would you like to see happen with the town-owned Strathmore Mill?

Rachel Roy: "It's right in the spot where I think the Native American cultural center should go. The problem I see is parking. However, we can have parking further away and run shuttle buses back and forth."

Margaret Pyfrom: "I think that building could be useful. We could bring some sort of business in there. I believe there was a production company in there before. We certainly have enough parking in town. It would be a good source of income for the town."

Chris Boutwell: "I'm not a big fan of town-owned property. They're money pits. They wind up being loss leaders down the road. Not only do you lose taxes, you put money in to keep them going, for maintenance, for heat.

"What I'd like to see over

there, if we do not put out an RFP [request for proposals] for it, is an incubator for small businesses, with sections divided off, like we had back in [1992]. We had, I think, 30 small businesses [operating out of the Strathmore]. That way, the town would get some of their money back."

Should we continue to market the landfill off Turnpike Road?

Margaret Pyfrom: "Yes. I wasn't aware we still had the capability to use that landfill. We can. So why are we paying to have someone come and pick up our trash when we can use the landfill?"

"I don't know all the technical aspects of opening it and running it. But, yes, we should."

Rachel Roy: "The landfill is another one of those thorny issues. There are all kinds of environmental implications if we continue to use it. I'd want to know that we're not creating an environmental disaster over there. I have grave doubts about reopening it without all of those questions answered.

"If we're marketing it for solar or wind energy, that's an interesting concept."

Chris Boutwell: "I was on both landfill committees for the health department. About three years ago, there was an RFP put out. The committee decided not to go with full blown trash - nobody wanted to go in that direction. We were looking at ash products. But it wasn't feasible; the RFP raised a lot of concerns and the money was refunded."

Boutwell added that a recent Franklin Regional Council of Governments study of the landfill site found it was "right on the borderline" for financial viability as a site for solar power, although the abutting burn dump might be a better site for solar development.

Should Montague continue to balance the budget "on the backs" of town employees?

Chris Boutwell: "Nobody looks forward to the budget being balanced on their backs. The employees feel like they're being chopped at. As far as the town employees go, we have such dedicated town employees, they walk down to Subway and get a sandwich and bring it back here and work while they're eating their lunch. That's how dedicated

these people are.

"The way economic times are, overrides aren't too favorable. You'd have to look at the total budget and see if you could find a few ways to regionalize projects. I don't think our finance committee even has a total picture of how to balance the budget without taking money out of reserves."

Margaret Pyfrom: *Agrees with Boutwell; no rebuttal.*

Rachel Roy: "We do have a dedicated crew. It's dispiriting and negative to try to balance the budget on their backs. There is no way I'd support an override. Look at the economic times.

"I'd need to take a look at everything. If I did a little micro-management, and took a look at the budgets, I'd try to find ways to streamline or regionalize so that we could do better with what we've got."

Should we use the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for services like health agent or building inspector; or what regionalization efforts would you support?

Rachel Roy: "I do not believe in a Council of Governments-run collaboration. The COG has no accountability to anyone in this town. Our town officials have accountability to our voters, so I would like to keep it that way."

Roy mentioned pooled health insurance purchases and working with "one or two local towns" for joint purchases of road maintenance equipment as possible avenues for fiscal savings and collaboration.

Margaret Pyfrom: *Agreed.* "I don't know why we shouldn't collaborate like that."

Chris Boutwell: "Regionalization studies are going on." But he cautioned if towns tried to jointly purchase "a plow truck, for example, every town gets a snowstorm at the same time, and the plow truck can only go to one town at a time."

Boutwell pointed out the mayor of Greenfield recently determined it would be cheaper to hire more building department staff than "going with the COG" for inspection services. Boutwell also said the Montague board of health had inquired what the COG would charge to provide Montague with health inspection services, and heard back that the "COG couldn't handle providing

continued next page

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health inspection services for Montague. They are there to supplement town employees, not to replace them."

How should we deal with the threat of forced regionalization, especially for our schools?

Chris Boutwell: "This is not the first time the state has come in and told us to do something, and provided no funding, and we'd have to figure out whose pocket to dig it out of. Franklin County schools are on the state's hit list, because we're so rural. I'm afraid we're going to be a target. They're going to try and make a model out of us they can use in other parts of the state."

Margaret Pyfrom: *No rebuttal.*
Rachel Roy: "We used to have regionalization out here. It was called county government. The state abolished that. Now they want to bring it back because it's convenient. Quite frankly, the state cannot tell us to do that."

"This is still America. We still, as a small town, have the ability to stand up and say, 'No.' They're going to dangle the carrot and the money. But you know what? This town is smart enough and able enough to get things done on our own. It's high time we get past the dangling state financial carrot and become independent, like we always used to be."

How do you view the relationship of the town and the schools?

Chris Boutwell: "We've started the healing process. There's a long way to go. There's a lot of creativity out there that's going to result, down the road, in tapping a volunteerism source to help out some of the positions and come out with a better operating school district afterwards."

Margaret Pyfrom: "When I attended town meetings, it seemed like everything the school requested was voted down. Their hands were tied. There wasn't any give. The town didn't seem to want to help the schools or give them their requests for finances. I didn't see any positive cooperation between the school committee and the town while I was a member of town meeting" [from 2006 to 2009].

Rachel Roy: "What the superintendent told me is we're out of line with our per-pupil costs here, and he's looking at ways to bring

that per-pupil cost down. If there's been some historically adversarial relations between the town and the schools, what we're going to see as this new superintendent gets his feet on the ground, we're going to find a way to make the town and school relationship function smoothly. All the more reason to keep the state out of it."

"Let's work it out. We're all mature adults. There's no reason we can't do that."

Where would you cut the town budget?

Margaret Pyfrom: "I'd cut all the local reporters." [Laughter.]
"I'd have to investigate the town budget. We're working on a shoestring as it is."

Rachel Roy: "Every time budgets get tight, you hear, 'Cut! Cut! Cut!' What I would prefer to see is increased revenues. I would rather spend my time and effort and energy looking for ways to increase revenue and then look for ways to streamline what we already have so we're operating at peak efficiency, if we're not doing so already. I'd rather see us get new business and industry in here to increase the tax base."

Chris Boutwell: "I concur. We definitely need more industry, and more revenue. I would definitely not be in favor of cutting any of the town services. They're all at bare bones right now. We've closed town hall on Fridays to save heat, electricity and air conditioning. People pay taxes, and they expect a certain amount of services."

How much time would you devote to the job if elected, and what strengths would you bring to the position?

Margaret Pyfrom: "I have time on my hands. I would dedicate as much time as possible. Not on Fridays, obviously, because town hall is not open on Fridays."

"Because I am new to politics, I would bring a lot to the table, with my queries and concerns about the future of the town of Montague. I would bring a lot of innovative ideas to the table."

Rachel Roy: "I'm one of the newly unemployed, so I have some time on my hands. It's a good time to get started on something like this. I'd expect to dedi-



DETMOULD PHOTO
Rachel Roy

"I've got years of budgeting and marketing and business development experience. I know the lingo. I can talk to business people. I can talk to politicians. I'm not afraid to speak up."

— Rachel Roy

cate 20 hours a week to the selectboard.

"I've got years of budgeting and marketing and business development experience. I know the lingo. I can talk to business people. I can talk to politicians. I'm not afraid to speak up. I happen to have learned a lot in American History, so I know the American Constitution, and my rights, and our rights as a small town. I'm kind of fearless when I approach these things. I've got integrity and honesty. So I would offer that as my contribution."

Chris Boutwell: "Just what it takes, just like any other committee I'm on. You can't really put a time limit on it. You get involved and you do what you have to do."

Would you aggressively pursue a Native American park for Turners Falls?

Rachel Roy: "I'm part Micmac. It just really bothers me we don't have anything like that up here [exploring the culture of the Northeastern tribes]. Would I pursue it aggressively? I certainly would. There is tons of grant money out there. There are many people who are willing to put some time, effort and energy into this. We've got a good place to locate it, in the paper mill building. The town has decided to follow up on this, and it just has really good energy to it."

"This was at one time a huge gathering spot for Native

Americans. So it builds on that healing energy that's been going on between the town and the tribes. A cultural center would be a huge tourism attraction. I do not ever want to see casinos, but it could become an educational center for the whole region. I would pursue it aggressively."

Margaret Pyfrom: "Montague could use something like that. However, are we going to call it a park? Turners Falls has an awful lot of parks. I would pursue it, not in a park sort of way, more as a museum or center. But I do look at the Native American aspect of our culture as letting people know the history of Montague. That would bring tourists."

Chris Boutwell: "We are definitely rich in history and culture around here. More of a possibility might be the old Cumberland Farms building [on the corner of Avenue A and 2nd Street]. The grant could be tied in with River Culture and the Discovery Center. We would use it as a tourist attraction. People would come when they are visiting Franklin County."

What is your favorite aspect of Montague?

Rachel Roy: "I just love where I live. I live overlooking Barton Cove. I get to look down on Unity Park. I get to hear the voices of happy people down there all the time. I get to see the eagles flying through my yard."

"I love the people I meet around here. I find it's really interesting as far as the socio-economics. I come from a small paper mill town in Maine. I can relate very easily to people here in that regard. My family is French Canadian; I spoke only French until grade school."

"I love the cultural diversity of this town. We've got a large French Canadian population here, we've got the Polish people, we've got the Irish people, we've got the Native Americans; we have new immigrants that have recently come in. I love what could happen here if we all continue in a positive way to move forward with the town."

Margaret Pyfrom: "I love the people. I moved here 20 years ago. I lived down in the South End. Fifteen years ago I ran for selectman. I walked around the neighborhood and introduced myself. Mostly it was older

women who had come here when they were children. I love listening to the older generation tell me what Montague used to be."

Chris Boutwell: "Montague has five villages, each unique for different reasons. I definitely enjoy talking to senior citizens in the community. If something is bothering them, they let you know about it. I've fought for the public health nurse so many times to help protect them over the years. Most all of them remember that."

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GILL from pg 7
 been to enough school committee meetings and looked at the school budget closely enough to fully answer that question. I'd have to have more information. There is a long history with Montague. I tend to believe the towns of Northfield, Bernardston and Leyden are more similar to Gill, so the Pioneer Regional School District may be a better fit for us. But we'd need to look at all the impacts, the impact to Montague. Just because we can do something, doesn't mean it's the right thing to do."

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

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

"We need to be creative. Boston doesn't seem to be coming up with anything new. Adjusting Proposition 2 1/2 just puts the onus on the taxpayers, and we have a lot of senior citizens in Gill."

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

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

What would you like to see happen with the Riverside Municipal Building?

Nancy Griswold: "My ideal would be if the Native Americans bought the Riverside Municipal Building and shared the building with our historical society. That would be a good deal for the town, and everyone would win."

Randy Crochier: "I think we could use that property more frequently for farmers markets. The Friends of Gill use it for an arts and craft fair in the fall. Maybe some group could be found to do a similar event in the spring to

take advantage of the traffic on Route 2, and the nearby boat ramp."

Should the town take a more active role in the relicensing of Vermont Yankee, and if so, how?

Nancy Griswold: "Politically, I don't know how to go about it. If they were to be relicensed, they'd have to come to grips with an enormous amount of things, and be honest with the residents of our towns. If they can't do that, it shouldn't be relicensed."

"I think each town in the evacuation zone should have an referendum on the question, to get the opinions of all residents."

Randy Crochier: "Because half of our town is in the ten-mile zone, we are more involved than other towns. We should take the question to town meeting, and see what the residents of town have to say, before the town takes action."

[Editor's note: In 2008, Gill town meeting voted unanimously to join with 11 other Franklin County towns in the evacuation zone of Vermont Yankee in opposing the relicensing of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant.]

Has Gill done all it should to preserve its agricultural base, or what further steps should it take to support agriculture in town?

Nancy Griswold: "I think we do a lot. The town supports agricultural business in a big way. I'm very proud of that. We've got some beautiful land and farms, and the conservation commission takes wonderful care of that. The town is very proactive in sustaining agricultural property and agricultural business."

Randy Crochier: "I think Gill has been very forward thinking. We've passed the Right to Farm

bylaw, we've formed an agricultural commission, we've preserved APR land. We should be trying to save as much open space as we can, building in the right areas while preserving our assets. We have some of the best soil in the Valley."

A few years back, the treasurer for the Riverside Water District was found to be embezzling district funds. Do you think there is sufficient oversight of the Water District, or should it be brought into town hall as a town department?

Nancy Griswold: "I think the water commission did an outstanding job in finding out what happened, taking care of business, very carefully going over the books, backtracking to find out who, what, why and where. They do an excellent job. They are very well monitored. The commissioners do an excellent job, and they should stay right where they are."

Randy Crochier: "I believe the town accountant should have some oversight over their books, because it does have a huge impact on the town of Gill, not just the water district."

Should the town hire a third police officer?

Nancy Griswold: "Yes. How we're going to fund it, I don't know. But the issues brought up by the [consultants'] study I was already aware of. I have worked with a lot of police chiefs, in a lot of towns. They are working under a lot of stress. Not many town residents realize that a lot of what our police force had done and a lot of their equipment has been purchased out of community policing funding, and that's gone now. David and Chris are really stretched. They are

doing an excellent job. But it's a borderline situation for two people to cover this town 24/7."


Randy Crochier: "I don't think it's a matter of whether we should have three officers. It's the cost, either way."


"If elected, I would sit down with our police chief, with the Council of Governments, with police chiefs of neighboring towns, to gather the opinion of people about the appropriate level of coverage, then weigh those factors against the cost of a third officer. Where does that cost come from? Do we take a man off the highway department?"

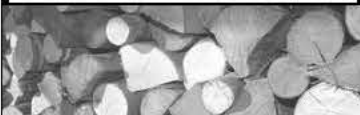
Has the town received fair exchange for the services it provides the Northfield Mount Hermon School, or what more would you do to seek a fair exchange with NMH if elected?

Nancy Griswold: "I'd like to sit down with them. I know they've been hit very hard by the recession, but they've put up a lot of incredible buildings. We should sit down to see if we can work out a little more financial help from them."

"We cannot buy a new fire truck without their help. Otherwise, we can't afford one. That hurts us and it hurts them. They are not paying any taxes. If they were a little friendlier monetarily, it would definitely be appreciated, and we've definitely earned it."

Randy Crochier: "I think continuing an open line of dialogue with NMH has always been central to the town. We should ask them for things. With all the building going on up there, we need to make sure their infrastructure doesn't grow so large that ours can't take care of it." 

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Strokes, and Other Problems

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – *Q. What are the most common symptoms that you're having a stroke?*

The most common stroke symptoms include: sudden numbness, weakness, or paralysis of the face, arm or leg – usually on one side of the body; trouble talking or understanding; sudden blurred, double or decreased vision; dizziness, loss of balance or coordination; a sudden headache with a stiff neck, facial pain, pain between the eyes, vomiting or altered consciousness; confusion, or problems with memory, spatial orientation or perception.

During a stroke, brain cells are deprived of oxygen and nutrients. They begin to die. The earlier a stroke is treated, the better the results.

In the USA, stroke is the third-leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer. It is the leading cause of adult disability.

Your doctor has many diagnostic tools for stroke. Among these are: physical exam, blood tests, carotid ultrasonography to check the carotid arteries in your neck, arteriography to view arteries in your brain, a computerized tomography (CT) scan of the neck and brain, a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain, among others.

Q. How bad does it have to be before you can say you're constipated?

The clinical definition of constipation is any two of the following symptoms for at least 12 weeks (not necessarily consecutive) in the previous year: straining during bowel movements,

lumpy or hard stool, sensation of obstruction or incomplete evacuation, fewer than three bowel movements per week.

Those reporting constipation most often are women and adults age 65 and over. Constipation is one of the most common gastrointestinal complaints in the United States

Common causes of constipation include: insufficient intake of fiber and liquids, lack of exercise, medications, older age, and abuse of laxatives.

Many seniors eat a low-fiber diet that causes constipation. Some lose interest in eating and choose convenience foods low in fiber. Others have difficulties chewing or swallowing; this leads them to eat soft processed foods low in fiber. Aging may affect bowel regularity because a slower metabolism results in less intestinal activity and muscle tone.

Some medications can cause constipation. They include: pain

medications (especially narcotics), antacids that contain aluminum and calcium, blood pressure medications (calcium channel blockers), antiparkinson drugs, antispasmodics, antidepressants, iron supplements, diuretics and anticonvulsants.

Q. Are there telltale signs that an older person is being abused?

If you're concerned an older adult might need help, these are symptoms to look for:

- Physical injury, such as a bruise, cut, burn, rope mark, sprain or broken bone.
- Refusal of the caregiver to allow you to visit the older person alone.
- Indications of dehydration, malnourishment, weight loss and poor hygiene.
- Negative behavior, such as agitation, withdrawal, expressions of fear or apathy.

• Unexplained changes in finances.

Recently, the U.S. Administration on Aging found that more than a half-million people over the age of 60 are abused or neglected each year. About 90 percent of the abusers are related to the victims.

What is elder abuse? It can take a variety of forms: physical, sexual, emotional, and financial. Neglect of an older person also is within the umbrella of elder abuse.

All 50 states have elder-abuse prevention laws and have set up reporting systems. Adult Protective Services (APS) agencies investigate reports of suspected elder abuse. To report elder abuse, contact your APS office. You can find the telephone numbers at the website operated by The National Adult Protective Services Association. Go to: www.apsnetwork.org/

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

ERVING from pg 1

plete list of hazardous chemicals present in the town.

The board approved requests by Dan Hammock to make the veterans memorial committee "the focal point" for all inquiries and maintenance tasks associated with upkeep of the veterans monuments in town, particularly in advance of holidays like Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Hammock said he would also endeavor to update the memorial stones to include the names of any veterans who have served in foreign wars and have lived in Erving for at least ten years.

Hammock also requested and received the board's approval to serve as the town's "horticultural consultant," to take care of plantings along Route 2 on town-owned land, using his own nursery stock, and working as a volunteer.

Hammock said he envisioned Erving becoming a destination spot for tourists, to view "Azalea Alley," once he gets through transforming the plantings along Route 2.

The board accepted an action

plan developed in conjunction with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for making Erving eligible for Green Community status, although Tessier made it clear he did not support passing the voluntary stretch energy building code as part of that plan.

The board approved spending \$17,500 from previously appropriated funds to pay Tighe and Bond to perform an asbestos survey of the former Usher Mill, in preparation for demolishing that derelict mill complex.

Tessier reported that the Erving Paper Mill has determined the source of a small copper leak at the wastewater treatment plant. Apparently, the copper line used to test levels in the chlorine contact tank was itself the source of the copper leachate getting into the Millers River in trace amounts. That copper line will no longer be used to test levels at the chlorine contact tank, Tessier said.

The Commonwealth has approved Erving's request to name a section of Route 2 after former selectboard member and Route 2 Task Force chair Dennis

Rindone.

The board approved spending \$7,200 to purchase a new computer server for town hall, from funds previously appropriated for that purchase.

Then, everybody had a slice of red velvet cake in honor of Tessier's retirement from the board.

"You taught me a lot in the last couple of years," said board member Andrew Goodwin. "We haven't always agreed on everything."

"It would be boring if we did," rejoined Tessier.

"It's been a pleasure serving with you," Goodwin concluded.

"We're going to miss you," added Margaret Sullivan. "You're the experience on the board."

The board will now shift to Thursday evening meetings, to better accommodate Goodwin and Jaime Hackett's work schedules.

Hackett has missed the last three consecutive meetings.

The next meeting of the Erving selectboard will take place on Thursday, May 13th, at 6:30 p.m.



Pioneer Valley Institute offers Timber Program

The Pioneer Valley Institute presents "Buying Local Timber: Consumption and Techniques of Supplying Our Own Demand" on Thursday evening, May 13th, at GCC's Downtown Center, 270 Main Street, Greenfield. The program, which is free and open to the public, begins at 7:00 p.m. Kate Marquis and Jeff

Hutchins, forestry students at UMass, will discuss in layman's terms many of the issues confronting the public and the lumber industry today. There will be a question and answer session after their presentation.

For more information, email pvi@gcc.mass.edu or leave a message at 413-775-1671.

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GO GREEN FAMILY

Episode 10: What's a Locavore?

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON
MONTAGUE CENTER –

Without the flier in Ruby's school backpack, Rita Tinker would never have found out about the "Be A Locavore" kick-off swap. The idea sounded perfect. "Heck, we've practically been locavores since before there was a fancy word for eating local food," Rita reflected. They ate venison from Billy's deer hunt every year, and half their vegetables came from their own garden. So with a little extra effort, by eating food grown within 100 miles of their home, they could show the Go Green Family judges they were reducing their carbon footprint and supporting local farms at the same time.

She and Ruby had to talk Alex and Billy into becoming locavores for the two months.

"Do I get to eat meat?" Alex wanted to know.

"Sure, so long as it's local," Ruby answered "Of course we have our own chickens, and we'll look for someone around here who is raising beef or lamb."

"The only grains that grow around here are corn, Rita!" Billy pointed out. Does that mean we're stuck with corn and potatoes for two months?"

"Let's find out!" she answered.

A day later, a Subaru wagon filled with the four Tinkers and a basket of their hens' freshly laid eggs chugged up a twisty dirt road and came to rest beside a ramshackle house on a grassy

hill, surrounded by about a dozen cars.

"Come on in," a voice inside yelled.

The door opened to reveal a crowd of over 30 people making their way around a series of tables with big signs and stacks of food: honey, maple syrup, dried corn, and the first greens of the season—spinach and lettuce. People behind the tables were taking money and making change. It felt like an indoor farmers market.

A woman in muddy jeans handed Rita a package labeled "Western Massachusetts Locavore Starter Kit." Inside the kit was a map that corresponded to a directory of local farms. There was a list of "hard to find" items that included oil, flour, and

dry beans. "Why don't you make your shopping list first, then you can wander around," advised their host. The Tinkers sat down together and made this list:

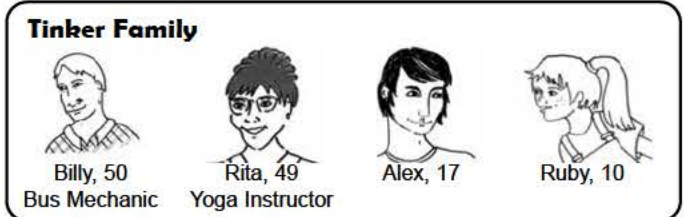
- Eggs, tomato sauce, spinach, Swiss chard, peas, chicken, goat milk – our own farm
- Lamb – Leyden Glen Lamb
- Beef – Hager Brothers Farm, Colrain
- Dried beans – Long Plain Farm, Whately
- Eggs, maple syrup – Davenport Maple Farm, Shelburne
- Onions, kale, brussels sprouts – Atherton Farm, Buckland
- Wheat, barley – Four Star Farms, Northfield

- Potatoes – Atlas Farm & Greenfields Market Coop
- Goat cheese – Laughing Dog Farm
- Asparagus, spinach, chard, salad greens – Seeds of Solidarity Farm, Greenfields Market Coop
- Winter squash – Steady Lane Farm, Ashfield
- Milk, strawberries, raspberries – Uppingil Farm, Gill

"Uh-oh" said Alex. "No peanut butter or catsup."

"You can make catsup," said the man next to Rita on the couch. "Hi – I'm Bob. I've got a fantastic catsup recipe. Would you like to buy some grass-fed beef?"

Continued next issue.



MEETING from pg 1
opposed spending a combination of \$1.25 million from free cash, \$500,000 from taxation, and \$650,000 transferred from unspent funds from other projects to build the new center, Dan Hammock said, "We just don't think the taxpayers of Erving should spend \$2.4 million on it. We keep hearing the economy's getting better. When all these road projects are done, what's next? Look at Spain, Greece and Portugal. There are no jobs for anyone to have."

Hammock said the move by the selectboard to finance the

project from available funds, avoiding the need to achieve a two thirds majority required for borrowing or taking money from the town's \$5 million stabilization fund amounted to "snookering" the voters.

"The Erving Paper Mill is in Chapter 8 bankruptcy," said Antonio Rubinacchio. "Without that mill, we'll have to operate the treatment plant. The economy is bad. We're throwing money away. It's going to cost us an arm and a leg to build this building."

Rubinacchio warned the \$2.4 million estimate for construction could swell to "\$4, \$5, \$6 mil-

lion," before the new center was built.

But Bruce Hunter, the town's project manager for the senior center project said, "I feel obliged to let you know, the plans have been completed. All permits have been received. The architect has built 30 - 40 senior centers recently; he has a very good idea what the costs are. The senior center building committee has spent a great deal of time developing these plans. We estimate the bidding process will result in a lower dollar figure because of the favorable bidding climate."

Selectboard chair Andrew Goodwin backed him up, saying, "Now is the best time to go out

for bids to build a senior center," though he cautioned, "it does add more infrastructure and ongoing costs to the town, costs we will have to pay."

Rising stiffly to his feet to give the finance committee's minority view, Pete Cavanaugh said, "Half the people in town are senior citizens. The other half are getting to be that old. I endorse the senior center 100%."

Brenda Silva said, "The town didn't fall apart when we built a \$2 million police station. It's not going to fall apart when we build a \$2 million senior center. We don't have a choice but to support the people who grew this town and built this town."

Joyce Bissell had the last word.

"You younger people don't think about it now, but you will need this senior center some day. Your children will move away. Your spouses will die. You will be alone. There are signs at both ends of town saying, "Erving, a Great Town to Live in." Well, maybe after tonight it will be. For everybody."

With less ado.. the meeting approved a \$3.75 million operating budget for the town, and a \$3.06 million school budget

After much debate, \$500,000 to demolish the derelict Usher Mill was also approved.



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JOE GRAVELINE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Domestic on Gunn Street

Tuesday, 4/27
 5:05 p.m. Assisted Orange police department at Prospect Street, Orange, in the arrest of three male subjects involved in an altercation.

Wednesday, 4/28
 8:30 a.m. Report of a noise disturbance at French King Highway address. Neighbor playing drums too loudly. Advised tenant to speak with landlord.

9:15 a.m. Barking dog complaint on Pratt Street. Checked area. Nothing found.
 12:59 p.m. Barking dog complaint on Pratt Street. Checked area. Nothing found.

Friday, 4/30
 10:20 a.m. Barking dog complaint on Pratt Street. Checked area. No dog could be heard barking.
 6:35 p.m. Report of a male subject in a vehicle threatening a resident on Gunn Street. Checked area. Vehicle gone upon arrival.
 7:00 p.m. Report of live ammunition found in middle of roadway. Reporting party stated they placed it on

side of road. Checked area. Unable to locate. Local residents stated they were unaware of anything.

Saturday, 5/1
 12:19 a.m. Black bear roaming in the middle of Mountain Road with a bag of bird feed. Same took off into woods.

Sunday, 5/2
 1:24 a.m. Report of possible domestic disturbance on Gunn Street. Found to be husband and wife arguing. All verbal. Wife left for the night.

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SATURDAY, MAY 8th
Valley Idol, Jr., an a cappella singing competition for students 8 to 17 years old. First round try-outs: 5/8 at 9:30 a.m. \$20 to register (see above listing). Audience admission for all dates: \$5. Round 2: 5/15 and 5/22 at 9:30 a.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 13th
 Internationally-acclaimed cellist **Matt Haimovitz** performance to benefit The



Vance Gilbert at the St. James Coffeehouse, Greenfield on Saturday, May 8th. Opening act: ambeR Rubarth at 7:15 p.m.

Food Bank and Rachel's Table. Renowned for his fearless and virtuosic performances, Haimovitz performs with his eight-piece cello ensemble Uccello, comprised of top students from Montreal's McGill University, for a program of new arrangements of Jazz classics including arrangements by David Sanford. 7:30

p.m. at the National Yiddish Book Center, Amherst. Tickets: \$18; \$5 for students.

FRIDAY, MAY 14th
 Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: **Steve Nelson** with local favorite **Dave Dersham** opening. Nelson has enjoyed an eclectic and award-winning career. 8 p.m. www.stevenelson.org.

Great Falls Coffeehouse, Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: **Green River String Band**, 7 to 9 p.m. Alternative country originals, bluegrass and old-time fiddle tunes by Mark Koyama, Eveline MacDougall, Charlie Conant, & Doug Reid.

SATURDAY, MAY 15th
 Free Saturday hot lunch (bbq turkey, salads, dessert) with a family-friendly focus (puppets, games, gardening, alacas!) noon to 3 p.m. at the Montague Farm Zen House, 177 Ripley Road, Montague. Free. Transportation available! Please call Karen Werner at 367-5275, or email Karen@zenpeacemakers.com.

THURSDAY, MAY 6th
 Deja Brew, Millers Falls: **The Relics**, '50s & '60s Rock with Brian Mallet & Lefty Cullen, 8 to 10 p.m.

Traprock Peace Center, Greenfield showing two films: **People To People: Pastors For Peace**. Followed by **Sin Embargo (Nevertheless)**. 7 p.m. Free, donations encouraged. Sponsored by Pioneer Valley Cuba Solidarity Committee.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Fall Town String Band**, 7:30 p.m. no cover.

THURSDAY TO SATURDAY, MAY 6th to 8th
 Northfield Mount Hermon student dancers and two guest artists team up for **Rhapsody**, the highly charged spring performance of the **Senior and Junior Dance Companies**. 7:30 p.m. in the Rhodes Arts Center theater. \$2 for NMH students, faculty, staff, or children; \$7 for all others. Reservations: dancetickets@nmh-school.org. **Rhapsody** will feature tango, West African, jazz, modern, hip hop and ballet-inspired pieces with guest choreography by Marilyn Sylla and Megan Buchanan Cherry '91.

FRIDAY, MAY 7th
 Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: **Friends Of Yours** with **Sway**. Despite their cheery name, **Friends of Yours'** music is a brooding, intense experience. Building on the increasingly common boy/girl duo pop-

ularized by **The White Stripes** or **Jucifer**, they differentiate themselves by writing songs that emphasize dynamics over catchy hooks or pummeling riffs. 8 p.m., \$5. www.myspace.com/friendsofyours.

Kirtan with Shubalananda and Ashley



Songwriter Steve Nelson at the Bookmill, Montague Center on Friday, May 14th, 8 p.m.

Flagg perform at Unity in the Pioneer Valley, Greenfield, 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Barrett Anderson**, renegade blues, 9 to 11 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **High Country, Low-Fi** with Jeffrey Foucault and friends, 9 p.m. \$5 cover.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, MAY 7th & 8th
 The Shea Theater's Fifth Annual **Valley Idol** begins. A benefit for the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Auditions start at 6 p.m. Register as a contestant: (must be 18 years old) www.theshea.org or call Shea Theater 863-2281. Audience Admission: \$3 (first night only). Round 1: 5/8 at 7 p.m. Continues 5/15 and 5/22.

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: **The General**. With live music by electric cellist Gideon Freudmann. The hilarious, gentle, fanciful and beautifully done 1927 silent film about love in the time of Civil War. Buster Keaton with Marion Mack. No pre-purchase tickets accepted. \$10; \$5 for kids. Music before the movie at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, MAY 7th to 9th
 JaDuke Inc. presents **Noises Off**. Hilarity and mind-boggling mayhem written by Michael Frayn, **Noises Off** premiered in London in 1982, winning both the Evening Standard and the Olivier awards for Best Comedy, and ran in the West End for nearly five years. It opened on Broadway in 1983 and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play. Friday & Saturday at 8 p.m. Sundays at 2 p.m. **Continues 5/14 to 5/16**. At the JaDuke Black Box Theater,

Fascinating **Frogs** at Northfield Mountain: Exploring Life Cycles with Rachel Roberts. At Northfield Mountain 10 to 11:30 a.m. A variety of hands-on science and art activities connected to life cycles, with a focus on frogs. Brief story time about the life of tree frogs. Weather permitting, time to investigate the ponds and other wildlife outside. (dress appropriately). This workshop is free and for families with young children. Pre-register (800) 859-2960.

Crabapple Blossom Festival Family Concert in Peskeompskut Park, Turners Falls. Family friendly band **3Potato4**, formerly the **Juice Boxes**, 10:30 a.m. In case of rain, the concert will be held in the Carnegie Library. Information, call the library, 863-3214.

Book signing with local author **Wilson Roberts** at World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield, 11 to 1 p.m. His latest book: **Incident On Tuckerman Court** with illustrations by Lisa Henry. (413) 772-2186.

Opening reception for: **Coordinates of Self**, an exhibition of new work by Montague artists Karen Chapman, Belinda Lyons-Zucker, and Claudine Mussuto, 2nd Street Baking Co., Turners Falls, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Lantern Hill House Concert, 21 Plain Road, Wendell: **Anna Coogan**, singer/songwriter. 7 p.m., 6 p.m. potluck. www.annacoogan.com.

Christina's Tavern, Erving: **The Reprobate Band**, jazz and blues, 7 to 11 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: **Carrie Ferguson**, original folk rock, 9 to 11 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **Left Ear Trio**, 9:30 p.m., (see ad this page).

SUNDAY, MAY 9th
 Deja Brew, Wendell: **Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Joe Fitzpatrick**, acoustic trio - warped americana, 8 to 10 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: **TNT KARAOKE**, 8 p.m. no cover.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12th
 Great Falls Farmers Market. On the lawn near the Discovery Center, Avenue A, Turners Falls. 2 to 6 p.m. Rain or shine every Wednesday.

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Memorial Hall Theater
POTHOLE PICTURES

Friday & Saturday May 7th & 8th THE GENERAL
 With live music by electric cellist Gideon Freudmann. The hilarious, gentle, fanciful and beautifully done silent film about love in the time of Civil War. 1927. B&W. NR. 75 min. \$10/\$5 kids
 Music 1/2 hour before the movie
 Fri. 3Potato4 - silly pop songs for children
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- THE LOSERS**
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 in DTS sound PG
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FRI 5/7
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9:30 \$5 (classic country)
HIGH COUNTRY, LOW-FI
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SAT. 5/8 9:30 \$3
LEFT EAR TRIO
 (new spin on a classic hammond organ jazz/funk from NYC)

SUN. 5/9 8pm FREE
TNT KARAOKE!!!

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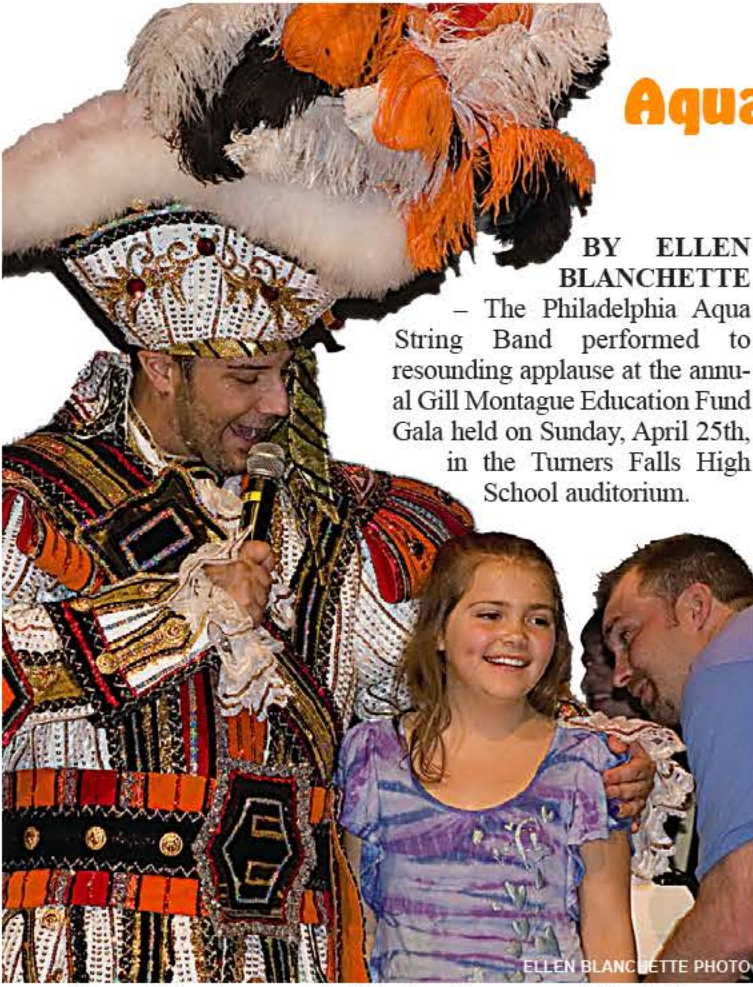
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Aqua String Band a Big Hit in Turners Falls

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE

The Philadelphia Aqua String Band performed to resounding applause at the annual Gill Montague Education Fund Gala held on Sunday, April 25th, in the Turners Falls High School auditorium.

According to organizer Joyce Phillips, the gala saw a bigger turnout than in past years, with approximately 250 people in attendance.

Ron Innacone, captain of the Aqua String Band, brought energy and joy to the performance as he introduced each segment of the show, and changed costumes at least five times, giving the audience a chance to see a wide selection of the gaudy attire worn in New Year's Day Mummers parades over the years.

Innacone says the Aqua String Band spends about \$60,000 on costumes every year, and devotes the entire year to planning for the New Year's Day parade.

In Turners Falls, during their two-hour performance, the string band performed a wide variety of songs in many styles, including Irish, Italian, Gospel, American jazz standards, and more.

The Aqua String band is a completely volunteer family organization that has been in

existence for over 100 years. Musicians at the gala ranged in age from 9 to 70 years old, with uncles and nephews, fathers and sons playing together, the elders grooming the young members to continue the band's legacy.

In a new addition to their show, Innacone led the band through the history of their development musically over the last 100 years. Starting slow and low with just the banjos and string instruments, the band gradually added glockenspiel, accordions, percussion instruments and then wind instruments, saxophones and clarinets. As each of the instruments was added, the pace of the music picked up and the volume grew until the full power of the modern day Aqua String Band filled the room.

In addition to the music and costumes, Innacone and his fellow mummers danced the polka and the mummers' strut with volunteers from the audience, children and adults, entertaining the

crowd, who laughed and cheered throughout the show.

Organizer Joyce Phillips told the Gill-Montague school committee on Tuesday, April 27th that the gala was a great success.

"I never got so many hugs after an event before," said Phillips, who added many members of the audience told her they loved the show and thanked her for bringing the Aqua String Band from Philadelphia to Turners Falls. Phillips said people came up to her afterwards and to tell her how happy the show made them. One woman in her 90s said she was so glad her son had brought her, she rarely felt so happy. Some audience members told her they were sorry they hadn't brought their children.

Phillips said she hoped this would encourage people to bring more children to the holiday show the Gill Montague Education Fund will offer later this year.

Emma Miner is congratulated by Ron Innacone, captain of the Aqua String Band, after she took a turn conducting the band at the Gala event on Sunday at Turners Falls High School.

Theater Review Explosive Material on Stage at Franklin Tech Papa Toph's

REVIEWED BY DAVID DETMOLD – On Sunday, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Pakistan allegedly tried and failed to set off a car bomb in Times Square, as theater patrons crowded nearby restaurants shortly before showtime.

On Wednesday, juniors in Dean Scranton's elective English class at the Franklin County Tech School performed a dramatic rendition of an original play – authored by the students themselves – dealing with a gun-toting Islamic extremist wearing a concealed explosive belt who threatens a suicide attack on a crowded Boston nightclub.

On Thursday, May 13th, at 7 p.m. at the Franklin County Tech School, students in the Tech

School's Conflict Resolution Theater, directed by Court Dorsey, will reprise their play – called *Papa Toph's* – for the general public, as a fundraiser for the junior class.

Dorsey has been directing CRT at the Tech School since 1995. He said this is the first year the students have chosen to take on issues in the world at large in their theater work, rather than focusing on problems internal to the high school community. The material is fresh, vital, and raw, dealing not only with the threat of terrorism, but along the way confronting casual alcohol and drug use, personality disorders, gay relationships, and religious intolerance. The ensemble piece is delivered in a



Christopher Jennison (center) plays an Islamic extremist in *Papa Toph's* at the Franklin County Tech School

fast-paced, ironic style, with slamdance scene changes, verbal gymnastics, and incisive humor.

Papa Toph's is a very mature piece of theater crafted by students who have looked squarely at the adult world and carved out a clear-eyed coign of vantage

from which to interpret it. Each character is clearly delineated, the action is furious, the commentary explosive.

This is not theater for the faint of heart. It is conflict resolution theater, and you won't find anything else like it in

Franklin County.

"Most schools would not let students take on material like this," said Scranton, as he introduced the play.

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