



**OPEN MIC**

Returns to Cup O'Joe / page 8



**CELEBRATING with FRAN DOLAN**

On his 85th birthday / page 12

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 5 - NO. 5

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 2, 2006

## LaRoche Hired as Town Planner

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
MONTAGUE has hired a new town planner. His name is Dan LaRoche, and he comes to town with an extensive background in land use planning and conservation, most recently as the director of land protection at Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, and for six years before that as land use planner for the town of Greenfield.

LaRoche will fill the post left empty when the selectboard turned down former planner Robin Sherman's request for a ten-month leave of absence to pursue a graduate degree in public administration at the Harvard School of Government. Sherman left the post in July of this year, and the town has been without a planner since then.

Selectboard member Pat Allen said LaRoche, "comes to us with quite a bit of experience that will come in handy in many



*Dan LaRoche*

PHOTO: SHAWN WOOLSEY

different areas."

LaRoche, who will begin his new job on November 27th after transitioning from his post at Mt. Grace, said, "I'm pretty excited about it. There are some great opportuni-

ties in Montague and I'm glad I will be part of that."

Among the top priorities he mentioned were the expansion of the town's industrial park to the south side of Millers Falls see **LAROCHE** pg 10

## STANDING ROOM ONLY

### AT SCHOOL CLOSING FORUM IN MONTAGUE CENTER

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
More than 80 parents and town officials packed a public hearing on school closing at the Montague Center school on Monday, October 30th. The crowd got there at the scheduled starting time of 6:30 p.m., and waited patiently for the superintendent, who had a 7:00 p.m. start in mind from previous forums at the high school and in Gill. By the time Superintendent Gee got there, the airless auditorium had heated up and swelled to capacity, with more than 100 residents filling almost every seat and lining two walls. The superintendent brought informational packets outlining the advantages of closing one or another of the town's elementary schools and quickly passed them around until the packets ran out.

All of this might have

put the crowd in a combative mood, even if the topic at hand - the possible closing of the Montague Center School - had not raised their ire in advance. But the hearing that followed was notable for the civility of its discourse, despite the passion in the voices of many speakers.

To no one's surprise, when the floor was finally opened for public comment, first to the microphone was Montague finance committee chair Jeff Singleton, an advocate of small neighborhood schools with K-5 or K-6 grade spans as the model for the district. Singleton, whose son attended Montague Center School, said, "We came to Montague, and live here, largely because of this school. I have supported every budget that the school district has presented, including the

Proposition 2 1/2 override last year. I hope the school committee, as it makes this decision, does not say, 'I didn't want to close a school, but we had no choice.' You do not have to close a school, and you do not have to close this school."

Singleton argued a projected gap in the school district's operating budget was not a sufficient reason to close one of Montague's three elementary schools. "It assumes you make big budget savings, but that doesn't work out in practice."

The superintendent has estimated the schools' operating budget will rise by at least \$800,000 for the next fiscal year, if cuts aren't made, or if a school isn't closed. Closing Montague Center School would save the district between \$139,000 and see **SCHOOLS** pg 13

## COOPERATIVE SHOPPING

• from Wyoming to Greenfield •

**BY BETSY CALVERT**  
People who want to buy their underwear in Greenfield packed the room on Wednesday to hear news of a proposed community-owned department store in

town, and to hear about the success of one such store already operating in Wyoming.

Shares of stock for a locally owned department store may go on sale in a few weeks, said

Robert Rottenberg, board member of the Greenfield Mercantile, Inc. Investors will have to buy shares in blocks of five, he said, for \$500. The maximum anyone could invest would be \$10,000, to keep any one person or group of people from gaining a controlling interest in the new store, Rottenberg said. There is no proposed profit sharing envisioned, he said, with investors being told the Mercantile is instead an opportunity to invest in the local economy.

The project needs to raise at least \$435,000

see **SHOPPING** pg 9



*Sharon Earhart, chair of the Powell Wyoming Chamber of Commerce*

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Decamps

from Crocker Building



DETMOLD PHOTO

**BY BETSY CALVERT**  
TURNERS FALLS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the anchor tenant in the restored Crocker Building at Avenue A and 2nd Street in downtown Turners Falls, will be

leaving its offices by the end of November, Silvio O. Conte Refuge Manager Andrew French confirmed Wednesday.

Fish and Wildlife employees will continue to provide partial staffing

of the Great Falls Discovery Center, French said, and the staff at the Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center on the other end of the power canal will not

see **FISH** pg 10

### PET OF THE WEEK Contented Kitty



#### Happy

Happy is a one-year-old black & white shorthair cat in need of a good home. She's a compact little cat, very solid, who was found stray. She's got a great tuxedo coat and really cute face. It is very easy to win her heart with a little petting - the purring will start up immediately! For more info on adopting Happy, please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org.

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### CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

## Got Books?

### NOVEMBER LIBRARY HOURS

**BY SUE SAN SOUCIE** - Due to the Veteran's Day holiday, the Carnegie Library will be closed on Friday, November 10th and Saturday, November 11th.

On Thanksgiving week, the Carnegie Library and the Montague Center Library will close at 5:00 p.m. on

Wednesday, November 22nd. The Carnegie Library and the Millers Falls Library will be closed on Thursday, November 23rd, Thanksgiving Day. The Carnegie Library will also be closed on Friday, November 24th, but will be open on Saturday, November 25th.

## Halloween Dance



PHOTO: LINDA HICKMAN

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - Many of the participants of the Music and Movement program at the Montague Center Library dressed up early for Halloween on Thursday, October 26th.

## Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Info Error

**BY ANNA VIADERO** - When the Department of Health and Human Services released its 2007 Medicare and You booklet, press packets and website information. They contained errors.

At this time there is no plan to correct the 2007 Medicare and You nationwide publication by sending out notices to beneficiaries or media. However, the www.medicare.gov website has been corrected.

An important error that was transmitted to readers of the November Good Life, and possibly other media sources, was about specific plan coverage of brand name drugs for those in the so-called 'donut hole' of coverage.

The correct information is: *No prescription drug plans will cover brand name drugs during the 'donut hole' coverage gap in 2007.*

Call SHINE at 413-773-

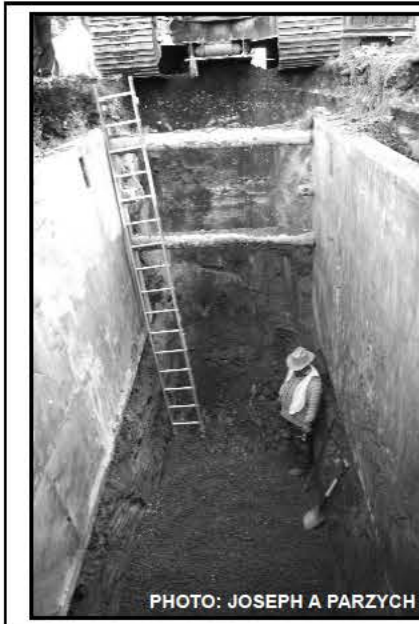


PHOTO: JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

## FACES & PLACES

'Chico,' in his trademark Texas hardhat, down in the hole on Avenue A, as Ludlow Construction's sewer project flows on.

## Pilgrim Party

**BY LINDA HICKMAN**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - There will be a Pilgrim Party at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, November 4th, at 2 p.m. Children of all ages and their families are invited to join Bev in pretending to be Pilgrim children. Participants can make Pilgrim hats, play Pilgrim games and eat traditional snacks. Children are encouraged to wear Pilgrim style clothing. For more information, call 413-863-3214.

## LOST BLACK CAT

Lost black cat with green eyes, lost early last week at the Greenfield Animal shelter; could be near Canada Hill area, Lodge Tire or trying to get back to Turners Falls. Please call 413-863-4020.

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**Great Falls Middle School**

Students of the Week:

**Grade 7**  
Megan Foster  
Dakota Albano

**Grade 8**  
Nicole Fuller

## Seniors: Two Weeks Left for Open Enrollment

**BY ANNA VIADERO** - Prescription Advantage, the Massachusetts plan to help lower drug costs for elders, is in its last two weeks of open enrollment. If you are 65 or

older or younger than 65 with a disability you may qualify.

Please call the SHINE office at Franklin County Home Care 413-773-5555 or 978-544-2259 for more infor-

mation or for help in signing up for this plan.

Prescription Advantage may lower costs of medications for those in the Medicare Part D.

### SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES November 6th - 10th

**MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth St., Turners Falls, is open Mon. - Fri. from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Make meal reservations a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on the machine when the center is closed (863-9357). Mealsite manager is Chris Richer. The center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. Transportation to the center can be provided. Special trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip.

**Monday, 6th**  
10:15 a.m. Aerobics  
11:30 a.m. PACE Aerobics

**Tuesday, 7th**  
9:30 a.m. Aerobics

**Wednesday, 8th**

10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 9th**  
1 p.m. Pitch

**Friday, 10th**  
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. PACE Aerobics

Advance registration appreciated for the following class, program will be canceled if less than 5 people sign up

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

be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at (978) 544-3898.

**Monday, 6th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch

**Tuesday, 7th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting

**Wednesday, 8th**  
9:30 a.m. Line Dancing  
12 Noon Bingo

**Thursday, 9th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Shopping

**WENDELL Senior Center**, located in the town offices on Wendell Depot Rd. Call Kathy Swaim at (978) 544-2020 for info, schedule of events or to coordinate transportation.

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# Rebecca Caplice Named New Greenfield Saving Bank CEO

**BY CHRISTOPHER SAWYER-LAUCANNO GREENFIELD** - Rebecca 'Becky' Caplice, currently Greenfield Savings Bank's Chief Operating Officer, will become president and CEO of the bank and its holding company GSB, MHC on January 1st, 2007. Caplice is the first woman to hold such an important office at the bank, and one of the few women bank presidents in all of Massachusetts. Current president and CEO Joseph 'Joe' Poirier will remain with GSB as a member of its business development team.

Caplice said she will continue to build on the strong foundation that Poirier established during his 18 years at the bank. Caplice, who joined GSB in 1991, has been active in many areas at the bank, from small-business and commercial lending to information technology and regulatory issues. She currently directs and supervises all bank operations and administrative departments as COO. "I'm really looking forward to my new role. I feel like I've been preparing for this for the last 30 years. It's exciting and gratifying to step up to this position," Caplice said.

Caplice's rise to the top position at the bank has not been meteoric, but it has been steady, involving her in a variety of positions. Her first banking job was over 30 years ago when she became a credit clerk for First National Bank of Cape Cod. But when her husband was offered a position by the Mohawk Trail Regional School District, she moved to Western Massachusetts, where she entered the MBA program at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. She recalled that she and her husband decided to move to Greenfield because it was equidistant between UMass and Shelburne Falls.

With her newly-minted MBA, she joined Shawmut Bank in Greenfield, where she

worked for 14 years in a series of increasingly responsible positions. In 1991 she joined Greenfield Savings Bank as a senior vice president.

Her first role at GSB was in small-business lending, a position she held at Shawmut. But it was also a natural fit for Caplice, as she had already developed a strong interest in community building. In 1999, she was elected to GSB's board of trustees and then promoted to executive vice president. In 2004, Caplice was promoted to chief operating officer, directing and supervising all of the bank's operations and administrative departments.

Although Caplice's responsibilities are varied, a major mission for her is to continue the long GSB tradition of community banking. "We stress the importance of community," she said. "We buy locally as much as possible, strive to be customers of our customers, and encourage our employees to be involved in community activities. 'A rising tide lifts all boats.' A healthier Franklin County economy means a healthier bank."

For Caplice, community means Franklin County. "We have a very strong market share in Turners Falls, and we are as committed to Montague and Gill and Erving as we are to Greenfield or Shelburne."

The commitment to Turners Falls is evident. GSB will soon break ground for a new facility next to Food City that they expect to complete by the end of 2007. The reasons for the new bank building in downtown Turners are many, not the least of which is that GSB is rapidly outgrowing its long-time facility across the street.

"The new bank will be larger and better," said Caplice. "Right now, on some days, there are lines stretching out the door at the Turners branch,



Rebecca Caplice

a problem we hope to remedy. We also don't own that building, so there's not a lot we can do to expand or renovate it." According to Caplice, the new bank will have more drive-through windows, and more private offices. "Privacy is an issue," she said. "Right now, with the exception of the manager's office there is no place

to have a private conversation with a bank officer."

Caplice also intends to give more authority to her branch managers, particularly in the area of lending. "It makes sense," she noted. "Our [branch] managers know their customers better than anyone, and we trust them to make the right decision for our customers and the bank."

Caplice's community involvement extends beyond banking. Her numerous positions have included serving as a trustee of Greenfield Community College, a board member of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, and chairperson for the Greenfield Downtown Planning Committee. She was also a cabinet member of Franklin Medical Center's capital campaign, helping the institution raise more than \$5 million - including a half-million dollar gift from GSB. Her

latest involvement is as president of the board of the Greenfield Mercantile, Inc., the group attempting to bring a community-owned department store to downtown Greenfield.

To help Greenfield see the potential for a downtown department store owned by the community, Caplice invited Sharon Earhart, head of the Powell, Wyoming Chamber of Commerce, who gave two talks to local residents at GCC on Wednesday, November 1st. Earhart was instrumental in helping her town establish and operate a highly successful community department store, and Caplice felt her experience would be relevant to Franklin County.

Caplice sees this enterprise as a natural extension of her duties at GSB.

"If the Franklin County economy goes under, Bank of America will still be standing. We won't be. It's really as simple as that."

## Rainbow in Balad

USAF Senior Master Sergeant Beth Peura sent this photo of a rainbow over Balad to her parents in Montague Center.

The photo was taken October 25th, ten days after fighters from a Shiite militia entered the city and killed up to 80 Sunnis, in retaliation for an attack a day earlier against Shiite laborers in Duluiyah, across the Tigris River. In that attack, Sunnis had kidnapped and beheaded 17 Shiites who had come to work in the date palm groves in Duluiyah. The U.S. military later arrested two Sunni police officers from the town



PHOTO BY BETH PEURA

most likely put up to keep car bombers out of the hospital. Then you notice the tents, which don't look very impressive or safe, but the life and death drama behind those tents goes on 24/7, seven days a week, month after month.

The troops wear their flak jackets and helmets at all times when they are outside."

But then, Kathy said, "Your eyes are directed upward and there is the rainbow in the sky. Does it mean Hope, Promise, Peace? Maybe all is not lost after all."

Sergeant Peura is on her third tour of duty in Iraq.

for alleged involvement in those deaths.

Balad is home to the major Air Force operation in Iraq. About 25,000 American troops are stationed there.

Sergeant Peura's mother, Kathy, said the photo looked odd.

"The first thing you notice is the large cement slabs -

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## YES ON QUESTION 4 CUT AND RUN

...Tonight! Now! Fast!  
It would only encourage the terrorists, they say.

We can't just pull out and desert the Iraqi people, they say.

It would be immoral to turn our backs on our allies, they say.

Mistakes were made, but we must go forward, they say.

We can't dishonor the sacrifices our military personnel and families have made, they say.

Any hope for stability in the region will be doomed by violence, they say.

There will be a bloodbath, they say.

It wouldn't be honorable. It wouldn't be moral. We have no choice. We can't just cut and run.

Yes. In fact, we can. And should. And must. "They," of course, are the people who ushered us into Iraq despite the warnings, despite the realities, despite the weight of history. "They" are all of us who followed. "They" are all of us who allowed it to happen.

Try this on instead:

The terrorists, like our declared allies in Iraq, and like the weapons we sought to seize, are the products of our own aggressive invention;

The Iraqi people, 600,000 of whom may have died since the war began, universally want us

out of their country. They are the "terrorists" we are fighting;

The "mistakes" were made consciously and willfully by real people with real names and addresses and with real blood on their hands;

The bloodbaths are mainly of our creation;

There is no way that we, or anyone, can or should "win" a war such as this, short of genocide;

Each and every life lost (103 American soldiers, last month, parenthetically) and each and every broken body has been a complete, ghastly and irredeemable waste;

Each and every dollar has been diverted from a critical need elsewhere.

We propose a simple and unambiguous withdrawal strategy.

On Tuesday, November 7th, in 36 legislative districts in Massachusetts, including the towns of Montague, Gill, Erving, and Wendell, vote YES on ballot Question 4, which calls for an immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

Write a letter to your great grandchildren and apologize. Tell them the war was evil and doomed from its inception. That it was executed with a stum-

## BUBBA and CARMINE The Sages of Barton Cove

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### Yes on Question 2

bling, stupid brutality. Tell them we have become the thing our forebears sought to defeat. Tell them we blew it. All of us. Big time.

Don't wait until Tuesday. Don't wait on Question 4, or for the Democrats to cobble together a withdrawal strategy. Leave now. Tonight. Turn and walk away, with your complicity of silence, patience, tax money Desert. Refuse one moment's further harm. Pull the plugs. Turn out the lights. Leave something amounting to a blank check for restitution on the doorstep. But walk away. Then cut. And run.

Voters in Massachusetts need more power to keep elected officials focused on issues we care about - like education, health care, and the environment. Question 2 would help give us that power. It would re-legalize open ballot voting, the 'lost tool of Democracy,' where issue-based independent parties can support major party candidates and still send a strong message. Candidates know voters are voting for them on a party line that stands for something - like a living wage or clean elections. They seek the endorsement of the party and what it stands for - and are more accountable to them afterwards. Once legal everywhere, open ballot voting was banned by the

Massachusetts legislature in 1912 at the behest of corporate interests that thought it would be easier to control public policy if folks outside of Beacon Hill had less power.

In New York and Connecticut progressives already use this tool to influence politics, without asking voters to waste their votes on protest candidates who can't win. It's a proven way to elevate issues and hold politicians accountable to promises they make in election season. If you agree that our elected officials need to focus more on the real issues that affect us each day, your vote for Question 2 will make a difference.

- Chuck Collins  
Jamaica Plain

## Jill Stein for Secretary of the Commonwealth

Each of our four gubernatorial candidates is busy making the case that she or he is the one who can best keep a watch on our legislature. When you consider that our legislators receive more than four out every five campaign dollars from just 1% of voters, that they repealed the Clean Elections law that would have placed fundraising and spending limits on legislative candidates, and are now the target of the highest lobbying expenditures in the nation, you can see there's a lot to keep a watch on. And when you consider that the legislature exempted itself from its own open meeting and public records laws, you know there's reason to worry. But the elected official we entrust to keep a watch on corporate lobbying and registration, to enforce

open meeting and public records laws, and to safeguard our elections isn't the governor - it's the secretary of the commonwealth.

The race for this office is between Dr. Jill Stein and a 12-year incumbent who thinks so little of voters that he (1) can't be bothered to debate and (2) is allowing voters in some towns to cast ballots this November on the same insecure and unreliable Diebold touch screen voting machines that other states are now banning.

As secretary of the commonwealth, Jill Stein will use the power of her office to hold our legislature and their lobbyists accountable. As chief of public records, she'll transform the secretary's website to allow us to see at a glance the connections

between lobbyists, legislators, campaign contributions, and legislation. As public information officer, she'll call for the elimination of the legislature's exemption from the open meeting and public records laws. And as chief elections officer she'll safeguard the integrity of our voting system.

Please vote for Jill Stein Nov. 7th.  
- Nate Fortune  
Whately

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Must've Been 1938

The article by Fran Dolan and accompanying photo in the October 26th issue were especially interesting.

The brothers Dolan, Jim and John, were major contributors to athletic programs at Turners Falls High School, none more so than the 1938 football team. That team was undefeated and untied, including victories over

Agawam, Gardner and Greenfield.

The photo was named as a 1931 picture. If Fran's account of the sweater award was 1938, the 1931 date attributed to the photo is obviously in conflict.

Love the paper.

- James J. Trembl  
Greenfield

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## The Montague Reporter

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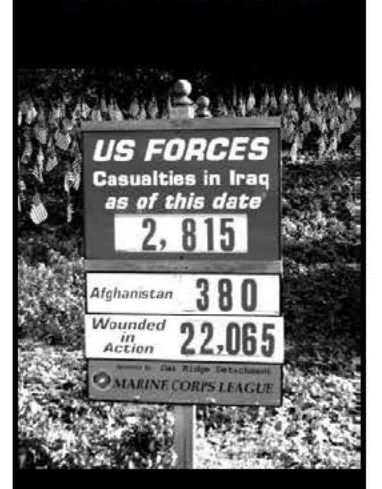
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## American Dead in Iraq as of 11/1/06



# GUEST EDITORIAL

## Once Upon A School

BY FLORE

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - Imagine skipping all the way to a red brick building, each morning!

Rain or shine, even in snow, or on a 'somersault' day, when spring is a-coming? Can you?

I can!

Climbing two by two the steps that lead to welcoming doors?

Looking at the car that brought you, slowly disappearing, as you wave to Mom or Dad. Then running a marathon with your friends, to be the first one to get to the playground?

Have you ever asked yourself, having heard that this jewel of a school might close next year, how would it be if



FLORE PHOTOS

Young masqueraders at the Montague Center School Hallowe'en parade.

this were to happen?

Ask the nearby neighbors. "It brings life in our lives..."

"We catch the sound of the

kids, during recess. Their laughing, bouncing voices..."

"You should watch them as they run, quick as lightning across the nearby baseball

field! The way we used to..."

"Would we miss their Hallowe'en Parade? Sure, like the one last Friday? I just can't imagine the silence of

the school walls..."

Again this year, the school special Hallowe'en mascot "Zoid" opened the parade. Again this year, they all marched, wishing for the adequate support the school needs to keep it where it stands, next to 'their' Walden Pond and Sawmill River...

Joining the merry hopeful party, were princesses, goblins, fantastic unicorns, pirates, scary tigers, kind devils, fairies and sweet witchies.

Could we delegate them, to be heard by the Board of Education?

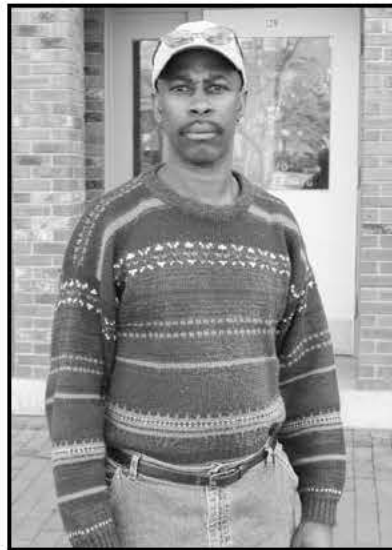
Oh let it be a rare treat of staying for this magical place of learning!

"Joyeuses Hallowe'en!"

# Word on the Avenue

COMPILED BY SHAWN WOOLSEY

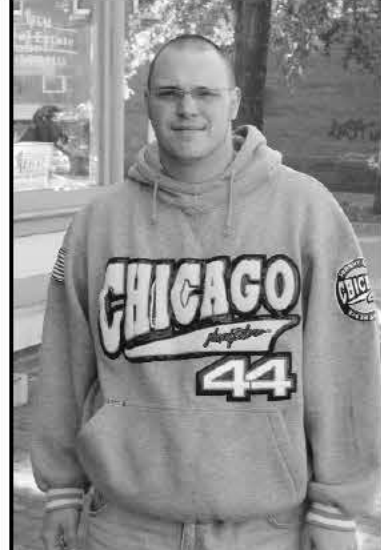
"Last month, 103 American soldiers were killed in Iraq. If you could give one piece of advice to the incoming Congress about the Iraq War, what would it be?"



**Norman Straughn, Turners Falls:** We did our job capturing Saddam Hussein, but our troops are still over there. We need to get our troops out of there. They should not be there.



**Joann Bascom, Turners Falls:** The Congress needs to get their facts straight and get the job done right. We're losing our sons and daughters for no reason.



**Matthew Cronk, Turners Falls:** A better plan for the war should be created. We're going about things the wrong way.



**Emmaly Andrews, Gill:** We need to stop trying to fix other people's problems; problems we have nothing to do with. We need to address our own issues first.



**Michael Crabtree, Turners Falls:** This war has been devastating to our economy. Congress should pull our troops and cut funding for the war effort.



**Chris Edwards, Gill:** I don't think this war should have ever started, but at this time we should wrap it up. It has been a waste of time and resources.

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## EYE ON TOWN FINANCES

### After the Reval: How Will I Afford My Taxes?

BY MIKE NAUGHTON

**MONTAGUE** - [Author's note: by eerie coincidence, a version of this column appeared about three years ago, just after the last property revaluation. . . ]

Ever since the new property tax valuations were announced, I've been running into people who have said more or less the same thing: "My house value went up so much - how will I ever afford the taxes?" I've tried to assure them that just because their house value has gone up, that does not mean their taxes will rise, and in this column I'd like to explain why.

Let's begin by reviewing how the tax rate is set. Basically, it's simple arithmetic. You take the total tax levy (the amount of money the town needs to raise from taxation, as determined by town meeting), divide it by the total assessed value of real estate in the town (known as the "EQV"), multiply by 1000, and you get the tax rate in "dollars per thousand," which is how it's usually expressed. For example, if the town needs to raise \$9 million and the EQV is \$450 million, the tax rate is calculated as \$20 per thousand.

In any given year, the tax levy (the amount the town wants to raise) cannot exceed the levy limit (a number set by the state and revised each year). Basically, the levy limit is the way that Proposition 2½ restricts how fast the tax levy can rise. Prop 2½ allows the levy limit to rise by no more than 2½% per year, along with allowances for new growth. While the actual tax levy is not required to follow suit (theoretically, it could go up less), it almost always does, so even if everything else remained the same our property taxes would likely be about 2½% higher this year than they were last year.

Note that I haven't mentioned tax overrides (or under-rides) and debt exclusions, which are ways that towns can



vote to raise (or lower) their levy limit. These can significantly affect the tax rate, but that has nothing to do with changes in property values, so they aren't relevant here.

Every three years, the board of assessors conducts a complete revaluation of all the real property in town, and this is one of those years. A revaluation has the potential both to change the total assessed value (the EQV) and to shift the burden (raising or lowering the values of some properties relative to others). For property owners, the key factor is this shift in relative values, since if all relative property values stay the same then changes in the EQV will have no effect on the tax bills.

One rough measure of how the revaluation will affect your tax bill is to compare your property's change in value with the overall change in the EQV. As I understand it, in the current reval, property values went up an average of 17%, so if your property's value also went up by 17%, your tax bill will likely stay about the same. If it went up less, you'll pay less; and if it went up more, you'll pay more.

If Montague had a single rate, that would be the end of the story. But we are among a minority of towns in the state that have a split rate, which shifts more of the tax burden onto our commercial and industrial properties. When setting the tax rate, the selectboard is allowed by law to adjust the percentage of the tax levy assessed to residential property by applying what's called a "residential factor," as long as the effect is not to raise the commercial/industrial rate more

than 50% above the single rate level. (In the town with a hypothetical tax rate of \$20 per thousand, the board would not be able to set the residential tax rate so low that the commercial rate went above \$30 per thousand.) While the selectboard tried for some years to bring the commercial/industrial and residential rates closer together, during the past few years they have chosen to widen the gap.

The upshot is that in Montague the tax rate is not a simple arithmetical calculation - instead, there is a certain amount of political judgment involved. As I understand it, the selectboard's goal has been to try to equalize the overall impact of any tax changes, so they use the split rate to try to adjust for other factors that might cause one group's taxes to rise by a higher percentage than another's. For those interested, it's also a public process - each year in the fall the selectboard holds a public hearing to set the tax rates. At that hearing, the board of assessors presents a set of possible scenarios, along with their recommendation, which the selectboard considers before making their decision. As always, the public is encouraged to attend.

*Mike Naughton has been a Montague resident since 1974 and a former finance committee member. He can be reached at [mjnaught@crocker.com](mailto:mjnaught@crocker.com) or by looking in the telephone book. The opinions expressed here are his own, and are not necessarily shared by anyone else in town government.*

**12th Erving Elementary PTA Craft Fair**  
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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Veterans Day Ceremony Planned

On Saturday, November 11th, Veterans Day, the Trustees of the War Memorial on Avenue A, Turners Falls, in conjunction with the Montague Elks, the Turners Falls American Legion, the Turners Falls Veterans of Foreign Wars, Turners Falls High School, and the Sheffield School will participate in a ceremony honoring all of the veterans of the villages of Montague.

The ceremony will commence at 10:30 a.m. and end at 11 a.m. The public is invited to attend to show their appreciation to all of the men and women of the five villages that served in their behalf.

In the event of bad weather the ceremony will be held in the Montague Elks Lodge, 1 Elks Avenue, Turners Falls.

The program follows:  
Opening Prayer given by

Terry Miner, Montague Elks Lodge; First Speaker: Brian SanSoucie, Commander Turners Post 178 American Legion; Second Speaker: John Murphy, Commander Turners Falls VFW; Main Speaker: Patricia Pruitt, Chairperson, Montague Selectboard; Poem: "On Flanders Field" to be read by Charles H. Peterson, Student, Turners Falls High School; 'America the Beautiful' performed by the Fifth Grade Chorus of Sheffield School, directed by Nan Sadoski; playing of 'Taps': Steve Damon, member of Bugles Across America, Eleventh Hour Ceremony; Michael Blanchard, Exalted Ruler, Montague Elks Lodge Closing Prayer: Janice MacCleay, Turners Falls VFW

- Art Gilmore, Chair  
Trustees Montague War Memorial

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### at the Gill Fall Festival



Gill firefighters cooked up their famous hand-made French fries at the Gill Arts & Crafts Festival, October 14th and 15th at the Riverside School on Route 2.

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# New Art Classes a Hit at TFHS

**BY ALI URBAN** - Turners Falls High School art teacher Mary Forrest is thrilled with course offerings in the TFHS art department this year. After a three-year building period, there is now a full offering of painting, drawing, ceramics, comic book creation and foundations of art classes.

"It's great that we can meet many of the interests of the students. I'm very excited about the new classes this year," Forrest said.

An art teacher in the Gill-Montague school district for 30 years, she has seen the changes in the department as budget cuts trimmed course offerings. This is her fourth year working at the high school, and she is encouraged the art program there has grown from only two classes per year to ten, currently.

Students enrolled this year will be able to take advantage of the recently renovated facility and new equipment.

"We're really lucky to have such a great facility to work in," Forrest said. "We just got a new light table this year so that the kids can transfer images more easily." Also in the art room is a slab roller that allows students to roll out

clay at a consistent thickness and a kiln room for firing clay pieces.

The art room is filled with natural light shining through the three large windows and a skylight. "The facility is very conducive toward creativity," said Forrest.

Adam Felton, a sophomore, said ceramics gives him a chance to be more creative.

"We can have fun while we're learning," he said.

Forrest tries to offer a structured classroom environment while still allowing students' artistic impulses to remain unrestricted. She wants students to feel comfortable expressing their creativity and able to move around the room

to get the materials they need. "I think that it is a comfortable, relaxing environment," she said.

Forrest is looking forward to new projects this year. The ceramics class is currently making clay buildings and will

play their work.

Forrest emphasized the importance of art programs within the school curriculum.

"Everyone excels in different ways," she said. "These classes give students that opportunity while reaching out

to kids who need an outlet for self expression."

Forrest has had a great response to the new art classes in this year's offerings and hopes to add more upper-level classes in the future. "There is obviously a need for classes like these," she said. "Students have really come to the forefront to take advantage of the opportunities that are offered."

Sophomore Annie Grant called the ceramics class the highlight of her day. "Even if I am sick, I still want to come to this class," she said.

Forrest also commented on the importance of knowledge of art as students grow up. "Art is everywhere, from the toothpaste tube to the design of a candy wrapper." She added that art classes give students a sense of aesthetics. "They gain a greater appreciation and understanding of what is around them," she said. "It's great when they see the connection."

*High School Highlights is a bi-weekly column by Turners Falls High School junior Ali Urban that focuses on subjects relating to and of interest to high school students and the general community.*



*Ceramics class members Evan Pollard, Adam Felton and Cody Traceski work on building models which they will later make out of clay. Art teacher Mary Forrest oversees the lesson.*

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

### High Winds and ATVs

**Wednesday 10-25**

11:30 a.m. Report of an erratic truck traveling east bound on French King Highway. All checked OK.

**Friday 10-27**

10:35 a.m. Assisted fire department on West Gill Road.

5:40 p.m. ATV complaint on West Gill Road.

9:15 p.m. Loose dog complaint on Main Road, same referred to animal control officer.

**Saturday 10-28**

1:15 a.m. Single vehicle crash on Gill-Montague Bridge, responded with BHA and Gill Fire Department

11:45 a.m. Traffic detoured on Main Road in the area of construction project due to heavy rain and roadway flooding.

8:10 p.m. Property damage complaint taken from West Gill Road residence.

**Sunday 10-29**

12:40 a.m. Report of

loose cows in the area of South Cross Road

10:20 a.m. Report of vehicle accident on French King Highway near the Bar-B-Q. Unable to locate

11:05 a.m. Report of tree on wires on North Cross Road, responded and assisted WMECO with same.

11:07 a.m. Report of tree in roadway on West Gill Road near the golf course.

4:20 p.m. Report of tree blocking Ben Hale Road. Highway Department advised of same.

**Monday 10-30**

10:01 a.m. Assisted disabled vehicle on Gill-Montague Bridge

**Tuesday 10-31**

2:55 p.m. Report of overturned trailer on Mountain Road. Same was towed from roadway. Under investigation.

5:18 p.m. Report of a car vs. deer accident on Main Road, north of the police station. No injuries. Report taken.

### Gill Agricultural Commission Approved

The Town of Gill recently approved a bylaw establishing an agricultural commission to support agriculture and other farming activities in the Town of Gill. The commission's function is to promote agricultural-based opportunities in town; act as mediators, advocates, educators, and negotiators on farming issues as needed; work for the preservation of prime agricultural lands; advise the selectboard, or any other appropriate town boards on issues involving agriculture; and to pursue all initiatives appropriate to creating a sustainable agricultural community. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please call Ray Steele, the town moderator.

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# Changes in the Works at Cup O'Joe

## OPEN MIC NIGHT SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH AT 6:30 P.M.

BY JANEL NOCKELBY

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Cup O' Joe café is holding an open mic this Saturday, November 4th at 6:30 p.m., and Cup O' Joe employees Hilary Graves and Lydia Fish want everyone to bring their voice, acoustic instruments, slam poetry, or their standup comedy for another unpredictable night of performance on Avenue A in downtown Turners Falls. (All styles and levels of musicianship are welcome.)

This open mic is the second for the café, and they will soon settle down to become an every third Saturday of the month event, according to employees Fish and Graves.

Cup O' Joe features breakfast all day, deli sandwiches, and specialty coffees. The most popular items on their menu are the breakfast sandwiches and burritos (especially with scallions, bacon, and cream cheese) and the Reuben sandwich for lunch, according to Fish. A frequent customer said one day she asked

for a Reuben made with turkey instead of pastrami, and it has become her favorite sandwich.

Breakfast is the main draw for Cup O' Joe customers. The café held an all-you-can-eat-pancake event during the Turners Falls Arts and Leaves gallery walk in September and had a tremendous turn out. Graves noted it was a "crazy," record-breaking day for sales. "Only two people ate more than four pancakes," laughed Graves. "We made them big." The blueberry pancakes were the most popular.

The popularity of events like these have motivated Cup O'Joe owner Zach Fellows to take down the "For Sale" sign that had worried customers in the front window for months this summer, and continue to develop the business. "There's definitely more potential here," Fellows said.

Graves and Fish have many more ideas they hope to bring to the café menu. On Hallowe'en, Graves wore her Cheshire cat

costume, suggesting the subtle cunning necessary to bring further success to the café.

Coming soon you may see soups on the menu. Fish and Graves report that Fellows makes a mean garlic and ginger turkey soup. With customer pressure we may see it by Thanksgiving.

Soon you may also see unique specialty espresso drinks such as ginger cream lattes and peppermint mochas, drinks you are not going to find anywhere else in town. The coffee served is 'fair trade' coffee, meaning the growers receive a just percentage of the price of each cup, and if you are a regular and you can manage to fill up a coffee club punch card, you just might win a month's worth of free coffee from the café.

Quick, fresh and convenient! The employees bake most of the food on the premises except the bagels (from Loose Goose in Amherst) and the donuts (from Adam's Donuts in Greenfield), and they plan to continue to



Cup O'Joe employees Hilary Graves and Lydia Fish encourage everyone to bring their voice, acoustic instruments, slam poetry or standup comedy to Open Mic Night.

expand on the variety of muffins and pastries offered. Along with your morning pastry, consider a more substantial breakfast made with ultra fresh Diemand Farm eggs or stop in for a lunch sandwich made with premium Boar's Head meats.

Currently, the café is featuring paintings on display and for sale by Howard Rose. The café would like to feature an artist

once a month and encourages Hallmark students and faculty, and local painters to stop by and consider having their work on display in the café.

Cup O' Joe's hours are Monday through Friday 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m. until 2 p.m., and Sunday 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Internet addicts take note: the café offers wireless access.

## MCTV Schedule

Channel 17: Friday, November 3rd through Thursday, November 9th

### Friday, November 3

9:00 am School forum-Sheffield  
11:00 am Montague Update-Susan Russo  
12:00 pm Montague Selectboard 10/30  
2:00 pm Discovery Center Open Mic.  
3:00 pm Farmers Market Concert: Pat & Tex LaMountain  
6:00 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #14  
6:30 pm Coffee House Series: Stephanie Marshall  
7:30 pm School Forum-Hillcrest  
9:30 pm Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit

### Saturday, November 4

9:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #14  
9:30 am Coffee House Series: Stephanie Marshall  
11:00 am School Forum-Hillcrest  
1:00 pm Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit  
6:00 pm The Discovery Center: Connecticut Valley Dinosaurs  
7:30 pm NASA: The Right Ratio of Rest  
8:30 pm The Well Being: Arthritis Rehabilitation  
9:30 pm On The Ridge

### Sunday, November 5

9:00 am The Discovery Center: Connecticut Valley Dinosaurs  
10:30 am NASA: The Right Ratio of Rest  
11:30 am The Well Being: Arthritis Rehabilitation  
12:30 pm On The Ridge  
6:00 pm Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit  
7:00 pm School Forum-Montague Center  
10:00 pm School Forum-Gill  
12:00am Classic Arts Showcase

### Monday, November 6

9:00 am Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit  
10:00 am School Forum-Montague Center  
11:00 am School Forum-Gill

### 1:00 pm Classic Arts Showcase

5:00 pm Family Friends  
6:00 pm Montague Halloween Parade  
7:00 pm Selectboard Meeting "Live"  
10:00 pm Anadromous Fish Facility  
11:00 pm Living in the Shadow of Vermont Yankee

### Tuesday, November 7

9:00 am Montague Halloween Parade  
10:00 am Anadromous Fish Facility  
11:00 am Living in the Shadow of Vermont Yankee  
1:00 pm Family Friends  
5:00 pm Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit  
6:00 pm GMRSD Meeting 10/24  
9:00 pm School Forum-Sheffield School  
11:00 pm The Discovery Center

### Wednesday, November 8

9:00 am Montague Update-Tech School Benefit  
10:00 am GMRSD Meeting 10/24  
1:00 am School Forum-Sheffield School  
3:00 pm The Discovery Center  
6:30 pm NASA Destination Tomorrow #14  
7:00 pm GED Connection #13  
7:30 pm The Well Being: Arthritis Rehabilitation  
8:30 pm Living in the Shadow of Vermont Yankee

### Thursday, November 9

9:00 am NASA Destination Tomorrow #14  
9:30 am GED Connection #13  
10:00am The Well Being: Arthritis Rehabilitation  
11:00 am Living in the Shadow of Vermont Yankee  
5:00 pm Montague Halloween Parade  
6:00 pm Montague Update-Tech. School Benefit  
7:00 pm Montague Selectboard 11/6  
10:00 pm Family Friends

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

### Three Vehicle Accident

#### Wednesday 10-25

7:50 p.m. Passerby reported debris in middle of road in Farley. Removed three large pieces of Styrofoam from roadway.

#### Friday 10-27

7:55 p.m. Assisted Montague police with motor vehicle/foot chase. Operator was tazed and arrested.

#### Sunday 10-29

12:38 a.m. Criminal application issued to 16-year-old

female juvenile from Gardner for unlicensed operation, speeding, and failure to inspect vehicle.

#### Monday 10-30

11:a.m. Received two reports of audible alarm going off in the middle of the night keeping callers awake. Spoke with subject earlier in the day.

#### Tuesday 10-31

9:40 a.m. Assisted Northfield Police with three-

motor-vehicle accident with personal injuries involving an oil truck on Main Street. Main Street closed while accident being investigated by state police.

12:30 p.m. Observed large section of roof over the Usher Building on Arch Street had collapsed. Contacted selectboard's office, highway supervisor, and fire chief. Closed section of Arch Street. Notified affected persons.

## MCTV to Hold First Low Power FM Meeting

BY MICHAEL MULLER

**MONTAGUE** - Montague Community Television will hold the first low power FM radio (LPFM) steering committee meeting on Tuesday, November 14th at 7:00 p.m. at their studios at 34 2nd Street in Turners Falls. Anyone interested in helping build Montague's first low power FM radio station is

encouraged to attend. Light refreshments will be provided.

In July 2001 Montague Community Cable, Inc. (MCCI) applied for an LPFM license from the FCC. In August of 2005, MCCI received a permit to build a radio station in Montague. If MCCI is able to transmit by February 2007, the FCC will grant a one-year 8-watt

LPFM license. If the station is still broadcasting on the one-year anniversary and everything is in order, MCCI will be eligible to apply for a 100-watt license.

Come join the committee that will work to make local radio for Montague a reality.

For more information, please contact Dean Garvin at the station, 413-863-9200.

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**SHOPPING**  
continued from pg 1

locally, he said, and preferably \$700,000 to \$800,000.

A new potential location has opened up in downtown Greenfield with the closing of a large furniture store on Fiske Avenue, board member Steve Alves said. Other options are the old Carr Hardware store building on Chapman Street, or the First National Bank building on Bank Row.

Wednesday night at Greenfield Community College's downtown building, would-be mercantile shoppers were signing up, asking to be contacted when shares go on sale. About 80 attended the first presentation, and more were expected for the second presentation later in the evening.

Alves thanked the group for attending, and one woman happily shouted out "We want our store."

The highlight of the evening, besides a \$225,000 check from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to the Deerfield-based Cooperative Development Institute, was a Power-Point presentation by a woman from Powell, Wyoming - population 5,533.

Sharon Earhart, head of Powell's Chamber of Commerce, told the story of how her town, 75 miles from the nearest interstate, built its own department store after the privately owned store closed down, leaving a huge gap on Main Street.

"It was a wonderful adventure," she said. "We met every Monday for 18 months."

Greenfield's store has already been 3 1/2 years in the planning.

In Powell, planners met with all the local merchants right off the bat, she said. There was some whining, such as "Nobody helped me start my store." All but two local merchants were supportive, however, said Earhart. One of the naysayers went out of business, spending his profits at the local bar. The other

was worried about competition, even though the community group agreed not to sell Carhartt brand clothes, which his store carries. Today, she said, that merchant's business is growing, and he is no longer a critic.

Then they held community meetings.

"The little old ladies wanted Lorraine's underwear," she said. "It never wears out."

So they got Lorraine's, and it's a big hit. And Levis asked them to stock their wares.

Greenfield organizers are following much of the Powell strategy, just as Powell followed the strategy of a store that opened before them in Montana near the Canadian border. It's all part of the philosophy and growing movement of community-based cooperatives, said Jennifer Gutshall, director of the Cooperative Development Institute. CDI provides technical assistance to cooperatives all over New England and New York State.

Finding the right board of

directors is critical, Earhart opined. There cannot be anyone with too big an ego, or with a private agenda. Powell's board even rejected a few applicants for the volunteer job, because they had too much "negativity" associated with them, Earhart said.

She counted herself on the list of people nearly proscribed from the board, which is hard to imagine, because Earhart appeared to be the most upbeat human being within 10 miles that night. Not everyone likes the Chamber of Commerce, however, so at every meeting Earhart would ask if she should leave - right after she served all the refreshments she'd brought. Needless to say, she remained on the board.

Another critical point, she said, is to find the right buyer for merchandise, clothing in particular. In Powell, a man with expertise in the field read about the progress of the board in the local newspaper, "and he realized they didn't know diddly squat," Earhart

said. He volunteered his services, and may have saved the project from failure.

Alves later asked the audience to keep an eye out for a person who could take on this job in Greenfield.

Asked how Greenfield, with Wal-Marts located north, south and east of it, can compare to Powell, Wyoming, Rottenberg said it doesn't have to be exactly the same. If Greenfield has a population of 18,000, half of whom don't support a proposed big box developer and half of whom do, then that makes 9,000 for

the Mercantile to work with. That's not counting the rest of Franklin County, he added.

Greenfield's store could also be co-existing with a proposed big box development off Route 2 in the northern part of town. The town and a Connecticut developer are promising a project at that location, but some say it could be just another strip mall.

When the Powell store was ready to open, Earhart was there with the scissors.

She called out, "Let the shopping begin!" as she snipped the ribbon.



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG**

**Lake Grove Runaway**

**Friday 10-20**

Orange woman reported to Orange police that she had been sexually assaulted in Wendell. State police investigating.

**Sunday 10-22**

Lake Grove reported a run-

away student - picked up by a purple van.

**Monday 10-23**

Farley Road resident reported Lake Grove staff hanging around his driveway and playing loud music.

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**LAROCHE**  
continued from pg 1

Road, and the redevelopment of the former Strathmore Mill.

"I've read about the efforts the town has made with the Strathmore. We need to find someone willing to redevelop that building, and make sure they have end uses for it. I'm sure this is going to be a project I will put a fair amount of effort into. As far as the revitalization of Turners Falls, I see that building as being important for the fabric of downtown."

On the expansion of the industrial park, where practically all the buildable lots have been

developed, LaRoche said it would be important to try to balance the sensitive wildlife habitat in the northern section of the Montague Plains, "but also allow for the economic opportunity of an industrial park" there. "I can work towards good strategies to make both of those things happen."

The land on that side of Millers Falls Road is owned by Northeast Generation. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said 100 acres are being looked at for a possible industrial park, of the 400 acres Northeast owns contiguous to the 1600-acre Montague Plains wildlife preserve. "The whole

area has been designated as critical habitat," said Abbondanzio. "It will take creativity," to negotiate a way through the regulatory hurdles around that site, "and that is something the new town planner will bring to the table."

Abbondanzio was involved in the development of the town's current industrial park in the 80s, when the infrastructure there was built largely with town funds, and with help from a US Department of Agriculture grant. "There was not much federal EDA (Economic Development Administration) money available for the industrial park, because the EDA was investing in developing Greenfield at the time, and

they did not want to have two industrial parks competing with each other in close proximity." Now, with both parks at or near capacity, EDA funding may be a possibility if Montague were to develop a second park. "With the number of jobs created at the old park, Montague is going to remain a regional employer," Abbondanzio said.

He said discussions on a new industrial park are at the preliminary phase.

LaRoche lives in Greenfield with his wife Ann and two daughters, Bev, 4 and Cora, 2. A native of Enfield, CT, LaRoche said he moved north along the Connecticut River after graduat-

ing from Central Connecticut State University because of the beauty of the land and the environmental awareness of the people. "We're committed to the area," he said. "We love Franklin County."

La Roche holds a masters in public administration from UMass, and has pursued graduate coursework in environmental studies at Bard College.

Looking forward to his new responsibilities in Montague, LaRoche said, "One of the things I see as exciting is the revitalization of the village centers. I see that as really positive, and I want to build on the good work that's been done there."



**FISH**  
continued from pg 1

be affected by the move.

French, without bitterness, said military spending by the federal government appears to be the cause of funding cuts to his programs.

"Because of other budget priorities at the federal level," he said, "our portion of the domestic account has been shrinking... It's part of life in the public sector."

Last year, French said, he had 15 full-time equivalent staff helping him manage three wildlife habitat refuges in New England, including the Conte

National Fish and Wildlife Refuge stretching along 400 miles of the Connecticut River. Today, French said, he has five staff. Not all 15 worked out of the Crocker Building, but still, staff reductions mean he no longer needs, nor can he afford the \$68,000 a year it cost him to rent space in the Crocker. Not all that money, he added, went to the building manager - Franklin County Regional Housing Authority (FCRHA) - but that's what the U.S. General Service Administration charged him.

"As best we can," French said, "we have to look for opportunities to save money."

Instead of leasing space in Turners Falls, French said his program will be sharing a federally-owned building in the woods of Sunderland on East Plumtree Road, near the Cronin National Salmon Station, off Route 116. With so few staff, French said, he can now fit everyone into a rent-free building, where he expects to spend about \$20,000 on utilities and maintenance a year.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife was the first tenant at the Crocker, thus opening the door for the

FCRHA to leverage \$5 million in private investment to rehabilitate the Crocker and nearby Cutlery Block apartments. The Housing Authority, before the turn of the millennium, began looking for ways to save the historic Crocker, a 19th century bank building that serves as a gateway landmark leading into downtown Turners. The three-story building, which had become a rundown rooming house, was nearly destroyed in 1997 by a fire that killed Tibetan refugee and tenant Palden Sangpo.

The housing authority, together with town officials and historic preservation advocates worked to find a way to rebuild the Crocker. Eventually, they pulled together private funding through investors looking for tax credits for low-income housing and historic preservation. The cost of rehabilitating the Crocker was prohibitive, given the number of possible units, Montague town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said recently. By combining the more cost-effective Cutlery restoration with the Crocker, he said, the joint project was

able to proceed. U.S. Fish and Wildlife stepped up to the plate to be the anchor tenant, thus reassuring investors.

"They were a great anchor tenant," said Paul Douglas, executive director of the housing authority.

Abbondanzio praised Fish and Wildlife staff for their work on creating and staffing the Discovery Center exhibits and programs. The Discovery Center is owned by the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Fish and Wildlife moved into the Crocker about four years ago, along with Greenfield Community Television. The federal operation currently occupies what could be considered two office suites on the first floor, Douglas said. Potential new tenants have inquired about the space, he added.

It was a great place to rent, French said, adding that he will miss his lunches at Subway and at the hot food counter at Food City. Federal staff at his office are on the road a lot, however, French said, traveling from northern Vermont to the Connecticut

coastline to manage the three refuges.

"I don't think they're going to have any trouble getting a tenant," French said, adding that he has seen many changes for the good in Turners in his four years at the site.

Both Douglas and Abbondanzio said they hope a new tenant will contribute to the renaissance of Turners Falls, which is focusing on the arts, eco-tourism along the Connecticut River and historic preservation tourism.

Another restaurant would be nice, Abbondanzio said, to follow in the footsteps of the success of Ristorante Dipaolo down the street. A specialty retail operation capitalizing on nearby waterways would also be helpful, he and Douglas said.

"It's a gorgeous space," Douglas said, reminding whoever is listening that Turners Falls has free parking.

Of downtown Turners, Douglas, long regarded as the most optimistic man in Franklin County said, "I really do believe great things are happening."



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**Vera Foley Enters Mt. Holyoke**

Vera Foley of Montague has begun her first year at Mount Holyoke College, the oldest institution of higher education for women in the United States. The class of 2010 numbers 570 students from 38 states and 37 countries.

Foley is the daughter of Sarah Weis and the late John Foley of Montague. She is a graduate of Turners Falls High School. A member of the National Honor Society, Foley was named salutatorian of her class. In sports she

swam on the varsity swim team and ran varsity track. She also served as a counselor at an equestrian camp in Leverett. While at Mount Holyoke, Foley plans to pursue a course of study that will prepare her for graduate school and a career as an editor.

Foley is known to readers of the *Montague Reporter* for her incisive reporting of local news, cultural events, historical landmarks and agricultural enterprise in Montague Center and its environs.

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## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Roof Repairs at Unity Park Field House Awarded to Thayer Associates Park Commissioner Sought Assistance of Sheriff's Department for Repairs

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - On Monday, October 30th, the Montague selectboard approved a bid from Thayer Associates of South Deerfield to put a new roof on the field house at Unity Park at a bid price of \$40,962. According to DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron, Thayer should have the roof stripped and reshingled by the end of November.

From Montague parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz's point of view, that's a good thing. "We do get leaks," he said. The field house is his office building, and the place where Dobosz stores all the parks and rec materials; the light maintenance division of the DPW shares half the building.

Two years ago, the Montague town meeting approved \$18,000 to replace the worn out roof, as a 100% match to a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant, administered by the Massachusetts Division of Conservation and Recreation. But the town waited more than a year and a half for the \$18,000 from the state to be released. As

fall slipped toward another winter, parks and rec commissioner Linda Ackerman called town administrative coordinator Frank Abbondanzio to suggest the town contact the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, to see if inmates working under the community service program could be enlisted to complete the roofing project.

According to Ackerman, Abbondanzio told her the parks and rec commission had the authority to initiate such a request for their office building, so in September, she called Peter Dionne from the Sheriff's Department. The next day, he came over to Montague to inspect the field house roof, and estimated his crew could save the town of Montague at least \$5000 on labor costs for the repair, although that estimate proved to be conservative. Dionne gave a start date of November 6th for the project, and estimated it would take two weeks to complete. The only charge to the town would be for cost of materials, which on the Thayer estimate amounted to \$4751. Thayer's bid for labor equaled \$15600, an

amount Ackerman said the town stood to save had her recommendation to use the Sheriff's community service program been followed. Ackerman said she had been prepared to make calls to local lumber yards to seek donations of roofing materials, as well.

Ackerman called Bergeron to see if the town could supply a dump truck to haul away materials. But at about that point Bergeron intervened, placing a call to Dionne to cancel the request for the Sheriff's men, in what park commissioner Ackerman termed "a turf war."

"I stepped in on that," said Bergeron, whose department shares use of the field house. "It's a town owned building. I need certified roofers." He said Dionne could not guarantee the inmates' roof work for 25 years, as a licensed contractor would. With the weather uncertain, "They could not even guarantee they'd finish it this winter."

In other news, the board OK'd Bergeron's request to be permitted to back up his road crew during winter storms, plowing and

sanding, at a rate of \$25 an hour. Bergeron said his department was down three men after recent layoffs and the departure of one employee for a neighboring highway department. He said hiring outside contractors to help the town clear the roads during a winter storm would be a far costlier option, and many of the local contractors preferred to hire on with the state for \$60 to \$90 an hour, so might not be available when needed.

The board took the occasion to congratulate Bergeron for his achievement as a Rhodes Scholar in the Bay State Rhodes Program at the Technical Assistance Center at UMass Amherst, where Bergeron has completed workshops in Basics of Good Roads, Planning and Improving Gravel Roads, Snow and Ice Control, Quality Hot Mix Asphalt Inspection, and a number of other topics of immediate application to his role as DPW superintendent. The commendation from the Rhodes Program cited Bergeron as "a professional who is serious about furthering his education and improving the way

he accomplishes his work."

The board appointed Jesse Sinclair to a 40-hour a week position as dispatch manager at the police department, for \$15.21 an hour, effective August 16th, and Cathy Sullivan, at 24 hours a week, as assistant dispatcher at \$13.61 per hour, effective September 17th.

John Zywna was appointed as the town's consultant in the town clerk's office, pending the recuperation of Deb Bourbeau, who has been away from her post on medical leave. Zywna will work at least through the week of the election, and receive compensation equivalent to his former salary as town clerk.

Historical commission chair Mary Melonis wrote to ask the board to consider naming the canalside bike trail after former Montague historian Charles W. Hayward, who arrived in Turners Falls in 1867 to assist William Crocker in laying out the streets of the town. The board took the request under advisement, intending to contact the Department of Conservation and

see ROOF pg 13

## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

## Mariamante RFP, Smart Growth Zoning Changes Near

**BY P.H. CROSBY** - The Gill selectboard met on Monday, October 30th, with two members present, Ann Banash and Leland Stevens. The board approved the appointment of a new firefighter, Brodie Coughlin of Greenfield, and receipt of a \$4000 Mass Cultural Council grant, for distribution through the Gill cultural council. Administrative assistant Deb Roussel has prepared notices for liquor and class license renewals, verifying that all proposed renewals were up-to-date on municipal taxes. Not all businesses were up-to-date on paying assessments, however, including the fee assessed on businesses with more than three alarms in the course of the year,

requiring costly police responses. Roussel will be reminding any business with such fees still unpaid that their license may be in jeopardy.

The fire department wants to donate their new rescue boat and brush truck to the town, to simplify any future insurance claims, but the town is still consulting with counsel about legal restrictions on accepting gifts. A final hearing on Smart Growth Zoning changes is scheduled for Thursday, November 9th at 7 p.m. at the town hall. Gill citizens who have not learned about proposed changes or weighed in on them are urged to attend, as this is their last chance to make suggestions and influence changes before regulations are

taken to special town meeting for approval, possibly on December 4th.

The RFP for the Mariamante land is nearing completion. The latest draft is to be reviewed in a meeting at town hall on Thursday, November 2nd at 5:15 p.m.

New information from the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection program indicates that fees may need to be raised for inspections. The program is particularly concerned about the costs for having to review plans for multiple large projects, such as the new buildings going up at Northfield Mount Hermon. There are only two inspectors for the entire county. If one has to spend days making sure large

new buildings are up to code, then a consultant needs to be hired to fulfill other obligations.

The Mass Municipal Association has launched an essay contest for 6th graders, looking for students to write 300 words on how they would run things differently if they were elected to public office. Gill is one of the towns eligible to participate this year. The deadline for submissions is November 10th.

Roussel reported that she received a call from the chair of the Concord selectboard, inquiring about the town of Gill's costs for educating the children of private school staff members, especially those electing to choice out of the district. Concord is

researching the burden this is creating for towns where private schools are located, with the intent of pursuing a legislative solution to the problem. Currently Gill is paying \$25,000 to cover the education costs incurred when Northfield Mount Hermon faculty moved to Gill during that school's consolidation, but opted to keep their children enrolled in Northfield schools. A discussion ensued regarding the level of payment NMH currently makes to Gill in lieu of taxes, as well as acknowledgment of the assets to the town represented by school staff contributions of time, expertise and leadership in the community.

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# Friends Gather to Honor Fran Dolan

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**TURNERS FALLS** - Dozens of friends gathered in the front room of Ristorante DiPaolo on October 28th to surprise Fran Dolan on his 85th birthday. Dolan, for decades a leading lion of the Franklin County Bar, stood to toast his friends, family and associates, quoting a favorite passage of Yeats: "There are no strangers here, only friends you haven't met yet."

After two martinis, Dolan took his time to pay tribute to each person in the room, and made good on the quote by learning the names and occupations of a few faces who were new to him.

Among the assemblage were his secretary of many years, Peggy Torello, who helped run his office at 40 School Street in Greenfield, while putting herself through night school, both of which "showed fortitude," Dolan said. She is now a lawyer in her own right, and Dolan urged the

party to "Go to Her," prompting Fran's nephew, attorney Jim Dolan, to later exclaim, "What am I, Chopped Liver?"

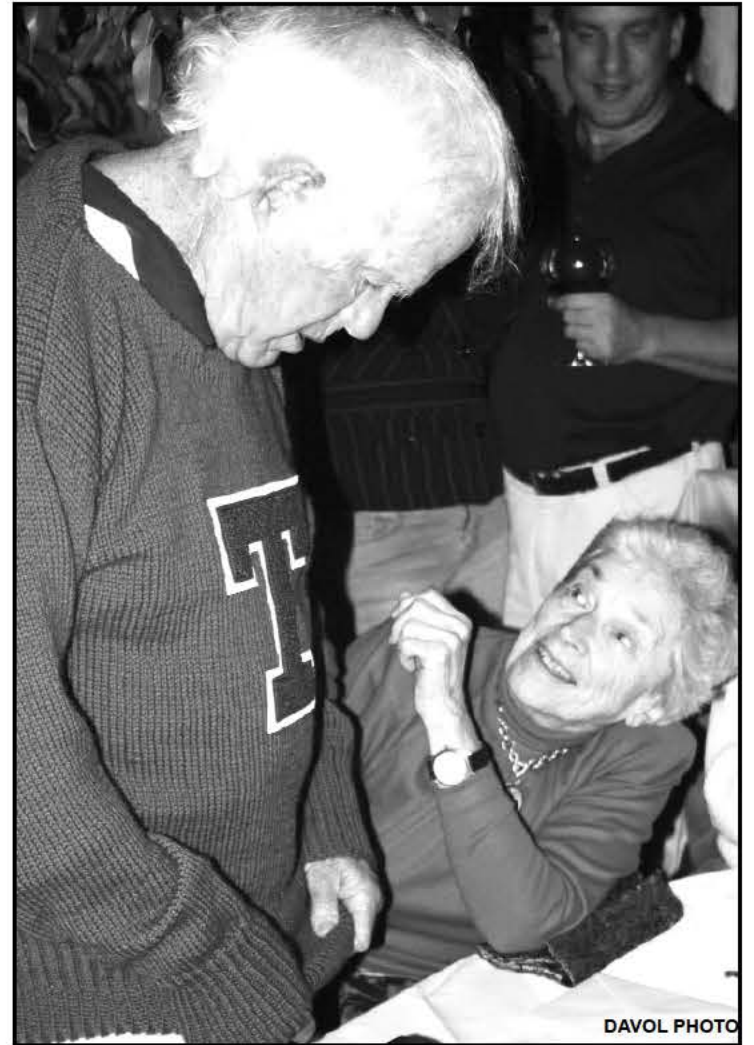
Fran Dolan recalled his first case as a trial lawyer, seeking restitution for a lady scarred in an accident. "The jury went out on a cold, cold January night, in 1952. When they returned, one of the women who sat on the jury was crying." Dolan said to his associate, "John, we lost the case. Why is that woman crying?"

As it transpired, he had won the case, and the woman, a Northfield resident, was crying because she felt convinced her auto insurance premiums would rise as a result of the award.

Dolan served the town of Montague as town moderator from 1953 to 1969. In an earlier account in this newspaper, penned by current selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt when she was only an elected town meeting member from Dolan's beloved

Precinct 5, Dolan recalled, "In those days it was an open town meeting. It was extremely exciting, live theater really. Everyone could speak. It was held on a Saturday in March. Everyone came and anyone spoke and let out all their pent up feelings. Under Roberts Rules, the moderator had the power to ask a policeman to confine a person who was interrupting the meeting. But I never had to say to anyone, 'Time is Up.' Individuals came forward to speak - some with considerable eloquence or rhetorical power. Some of these had followers who showed up just to hear their speaker."

He said serving the town as moderator was, "an honor, really... a tribute from the people you grew up with." He has been known to refer to the day Montague's town government changed from open meeting to elected town meeting "the day Democracy died in Montague."



DAVOL PHOTO

*Fran Dolan admires the letter sweater given to him at his 85th birthday party as his friend Fran Hemond looks on.*

Dolan has traveled the world, first in the Navy in World War II and later as a tourist in Ireland and along the Danube in Europe. "I always warn the girls I'm an Irish rogue," Dolan said, with a characteristic twinkle in his eye. Dolan still frequents the candy store and farmers market in Turners, purchasing chocolates and maple coated peanuts for his favorites.

Although he served his country, Dolan said on Saturday, "You can't defend warfare. There is no justifiable cause for warfare, except perhaps for World War II. But we never should have dropped the bomb - even though it probably saved my life. It still bothers me."

Dolan summed up his political philosophy one day for a Word on the Avenue reporter: "Fund the poor."

These days, Dolan is often seen wearing a dashing white silk scarf on his daily strolls. He told the story of how he came by that item of apparel.

"I met a Japanese lady at Cup o' Joe, introduced by her daughter. Her husband had died in World War II. And when we left, she said, Frances I have something in my car for you. It was beautiful white scarf. She cried when I told her, 'We are all friends who haven't yet met.'"

Among the friends Dolan had

yet to meet on Saturday was Sandy Miner, from Erving, who had taken it upon herself to knit him a gift that would have particular sentimental value. Dolan had written a poem for Anna Viadero's publication, "Local Color" describing his favorite article of apparel from years past: a blue letter sweater presented to him in high school for his prowess on the playing field. Using a TFHS letter sweater loaned by Murph Togneri as a model, Miner knitted a new blue letter sweater for Dolan, with the letters TF proudly emblazoned on the heart. If she had asked Dolan to stand for a tailor's measuring tape, she could not have made it fit more perfectly.

Dolan put the sweater on, as the room applauded. "I shall wear it until I am hauled away," he declared.

"Why did you knit it for me?" he asked Miner. "Your friends thought you needed a new sweater," she replied.

On Saturday, friends old and new gathered to honor this native son of Montague, who rose from humble roots to win the love and respect of all who know him. And as Dolan asked those gathered in the dining room on Saturday, "What is more important than love?"

## Neither Wind nor Rain can Keep this Doctor from Her Appointed Rounds

BY JOANNA FRANKEL

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - The high winds that knocked down trees and knocked out power in Montague Center on Sunday did

not deter neighbors and supporters from gathering in Montague Center to welcome Dr. Emily Maiella to her new practice. Dr. Maiella's clinic, Valley Naturopathic Family Medicine, formally opened its doors this week at 432 Greenfield Road, next door to the Montague Mill.

Naturopathic medicine, as explained by Dr. Maiella, is based on seven principles: the body's ability to heal itself; first do no harm (the idea that minimally invasive treatments should be tried first); underlying causes, not just symptoms, of illness should be uncovered and treated; treat the whole person; emphasize prevention; and educate the patient.

Naturopaths go to medical school, taking many of the same courses as an M.D. However, in their last two years of school, naturopaths also study 'alterna-

café." Despite the fact that Massachusetts, "doesn't license naturopaths as physicians, unlike every other state in New England," Maiella said she's happy to find a congenial home in her new Montague office.

Among the visitors at Maiella's open house on Sunday afternoon was her 90 year-old grandfather, Dr. Anthony Maiella. The elder Dr. Maiella was a general practitioner in Brookline, Mass. for 55 years, retiring a mere six years

ago. His examination table and other furniture are now put to good use in his granddaughter's office.

Emily Maiella is available for office visits and also telephone consultations. Say hello if you see her around town. As she told this reporter, "I still go to the Mill to get my coffee. Naturopaths do drink coffee." That's my kind of doctor!

tive' methods of healing: such as botanical, nutritional, homeopathic, and hydrotherapy treatments and remedies.

Maiella, who lives in Wendell, knew Montague Center was the right place for her to set up practice. Before moving to Seattle for six years to attend medical school, she "worked in every space in the Montague Mill, the bookstore, the Blue Heron, and the old



*Dr. Emily Maiella of Valley Naturopathic Family Medicine*

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**SCHOOL**  
continued from pg 1

\$159,000 a year, Gee has estimated. Closing Hillcrest Elementary would save the district \$160,000 a year, but renovations totaling \$730,000 would eventually be required at Montague Center to bring the two-story building into compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, according to the superintendent. Closing both the primary schools and educating all Montague pre-K through 5th graders at Sheffield, with Montague sixth graders moving to the middle school, would save the district about \$255,000 a year, Gee has said, although some renovations would be needed to equip Sheffield for the 428 students it would then house.

Singleton said the anticipated savings from closing a school would not equal "half a year's increase in health insurance" for the district. He said the condition of Montague Center School was a negative factor in considering whether to keep the school open, but not an insurmountable obstacle. "If you're willing to spend \$1 million in non-reimbursable town funds to renovate a swimming pool, it's not a credible argument to say you can't renovate Montague Center School." He finished by saying, "Three K-5 or K-6 schools, one in Montague Center, one on the campus in Turners Falls, and one in Gill, leaves the district in a win/win situation. You have schools with identities, you align these identities with MCAS standards, you have Hillcrest School to meet the town's future capital needs, and you have equity

**ROOF**  
continued from pg 11

Recreation, which owns the trail, about the process for obtaining naming rights.

The board approved \$15,000 from program income funds to augment the Peskeomskut Park improvement project, where a large amount of blacktop, formerly buried behind the park by the highway department, had to be removed to make way for new landscaping.

The board also approved \$20,000 in matching funds as a local match for next year's MassCultural Council grant for the RiverCulture project. The board also appropriated \$4962 from program income to complete roof repair, electrical and heating improvements at the Unity Park field house. \$94,000 remains in the fund balance.



One speaker asked how many parents in the room would join him in exploring the creation of a charter school if Montague Center School were closed.

across the district."

Stacy Langknecht, a parent with three children in the district, said, "I would like more emphasis to be placed on the quality of education," rather than on costs. She asked, "What is going to be done to attract new families to the district? No one has been addressing that." She talked of the \$18,000 environmental study grant the Montague Center School received this year from the Massachusetts EPA and the Massachusetts Environmental Trust to support the Hitchcock Center's ongoing work with students on the comprehensive Sawmill River project. Langknecht called this grant "site specific" and said it would help make the Montague Center School a magnet to draw new students into the district.

Langknecht also challenged the superintendent's assertion that \$160,000 in cost savings could be realized in the district's operating budget next year by laying off two special education teachers and two paraprofessionals. "The district has a fair number of special needs students. What does streamlining [special ed programs] mean for them? How are we going to improve their education? And what about bright kids who need more stimulation? How are their needs going to be met in this budget?"

She dismissed the option of closing both primary schools and sending all the town's elementary students to Sheffield as "closing the door to growth for the district."

Langknecht continued, "Active parent involvement is linked to student achievement. Montague Center has always been open to the community; and [parent involvement] has been a

really important part of our children's education.

"I would like you to address what would happen to an empty school building. We're not a rich town. If we're going to close a building, we need to put it to productive use."

She concluded, "If Montague

47 more students), Pezzati said, "Another 30 students lost to school choice and you would lose all the savings you would gain from closing the school."

"My mother and father grew up in Montague," said Mark Beaubien. "My grandfather was a selectman, so was my great uncle. My father went to a little school in Millers Falls. He lived across the street and used to load coal in the school's furnace in the morning. During the Depression, he remembered kids from Lake Pleasant wore newspapers to school for shoes." Beaubien said his father excelled as an entrepreneur after the education he got in the small neighborhood school, and went on to become chairman of the board of regents for UMass Amherst.

Beaubien said he grew up in Sudbury, a relatively affluent town in Eastern Mass, which at one time had five neighborhood elementary schools. During the 70s, Sudbury closed and consolidated their neighborhood schools, and went on to spend \$100 million building them back again in later decades. He said the large, impersonal high school he went to in the Lincoln - Sudbury district was colloquially referred to as 'Drinkin' - Drugsbury' in acknowledgement of favored student extracurricular activities. "You get lost in a sea of people," in a school that size, he said.

"I'm one of the jerks who pulled their kids out of the schools in this town," said Beaubien. Due to the uncertainty of the elementary configuration, and the future of Montague Center School, Beaubien said he now pays to have his children go to an expensive private school. But he also said he had discussed with the former town planner that his family owns five acres of land behind the Montague



Jeff Singleton commented, "If you're willing to spend \$1 million in non-reimbursable town funds to renovate a swimming pool, it's not a credible argument to say you can't renovate Montague Center School."

Center were closed, it would be a huge loss to this community, and not just to Montague Center but to Montague City, Turners Falls, Millers Falls and Lake Pleasant. This school has opened its arms to the community. 'That's a wonderful school.' I hear that all the time. Especially if you want to keep people in the district, we need to weigh the losses that would happen if we close a school."

Patrick Pezzati, a Montague Center parent, passed out a comparison of MCAS scores he said showed Montague Center School having higher math and reading scores than other elementary schools in the region, including schools in Northampton and Amherst. "I keep reading how Montague Center needs to close because of money. But children are thriving here." Commenting on the GMRSD decline in student population (last year the district lost

Center School. "There is an option to expand this school," he insisted.

Beaubien, general manager of Yankee Environmental Systems in the Turners Falls industrial park, took issue with the figures Gee quoted for accessibility renovations to the Montague Center School, particularly the \$80,000 figure cited to build a ramp at the front door. He said a pressure treated ramp could be built for a much lower figure, and cast doubt on the \$250,000 figure for installing an elevator too. "Standard factored cost for an elevator is \$50,000 per floor," Beaubien said.

Beaubien mostly wanted to talk about taxes, but from a different angle than many have taken in commenting on the impact of school budget increases over the years. "This is a good, high-performing school," Beaubien said. "If you close it, you are going to lower the assessed value of everyone's property in town." To prove that point, Beaubien said he would hire a lawyer and demand an abatement on his property taxes if the Montague Center School were closed. "I'm not going to pay \$12,000 a year on my house. It's not worth it." Dropping a line that other speakers echoed throughout the evening, Beaubien said, "It may be pennywise and pound foolish to close the building. You may be looking at another 20% drop in enrollment, if you close any of these buildings."

He concluded by admonishing the committee, "I'm not sure why we're talking about closing schools that seem to be performing. I'm trying to attract PhDs to come work at my little company. They're not going to want to settle here if we're talking about closing schools."

Later in the evening, Beaubien came back to the front of the room to ask how many of the parents in the room would join him in exploring the possibility of forming a charter school in Montague if the Montague Center School were to close. About half the people in the room raised their hands.

Jim Harris, a parent of three children in district schools, spoke in favor of instituting intra-district choice among the elementary schools. With intra-district choice, parents could opt to move their students to a school with fewer students in the grade, without leaving the district (and taking state aid with them). "School choice should be

see **SCHOOLS** pg 14

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**Jean Donovan, CRS, ABR**  
BROKER

**SCHOOL**  
continued from pg 13

bringing children into this district," Harris said. He spoke in favor of neighborhood schools and against children spending more of their time on school busses. He questioned whether sending all of the town's elementary school children to the



*Jim Harris said, "School choice should be bringing children into this district."*

Turners campus would realize the cost savings quoted, since the higher volume of traffic during pick-up and drop-off hours would necessitate more traffic guards, and the large number of children at recess would require more teachers or aides to watch them. Harris urged the audience to join him in writing to legislators demanding an increase in aid for education. "Give us the funding we need to achieve the goals we want for our community."

Colleen Kelly, an educator and naturalist from the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Leverett, said she had worked for the last 15 years at the Montague Center School, helping students explore and understand the social systems and natural systems of the Sawmill River. This kind of local environmental focus "gives purpose to students' learning, and improves problem solving and critical thinking," Kelly said,

"rather than just memorizing facts."

Due to the Hitchcock Center's collaboration, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and the Massachusetts Department of Education named Montague Center School one of four EIC (Using the Environment as an Integrating Context) Schools in the state, a designation which provides future grants, Kelly said. "With MCAS science testing coming, you have so many natural resources, with the pond and the river within walking distance; you don't have to bus students to them."

She added, "I travel around New England with a Power Point presentation about this school. Audiences always say, 'Oh my God, if we had those resources...'" Like Langknecht, Kelly cited the Sawmill Project as a positive draw for the district in an era of school choice.

Sharri Conklin Toal, a teacher in the Amherst school system, said her family moved to Montague recently. "We didn't plan to stay here. We didn't hear good things about the school system. We're still here because of Montague Center School." She said house hunting friends ask her if there are homes for sale in Montague when she tells them about the school. "We tell them about the science program here, and the setting."

She said, "When you close a school that is this exciting and brings this number of people out, you're going to be losing a lot of people as well."

On the other hand, Les

Cromack, chair of the Montague capital improvements committee, said, "I was in this room many years ago. My wife and I were arguing to keep this school open. (Then school superintendent) Dan Morrison's words still ring in my ears: In times of budget crisis, the swimming pool and the Montague Center School are always up for grabs. Well, I guess the pool is safe now. Ladies and gentlemen, it's time to close the Montague Center School."

Cromack said he'd heard people say \$250,000 to \$140,000 is not much money to save. "But it goes on for years and years," Cromack said. "It stands to reason: it's cheaper to run two buildings than three."

He continued, "Mr. Beaubien spoke eloquently about the Millers Falls school. That building is closed. The Montague City school is closed. The South End school is closed. The [Central Street] school in Turners Falls is closed. People fought hard for those schools. Montague Center does not meet ADA requirements. It grieves me to be here speaking against the Montague Center School. But for the good of the town, it is time for Montague Center School to close. In this town, we can't afford all the school committee wants."

In closing, Cromack estimated, "My chances of being re-elected as a town meeting member from this precinct are slim to none." This line drew laughter and a round of applause.

Former Montague Center principal Anna Garbiel said there were less than 90 children in the Montague Center School when she began her 22-year tenure there. That number rose to 150, then increased to 220 during the time of the Sheffield school fire. "This school enrolls children from all five villages," Garbiel said, "And it has all along." But she said, "From my experience, it has been orchestrated to be a small school. That makes it very vulnerable."

She termed the climate at the Montague Center School, "Welcoming and open, more so than in any other school I've seen." As for student achievement, Garbiel said, "Look at the student data. You

couldn't get a better program." She talked of parent involvement at the school, where the PTO stepped in to fully fund after-school programs following recent budget cuts. And she said, "One of the unique characteristics at Montague Center are its school traditions,"

such as the recent Hallowe'en parade, and an annual fishing derby. Garbiel said such school traditions are more typical of private schools than public schools, and they speak of community pride in their school.

"I attended school here," said Garbiel. "I have been affiliated with it for a great portion of my life. Please keep it open."

Responding to a concern noted in the information packet that Montague Center would lose its library room if it accepted 60 students from Hillcrest, in the event that school were closed, Marie Colton mentioned, "The library had been in the cafeteria for years. We could walk the kids to the town library. That's a huge advantage."

Colton has one child at the middle school, one at the high school. She added, "Montague Center has had 'Responsive Classroom' [techniques] since the early 90s. Sheffield just got it two years ago."

She said, "In smaller communities, smaller schools give much more 'bang for the buck.' You get mentoring and parent involvement. This is a small town. We ought to capitalize on the strengths of being a small town."

Eileen Mariani, a town meeting member from Montague



*Colleen Kelly, naturalist from the Hitchcock Center in Amherst said, "I travel around New England with a Power Point presentation about this school. Audiences always say, 'Oh my God, if we had those resources...'"*

Center and a former school committee member who now works with the Northeast Foundation for Children, where Responsive Classroom techniques were first developed, said, "I am feeling very conflicted. Some of my former elementary children from the Highland School are teaching here now." She congratulated the educators and parents present, "You've created an enormously



*Eileen Mariani said, "The time has come to close Montague Center School."*

successful place for your children to learn."

She spoke of Sheffield principle Chip Wood's decision to return to the public schools after his work with Northeast Foundation for Children, and said he was bringing his passion for teaching to Sheffield and enhancing the quality of education there. And she urged the parents in the room to "bring the same enthusiasm you show" for the Montague Center School to all the schools in the district, so "all the children in the schools would thrive."

Mariani concluded by saying, "I agree with Les Cromack, the time has come to close Montague Center School."

Not everyone took time to speak at the microphone. At the back of the room, former Montague Center principal Bob Mahler said he was enjoying working at Shutesbury Elementary, where he had all the tools needed - a librarian, a tech support person - to make a school work. He looked around the room and said, "What I see is that the Montague Center School is a casualty of war."

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## Sixth Grade at Middle School Discussed at Sheffield

### FROM STAFF REPORTS

**MONTAGUE** - On Wednesday afternoon, November 1st, at the Sheffield School library, the seemingly tireless G-M superintendent Sue Gee, along with the equally animated Gill-Montague school committee, presented their various school closing options to about 30 community members. Although fewer attended this forum than turned out Monday night in Montague Center, the audience questions and comments were vast and varied, reflecting a high degree of sensitivity to the issue.

Almost everyone who spoke praised the school committee for holding the series of public information forums, which concludes this evening at the Hillcrest multi-purpose room from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. While there was ample discussion about which school or schools to close, other major issues centered around intra-district choice, and about the issue of reconfiguring the Montague elementary schools to become K-5, with the sixth graders moving over to attend the recently renovated Great Falls Middle School, where four classrooms are now empty.

Rebecca Olson, the only remaining English Language Learning teacher in the district (one-and-a-half ELL positions were cut last year) advocated keeping both Hillcrest and Sheffield School open. Noting that almost all of her 25 non-native speaking students come

from downtown Turners, she stressed that these schools, within walking distance to downtown, were easily accessible and welcoming not just to students but to their families.

Art Gilmore, speaking as a long-time educator, parent and resident, argued for a K-5 configuration, with the sixth grade being sent on to the middle school. He also felt that the option of consolidating all of the Montague elementary grades at Sheffield (thus closing both Montague Center School and Hillcrest) had the most merit. "You have everything here: a gym, an auditorium, a library, classrooms of the right size," he stated.

Pam Grimard, parent of a fifth-grader, however, said she was nervous about her daughter going on to the middle school next year. Kelly Markel had similar qualms about her son being shifted out of the Sheffield sixth-grade, stressing she felt it was important that the sixth grade be truly separated at the middle school.

Others, however, shared Gilmore's opinion that moving the sixth grade to the middle school made sense. Donna Klaiber, who has taught at Sheffield for 14 years and lives in Montague Center, said she felt this was a sound proposal. But she



DETMOLD PHOTO

*Rebecca Olson, the English Language Learning teacher in the district, stressed that Hillcrest and Sheffield, within walking distance to downtown, were easily accessible and welcoming not just to non-native-speaking students but to their families.*

disagreed with Gilmore about consolidating all of Montague elementary students in one building, feeling that Hillcrest should remain open. And while she said that her own children had attended Montague Center School and thrived there, they had also done well at Sheffield.

### FINAL PUBLIC FORUM

on elementary school closing in Montague will take place tonight, Thursday, November 2nd, at Hillcrest Elementary School on Griswold Street from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Written comments from the public are welcome to superintendent Sue Gee at [sgee@gmrtd.org](mailto:sgee@gmrtd.org).

In Klaiber's opinion, it made greater sense to close Montague Center School. The reality, for her, was that older folks on fixed incomes in the district could not afford to fund education beyond the present level of taxation, so if closing a school was necessary to save money, she felt it would be the right decision.

Stacey Langknecht raised a number of questions about the proposals, perhaps most importantly, how the school committee was planning to deal with the projected \$350,000 to \$500,000 deficit, even if a school were closed. She also asked how the district proposed to split up kids if a school were to be closed, and in response to the opinions about sending sixth-graders to the middle school, she wondered whether any studies had been done on this issue.

To some extent, Sheffield School principal Chip Wood answered these last questions. "The research is just not out there," he stated. "There are zillions of configurations and no trends." He did, however, advocate for the sixth grade to be housed at the middle school. He closed his remarks by saying that the district needed to deal with class and resource issues, and consider these factors in the strategic reassignment of students.

Only two attendees stood up strongly for Montague Center School remaining

open. Marie Colton asked why the school committee was even considering closing what she termed "a model school." Jeff Singleton, chair of the finance committee, also argued for keeping the Montague Center School open, noting that Hillcrest might be used by the town for a senior center and for parks and recreation.

Selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt, responding to Singleton, said that to her knowledge no one yet had a clear idea of what the senior citizens even wanted. She also questioned whether any school really needed to be closed.

"This is a one-time savings," she argued, "and it may not save us unless we get help from the state."

Intra-district choice was also a hot topic for discussion with several audience members, among them selectboard member Patricia Allen, who advocated strongly for the possibility of sending elementary students across town lines. In response, superintendent Sue Gee stated that while this idea was certainly on the table, to change the district agreement to allow intra-district choice between Gill and Montague would require town meeting approval in both communities.

The school committee expects to issue a report on school configuration and school closing on November 14th, and promised to hold at least one more meeting to discuss their decision.

## Gill Forum Focuses on Montague Configuration

**BY P.H. CROSBY** - School committee chair Mary Kociela's warm welcome and even-handed description of the purpose for the school configuration forum held at the Gill Elementary School on Thursday, October 28th would seem to have paved the way for a productive discussion of the issues between the approximately 60, mainly Gill parents and community members present. However, the presentation veered abruptly into 'he said - she said' mode, with strong stands from a number of Montague Center residents in a row, leaving some Gill residents wondering why the committee bothered to come to Gill to host a forum.

First school committee member and Montague Center resident Richard Colton announced he did not believe in the dollar figures related to the projected costs of closing various elementary schools in Montague as described in the printed packet handed out at the start of the forum. Next, school committee member Mike Langknecht, another Montague Center resident, declined to take the podium to speak as a private resident as requested by Kociela, who was attempting to keep order in what risked becoming a debate rather than a hearing. Langknecht

referenced the fact that none of the school closing options saved much money, nowhere near enough to close the school district's conservatively-projected budget gap of \$800,000 for '08.

Estimated savings of individual school closings range from \$139,775 to be gained from closing Montague Center to \$255,356 to be gained from closing both Hillcrest and Montague Center. Closing Gill Elementary is not an option under discussion.

Prompted by Gee's opening remark that the district has lost nearly 18% of its enrollment over the past four years, one of the first questions from the audience was whether the system was systematically collecting information on why people were leaving, and using that data to plan accordingly. Gee replied there was some indication that a good part of the loss was attributable to people moving out of the area to look for work elsewhere, due to the flat economy. Figures distributed in the information packets show that while an average of 116 students left the school each year of the past three years on school choice; an average of 68 per year choiced in



PHOTO BY SHAWN WOOLSEY

*Sally Shaw of Gill wondered if a poll of teachers might find they were willing to give up step raises for one year totaling \$159,000 if it meant saving a school.*

to Gill-Montague each year, for an average yearly net loss to school choice of 48. In addition, the district experienced a further drop in enrollment this year of 45 students.

Gill committee member Ted Castro-Santos noted that central office and administrative staffing have been kept extremely lean as a way of dealing with budget constraints, which allows scant time for collecting or analyzing exit data.

Jeanne Weintraub of Montague Center took the podium to congratulate Gill parents on their

'wonderful school', likening it to Montague Center in terms of the close-knit school community and its high performance in testing. Her request was that Gill parents consider that Montague Center also be allowed to preserve a community school that people stood behind and were proud of.

Gill parent Sally Shaw wondered why it was always school closings that were looked at to save money and why always elementary level cuts. She pointed to extensive sports programming at the middle/high school level as something that never seemed to be questioned, and also wondered if a poll of teachers might find they were willing to give up step raises for one year totaling \$159,000 if it meant saving a school.

Joanne Rabideau, a Gill resident and Gill teacher who attended Gill schools herself, expressed the view that a building is not what makes for a good education. Cuts in the classroom are what a child feels, Rabideau said, while changes in which building houses them are not as significant. Rabideau also asked Gill parents, some of whom have strong objections to any plans for moving Gill's sixth grade to Great Falls

Middle School as part of a district reconfiguration plan, to give the idea a chance. "I was against it at first too, but after talking to (Gill's interim principal) Dr. Crisafulli, I began to understand some of the advantages."

Karen Wartel, a teacher at Montague Center School, echoed the comments of some other speakers when she reminded the audience they had much to be proud of in their schools, such as the widely-recognized Sawmill River Project at Montague Center integrating environmental studies with classroom instruction.

(The writer of this article, another long-time Gill resident who attended the Gill School when it was K-8, pointed out that there was a time when Gill used to have more than one school, but that having only one now brought the community together - Riverside, Gill Center, NMH parents, everyone - to support and defend their school and insist on the best for all their children.)

Apparently off the table for now was the subject of moving Gill's 6th grade to Great Falls and opening up Gill to intra-district school choice, two actions which would require opening the district agreement and a majority vote in Gill and Montague town meeting.

# Turners Falls to Athol

BY LEE CARIGNAN

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Athol Red Raiders defeated the Turners Falls Indians 20 - 9 in Intercounty League football action last Friday night. Turners played well for most of the night against the league leading Red Raiders, trailing by five points late in the fourth quarter. But in the end, the heavily favored Raiders and the big plays of Mike Chamberlain were too much for Turners. With Friday's win, Athol holds onto their first-place lead and improves their record to 7-1 on the season.

Turners got off to a fast start on their opening drive, moving the ball down the field with the big-play capability of Evan Brusco, who suffered a lower leg injury last week, but was back in the starting lineup

Friday. On the first play of the game, Brusco found a hole and sprinted down the field for a 61-yard gain. Turners, who have had problems in the red zone all season, were halted at the 8-yard line and forced to kick a field goal by the tough Red Raiders' defense. Sonny Lucas' 26-yard kick gave Turners an early 3-0 lead.

Athol came back quickly, as quarterback Ryan O'Connell completed a strike to wide receiver Jason Strong for 34 yards. Mike Chamberlain followed with a 30-yard run down to the Turners' 11-yard line. The run put Chamberlain over 1,000 yards for the season. Chamberlain capped off the drive with a 1-yard touchdown run to put the Red Raiders up 7-3 with 5:19 to go in the first quarter.



Both teams struggled to put points on the board in the second quarter. Athol had an apparent touchdown called back, and Turners drove the ball down to the Athol 15-yard line late in the quarter, but quarterback Adam Bastarache was intercepted in the end zone, keeping the score 7-3 at the half.

Turners caught a break when Athol fumbled the opening kickoff of the third quarter. C.J. Peterson, who had a good game at running back last week, recovered the fumble, giving Turners excellent field position at the Athol 40-yard line. But

the boys in blue couldn't take advantage of the turnover, and were forced to punt the ball away.

Later in the quarter, Athol had another touchdown called back for an illegal block penalty, keeping the score at 7-3. But on the first play of the fourth quarter, Chamberlain broke loose for another big play, scoring a 65-yard touchdown. Turners coach John Putala argued for another clipping penalty to the officials, but this time the touchdown would stand, making it a 14-3 ballgame.

The Turners offense answered when quarterback Adam Bastarache connected with wide out Tom Field on consecutive passes of 15 and 32 yards, to move Turners down to the Athol goal line. Field capped off the drive with a 1-yard reception for the touchdown. Turners went for the 2-point conversion to get

within a field goal, but Athol defense held them to keep the score 14-9.

Athol finished Turners off on another Chamberlain touchdown run off 39-yards to make the final score 20-9. Chamberlain finished with 31 carries for an amazing 247 yards. He also had 146 yards called back on penalties.

Adam Bastarache finished the night with 4 completions on 18 attempts for 57 yards, and one touchdown pass. He also rushed for 37 yards. Evan Brusco had 62 yards on 5 carries. Tom Field led Turners with 4 receptions for 57 yards and a touchdown.

Next week Turners plays at Frontier on Friday night. This should be another tough opponent for the Indians. Frontier is in second place with a 5-2 record. Last week, Frontier kept their playoff hopes alive, with a big 7-0 win over Mohawk.

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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

### E-Mail Fraud in Turners Falls

#### Friday 10-27

2:00 p.m. Request for a well being check in the Connecticut River by the buoys. Caller reports there is a boat near the buoys. Officer sent. All ok. Subjects told to stay away from the buoys.

7:35 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop on Turners Falls Road at Hatchery Road,

[REDACTED] was arrested and charged with speeding, failure to stop for a police officer, resisting arrested, and operating under the influence of liquor (4th offense).

#### Saturday 10-28

5:25 p.m. Report of fraud at a Federal Street, Montague

address. Caller reported an e-mail scam. Advised of options.

#### Sunday 10-29

4:08 p.m. Report of a fraud at an H Street address. Caller reported losing a credit card and the credit card company told him that someone tried to use it. Under investigation.

6:38 p.m. Report of a larceny at a Turners Falls Road address. Caller reported cash was missing from an unlocked vehicle. Report taken.

#### Monday 10-30

3:24 p.m. Report of a dispute between neighbors at an Avenue A address. Problem is ongoing. Both advised of options.

#### Tuesday 10-31

7:13 p.m. Report of shoplifting from Food City. Two men stole 2 30 packs of Bud Light and left the store in a green Toyota Corolla. Under investigation.

10:12 p.m. Walk in to station reported an assault at a Hillcrest Homes address. One juvenile assaulted another. Charges pending, still under investigation.

10:45 p.m. Report of a breaking and entering at an Avenue C address.

[REDACTED] was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, assault and battery on a police officer, and malicious destruction of property over \$250.

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## FINDING BALANCE

## Saying Goodbye to a Dog

BY JENNY CHAPIN

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - This morning my friends had one of their beloved dogs put down. This decision is always made with great reluctance, from love, from wanting the animal not to suffer any further. Sugar Bear was very ill from cancer, and for the last few days he was clearly already partly somewhere else.

These animals are our friends, co-conspirators, companions on the path. They teach us how to play, and to give ourselves over completely to all that life offers. They show us how to trust, and to love without reserve, even in the face of ugliness and pain.

Years ago, I had a boyfriend, a pony-tailed troublemaker, and I had a dog, a White German Shepherd-Doberman mix.

Lather went everywhere with me; he was the first dog I had that deep affection for, and it was a revelation of delight. Once my boyfriend said, "I think you love that dog more than you love me," and I just looked at him and raised my right eyebrow: If he didn't already know the answer to that statement, I didn't think he'd want to hear it voiced.

Dog lovers are people with such a passionate connection to their canine buddies that they are nearly a breed apart from the rest of humanity. Dog lovers are devoted, slightly goofy, and are probably seen by the rest of the world as a bit over the top: we pull photos of our pooches out of our wallets, can stand around for hours exchanging stories, and order headstones for their graves. But they teach



us to love deeply and madly, and to love over and over again, and how bad can that be?

It's a strange position to be in, helping our dog to go from this world to the next. Even when it has become so clearly the action to take, to do right by creatures who are suffering, it still produces a very bizarre and, for me, uncomfortable feeling of playing God.

One moment they're here, the next they're gone, and that moment of transition can put us in a very altered state. With Dillon, a Portuguese water spaniel, after the vet gave him

the shot and he faded away from us, I howled - the canine version of keening - and wished anything to be able to take it back, to have one more moment of him being alive. After Tesseract, my White German Shepherd and one of the best dogs who ever graced this planet, died, I spent three weeks in a daze, wondering how I could keep going with a broken heart.

But they keep walking by our sides. Pam Houston, in her novel *Sight Hound*, writes from the dog's perspective, "Once you've had those times together, they become like a present you can open again and again. Humans call this memory, because they can't open their eyes wide enough to see around time, but real love isn't any less solid than picture frames and colored pencils, and a great deal

more durable. Death can't take it from you once you've held it in your hand."

Though we must let them go, they are nonetheless set into our lives, and we continue to love them beyond time and space. We mourn them, who own a piece of our heart, a piece we gave willingly because to love them was our joy. We mourn them... and we keep walking, into the rest of our lives, as they continue to fill us, and to make us better people because of their love for us, which continues beyond time and space.

*Jenny Chapin is an acupuncturist, bodyworker, and yoga teacher in Greenfield. Suggest a topic or question for her column at [jjchapin@crocker.com](mailto:jjchapin@crocker.com).*

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

## Nothing Personal - But You're Crazy

BY FRED CICETTI

**LEONIA, NJ - Q.** A friend who uses a lot of psychobabble described a new woman in our retirement community as having a "personality disorder." I would call this woman a pain in the neck. What's the difference between a personality disorder and just a lousy personality?

People with a personality disorder are more than just pains in the neck.

They have serious trouble getting along with others. They are usually rigid and unable to adapt to the changes life presents to all of us.

They simply don't function well in society.

People with personality disorders are more likely to experience homicide and suicide, social isolation, alcohol and drug addiction, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and self-destructive behavior such as

excessive gambling.

About one in seven U.S. adults has at least one personality disorder, and many have more than one. Personality disorders are usually first noticed around the teen years. However, personality disorders can surface at any time, including old age. About one in ten older adults living at home may have a personality disorder. This figure is even higher among adults living in nursing homes.

Childhood experiences and your genes play major roles in personality disorders. However, personality changes can be brought on in older adults if they have trouble handling the losses of family and friends, other major life changes or their own medical problems.

Mental health professionals place personality disorders in three categories or clusters.

People in Cluster A exhibit



ILLUSTRATION: JESSICA HARMON

eccentric behavior. Those in Cluster B are dramatic, emotional or erratic. And those in Cluster C are fearful.

The following are some examples. The descriptions are very brief because of space requirements. You could write pages to describe each disorder. In Cluster A are schizoid, paranoid and schizotypal personality disorders. Schizoid personalities are introverted daydreamers who fear intimacy with others.

Paranoid personalities don't trust people, and see them as deceitful or worse. Schizotypal personalities are eccentrics who act inappropriately and often claim they have supernatural gifts.

In Cluster B are antisocial, borderline and narcissistic personality disorders. Antisocial personalities are belligerent rule-breakers who often get into legal difficulties and fall into substance abuse.

Borderline personalities are unpredictable, self-destructive and often see things in black and white. Narcissistic personalities overstate their own importance and need constant attention.

In Cluster C are avoidant, dependent and obsessive-compulsive personality disorders.

Avoidant personalities can't handle rejection well and may have no close relationships outside of their family. Dependent

personalities lack self-confidence and rely on others to make decisions for them.

Obsessive-compulsive personalities are unsatisfied perfectionists who are so detail-oriented that they have trouble making decisions.

The symptoms of Cluster A and Cluster B personality disorders may diminish with age. Those with Cluster C personality disorders often experience worsening symptoms as they get older.

There's no cure for these conditions, but psychotherapy and medication for symptoms such as anxiety and depression can help. The symptoms of some personality disorders also may improve with age.

*If you have a question, please write to [fredcicetti@gmail.com](mailto:fredcicetti@gmail.com).*

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# JEP'S PLACE: FAITH, HOPE AND OTHER DISASTERS PART IX

## Chapter 6: Julia

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - After Pa refused to buy the washing machine, Ma's eyes sank into her head. She sighed mournfully, and walked around like a zombie, as she had when Julia died.

A strange sound had awakened me on that terrible morning. At first, I thought my mother was singing. My parents and the older kids went to church before Julia was born, and sometimes, while getting dressed for church, Ma sang songs she sang when growing up in Poland.

But this didn't sound right. I ran downstairs, half asleep, to see what it was. On the way down, I realized it wasn't Sunday and it wasn't singing. It

was wailing - scary wailing. I found Mama in the bedroom, crying in a sing-song voice, over and over, "My baby, my baby, my sweet dear baby," as she washed blood from Julia's mouth.

Ma's eyes were red, filled with tears, and there was a terribly sad look on her face.

"What's the matter with Julia, Mama?" I asked. But she didn't seem to hear or even see me. Pa paced back and forth, gesturing with his hands, palm up, looking at the ceiling, saying, "Why? Why?"

When he turned, I saw a big blood stain on his white shirt.

"What's wrong with Julia, Pa?" I asked. But he didn't hear or see me, either. I felt as if it were all a bad dream, with me just looking on, not able to do

anything about it. Julia lay on the bed as though she were sleeping. Mama would stop dressing her every little while and pick her up to cradle her and sit on edge of the bed, rocking and crooning the way she did when she put Julia to sleep. From time to time Mama would close her eyes and turn her head back and forth as if she were saying "No, No, No." Tears came, and a terrible moaning sound came from somewhere deep inside her.

As she put a white christening dress on over Julia's head, she had trouble getting her arms into the sleeves. Julia was limp all over.

Mama kept brushing away tears as she struggled to dress her. Emmy led me into the kitchen.

"Julia's dead, Joey," Emmy said, putting her arm around me. I remembered how happy

Ma and Pa had been when Julia was born. When her labor pains began Ma lay on her bed calling for Emmy.

"Quick, go get the baby lady. Tell her it's time."

Because the midwife had once worked for a doctor, Ma had great faith in her. She lived more than a half mile away. Emmy and Irene ran all the way.

The midwife had waddled down the dirt road to our farm, taking her sweet time, her cane in one hand and a mysterious black bag in the other, calm as could be. At the farm, she went into the bedroom to see Ma. When she came out, she took off her shoes and put on worn-out bed slippers. "You boys get behind the stove and stay there," she said. "I got work to do."

The cook stove sat a couple of feet out from the wall. My younger brother, Louis, and I

got behind the stove and slid under it on our bellies. The midwife stood by the stove, heating water. Her toes stuck out of holes in her slippers, tempting us. We pinched them, but she just laughed, taking all the fun out of it. From time to time, she went into the bedroom to check on Ma.

When Pa came home from work, she sent him into the bedroom. On one trip, she stayed in the bedroom with Pa for a long time. We all waited in the kitchen, watching the bedroom door. We heard Mama cry out, occasionally, and the midwife murmur.

The only sound in the kitchen was the teakettle singing on the stove. After a while, we heard a baby cry. Pa came out, his shirtsleeves rolled up, carrying a baby wrapped in a towel.

The baby lady followed. She had a washbasin of warm water ready on the table. Pa smiled as he put the baby in the water. It was a cute little thing. Pa washed it carefully, as though it would break.

We all watched. No one spoke. I kept wondering where that baby came from. It seemed like the magic trick Johnny did, pushing a penny into his arm and getting it out of his ear. I wanted to ask Pa where the baby came from, but I knew we had to keep as silent as wallpaper. We watched in surprise.

We weren't used to seeing him taking care of kids, especially a baby, but he seemed happy with the little thing and I wondered if he was going to keep it, seeing as he always said there were too many kids.

I asked my sisters, in a whisper, where the baby came from, but they just got embarrassed, grinned and whispered, "God sent her."

*to be continued . . .*

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Heroes*, classic rock, come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH**  
Dove of Peace Christmas Bazaar Featuring crafts, multi-raffles, bake sale, attic treasures, luncheon, etc. At Our Lady of Peace Church, 7th Street, Turners Falls. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info. 863-2585

4th Annual A Cappella Concert Groups from Smith College, Dartmouth College and St. Mark's School will join NMH's own Hogappella and its new female a cappella group, the Nellies to serenade the crowd with intricate harmonies unaccompanied by musical instruments. Held in the Blake Student Center on Northfield Mount Hermon Gill campus. The event is a benefit for a war memorial in Sunderland. 8 p.m.

Country Fair at the First Congregational Church, L Street, Turners Falls. Features a variety of crafts, gifts, food, jewelry, stuffed animals, white elephant items, silent auction, Mrs. Claus' table, and raffles. 9 to 2 p.m. Luncheon served 11 to 1 p.m..

Class Action, a national organization working for social and economic justice, presents "Exploring Class," workshop exploring the impact of class issues on our lives. 9-5:30 p.m. at FCAC, 393 Main St., Greenfield. Sliding scale. Info or questions, call (413)-585-9709 x201 or register on line www.classism.org.

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, Fred Eagesmith & The Flying Squirrels, w/ Steve Sanderson Opening Show 8:30 p.m. Come to dance!

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH & 5TH**  
Cider Day! This Franklin County based event incorporates apples and cider from around the US and world. Cider Day workshops and tours are free. To taste hard ciders at any of the activities, purchase a Cider Day glass for \$10, available at the Brick Meetinghouse on Saturday. Tickets for the Cider Day Dinner, Heritage Apple Tasting and Cider & Cheese Tasting, and complete schedule of events, are avail-



Lissa Schneckenburger, an amazing Scottish and Celtic fiddler at the Bookmill, Montague Center. Saturday, November 4th. 7:30 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.

able online at [www.ciderday.com](http://www.ciderday.com).

*The Lady Pirates of Captain Bree*, a play the whole family will love. This tale is set in the backdrop of 1880 but loosely based on 17th century Irish pirate Gracie O'Malley. Humor, music and dancing-all with an Irish lilt! At Pioneer Valley Regional, Martin Auditorium. Just off Route 10, Northfield. 8 p.m. 498-2931

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH**  
Open Mic at Cup O' Joe, Avenue A, Turners Falls. Everyone is encouraged to bring their voice, acoustic only instruments, slam poetry, or standup comedy. All styles and levels of musicianship are welcome. 6:30 p.m.

Documentary Film Series on "Active Nonviolence" at the Arms Library, Shelburne Falls. thru November. **Nov. 8** *The Take*, this moving film records the dramatic and ultimately successful efforts of Argentine workers to convert dozens of closed factories into productive, worker-run cooperatives. 7 p.m. Free

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, open mic hosted by Peter Kim Jimmy Arnold, all welcome to play! No cover. 8:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY TO SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH TO 11TH**  
The Dance Companies of NMH Dance present *Dancing Out Loud*, a modern dance piece by students, faculty and alumni. One piece, *Fedora*, features the music of electric cellist Gideon Freudmann. Performances: Nov. 9 at 7p.m., Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m., and Nov. 11 at 7 p.m., Grandin Auditorium. Tickets \$2 for students and \$5 general audience. Limited seating, frequently sells out. Reservations, 413-498-3017.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH**  
Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Love Bomb*, rock. Come to dance! 9:30 p.m.

Fall Fairy Fun: Work on winterizing those fairy houses including practicing to make a survival shelter good for fairies that end up spending a night out in the woods. Suitable for ages 5 and older. Northfield Mountain Recreation 1 to 3 p.m. 800-859-2960

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11TH**  
Join Turners Falls River Culture in celebrating the long awaited unveiling of four outdoor public art pieces to be on view for three years throughout the downtown. Meet the artists, take a tour of the works, then come back to the beautiful Great Hall of the Discovery Center for food, music and schmoozing. 3-6 pm. Free

Rt. 63 Road House, Millers Falls, *Turn It Loose*, rock, come to dance! 9:30pm

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**SATURDAYS IN NOVEMBER**  
Animal Preparedness Winter Survival Series. Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife staff focus on animal adaptations and behavior that allow them to survive through harsh New England Winters. **11/4 Mammals: Bears & Beavers.** **11/11 Reptiles: Turtles & Snakes.** **11/18 Amphibians: Frogs, Toads & Salamanders.** **11/25 Birds: Migratory & Non-migratory.** 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.. **UNTIL NOVEMBER 4TH**  
Pioneer Valley Institute: Great River Art Show in the Great Hall **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH**  
Bat Program. Join us for a hands-on nature activity for preschool aged children which will include making your own bat. 10:30 - 11:30 am

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH**  
3 - 6 p.m. Riverculture Kiosk Tour w/ Local Artists.

**BEGINNING NOVEMBER 17TH**  
Come and view the Junior Duck Stamp artwork from Massachusetts students grades K - 12. The first place design from the national contest is used to create a Junior Duck Stamp for the following year. Proceeds from the sale of Junior Duck Stamp support conservation education, and provide awards and scholarships for the students, teachers, and schools that participate in the program.

**Great Falls Discovery Center** [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org)  
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Murder Mystery Dinner at The Montague Elks Lodge #2521, 1 Elks Avenue, Turners Falls. The Comical Mystery troupe performs *Holiday Mystery Party*, a benefit for the capital campaign for the new lodge. Dinner of spaghetti and meatballs \$15. Please contact Betsy Sicard, the chairperson for tickets at (413) 423-3455. 6 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH**  
Equity Trust presents: Soup and Seeds: Reshaping Our Economic Relationship to Land & Food. Presentations from Jaunita Nelson and Jean Paul Courtens, biodynamic farmer. At First Churches, Northampton. Soup and bread served. 5:30 p.m. Free, all welcome. Info. 863-9038 or [www.equitytrust.org](http://www.equitytrust.org)

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH**  
Comedy at the Shea. Featuring Tony V., Greg Rodrigues, Myq Kaplan & Jennifer Myszkowski.

Proceeds benefit Turners Falls RiverCulture Project. [www.SheaComedy.com](http://www.SheaComedy.com) Tickets are \$15 in advance (\$17 at the door), on-line at [www.sheacomedy.com](http://www.sheacomedy.com), or at World Eye Bookshop & Mesa Verde, Greenfield and Books & More, Turners Falls.

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# Halloween 2006



DAVOL PHOTOS



Above left to right: Tigger: Owen Potts; Princess: Kaylee Diaz; the clowns at Greenfield Savings Bank and Power Ranger: Jordan Welsh. all on Avenue A in Turners Falls.



## Ray's Horror and Sci-Fi Corner

~ a collection of DVD and occasional theater recommendations

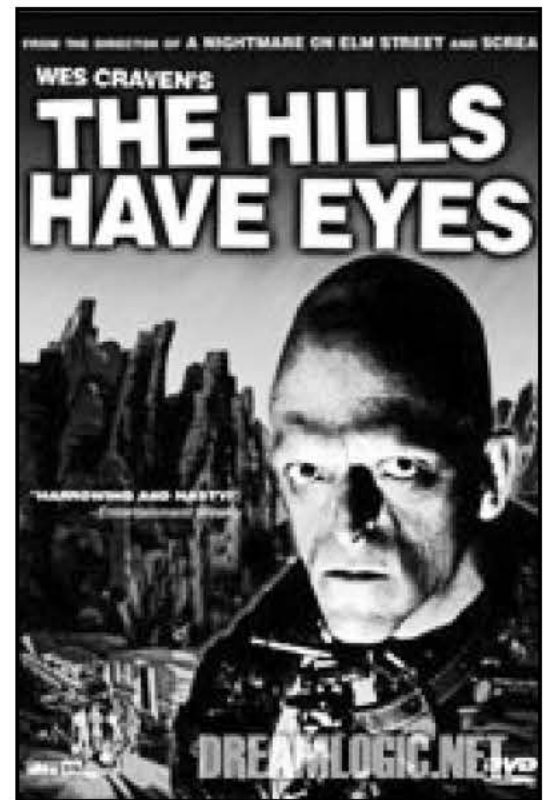
BY RAY DIDONATO  
**WENDELL** - *Bubba Ho-Tep*, directed by Don Coscarelli (2002). Elvis didn't die, he ended up at Mudcreek Shady Rest Convalescent Home in Texas. Now the King (Bruce Campbell) has teamed up with a fellow patient (Ossie Davis), who incidentally thinks he's John F. Kennedy, in order to destroy a soul-eating Egyptian mummy (Bob Ivy) lurking in the nursing home. Based on a short story of the same title by horror writer Joe R. Lansdale.

Bruce Campbell, who made his fame with horror and B-movie fans as the character "Ash" in the Evil Dead movies, now slays the audience as Elvis. The mummy special effects and stunts are quite good, especially considering the small budget of this film, which has gone on to win several cinema accolades - a great flick that works on multiple levels. Rated R, 95 minutes.

*The Hills Have Eyes*, directed by Alexandre Aja (2006). When a cross-country family vacation breaks down in the remote New Mexico desert, the travelers are soon preyed upon by bloodthirsty, axe-wielding mutants who are the generational byproducts of atomic tests. With his family attacked, and his infant daughter kidnapped by the desert freaks, Doug Bukowski (Aaron Stanford) must find a way to get his child back - but will he survive long enough to save her? Also starring Kathleen Quinlan (Apollo XIII), Ted Levine ("Monk"), and Emilie de Ravin

("Lost").

Based on the Wes Craven horror classic, *Hills* turns on the mayhem and gore from the outset, and it never seems to wind down in intensity. The title sequence sets the mood by rattling the viewer, alternating between dreamy 1950s television clips and stock footage of atomic tests and bizarre mutations, all in



the backdrop of the Webb Pierce song "More and More." This film originally earned an NC-17 rating but was re-edited to an R rating; however I recommend the unrated DVD version. As always, to our readers not unaccustomed to gore, 'Consider Yourself Warned.' On the same note, the film contains a multitude of disturbing scenes and themes, so be sure to get out the popcorn. Unrated, 109 minutes.

'X-Files' Recommendation: "Post-Modern Prometheus," originally aired 11/30/97 (Season 5, Episode 5). When a barren woman becomes pregnant under circumstances involving a mystery intruder and Cher music, Mulder and Scully soon find themselves entwined in a case involving an eccentric geneticist and his odd experiments. This episode, filmed in B&W, features John O'Hurley ("Seinfeld") and Jerry Springer.