



**POISONOUS DART FROGS**  
in Turners Falls  
Page 9



**WINTER GARDENING**  
with Laughing Dog Farm in Gill  
Page 20

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 8

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 21, 2007

## Third Kindergarten Teacher Hired at Hillcrest

**BY BRIDGET SWEET**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - November 5th was opening day for Kelly Gobeil's new full-day kindergarten class at Hillcrest Elementary. When school opened in September, Cheryl Robertson and Fay Jean Smith's kindergarten classes at Hillcrest were overenrolled, with 26 students in each class. "There was an unexpected enrollment the last two weeks of summer," Hillcrest principal Christine Jutres explained.



Kelly Gobeil

"Parents expressed concern with the large kindergarten classes," Jutres continued. "We wanted, as a district, to offer equitable class sizes," for kindergartners entering any of the district primary schools. Gill Elementary has 16 kindergarten students, and Montague Center has 15 kindergartners, up only slightly from last year.

Superintendent Ken Rocke said he is not see-

ing any significant increase in enrollment in the district as a whole, and in fact, according to the recent Department of Education analysis of the Gill-Montague schools' longterm trends, enrollment has dropped 29% since 1998, from 1598 students to 1142 presently enrolled. But he said year by year class sizes can fluctuate, as was the case at Hillcrest this year, where the size of the incoming kindergarten class caught school officials by surprise.

"Teachers, parents, and administrators called our attention to the class sizes," at Hillcrest kindergartens, Rocke said. "I visited them myself."

With funds so tight, in order to add another kindergarten class Jutres reapplied for a DOE grant to help out the situation, and was happy to receive \$15,000. The remainder of the needed funding came from the state's \$21,000 'Pothole' grant.

Rocke said, "The parents saw our fiscal situation, and exercised a great deal of patience, and continued to properly advocate for a smaller class size."

With the addition of the third kindergarten class at Hillcrest, Robertson's class now has thirteen students, and Smith's class now has eighteen students. Gobeil's class has sixteen students, and help from paraprofessional, Pam Grimard.

see **GOBEIL** pg 14

## A Turkey in Every Oven! Thanks to the Survival Center



LITCHFIELD PHOTO

On Tuesday, Laurie Leese, left, of Northfield, received her Thanksgiving dinner from Franklin Area Survival Center volunteers Theresa Roussell of Turners Falls, center, and Jean Thurber, right, of Gill. The Food Pantry gave away 300 turkeys and Thanksgiving dinners.

**BY KATHY LITCHFIELD**

**TURNERS FALLS** - Cradling her four-teen-pound Thanksgiving turkey like a baby in her arms, Laurie Leese of Northfield couldn't thank the volunteers enough as she left the Franklin Area

Survival Center on 4th Street.

"I'm so grateful," she said, sharing a wide smile and showing the three bags holding the Thanksgiving dinner she wouldn't have been able to afford if it

see **TURKEYS** pg 14

## Mahar May Form K-12 District

**BY JOSH HEINEMANN**  
**WENDELL** - Finance committee member Jim Slavas met the select-board on Wednesday, November 14th to report on the ongoing discussions about regionalization of schools. The Mahar superintendent, Dr. Reza Namin, wants to form a K through 12 district, with Petersham expressing interest in joining. Wendell and New Salem have been consistent in their wish to keep Swift River School separate, but to remain in the 7 through 12 Mahar regional district.

Since the last time Slavas met with the board, the Massachusetts Department of Education sent a lengthy email saying they would not approve such a hybrid dis-

trict; it would take an act of the legislature to create one. Slavas said that position gives Wendell four alternatives:

One is for Wendell to pull out of the Mahar district and pay tuition for students who attend Mahar. That would reduce Wendell's per student payment to the same amount that Orange pays, and avoid the argument about minimum and alternative assessment, but transportation would be the responsibility of parents or the town, and Wendell would have no seat on the Mahar School Committee, and no voice in the operation of the school.

A second choice would be to encourage Petersham to join Union 28.

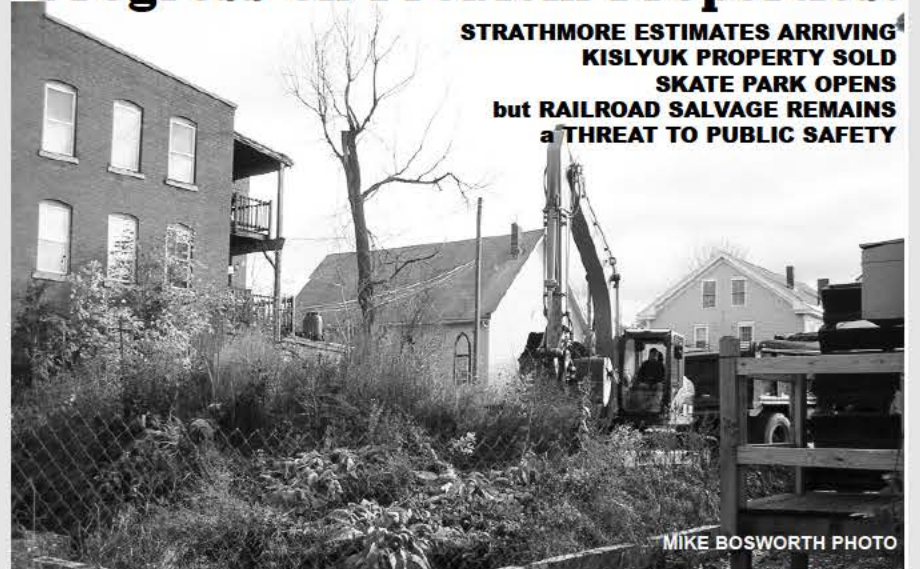
A third choice would be to pursue legislative approval of a district with Petersham and Orange joined K through 12, and Wendell and New Salem joined with those two towns for grades 7 through 12. Breaking down all the financial aspects of such a district would be complicated, and Orange's representative, Chris Donelan, was reportedly cool to the idea, and only softened to it after some discussion. The Swift River School district was created by a legislative act.

A fourth possibility would be to join in a Mahar K through 12 district.

For now the school committee and finance committee are pursuing see **MAHAR** pg 14

## Progress on Problem Properties:

**STRATHMORE ESTIMATES ARRIVING  
KISLYUK PROPERTY SOLD  
SKATE PARK OPENS  
but RAILROAD SALVAGE REMAINS  
a THREAT TO PUBLIC SAFETY**



MIKE BOSWORTH PHOTO

Renaissance Excavators go to work leveling the abandoned mounds and foundation wall at 181 Avenue A on Friday, November 16th.

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**

**TURNERS FALLS** - After enduring the eyesore of abandoned mounds of dirt rising from a decaying cinderblock foundation, cordoned off by chain link fencing since August of 2005, the town has finally been freed of the remnants of Belchertown contractor Mark Kislyuk's

attempt to build a mixed used six-unit apartment building at 181 Avenue A, across the street from the post office. In May of this year, the town arrested Kislyuk afterin May of this year, after he defied a joint order from the board of health and the building inspector to re-see **PROPERTY** pg 7

**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Let's Diet!**



**Patches**

My name is Patches, and I am a five-year-old tortoiseshell female cat in need of a good home. Are you looking to give a home to a kitty that needs a little extra love? I am a very sweet girl and I am excited to meet people and to be given some attention. I am a little overweight, so it's very important for me to remember to eat healthy. I also like having my chest and stomach rubbed (I can't really reach them on my own). I have a lot of love to give a special person, and I know someone is out there who will be the perfect friend! For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at leverett@dpvhs.org.

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**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Mother Goose on the Loose**

**BY LINDA HICKMAN**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - Mother Goose on the Loose will be held Saturday morning, December 1st, at the Carnegie Library at 10:30 a.m. The program is an interactive mix of live music, rhymes, stories, puppets, and other visuals. The free sessions are designed for babies through preschoolers and are performed by Children's Librarian Linda Hickman and musician Michael Nix. The monthly

Saturday programs will be held on the first Saturday of each month through Spring. Linda Hickman will also be performing the programs solo on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. weekly at the Carnegie Library. The programs are supported by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. For more information, call the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

**Tranquility Zone**

Tranquility Zone with the theme "Gratitude" will be held Sunday, November 25th, at 10 a.m. An hour of reflection, music, prayers, writings from the Holy Scriptures of the World, including Zoroastrian, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Islam, and Baha'i. The readings

will be followed by a period of silent meditation. Please feel free to bring and share a writing that has touched you. Brunch will be served. Held at the home of Shay and Charles Cooper, 71 Kentfield Road, Wendell Depot (1st road on the left of Wendell Depot Post Office, heading south) Phone: 978-544-2190. Sponsored by the Baha'is of Wendell.

**Gill Notes**

**Pre-payment Appreciated**  
The tax collector would like to thank taxpayers who have pre-paid on their 2008 real estate bills. Due to extenuating circumstances, the '08 tax bills will not be ready to mail soon. However, taxpayers may send in payment based on an estimate taken from last year's bills. If your payment is received by December 31, 2007, you may claim it on your 2007 Income Tax Return. However, to facilitate the town's cash flow, we would greatly appreciate your pre-payment by December 15th, 2007. For more information, call the tax collector's office at 863-2105.

**Ex Mill Workers Wanted**

Heather Batchelor, social studies teacher at the Turners Falls High School, is seeking a few community volunteers with direct familiarity with the industrial history of Turners Falls to come into the classroom to talk with students about their experience. Community members who might be interested in sharing their knowledge of the canalside cutlery, paper and textile mills and log drives, etc. are encouraged to call Batchelor at the High School at 413-863-7200 x1243.

**Franklin County Home Care Dining Center Holiday Schedule**

Franklin County Home Care's Greenfield Dining Center will be closed on Friday, November 23rd. There will be no Home Delivered Meals sent out that day (frozen meals will be available) and there will be no congregate meals served. All

other Franklin County Home Care dining centers and luncheon clubs will be open on that day. On Monday, November 26th, all dining centers and luncheon clubs, with the exception of the Greenfield Dining Center, will



DETMOLD PHOTO

**THIS WON'T HURT A BIT!**

Helen Stotz of Turners Falls gets a flu shot from GCC Student Nurse Carrie O'Gorman. The Montague Health Department and the Gill-Montague Senior Center sponsored their annual Flu Clinic on November 15th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Stotz was one of nearly 200 seniors who got their flu shots that day. For more info on how to get yours, call: 863-3200 x205

**Winter Parking Ban**

There will no parking on Montague streets from 1:00 a.m. to 5:30 a.m., from December 1st through March 30th. Drivers ignoring this ban are subject to ticketing on any night, and towing at their own expense on the night of any storm requiring sanding or plowing. For more information, contact the Montague police at 863-8911.



**Don't Miss It!**

**GILL CORRESPONDENT NEEDED.**  
An interest in town affairs is all that is required. Call the Montague Reporter at 863-8666

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**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES November 26th - 30th**

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

9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi  
**Wednesday, 28th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 29th**  
THANKSGIVING  
**Friday, 30th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.

**Monday, 26th**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch  
**Tuesday, 27th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, 28th**  
9:00 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Weight Loss Group  
12 Noon Bingo  
**Thursday, 29th**  
THANKSGIVING

**ERVING Senior Center**, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (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

**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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# Franklin County Technical School Tuition-Free Computer Course for Veterans Well Attended

BY PAUL COHEN

**TURNERS FALLS** - State representative Christopher Donelan (D-Orange) recently visited the tuition-free computer-aided design course offered by Guy Lapollo to veterans at the Franklin County Technical School in Turners Falls.

Lapollo is a blueprint and computer aided design instructor at the school.

The goal of the course has been to introduce participants to basic skills, and to explore career opportunities in computer-aided drafting, design and layout.

Thirteen area veterans initially signed up to take the course, but five have found



Left to right: Phil Bennington from Athol, Representative Christopher Donelan (D-Orange), and Kevin Leszczynski from Greenfield at the Franklin Tech School's free computer-aided design course for veterans

employment since.

Michael Truckey, director of the Franklin Hampshire Career Center in Greenfield, discussed the possibility of expanding the course to include additional adult instruction, and employment enhancement opportunities for individuals already employed in local machining trades.

Ron Matuszko, local veteran's employment representative, said the invitation for Lapollo's course was sent out in September to area veterans, and received a "terrific" response.

For more information on free course opportunities for area veterans, call Matuszko at 774-4361 x 359.

## CORRECTIONS

In last week's article about the dedication of the veterans memorial on Avenue A in Turners Falls, we mistakenly identified the trustees who cut the ribbon for the new memorial. Chris Boutwell and John Murphy cut the ribbon; Don Girard played Taps.

In a previous article about the Turners Falls skate park, "Whassup with the Turners Falls Skate Park" (MR VI #5), we incorrectly reported that the lease on the skate park is due to expire this month. In fact, it is due to expire in November of 2008. We apologize for the errors.

## Water Bills Due

The Turners Falls Water Department will be open on Friday, November 23rd from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Water bills are due by December 3rd.

# Dunbar Receives Rank of Eagle Scout

BY JOE ST. PETER

**TURNERS FALLS** - On November 17th the Montague Elks Lodge #2521 held an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Theodore Dunbar, of Troop 6, which the Montague Elks sponsor.

The evening began with a delicious chicken dinner prepared by Past Exalted Rulers Donald Traceski and Russ Brown.

Following scoutmaster Bruce Dunbar's opening of the Court of Honor, Eagle Scout Shawn Stevens recited both the "Call of the Eagle" and the "Eagle Scout Challenge." The "Eagle Charge" was read by Curt Englehardt, who was the last recipient to be awarded the rank of Eagle Scout in Troop 6, 28 years ago.

The Eagle presentation was made by assistant scoutmaster Peter Turban. Theodore Dunbar was pinned with his Eagle Pin by his mother. Theodore then pinned his mother with an Eagle Mother's pin, and pinned his



EILEEN TRUMBLE PHOTO

Left, Exalted Ruler Pamela J. Lester of the Montague Elk, presents Theodore Dunbar with his Eagle Scout award.

father Bruce with an Eagle tie clasp.

Michelle Podlesny read "The Legend of the Rose," and upon completion Theodore presented his mother with a dozen red roses. Exalted Ruler Pamela J. Lester then presented Theodore with a certificate from the Lodge and an American flag, which will be put in a ceremo-

nial case for display. Theodore Dunbar's choice for the Mentor Award was his uncle, Shawn Stevens.

Only 8% of American boys become Boy Scouts, and of that total only 2% go on to become Eagle Scouts. It is quite an honor, to say the least. The Montague Lodge is proud to sponsor Troop 6.

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58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376

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## That Would be Something to be Thankful For

BY FLORE

### MONTAGUE CENTER

Have you noticed how nostalgia creeps up on our memories of things past? "Things ain't the same," is the common expression, when people remember when. Was it really a better world?

For instance, what was your childhood Thanksgiving like? Do you still feel the warmth, the family and friends gathering, running up and down the corridor excitedly? The kids could roam unchecked by the grown-ups, too busy that day for surveillance. That day was theirs, too.

Can you hear those sounds again, the turmoil like a battleship in that Kitchen? The tinkling of cooking instruments, the banging of oven doors?

The womenfolk holding fort, while the men play it safe, talking shop and sport. Also guessing, with that olfactory gift of theirs, what was being prepared in that culinary whirlwind.

The American tradition of festive Thanksgiving is based on European harvest festivals, which usually occurred around the 29th of September, when all the grain was safe indoors.

For instance, in Normandy, France, it is said: *A la Saint Michel tout le monde demenage!* (At St Michael's day, every one is on the move again!) This was the time when yearly contracts for farm work were renewed.

The Pilgrims' original first Thanksgiving lasted,

according to the historians, three days.

Some say that back in 1621, Thanksgiving fell on November 21st. Perhaps this date was also chosen for commemorating the Mayflower dropping anchor at Cape Cod?

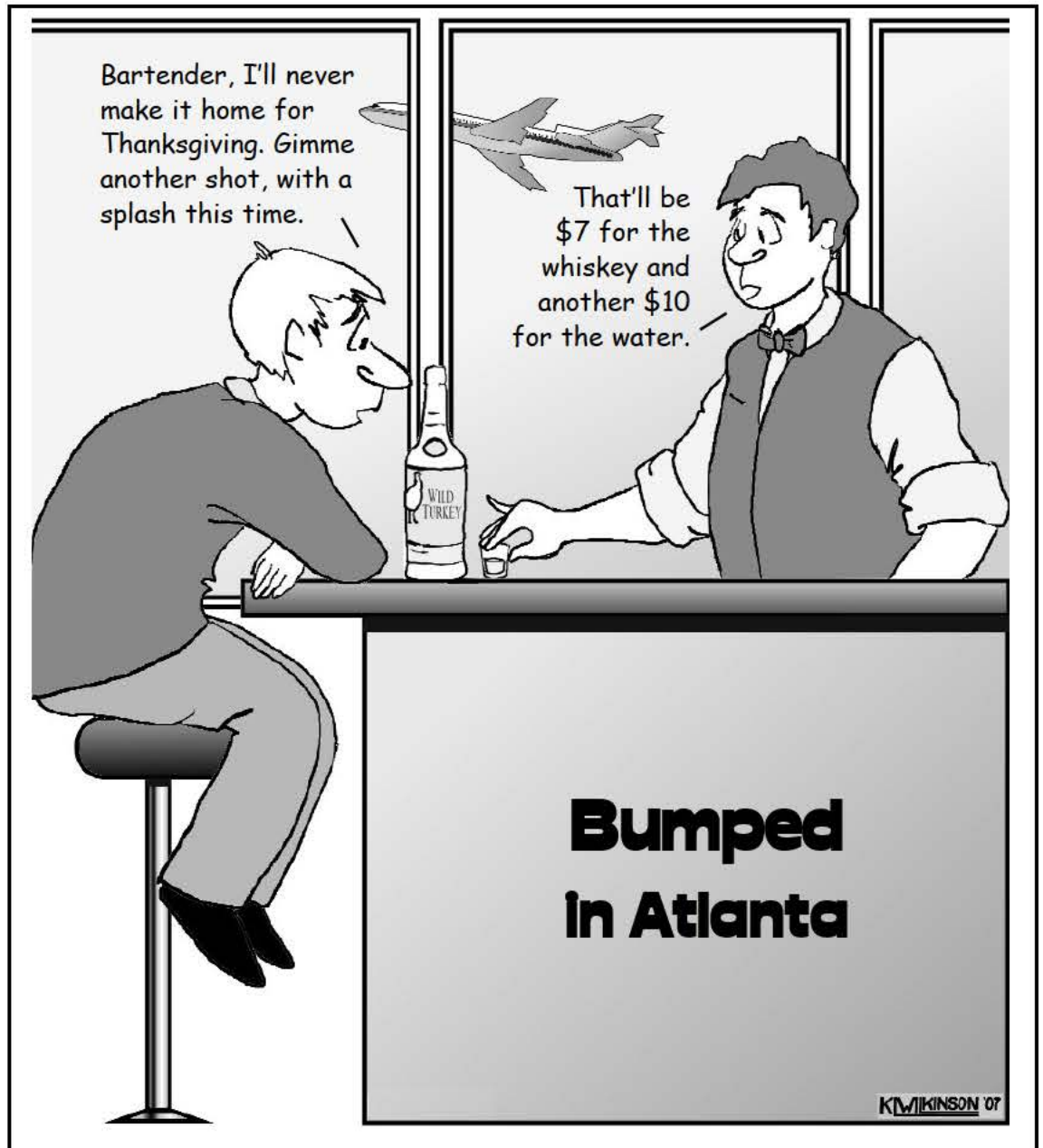
It was Governor William Bradford who proclaimed, "It would be a day of Thanksgiving, and a day of prayer." Two years later, New England was undergoing a severe drought. After a day of fasting and prayer, abundant rain fell as a special Thanksgiving miracle, and everyone rejoiced!

Now, I try to understand this phenomenon. No one seems to have remembered this continent's original occupants, the Native Americans.

The Wampanoag shared their wise knowledge with the Pilgrims. Without them, the settlers might not have been able to survive. Sharing as one people, the first Thanksgiving could have sealed a deeper understanding between the races of the Earth. Are we not all her children?

What have we learned since? How can mankind suppress conquering greed?

War was then - and war is still - dominant. How can we again, after so many times, dare face the universe's beauty, with blood on our hands? Let the world be again a place for everyone to blossom. Wasn't America once called the Land of Milk and Honey?



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



### Thanks for Helping Ricky

On October 6th, 2004 our then four-year-old grandson, Ricky, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia and treatment at Yale-New Haven Hospital began. You may remember reading about him in this newspaper, and like me, want to know the rest of the story.

In March of this year - 2007, Ricky was in remission. We were overjoyed! Then, mid-June, he relapsed. We were devastated!

Ricky is now 7½ years old and would have been in secondgrade this year. His academic studies are sporadic now as more aggressive treatment has become necessary. While at Yale-New Haven

Hospital he's endured two surgeries -- one to remove his port and the other to install a unit that will accept his bone marrow transplant along with numerous spinal taps, chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Currently, Ricky is at Boston Children's Hospital having just received a bone marrow transplant on November 15th. He's a pretty sick little boy but would appreciate your cards and words of encouragement. Please address your good wishes to: Boston Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Avenue, Boston, MA 02115, 6 West - Room 602, Richard Koscinski. He'll be delighted.

We thank all of you who have continued to keep Ricky and his family in your prayers and who have made contributions to help defray the ongoing costs of his medical bills not covered by health insurance. It is times like these that make us stop to count our blessings and reach out to those in need. If you are able to help, please send contributions to: The Richard Koscinski Leukemia Fund - The Savings Bank of Walpole, 84 Marlboro Street, Keene, NH, 03431. Your help is deeply appreciated.

Our heartfelt thanks,

- David and Nancy Stone



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## Carpenters Needed

With the holiday season upon us, I'm hoping someone or a couple of people could give some time and skill to help a family in need in our community. One family member is unable to walk and is in a wheel chair. A local organization has donated the materials to build a ramp for access in and out of the home. The family is trying to locate someone who would donate their time and skill to build the ramp for them. Any leads would be

greatly appreciated. Call 863-9545 ext 427.

- Diane Greene  
Turners Falls, MA

We welcome your letters  
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### American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 11/20/07



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

# GUEST EDITORIALS

## The First Thanksgiving

BY FRAN HEMOND

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - Our Thanksgiving celebration today is a modern response to the Thanksgiving described in Plymouth Colony by colonist Edward Winslow in a December, 1621 letter to a friend in England. The letter was printed in *Mourt's Relations* and the holiday has been variously adapted. In 1863 President Lincoln declared it a national holiday on the last Thursday in November. Today we follow President Franklin Roosevelt's lead and observe it on the fourth Thursday.

The original of our Thanksgiving Day was after their harvest in October, 1621. Five women had survived the "starving time" when half of the population had succumbed to disease. They had established good relations with Massasoit, chief of the Wampanoags. Enough housing existed so that no one had lived aboard the Mayflower since March. There were eleven buildings on Main Street. Waterfowl was plentiful. It augmented the

corn, squash, beans, barley, peas, and even "very sweet and strong red and white wine" and Thanksgiving relaxed into a harvest festival.

The Pilgrims had invited their Indian friends and Massasoit arrived with ninety warriors and furnished five deer for the party. Indeed, it was a party, for three days. Fun and games dominated. Captain Miles Standish held a military review. Games of skill and chance encouraged more personal relationships. As Nathaniel Philbrick in his book, *Mayflower* (2006) points out, the leaders of both groups appreciated that mutual respect was necessary for mutual survival. At this point, a colonist wrote that the woods of Plymouth were as safe as the highways of England.

It was "sail now, pay later" when the Plymouth pilgrims finally left England on September 6th, 1620 for the New World. They were 41 of the 102 passengers on the Mayflower, captained by Christopher Jones. They were exiles whose refusal

to follow dictated religious forms had landed them variously in prison and foreign lands. The Merchant Adventurers, a voluntary corporation in which they were stockholders, hoped to make its fortune from their work and trade in the lands three thousand miles to the west. The other passengers, called "strangers" in Georges Willisons' *Saints and Strangers* (1945), were servants and company men. Along with a crew of thirty and the captain's staff of five, the ninety-foot

ship not only coped with late fall sailing weather but dreadful living quarters for disparate people.

"Sail now," was a hazardous two-month trip. William Bradford's *Of Plimoth Plantation 1606-1647*, tells of young servant John Howland,

leaving below decks during a storm, being washed overboard. He was saved by grabbing a stray halyard and being hauled from the deep with a boat hook.

ment in clapboards and furs on the ship Fortune to the French, of years of inept trading and interest rates sometimes in 50%, and finally buying out the Merchant



He was Governor Carver's indentured servant. But the New World gave him opportunity, and he served as assistant governor in later years.

"Pay later" is a tale of the Pilgrims' loss of their initial pay-

Adventurers in 1648.

The First Thanksgiving was a happy moment when friendship and trust, based on kind assistance, overcame fear, in a time and place in which daily survival was an art.

## Tree of Hope Thanks

Hospice of Franklin County celebrated its third annual Tree of Hope and Remembrance on November 5th. At the ceremony, over 250 county residents gathered to celebrate the lives of friends and family by lighting hundreds of lights on a twenty-foot evergreen that will remain lit at the Hospice office on Conway Street through the holidays.

The staff and board of directors of Hospice of Franklin County extend our deep appreciation to the many donors of lights, and to the

community for participating in this meaningful commemorative event. We are also very grateful to the following area businesses for their contributions: Clarkdale Fruit Farm; Adams Donut Shop; Meadowcrest Tree Farm; Mole Hollow Candle; Richard D. Smith, Inc.; Snow & Sons Landscaping; and Hilltown Tents. Beautiful music was provided by harpist Sarah McKee, and by Clinical Notes - Baystate Franklin County Medical Center Women's a Cappella Chorus members Lynn Boudreau, Judy Doel,

Kathryn Fox, Marian Holbrook, Sue Keller, Merry Lein, Kim Mohlar, Phyllis Roy, Kathy Ruseckas, Sue Sharbaugh, Vicki Sutton, and Linda West.

We at hospice of Franklin County are privileged to serve our community as the only locally owned and operated hospice in Franklin County. Thank you for joining us in this year's Tree of Hope and Remembrance.

- Priscilla White  
Hospice of  
Franklin County,  
Greenfield

## GOP Reorganizing in Montague

Montague Republicans have begun an effort to re-establish an active town committee in the upcoming presidential primary. Led by 21-year-old Gerald E. Sykes III of 73 5th St in Turners Falls, Republicans from Turners Falls, Millers Falls, Lake Pleasant, Montague City and Montague Center will run for office in the 2008 Republican Primary.

"We still don't know what date the legislature will select for the primary, but we will be ready for February 2nd if need be," said Sykes.

Montague may elect up to 35 members to the Republican Town Committee. The Montague Republicans missed the filing deadline, and will be

running a sticker campaign to reform their committee. Hampshire and Franklin State Committeeman Isaac Mass of Greenfield encourages GOP enthusiasts from the five villages to contact Sykes in order to be included on the sticker slate. "We have to get organized if we want to keep Hillary out of the White House!" said Mass.

Sykes can be reached at 413-834-0917 or by email at sykes\_gop06@yahoo.com. The Montague Republican Town Committee will also be eligible to caucus to nominate Republican candidates for local offices over the next four years.

-Gerry Sykes, Turners Falls  
& Isaac Mass, Greenfield

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# Quenching a Thirst for Nature

## AQUIFER WALK ON THE MONTAGUE PLAINS

**BY JANEL NOCKELBY**  
**MONTAGUE CENTER** - On Saturday, November 10th, walk leaders Tina Clark, Doug Stephens, Don Ogden, and other knowledgeable folks gave about a dozen of us a tour of the Montague Plains. Water beneath the ground here eventually runs to the area around the Bitzer Fish Hatchery, on Hatchery Road, less than a mile away.

For now, Massachusetts law governing conservation land seems to have discouraged the Nestlé Corporation from tapping into the aquifer at the state-owned nature preserve on the Montague Plains for a bottled water factory, our guides said.

But, they were there to show us what the Plains are made of anyway.

I walked the pine barren trails charmed by rumors of box turtles and endangered moths, talk of neighbors skiing and hiking several times a week, blueberry bushes getting ready for next year's blue, hunters promising not to shoot us, just the pheasants, bug repellent masquerading as soft ferns, and people rockin' orange hats.

The Montague Plains used to be a part of Glacial Lake Hitchcock way back in the day. Now it is piles of sand, sand that houses stubby pines and even stubbier oaks, fuel for Lake



NOCKELBY PHOTO

*Aquifer Adventurers trek the pine barrens on the Montague Plains: (l-r) Ivy Muller, Mik Muller, and Miette Muller of Montague Center, Pat Carlisle of Turners Falls, and Mary Parker of Florence and Colrain.*

Pleasant fires of yore. We saw of them rainbows, jumped, and fire prevention practices at freaked out. Kinda made me work, fire lines and thinning hungry, but not for fish.

thanks to Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife expertise. We're all rooting for Lake Pleasant.

At the Bitzer Fish Hatchery the Hatchery man said he feeds the trout 400 pounds of food pellets a day. We then all walked off with our little bins of pellets and flung them through the air. The trout, some

# The Big Read

**BY ANNE HARDING**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - The villages of Montague have been challenged to read and respond to *Fahrenheit 451* - as the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association (PVMA) winds up its Valley-wide project 'The Big Read: Banned and Burned in Boston.' The event is organized around Ray Bradbury's classic science fiction novel, in which the sole purpose of the fire department is to find and burn books. Readers not familiar with Bradbury can be assured this fast moving tale appeals to all readers, not just sci-fi fans.

Hosted locally by the Rendezvous in Turners Falls, there will be events Tuesday, November 27th (burn candles, not books) and Wednesday, November 28th (creative response, shared readings, and games). All are welcome.

Ray Bradbury once said, "You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them."

PVMA hopes you will start reading *Fahrenheit 451!* Wednesday, November 28th is challenge night, so now is the time to get started by picking up your free Challenge Bag at the Rendezvous on Third Street in Turners Falls. Provided by the PVMA, the bags contain a copy of *Fahrenheit 451*, the NEA reader's guide and an audio guide featuring literary figures including Ray Bradbury himself. A limited number of deluxe bags are available containing additional items. Go to: [www.deerfield-ma.org](http://www.deerfield-ma.org) for a complete list of Big Read events.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY CENTER

*Birders watch for buffleheads and swans along the Migratory Way canal in Turners Falls.*

# Accessible Birding in Turners

**BY MARCY MARCHELLO**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - On Saturday, November 17th, the accessible birding program had a successful outing, despite cold temperatures. Ten people attended the program designed to accommodate people at a gentle pace, and be inclusive of those with disabilities. Led by three members of the Hampshire Bird Club, participants viewed American coots, buffleheads, and mute swans at Unity Park, and then proceeded to the Migratory Way canal. There, Canada geese were present in large numbers as usual, plus a pair of hooded mergansers and

six common Goldeneyes. The final highlight of the morning was a juvenile northern shrike seen at the Turners Falls airport.

More accessible birding will take place in Turners Falls in March and April. Programs meet at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and seek migrating waterfowl, seasonal songbirds and nesting eagles.

For further information contact Marcy Marchello at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's Universal Access Program: 413-545-5758.


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**PROPERTY** from page 1  
turn the lot to a level grade, and failed to appear at six court hearings in a row. Released on an order to implement the boards' demands within 30 days, Kislyuk pled poverty, and never completed the work.

On October 19th, Michael Bosworth of Brattleboro purchased the property from Kislyuk for \$30,000, according to the Registry of Deeds.

Bosworth said, "As of Saturday, November 17th, the town's two requirements, to take down the existing foundation and bring the land back to grade" had been accomplished.

Bosworth, a former Montague Center resident who works at the Brick House Community Resource Center in Turners Falls, said he is exploring the possibility of creating artist live-work space on the upper floors of a mixed use building he hopes to build at the site. He said he would prefer to have four units of housing in such a building, instead of six, "if the numbers work."

The town's zoning bylaws will require the first floor to be commercial space, Bosworth said.

**STRATHMORE REPAIRS**

In other news, building inspector David Jensen said bids were opened on Tuesday on the proposed conversion of the Strathmore Mill's sprinklers to a dry system, to prevent the likelihood of their freezing over this winter. The town acquired the 244,482-square-foot mill complex two weeks ago, for back taxes.

Jensen said two bids were received on the retrofit, one from HFP Corp of Westfield for \$101,945, and one from Royal Steam Heater Company, of Gardner, for \$90,000. The town will seek to determine that both bidders are qualified and available

to start and complete the work quickly before awarding the bid.

Jensen said the state was allowing the town to proceed with bids on the Strathmore expeditiously, due to the emergency nature of repairs needed in the wake of the devastating May 26th arson fire that left the roofs of Building #1 and Building #11 partially destroyed, and Building #10 reduced to a heap of rubble in between them.

Jensen said two contractors had come to look over the roofing repairs on the damaged buildings, with another due on Friday. The town has \$100,000 allocated for repairing the roof to the older Building #1 (near the river), and \$75,000 for the roof on Building #11 (closer to the canal). Replacing the shingles on #11 will be difficult in cold weather, with

the rubble heap of the adjacent destroyed building preventing the use of a lift. Putting up staging for Building #11 could prove to be very expensive, Jensen said.

Repairs to Building #1 will include use of standard framing lumber to replicate the original timber framing, and plywood instead of board sheathing. Jensen said repairs will be made to both buildings so as to protect their historical integrity, which may facilitate future grant funding for redeveloping the property

Jensen said the town hopes to have the mill secure and weather proof "within weeks."

**SKATE PARK OPENS**

After three more work days, attended by teens and their supporters, the good news is the building inspector has pronounced the First Street Turners Falls skate

park "Good to Go." The bad news is the planned re-opening celebration (after four and a half years of delay) on Tuesday was snowed out.

Americorps member Ruth Nervig, who has coordinated the recent work days for the Brick House's Hot Spot Teen Center called the participation of skate park landlord Tim de Christopher and long-time skate park organizer Zach Holmes in the repairing ramps and a vandalized section of the new chain link fence "vital." She also credited the work of teen volunteers Cody Newton, Nick Picariello, and Mark Heath in getting the skate park back in working order just in time for the first snowfall.

**NO PROGRESS on POWER ST.** Meanwhile, there is no good news on the Railroad Salvage front.

Jensen said building owner Gary Kosuda has been in town recently, installing electricity in the building's annex, and focusing his efforts on installing surveillance cameras on the property. But Kosuda has made no forward motion on the 6-month-old court ordered agreement to install barbed wire on the repeatedly vandalized fence around that dangerously decrepit structure, which features hanging timbers and a perilous drop to the basement from a rotting first floor. Kosuda was also ordered to hire an engineer "to evaluate the stability of the walls so we can get our street back," said Jensen, referring to Power Street, barricaded since June of 2006, when the building's roof collapsed and took down part of the exterior walls. "He just doesn't get it. We need to return to court. It's a safety hazard."

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# Elisabeth von Trapp Returns to TFHS

BY JOYCE PHILLIPS

**TURNERS FALLS**—Elisabeth von Trapp, granddaughter of the legendary Maria and Baron von Trapp, whose story inspired *The Sound of Music*, will return to the Turners Falls High School Theater on December 9th. The von Trapp Christmas Concert will feature festive music from around the world, timeless ballads, Austrian, English and French carols and traditional holiday music.

Returning with her is Erich Kory. For more than 40 years the cello has been his voice. He began his relationship with the cello at six years old, playing in orchestras by 12. He has performed with many well known artists including Placido Domingo, Leonard Bernstein, Andre Previn, Sting, Tony Bennett, Smokey Robinson, the



*Elisabeth von Trapp and Erich Kory will perform December 9th at the high school.*

Moody Blues, and Johnny Mathis.

Audiences of all ages are

drawn by the promise of von Trapp's name, awed by the beauty of her voice. Don't miss the opportunity to hear her in concert on Sunday, December 9th, at 2 p.m. to experience a von Trapp Christmas Concert at the Turners Falls High School Theater, 222 Turnpike Road, in Turners Falls.

Tickets are \$20 and are available at Scotty's Convenience Store in Turners Falls, World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield, or from Sandy at TFHS (863-7218).

For more information visit the GMEF website: [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org).

## NEW DENTAL PRACTITIONERS AT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER OF FRANKLIN COUNTY

The Community Health Center of Franklin County has announced the hiring and promotion of several new dental practitioners. Dr. Stephen Johnson, DDS, a longtime local dentist who joined the health center in August, has been promoted to fill the position of the CHCFC's first dental director. Joining Dr. Johnson is Dr. Risha DeLeon, a full-time general dentist, and Dr. William Barr, a part-time general dentist.

Two more full-time dentists are expected to join the health center staff and will begin seeing patients at both its Orange and Turners Falls offices within the next two months.

The CHCFC serves over 7,000 residents of Franklin County and the North Quabbin, providing high quality medical and dental care to all, without regard to patient income, insurance status or ability to pay.

## MCTV Schedule Channel 17: Nov. 23rd - Nov. 29th

<p><b>Friday, November 23</b>                  8:00 am Discovery Center: Woodpeckers                  9:00 am Montague Select Board (11/13/07)                  11:00 am Turkey Day Game (2007)                  1:00 pm Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall                  12:00 pm The Spirit of Lake Pleasant                  6:00 pm Montague Update: John Hanold                  7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (11/13/07)                  10:00 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa                  11:00 pm Independent Voices #39</p>	<p>2                  10:00 am Elder Law                  11:00 am Variety Show                  12:30 pm Encore Body Art: Mermaid Caught in Net                  5:00 pm Montague Update: Paul Mariani                  6:30 pm Source To Sea 2007                  7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)                  9:00 pm Emu's                  10:00 pm Flotilla                  10:30 pm Taft Mountain Toppers</p>
<p><b>Saturday, November 24</b>                  8:00 am Montague Update: John Hanold                  9:00 am GMRSD Meeting (11/13/07)                  12:00 pm Windchanger: Mona Lisa                  1:00 pm Independent Voices #39                  6:00 pm Songs for Wee People                  7:00 pm Positive Profiles In Courage                  8:00 pm Physician Focus: Becoming A Smarter Patient                  8:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks                  9:00 pm The Fabulous Maurice                  10:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: "Passion &amp; Compassion"</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, November 27</b>                  8:00 am Source To Sea 2007                  8:30 am Montague Update: Paul Mariani                  9:30 am Naturalist Laurie Sanders                  10:30 am Emu's                  11:30 am Flotilla                  12:30 pm Taft Mountain Toppers                  5:30 pm The Pop Rockets                  7:00 pm GMRSD (11/13/07)                  10:00 pm Independent Voices #33                  10:30 pm Common Man Concerts: Jeff Brewer</p>
<p><b>Sunday, November 25</b>                  8:00 am Songs For Wee People                  9:00 am Positive Profiles In Courage                  10:00 am Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient                  10:30 am Thomas Jefferson Speaks                  11:00 am The Fabulous Maurice                  12:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: "Passion &amp; Compassion"                  2:00 pm Turkey Day Game (2007)                  6:00 pm Coffee House Series: Jeff Martell                  7:30 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 2                  8:00 pm Elder Law                  9:00 pm Variety Show                  10:30 pm Encore Body Art: Mermaid Caught in Net</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, November 28</b>                  8:00 am The Pop Rockets                  9:30 am Open Mice Discovery Center                  11:00 am Birds of Prey                  12:30 pm Independent Voices #33                  1:00 pm Common Man Concerts: Jeff Brewer                  6:00 pm Windchanger: Green Screen/Water Vessel                  6:30 pm Turkey Day Game 2007                  9:00 pm Art Fest 2007                  11:30 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Part Two</p>
<p><b>Monday, November 26</b>                  8:00 am Coffee House Series: Jeff Martell                  9:30 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume</p>	<p><b>Thursday, November 29</b>                  8:00 am Windchanger: Green Screen/Water Vessel                  8:30 am Turkey Day Game 2007                  11:30 am Art Fest 2007                  1:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Part Two                  6:00 pm Discovery Center: Woodpeckers                  7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (11/26/07)                  9:00 pm Turkey Day Game 2007                  11:30 pm Stephanie Marshall</p>

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Weather Related Accidents

**Thursday 11-15**  
 5:46 p.m. Report of a larceny from an Avenue A address. Caller states a package with a cell was delivered from Fed Ex and was opened and the sim card was missing. After further checking it was determined that the sim card was in the phone and the caller was mistaken.  
 8:04 p.m. Report of a disturbance in the alley behind the Pizza House. Five youths were fooling around and the caller was afraid it would escalate and someone would get hurt. Officer checked the situation out and determined nothing was wrong.

**Friday 11-16**  
 11:48 a.m. Report of a larceny from Family Dollar. Employee states that her hand bag had been stolen. Report taken.  
 2:53 p.m. Report of an assault at a 4th Street address. Caller states she was bitten by another woman. Advised of options.  
 7:20 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

**Saturday 11-17**  
 5:17 p.m. Report of a fight by the 11th Street bridge. Caller states there is a group of people yelling. One of the male parties left. Peace restored.

**Sunday 11-18**  
 2:08 p.m. Report of a neighbor disturbance at a Franklin Street address. [redacted] was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, and destruction of property less than \$250.

**Monday 11-19**  
 1:26 a.m. Report of a breaking and entering into the Shady Glen. Still under investigation. No further details released.

**Tuesday 11-20**  
 Between 7:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. More than 13 weather related accidents were reported all over Montague.

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# A Tropical Rainforest Is Calling . . . In Turners falls

**BY KATHY LITCHFIELD** - The humidity hits you when you enter the long, low building on the outskirts of Turners Falls. The air is warm and dense, a rainforest environment. Your senses awaken to the sharp trilling calls mingled with a faint buzz coming from the tall rows of terrariums, their lush greenery moist and seductive.

It is mating season for the poisonous dart frog, and the males are courting their females with unmistakable longing.

Just a typical day inside Black Jungle Terrarium Supply at 370 Avenue A, a place more than 400 individual poisonous dart frogs call home. At least until they're adopted as pets. Black Jungle owners Mike

male soaks in a pool of water. He comes back and fertilizes the eggs, and empties water from his bladder onto the eggs, creating a jelly mass."

When the eggs hatch, the frogs exhibit extraordinary parental care with their offspring, Revis said. Black Jungle's shop includes a tadpole room where some frog varieties begin their days, and where they mature until they absorb their tails and develop insect-eating mouth parts.

Inside one terrarium, the male visits the eggs a couple of times a day to water them and keep them moist. After two weeks, the eggs will hatch and the female will pick up the tadpoles, who swim onto their mom's back.

In their native South and



LITCHFIELD PHOTOS

*This poisonous tree frog is a *Dendrobates tinctorius*, two years old, and is native to Suriname.*

be as complex as they are for being so tiny."

Poisonous dart frogs come in all shapes and sizes -- there are large black and yellow ones, tiny fluorescent orange ones, medium-sized turquoise blue and black ones, small fire engine red ones, and the list goes on and on.

Visitors to Black Jungle can observe them all in their recreated natural habitats, surrounded by exotic and tropical plants artificially propagated by Wallitis at his home greenhouses. The humidity inside the terrariums is maintained at 80-100 percent, he said, and artificial light helps the plants thrive.

Wallitis and Revis grow varieties of rare, exotic, tropical, insect-eating and carnivorous plants including Venus flytraps, sun dews and pitcher plants, which appeal to exotic plant collectors. Some of these species are actually native to Massachusetts, said Wallitis, although it is illegal to harvest them.

"The whole tropical, exotic nature (of this business) fascinates me. In Las Vegas (where he grew up) it was so dry and had very little life . . . We want to have a little window to look at that is very tropical and exotic, and completely different from where we live. An actual representation of the wild, from nature, here in your living room."

Revis was born in New Jersey and grew up in Las Vegas from age 7, while Wallitis grew up in Turners and moved to the West Coast, after active duty in the Air Force. Both were interested in the natural world from a young age. Wallitis grew exotic plants as a child. Revis had trouble chasing tadpoles in the dry environs of Vegas, so he read everything he could get his hands on and took all the

botany and biology courses he could find in college. He managed several wildlife rehabilitation centers, as well

discovered their similar interests, and founded Black Jungle in 1994. They moved the business to Turners in 2000 and were formerly located above Doggie Dips & Clips on Avenue A, then on Arch Street in Greenfield, before moving to their largest location yet at 370 Avenue A, between Cumberland Farms and the bike path.

Terrarium hobbyists will find all the supplies they need to keep dart frogs and exotic plants inside Black Jungle's retail shop - staffed by seven employees, including local high school and college students with an interest in the species.

Turners Falls High School science teacher Bob Perlman stopped into Black Jungle recently, after fueling his car across the street. He saw the poisonous dart frogs and said, "I've got to have these for our class."

"We have red eared sliders (turtles), guppies, fish . . . and we study different ecosystems, genetics, food webs and ecology," said Perlman. Now he keeps two orange and black poisonous dart frogs in the classroom as well.

"The rainforest has one of the best diversities of all ecosystems." The addition of the dart frogs "fits into a lot of our curriculum," Perlman said.

Black Jungle is open Tuesday through Friday, from noon to 4 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. Their website is [www.blackjungle.com](http://www.blackjungle.com).

as the livestock and veterinary departments of the national chain, PetSmart.

Revis and Wallitis met in a Las Vegas pool league,



*This tiny poisonous tree frog is smaller than a dime, a *Dendrobates truncatus*, 5 weeks old, native to Venezuela.*



*Black Jungle owners Mike Wallitis, left and Richard Revis, right, in front of their poisonous dart frog terrariums and terrarium supplies.*

Wallitis and Richard Revis, both of Greenfield, breed over 60 different types of frogs in this recreated rainforest environment, and sell them all across the country to terrarium hobbyists, museums, zoos - even Walt Disney World.

Bred in captivity, the frogs are not poisonous. They make great pets, Revis said. They are raised in attractive, naturalistic habitats; they are easy to maintain; they eat only insects. Well-cared for, they can live into their teens. They're beautiful to look at, and, unlike most terrarium-dwellers, they are active during the day, "moving around and courting and breeding right before your very eyes."

Courting is a well-orchestrated and careful procedure - the male dart frog calls for his female, who comes over to stroke his back.

"Then the male hops around, leading the female to the breeding site under the coconut hut," said Revis, pointing with a pen light through one terrarium's glass wall. "This can last a couple of hours to a couple of days. Then the female lays eggs while the

Central America, the frogs would use hatching pools on plant species that collect water, even seven feet up a tree. Inside the terrariums, Revis and Wallitis make artificial pools with small plastic cups to serve the same purpose.

The female carries the tadpoles to the pool she's selected and then, to feed the tadpoles the only thing they can digest, she lays infertile eggs for them, Revis explained. She comes back every few days for six to eight weeks, until the tadpoles change into froglets, who then switch to eating insects. In the rainforest, the mother frog would remember exactly where the tree is, and which leaf her young are swimming on.

"The complexity is amazing. They are such tiny little organisms that have such elaborate behaviors and interactions with each other and with their environment," Revis enthused. "They set up territories and court females and fight with other males and take care of their offspring . . . year-round. And their brains are no bigger than the head of a pin. It's amazing that they can

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**the poetry page**

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

- William Carlos Williams

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

Klondike Sound, Green Fields Market, Carlin Barton, Harry Brandt, Michael Farrick, and Michael Muller.

**His Sons Grow Old**

"Sultan Murad had seventeen potential heirs. Ottoman custom required that all but one should die immediately after their father. Of the sixteen thus killed, one was a child found by the executioner eating chestnuts. The boy begged that he be spared until the chestnuts were gone, but the executioner, understanding his obligation, refused."



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

Readers are invited to send poems to the Montague Reporter at 24 3rd Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376; or email us your poetry at reporter-poems@montaguema.net

design by Boysen Hodgson

**After Vallejo-**

When these pills are gone, so too is my pain. My tongue stretches toward morning but the trees plant their feet too near, refusing to allow dawn inside my house.

If the ghosts who live here are unhappy, keep them hidden from my ears!

If their moonlight must stray down, let it bleach the branches of my sorrow- What becomes of the future if forever has already taken place?

Sometimes forgetting proves the fiercest part. My dead keep clamoring along ivory keys and all I have left of my name is a laugh that refuses to stay underground. It hums misty notes in my left ear and plants salted tears in both eyes.

But every evening, my heart cannot remain silent. The pale paper sucks at my pen which sings that I have so much more to see!

So if these ghosts are unhappy keep them hidden from my ears!

--bg Thurston

Central Massachusetts



The old man never cared for me or them.

Determined sons are best. - stolen from the cradle, a weakling, trained by overbearing women, thrust upon dark stages, forced to sing their songs to ambitious girls. No comic strip will tell you more.

How else to better time, reduce its cavern past to confidence? Look: those people could be heroes, thinking they could give us all they never got: Worship! Paradise! Eternity!

No, sweet prince, like you, your sons grew old before their time.

--Edward Foster

Greenfield and Jersey City, NJ

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**January 28th**: John Coletti, Greg Fuchs, and Frank Sherlock  
**February 25th**: Geoffrey Olsen, Alan Davies

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Swimming meets for example. Depending on what turns you on. The choice is yours. Beer or a highball. Emotional upset may vary. Recycled words. Face pheromones. You win. Yesterday healed quite nicely. The high beams of the night. The mall. I will not recapitulate the journey. But I say you should get in a tree. You will expand your sense of self. Tax and embrace the marriage act. To show affection is healthy affection. Follow the heat to be naked. Be warned without control. And then the wind. Hygiene. It must be sold.

--Janel Nockleby

Turners Falls



**December**

I walked into the marsh in search of you. Instead I found eleven swans, the question of their necks, punctuated by black eyes and bright beaks. Serene on the murky lake, the feathers of their wings lifted like sails. I heard the narrow trunks of pines asking directions from the wind, warnings of birdsong as a kestrel flew low over the water, then disappeared. A young blue heron stood, poised among the tall reeds, resting on one foot then the other. No one noticed my presence and I did not find you, only these creatures that speak in spite of me.

--bg Thurston

Central Massachusetts

**CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:**

Gini Brown, a Berkeley artist, is the daughter of Woody Brown (1927-2006). Woody was a savant, raconteur, great generous spirit, and first president of The Montague Reporter Board of Directors.

Edward Foster's numerous books of poetry include The Angelus Bell; Mahram: What Men Should do for Men, and most recently What He Ought to Know: New and Selected Poems.

bg Thurston is a graduate of Vermont College's MFA in Writing Program. She teaches poetry at Lasell Village in Newton, MA, Newton Lifetime Learning, and Vermont College's Online Poetry Classes. Her work has appeared in numerous

publications. She is the author of a chapbook, Saving the Lamb, and a full-length collection, Nightwalking.

Brenda Iijima is the author of Animate, Inanimate Aims, Around Sea, numerous chapbooks, and her

book, If Not Metamorphic, will be published by Ahsahta Press.

She is an editor at <http://yoyoiabs.com/> and Boog City, is co-editing a collection of essays concerning poetry and ecological ethics, and is a visual artist also.

Janel Nockleby lives in Turners Falls, is attending the UMASS MFA Program for Poets and Writers, helps edit this poetry page, and wants even more local poets to submit their work to The Montague Reporter.

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## Domicile

Why do some, like me,  
have this insatiable need for 'nesting'  
while others, like you, seem to be unfettered  
by such nagging obsessions?  
How do you walk by those drapes  
and not notice they've faded  
to a color that has no name?  
If we took that window out  
and made that window bigger  
the view would be ever so much better;  
don't you agree?  
Why is my desire to change something  
as uncomplicated as color  
met with whiplash braking  
of brain activity from your sector?  
Our house looks like no one lives here  
must you look that way too  
if asked for an opinion  
on umber or ecru?  
I want to talk texture and angles  
or maybe something different to look at;  
something new?  
I just want to take out a wall  
or two.  
You look so stricken when I mention  
the least possible change  
like moving the couch  
while you're watching the game.  
If new art work is invisible  
then what do you see?  
Is it the street number  
that guides you back to me?  
Why do you consistently,  
mentally vacate  
if home improvements  
co-mingle with dinner?  
There was a flicker of cognition  
when tennis was the topic  
but if I mention raised beds  
you furrow your brow  
and disappear out the gate  
leaving me to extrapolate;  
is there a spatial handicap you've not  
disclosed?

These aesthetics are killing me  
left as they are.  
When can we have landscaping?  
I need to know.  
We should wait till the dog dies?  
By the way,  
When I talk light fixtures, molding,  
or a new duvet  
the dog is not just well versed  
but listens in earnest to all that I say.  
He doesn't have to feign interest,  
he has real opinions not unlike mine.  
He may not have mastered the paint brush  
or ladder  
but at least we share dialogue on this topic  
that to me really does matter.  
Can't you revel in ownership,  
come out of your fog,  
try to be less like you  
and more like the dog?

--Gini Brown  
Berkeley, CA

## REV IN ALL CYBER SERIOUSNESS

Mind wars body wars bloody wars body  
minding mind wars protracted wars virtual  
wars galactic wars Born an untouchable  
from fetal trash I maneuvered my way into  
office Both created promised desired The  
walls were impressive Highly cynical  
aesthetics as status quo I love the book Full  
Metal Apache Floweroid am I exhumed  
from fetal trash blooming stamen Vanishing  
into some controvertible imperative Slick in  
a leotard of gossamer vinyl diving off  
periodic table Table set for culprits of the  
exotic war I mate with the ghost children  
unfed I puke up the pupae of change Aliens  
are being adopted by suburbanites who live  
in the outer circle Wait here's the latest  
news:

The Domination War has just ended! We  
can bid farewell to the interstellar aggression  
between the Dominion and the Federation  
Alliance that consumed the entire Alpha  
Quadrant (known as the Promised Land to  
some called New Texas to others) So many  
droids were destroyed, the art animals rule  
Time again for bastion Time again for  
ecstasy Time again for the brilliance of Béla  
Bartók my doppelganger Since this  
synchronous war the gift of death is only a  
proposition My time in office will be spent  
encouraging perfumed interplay loosely  
defined insuring virtual light on the picotech  
bridge and humming dynamism  
Mosquito binaries fade

--Brenda Iijima  
Brooklyn, NY

## REV TONGUES

Populous tongue tied and questionable or  
questioning the days go along A  
media spews representation but we are our  
own description There are fires everywhere  
but the smoke is oblique Incendiary were it  
not for the appliances and these vehicles  
Scorched canvases as representations of  
towns Clashed syntax The longest  
boardroom table waxing and waning Furs  
exchanged at the post were mainly raccoon,  
deerskins, bearskins and the valuable  
menues pelleteries plus beaver They want  
them dead and gone We're in Kansas now or  
Nebraska... I'm behind a dense thicket of  
underbrush with my sister Cold windy  
November lightly falling rains The river  
boulders are shinny and cold The river  
swollen A few drunken men lay around a  
fire laughing We think about stealing their  
tobacco but decide against it as the sun  
sends rays into the depth of trees I don't  
want your medicine in this glass of water I  
don't want your psychology floating in the  
Great Lakes These are specters speaking  
Take this if you are feeling blue Take this if  
you are feeling red Back into animal

-- Brenda Iijima  
Brooklyn, NY

## Hunting Season

In the forest, my dogs follow  
fresh tracks of large hooves  
between roots mortared in moss.

Dressed in orange hats and vests,  
men carrying rifles pass us by  
asking have you seen deer?

At dusk, the chickens weave  
through weeds, searching  
for insects. A spotted toad

hides in the henhouse-brave  
fool, crouching in a corner,  
counting on being missed.

Tonight, the moose huffs  
and mumbles through low brush  
and high grass breaking

her path, so close  
to where I have planted  
the stolen rhubarb seeds.

Come spring, the deer  
will return to my garden to forage  
amid tender blood-red shoots.

--bg Thurston  
Central Massachusetts



## The Lady Did Not Hear

"Inner voice"?  
Listen, lady,  
the you with whom I talk must be real.  
To speak, I must create you every day and hear  
your lessons like a boy.  
I say: I'm famished for your touch.

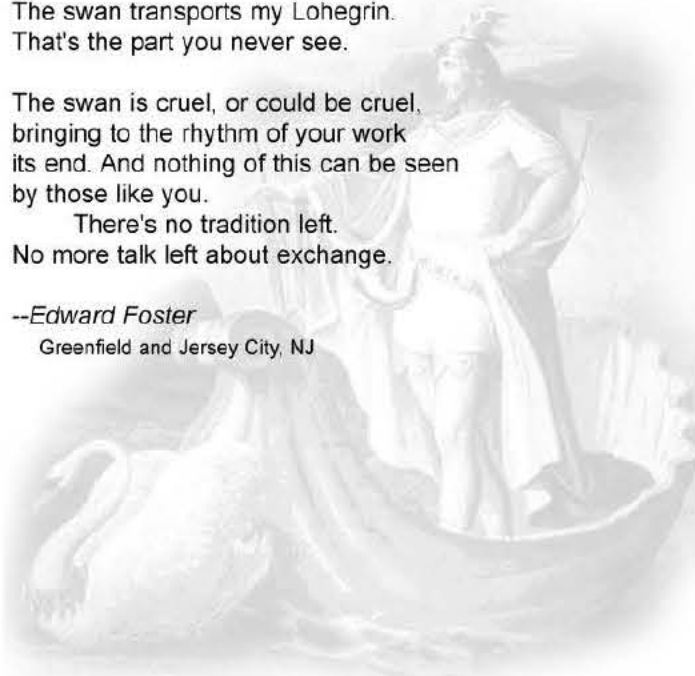
My landscape has a golden swan, a savior,  
ladies like yourself with capes and parasols.  
Gently, no lady speaks to me,  
although this savior comes to make them wonder.

The swan transports my Lohegrin.  
That's the part you never see.


The swan is cruel, or could be cruel,  
bringing to the rhythm of your work  
its end. And nothing of this can be seen  
by those like you.

There's no tradition left.  
No more talk left about exchange.

--Edward Foster  
Greenfield and Jersey City, NJ



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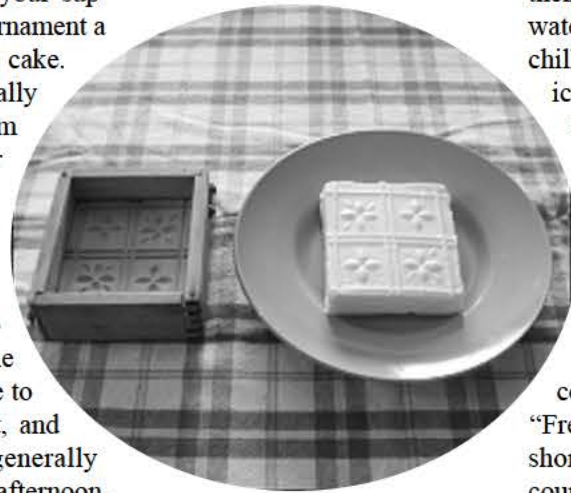
BUTTER

BY CLIFFORD HATCH

**GILL** - My mother's butter and my memories of it still speak to me. Few things satisfy and serve so well: sauce your supper, glaze the bread, ornament a fine table or ice the cake. Her butter was usually made from sour cream and was salted. Butter was made when there was excess milk which had been "standing" for a while (at least two days) so that all the cream had time to rise to the top, thicken a bit, and be skimmed. She generally churned butter in the afternoon, sitting in her sunny dining room, lace tablecloth removed to the sideboard, the wooden churn beside her on the best table with a cup of tea as she turned the crank that paddled the cream. This was her time, before we returned from school, to enjoy some quiet. On a fine day when we burst in, the large windows would be open with a fair breeze blowing the curtains. The mockingbird would be singing in the peach tree and the churn would have just started thumping, the signal that her work had come to a new phase.

If we were lucky there was also the smell of fresh bread and warm loaves. The churn had a cork at the bottom of the cask to drain the buttermilk. She would carry the churn to the kitchen sink, drain the milk into a jar, and remove the butter to a large

wooden bowl for working. We would greedily butter our bread before the working, chew and watch, as she worked the



remaining buttermilk from the butter with wooden grooved paddles against the sides of the bowl and drained it to the jar. She did not wash or rinse her butter, and there was always a degree of buttermilk remaining after she salted, molded and pressed it into either a one pound block mold or had pressed and decorated it with one of her mother's wooden stamps, as either a strawberry or a teasel. This butter would be wrapped in wax paper and develop more flavor with time if it lasted.

This tradition of buttermaking comes from the time before there was efficient milk transport from country to city. It is still the reason why butter is labeled as either "salted" or "sweet". Traditionally, when the landscape was dotted with

many small farms, each with a few cattle, the product that was delivered to local "creameries" was cream. Most dairies cooled their milk in cans with cold water from a spring, or in water chilled with ice if there was an ice industry. Topographically, hill farms used springs, and farms in the lowlands and valleys had icehouses where they stored ice gathered from the ponds and marshes during the winter. At the heart of every dairy was its milk cooling and storage system. "Fresh" milk in this system was short-lived. Farms in remote countrysides did not attempt to deliver fresh milk. Milk could be held long enough to skim the cream and deliver it to the creamery for some currency. The butter made from this cream was not sweet and needed to be salted so as not to become bitter.

Sweet cream butter is manufactured from cream that is fresh, well refrigerated until it is brought to churning temperature (60F), churned, separated, washed with cold water, worked and molded. The butter is kept well chilled or frozen after it is made so as not to need the preservative of salt. Thus, sweet unsalted butter is more expensive and is generally used for baking and sweets. Common salted butter is used for general cooking where its more complex flavor can be appreciated.

Wendell Raffle Winners

We are happy to announce the winners of the recent Wendell raffle for new subscribers to the *Montague Reporter*. The five third place winners, who will each receive a \$20 gift certificate to Wendell's hottest drinking and dining and cultural establishment, the Deja Brew Pub and Café, are: Nini Melvin, Judith Putnam, Charlie O'Dowd, Wanita Sears and Richard Baldwin. Congratulations! We recommend the Pesto Pasta; it's superb.

So there could be no hint of favoritism, the raffle tickets were pulled by five-year-old Jordan Welsh, of 4th Street in Turners Falls, who does not know how to read yet, although he's working on it.

He also picked the second place winner, Brian Gillis, who will enjoy a \$40 gift certificate at the Copper Angel, the finest Route 2 eatery this side of Templeton. Or maybe even

Concord. Brunch is heavenly at the Copper Angel, particularly the Eggs Benedict or the inimitable Huevos Rancheros.

Jordan also picked our first prize winner, who will receive a \$50 gift certificate to the Diemand Egg Farm, just in time for Thanksgiving.

The lucky winner? Byron Ricketts.

Congratulations Byron, and to all our winners, and many thanks to all the Wendellites who subscribed in the last four weeks.

And special thanks, again, to the anonymous Wendell donors who made the contest possible; we are very grateful. With your help, we have increased our regular readership in town by more than 50%.

We will do our best to earn your confidence with continued regular coverage of the news and views of Wendell and its citizens.

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\*Musicians are partially funded by the Wendell Cultural Council, a local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council

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# Proud of TFHS Senior Field Hockey Stars

BY SALLY DELANEY

**ERVING** - It's been a privilege to know these five senior field hockey players for the past six years. They have transformed themselves from shy seventh graders to fine tuned senior athletes. They began their careers under the coaching of Cheri Cloutier, who led her team to tournament when these five girls were still in the seventh grade. The next year, Colleen Bannister took over the reins.

Many opponents over the years have shown up with any number of boys on their team. Parents on the sidelines would shudder thinking their daughters could be hurt. Well, the truth of the matter is our senior girls have laid many a full body check on these boys that any ice hockey coach would have been proud of.

This year the Turners Falls Lady Indians once again progressed through the ranks to make it to tournament, for the first time in their high school years. A penalty called in the first tournament game, in double overtime, dashed the hopes of the Turners team. The game became six against seven, the opponents were able to score. I will of course reserve comment on the referees in that game.

The Turners field hockey team is comprised of many talented athletes who come together without reservation each and every game. The junior varsity players are totally supportive of the varsity girls, and vice versa. On senior night, the underclassmen honored the senior girls with speeches that showed their total respect, thanks and admiration. As these five girls prepare for their next seasons and for graduation, it has been my honor to be a small part of their lives.

Stephanie Joly has played for six years and served as captain in her senior year. She has played midfield for five years, and when the team was without a goalie she stepped between the pipes in her sophomore year as goaltender. Steph is also on the varsity swim team, and will move up to first singles player in varsity tennis. Steph plans to go to college to become an orthodontist.

Steph says: "I love field hockey because it is a team sport. I enjoy being able to work with my teammates to reach a common goal, to win! All of my



DELANEY PHOTOS

Abbey Daniel-Green beats an opponent to the ball.

close friends are also on the team. Therefore, it's fun for us every day."

Coach Colleen says, "Steph is the backbone of the team. Without her, we don't win a game - not to mention making the playoffs. She is the most unselfish player I have coached. She listens to feedback and immediately applies it to game situations. She is the point guard, the catcher, the coach on the field..."

Jen Jason has played for six years, and served as captain in her senior year. She played wing in her early years, moving to midfield in her junior and senior years. Jen is on the varsity swim team, and on the track and field team. Jen plans on going to college to become an accountant, and to pursue her swimming career.

Jen says, "I have so many friends and memories with the field hockey team. I always remember my sisters playing, and wanting to when I got older. I went from being a ball fetcher for my sisters to playing important positions. I will miss it."

Coach Colleen says, "Jen is the fastest player on the field. She could come out of nowhere and beat anyone to the ball. She handed me the game ball after our first win last season saying,

'You should have this.' I still have that ball and the great memory of Jen's thoughtful gift. I also have this great picture of Jen with her sweat-pants up

Words from Courtney: "I love field hockey because it is the sport I'm best at. It's the sport where I can be myself during games and practice. There is no drama at all. Well... there is, but not all the time. I love the girls on our team, and it is also the sport where if I hurt someone or bump them hard and they fall, well, I can keep running, unless the referee sees me do it. I just love the sport!"

(And I just love her honesty!)

Coach Bergeron says, "Courtney is our biggest point scorer in her entire career! Always being in the right place at the right time and taking her

and plays varsity tennis. Abbey plans on going to a four-year college to major in communications.

Abbey says, "I love field hockey because I love the way our team plays when we have games. Everything just seems to go our way and everyone plays to their potential. I also love the comradeship the team has created."

Coach Bannister adds, "Abbey is probably our best dribbler and defender. Feared by the other teams and thankfully playing for us when it came to being the last word on the field. The fiercest competitor on the

field, with a fantastic sense of humor. One who recognized the frustration of losing, and motivated others to start winning again."

Katy Eddy: Katy has played for six years as sweeper and left wing defense. Katy is a quiet but deadly defender around the net. Besides field hockey, Katy has played softball and plays varsity tennis as well. Katy plans on going to college to become a dental hygienist.

Katy said, "It is fun to be part of a team of wonderful girls. It's very competitive and rewarding, and I love the intensity."

Coach Bannister said, "Katy probably has more saves than Jodi! The immovable object who roams our defense. She has the knack of being exactly where the ball is going to go, and the quickness to get there before our opponent. Easily one of the fun kids, with an infectious laugh. Came out every day wishing not to run, but doing it anyway."



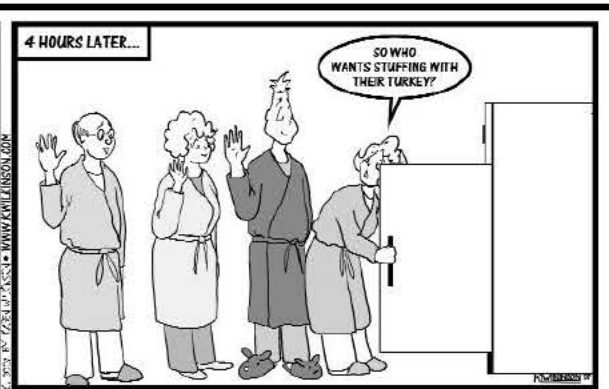
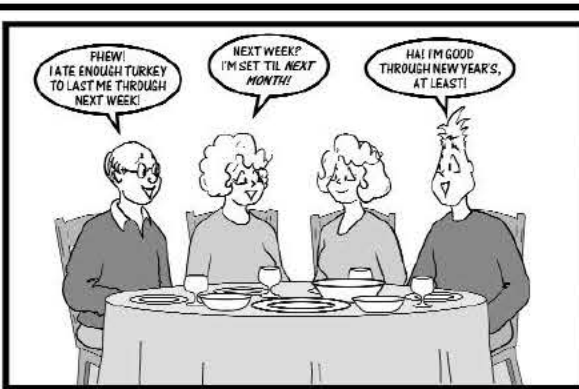
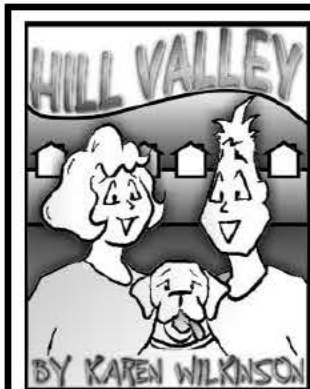
Left to right: TFHS Seniors Courtney Wells, Katy Eddy, Steph Joly, Abbey Daniel-Green and Jen Jason of the TFHS Field Hockey team

around her neck... She makes us laugh on a daily basis, and has some great stick skills to back it up."

Courtney Wells has played field hockey for six years, playing center forward, and served as captain in her senior year. Courtney is also on the basketball team, and the softball team. Courtney plans on going to Greenfield Community College and then transfer to a larger school where she can work with film.

game to the next level each day. She has the most consistent and hardest shot inside the circle on the team - with the best contact shot in the world. We will miss her so much, but she has, thankfully, taught the rest of the forward line."

Abbey Daniel-Green has played for five years as sweeper and right wing defense. Abbey puts her heart and soul into the game each and every time. Abbey also played varsity golf, swims with the the varsity team,



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**TURKEYS from pg 1**

had not been for the Turners Falls non-profit organization feeding families in need.

The Franklin Area Survival Center Food Pantry gave away 300 14-pound turkeys with 'all the fixin's' between last Friday and yesterday, setting a record for the most Thanksgiving dinners volunteers have ever given away at this site.

"It feels good that we're doing it, but it's scary that there are so many people that need it," said Everett Hatch, eight-year Food Pantry volunteer and Survival Center board member.

He said, "I think (the reason is) the high cost of fuel, oil and gasoline. People that were doing well a few years ago now have all that extra expense, and something's gotta give."

Food Pantry distribution manager Mary Cavanaugh agreed. "That's the saddest part of all of this - the overwhelming need for us to be here," she said.

Cavanaugh said getting the turkeys this year was "a bit of a scramble." They were hoping to purchase 300 birds at 18 cents a pound from the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts in Hatfield, but discovered at the last minute the Food Bank didn't get all the turkeys they were expecting. The Survival Center

got only 78 discounted turkeys from the Food Bank, purchased another 116 from Food City in Turners, and finally received 39 more as donations from the Greenfield Emblem Club. The remaining turkeys were funded by anonymous donors.

"We had to really scramble to make sure we had the turkeys, but we got it done and we pulled it off," said Cavanaugh, with a grin.

"And I got a big hug today," said Theresa Roussell of Turners Falls, who volunteered yesterday to help seniors carry their Thanksgiving dinners home. "They're really heavy!"

The 300 families - comprising about 800 individuals - who picked up their Thanksgiving dinners at the Food Pantry, actually received one 14-pound turkey, two pounds of carrots, five pounds of potatoes, four onions, green beans, cranberry sauce, a large butternut squash and a package of stuffing mix.

Many of the vegetables were donated by local farmers, said Cavanaugh, who thanked the generous private donors and organizations who helped the Center provide all 'the fixin's'.

On Saturday, November 17th, Boy and Girl Scout troops from Erving and Boy Scouts from Greenfield collected almost

4,000 pounds of food for the Survival Center, Cavanaugh said, which will help the pantry through the winter months. Many donors also gave checks rather than food, which Cavanaugh will use to purchase items at 18 cents per pound at the Food Bank.

"The number of families we're seeing coming into the Food Pantry on a regular basis is increasing," said Cavanaugh. "Last month it was 129 families, and we gave away the equivalent of 9,000 meals."

Client families come to the Food Pantry six times a year on a monthly basis, and receive three days of food for each family member, she explained. Several shelves of free food, including a daily supply of bread from Food City, Stop & Shop, BJ's and the Vermont Nissen outlet are also available to the general public. The pantry is open Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., year round.

"Every day that we're given the opportunity to feed people in need is a day that makes us happy," said Cavanaugh. "We haven't had to scale back on what we give, and that makes us feel good. Everything costs so much these days, from food to fuel to heat, and we're giving as much as we can give."



**GOBEIL from pg 1**

Gobeil was chosen out of four candidates who applied to teach the new class. She has a Master of Education degree from Springfield College, and is certified to teach pre-kindergarten through grade six.

Her classroom is designed around the students' four round tables, with art easel, blocks, books, computer, drama, listening center, math and science, and sand table learning areas. There is a big area rug where the children sit for morning meeting and group instruction. The walls are vibrant with colorful alphabets, numbers, "Our Class Quilt," and posters displayed for a stimulating learning environment.

Gobeil said she is implementing a daily 90-minute literacy block as part of the Reading First Initiative. On a recent classroom day, she reads from *Leaf Man* by Lois Elhert, and afterwards the students make their own leaf designs. Gobeil had maple, oak and birch leaves made from red, brown, and yellow construction paper available for the students. Some of the students stood up or sang to themselves while working. Grimard and Gobeil assisted the kindergarteners with glue sticks and spelling. Each student had

the opportunity to sit in the spotlight chair and display their masterpieces when finished.

Gobeil reminded her students to, "use a 'Mama Bear' voice and not a 'Baby Bear' voice" while they shared. Their smiles shone through their shyness. Now, their works of art are on display at the front of the classroom.

Next, the letter "N" was the focus for the class, with "Nyle Noodle" as a helper. Gobeil had the students use their index fingers to trace the letter N's in the air. They went to their tables and printed N's and then drew pictures of objects beginning with the letter N.

Gobeil said, "The parents have been wonderful. We had a class breakfast last Thursday, with a good turnout. The kids are adjusting."

Cassidy's mom, Darlene, said, "Cassidy made a great transition, and likes Mrs. Gobeil. She was glad some of her classmates transferred over with her." Christina's mother, Shauna, said, "I was surprised, at first, when they said they would move her. At first she didn't want to leave Mrs. Robertson, but now she's OK with it. She likes all the kids." The parents seemed pleased by the smaller class size.



**MAHAR from pg 1**

legislative action to create a hybrid school district. Slavas said he made another argument for the alternative assessment process, which would honor the original Mahar regional contract, and have all four towns paying the same amount per student to attend Mahar High School.

Kaymarion Raymond met the selectboard with estimates for the renovation work needed to make the town hall suitable for use by the nonprofit, volunteer Good Neighbors food pantry. She said the board of health raised no particular roadblocks to the possibility of Good Neighbors distributing food from the town hall. Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said selectboard member Dan Keller (absent from the meeting) had raised a concern that the money town meeting authorized for Good Neighbors to be housed in the old library might not be available for use on town hall renovations unless it is transferred at a special town meeting.

The school committee met with the board and nominated Ray DiDonato to fill a recently vacated position. DiDonato has a son in second grade, a younger son approaching school age, is well educated and willing to serve. The selectboard appointed him, and he walked across the hall to be sworn in by the town clerk. His appointment is only until the May election, and no one was certain whether he was filling a one, two or three year appointment.

Board members Ted Lewis and Christine Heard tentatively scheduled a special town

meeting for Wednesday, December 19th to transfer money for Good Neighbors' move to the town hall. An article to transfer funds to build or buy a tool shed to maintain the plantings around the town office building may also be on the agenda.

While signing warrants at the beginning of the meeting, Lewis mentioned that Whitney Trucking had moved the veterans monuments from in front of the former library to the north common, where they are further back from road salt and winter plowing. He said Whitney did a good job, moving smoothly and carefully, and the job was done quickly.

Heard asked when would be a good time to plant grass where the lawn around the new buildings have come up in lambs quarters, and Lewis said, "Now."

Aldrich relayed to the board that fire chief Everett Ricketts said the town may now accept a Massachusetts General Law that will provide \$5,000 for funeral expenses only for firefighters who die in the line of duty. Ricketts would like a warrant article on this at the next annual town meeting.

Aldrich also reported that the Franklin County Council of Governments, having discontinued the service of engineer Jim Toth, has signed a cooperative memo of understanding with the firm that designed Wendell's septic system, now called Santec Consulting. Memos will cost \$55 an hour and technical design will cost \$110 an hour, approximately 10% below market price.



**TURNERS FALLS HIGH SCHOOL 1ST QUARTER HONOR ROLL**

<b>GRADE 12</b>	Tenzin Soepa	Jeremy Nicoll	Heather Willor
<b>First Honors</b>	Mercedes St. Marie	Olivia Nicotra	
Alix Ackerman	Chelseigh St. Peter	Sergiu Placinta	
Frida Alexandersen	Jeffrey Tela	Kathleen Rinaldi	
Lara Ames	Courtney Wells	Dustin Rivard	
Christopher Broga		Kimberlee Savage	
Katie Christenson		Sarah Underwood	
Abbey Daniel-Green	<b>GRADE 11</b>		
Amanda Golembeski	<b>First Honors</b>	<b>Second Honors</b>	
Samuel Johnson	Amy Baxter	Juliana Aprileo	
Stephanie Joly	Samuel Colton	Ashley Bailey	
Shayna Langknecht	Theodore Dunbar	Kayla Breor	
Kellie Lastowski	Alan Fish	Hannah Brown	
Colby Lavin	Joshua Gammon	Nataliya Buhakova	
Corey Leveille	Kimberly Nelson	Emma Butynski	
Melony Lucas	Erika Romashka	Danielle Dolhenty	
Brittany Mazor	Shelby Sayer	Matthew Garber	
Kayla Pecor	Nicholas Skarzynski	Ashley Gibson	
Molly Perry	Lindsey Wilson	Laura Gilbert	
Alexander Tufano		Megan Grimard	
Alice Urban	<b>Second Honors</b>	Ryley Harriman	
Gina Varuzzo	Joseph Auger	Cassandra Kazar	
Erica Zajac	David Bennett	Morgan Kyser	
	Jordan Boisvert	Benjamin Mailloux	
	Leah Booker	Evan Pleasant	
<b>Second Honors</b>	Lacy Cardaropoli	Andrew Reed	
Kara Bassett	Nicholas Clark	Ashley Sears	
Aliza Broga	Nicole Dubay	Justin Sessions	
Samantha Carey	Allison Giknis	Christopher Shattuck	
Briant Deruiter	Christopher Humphrey		
Katherine Eddy	Kelsey Kane	<b>Third Honors</b>	
Walter Fitzpatrick	Susanna Khasonova	Tyler Anderson	
Amanda Hebert	Sara Pease	Chelsea Bailey	
Jennifer Jason	Samantha Wondoloski	Eric Bastarache	
Evan Jobst		Jennie Booth	
Dawn Miner	<b>Third Honors</b>	Scott Brown	
Michael Radzuik	Kimberly Arsenault	Jaryd Buzell	
Ashlea Rawls	Emma Banning	Daniel Cruz	
Alexander Stevens	George Correa	Lauren Flynn	
Danielle Sullivan	Eric Dumas	Mackae Freeland	
Jeremy Tetreault	Tranae Gallagher	Stephanie Hoover	
	Amber Henry	Jacob Lapean	
	Lisa Jackson	Jacob Lewis	
<b>Third Honors</b>	Angela Marguet	Carlyn Perry	
Brian Campbell	Joseph Rinaldi III	Cayla Pollard	
Krystal Ducharme	Jeremiah Wawrzyniak	Tam Roberts	
Felicia Emond	Thomas Willard	Elena Rushford	
Kiersten Henry		Whitney Sanders	
Zachary Little		Yaritza Torres	
Amanda Messer	<b>GRADE 10</b>	Alex Westfall	
Stephanie Ollari	<b>First Honors</b>		
Brittany Senn	Jill Bernard		

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOXICOLOGIST

# Drug Interactions, More Common than You Think

**BY EMILY MONOSSON MONTAGUE CENTER** - Many years ago, my father suffered a TIA or transient ischemic attack, a sort of mini-stroke. This episode occurred in association with a very common type of cardiac irregularity called atrial fibrillation. And what should have been a relatively short hospital stay turned into an all too real example of the adverse effects resulting from multi-drug interactions.

Following the TIA, thanks to a quick response by the local ambulance company, by the time my father reached the hospital he was relatively symptom free. A fact apparent to all but the admitting doctor who, upon checking for impaired mental capacity, asked him to recite the months backwards, beginning with the current month.

He said, "Enuj."

It was the month of June, and that was my dad.

But as doctors struggled to find a safe and effective dosage of Coumadin (known generically as warfarin), a common blood thinner used to prevent future and more severe blood clots that can cause TIAs and worse, my dad's blood levels of Coumadin bounced around, predictably unpredictable, thanks in part to his well-developed drug metabolism system. You see, in his early twenties, following a bout of spinal meningitis, my father was diagnosed with epilepsy. For the rest of his life, he relied upon a combination of Meberal and Tegretol, two powerful medications, to keep the seizures at bay.

Meberal is a derivative of phenobarbital, a drug I'd been using in the toxicology laboratory at that time to increase specific drug metabolizing enzymes. Tegretol will do the same. Those enzymes belong to a detoxification system that essentially alters many drugs and chemicals, often to an easily excretable form, sending them on their way out of the body before they can cause damage. Most likely, it was those same enzymes, induced by years of Meberal and Tegretol, which wreaked havoc with my father's early Coumadin levels (or "pro-time," used then as a measure of anticoagulant activity.)

To be fair, Coumadin is one of the most difficult drugs to manage, in part, because it is so susceptible to interactions with other drugs and nutrients (more on that later). Says Ed Tessier Pharm.D, and clinical pharmacist at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, "It's a life saving drug, but it's known nationally as one of the most difficult to

manage, not only because of drug interactions but genetics as well." As with most biological systems, there is a strong genetic component of the detoxification system. Some of us are rapid metabolizers; some of us are not.

But here's the thing. Although many of us don't think we're prime candidates for Who Wants to Host a Complex Drug Interaction, many of us do occasionally ingest potentially toxic combinations of drugs and chemicals in our food and drink without a second thought. Some of these combinations render drugs ineffective, some turn them toxic.

Take caffeine and Tylenol (known generically as acetaminophen) for example. Acetaminophen is one of those drugs metabolized by the liver enzymes mentioned above, and according to an article (published online by *eMedicine*) by Dr. Susan Farrell, assistant professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Harvard Medical School, "Acetaminophen is the most widely used pharmaceutical analgesic and antipyretic agent in the United States and the world.... As such, acetaminophen is one of the most common pharmaceuticals associated with both intentional and accidental poisoning."

Most of the time, most of the acetaminophen we ingest is metabolized by specific detoxification enzymes to nontoxic by-products or metabolites, which we excrete without a problem. But sometimes, depending on the amount ingested, or, since we are talking about drug interactions, whatever else we may have ingested prior to or along with the acetaminophen, some of it takes the toxic route, resulting in highly toxic metabolites. If you're a cat owner, this may sound familiar. Acetaminophen and cats are a potentially lethal combination because in cats, unlike in humans, it tends to be metabolized primarily via this toxic route.

Since most of this drug metabolizing drama takes place in the liver, it is the liver that is most susceptible to toxic metabolites. Notes Farrell, "In the United States, acetaminophen toxicity has replaced viral hepatitis as the most common cause of acute hepatic failure, and it is the second most common cause of liver failure requiring transplantation in the United States."

Now say we drink a few too many Starbucks Grandes in addition to ingesting a hefty dose of Tylenol. According to Dr. Sidney Nelson, professor

of Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Washington, and lead author of a recent article in *Chemical Research and Toxicology* on the interaction between acetaminophen and caffeine, "...very high concentrations of caffeine (the amounts individuals might achieve by drinking approximately 20 cups of coffee) can triple the amount of a liver toxic metabolite of acetaminophen."

Twenty cups? That seems like an awful lot, although these days between high-test coffee and higher-test energy drinks, it would be wise for those heavy drinkers to take note. Not only that, but if one were to add a night of excessive drinking (this time I mean alcohol), followed by a morning requiring Tylenol and caffeine, it may not take twenty cups before your liver begins to suffer the consequences.

Says Dr. Nelson, "...There is a period of 12-36 hours [after acute alcohol consumption] during which more acetaminophen toxic metabolite will be formed because of increased amounts of the metabolizing enzyme."

You see alcohol, like my dad's anti-seizure drugs, also increases specific enzymes involved in certain detoxification (sometimes toxication) systems. And unfortunately, it's not just "recreational drugs" like caffeine and alcohol that can interact with other drugs in potentially devastating ways. For a few years following my father's TIA, after doctors figured out the correct Coumadin dosage, his blood levels of the drug remained relatively stable. He was an extremely attentive patient, interested in tracking levels of the drug as the doctors made them available, well aware of potential interactions of drugs and diet.

Then one day his Coumadin level shot up. This time, his medications weren't to blame, nor was his overactive liver. Something was inhibiting the metabolism. The culprit, doctors eventually discovered, was his latest favorite beverage, grapefruit juice. Once again, my father's real-life experience reflected what I had learned in toxicology. To inhibit detoxification enzymes in some of our experiments, we had used quercetin, one of the active substances in grapefruit.

According to Ed Tessier, for most Coumadin patients grapefruit juice may not be as important as other food and drug interactions, however, "grapefruit does affect metabolism of a great number of other drugs, including most of the 'statin' drugs to lower cho-

lesterol (such as atorvastatin - Lipitor) and can lead to rhabdomyolysis - a life threatening condition which results in muscle tissue injury and possible kidney failure."

As we add new foods to our diet, and new pharmaceuticals and herbal remedies to our medicine cabinets the potential for interaction is never-ending. One more product I am compelled to mention is St. John's Wort, the herbal remedy commonly used to treat depression, which also induces detoxification enzymes.

According to Nelson, chronic ingestion of St. John's Wort may also increase the body's tendency to metabolize acetaminophen to its toxic metabolites, which shouldn't be a problem if you were taking therapeutic doses of acetaminophen. But if, in addition to regular use of St. John's Wort, you were taking larger than therapeutic doses of acetaminophen, and consuming large amounts of caffeinated beverages (say, eight cups or more of strong coffee) or large amounts of caffeine-containing drugs, the combination could result in the formation of more of the toxic metabolite, and increasing the risk of liver damage.

Additionally, among the many medications that may fall prey to enzymes induced by St. John's Wort are most antidepressants, as well as many migraine medications, HIV medications, and birth control pills. Only, in the case of some of these drugs - including birth control pills - the result of increased metabolism isn't increased toxicity, but reduced efficacy.

Should this brief lesson in drug interaction scare you off your meds, fear not. These days, doctors like Kathleen McGraw MD, Medical Director of Hospital Medicine at Baystate Franklin Medical Center are blessed with instant access to reams of information on drug interactions through the web, some of which can be downloaded onto hand held computing devices.

Within minutes of my men-

tioning St. John's Wort, McGraw was on her PDA running the Epocrates program, scrolling through lists of drugs known to be adversely impacted by St. John's Wort. Just as quickly she rattled off drugs affected by grapefruit juice.

To avoid problems caused by the potent chemicals in grapefruit juice, says McGraw, "I tell patients they need to give it up totally (same with cranberry juice) unless it is something they can't live without, in which case they have to commit to having the same amount every single day. Given that choice, everyone says they'll quit."

Adds McGraw, "I encourage every patient on Coumadin to remind any physician giving them a prescription for a new medication (especially antibiotics) about the Coumadin, and ask if it will be affected."

Thankfully, since the days of my dad's TIA, the science and the awareness of drug-drug and drug-food interactions have come a long way. But it's a two-way proposition. For pharmacists and doctors to do their part, we have to do ours, whether it's disclosing that we're on Coumadin, Viagra, birth control pills, herbal medications, Starbucks Grandes or the newest favorite fad drink, pomegranate juice.

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**JOE GRAVELINE**

# WASTE NOT

## How to Recycle Mercury Thermometers

**BY AMY DONOVAN GREENFIELD** - The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District has expanded its free thermostat collection program. The program accepts wall-mounted mercury thermostats: these are the older, non-digital types that are round or rectan-

gular in shape. If a contractor or homeowner removes an old thermostat, it should not be thrown in the trash. These thermostats contain mercury, which can be hazardous to our environment and human health if not properly disposed of.

Mercury is toxic and found

in many common household items such as button batteries, rechargeable batteries, mercury thermometers and fluorescent light bulbs, including the new energy saving compact fluorescent bulbs. Mercury thermostats contain 3000 times the amount of mercury as compact fluorescent bulbs.

None of these mercury-containing items should be thrown out in the trash; they can all be safely disposed of at the sites listed below.

It is important to return the entire thermostat, and not just the mercury-containing ampoule, since the casing provides protection for the mer-



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

cury during shipment. Handle carefully. If a mercury ampoule breaks, ventilate and vacate the area for 15 minutes. Do not use a vacuum cleaner to clean up. Droplets of mercury can be pushed together using a piece of paper and then collected using one or more pieces of paper. Small drops can be picked up on tape. Place these items and the thermostat in a doubled plastic bag and seal tightly. Wash hands, remove any contaminated clothing and wash it before reuse.

Thermostats can be brought to the district office at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield. Hours vary; please call 413-772-2438. District residents can also bring them to one of the regional hazardous waste collection sites at the transfer stations in Bernardston (first Saturday of each month; 8-noon from May-November; and 9-11 from December-April), Colrain (every Saturday, 8-4), or Conway (first Saturday of each month, 11-2). These sites are open to residents of the towns within the Franklin County Solid Waste District: Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Rowe, Shelburne, Sunderland, Warwick, Wendell and Whately. There is no charge for recycling mercury thermostats.

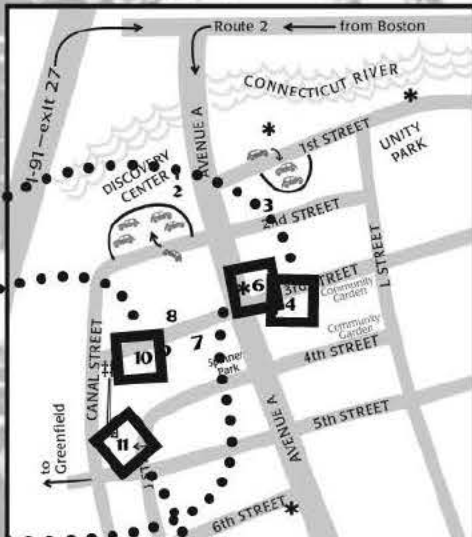
For more information, please visit: [www.franklin-countywastedistrict.org](http://www.franklin-countywastedistrict.org), and click on "Mercury," or call 413-772-2438.

*Amy Donovan is program director for the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District*

# ARTS & ICICLES

## TURNERS FALLS OPEN STUDIO & DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

### DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> STARTING AT 10AM



**3-D COLLABORATIVE SCULPTURE PARK**  
Corner of Third Street & Canal Street  
Local sculptors, Turners Falls River Culture Project and members of the Community of Turners Falls are creating a Sculpture Park where young folks can display their art. For more information, contact Joe Landry at 863-915 or youth3dspark@aol.com.

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## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# Hey! Are My Feet Getting Bigger?



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

**LEONIA, NJ - Q.** Over the years, I've been buying larger shoes. Could it be that my feet are getting bigger, or is it that I've gradually begun to prefer shoes with more room in them?

Feet do get bigger over decades of pounding. Some people over the age of 40 can gain half a shoe size every ten years. I know my feet are larger than they used to be. When I was in my twenties, I wore a

10½ shoe; in my sixties, I'm wearing a size 12.

The foot is a complicated machine. It contains 26 bones, 33 joints, and more than 100 tendons, muscles, and ligaments.

Feet flatten out because the supporting tendons and ligaments lose their elasticity. As the tendon along the length of the sole elongates, the arch lowers. This condition contributes to bunions, which are inflamed swellings of the small fluid-filled sacs on the first joints of the big toes.

Another reason feet enlarge is that the force of your weight thins the fat pads cushioning the bottom of the feet. The loss of padding can cause corns and calluses, which are

protective layers of compacted, dead skin cells. Thinner pads also lead to soreness.

Not all older people notice that their feet have been getting bigger. A recent study of senior patients at a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospital found that three quarters of them were wearing shoes that were too small.

Properly fitted shoes are important to the health of your feet. The following are some pointers to remember when buying shoes:

- The uppers on shoes should be made of a soft material that can match the shape of your foot.
- Leather shoes reduce the possibility of skin irritations.
- If you buy new shoes with

leather soles, rough up the surfaces before walking, especially on carpet.

- Consider thick soles to cushion your feet if you have to walk on hard pavement. This is an important consideration if you are visiting countries such as Italy, which has many cobblestone streets.

- Opt for low-heels. They are more comfortable and safer.

- The best time to measure your feet is at the end of the day when your feet are largest.

- Most of us have one foot that is larger than the other, so fit your shoe to your larger foot.

- Don't select shoes by the size marked inside the shoe but by how the shoe fits your foot.

- When fitting shoes, make sure there is about a half-inch extra space for your longest toe when you are standing.

- Make sure the ball of your foot fits comfortably into the widest part of the shoe.

- Your heel should fit comfortably in the shoe with a minimum amount of slipping. The shoes should not ride up and down on your heel when you walk.

- Walk in the shoes to make sure they fit and feel right. Then take them home and spend some time walking on carpet to make sure the fit is a good one.

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

## THIS WILD PLACE

## Crows in the Night



ILLUSTRATION BY ANJA SCHUTZ

BY KARL MEYER

**GREENFIELD** - They've become simply, "the crows." And they are ever present. Of course, they're ever present everywhere. But somewhere toward the north part of Greenfield they have a large and not so secret roost. I do not know where it is yet, but I'm sure many do. At dusk thousands of crows gather, heading home across Montague's fields, skirting the Connecticut River ridgeline at Turners Falls, moving like apparitions as they cross the river from Deerfield. But it's not what they do that's of most interest to me. It's what the crows know.

They often strafe a ridge top overlooking Greenfield. I was there early the other morning as a lone crow rolled along that ledge in gleaming flight. I startled it, which is unusual for a crow. It quickly veered away from the cliff face in a broad arc.

It's not everyday you get the jump on a crow. Surely I was not a serious threat, just a known crow predator, a human. I did honor its passage with a quiet crow call, signaling no harm intended. It flew on.

But recently, secure in my

apartment just after dusk, I heard crows through an open window on an unusually warm, late October evening. The radio was on. Truly it was dark, but I was hearing birds. It's the radio, I thought, background noise not edited from a news interview. I ignored it. But then, next story, there was that noise again - a low, caw-caw-caw. And then it would stop.

At the third sounding, I flipped off the radio, went to the window. It was dark, with just an afterglow in the western sky, in the late-October night. Birds don't sing when the streetlights are on, save owls and the odd mockingbird at the full of the moon. And, though the full moon was near, these were no mockers. "Caw, caw," again.

The call wasn't feverish, just a minimal communication, a signal, a crow sharing news. "Caw-caw," something is up, something, somewhere is exciting and newsworthy in crow culture. Perhaps it is the moon, or, more likely the weather. Or maybe it's just late-day crow intimacy that can't wait until daybreak.

It is night. The crows are singing. I'm fascinated and grateful to have these new

neighbors, as someone who's just moved to the city from the country. At this moment they are as wild as wildebeests.

And this morning, awakened, pre-dawn, by some unknown bump or scratching, I am up before six to make coffee in the glow of a single light. I return with it to bed and grab the thick novel I'm working through. Shortly though, I hear it. Caw! Then another. Then, caw-caw-caw-caw-caw-caw! They are up, and not just one or two. This is bait I cannot help but take. I rise quietly and head out the door to a second floor deck overlooking backyards and the dead end of a street.

Looming above is a tulip tree, nearly a hundred feet tall. The leaves are half-fallen. And there are the crows, yelling, some silently moving to-and-fro in pre-dawn silhouettes. The chorus is truly big neighborhood news, but the neighbors are not up yet. It's too dark to see if perhaps the point they are making is that there's a predator in this tree - an owl or roosting hawk. I've seen a Cooper's hawk around. The yelling continues. More crows fly in, joining dozens. Others scoot by for a look, some moving off to the

west. But the core of them stays, continuing to grow. There is split-second quiet when I move, telling me they're aware of my presence, but it is momentary. Whatever they have to share is more important. The gabfest goes on.

Coffee in hand, I'm there for ten minutes, fifteen. When it seems like the darkness has lifted enough to make binoculars useful, I duck in and grab some. The noise continues; crows swirl. I can't make out any lump of owl or hawk, or marauding raccoon or fisher either. It's just shadowy crows. They have something. They must. But my vantage will not reveal it - there is a side of these two trees that will remain hidden from my sight as darkness continues to lift. I move up and down the deck, hopeful of catching some predator's hunch, or movement. Once or twice I hear a plaintive, low call - something more than cooing, but similar to it. I can't place it though.

Daylight makes a slow entrance. The catcalls of this wondrous horde continue, but with less intensity. Inevitably, morning brings a subtle, quiet dispersal. Crows peel away one and two at a time until its just

me left on the deck, pondering their wildness - wondering who and what had come to rest in that tulip tree to receive the honor of such noise. I'm awake, in a still-wild world.

*Cooling thought: As winter ice becomes a hazard, skip the salt and use sand wherever possible. With a little sun, sand creates a non-slip grit on icy walks. Salt scalds roots, is toxic to subsoil creatures, and taints the groundwater.*

Karl Meyer can be reached at: [karlm@crocker.com](mailto:karlm@crocker.com)

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND**  
At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *DJ TriptophAntidote* dance party after 9 p.m. Free! This evening hours open 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. (kitchen closed). rendezvousfma.com.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD**  
Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Love Bomb*-Come dance! 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Wood Green Empire*, Gypsy jazz at its djangoey best, 8 p.m. \$3 cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Relics* - Blues/Reggae, 9 to 11 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH**  
Senior Center, 5th Street, Turners Falls *Christmas Bazaar*, 9 to 1 p.m. Call 863-9357 for information.

Annual Farren Festival at the Farren Care Center, Montague City, 9-3 p.m. Crafters, vendors, artists and more!

The National Spiritual Alliance: *Psychic Fair*, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Thompson Temple across from the Post Office, Lake Pleasant. www.thenationalspiritualallianceinc.org.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Drunk Stuntmen* with *YARN* as the opening show.

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

The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Rock it Queer 2*, (monthly gay dance night), with DJ Tommy, 9 p.m. free.

Wendell Full Moon Coffee House, Maria Gillard, Don't miss this opportunity to swing with Maria as she

serves up an evening of real life songs that will have you laughing, crying and wanting more. Proceeds shared with the Friends of Wendell. Dessert-o-rama on premises. Open Mic begins at 7:30 and the feature at 8 p.m. www.wendellfullmoon.org. Admission: \$6- \$12 at the door; kids 6- 12 \$2; under 6 free.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH**  
Family Dance, Montague Grange, Montague Center. Simple dances for little feet. Each last Sunday of the month, through April '08. 4 to 6 p.m., \$4/ person, or families \$7 - \$12 sliding scale, snack included. Amy Cann leads with *Shingle the Roof*.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Don McAuley* - Acoustic Trio, 9 to 11 p.m.

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH**  
Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, *Mark Applegate*, guitar. *John Vanepps*, malletcat, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH**  
*Quiz Night*. At The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls. 8 p.m. - \$2 per player for teams of up to five (or as few as one). Brought to you by Quizmaster Chad!

Reel World documentary film: *Lalee's Kin: The Legacy of Cotton*, The story of one extended family in the Mississippi Delta whose extreme poverty is a legacy borne by generations of black sharecroppers whose only employment option was to work in the white man's cotton fields and of a grandmother's love and a school superintendent's belief in the gifts of children. 88 minutes (2001)7 p.m. Held at the Arms Library, Shelburne Falls.

**THURSDAY TO SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH TO DECEMBER 2ND**  
Arthur Miller's searing drama, *The Crucible*, performed at Northfield Mount Hermon School. The play



*Maria Gillard, recognized as one of the best folk singers in America today, brings her bluesy, soulful sound to the Wendell Full Moon Coffee House, Saturday, November 24th, 8 p.m.*

about the witch trials in 17th century Salem, Mass., is widely seen as an allegory for the Red Scare of the 1950s. Performances November 29 at 7 p.m., November 30 and December 1 at 7:30 p.m., and December 2 at 2 p.m. in the Music Building. Tickets \$5 for general admission, reservations by e-mail david\_rowland@nmhschool.org. Shows sell out quickly.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH**  
At The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *The Novels and Moon Eye*, 9 p.m., \$5 cover. http://myspace.com/novelspace

Healing Environment Concert Series at the Franklin Medical Center last Friday each month, in the main lobby. Jerry Noble and Bob Sparkman, jazz duo, November 30th; and the Northside Saxophone Quartet in a special holiday concert, Friday, December 21st.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOV. 30TH & DEC. 1ST**  
Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls - Truffaut's *FAHRENHEIT 451* based on the Ray Bradbury novel. The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's 2007 Big Read will co-

sponsor this harrowing story of a futuristic world where firemen start fires - with books - w/ discussion by PVMA's *Big Read Project* after the movie Friday night. Music, 7 p.m. Friday: Eco Drum Corps ensemble. Saturday: Abdul Baki & Family.

**SATURDAY & SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1ST & 2ND**  
Wendell Holiday Fair, Wendell Town Hall. Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Arts & Icicles, Turners Falls arts and eats. The Discovery Center open both days. Steve Winters gives a geology walking tour 1 p.m. www.turnersfallsriverculture.org

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 3RD**  
Live jazz at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls, *Karl Rausch*, solo guitar, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7TH**  
*Moonlight & Morning Star* at Smokin' Hippo restaurant, Erving. (413) 423-3220, www.thesmokinhippo.com, 6:30 -8:30 p.m.

**FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH - 9TH**  
Welcome Yule: A Midwinter Celebration. Irish & English music, dance, songs and stories celebrating the return of the light. A show for all ages at The Shea Theater, Turners Falls, Dec. 7 and 8 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors and children, 4 yrs and under free. Reserve tickets 863-2281, or Jones Library, Amherst, Broadside Books, Northampton, the World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield. 665-3206 or www.welcomeyule.org

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH & 8TH**  
Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls - *Off The Map*, a beautifully made and touching tale about the joys and sorrows of living a life full and free. Directed by Campbell Scott. 2003, PG 13.108 min. Screenwriter and Berkshires resident Joan Ackerman will be our guest to discuss the film on Saturday night. 7:30 p.m., music before the movie at 7 p.m.

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

**FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH - 9TH**  
*Taking Control of Change, Embracing Simplicity*. New England Gathering of War Tax Resisters & Supporters. Woolman Hill Conference Center, Deerfield. Info and registration (802) 257-5725 email andbefree@yahoo.com

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH**  
Montague Reporter Holiday Party at The Night Kitchen. Celebrate 5 years as the voice of the villages. Sliding scale donation \$10 to \$100,000. Free hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, 5 to 7 p.m.

**ONGOING**  
Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls on display: Michael Yamashita's *Great Wall of China & The Silk Road*. On display through December 16th.

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<b>THROUGH DECEMBER 15TH</b> View the Junior Duck Stamp artwork from Massachusetts students grades K - 12. The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program (JDS) is a dynamic arts curriculum that teaches wetlands and waterfowl conservation to students in kindergarten through high school. The program incorporates scientific and wildlife management principles into	a visual arts curriculum with participants completing a JDS design as their visual "term papers". <b>SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH</b> Book Discussion Plan B 2.0, 11 a.m. - noon. Join Refuge staff on a discussion of PLAN B 2.0 by Lester R. Brown. This book addresses issues of global concern and the potential for rescuing a planet under stress. Lester Brown is the president of	Earth Policy Institute based in Washington, DC. He founded the Worldwatch Institute and is recognized internationally for his work in eco-economics. Book available for purchase at museum shop. <b>THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH</b> Exploring Nebraska's Refuge Lands. Reports from a month of volunteer service at the Niobrara-Valentine River National Wildlife Refuge in Valentine NB by Rachel	Scherer. 7 to 9 p.m. <b>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8TH</b> Junior Duck Stamp Workshop <i>Conservation through the Arts</i> program. Local artist Annie Chappell leads this workshop. Participants draw from the exhibits and look at the form and function of birds to better understand how to portray them. Registration is limited to eight, call now! Program 9 - 11 a.m.
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Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls (413) 863-3221 www.greatfallsma.org

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# Winter Gardening with Laughing Dog Farm

BY FAFNIR ADAMITES & NEIL YOUNG

**GREAT FALLS** - A few weeks ago, we stumbled out of bed, eagerly anticipating a warm autumn day to take care of an ever-growing list of tasks and errands associated with buttoning-down our home and garden for the winter. Top of that list was a visit to Laughing Dog Farm in Gill to attend a two-hour workshop on "Growing Winter Crops". We pre-registered via email and got this message back: "Slipped a disc, in pain. Workshop might be shorter and less formal."

After a bit of bickering over which order would most efficiently execute our morning errands, we blasted off to a nameless lousy bigbox home improvement megastore where we are still chipping away at family-endowed giftcards left over from the previous holidays. These stores rarely have everything one is looking for, and in fact, often what they do have is an ill-fitting shadow of the item you seek, usually blister-packed in multiples. Lucky for us, we stayed focused, refusing the lure of endless browsing and soon found ourselves cruising the sinewy artery of Gill's Main Road.

Blissed out on one bucolic scene after another, we must have passed the farm three times, trying to find the house number, or other more obvious signs. Of course, the Laughing Dog operation sits atop a hidden hill, on land once part of the Renaissance Community.

We approached the farthest structure at the end of a long winding driveway. The multi-windowed, odd-angled house was of the 70s freestyle-castle-variety and it appeared to be undergoing some intense Tyvek and two-by-four transformation. We toured the grounds and marveled at the scene around us.

There were gigantic squash that lounged on benches and walls like lazy overweight children, vivid red clubs of amaranth shooting up all around and magnificent towers of climbing purple hyacinth beans. It's right about here that we should note that our ability to name such a panoply of plants is almost limited to the three listed in the previous sentence. In essence what we saw was an overwhelming diversity of intermingled green

things growing in ways that appear more common in nature than in a man-made environment such as a garden.

The chaotic effusive beauty of Laughing Dog's grounds is permaculture at work. Permaculture is a brilliant and wacky concept of growing many things, all at the same time, in ways that try to mimic the cooperative structures of nature. The greenery may look messy, but it is in fact planted in a deliberate design to create a symbiotic flow of products, wastes, inputs, and outputs. Ground-based plants that need less light are shaded by their taller, more sun-worshipping friends, and so forth. At Laughing Dog, there are mounds of composted stuff with three and four different types of plants growing off of each other, up sticks and trellises, all producing edible goodness.

This is no farm of sprawling monotonous rows, but an urban labyrinth, sometimes as tall as it is deep. We had only begun exploring the maze of gardens, when we noticed Daniel emerging from the house. In spite of his obvious lumbar pain and ruffled demeanor, he offered to give a more informal talk and a slower paced tour through the garden and hoop house.

Daniel gingerly led us through, interpreting and displaying his bountiful grounds. For us, the jawdropper were the male and female Kiwi trees climbing and embracing a trellis at the bottom of the hill, proving we can grow in the Up Over as well as in the Down Under.

For the workshop, and for someone as amped about vegetables as Daniel Botkin, the crowning jewel of the farm is the massive plastic-covered hoop house, where every square inch of the structure is utilized to grow things in raised beds and

shelves.

For wintering vegetables, a structure like a hoop house is indispensable. It regulates the environment inside, providing

have been a rumpus room. It would have come equipped with a wet bar, a foosball table and a big screen TV. Instead we walked into the middle of a

So the rest of the afternoon was spent scavenging materials for our very first cold frame. An old storm window was extracted from a creepy room in a friend's barn and some displaced lumber was taken out of the mangled pile of junk behind a local bar. After drawing up a design for a simple rectangular box with a slanting front to let in the light from the south, we realized we did not find enough wood.

We then proceeded to buy too much framing timber (our carpentry skills are even less advanced than our gardening skills, apparently) and finally banged out the frame. It now sits in our garden, protecting our chaotic patch of hardy greens from the elements, and hopefully dismissing any schemes of transforming itself into a coffin for withered leaves.

There are certainly many factors working against us in this experimental journey into winter gardening. But it is the radical idea that we are reclaiming the dead months of winter for something much greener and tastier that will surely keep us trudging out to our cold frame garden for the next few chilly months.

We will definitely be at Daniel Botkin's next workshop, and if you're interested in further reading, check out Eliot Coleman's book *Four Season Harvest*.

## HOW DO I GET RID OF THAT?

Have you ever wondered how to properly dispose of broken glass, laundry detergent boxes, or mothballs? These items are among the hundreds listed on a new webpage of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD). The page alphabetically lists over 350 items, from adhesives to Ziploc bags, and details the proper disposal procedures for each. It includes recyclables, hazardous products, organics, and trash.

Jan Ameen, FCSWMD's director said, "We hope to have one of the most comprehensive lists in the country. We will be continuing to add items in response to questions and suggestions from residents."

The new webpage can be found by going to FCSWMD's website — [www.franklincounty-wastedistrict.org](http://www.franklincounty-wastedistrict.org) — and clicking on "What Do I Do With...".



The backyard is a treasure trove in the cold months, with a cold frame on hand. Here, Neil Young is seen examining the growth of salad greens behind his Central Street home.

protection from the elements, promoting humidity and a 15-degree-warmer-than-outside temperature. All of this is done with no heat source but the sun. Botkin also has a compost bin inside the hoop house, where the heat byproduct of decomposition provides additional temperature stability in the winter months. He also tricked out his rig with roll-up cranks, so on warmer days he can get a little air in there so the plants don't droop.

A hoop house is far less expensive than a full-on greenhouse, but requires space and a fair amount of labor. As neat as it was to see his setup in action, we're not quite ready to commit to that level of engineering.

After showing us how he grew ground-covering squash in the wells of his various fruit trees, we marched into the mod-house to continue our absorption of knowledge.

The four of us entered into what in another world might

idea that we are destined to spend the long months of winter shuffling through the produce aisle of Food City.

Daniel had to take to the massage table in the kitchen to try to find some relief for his back and to consult the outline for the workshop he had sketched out earlier. He had whipped up some tasty vegetable soup for us ahead of time too, which we promptly ladled into bowls. Then we discussed the challenges of winter gardening: wind, moisture, microclimates and of course temperature. We also talked about the different structures that could be used; a hoop house (Daniel's preferred method), a cold frame (basically a box with a slanted window roof), or a more traditional greenhouse.

Walking away from Laughing Dog Farm with a generous armload of squash and garlic, we knew we had to put some of these ideas to work in our little patch of backyard dirt.

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