



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 9 - NO. 9

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

75¢

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 24, 2010

## Housing the Homeless in Western Mass

BY MARC ODATO

SHELburnE FALLS —

Western Massachusetts author and social worker Jay Levy has been pivotal in developing a new and effective method to help the homeless — a method that includes putting individuals into permanent housing before addressing other serious issues they might face.

“Year after year, there are people going into and out of shelters, and that approach does not work,” said Levy during a discussion at Boswell’s Books on Thursday night, November 18th.

A perennial issue during the cold holiday season, homelessness in Franklin County was recently highlighted during the town of Greenfield’s efforts to deal with tent residents in the so-called “Jungle” along its railroad tracks. Earlier this month, Mayor William Martin announced the Jungle had been cleared and all its residents successfully housed.

Western Massachusetts has, on a given night, about 500 people in shelters or out on the street. See **HOMELESS** page 13

## Whole Farm Affordability Pioneered in Montague



DETMOLD PHOTO

Ryan and Sarah Voiland at the new home of Red Fire Farm, on Meadow Road in Montague

BY ELIZABETH CARTER

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - If farmers in our area can’t afford to grow food, our food security — our long term ability to feed ourselves — is compromised.

Few people see the effects of volatility in real estate values as directly as farmers do. In order for a farm to be profitable, a parcel of land must be able to produce enough crop to pay its mort-

gage. When inflation in real estate markets outpaces the inflation rate for commodities such as food, it can become economically unfeasible to be in the essential business of feeding your commu-

nity. This is where market volatility, which we’ve witnessed sharply in the past decade, comes to haunt the rest of us.

Ryan and Sarah Voiland of Red Fire Farm have built a thriving

see **FARM** pg 7

## Cheese is Just the Beginning of the Gill Menu Zoning Board Rules Against Gravel Pit Expansion on Route 63



KATHY LITCHELD PHOTO

Upinngil’s Clifford Hatch (right) and Sorrel Hatch (center) chat with friends and farmers at the Gill Cheese Night, Friday, at the Congregational Church

BY STEVE DAMON

**GILL** - As the vegetables are harvested and the field machinery oiled and put away for the winter, the Gill agricultural commission believes the time is ripe to enjoy other agricultural goods from our beautiful town.

On Friday, November 19th, the commission cel-

ebrated its second annual Cheese Night at Gill Congregational Church. Two of the town’s cheese producers — Upinngil and NMH School Farm — brought their wares for over 60 people to sample, discuss, and purchase. To complement the abundance of dairy delicacies, Gill Tavern donated fresh-

ly-baked French bread, while NMH School Farm donated farm-pressed apple cider.

While the big people stood around talking about curds, cultures, whey, lactation cycles, and what drinks to serve with which cheese; six-year-old Toby Sol simply sat eating all

see **CHEESE** page 8



DETMOLD PHOTO

Richard Roberts’ gravel pit on Route 63, with Roberta Bryant’s land in the background

BY DAVID DETMOLD

**LEVERETT** - The zoning board of appeals turned down a request by Roberta Bryant of 470 Long Plain Road (Route 63), and Richard Roberts of 31 Hemenway Road for a special permit to expand the gravel mining operation at that location by five acres.

In a subsequent decision, the board denied a request to remove a stop work order on the gravel mining operation due to

the gravel pit being a ‘grandfathered use’. Bryant argued that parts of the property have been the site of gravel mining for decades, but the board ruled the increase in area of proposed gravel mining would not qualify as a grandfathered use.

County building inspector Jim Hawkins had placed a stop work order on gravel mining operations at 470 Long Plain Road in July, when the town determined that

Bryant had leased commercial gravel rights on five acres of her land to Roberts and his partner Ed Stone, even though Bryant has kept that land in Chapter 61-B protection as recreational open space for more than a decade. While the land remains under Chapter 61-B, Leverett grants Bryant a tax deduction, taxing her open space acreage at just 25% of its assessed value. A condition of that agreement was that she

see **ZONING** pg 14

## PET OF THE WEEK Love To Be Yours



### Dusty

My name is Dusty and I'm a one-year-old domestic short hair cat in need of a good home. I'm a big beautiful all black guy, with golden eyes and the softest fur. I can really use some love and tenderness, and a home where I'll be adored. When I came here to the shelter I had some ear problems; the wonderful Dakin doc is treating me for that now, and I hope to have a future with no more itchy ears before too long. Ask my friends here, they'll fill you in. All I can say is: I am a really good boy, and I'd really love to be yours. To find out more about adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

### Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

#### Grade 6

Jemma Dickson

#### Grade 7

Jacob Clark  
Coby Dobias

#### Grade 8

Sara Bradley

### NANCY L. DOLE BOOKS & EPHEMERA



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ndole@crocker.com closed Mondays

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### MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

#### Library Holiday Closings

The Carnegie Library in  
Turners Falls will be close at  
5:00 p.m. on Wednesday,  
November 24th. It will reopen  
on Monday, November 29th.  
The Millers Falls Library will be  
closed on Thanksgiving Day.  
The Montague Center Library  
will close at 5:00 p.m. on  
Wednesday, November 24th.  
For more information, call the  
Carnegie Library at 863-3214.

### LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

#### Pastel Painting Presentation, Historic Map Display

The Friends of the Leverett  
Library author and artist series  
continues when local artist Chris  
Nelson will give a talk at the  
Leverett Library on Wednesday,  
December 8th, at 7:30 p.m.  
exploring the use of pastels as a  
medium, and the life experi-  
ences that compel an artist to  
create. Nelson and Elsie  
Sturtevant from the Leverett  
Crafts and Art Center will exhib-  
it pastel paintings at the library  
through the months of  
November and December. The  
two artists share a studio at the  
art center, both paint in pastels.  
Nelson's work focuses on ani-  
mals, while Sturtevant's work  
depicts her native Holland land-  
scapes.

The Leverett Library has  
received a set of historical town  
maps and county maps, which

may be seen during our open  
hours. The 1830, 1858, and  
1871 maps, in particular, appear  
to show every road in Leverett.  
The collection includes full  
color prints of the 1794 and  
1830 maps from the  
Massachusetts Archives.

The maps will be useful for  
people interested in dating their  
houses, for genealogists, and for  
those interested in the locations  
of old roads.

The maps were collected and  
issued by David Allen, a map  
researcher who owns the on-line  
business [www.old-maps.com](http://www.old-maps.com)  
and a land surveying business in  
Greenfield. Research and print-  
ing was done with the assistance  
of a grant from the Leverett  
Cultural Council, a town agency  
which is supported by the  
Massachusetts Cultural Council.

## Shhhh! Genealogists at Play

BY SARA CAMPBELL

**TURNERS FALLS** - In an  
ongoing project to make local  
records more accessible to the  
researching public, a group got  
together at the Carnegie Library  
on Monday night to upload  
images of the burials at the East  
Mineral Road cemetery in  
Millers Falls to findagrave.com.  
Wireless internet at the library  
made sharing the task easy, as  
Pat Allen, Shari Strahan, Tina  
Peters, Phil Johnson, and  
Bevlyn Gallant attached the  
photos to the data compiled by  
the Montague cemetery com-  
mission ten years ago. More  
cemeteries will be added from  
Montague, Erving, and Leverett

as the data which was collected  
in the past is organized and  
attached to the photos.

To get involved in this effort,  
contact rememberingances-  
tors@yahoo.com.

The next  
meeting of the  
C a r n e g i e  
L i b r a r y  
G e n e a l o g y  
G a t h e r i n g  
will take place on  
W e d n e s d a y,  
D e c e m b e r 8th at  
6 p.m. at the  
library, on  
Avenue A and  
7th Street in  
Turners Falls.

All are welcome to come and  
share their questions or their  
enthusiasm for local history.  
Information is posted at [genealogygathering.blogspot.com](http://genealogygathering.blogspot.com).



Pat Allen (clockwise from left), Shari Strahan,  
Phil Johnson, Bevlyn Gallant, and Tina Peters  
gathered to upload burial images at the Carnegie  
Library at Monday night's genealogy gathering.

## SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES - November 29th - December 3rd

**GILL/MONTAGUE** Senior  
Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners  
Falls, is open Monday through  
Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00  
p.m. Congregate meals are  
served Tuesday through Friday  
at Noon. Meal reservations must  
be made a day in advance by  
11:00 a.m. The Meal Site  
Manager is Kerry Togneri. All  
fitness classes are supported by  
a grant from the Executive  
Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary  
donations are accepted. Council  
on Aging director is Roberta  
Potter. **Annual  
Holiday Lunch** at the Tech  
School is Tuesday, December  
7th. Tickets are on sale at the  
Senior Center. For more infor-  
mation, to make meal reserva-  
tions, or to sign up for programs  
call (413) 863-9357. Messages  
can be left on our machine when  
the center is not open.

**Monday, November 29th**  
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle

**Tuesday, November 30th**  
9:00 a.m. Walking Group  
10:30 a.m. Yoga  
12:00 p.m. Lunch  
1:00 p.m. Canasta  
**Wednesday, December 1st**  
10:00 a.m. Aerobics  
12:00 p.m. Lunch  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, December 2nd**  
10:30 a.m. - noon Brown Bag  
12:00 p.m. Lunch  
No Tai Chi  
**Friday, December 3rd**  
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Scrabble  
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

**ERVING** Senior Center, 18  
Pleasant St., Erving (Old  
Center School, 1st Floor), is  
open Monday through Friday  
from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for  
activities and congregating meals.  
For info and reservations, call  
Polly Kiely, Senior Center  
Director, at (413) 423-3308.  
Mealsite Manager is Jim  
Saracino. Lunch is daily at

11:30 a.m., with reservations 24  
hours in advance. Transporta-  
tion can be provided for meals,  
shopping, or medical necessity.  
Please call the Senior Center at  
(413) 423-3308 to find out when  
the next flu clinic will be held.  
**Monday, November 29th**  
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:00 a.m. Osteo-Exercise  
12:00 p.m. Pitch  
**Tuesday, November 30th**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, December 1st**  
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing/Zumba  
12:00 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, December 2nd**  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
**Friday, December 3rd**  
9:00 a.m. Bowling  
11:30 a.m. Lunch - Call the  
center for details

**WENDELL** Senior Center is  
located at 2 Lockes Village  
Road. Call Nancy Spittle, 978-  
544-6760 for hours and upcom-  
ing programs. Call the Center if  
you need a ride.



## Wendell Auction Nets a Grand; a Grand Time was had by All

On Saturday, November 22nd, auctioneer Ted Lewis kept the bidders laughing as the town auctioned off random equipment at the highway garage, including a diesel generator, a non-functional truck and chassis and a plastic crate of household knives. The town earned \$1222.

### Historic Bridge Facts

PROVIDED BY ED GREGORY, OF GREENFIELD - from the Gill-Montague Bridge dedication booklet, published for the ribbon cutting ceremonies that took place on Saturday, September 10th, 1938.

Concrete used, by volume -  
8,980 cubic yards.  
Weight of blacktop used for

the roadbed - 1,400,000  
pounds.

More bridge facts next week!

## Breakfast with Santa to Benefit TFHS Class of 2011

Come enjoy breakfast with  
Santa on Sunday, November  
28th, at the Montague Elks  
Lodge. Pancakes, scrambled  
eggs, sausage and hot and cold  
beverages will be served.

Breakfast is from 7:00 a.m. to  
11:30 a.m. Adults \$6 and kids 10  
and under \$3.

Tickets sold in advance and at  
the door.

There will be a multi-affle.

The proceed from this event  
benefits the Turners Falls High  
School Class of 2011.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

## Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG

Come meet local student artists on Saturday, December 4th, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at an open reception for the winners of the Massachusetts 2010 **Junior Duck Stamp (JDS)** competition held in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, in Turners Falls.

The Junior Duck Stamp Program was launched in 1991 by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with the aim of increasing young people's awareness of the importance of preserving wetland habitats and the delights of wildlife. In 1992, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service printed the first ever Junior Duck Stamp with the funds going towards scholarships and educational grants.

On street parking is banned from Montague streets starting December 1st, from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., through April 1st, to facilitate the work of sanding and plowing through the winter.

Three Churches of Northfield Christmas Fairs will be held Saturday, December 4th, starting at 9:00 a.m. The three beautiful churches located along Main Street in Northfield hold their Christmas fairs simultaneously. Each has different features - roving minstrels, Santa and his helpers, crafters, white elephant tables, Christmas wreaths, luncheon, bake sales and much more. Participating churches are the Unitarian, at 72 Main Street; St. Patrick's at 80

Main Street; and the Trinitarian at 147 Main Street.

The Second Street Baking Company has been a busy place this week. Pre-ordering for the holiday closed on November 20th and bakery personnel were scrambling all week to fill more than 300 orders - most with more than one item. Just two years ago the bakery had only 60 Thanksgiving orders.

Pies are a top seller with 250 ordered, as well as sweet breads, dinner rolls and much more. The kitchen is cooking to capacity, filling the bread racks, pie and pastry shelves in addition to all the preorders. According to co-owner Laura Pulchalski, by Wednesday afternoon the place will be sold out.

Second Street will be closed for a well-deserved four day weekend and return to a closed shop Monday to start the baking to refill the shelves. They'll be back in action on Tuesday morning for business as usual.

Are you **traveling for the holidays**, Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Years? Then bring along a copy of the Montague Reporter and have someone snap a picture of you, family, or friends holding up the paper in front of a recognizable landscape or landmark building. When you return home, submit that photo along with information about who is in the picture and who took the photo.

You just might find yourself on page 2 of the paper under Faces and Places.

Send items for local briefs to: [reporter-local@montague-ma.net](mailto:reporter-local@montague-ma.net)

# Swift River School Earns Green Repair Funding



JOSH HEINEMANN PHOTO

## Swift River School

**WENDELL - NEW SALEM** - Representative Steve Kulik (D-Worthington) announced this week that energy saving renovations and repairs planned for the Swift River School will be in line for substantial reimbursement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, after a recent MSBA vote to include the work in the state's "Green Repair Program."

More than 65% of the cost of a new furnace as well as roof and skylight repairs at the elementary school could be covered by the state. Town meetings in Wendell and New Salem would have to approve the local portion of the cost before the work is undertaken.

"The Green Schools Program is a critical initiative of the MSBA, and will enable Wendell and New Salem to make the Swift River School more energy efficient, less expensive to maintain, and a more comfortable learning environment for its students," said Kulik. "I am grateful to the MSBA for its timely review and overall sup-

port of the proposal. By helping to underwrite needed work on the roof and heating system, the program will extend the useful life of the building and save tax dollars in the long run. The Green Schools Program is an excellent use of scarce public funds."

Swift River School principal Sheila Hunter said, "At Swift River School, we work hard to be energy efficient, and replacing our roof and 35-year-old boiler would be a major boost to our efforts. I think this is an amazing opportunity for districts like ours that need major

building repairs."

Union 28 Superintendent Joan Wickman was enthusiastic about the prospect of technical assistance and reimbursement from the state. "These are badly needed repairs. The roof has been leaking and the boiler is old, but I doubt the towns would undertake the work at this time without substantial state support. One of the next steps is to provide our towns with as much information as possible to enable voters to make informed decisions at special town meetings," which are expected once cost estimates are in hand.

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

### Brings Needed Funds for Senior Center

BY JOHN FURBISH

**TURNERS FALLS** - This past Saturday featured the annual Christmas Bazaar at the Gill-Montague senior center. The Friends of the Meal Site group produces this annual event, their primary fundraiser.

The senior center, at 62 Fifth Street, is a Commonwealth meal site for hot meals (available with a minimum \$2.00 donation) served to seniors on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

The Friends of the Meal Site group uses much of the money it collects from the bazaar to cover unexpected expenses at the senior center. For example, recently the stove in the kitchen gave out, and the Friends contributed

\$3,000 toward the purchase of a replacement commercial range.

Also, the Friends purchase cards and postage to keep in touch with and support local seniors in times of need. Every year, the Friends contribute \$300 for the Meals on Wheels program of the Franklin County Home Care Corporation.

This year, 15 volunteers gathered holiday items donated by generous local residents, and arranged them for sale at the bazaar in the senior center. This year, about \$1,650 was collected from sales, reported Allan Adie, treasurer of the Friends group.

Adie said, "This year's bazaar was a great success."

## Upcoming University Without Walls Information Session

The UMass University Without Walls program is a bachelors degree completion program in which students design their own degree - integrating previous academic credit, using background and interests that reflect their creative and interdisciplinary connec-

tions, allowing them to earn UMass credit for experience gained from life, work, and training experiences.

Learn more at an upcoming information session at Greenfield Community College on Monday, December 6th at 5:30 p.m. or at the University

Without Walls Mass Venture Center in Hadley on Saturday, December 18th at 10:00 a.m.

If you have any questions, visit [www.umass.edu/uww](http://www.umass.edu/uww) or contact Robin Coolbeth at (413) 545-1378 or by email at [uww@uww.umass.edu](mailto:uww@uww.umass.edu).

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# The Montague Reporter

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"The Voice of the Villages"

## Be Thankful for Family and Friends

BY MARVIN SHEDD

**BERNARDSTON** - Fall has always been my favorite time of year. Never a fan of summer heat, I prefer the cooler air that late September brings. Each year I welcome the turning of the leaves and the flight of geese on their migratory path.

The cooler air portends the advent of the holiday season, which I greet with mixed emotions. While decrying the overt commercialism that accompanies the modern holiday season, I do enjoy, and look forward to, time spent with family and friends.

This Thanksgiving finds our country in difficult times. With uncertainty in the money markets and many unable to find work, there is a sense of despair that has not been seen in a generation. The change in the balance of power in Congress, touted by many as the answer to the problem, leaves many of us wondering if we will see anything but gridlock in Washington. It is fairly certain the middle class will see little, if any, benefit from what Congress does.

That we still have young men and women in harm's way on two war fronts will certainly make the holidays bleaker for many.

My own family has been touched by the devastating economic conditions that have unfolded over the past two years.

At the onset of the financial crisis I lost my job. When the new owners of Rugg Lumber opted to close the Greenfield store, I became unemployed for the first time in my life. As I looked for work, a series of rejections and dashed hopes sent me into a deep spiral. The loss of my job seriously eroded my self confidence and left me wondering where I'd gone wrong.

In the end, I was lucky; I found a new job relatively quickly, unlike the millions in our country who are still searching for work.

Each of us has demons we wrestle with and hard times to overcome, yet most of us can list many good things in our lives. For me, there are many things that I am thankful for. I live on land that has been in my family for over 150 years. I enjoy the pursuit of creativity as an actor in community theater and a musician in the Fall Town String Band. I am most thankful for the love and support of my family and friends. I have a small but loyal cadre of close friends who continually encourage me to be who I am. I have two sons who are becoming fine young men and a loving wife who has been by my side for 26 years.

Yes, even in dark times, there is much to be thankful for. May each of us find time to reflect on the good things in our lives this Thanksgiving.



Benjamin Franklin wished the Turkey had been chosen instead of the Bald Eagle as America's national bird.

JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION, CLAUDIA WELLS COLLAGE

## Give Thanks for Small Favors

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Hard Work on School Budget Appreciated

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the voters and community members of the Gill-Montague Regional School District for voting unanimously to support the FY '11 operating budget on November 18th. This was an achievement many thought impossible, but one that was realized because people of good will came together and found a way.

The school committee worked diligently to provide a fiscally responsible budget that was responsive to the fiscal realities of the member towns and would still meet the educational needs of the district. They also agreed to

work in collaboration and partnership with the towns, our area legislators, and municipal leaders to develop a plan for long-term fiscal stability for the school district and the member towns. These are not insignificant achievements by the school committee and its partners, and everyone involved should be applauded for taking the necessary steps to ensure our collective efforts would be successful.

I would also like to publicly thank and recognize the invaluable contributions and hard work of the community members who worked with the district to develop the long-term plan for fiscal

sustainability - Jeff Singleton, Mike Naughton, and Tupper Brown. Without their efforts the compromise and long-term solution would not have been achieved.

We have many fiscal and educational challenges facing us in the next year, as well as in the years ahead. It is encouraging and hopeful to know we will be attempting to face them together - school and community as partners - to benefit both the students and the towns.

- Superintendent Carl Ladd  
Gill - Montague Regional School District

## The First Thanksgiving

BY FRAN HEMOND

**MONTAGUE CENTER** - It's been 319 years since the Pilgrims at Plymouth who had survived their first year in this New World, feasted on its autumn bounty, and invited their Indian neighbors. On the last Thursday in

November, we remember this as Thanksgiving Day.

Thanksgiving was designated a national holiday by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, in the midst of the Civil War. Previously, it had been a fall festival holiday of old New England, probably originally held in October.

William Bradford, governor of the Plymouth Colony, kept a journal of the Pilgrims' venture to the New World. Historian Samuel Eliot Morison edited Governor Bradford's *Of Plymouth Plantation*, and he offers the following of the fall harvest of 1621:

see PILGRIMS pg 5

Shad for a Brighter Future were at the 11th Street Bridge in Turners Falls on the morning of Monday, November 15th, braving the chilly air to protest the lack of action on the fish lift which has been proposed for ten years at Cabot Station. The Shad also protested the lack of action by the Connecticut River Atlantic Salmon Committee (which, coincidentally, was meeting that same morning at the Silvio Conte Anadromous Fish Lab) to save the shad run, which was up by 1000% this year, at the same time the Northfield Pumped Hydro Station was off line for repairs.

How many more shad are going to die before someone requires the utilities to act on behalf of the shad, and not

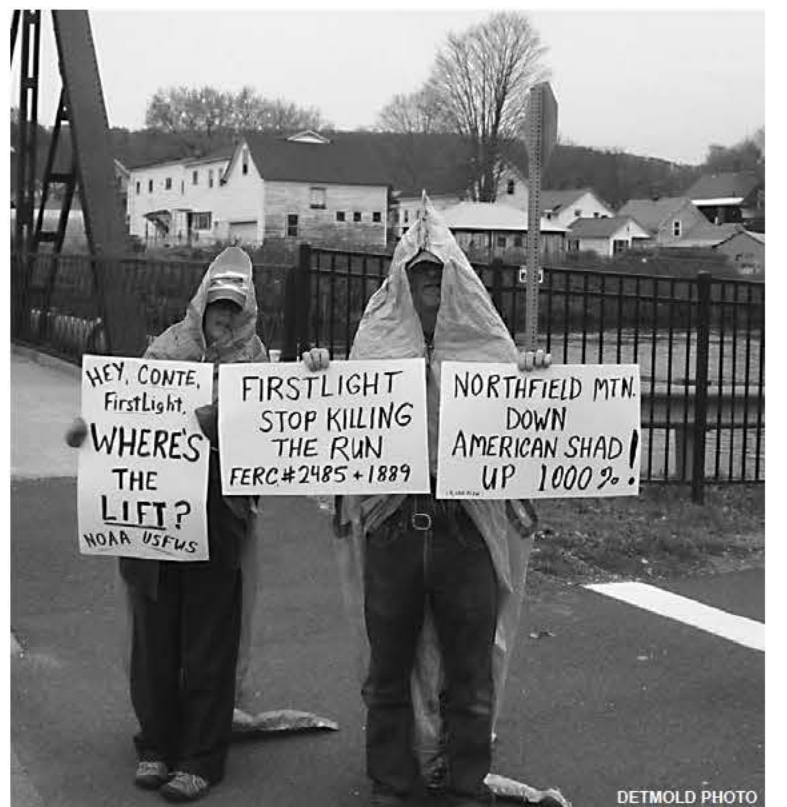
just their bottom line? Plus, the tons of silt dumped in the river by Northfield Pumped Hydro as it cleared out its clogged turbines cleared out its clogged turbines and fauna inhabiting the Connecticut River we all love.

Shad can't wait for the water temperature to drop once Entergy

Nuclear Vermont Yankee shuts down for good.

Shad for a Brighter Future hope all creatures large and small will have a better, brighter future in the Connecticut River.

- Claire Chang  
Riverside



Shad Protest on the 11th Street Bridge

DETMOLD PHOTO

**We Welcome Your Letters!**  
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**U.S. Casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 11/23/10**

<b>US FORCES</b>	Casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan as of this date
<b>4429</b>	
Afghanistan	<b>1400</b>
Wounded in Iraq	<b>30,718</b>
Wounded in Afghanistan	<b>9256</b>

**ANOTHER LETTER**

**PLENTY TO GIVE THANKS FOR AT DIEMAND FARM**

**Country Fair Thanks**

The First Congregational Church in Turners Falls would like to thank everyone who participated and contributed to the success of our annual Country Fair.

We especially want to thank the following businesses for their generosity: Sandri Oil, Travel Kuz, Foster's Super Market, Food City, Big Y, Stewart's Nursery, Ristorante DiPaolo, Goodies, Four Leaf Clover, Dunkin Donuts, Bank of America, Kharm Salon, Tognarelli Heating, Lisa's Handmade Soap, Booska's Flooring, 2nd Street Bakery, Peter Kretzenger, and Turners Falls Pizza.

We hope you continue to support these great businesses.

- **Helen L. Stotz**  
Turners Falls



Anne Diemand ships turkeys out from the Wendell Post Office earlier this week — to customers as far afield as Maryland, Connecticut and Wisconsin!

**PILGRIMS from 4**

"They began now to gather in the small harvest they had and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty... Some were exercised in fishing about cod and bass and other fish of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want and now began to come in store of fowl as winter approached..."

"And besides waterfowl, there was a great store of wild turkeys of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides, they had about a peck of meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to that proportion... Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty to their friends in England which were not feigned but true reports."

Plymouth colonist Edward Winslow's letter to a friend tells of fun and games that accompanied the feast. Their friend, Massasoit, the Wampanoag chief who had helped them through the starving winter, was invited. He came with 90 braves, and they brought venison of five deer to the festival.

For three days the hosts and their guests feasted and made

**BY ANNE HARDING**

**WENDELL** - There will be plenty of reasons to give thanks this year at the Diemand Egg Farm. Four thousand two hundred of them, in fact. That's the number of turkeys the Diemands raised and processed for Thanksgiving dinner tables this season.

A family owned farm since 1936 and one of the few remaining commercial producers of eggs in Massachusetts, the Diemand Egg Farm is in the midst of their 21st turkey season. They've come a long way in this niche market — raising over four thousand birds this year ranging from 8 to 43 pounds.

The farm was founded by Albert and Elsie Diemand, who raised meat chickens until the 1960s when they transitioned to the egg business, which was the farm's mainstay until the late

merry. There were games of skill and chance and Captain Miles Standish put on a military review.

It was a meeting of two different ways of life, but the party's success points out that the basics were the same.

1970s. The closing of the Keech family's Franklin Farm in Gill presented an opportunity for the Diemands to venture in a new direction, and in 1989 they raised their first 500 turkeys.

The decision to enter the turkey market was an exciting time at Diemand Farm, and daughters Faith and Annie visited other turkey farms in New England to investigate processing systems. Some of the original equipment purchased from the Franklin Farm is still in operation.

Though Albert Diemand died in May, 2000 and Elsie passed away in June, 2007, the farm is still run by family members, with the help of several part-time employees. Three of the couple's twelve children — Annie, Faith and Peter — are full-time farmers these days, and four of the sisters — Mary, Judith, Bertha and Elsie — keep their hand in part-time or seasonally. A couple of grandchildren schedule their vacation each year to help with the Thanksgiving crunch time.

Annie Diemand remembers growing up raising meat chickens — her grade school farm job was helping her mother on the evisceration assembly line — so raising turkeys did not seem too

big a leap. She remembers the early "turkey years," and the late nights creating graph paper charts — manually matching the weight of the dressed birds to customer orders after a long day on the production line. Nowadays, all this work is done on the computer.

"We're working smarter, not harder," said Annie Diemand, pausing in the midst of the holiday rush. Improvements in the system have speeded the process and reduced the physical strain on workers, in spite of the increased number of birds being handled.

Dressing the birds starts about two weeks before Thanksgiving. There used to be three separate stations (slaughter, evisceration and final picking) and the birds were literally carried from station to station. Averaging more than 20 unwieldy pounds apiece, the birds put a tremendous toll on the workers. Annie Diemand remembers nights when back spasms literally kept her on her hands and knees.

Today the production line takes place on a single long stainless steel table, so birds simply slide down the table to the next station.

The farm receives the first

shipment of day-old turkey poults in March, and the last shipment in August. The staggered delivery times ensure a variety of sizes by Thanksgiving, and provides for a number of institutional sales as well. About 1,000 birds were dressed in late summer for UMass, where food production departments do a lot of local buying. In addition, Diemand Farm sold about 800 pounds to Mount Holyoke and made a couple of deliveries to Smith College as well.

Local retailers and restaurants account for about 2,000 turkeys, and about 600 families order their birds and pick them up at the farm store, which is a thriving business unto itself. Along with the turkeys, customers pick up pies, cranberry relish, and stuffing. One freezer is filled with a great variety of homemade soup, including many vegan and vegetarian offerings. Two more freezers feature cooked dinners, ranging from single serving turkey dinners and turkey pot pies to turkey-kale lasagna and shepherd's pie, to jambalaya and summer squash casserole, and a host of others.

Customers say they appreciate the wholesomeness of foods prepared with simple natural ingredients, without additives and preservatives.

The farm grows basil and garlic, but primarily buys from Laughing Dog Farm, Fosters, and Seeds of Solidarity — wherever possible using local produce in their cooked food dishes. Annie Diemand is in charge of the kitchen, but credits much of the cooking to Doreen Stevens, who was lured to the farm in 2001 to help cook Thanksgiving dinners. She came back in 2002 and has been working there ever since, 20 - 24 hours a week.

All told, there are four part timers working in the kitchen, each with specialty dishes. Though hot turkey dinners with all the fixings are no longer available for Thanksgiving, they can be ordered on other occasions. The catering side of the business continues to grow beyond the well-known chicken

see **DIEMAND** pg 15

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**NOTES FROM ERVING SELECTBOARD****Goodwin Will Not Seek Re-Election**

BY KATIE NOLAN - Chair Andrew Goodwin informed fellow selectboard members he would not be running for re-election when his term ends in 2011. He mentioned family responsibilities and his demanding career schedule as reasons for deciding not to run again.

Town administrator Tom Sharp told the selectboard the Montague selectboard has agreed to meet with them on December 9th regarding costs for the recently completed improvements at the Ervingwater treatment facility.

Earlier this fall, Erving asked Montague to discuss sharing costs for the upgrade. Sharp told the board the Montague selectboard was now "armed with all the data they should need to talk with us."

Sharp said Pete Sanders of the water department and a Tighe and Bond consultant had developed a spreadsheet categorizing costs for the \$5.2 million upgrade. He noted that the treatment plant shares the building with the Erving highway department, and Erving should assume 100% of the capital costs relating to the highway department use of the building.

The selectboard signed the \$1.9 million contract with MCMUSA, the general contractor for the senior center building project, and approved the notice to proceed. According to these documents, the project has a starting date of November 19th, 2010 and a completion date of September 21st, 2011. Bruce Hunter, owner's project manager for the project, said MCMUSA

would start work on Monday, November 22nd. A groundbreaking ceremony for the project was held at noon on that day.

Hunter and the board briefly discussed a change order from the architect for adding either a temporary or permanent generator to the building, in order to make it useful as an emergency shelter. Fire chief Bud Meattay said the senior center is listed as a fallout shelter in town emergency plans.

Goodwin remarked the senior center is not needed as an emergency center, because the Erving Elementary School, just down the road, is already outfitted as an emergency shelter. He added, "If the town of Erving wants to end up with a tax rate as high as everyone else's, keep spending away."

Administrator Tom Sharp said five licensed wastewater treatment operators and nine unlicensed individuals applied for the town's open wastewater treatment facility maintenance position. Sharp, DPW head Paul Prest and water department head Sanders will screen the applicants and recommend two or three candidates to the selectboard. The selectboard will select the finalist after interviews. Sharp estimated the process would take approximately one month.

The state Department of Revenue has certified the town's free cash at \$809,336, down from last year's free cash total of about \$1.3 million. Sharp said there was less free cash this year because the selectboard has been tighter on budgeting.

Goodwin recommended the selectboard look at the year end numbers and determine the "drivers" for the free cash account. "Where do we need to get better in the budget process to reduce free cash?" he asked.

Finance committee chair Stanley Gradowski attended, saying he didn't yet have enough information to present budget information to the board for the coming fiscal year. Gradowski told the board, "I like the direction you're going." He predicted this year the budget would be "facing a more prudent town meeting."

Regarding the free truck tractor offered by the state that had been discussed at previous meetings, Meattay agreed to provide an estimate of costs to make the vehicle useful as fire equipment. He said the state would hold onto the truck until the town makes a decision about whether to accept it.

Meattay said the fire department would conduct hydrant flushing before the first snow, after notifying the water department and public.

The selectboard approved the installation of a guying pole to stabilize a utility pole near 190 Mountain Road. National Grid spokesperson Rich Nalewski said the current pole (#43) is leaning toward the residential driveway and the conductor wire is sagging.

The selectboard concluded the open meeting and went into executive session to discuss the character or reputation of an individual and to get an update on Erving Elementary School Union #28 contract negotiations.

**NOTES FROM GILL SELECTBOARD****Save It or Spend It?**

BY DAVID DETMOLD The town of Gill has the problem of figuring out what to do with an extra \$38,121.

Last Thursday's district meeting finally settled on a \$16.4 million operating budget for the Gill-Montague Regional School District for the current school year. That agreement wound up asking \$1,349,745 for Gill's school assessment, \$38,121 less than what Gill voters had originally approved to fund the district schools at annual town meeting.

Now, the question is what to do with the windfall.

"My choice would be to have a special town meeting and put that money away for next year," Ann Banash told her fellow selectboard members on Monday. "It's the only prudent thing to do."

But town administrative coordinator Ray Purington said there were a number of other line items competing for funds.

"We're about \$4,200 less than budgeted for Four Winds School's rent," Purington said. The town gave the private middle school a \$350 per month discount on the rent this school year, due to the school's low enrollment. Banash said the town was still breaking even on the basic costs of the building, even at the current rental agreement of \$500 a month for Four Winds.

"We felt it was better to have someone in the building," Banash explained.

Additionally, Purington said the town appears to have overestimated the amount of new growth when the FY'11 was being prepared, by about \$4000.

"It's a horrible year for new growth," said

Purington. "I projected about \$20,000, half of what we got last year." But the proof is in the building permits.

Also, Purington said the town will have to budget an additional \$2,000 for FY'11 for veterans benefits, an amount for which the town will eventually receive 75% reimbursement from the state.

All of these items could either be taken from free cash, or from the remainder from the school assessment.

That discussion will get settled at a special town meeting on Monday, December 20th, at 6:30 p.m.

The selectboard may also put a warrant article on the town meeting agenda to accept a provision of state law that would allow restaurants and other facilities with on premises pouring licenses to serve alcoholic beverages for two hours before the current noon start time on Sunday mornings.

"Brunch has become so big," said Banash, explaining the motivation for the change in state law, "and people can't have their mimosas and Bloody Marys."

As he stared at the remaining agenda items, selectboard chair John Ward said glumly, "I haven't had a Bloody Mary before noon on Sunday in years."

Banash countered, "I'd

be asleep by noon if I did."

Due to "the town of Gill's favorable loss history," the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association has offered Gill a 10% discount on last year's rates, in exchange for early sign up for property, liability insurance and worker's compensation.

The selectboard took MIIA up on this offer, and also agreed to police chief David Hasting's request to spend \$822 to replace a rusted panel on the body of the department's 2004 Ford Explorer. The selectboard, while agreeing to the purchase order, urged the chief to first see if the Franklin County Tech School could do the work as a body shop project, rather than take the reasonable bid from Doug's Auto Body.

The board approved Hasting's request to hire two part time officers: Todd Mongeon and Cody Guilbault.

Finally, the board seemed pleased to note that building permits will soon be available on line through the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection office, so people will no longer have to journey over to the county courthouse to get them.

"Good," said Ward. "I never liked getting frisked to get a building permit. When I walk into the building inspector's office putting on my belt, I know I'm in trouble."

**Learning from Local Food Producers**

The Wendell local food subcommittee is inviting area farmers and food producers to an open forum to discuss how a local food coordinator can be the most effective in increasing local food

independence. We are hungry for your ideas!

Anyone is invited to attend on Monday November 29th, 7:00 p.m., at the Wendell town office building.

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UP TO THE MINUTE TECHNOLOGY  
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**FARM from page 11**

ing local business. Ryan Voiland is a Montague native, and bit of a local legend. The popular Old Depot farmstand on Turners Falls Road near the village of Montague Center was his version of a lemonade stand when he was still in middle school. He started off picking and selling wild berries, but soon learned the enterprise could be more profitable if he took over his father's vegetable garden. By the end of high school, Ryan's market garden had outgrown the acre plot his parents owned, and he began farming rented land on Hatchery Road.

Voiland continued to grow his business while he studied crop production and farm management at Cornell University. After graduating, he purchased the 20 acres in Granby that became the backbone for Red Fire Farm. Sarah, who farmed in Stafford Springs, CT before she met and married Ryan, joined him there. "His farm was bigger," she explained.

In addition to the original farmstand in Montague, the farmstand in Granby, wholesale accounts, and farmers markets, Voiland began marketing produce through CSA shares (that's Community Supported Agriculture — where customers buy a share in the farm and receive weekly allotments of fresh produce and local groceries throughout the growing season) in 2001. Since then, the CSA program (through Red Fire Farm and Common Wealth CSA) has expanded to 1400 seasonal shares and a members-only pick-your-own field.

A "farmstand member" program, where customers purchase an advance credit good for any Red Fire market and receive a ten-percent discount, is a more flexible option for community members who want to invest in, and reap the benefits of, Red Fire.

"I think it's important to eat local as much as possible all year," said Ryan. By growing more root vegetables for storage to distribute in the colder months, growing hardy greens (such as spinach, salad mix, baby brassicas, and arugula) year-round in

unheated greenhouses, and outsourcing local dairy, cheese, flour, and value added products from other local producers, Red Fire currently has about 800 shareholders receiving groceries in the extended season, and another 250 receiving produce in the deep winter. Red Fire has started selling at the winter markets in Springfield, Amherst, and Wayland.

The farming population at Red Fire has needed to grow to keep up with their expanding customer base. There are currently 45 to 50 employees working during the growing season at Red Fire. About a dozen of these employees work year-round.

Many of the seasonal employees are "people in their 20s who only farm for a year or two," but some, like the Voilands, find their vocation in the fields. Former Red Fire interns have gone on to found the Mighty Food Farm in Pownal, VT; Hamlet Organic Gardens in Brookhaven, NY; and Stone Soup Farm in Belchertown.

"We try to provide education and experience. We've been trying to figure out what the steps are to becoming an effective farmer, and we want to try to give people these skills. Working for a farm of Red Fire's scale gives people a good idea of how to grow things. We're so diverse in what we grow and the seasons we grow in that I think we can provide a really exceptional experience," said Voiland. "We're always looking for good people interested in farm work."

By valuing their employees, nurturing their land, producing a staggering amount of high-quality produce, and maintaining a diversified marketing strategy that attempts to compensate for the value of the entire farming operation instead of its isolated products, Red Fire Farm is an example of a cornerstone business in an enduring, thriving rural economy.

But statewide and national trends inflating the price of real estate have threatened Red Fire's long term viability. To have enough space to grow all this food, the Voilands began renting

land from neighbors with annual leases. Much of this land is prime for development. Facing a very real risk of losing land they were dependent on, "We were feeling the farm was in a vulnerable place," Voiland said.

Which is why when two adjacent farms went up for sale on Meadow Road in Montague, containing 45 acres of cropland with some of the most fertile soils in the country, the Voilands knew they had to act, and purchased both farms. "It was a financial stress initially," said Ryan Voiland, "but we felt it was important to achieve long term sustainability."

One of the properties, the former



mer Tuvec Farm, had been made affordable through the Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) Program — a state program that buys the development rights to farmland, keeping the cash value of the property low enough to ensure its viability as farmland. The other property, the former Blue Meadow Farm, which the Voilands purchased mainly for its extensive greenhouses and other farm infrastructure, was not protected under the APR Program.

"Mount Grace Land Trust has been really helpful in this process," said Ryan Voiland. Mount Grace Land Trust, an organization which has spent the past quarter-century helping landowners in 23 area towns preserve the local landscape, helped the Voilands make the purchase. They acted as a financial intermediary between the state and the seller of Blue Meadow Farm, fronting the cash for the development rights which would later be purchased by the Massachusetts APR program.

Even with the offset from the sale of the development rights, "There are still a lot of issues with the affordability of the land," said Voiland. A house lot

on the property is excluded from the APR and had to be purchased by the Voilands at market value. In fact, all structures on the property have been excluded from the APR, a complication that can have large economic repercussions for a farm like Red Fire that depends on greenhouses for growing starts and winter greens.

This is a chronic gap in farmland affordability that Mount Grace is interested in bridging.

"We are pursuing an innovative approach to purchase all of the land of Red Fire Farm in Montague and install a farm affordability mechanism," said Leigh Youngblood, president of the Mount Grace Land Trust.

While Mount Grace is still in "feasibility mode," waiting to reach a minimum of funds before the plan goes public, the land trust has started accepting restricted donations towards the purchase of the Red Fire Farm property. So far, Mount Grace has raised more than \$65,000 for this project. (Interested in donating? Go to [www.mountgrace.org](http://www.mountgrace.org) to learn more.)

"We do expect this project to be successful because (Red Fire) is a great farm. This is a valuable concept, and it fills a need that is widely recognized," said Youngblood.

If purchased, Mount Grace will hold the land as a community resource, and give access to the Voilands in the form of a 99-year inheritable lease. The Voilands will own existing farm structures and any improvements they make on the land. The Voilands (or their posterity) must actively farm the land. If they sell the land, they must sell everything, including the farm buildings, at a price that an incoming farmer can afford. This concept, which allows the whole farming operation to be kept permanently affordable, was minted by the Equity Trust, Inc. ([www.equitytrust.org](http://www.equitytrust.org)) headquartered at 177 Avenue A in Turners Falls.

"The price of farmland is the single biggest barrier to a farm business," said Youngblood. "The APR program does not apply to houses. Farmers can buy farmland, but can't afford farm

buildings and housing. Whole farm affordability combines an existing program to make the whole farm affordable. It's an important step we're really excited about."

Said Ryan Voiland, "This transaction would ensure our viability in the future, ensure that we can pay our employees a living wage, and ensure the perpetuity of the farm."

The Pioneer Valley contains some of the most fertile, and endangered, cropland in the country: the floodplain of the Connecticut River. "Good farm soil is a very rare, invaluable natural resource that cannot be replaced," said Youngblood.

The Voilands have a vested interest in maintaining the soil's natural fertility. While they plan to move 75% of their growing operation up to Montague by 2012, the Voilands are resting the land — which has been depleted by years of use by tenant farmers — under cover crops while they transition the fields to organic production. After that, they're not planning to grow their farming operation much in the next few years. Said Ryan Voiland, "We'll have more land available, but we'll also be seeking to improve our rotations," to rebuild soil fertility.

Impatient to have Red Fire as a neighbor? The Old Depot Farm Stand will be up and running next year, with a new perk for farmstand members: a new pick-your-own field will be open on Meadow Road. "A lot of people don't have time to garden extensively. Pick-your-own is kind of like a member's personal garden," said Ryan. With a startling variety of crops lined up to be grown — including 20-30 varieties of cherry tomatoes (that's not counting other tomato varieties), ground cherries, tomatillos, raspberries, strawberries, peas, beans, fresh herbs, and hot peppers — few would blush to call these fields their own.

Red Fire is now looking for housing for farm workers, especially in the vicinity of Meadow Road, and additional farmland to rent in or near Montague. Call 413-467-7645 for more details.



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# Erving Senior Center Breaks Ground



BETSY SICARD PHOTO  
 Senior Center director Polly Kiely (right to left), Erving council on aging chair Collis Adams, selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo, and representative Christopher Donelan toss the first shovelfuls of dirt at the Erving Senior Center groundbreaking on Monday, as senior center committee members Leo Parent, Jr., Bruce Bezio, AnnMarie Gilbert and Carole Lyman look on admiringly.

**BY DAVID DETMOLD** - A little wind and rain could not spoil this party!

At least 50 people turned out on Monday at noon for the groundbreaking ceremony at the site of the new Erving senior center. Senior center director Polly Kiely was there, with about 30 seniors who are looking forward to the day they can move in and begin to stretching out in the spacious new activities room.

That day should come sometime in late September of next year, when the \$2.4 million, 6,000 square foot senior center on Route 63, just north of the Erving Elementary School, will be ready for use, if general contractor MCMUSA keeps to schedule.

Monday was a day for celebrating for the dedicated group of Erving seniors, who persevered over two failed town meeting votes to finally win

approval for their new center in May. Collis Adams, who chaired the council on aging through the dark days of defeat to the final victorious vote, held one of the gold plated (or perhaps gold spray painted) shovels provided by highway superintendent Paul Prest, who will act as the town's clerk of the works for the project.

Lending a touch of old time charm to the proceedings, Kim Gregory, in costume as the Town Crier, unfurled a proclamation pronouncing this a great day for the senior citizens of Erving, and thanking the movers and shakers who helped to make it happen - AnnMarie Gilbert, Marge Clark, Carole Lyman, Jean Black, Louise Goloh, Kiely, Adams, and many others.

Outgoing state representative Chris Donelan was there to heft a shovelful of dirt. So was Erving selectboard member

Eugene Klepadlo. Among the others gathered near were MCMUSA owner Scott D'Entremont, Jacquie Boyden, who now chairs the building committee, John Catlin, of Quincy, the project's architect, and town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp.

Sharp, who is responsible for arranging these things, said, "Miraculously, the weather cleared just at 11:30. I was afraid we were going to have 30 seniors coming down with colds."

As insurance against that eventuality, Kiely ushered all the attendees back to the current senior center on Pleasant Street, where they crowded around for soup and sandwiches. They won't have to crowd around much longer. The dining area in the new senior center will be big enough for everyone and their uncle to find a seat.

**CHEESE** from page 1  
 the goodies he could reach. His big sister, Hannah, also enjoyed that tactic. Their neighbor, Isaac Damon, also 6, never ate a bite of cheese, but downed nearly a box of not-made-in-Gill crackers smuggled in by NMH School farmers.

Both Upinngil and NMH School Farm produce dairy products year round: milk, cheese, ice cream (yes, ice cream!) New for 2010, NMH

School Farm now uses some of its cow milk to produce their own ice cream, with other farm produce such as raspberries and maple syrup for flavoring.

NMH School Farm is not the only Gill-made ice cream. The Wagon Wheel restaurant has gotten into making its own ice cream with unconventional (and tasty) flavors as Mexican Chocolate, Apple Pie, and Coffee & Donuts.

Do not fret that your vegetable garden will soon be cov-

ered in snow. Laughing Dog Farm and the Gill Greenery use plenty of agricultural know-how to keep greens growing all winter long. And, before all the snow melts into the Connecticut, Gill maple producers will be tapping trees, the harbinger of another Gill growing season!

*Steve Damon is the chair of Gill agricultural commission.*



# It's Unanimous! Voters Back G-M Budget

**BY BILL DRAKE**

**GILL-MONTAGUE** - Four years of political and budgetary battles between the towns of Montague and Gill and their regional school district ended in harmony and compromise on Thursday, November 18th, as a unanimous Yes resounded from town meeting members on a motion to approve a \$16.4 million FY'11 operating budget for the district.

This number represents a level funded budget from FY'10. The compromise approved Thursday included the town of Montague agreeing to spend an additional \$200,000 in reserves above the amount already committed, and the school district agreeing to spend about \$235,000 more from reserves than the amount the district had previously committed, in order to bring down the assessments to the towns.

All voters attending the special district budget making meeting in the Turners Falls High School auditorium ratified the budget proposal for the Gill-Montague Regional School District, bringing balance to the school budget and cost certainty to the town selectboards. The vote was a welcome one for superintendent Carl Ladd.

"What this vote does," said Ladd, "is remove the Department [of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)] from exercising fiscal control over the schools."

The new budget marks the first time in four years the towns and schools have reached a budgetary agreement. But, in the new compact, the schools and towns have signed onto a five-year funding strategy, mapping out budgetary goals, to bring long range fiscal stability to the district.

"The Gill selectboard is in full support of this budget," said John Ward, Gill selectboard chair. "The spirit of cooperation is a breath of fresh air."

Art Gilmore, who represents Precinct 2 in Millers Falls on Montague town meeting, said he had not always supported past school budget plans. "I voted against it a couple of times," he admitted. But as he stood up to speak on Thursday, he urged the voters at the meeting to come together and support the compact.

"I thought [the compact] was very fair," said Gilmore after the

voting. "The fact they got the school committee and both town selectboards to come together; they put in all the hard work to give us the opportunity to approve it. How could I not?"

The compact is a compromise for all parties involved. The hardest hit this fiscal year fell on teachers and paraprofessionals. Four teachers, one from every school level, lost their job, while 11 paraprofessionals received pink slips. All told, 18 jobs were lost, reducing the budget by \$604,803 and accounting for nearly 75% of total budget reductions for fiscal year 2011 (FY11).

David Jensen of Montague asked repeatedly for the school committee to consider signing only a one-year contract with the teachers' union as way to keep expenses in line. The school committee has been waiting to receive a review of the district's fiscal capacity from the DESE before ratifying the negotiated contracts for teachers and staff, which remain in limbo.

Asked when he expected that report from the DESE, Ladd said, "November 1st was the deadline. Then [the state] said 'November 18th,' then they said, 'November 19th,' but I haven't heard a whisper out of Malden, so I don't know."

The report from the DESE will also determine if the Gill-Montague school district is still considered to be an 'underperforming' school district, a label that brings with it an added level of scrutiny and support from the state.

"We really need that report," said Ladd. "That's going to be the indicator, I think, of where we end up. I think one of the problems from the [DESE's] standpoint is that the district hasn't had the fiscal capacity, because we haven't been able to pass a budget."

But with Thursday's affirmative vote, the towns and the school district are one step closer to pulling their schools back into the black. This action may lend support to the state's removing the 'underperforming' label from the school district.

"With the ability to pass a budget, and a proven ability to work together and come up with a solution, I am hoping that that will carry some weight, but I don't know," said Ladd. "We'll have to see."

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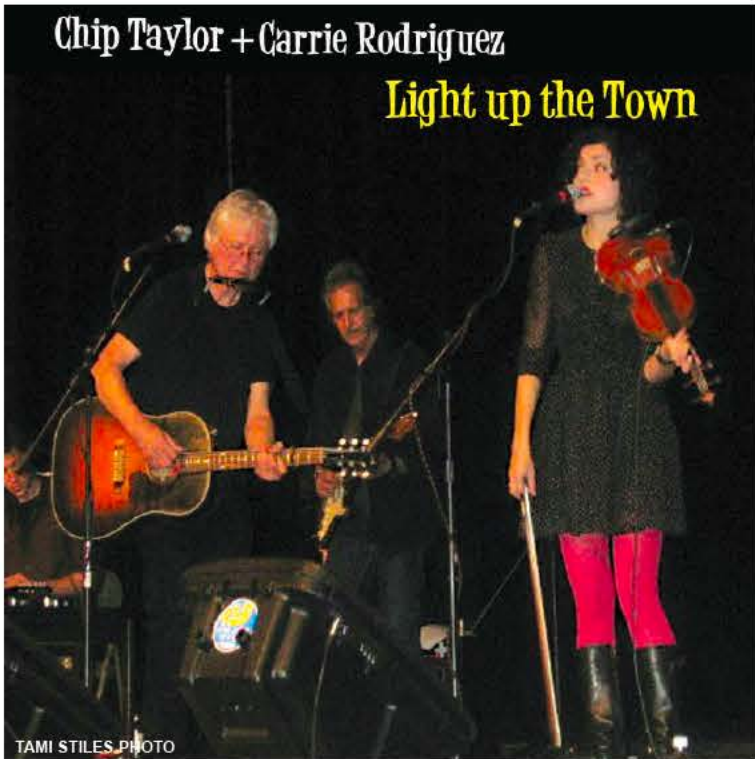
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TAMI STILES PHOTO  
Chip Taylor (left) and Carrie Rodriguez, with Hans Holzen (background left) and John Platania (background, center) at the Shea Theater Sunday night

**Chip Taylor + Carrie Rodriguez**  
**Light up the Town**

**BY TAMI STILES**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - The house was packed at the Shea Theater as PowerTown music presented Chip Taylor and Carrie Rodriguez on Sunday night.

Featuring songs from their recently released greatest hits album, *The New Bye and Bye*, with four new tracks including "On an Island" and "Play it Again Sam," Taylor and Rodriguez brought back to the Pioneer Valley old favorites intertwined with stellar new songs.

With a laid back honky tonk style, these two delivered a performance that kept the audience in a toe tapping mood throughout the show.

Speaking of toe tappers, "Don't Speak in English" received resounding applause

that rolled on and on, to which Taylor could only respond with "Oh gosh, this is something," as he beamed at the audience.

They slowed it down a bit with songs such as, "Him Who Saved Me," and "On an Island," received with attentive ears and a still house.

Rodriguez's vocals and fiddle stylings on "Keep your Hat on Jenny" easily transported a listener to a hootin' nanny, minus the haybales and frosty beverages.

Speaking of beverages, Taylor likes to sing about whiskey, so they cranked up the room, and busted out "Must be the Whiskey." Laphroaig's his current favorite. With a warm lead guitar and smooth moves from the upright bassist and steel guitarist, the song was met with a strong partici-

pation from the audience. Evidently people like songs about whiskey, because once again the Shea was ricocheting with applause.

"Wild Thing" bounced off the walls of the theater, with many of the voices from our Valley singing right along. I do believe there was a little air guitar being played by a few members of the audience.

Powertown provided a hot ticket on a cold November night. Chip Taylor and Carrie Rodriguez combined their formidable talents and sparked both a real wild time and a laid back honky tonk in the old Shea Theater.

*The New Bye and Bye* is a great place to spend some time with friends like these, with or without the whiskey.

**Talking Wild Turkey**

**BY JEN DOWNS**

**TURNERS FALLS** - Nature writer and game caller Joe Judd shared turkey facts and turkey lore, close-range photos of Eastern Wild turkeys and even

offered an interactive opportunity to try a wooden box call for a small but appreciative crowd at the Great Falls Discovery Center last Thursday.

Judd grew up in New York

state and became an avid outdoorsman in his teen years. While much of his experience has been with hunting, Judd said he feels "a kindred spirit to the wild turkey," and reminded folks that hunters make excellent conservation agents.

Ben Franklin's suggestion that the turkey, with its red, white and blue coloring, would make a good national bird lost out to the American Bald Eagle, but Judd shared plenty of reasons why the turkey is one of America's true icons.

Due to conservation efforts, there are now more wild turkeys in the state of Massachusetts than there were at the time of the landing of the Mayflower. With few natural predators, their numbers have risen beyond an estimated 50,000 birds, and may double before they reach their natural limit.

By the early 1900s, turkeys had all but disappeared in Massachusetts, due to hunting and loss of habitat. In the mid-1950s, turkeys from Alabama were brought to the Quabbin region in an early restoration effort. The southern birds could not acclimate to harsh New England winters, and they soon died out.

But in 1974, through the

efforts of Jim Cardoza of Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife, 36 birds from New York were introduced in Franklin and Berkshire counties. These three dozen birds, through careful conservation measures, soon multiplied to the current numbers.

The open farmlands of our area were vitally important to their successful reintroduction. Turkeys forage on farm fields during the winter. Wild turkeys provide benefits to the farmer as well, by fertilizing and, in their own way, tilling the soil as they scratch for food.

Almost every American child has outlined their handprint in school, to draw a turkey for the holidays. Here is a list of some facts about these amazing birds:

Turkeys are born as chicks in late May. The weather of the first 10 - 12 days of their lives, usually in late May or early June determines if they will make it to the fledging stage (yes, turkeys can fly!) The biggest threat to the turkey population is a cold, wet spring, as young chicks will chill



JEN DOWNS PHOTO  
A stuffed turkey at the Great Falls Discovery Center, in a diorama display.

and die easily.

Mature male turkeys are called toms or gobblers. They can weigh up to 30 pounds, have the full tail feathers, a beard that hangs from the breast (looks like horse tail hair, but actually feathers), the iconic bright-red wattle on the neck and the snood (that wobbly bit over the beak). The larger all of these features are, the older the turkey is and the more desirable to females, Judd said.

Adult female turkeys are called hens. They lack the large tail, and display more muted colors. **see TURKEY pg 15**

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*On Turkey Day, we thought readers might appreciate reading this first installment from Patricia Pruitt's travels along the Golden Horn.*

## First Weeks in Istanbul

**BY PATRICIA PRUITT** - I arrive in Istanbul just before midnight, about 40 minutes late. As I head for passport control, one immediate difference I notice is both visible and audible: the language, written and spoken. I know only the Turkish word for bread (ekmek), a word not likely to be needed in passing through passport control.

My passport with visa carries me through in seconds and I am officially in Turkey. Fatigue, rather than anxiety, is the next hurdle. I still have to face picking up my 55 pound duffle bag at baggage claim. I'm impressed; the bags are rolling out onto the carousel. There it is. The prospect of carrying it or pulling it makes me decide to get a cart.

To do that, I need to exchange dollars for Turkish lira. I do that, and insert two lira into the slot mechanism to rent a cart. The coins stick, neither going in nor coming out.

Back to the luggage carousel. Now my bag is nowhere to be seen! I also note that my husband, Christopher, whose flight arrived earlier and who was to meet me

in baggage claim, is nowhere in sight.

I try telling the baggage handlers about my missing bag. They tell me all the bags from my flight have been claimed. If someone had taken the wrong bag, there would be a similar bag left, and there are none. They suggest I check with them in the morning.

Not having the bag is by far worse than having to pull it around. Maybe I'll do better finding my husband.

I exit the baggage area, scanning the faces in the line of people waiting for passengers. No Chris. Then happily I spot him far down the room talking to a service person. Next to him I see my duffle bag. He explained he was trying to have me paged since I was probably lost somewhere in the airport.

About 1:30 a.m. we arrive at #40 Cimen Sok (sounds like cheemen soak) in the Fener district of Istanbul, our home for the next nine months.

The Fener district has been traditionally a Greek neighborhood and is the home of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in



BJØRN CHRISTIAN TØRRISSEN PHOTO

The Blue Mosque photographed from the Sultanahmet Park early in the morning, before the fountain is turned on.

Istanbul. History tells us that on two occasions, in 1923 and again in 1950, the Turkish Greeks (called Rums by the Ottoman rulers) were driven from Turkey. Greece in retaliation likewise drove Greek Turks from Greece. Nonetheless there are still Greeks living in the Fener neighborhood.

The neighborhood is also home to many Turks, and foreigners as well. A new pressure on the area comes from would-be developers who visualize high priced real estate along the Golden Horn, the park and waterway that borders Fener.

The end of my first week in Istanbul was dramatically marked and marred by a suicide bombing resulting in the death of

the bomber, and injuring 32 people, 15 of them policemen. It happened on Sunday, the weekend of the birthday of the Turkish Republic, in Taksim square.

Taksim is a recently developed, upscale pedestrian shopping district. The shops here are mostly Western and European brand names such as the Body Shop, Benneton, and sleek new shops such as Pink. Taksim is accessible by dozens of bus lines, the metro, taxis, and cars. It is bustling at all hours, not surprising since Istanbul is a city of approximately 16 million.

Crowds are never lacking wherever you go. Here people are more numerous than trees; in Montague I'd wager the trees are

more numerous.

The bombing took place on the last day of a ceasefire between the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) and the Turkish government. The PKK denied doing the bombing and has since extended the ceasefire with the agreement of the Turkish government. The theory now is that the bomber was a member of a separatist wing of the PKK.

Days after the bombing, we walk through Taksim Square around 4 p.m. on a sunny weekday. There are no police gathered in the square, as there are on weekends. There is no sign of any disturbance at all.

Everywhere we look, people

see **ISTANBUL** pg 13

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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

Poetry Page edited by Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno and Janel Nockleby

Readers are invited to send poems to the Montague Reporter at 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376; or email us your poetry at reporter-poems@montaguema.net

design by Boysen Hodgson

### Invitation

Voices drift across the lawn  
and curl in the shape of clovers. A slight breeze  
bezels the fishpond, lens  
of grainy light, black

cord covered with electric tape. Kneel  
on the concrete. Tile, sedge.

Koi ghost out  
to meet you, blunt-  
edged hunger curving  
blindly up.

Take this bract that rises and subsides.

Butterscotch or red and white,  
their bodies slick  
as sorrow, lathered  
with the cold, unseemly weed.

Elsewhere, there's a napkin.  
Clink of glasses, square of kitchen light.

Elsewhere, a pair of pliers  
spreads  
its intricate beak.  
A hooded sweatshirt gestures  
from the bottom of a lake.

Here, put these on. You're going to need  
the leather gloves I tossed off in the shed.

Speech is just an instrument to register  
the night. I offer

you no hook, no tool,  
nothing to make fast

no metal implement with which to cut or mend.

--Anne Shaw

Providence, RI

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and Michael Muller**

### What Things May Come

What things may come to  
those who dare to dream

To those who dare to  
change the course  
of their own history.

What things may come  
to those of us who  
stand and say no more.

To those of us who  
ask what if...

What things may  
come without  
the thought that  
kept us here.

--Elizabeth L. Freeman  
Montague

### Lunula Rising

Reaching up toward  
That starched white round  
With extended arms  
And fingers stretched wide  
Our own earthbound  
Lunula crescent  
Spreads keratin  
No less sublime  
Across its own matrix of time  
Its cuticle encrusted  
In lofty rime  
The silt beneath our nails  
Sprouting a meadow of dreams  
Just beyond  
What can be seen

--Gini Brown  
Berkeley

### When I jumped

When I jumped  
I jumped hard  
I jumped long  
I jumped foolishly  
But...  
Is there any other way?

A hop is frivolity, of no consequence  
A leap is an orchestration of the mind  
A skip mere merriment  
A jump is full throttle revolution

A jump requires suspension of the mental machine and  
Engagement of the heart muscle  
Release of the emotional security of barbed wire  
Relinquishment of the perpetual past  
And the nerve of steel reserved for this kind of moment

When I jumped I was out of my mind,  
in my heart and free  
Of the gravitational pull  
of the last jump

--Trish Casimira  
Shutesbury, MA

### Tide line

A rope  
of indifference  
kelp feathers tar  
and shells snakes  
to infinity

From this  
dry pungent  
margin set by  
August moon  
a periwinkle shell  
rubbed between  
thumb and forefinger  
resurrects  
an entire child

at her swing

my friends' young daughter  
dispenses  
wisdom from her small world  
and I learn some things

--Art Stein

Northfield

### Attendant

So slowly the leaf twirls  
its carrot colors  
swinging to the ground  
a song it sings every fall  
and it doesn't know  
how it learned it  
how to change it colors  
or how to fall

--Laura Rodley



## ALL SMALL CAPS



Anne Shaw



a night of spoken word

### Trish Casimira



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We dedicate this poetry page to the memory of Art Stein, architect, poet, friend.

### CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

Trish Casimira is a contributing author and assistant editor of Michael Newton's newest book *Memories of the Afterlife*. She is a hypnotherapist.

Anne Shaw is the author of *Undertow* (Persea Books), winner of the Lexi Rudnitsky Poetry Prize. Her work has

appeared or is forthcoming in *The Harvard Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Drunken Boat*, *Green Mountains Review*, and *New American Writing*. She has also been featured in *Poetry Daily* and *From the Fishhouse*.

Elizabeth Freeman is a Montague Center native. The motto of her business is "Everybody needs an ELF." As one who is thriving, Elizabeth wishes to dedicate this poem to the Thrive Project. To learn more about The Thrive Project visit [www.thethriveproject.org](http://www.thethriveproject.org).

Laura Rodley teaches *As You Write It* at Montague Senior Center and has new chapbook *Your Left Front Wheel* is *Coming Loose* released this fall.

Art Stein lived in Northfield, was one of the founding members of *Slate Roof Press*, and a well-known local architect.

He wrote poems in the Japanese forms of *Tanka* and *Senryu*, in addition to free verse.

Gini Brown is a Berkeley mom watching life go by and kids grow up. Some moments feel like poetry.

## Contempt Order for Village Center Building Work



JOSEPH A. PARZYCH PHOTO

At 34 East Main Street in Millers Falls, Jeanne Golrick stands by the front door, where a sign in the window reads, "I have the authority to do it even if I don't have it."—David Jensen." Golrick said this was a direct quote from Montague's building inspector, who has taken Golrick to court for working on the building without a permit, and for code violations.

**JONATHAN VON RANSON**  
MILLERS FALLS — A number of buildings on the main street in downtown Millers Falls need work, but town officials aren't

happy with some of the work that's being done to them. In fact, they're in litigation with one of the parties, Jeanne Golrick, who they say is doing renovations on

obtained a contempt order allowing the town to board up 34 East Main Street, one of the vacant properties in question.

This week, Jensen said the

two buildings in the village center.

Montague building inspector David Jensen says Golrick has refused to cooperate with his office by failing to take out permits and to correct violations involving junk cars and improperly stored waste oil.

Consequently, in September the town of Montague took Golrick to court and

building has not yet been boarded up, pending the job being contracted out. He also mentioned that work appeared to have ceased on it since the court order, though work appears to be continuing on the building to the rear of #34. Jensen said the ownership of both buildings is unclear.

Golrick initially agreed to an interview with the Reporter to discuss the stand-off, but later called to cancel that appointment, saying her attorney had advised her not to talk to the press.

The problem has been ongoing for the better part of a year.

Jensen finally inspected 34 East Main Street this summer after obtaining a court order, and cited Golrick for failure to take out permits for plumbing, electrical and drywall work, and for turning a one-family house into a two-family. Her failure to respond to the citations prompted the September court action and contempt order.

Elizabeth Stinehart, spokesperson for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, said her agency con-

ducted two site inspections at the property, including the garage at the rear, on September 22nd and October 21st, and found a large quantity of what appeared to be waste oil stored improperly there. The DEP ordered Golrick to clean up the oil within 120 days, using the services of a licensed site professional.

Downtown Millers Falls is only a few blocks long, and Tammy Berard, one of the owners of the Millers Falls Pub, remarked that she's unhappy about the appearance of the other side of her street, East Main. "As a business owner in Millers Falls, when you're trying to build up the town, it's hard when you look across the street and nothing's being done," she said. "It's not just [#34], it's also the ones surrounding it. If they could at least keep the front cleaned up, with weed whacking and things, it would be better."

Berard added, "There's no parking in this town. If there's a condemned building, maybe take it down for parking. Or put in a laundromat."

**ISTANBUL** from pg 11  
are engaged in shopping, eating, talking, catching a bus, buying flowers, meeting friends, hurrying to an appointment, in life ongoing.

Here in Fener, we live a few doors up from a grammar school. School begins at 8 a.m. and ends at 5:30 for younger students, at 6 p.m. for older ones. This morning and once a week, at least, there are outdoor assemblies in the schoolyard where individual students make a speech in rousing tones to their classmates, who cheer sporadically throughout the speech. Each speech is carried over loudspeakers, so the neighborhood participates, willingly or not.

This past Saturday we took a tour of the 550-year-old Greek school, once for boys only, but now coed. At this time there are only 50 students. The science room is also the art room. There are cabinets filled with 19th century teaching materials, including some frightening examples of taxidermy, including what looks like a vampire bat, and a miniature ape-like creature straight out of Hollywood horror movies. The assembly hall is quite ornate and formal. The building exterior is a fortress-like brick facade with tile and stone inserts breaking up the brick surface.

Next, we go down the narrow, winding hill a few doors to what once, 30 years ago, was the girls' school.

With us is a young woman

named Maria who is the daughter of a Greek-American mother and a Turkish-Greek father whose family were forced out in the 1950's expulsion of Greeks and came to the U.S., settling in New Jersey. Maria is hoping to discover some of her family history during the year she is staying in Turkey, and plans to write a novel about those experiences.

The girls' school is in poor repair. The books left in the bookcases were published in the early 19th century and include a French translation of Homer's Odyssey, and other classical texts. Even the ancient Greek texts are bilingual, with French facing the Greek.

In one of the classrooms on the first floor we linger over the desks which are bolted to the marble floor and have old-fashioned lift-up tops painted yellow. Written on the underside of one desktop is a charming poem addressed, "To My Beloved Desk."

Maria is looking closely at the scribbling around the poem. All of a sudden she says, "Isn't this weird? Here's a name that's exactly the same as my aunt's name." She calls her aunt in Greece on her cell. She asks, "Where did you go to school when you lived in Fener?" By the end of the phone call she knows her aunt was indeed the person whose name was written inside the yellow desk.

As for the run-down building, there is interest in turning it into a restaurant, because the former



IRENE WATSON PHOTO

Jay S. Levy

**HOMELESS** from pg 1  
streets, and if one were to include transitional housing or other homeless programs, the number doubles. Levy said, "Over the course of the year, you can multiply that number by six."

Levy said veterans comprise roughly 13 percent of the homeless population.

Roughly 90 percent of the chronically homeless also have serious substance abuse issues, mental health issues, medical problems or, usually, all those problems combined. Levy, who has been working with homeless populations for over 20 years, said, "We know the people who don't get the help do actually die."

Traditional homeless responses place individuals into an emergency shelter, later to have them

playground has magnificent views of the park and water along the Golden Horn.

Next installment coming soon.

work their way into transitional housing and later still into permanent housing. Levy said earlier models of helping the homeless are usually stymied either by programs demanding clients give up their ways of life or by clients' resistance to change.

An innovation in response to this problem is Housing First, which puts homeless people immediately from the streets into their own apartments. Other issues, like substance abuse or mental health, are addressed only after permanent housing is secured. Levy explained, "It is not just housing. It is housing plus support services."


Levy, who oversees a nine-person Housing First program, said 90 chronically homeless people in Western Massachusetts have been placed into housing over a 20-month period using the new approach. Although he sees his work as a moral concern, Levy said state funders have another reason to like Housing First. "It is quite a bit cheaper to house people with support services."

Getting chronically homeless people into housing is itself a major step. "To the people who say 'they are choosing to be out there,' I say they are out there because they don't see the choices as you see them," Levy continued. "I might think of it as help; they might think of it as disruption. It has to resonate in their world."

"The central question of outreach is how do you help those

who are clearly in need, but who communicate no need for help?" His answer is what Levy calls a pretreatment approach, which focuses first on developing a relationship and building a common language with homeless clients rather than foisting ready-made solutions on them. "The cardinal rule of pretreatment is you start where the people are at."

Levy outlines his pretreatment method in his new book *Homeless Narratives & Pretreatment Pathways: from Words to Housing*. The book provides guidance to human service professionals on the intricacies of outreach and engagement, and housing stabilization strategies for the most vulnerable. Fifteen percent of the book's profits will go to the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Levy's book is available at Boswell's Books (Shelburne Falls), Food for Thought Books (Amherst), and Broadside Books (Northampton), or online via Amazon or Barnes & Noble, as well as through his website: [www.jayslevy.com](http://www.jayslevy.com). 


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**ZONING from pg 1**

ment constrains Bryant from any change of use or commercial activity on the excluded land.

In July, selectboard chair Richard Brazeau told Bryant she had gone around the letter of the law by leasing commercial gravel rights to Roberts and his partner Ed Stone without first notifying the town. By law, the town has the right of first refusal to purchase property once it is removed from Chapter 61-B.

On Thursday, November 18th, a divided zoning board heard competing arguments from attorney Mark Berson, representing abutters Robert and Georgiana Schmid and Peter and Joanne Zabko, and from attorney Mark Tanner, representing Bryant and Roberts.

Berson argued that the board should not grant a special permit for expanded gravel mining on Bryant's property, as it would have a negative impact on the property values of the abutters, would spoil their view of Mount Toby, would create noise, dust, and increased truck traffic, would produce minimal economic benefit for the town, and was not justified by a pressing need. Berson presented an appraisal of the Schmid and Zabko properties performed by Levitch Associates of Greenfield on November 8th of this year. That appraisal found that doubling the size of the current gravel pit (Roberts currently excavates some gravel and runs a landscaping business on acreage purchased previously

from Bryant, abutting her property to the north) would reduce the abutters' property values by 20%.

Tanner presented case law to the zoning board which he said showed that the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court had previously recognized that houses which abut business districts are not worth as much as residences that do not abut commercial districts. That fact cannot be used to disqualify special permits for new businesses in commercial zones, he said. Therefore, the board should not take into consideration the purported decline in property values that may result from enlarging the gravel mining operation in the commercial zone on the west side of Route 63. This is one of Leverett's few commercial zones, and a gravel mining operation may exist by special permit in a commercial zone, Tanner said.

Tanner gave additional case law to the board which he said showed that the board should not consider the impact to an abutter's view in granting a special permit, unless that view is specifically protected by zoning. Zoning in Leverett makes no provision for protecting views.

Berson gave copies of a letter signed by ten abutters or near neighbors to the property, including Art and Grace Meldon, Steve and Jennifer Bergin, Rosie McMahon, Blair Maerowitz, the Zabkos and the Schmidts, which read, in part, "The proposed gravel pit not

only would affect our current and future way of life and health, but would... also have an effect on the ability to sell our homes. Most people would not choose to live directly across from a gravel pit. Many of us have lived in this neighborhood for 35 years, and done our best to be good stewards of the land. We have made improvements to our homes and properties, and take pride in what we have accomplished."

Earlier in the hearing, Tanner presented a revised site plan, delimiting his clients' offer to move the front line of the gravel pit 200 feet back from Route 63, with the rim of the pit shielded behind a berm, to limit the visible impact of the operation.

Nonetheless, Berson said, "A special permit shall be granted by the board only if the proposed use will not have an adverse affect on the town or the neighborhood. My clients are in the neighborhood of this proposal." He added, "This is no longer a neighborhood gravel pit grandfathered in to serve a few customers. This is going to be a serious, commercial gravel operation and it doesn't belong in this neighborhood."

Berson also made the point, "There are half million dollar homes across the way. They didn't sign on for this. This is substantial real estate. This is what this town is all about. Real estate. Rural living. That's what maintains your tax base, your schools, everything."

Bryant pointed out that gravel mining had been going on at her property, off and on, for more than six decades. "If you can't put anything on commercial land because the abutters don't want it, what is the point of having commercial land in Leverett? It is commercial land. They [the abutters] knew that when they bought [their homes]."

After hearing from the lawyers, the board began their discussion of the request. Larry Farber said he did not believe it was Roberta Bryant's responsibility "to maintain the view for the neighbors."

Nancy Paulin said, "I would

hate to be in a situation watching a field across from me get crushed." Nevertheless, she eventually sided with Farber to support the special permit.

Farber continued, "It will affect property values. On the other hand, it is on Route 63, which is the major state road through Leverett. There is commercial traffic up and down that road," regardless of the outcome of the hearing, Farber added.

Farber emphasized the proposed expansion of gravel mining would be taking place in one of Leverett's few commercial zones. "Unfortunately, a gravel pit occupies a special hell in people's thoughts."

Farber said he was not satisfied with the remediation done to the old gravel mining area on Bryant's property, and said he would require a bond from Roberts to insure any land involved in an expansion of gravel mining was eventually restored.

Cynthia Baldwin noted that the property was originally zoned commercial to allow for a greenhouse in the area, a commercial use she said was a far cry from gravel mining. "I don't think zoning that runs down the middle of the road means that is the end of the neighborhood." The commercial zone in question begins on the west side of Route 63, the residential zone adjoins it on the east side.

Brian Werner, who joined Baldwin in opposing the special permit, dismissed the possibility of future restoration after gravel mining. He said, "Wiping out the land is the worst possible use - that's a gravel pit. We're really wiping out what's precious in this town, in the sense that there isn't much open meadow land that's accessible, that you can see from the road."

Richard Godsey, of 446 Long Plain Road, recused himself from voting due to his proximity to the Bryant property. Nonetheless, he made his feelings plain. "I've been 27 years on the board. There have been a number of cases where the board has worked to preserve open land and rural character. It would seem to be in the town's

interest to preserve that meadow. This is a hill town. Brushy Mountain takes up most of the land in Leverett. It's forever when you dig that land up."

Werner suggested the town could make an offer to purchase the meadow land from Bryant using Community Preservation Committee funds. The town's right of first refusal in consideration of the change of use of the land from Chapter 61-B hovered on the border of the board's discussion, but did not specifically weigh on the matter at hand - whether or not to allow the expansion of gravel mining at Bryant's property by special permit.

After moderating the discussion for more than an hour, it was the chair's turn to speak. Don Putnam said, "I can see hardships on both sides. I'm tending to lean toward Larry Farber's view. This is a permitted use in a commercial district. I have seen reclaimed gravel pits that are really very attractive."

He made a reference to reclaimed land in Sunderland, and Baldwin interrupted, "I think that's terrible, along Bull Hill Road. You used to see hills, now you see arbor vitae. There used to be beautiful crops there - now that's all gone."

Putnam persevered. "The two or three lots that are zoned commercial in this town are worth protecting, to allow some commercial use in the town." Speaking of the long-time gravel mining that has gone on at that property, Putnam said, "I'm not convinced the mining activity is going to be any worse than it has been in the last 63 years."

By this, Putnam, who has made a living in the trades himself, recalled that the town of Leverett has long taken gravel from that bank.

In an interview after the meeting, Putnam said, "Roberta Bryant had always given gravel or sold gravel to the town," back when Larry LaClaire was running the gravel pit. "Whether she gave it to them, or charged 25 or 50 cents a yard, the cost of gravel is little to nothing; it's the

see ZONING pg 16

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**TURKEY** from pg 10  
 oration to camouflage their location in the brush. They are very dedicated mothers to their average 12-15 offspring, called a clutch. Hens will lay one egg a day beginning in April, with an incubation period of 28 days. They stay on the ground until the flock learns to roost in trees overnight. Hens rear the entire clutch until the following March.

Hens can be more dangerous than males, as males tend to only be assertive in the mating season, in early spring. Judd said a protective hen can be "one nasty bird!" Hens raise their clutches independent of a mate. If the spring proves to be damaging to the flock, hens can produce a second clutch, but must hurry to ready the group for the quickly coming winter.

Male and female adolescent turkeys tend to look identical until the following spring. Often, the only way to distinguish them from the hens is to compare the width of the breast. A jake, a young male, may display the large tail, but the tail feathers tend to be of various lengths, verses the symmetrical tail of the mature gobbler.

Turkeys make more sounds than just the well-known gobble. There are clucks, purrs and

cuts (an alert call, the turkey equivalent of "get home now!"). The kee-kee is the call of the adolescent bird. Young birds practicing in the woods before learning to fully utilize their throat can sound like a dog yelping in pain. (For an example of this sound, please see the Montague Reporter's blog, [montaguereporter.blogspot.com](http://montaguereporter.blogspot.com) for a video of Joe Judd making this distinct call!)

Turkeys are the eating machines of the bird world! They eat most anything, but popular items are sumac, grasses, hickory nuts, bearberry, crabapples and grasshoppers. They prefer acorns in the fall, as they need to build up a fat packet on their breast for winter. Any item hard to digest is held in the crop, a pocket in the throat, until softened. Turkeys also need to drink daily, so can usually be found near fresh water.

Turkeys have amazing eyesight, but virtually no sense of smell. They can hear well, so it's rare to experience them close at hand. Turkeys can sense movement better than white-tailed deer, Judd said. He explained turkeys are extremely shy; photographing them up close is difficult.

Judd stated, "I guarantee

hunters are no threat to the wild turkey [population]." Turkey season in Massachusetts opened in 1980 with 63 permits. Currently, the state offers a spring and fall season, with 15,000 permits issued annually. Turkeys are hard to hunt, averages of only 2500 birds are actually harvested. In the spring season, only gobblers can be taken, so clutches are not abandoned.

Joe Judd has lived in Shelburne since 1974. He writes for several sporting publications, as well as being a Quaker Boy Game Calls Pro Staff employee. He also hosts the show *On the Ridge* on Shelburne's Falls Cable channel. He was a three term president of the state chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Most of us will see real stuffed turkey on Thanksgiving, but you can see one any time of the year by visiting the Great Falls Discovery Center. To find out more about activities like Judd's presentation, go to their website [www.greatfallsma.org](http://www.greatfallsma.org) or join the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center facebook page.

Happy Turkey Day!



**ONE MORE GUEST EDITORIAL**

**The Best President**

Since MontagueMA.net corkboard subscribers as well as many voters in this nation seem to be busy flushing the Obama presidency down the toilet, let's have a little poll to determine the "best" president since the end of WW2.

I think that would only be fair. Start with Harry "the Buck Stops Here" Truman, to our "Golden Years" under Eisenhower through the Kennedy Camelot and pool parties, to LBJ's New Society and the Vietnam years, to "Tricky Dick" Nixon, to Gerald, "How Did I Become President" Ford, to Jimmy and Billy Carter, to Ronnie Reagan and that monkey, to Bush, "Read My Lips: No New Taxes" the 1st, to Bill, "I Never Had Sex with that Woman," Clinton or "Whitewater, What is

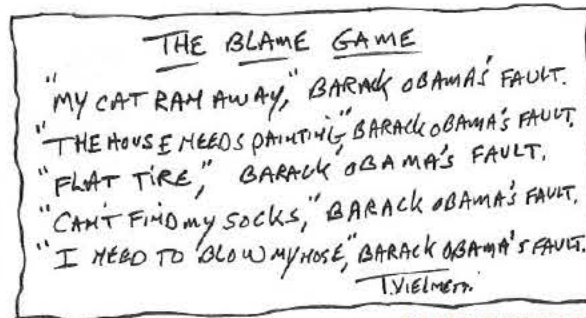
Whitewater?" to Bush the 2nd (P.S. "Dad, Thanks for all the Great Friends you Sent Me, like Dick Cheney") to Obama, "Hey, I've Only Been Here Two Years, Give Me Some Time."

No wonder comedians make a fortune off of American politics. And some of those comedians can be seen nightly on CNN, FOX, CNBC or the Comedy Channel. George Carlin, you died way too soon.

So, to be the first to jump into this highly accurate poll, I vote for President Harry Truman. Yeah, he might have given Eastern Europe to the Soviets after WWII, but at least he stood up for his daughter against a critic, even though she could not sing or play the piano.

Give 'em Hell, Harry.

- Don Clegg  
 Turners Falls



TIM VIELMETTI CARTOON

**DIEMAND** from pg 5  
 barbecues, which are available in spring, summer and fall.

Not too much has changed on the egg side of the business. The farm uses a two-tiered cage system, with a 15,000 hen capacity. The layers are purchased at one day old from West Wind Farm in Ithaca, NY. They arrive in scheduled shipments of 3,000 for systematic rotation of birds in and out of production. By five or six months old, the young pullets start laying. Their earliest eggs are generally small and sometimes double yolked.

There are currently 9,000 laying hens on the farm, with 3,000 pullets that will begin laying in early January. Pullet eggs are not always available, but are coveted by pastry chefs.

Layers live about two years on the farm before being phased out. In the past, the old layers were sold to Campbell's Soup. But in recent years, the birds are "New York dressed," meaning they are killed, bled out, defeathered and sold as fowl with the head, feet and gizzards intact. They are popular with many Asian immigrants and a growing number of Russian, Moldavian and African immigrants who buy directly from the farm. Some are local and some travel from as far away as Fitchburg and Lowell.

The farm now employs Russian and Moldavian immigrant workers. The first one was sponsored through church connections by Peter Diemand, and the practice has continued.

Among the things Annie Diemand said she is thankful for these days is the 100% turnaround in attitude toward agricultural professions. Years ago, farmers were underappreciated, she said, but now announcing you're a farmer in a roomful of people is likely to result in exclamations of admiration.

Diemand attributes much of the change in attitude to CISA's (the Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture) "Local Hero" campaign. For the Diemand Farm, CISA has also helped with year round marketing and grant applications.

Diemand Farm received a Department of Agriculture grant about 15 years ago to create a manure storage shed, to help protect groundwater. A

Massachusetts farm viability matching grant in 1998 helped build the first of the three outdoor ranges for the turkeys, and allowed the farm to upgrade equipment. A second viability grant in 2007 bought new freezers and coolers - twice the size of the old ones - vastly increasing reliability and energy efficiency. In addition, the farm has received a small grant to investigate the feasibility of building a turkey shelter roofed with a photovoltaic array.

You can visit on the farm on Facebook and see photos of thousands of free range turkeys, miniature farm animals and more. Better yet, follow the signs and visit the farm in person on Mormon Hollow Road.

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ited basis from late spring to early November. It's best to call ahead to schedule a visit at 978-544-3806.



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# And the winner is....



Gabriel Rice, age 7, of Turners Falls, (left) shakes a brown paper sack filled with a dozen names of recent Wendell subscribers to the Montague Reporter on Saturday. In the second photo, he draws the winning name for the Wendell subscription drive and Thanksgiving raffle. In the third photo, he shows the grand prize winner to the camera. When she learned she had won the \$50 gift certificate to the Diemand Egg Farm, Claudia Pommer chose to donate her prize to the Friends of Wendell, a local charity that helps Wendell citizens in need. Rice then proceeded to pick the next five winners, who all received second prize gift certificates to Wendell's premier dining and entertainment night spot - the Deja Brew Pub. Thank you, Gabriel!

**ZONING** from page 10 gravel is little to nothing; it's the trucking that is the expensive part," Putnam explained. "Larry LaClaire, Ed Stone, Richie Roberts, they're really looking for the income they get from trucking." "In those days," Putnam went on, "the excavation was nowhere near the edge of the road." When Larry LaClaire started his own landscaping business up the road in Sunderland, Richie Roberts took over

the existing agreement with Bryant for removing gravel from the land, Putnam said. "They're going to take gravel from the easiest place, right next to the driveway. They kept coming closer and closer to the road." Putnam said Roberts then purchased land in two parcels from Bryant, and continued removing some gravel from the pit, and also used it as a location to store materials for local landscapers to pick up: bark mulch, pea

stone, TRG. "There weren't huge trucks coming in and out," said Putnam, until this summer, when excavation at UMass required the trucking of large amounts of fill, which Roberts used to line the banks of the existing gravel pit, to maintain required slopes. Trucks were hauling material up 63 from UMass to Robert's land, and also to Ed Stone's pit in Montague, and further up to Northfield. "Trucks were driving by every ten

minutes, all day long. It was an unusual summer," Putnam noted. At about this point in time, Roberts and Stone acquired the right to mine gravel on five acres of Bryant's land, apparently after Roberts discovered that he had strayed across the survey line and had already begun mining gravel on her land. "So not only was fill going in, but gravel was going out," said Putnam. "Neighbors and townspeople called the selectboard, and at that point the selectboard said, 'This land is under Chapter 61-B'."

At last Thursday's meeting, Putnam carried out a brief back-and-forth with Donald Robinson, chair of the Board of Assessors, who insisted he still had not seen a copy of the agreement granting commercial mining rights to Roberts and Stone on Bryant's Chapter 61-B protected property. Putnam allowed, "The town may have to take Roberta to court for violation 61-B. I still feel it's a use permitted in one of the few commercial zones in town." Putnam said, "That gravel pit has been there

ever since I've been in town. It's not a Warner Brothers gravel pit. We can put restrictions on it to keep it from becoming a Warner Brothers gravel pit." But Werner pointed out the purported lease of commercial rights to Roberts and Stone is said to extend for only ten years, for a five acre lot. "The rate of extraction is going to be much, much faster," than the neighborhood had seen in the past. "Otherwise it's going to be commercially unfeasible," he claimed. Baldwin said, "If you asked the people of Leverett, it's having a very significant impact on the neighborhood character and open space to uphold the commercial zone. We're here to reflect the will of the town, and the bylaws give us the power to determine," whether or not a special permit is warranted in each instance. "I think the neighborhood character is more than just where the zoning ends." Farber proposed setting a 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. limit on operations for the expanded gravel pit, with a limit of one truck per hour, and a land-

scaped berm to buffer the view. Farber's motion garnered the votes of Paulin and Putnam, with Werner and Baldwin opposed. Godsey did not vote. The seventh ZBA member, Bruce Cohen, was not present for the hearing. According to Chapter 40-A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws, "A special permit issued by a special permit granting authority [ZBA] shall require a two-thirds vote of boards with more than five members, [or] a vote of at least four members of a five member board." With three in favor, two opposed, the motion failed. Roberts said he did not think the decision was right. "I just think it's zoned commercial," he said. "They were talking like it wasn't zoned that way." As 11:00 p.m. came and went, Roberts and Bryant huddled with their attorney in a downstairs room at town hall, discussing their next steps. Asked afterwards if he planned to appeal the ZBA's decision in court, Roberts said only, "Time will tell"

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

**THE HEALTHY GEEZER:**

**Sodium - How Much is Too Much**

**BY FRED CICETTI**

**LEONIA, NJ** – Q. *I've noticed that food labels list sodium content, but the numbers mean nothing to me. How much is bad?*

Diet experts recommend a daily consumption of less than 2,400 milligrams (mg), the amount of sodium in a teaspoon of table salt. If you have high blood pressure, your doctor may advise limiting your intake to 1,500 mg of sodium a day.

High-sodium diets are linked to increased blood pressure and a

greater risk for heart disease and stroke. Reducing the amount of sodium you consume can help lower blood pressure or prevent it from developing. Less sodium also makes blood-pressure medications more efficient.

Table salt (sodium chloride) is not the only problem. The main sources of sodium in the average U.S. diet are: 5 percent added while cooking, 6 percent added while eating, 12 percent from natural sources and 77 percent from processed foods.

Most of the body's sodium is in blood and other fluids. Sodium helps keep fluids in a normal balance and helps maintain normal nerve and muscle function. The body gets sodium through eating

and drinking, and loses it by sweating and urinating. Healthy kidneys maintain a consistent level of sodium in the body by adjusting the amount excreted in the urine.

Seniors have to be especially careful about sodium consumption because their bodies can't handle it as well as they did when they were younger. Here are some reasons:

- Kidneys may not work as well as they once did.
- As we age, we are not as sensitive to thirst and may not drink fluids when we need them.
- About 45 percent of body weight is fluid in healthy older people, compared with 60 percent in younger people. Even a

slight loss of fluid and sodium in a senior can cause health problems.

Some older people have physical problems that prevent them from getting something to drink.

Hyponatremia is a low sodium level in blood. In seniors, this can be caused by water retention brought on by heart failure.

Hypernatremia is a high sodium level in blood. This is com-

mon in older people. It is caused by dehydration from not getting enough fluid.

Symptoms of hyponatremia or hypernatremia are usually more severe in older people. For example, hyponatremia can cause confusion, agitation, or lethargy.

About nine out of ten Americans consume too much sodium. How can you cut down? In my next column, I'll give you some tips to reduce your sodium intake.

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

**HOMELESS** from pg 1

cold holiday season, homelessness in Franklin County was recently highlighted during the town of Greenfield's efforts to deal with tent residents in the so-called "Jungle" along its railroad tracks. Earlier this month, Mayor William F. Martin announced the Jungle had been cleared and all its residents successfully housed.

Western Massachusetts has, on a given night, about 500 people in shelters or out on the streets, and if one were to include transitional housing or other homeless programs, the number doubles. Levy said, "Over the course of the year, you can multiply that number by six."

Levy said veterans comprise roughly 13 percent of the homeless population.

Roughly 90 percent of the chronically homeless also have serious substance abuse issues, mental health issues, medical problems or, usually, all those problems combined. Levy, who has been working with homeless populations for over 20 years, said, "We know the people who don't get the help do actually die."

Traditional homeless responses place individuals into an emergency shelter, later to have them work their way into transitional

housing and later still into permanent housing. Levy said earlier models of helping the homeless are usually stymied either by programs demanding clients give up their ways of life or by clients' resistance to change.

An innovation in response to this problem is Housing First, which puts homeless people immediately from the streets into their own apartments. Other issues, like substance abuse or mental health, are addressed only after permanent housing is secured. Levy said, "It is not just housing. It is housing plus support services."

Levy, who oversees a nine-person Housing First program, said 90 chronically homeless people in Western Massachusetts have been placed into housing over a 20-month period using the new approach. Although he sees his work as a moral concern, Levy said state funders have another reason to like Housing First. "It is quite a bit cheaper to house people with support services."

Getting chronically homeless people into housing is itself a major step. "To the people who say 'they are choosing to be out there,' I say they are out there because they don't see the choices as you see them," Levy said. "I

might think of it as help; they might think of it as disruption... it has to resonate in their world."

"The central question of outreach," Levy said, "is how do you help those who are clearly in need, but who communicate no need for help?" His answer is what he calls a pretreatment approach, which focuses first on developing a relationship and building a common language with homeless clients rather than foisting ready-made solutions on them. Levy said, "The cardinal rule of pretreatment is you start where the people are at."

Levy outlines his pretreatment method in his new book *Homeless Narratives & Pretreatment Pathways: from Words to Housing*. The book provides guidance to human service professionals on the intricacies of outreach and engagement, and housing stabilization strategies for the most vulnerable. Fifteen percent of the book's profits will go to the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Levy's book is available at Boswell's Books (Shelburne Falls), Food for Thought Books (Amherst), and Broadside Books (Northampton), or online via Amazon or Barnes & Noble, as well as through his website: www.jayslevy.com.

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# GO GREEN FAMILY

## Episode 34: Climate Refugees in Leverett

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

**MONTAGUE CENTER** — “That’ll put hairs on ya chest,” commented Brian Dubin, house-guest of the Bartlett family, taking a swig of the gin and tonic that Gerry Bartlett had prepared. The Dubins — Brian, Sylvia, and Maggie, were seated across from Jayden and Gerry. The Bartletts watched with amazement as the

two adult Aussies downed their drinks with gusto, then asked if Gerry had any beer in the fridge.

“Tell us about life in Adelaide,” prompted Gerry.

“Oh my god, I am so glad to be away from there,” began 20-year-old Maggie. “They call the suburb we live in Paradise — what a joke! We get these bloody heat waves in the summer — the temperature’s above 40 friggin degrees for days on end — that’s over 104 degrees your

Fahrenheit. If you go outside without sun protection for an hour, you can get first degree burns. This bloke I know had to have surgery — his skin blistered up after he was out in the sun putting up a tent for just one hour!”

Maggie’s mother Sylvia added, “Last summer it got so hot the rail lines melted, so the trains got cancelled. Then our electricity went out because they didn’t have enough water to run the coal-generated power station.”

“And in the bush near us it’s even worse,” Maggie explained. “Every four days there’s another suicide — we’ve got depression clinics everywhere because all the farms are drying up and the farmers can’t make a living.”

“We get ferocious bush fires — we call em ‘mega-fires,’” Brian interjected. “In Victoria, 200 people died last year — worst disaster ever in Australia — 100 kilometer an hour winds, trees exploding — flames that go up 100 meters high. Those fires killed a quarter of Victoria’s koalas and kangaroos, mate.”

“The bush fires start earlier each year,” Maggie added.

“But why don’t you think things will improve?” Jayden Bartlett asked.

“It’s all about climate change, lovie,” said Sylvia. “Sidney hasn’t got water either. Darwin’s got nasty monsoons and malaria and it gets as hot as Adelaide in the summer, only it’s all horribly

sticky.”



Later that evening, Jayden knocked on the newly installed door off the front hall and was let in by her cousin Maggie. As she stepped into the new apartment, Jayden marveled at how quickly her mother’s design studio had been transformed into an inviting and comfortable living space. Beverly had even installed a Christmas tree, complete with little white LED lights.

“Did you know that my mom ordered all eco-friendly furniture for your apartment?” Jayden commented.

“Cool. What does that mean, ‘eco-friendly’?” Maggie asked.

“The couch, the table and chairs and bed all came from this company, Zola Furnishings. They say in their brochure that all the wood is from sustainably managed forests, and their fabric is organic cotton or hemp. They use kapok for stuffing — it’s from some tropical tree.”

“It’s really great that your mum and dad are so concerned about the environment,” said Maggie. “In Australia, people talk a lot about climate change but they don’t do anything. You want to know the worst thing? The politicians are a buncha boofheads — they depend too much on money from filthy coal companies to listen to people who are hurting. Did you know Australia’s the world’s largest exporter of coal? Almost all of our electricity comes from coal. Even though coal is the worst for the CO2 emissions that causes global warming! It’s big, big

money for the country, so the government does bugger all about it.”

“We have the same problems here, too,” Jayden said. “I think maybe half our electricity here is from coal, and it’s not like we’re going to stop using it anytime soon. I heard the southwestern states in the US are in this huge drought and running out of water — like in Australia. But after the Climate Change conference in Denmark was over, we hardly ever hear any more about global warming or climate change in the news.”

“Aren’t you sick of all this denial?” Maggie ranted. “This is totally the biggest threat to life on earth!!! If people don’t stop dumping CO2 into the air, there’s going to be fires, flooding, drought, hurricanes and diseases everywhere! There must be other people willing to fight these big corporations and tell politicians we’ve got to stop using fossil fuels right now!” exclaimed Maggie. “I need to do something besides just talk about it.”

“I met someone in Boston last year from this organization called Rising Tide. She said she and some other friends blockaded a coal power plant. They did a sit-in, and some of them got arrested.” Jayden explained.

“Can you help me find out how I can join Rising Tide?”

“Sure,” Jayden said, flipping up her cell phone. “But first, can I show you a picture of my boyfriend, Alex?”

*Continued next issue...*

### LIBRARY TRUSTEE POSITION

The Montague Board of Library Trustees is seeking interested candidates for a vacant Library Trustee position. This vacancy remains since elections in May. Montague residents should submit a letter of interest to the Montague Board of Library Trustees, 201 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376 by December 15th. Final appoint-

ment to this vacant slot is a Board of Selectmen responsibility. Applications will be reviewed by the Trustees and forwarded to the Selectboard. This position is only in effect until the next town election in May. For further information, please contact Susan SanSoucie at the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.



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### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

#### Illegal Dumping, Break In, Vehicle Fire

**Wednesday, 11/17**

9:10 a.m. Animal complaint at Sheffield School. Investigated.

11:53 p.m. Safety hazard behind Turners Falls Pizza House. Services rendered.

7:41 p.m. Suspicious auto at Carroll’s Market in Millers Falls. Services rendered.

8:16 p.m. Loud noise disturbance on West Main Street. Peace restored.

**Thursday, 11/18**

12:18 a.m. Open door/

window at the transfer station. Secured building.

8:38 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Unity Street. Report taken.

5:05 p.m. Illegal dumping on Old Northfield Road. Referred to other agency.

5:44 p.m. Threatening/harassment at Franklin Regional Housing Authority on Canal Road. Services rendered.

**Friday, 11/19**

8:56 a.m. Suspicious auto

on South Prospect Street. Report taken.

9:51 a.m. Assault at Turners Falls High School. Report taken.

**Saturday, 11/20**

7:32 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering at Eagle Automotive on Second Street. Investigated.

9:43 p.m. Vehicle fire on Mormon Hollow Road. Services rendered.

**Sunday, 11/21**

3:20 a.m. Loud noise dis-

turbance on Third Street. Peace restored.

4:22 a.m. Arrest of [redacted], for disorderly conduct.

11:55 p.m. Assist Erving police at French King Bridge. Services rendered.

**Monday, 11/22**

7:30 a.m. Suspicious person at Highland bus stop in Millers Falls. No such person can be found.

9:16 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Greenfield Road.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Junior Duck Stamp Exhibit Reception, 1 to 3 p.m. Local student artists, winners of the Massachusetts 2010 Junior Duck Stamp (JDS) competition! The art is judged in four age group categories in a statewide competition, and the entry judged Best of Show moves on to represent Massachusetts in the national JDS competition. View the exhibit through December 18th, Fridays & Saturdays 10 to 4 p.m.



Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp exhibit on Display at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Artist's reception on Saturday, December 4th for the 2010 winners. Pictured is the 2009 Junior Duck Stamp display, photo by Janel Nockelby.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24th**  
Montague Grange: *Mid-Week Contra Dance with David Kaynor.* 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Ron and Adrian Meck, Traditional and Contemporary, Celtic and Folk.* 9 to 11 p.m.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26th**  
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet*, 9:30 p.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Nexus, Harmonic Eclectic Rock.* 9 to 11 p.m.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27th**  
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Groove Shoes and Flabberghaster*, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Test Your Tastebuds at our Blind Beer Taste Test*, 8:00 p.m. followed by *Rock 201.*

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

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28th**  
Montague Grange: Family-style

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Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Crow, Peter Kim & Joe Fitzpatrick, Acoustic Trio - Warped Americana*, 8 to 10 p.m.

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29th**  
Northfield Coffee and Books: *Photo-documentary and book signing by Northfield photographer Cate Woolner.* 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Open mic with emcee John Landino.* 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *All Small Caps, A Night of Spoken Word.* Special Poetry night menu available, bring a friend and your appetite. Open mic at 7 p.m. Guest readers 8 to 10 p.m.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2nd**  
Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Relics*, Brian Mallet and Lefty Cullen playing all your favorite oldies from the 50's & 60's, 8 to 10 p.m.

Kellianna - Pagan Folk Music and Chant.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4th**  
*Home For The Holidays* concert featuring Sgt. Dan Clark (the singing trooper) and Mary Colarusso, and *Rhapsody Blue* in the Turners Fall High School Theater. Benefit for the Gill/Montague Education Fund at 2:30 p.m.



Si Kahn at the Echo Lake Coffee House, Leverett on Saturday, December 11th at 7:30 p.m.

Montague Community Band holiday concert at the First Congregational Church, Turners Falls, 148 L St., 7:30 p.m. free.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8th**  
Montague Reporter Holiday Party at The Night Kitchen! Join us for hors d'oeuvres, music by Steve Alves and friends, cash bar, 5 to 8 p.m. Suggested donation: \$20.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11th**  
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Outdoor Skills Workshop Series: Finding Your Way*

*in the Woods.* 1 to 2 p.m. An hour long exploration of compasses. While some advanced concepts can be discussed, this program is designed for individuals with very little compass experience. All ages are welcome. Pre-Registration is Required! Call (413) 863-3221.

Veteran singer/songwriter, activist and community organizer, *Si Kahn*, at the Echo Lake Coffeehouse, Leverett at 7:30 pm. Si Kahn is an accomplished author and musician who incorporates his passion for people's rights and dignity into his songwriting, concert and festival performances, conference keynotes, workshops and residencies. Reserve tickets: (413)548-9394. [www.echolakecoffeehouse.org](http://www.echolakecoffeehouse.org).

**AUDITIONS**  
Arena Civic Theatre auditions for spring musical *Cabaret* on Sunday December 5, 3 p.m. at the Jones Library, Amherst; Monday December 6, 7 p.m. at Artspace, Greenfield and Tuesday, December 7, 7 p.m. at Bangs Community Center, Amherst. *Cabaret* will be produced at the Shea Theater. [www.arenacivictheatre.org](http://www.arenacivictheatre.org).

**Wendell Holiday Fair**  
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3. MEGAMIND 3D PG DAILY 12:00 2:00 4:00 7:00
3. MORNING GLORY PG13 DAILY 9:00
4. UNSTOPPABLE PG13 DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:45 9:15
5. DUE DATE R DAILY 3:15 6:45
5. THE NEXT THREE DAYS PG13 DAILY 12:15 9:15
6. BURLESQUE PG13 DTS DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:50 9:20
7. LOVE AND OTHER DRUGS DAILY 12:30 3:30 6:50 9:20 R DTS

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MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

### Late November Garden

The skeletons of the trees reappear, the perspective widens, and when the sun does shine, the light has a brilliant clarity.

The cold bright air seems to sharpen the mind. Gone is the lassitude of summer. Now, like the migrating birds and hibernating animals, we prepare for the deep dark and chill of winter.

We make lists of chores and hasten to complete them against the gathering dusk. Fields are laid to rest with a blanket of

manure, wood is cut and hauled, hats and mittens retrieved from storage. The holidays loom with their mixture of dread and anticipation.

With the leaves off the trees and shrubs, the bittersweet and grape vine and berry branches that have used any available plant for trellising stand out. It's a great time to cut them down before the weight of winter snow.

These vines are ancient and troublesome; you can cut them down but they will return next year. Just the same, it is worth the time and trouble to pin them back to ground level now, or left

to their own devices they will eventually snuff out the beauty bush or rose or small tree.

Similarly, a little judicious weeding in this cold season will clean out flower and garden beds so that when spring breaks through the new growth will have more breathing room. Rake the leaves off the lawn, but leave some around the base of rose bushes to help to keep them warm. Weed out the strawberry bed, but then rake in the leaves to shelter the new runners off the mother plants. With the rain and snow, these leaves will break down and start a level of mulch against the next weed season.

Spread any leftover manure, potting dirt or topsoil on your vegetables beds. If you store it

until next season, it will likely get moldy and perhaps cause damping off in your new spring seedlings. Left on top of the soil now, it will slowly leach in with the rains and snow to come. Then, when spring comes, you will only need to work the surface of the garden lightly before seeding or setting out new plants.

Spread any leftover lime on yellowish or mossy parts of the lawn and look forward to improved grass next year. It's not too late to cast any leftover grass seed either. These seeds will crack with the cold and then when the ground softens, they will sprout early in February or March, strengthening highly trafficked areas of the lawn.

*Happy late November gardening!*

BY LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** - Despite the chill damp and the often gray skies, late autumn has an austere beauty all its own.

## BOB DYLAN AT THE MULLINS



BY WESLEY BLIXT

**AMHERST** - Conventional wisdom posits two things about Bob Dylan concerts: you never know what to expect, because he will generally have moved on by the time you get there; and you always know what to expect, because Dylan's many faces and phases have, in their own odd and unpredictable way, become your own.

I will go with the conventional wisdom on this one, in part because I had never seen Dylan perform live until last Friday at the Mullins Center. I probably would not have gone even then, had it not been for the generosity of the folks at the Mullins and this newspaper. I am, however, profoundly grateful.

I was 13 when I first heard *Highway 61 Revisited*, an album I

### Portrait of the Artist as a Thin Man – Full, Phenomenal and Slightly Dangerous

have listened to almost constantly for 45 years, even as I have come to be enthralled with so many of Dylan's subsequent works, and even as I dared to add so many of those *Highway 61* songs and others to my own repertoire. Stuck Inside of Mobile, Like a Rolling Stone; Ballad of a Thin Man, Desolation Row, Chimes of Freedom, Masters of War, It Ain't Me Babe. Joey. Queen Jane. Visions of Johanna. And so on.

And through all of that, I stayed away from the live performances. Perhaps I was afraid of being disappointed, especially as I heard folks cluck and tut about poor ole' Zimmie and how his voice was shot and his mind was feeble. Perhaps I wanted to maintain him in my own heart, full and phenomenal and slightly dangerous.

The fact is, if this tour is any indication, he remains all of those things, and he did not need the protection of my loving heart and quiet reluctance to be so. He was superb. Sure, his voice has changed. He is not 23. He is three times that. The intonation and phrasing of his harmonica work are timeless and constant, but almost everything else changes. It changes not because he is unable to do what he used to do, but because he is working so

heroically at what he's doing now. Right NOW – from his opening "Gonna Change My Way of Thinking," through a single long set that included "Stuck Inside of Mobile," "Tangled Up in Blue," "Highway 61 Revisited," "Ballad of a Thin Man" and "A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall," and closed with "Jolene" and "Like a Rolling Stone" for the encore.

Dylan was 21 when he performed "A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall" at Carnegie Hall. It was 1963, and all of Southeast Asia was primed to burn, as were many American cities. Now, Dylan is turning 70, and the song continues to knock the wind out of you — not because it reminds you of then, but because it is so painfully now . . .

*Where the people are a many  
and their hands are all empty  
Where the pellets of poison are  
flooding their waters  
Where the home in the valley  
meets the damp dirty prison  
Where the executioner's face is  
always well hidden  
Where hunger is ugly, where  
souls are forgotten  
Where black is the color, where  
none is the number  
And I'll tell and think it and  
speak it and breathe it  
And reflect it from the mountain  
so all souls can see it*

*Then I'll stand on the ocean  
until I start sinkin'*

*But I'll know my songs well  
before I start singin'*

*And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a  
hard, and it's a hard*

*It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.*

Forget about his voice getting raspy. Listen instead to his strange disarming syncopation in a new way. This is the way of the storyteller. A looping iamb setting you up in one line, and staccato knocking you down in the next, as in "Tangled Up in Blue":

*She was married when we first  
met, soon to be divorced.*

*Helped her out of a jam I  
guess, but I used a little too  
much force.*

Or in "Hurricane":

*You'd be doing society a favor.  
That son of a bitch is brave and  
getting braver.*

Still, I found myself feeling a little out of place at this particular concert. Folks made their way in quietly, quickly and resolutely, much as if they were about to see a symphony orchestra. Some seemed more concerned with finding their assigned seats than anything else. There were people of all ages, and many seemed to be on 'dates.' Real dates — though apparently not very happy dates.

The show began at 8:05 p.m. sharp, and there was no dancing. I rarely saw a head bob, even as the spotlights swept the audience during "Rolling Stone." The show ended promptly at 9:50 p.m. and folks immediately dis-

persed without the threat of police action and were presumably able to be in bed by 11 p.m. Safely, if not happily. I had never been to a concert like this.

As the crowd made its way toward the parking lots, I heard one young man tell his companion, "It made me wish I had seen him 15 years ago." Or did he say 50 years ago?? Another said he should have stopped after *Blood on the Tracks* was released. That, or course, was 1975, long before this young man struggled into the world, and long before the release of . . . well, so very much.

I found this mildly distressing. But then I realized that Zimmie might have gotten a kick out of it . . . that he would have turned it on its head and struggled to imagine it in a new way, which is the way of a consummate artist, full of heart, complexity and nuance; full and phenomenal and slightly dangerous.

And so I toddled off to find a bar, humming "Stuck Inside of Mobile" . . .

*Now the rainman gave two  
cures*

*And he said just jump on in.  
The one was Texas medicine  
And other was just railroad gin.  
And like a fool I mixed them  
And it strangled up my mind  
Now the people just get uglier  
And I have no sense of time  
Oh, Mama, can this really be  
the end?*

*To be stuck inside of Mobile  
With the Memphis blues again*

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