



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Great Turnout to Support the Senior Ctr.
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MASONIC LODGE

Open House in Montague City
Page 8

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 7 - NO. 9

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 26, 2008



Diving for a Welcome Sign

DETMOLD PHOTO

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - On a day when the citizens of Montague were bundling up in winter coats and mufflers against the 39 degree weather, the brave men from the Westfield state police dive team were bundling into wet suits and preparing to dive into the frigid waters of the power canal. Had a destitute citizen jumped from the Gill-Montague bridge? Rumors were flying.

But the truth was stranger than fiction, as is often the case. Troopers Jonathan Fleming, Jeremy Cotton, Aaron Kane, Scott Sawicki, Rick Gawron, and Sergeant Blake Gilmore, in various combinations, spent the better part of an hour under the waters of the canal on Monday.

see DIVING pg 12

BY JOE

KWIECINSKI

MILLERS FALLS

With St. John's Catholic Church set to celebrate its final Mass on Sunday, December 28th, many church members are hard at work preparing for a farewell dinner to be held Sunday, December 7th at the French King Restaurant, on the Erving side of the parish. Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 11:30 a.m., with dinner to follow at 12:30 p.m.

A classic New England white clapboard church, St. John's has served its parishioners for 110 years, with many different priests ministering to their spiritual needs over the decades and fostering a tight-knit community. A multitude of churchgoers have flocked to its pews since the time when William McKinley was president of the United States. Over those years, a long

Farewell to St. John's



DETMOLD PHOTO

After 110 years, St. John's Church in Millers Falls will close.

list of people have been baptized, received first holy communion and confirmation, married, and have been interred during their affiliation with St. John's.

St. John's Catholic Church

was dedicated on May 30th, 1898 by then Bishop Thomas Beavan of the Diocese of Springfield. Many parishioners helped in the actual construction of the church, which was completed on January 26th, 1898, about five months after ground was broken.

Now, Father Dennis Bombardier is the final pastor at St. John's. He has spent 27 years as a priest in Franklin County, arriving at St. John's in October, 1985.

He began his ecclesiastical duties in 1968, serving for two and a half years at St. Joseph's Church in Shelburne Falls.

Father Bombardier will retire from full-time duties with the closing of St. John's. But he will remain in the area to assist other parishes, performing various duties during his 'retirement', which begins at age 68.

see CHURCH pg 10

GMRSD Rejects District Budget

State Takeover Looms

BY ALEX GOTTSCHALK

GILL-MONTAGUE - After a marathon four hour meeting marked by contentious and impassioned arguments, the Gill-Montague school committee rejected the 1.5% operating budget increase approved just one week earlier at the district meeting. On November 25th, with a dwindling crowd of town officials in the audience as 10:30 p.m. rolled around, the school committee turned down the 1.5% budget increase, approved by majority of the district voters by a vote of seven to one.

A second proposal, an advisory motion to approve a 3% budget increase with a 2.3% assessment also failed to carry, with five against and three in favor.

Finally a motion that proposed a 3% budget with a 3.3% assessment for the towns — essentially the same budget voted down by the district meeting on November 18th — passed the committee by a vote of six to two.

Speaking in relation to the see GMRSD pg 3

"On Time and Under Budget"

A Look at the Montague Police Station Building Project



CLAUDIA WELLS PHOTO

The steel frame of the new police station takes shape earlier this week.

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE - "We will be on time and under budget."

That's Ted Fiffy's confident prediction about the progress of construction of the town of Montague's new \$5.6 million police station. The steel frame of the 11,000 square foot structure is going up on Turnpike Road this week, with all underground systems and foundation work largely complete. Last week, a first coat of tarmac was laid down around the parking area before cold weather closed the asphalt plants.

"A lot of people laughed when we said we'd be out of the ground before winter," said Fiffy, Montague's clerk of the works for the project. "But we did it. So far, this

team has been incredibly systematic. There has been a seamless project delivery to date."

Pam Hanold, chair of the public safety building committee, has confidence in Fiffy. "Because I've been able to attend on site construction meetings, I've been able to see Ted in action with the contractor, subcontractors and architect. Ted is very focused on the details, having all the pieces work together, and moving things forward. The contractor has established a very ambitious schedule, and we are meeting it."

Last week, Fiffy, wearing a Boston Red Sox cap and seated in a small trailer surrounded by contracts and spread-

see POLICE pg 12

~review~

Dynamite, Whiskey, and Wood

BY JEN AUDLEY

LEVERETT - One hundred twenty-five years ago, Turners Falls was a major stop on the annual log drive that brought 250,000 massive spruce logs hundreds of miles down the Connecticut River each year. The logs traveled from the headwaters of the Connecticut in northernmost New Hampshire to the lumber mills in Turners Falls and Holyoke that supplied lumber to build the cities of Springfield, Hartford and others.

Each August, hordes of loggers descended on Turners as the logs they tended jammed the stretch of the Connecticut River called the Narrows, just upstream of Barton Cove. The logs and loggers that made it to Turners had already been traveling since April, when the melt up north set thousands of former trees on their way downstream. The loggers' task was to herd this huge, dangerous mass nearly 300 miles south through white water, over dams, and past bridges, breaking up stubborn and dangerous jams all along the way.

Turners Falls, home to the Connecticut Valley Lumber Company, was the first stop where logs were removed from the river and milled. With over two dozen saloons and other assorted venues for masculine entertainment, Turners was a destination that hundreds of hard-working, pleasure-seeking

men looked forward to all year long. "Lock up you daughters!" was the cry when the loggers rolled into town.

The 2006 documentary *Dynamite, Whiskey, and Wood*, produced by the husband and wife team Ed and Libby Klekowski, along with editor Elizabeth Wilda, encourages us to imagine and wonder what it would have been like to live through one of these great log drives, or to live in one of the towns along the way. Ed Klekowski, professor emeritus at UMass Amherst, narrates, as an artful mix of interviews, sound effects, archival photos, and underwater photography help viewers see how many artifacts from this time still exist - pretty much right before our eyes. If we know how to recognize them.

Dynamite, Whiskey, and Wood is an elegant little one-hour film, which first aired on WGBY a few years ago and is well worth seeing if you get the chance. And you will. At last week's showing, sponsored by the Leverett Historical Society, host Dawn Ward announced there would be a repeat screening in the spring at the Leverett Library, with the Klekowskis on hand to answer questions. Keep an eye out for an announcement about the date and time of that screening in *the Reporter*, and go!

You won't regret it.

PET OF THE WEEK

Dixie Dog



Ellie

My name is Ellie and I'm a two-year-old female retriever lab mix currently in foster care. I'm an all-around active girl! With my youth and breed, it won't surprise you to hear that I have plenty of energy and look for ways to use it! Kids eight and over, dogs, and confident cats are all good matches for me. I weigh about 50 pounds, and I'm a Dixie Dog. For more information on adopting me please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898. or via email: leverett@dphvs.org.

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ERVING LIBRARY NEWS

Snowflakes and Song

BY BARBARA FRIEDMAN
ERVING - Snowflakes and Song
for school-aged children and
their parents & anyone else who
loves to decorate.

Come and help decorate the

Erving Public Library with
snowflakes for the season. We
enjoy music and sing songs while
we cut out and create snowflake
decorations. December 7th -
Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS

Artist Ruth O'Mara

LINDA HICKMAN
TURNERS FALLS - Preschool
Story Hour is held on Wednesday
Mornings at 10:15 a.m., at the
Carnegie Library. Young children
and their families are invited to
come and enjoy stories, crafts,
music, activities and snacks with
artist Ruth O'Mara. The themes
for the month are as follows:

December 3rd - Bird Stories,

December 10th - Stars & Space,
and December 17th - Stories of
Light. Please note: There will be
no story hour on December 24th
or December 31st.

The weekly free series is
designed for ages 3 to 5 and their
parents, grandparents, and other
caregivers. Siblings of any age
are welcome. For more informa-
tion, please call 863-3214.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Mucho Gusto Spanish

In this fun and interactive
series with instructor Laurie
Davidson, you and your child
will learn Spanish vocabulary
through finger play, music and
movement, stories, puppets and
simple circle games around ani-
mals, seasons, foods, actions
and daily routines. Dress your-
self and your child in comfort-
able clothing. Handouts provid-
ed for parents with key vocabu-
lary to reinforce learning at
home. The program takes place
on Wednesdays, December 3rd,
10th, and 17th, from 10 to 11
a.m. at the Wendell Free

Library. (Ask for directions
when registering.)

- Preference will be given to families who can commit to all 3 sessions.
- Register by December 1st
- Group size is limited to 12 children only.
- Call Naz at 413-423-3337 or email mohamed@erving.com to register, or for more information.

Sponsored by the Wendell
Cultural Council, School Union
#28 Family Network, and the
Wendell Free Library.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES -- Dec. 1st to 6th

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

For trips: Call the Senior
Center 413-863-9357 or 863-
4500.

Monday, 1st

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Easy Aerobics

Tuesday, 2nd

9 a.m. Walking Group.
1 p.m. Canasta

Wednesday, 3rd

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday, 4th

1:00 p.m. SHINE Presentation:
The Medicare Prescription Drug
Program. Many seniors do qual-
ify for and benefit from the
extra help through Medicare.
SHINE Counselors will be
available to assist with one-on-
one counseling and application
assistance. SHINE Counselors
provide free information, coun-
seling, and assistance to seniors

on topics such as Medicare,
Medicare Supplements,
Medicare HMOs, Medicaid,
Prescription drug options,
Insurance Claim Forms, and
other Health Insurance Options.
Please attend to learn about how
this program can help.

Friday, 5th

10 a.m. Senior Aerobics

11 a.m. Easy Aerobics

Saturday, 6th

10:00 a.m. Save Energy Save
Money. Home energy conserva-
tion workshop with David
Knowles, Energy Consultant &
Home Weatherization Trainer.
Free and open to public.

**We need five more people for
our trip to White's of
Westport on Wednesday,
December 10th.** Cost is \$63.00
per person. Package includes
lunch with a choice of entrees.
Gather your friends as we cele-
brate the Holiday Season with
fun, laughter and Christmas
Cheer! Combine the great food
of White's of Westport with an
afternoon holiday show, and
you'll be on your way to some
"Happy Holidays" celebration!
Bus departs at 8:15 a.m. and
returns home at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Party at the Tech
School, Monday Dec. 8th. Make
reservations now \$10.00 per
person.

ERVING Senior Center, 18
Pleasant St., Erving (Old
Center School, 1st Floor), is



(right to left) Paul Hardy, president of the Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club, hands a check for \$1200 to Staff Sergeant Christopher Williams, to support the special response team of the Montague Police Department, as Detective Lee Laster and Patrolman Daniel Miner look on.

Millers Falls Rod and Gun Donates to Montague Police


On a crisp fall morning,
Sunday, November 23rd, 75
members of the Millers Falls
Rod and Gun Club gathered at
the club grounds off Turners
Falls Road for the last Turkey
Shoot of the season. No live
birds are harmed in this activity.
The Turkey Shoot involves club
members and their guests lining
up at a set distance, taking aim,
and firing, all more or less at the
same time, at a row of about 20
mounted targets. Whoever gets a
beebee closest to the center of
the X, wins a store bought
turkey. It costs \$2.00 to take a
shot, and there is a winner for
each round. In between rounds,
people warm up near a huge fire
pit and catch up with friends and
acquaintances, or get some

refreshments.

"This is an excellent club,"
said Mark Hunt, of Greenfield,
who has been a member for the
last two years. "it's very com-
munity oriented."

This past Sunday, club presi-
dent Paul Hardy presented a
check to the Montague Police
Department for \$1200, to sup-
port the work of the special
response team. The money came
from a golf tournament club
members held earlier in the year.
A check for \$500 was also given
to support the work of the K-9
officer, officer Kyra. That money
was raised by small donations
taken up in the club's
"dog bone can" in small
amounts chipped in by the mem-
bers over the course of the year.

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GMRSD from pg 1 district approved budget, interim superintendent Ken Roche stated, "It's risky to our education. It's premature to cut a quarter of a million off this budget."

School board member Kristin Boyle voiced the consensus of the majority commenting, "I'm willing to take a chance and see what the state has to say."

The towns and schools have run out of time to reach an agreement on the '09 GMRSD budget, the state will take the reins of district finances on December 1st, and impose a school budget on the towns of Gill and Montague.

Earlier in the meeting, Roche sought to assuage concerns over the prospect of a state takeover of the district, when he spoke of talking with school board representatives from the Southern Berkshire district, who, when faced with a quandary over the school budget late last year, let the state Department of Education take the district's financial reins. "It was not a difficult process once the state took over," said Roche. Nevertheless, it was with an air of resignation that the final votes were cast.

In other news, interim superintendent Ken Roche updated the committee on the recent meeting held between Greenfield school district officials and representatives of the GMRSD.

"It was a great first meeting, focused on education. A charge was given to me and to [Greenfield] superintendent Hollins to discuss a superintendency union at our next meeting, and to come back with a report on collaborations going on between both districts. I'm not sure where this is going to go, but

it is worthwhile to have these discussions," Roche said.

Representatives of the two school districts will meet again on December 8th.

By a vote of 4-3 with one abstention, the school committee voted to "be willing participants" in the \$25,000 planning grant being applied for by Gill and Montague to explore the expansion of the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

"I really don't think regionalization is the solution here," said committee member Sorrel Hatch, of Gill.

A lengthy discussion of the "Tomahawk Chop" issue led to a decision to invite representatives of the local Native American community to the next school committee meeting, on December 9th. The moratorium on the use of the Tomahawk Chop motion or the playing of the Tomahawk Chop song by the school band was extended by administrative decision until after the school committee has a chance to discuss the matter.

Reporting on the progress of small group meetings between local Native American representatives and students and administrators at the high school led both high school principal Jeff Kenney and Roche to state emphatically that they felt the use of the Tomahawk Chop song and motion at school games was a violation of the school committee's anti-discrimination policy.

"There is no doubt that the use of the Tomahawk Chop is offensive to the Native American community," said Roche, who added a discussion of the Indian logo for team sports was overdue.

Save Energy, Save Money

~ MAYBE EVEN WIN A FURNACE ~

BY SALLY PICK

TURNERS FALLS - On Saturday, December 6th, local residents have a chance to learn from an energy expert how to keep their home or apartment warm this winter and lower their heating costs. Any Montague resident attending this workshop will have a chance to win a fabulous door prize - a free, installed forced hot air furnace - donated by Lennox Industries, a leading manufacturer of innovative, high efficiency furnaces.

Energy consultant and home weatherization trainer David Knowles, who will lead the workshop, said, "When we talk about things people can do to reduce their heating bill and stay more comfortable at the same time, we like to point out that their choices range from low and no cost strategies that are simple, immediate, and don't require a lot of tools or specialized material, to big-ticket home improvements (new heating systems, additional insulation) that usually involve a contractor and significant cost. Some choices are well worth the expense and effort; others may not be such a good idea. We also try to explain what the 'advanced diagnostic audit' is and why it's a very good idea.

"And here's the other big payoff. People whose houses have been carefully weatherized generally report their home is more comfortable. The floors perhaps feel a little warmer, or the cold air that comes in around the kitchen door is gone, or the moisture that used to stay on the win-

dows clears up. Professional weatherization teams also emphasize safety. They make sure carbon monoxide is not building up, and all the combustion appliances in the home work properly."

Knowles will also talk about state programs available regardless of household income to help pay for the big-ticket improvements. For example, MassSave has a HEAT Loan Program for qualifying residents that allows people to pay for energy efficiency upgrades with a 0% loan of up to seven years. Residents can cover the costs of insulation, high efficiency heating systems and water heaters, Energy Star replacement windows, and duct sealing and insulation.

Chris Mason, chair of the newly formed Montague Energy Committee, explained, "The Energy Committee recognizes this will be a difficult winter for many of Montague's residents, who struggle to stay warm. The committee has identified education and helping people weatherize their houses as high priorities for its work.

"It's with the generosity of our neighbors that we're able to hold this workshop. David Knowles is donating his expertise and time, the Senior Center is donating the meeting space, Franklin County Home Care Corporation, TRIAD, and other organizations and agencies are stepping forward to help adver-

tise this opportunity, Deerfield Valley Heating and Cooling will donate time and materials toward the installation of the free furnace, and Lennox Industries is donating the furnace. Paul Voiland, a member of Montague's Energy Committee, made the connections to make this fabulous door prize possible. It's amazing that so many people and companies have stepped up so quickly to make this work."

To win the furnace, you must attend the workshop and be a resident of the town of Montague (Turners Falls, Millers Falls, Lake Pleasant, Montague Center or Montague City). Along with the free furnace, all standard installation costs will be donated, except for the required building permit. There are some practical limitations on which buildings are compatible with this new furnace; most importantly, the new furnace can only replace an existing forced hot air furnace system. More detailed criteria for which buildings qualify will be spelled out at the workshop.

The free workshop is open to the public, and will take place Saturday, December 6th, at the Senior Center, 10 a.m. to noon, at 62 Fifth Street, in Turners Falls. It is co-sponsored by the Montague Energy Committee and the Franklin County Home Care Corporation.

For more information, please call 367-9304.

MORE WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

More Paper Pleasures

Back by popular demand. Spend a pleasurable morning, Saturday, December 6th, 10 a.m. - noon, with Luc Bodin as he teaches new paper folding and cutting techniques for the holidays at the Wendell Free Library.

Create paper ornaments, spirals, snowflakes, birds and stars. Basic materials supplied. If you have specialty paper you'd like to work with, please bring it along. The program is intended for adults and teens; children assisted by adults also welcome.

Free, no registration required.

MORE SLATE LIBRARY NEWS

sToRY hoUr

GILL - Story Hour continues, Fridays at 10 a.m. On December 5th, the theme is Stories about Light; on December 12th, Stories about Snow; on December 19th, Holiday Tales. For pre-schoolers ages 3 - 5; siblings and caregivers welcome.

Mary Jo Marchak will perform a multi-cultural holiday show "the Most Precious Gift" at the Slate Library on Sat., Dec. 20th, 11 a.m. The performance will include winter stories and songs, a charming Italian folk tale accompanied by mandolin, sing-a-longs for Hanukkah, Christmas and Solstice. Funded by the Gill Cultural Council.

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The State We're In

BY FERD WULKAN

MONTAGUE CENTER - We are in a fiscal mess. Why? Because state aid to our schools and our towns has not kept up with our needs, our mandates, and our ability to provide the services our residents need and deserve. According to data from the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center, this is because:

- The state lost \$600 million per year when it reduced tax rates on dividends and interest.
- The state lost \$400 million per year when it passed business tax cuts.
- The state lost \$1.4 billion per year when it reduced the income tax rate to 5.3%, foolishly thinking the good times would last forever.

Total tax revenue as a share of personal income is lower in Massachusetts than in 35 of the other 49 states. This is not Taxachusetts anymore!

In fact, over the last 29 years the share of income collected as taxes in Massachusetts declined by 24 percent. This is the sharpest drop in state and local taxes as a proportion of personal income among all 50 states.

Nobody wants to pay more in taxes, but that's partly because our tax system is so unfair: it is unconstitutional in Massachusetts to have a progres-

sive income tax (where higher incomes are taxed at a higher rate, like our federal income tax). Too much of our tax revenue comes from the property tax which is regressive and varies so much from town to town. And of course, our federal taxes go toward a bloated military and corporate bailouts, instead of to the states where money is generally spent wisely.

In the last election, Gill and Montague both voted down the income tax repeal (Question 1) by a 5 to 1 margin -- even better than the statewide margin of 70-30. That was a critical first step, and we should be proud.

Now we need to call on our legislators to take a new look at the fairest way to raise enough revenues so that the state can play its proper role in supporting towns, schools, infrastructure, higher education, and social services. We need them to know we will support them when they consider raising taxes, if it's done in a fair and progressive manner.

Until then, Montague and all other towns will suffer and we will continue to fight among ourselves over the crumbs.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks to Everyone for the Gill Montague Senior Center Bazaar!



DETOLD PHOTO
Renee Jenkins of Gill, at the 'Guess How Many Chocolates in a Jar' table at the Senior Center Christmas Bazaar

BY ALLAN ADIE RIVERSIDE - The turnout at the Gill Montague Senior Center Christmas Bazaar this past Saturday was to me an indication from the donors, the volunteers, and the kind people who purchased items that the Gill Montague Senior Center is not just a building.

It is a building of friendship,

caring and love. It is a place where homeowners or tenants who for many years have paid taxes and purchased items from local businesses come together. It is a place where seniors who have lost loved ones can come to be with their friends, with others who have the same feelings and problems they have. It is a place you can go and lower the thermostat at home to save a few gallons of oil in the winter, or shut off the air conditioner in the summer.

Wondering who will put that last piece in the 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle? Remembering the groans of a bingo player who lost saying, "All I needed was one more number?" What about the dinner that contains all the needed items to keep a senior healthy, that you might not fix for yourself, but now, since you've paid \$2.00 for the dinner, you might as well eat it. And if you don't like to walk alone or exercise, this is the place to stay fit with your peers, to laugh with them as they exercise or perhaps stroll with them along the peaceful canal.

A large TV can be turned on softly so you can watch a favorite program where other seniors are milling about. You are not alone, as you may be at home, with no one to say, "Hi, how are you?"

These are not the times when years ago whole families would work in the same mill or factory. Children now go to college or through necessity leave

home and move far away, and only come home to see their parents on special occasions.

This doesn't mean they don't love their parents. But they have their own life to live.

My wife and I and many others have volunteered at the Senior Center for over twenty years, and we are very gratified to see the community turnout to support the activities of the Center at our holiday Bazaar. From all of us, to all of you, thank you.

Here are the names of the raffle prize winners, and the items they won. First prize, one Senior Trip, went to Bev Demars; Second Prize, \$100 savings bond from Greenfield Savings Bank, went to Ryder Molongoski; Third Prize, a gift certificate for the 99 Restaurant from Kostanski Funeral Home went to Gary Fiske. As well, Steve Ciechowski won two tickets to Foxwoods from Travel Kuz; Pam Hanold won two buffet tickets to Mohegan Sun; Ethel Dobias won a Mary Melonis wall hanging; Mary Ellen Krejmas won a Christmas Tree skirt; Karen Gauthier won a Men's Basket; Lynn O'Riley won two nine holes of golf with cart at the Oak Ridge Golf Course; Doreen Kwader won a \$50 gift certificate for Food City donated by A.J. Cycle; Jason Edson won a \$50 gift certificate to the Gill Store and Tavern donated by the Friends of Gill; Joan Duda won a Scarlett O'Hara Barbie Doll donated by Lillian Fiske; and Mary Belunas won a Santa Claus basket.

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 11/25/08

US FORCES Casualties in Iraq as of this date	4207
Afghanistan	629
Wounded in Action	30,832

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Report All Options, Please!

In response to an article in the November 13th issue (*MR VII* #7) titled, "Gill Voters May Face Pyramid Override this Year," just a note...

Besides the three options listed for Proposition 2½ overrides that Gill voters may soon face, a fourth option is to vote for No Override at all.

You failed to mention this, perhaps misleading potential

voters.

This reminds me of the Montague Police Station presentation: it's either \$5.6 million or the same old station, when the project could have been scaled down to a more affordable project. That option was never reported.

- Don Valley
Turners Falls

MCSM Gift Shop During Arts & Icicles

BY CHRISTINE DIANI

TURNERS FALLS - The Montague Catholic Social Ministries (MCSM) will transform the Turners Falls Women's Resource Center at 41 3rd Street and the Gill-Montague Family Center at 78 Avenue A in Turners Falls into a WinterFest Gift Shop filled with hand-made arts and crafts for sale, along with new donated items for raffle. This year, MCSM is taking part in the Arts & Icicles Art Walk on December 6th & 7th. The WinterFest Gift Shop will be open on Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

MCSM is an independent, community-based non-profit organization whose mission is to strengthen, encourage and support families through outreach, family education, positive conflict resolution, leadership development and group empowerment.

Women and families who participate in MCSM programs have joined together to knit hats, scarves, children's sweater sets, blankets, and craft jewelry, magnets, handmade books, credit card wallets, decorated switchplates and more. Artwork for sale at the MCSM gift shop will include photography, watercolors, collages and prints.

A 'Big Raffle' will be held for four fabulous items: a Fisher-Price Wrangler Jeep motorized child's car; a handmade reversible twin size quilt; a basket of baby Einstein books,

tapes, stuffed animals, and other gifts suitable for ages 6-9 months (valued at over \$40); and a \$40 gas card. Raffle tickets are \$1 each and 6 for \$5, drawing to be held on December 17th. First name drawn chooses their own first prize, second chooses next, and so on. Tickets may be purchased before and after the event by calling Ceil at (413) 863-4805, ext. 2 or stop by the MCSM offices on Monday, Wednesday or Friday from 9:30-noon. Access to MCSM offices is at the Moltenbrey on 3rd Street - press 103 to buzz in! Raffle tickets will also be sold during the Arts & Icicles weekend, December 6th and 7th at the MCSM Gift Shop.

There will also be a 50/50 Raffle and a Multiple Chance Raffle Table featuring fine items donated by local individuals and area businesses.

All proceeds will go toward supporting the free programs and services MCSM offers through the Basic Needs Program, Turners Falls Women's Resource Center, Gill-Montague Family Center and Family Support Program. Montague Catholic Social Ministries has received a "Matching Funds Challenge" from an anonymous donor. Any funds raised, up to \$3000, will be matched by this generous donor! Come join in the fun, shop for wonderful gifts, and help MCSM benefit fully from this exciting challenge.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD TOXICOLOGIST

Eternal Baggies

BY EMILY MONOSSON

MONTAGUE CENTER - I pull a gallon sized Ziploc bag from its sunny yellow box, one of several boxes my mother, who shops at Costco, sent home with me last weekend, and swallow the guilt as I add yet another virginal plastic bag to the relatively permanent archive of plastic things in the world.

Just to be clear, I don't buy plastic bags. Well, not unless it's for a good cause like packing away the twenty pounds of wild low-spray blueberries we'd raked last summer. Besides, I tell myself, I'll reuse them.

And reuse I do, from storing bagels, to blueberry muffins, to banana bread before tossing them in with the clothing for a spin in the wash and then the dryer whenever a greasy film, beyond what I can tolerate, builds up.

But then the inevitable happens. The plastic zipper tab breaks off, or the blue and yellow tracks warped by warm water and dryer heat no longer join. For a while the bag limps through still storing food, closed up with a rubber band, or just rolled up tight and tucked away. But that can only put off its fate for so long — eventually the plastic shows its age — small cracks and holes letting in air or letting out drips of last night's soup.

That's when it's pitched into the trash. I refrain from combining them with the shopping bags for recycling at Stop & Shop — hearing stories of recycling contamination — and I make a note to get in touch with Stop & Shop and ask about that.

Although I try to be frugal with plastics, my mother swears by Ziplocs and Saran wrap. But it wasn't always that way. In fact I can still recall my envy over the little plastic baggies which protected the sandwiches of my very

best friend Amy in grade school. Her mother was younger and more "with it" than my mom (who was at the time all of 42.) If a new product came out, Amy had it. While Amy's sandwiches were moist and soft — good

Shop, I was heartened last week when I loaded my bagels into a recycled plastic produce bag at Whole Foods. If only the darn thing didn't break open and spill six bagels onto the floor! I'm sure in time they'll get it right.

Like sandwich baggies, by some estimates the useful lifetime of produce bags is measured in minutes, or however long it takes to stuff some string beans into the bag, hit the checkout counter and dump them into the colander for dinner. Even the most fastidious of us who reuse those produce bags eventually submit, ball them up and toss them into the trash.

Like all plastics, plastic baggies flow from the crude oil tap which is refined and distilled before cradling our organic broccoli.

Crude oil is a complex mixture of hydrocarbons, carbon and hydrogen containing molecules. Some are long, some are short. They are straight, or branched, but all have a carbon "backbone," or a chain of carbons C-C-C-C.

For years I had a small vial of crude oil in my office, rescued from the Valdez Oil spill; the label thanked me for helping to remove some ridiculously small percentage of the original spill (it now sits somewhere on my son's science teacher's desk, beseeching impressionable minds to think more deeply about the consequences of using oil.). This particular crude is the darkest of browns, a thick balled up tar-like substance floating atop the Prince William Sound water captured along with it. It is hard to imagine the link between the transparent filmy Ziplocs in my pantry and a vat of crude oil.

During distillation successively lighter fractions are boiled off and collected, the shorter the carbon chain the lighter the fraction.

see PLASTIC pg 11



Nifty bag dryer makes a great holiday gift

material for a lunchtime trade — mine, in its wax-paper sandwich bag, could not compare. Now the shoes are on my slightly older feet and like her I refuse to pack my kids' lunch in plastic baggies. Just check out the garbage pail in any schoolroom around the country and you'll find plenty. Their total useful lifetime? About three hours.

According to the history of plastic bags, those little baggies, thin sheets of blown polyethylene film sealed along three sides, first came into being around 1957, roughly twenty-four years after the discovery of the stuff, and ten years before the ubiquitous produce bag. When I'd asked my mother to verify my version of the sandwich bag story (she did) I realized that she'd been without plastic produce bags back then too.

Those plastic produce bags now fill the cotton shopping bags of the most plastic-frugal consumer whether they're shopping the farmer's market, the local co-op, Whole Foods or Big Y. Although I don't expect creative solutions at Big Y or Stop &

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Mike Fuller, Owner

FRANKLIN COUNTY TECHNICAL SCHOOL HOSTS REGIONAL TRAINING FOR TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

Technology professionals from area schools met at Franklin County Technical School on November 12th for demonstrations and training workshops in virtualization and thin-client options. These technologies may provide affordable solutions to some school districts seeking ways to maximize resources and budgets. The collaborative training is part of an ongoing series of seminars for technology professionals at schools throughout Franklin County and Hampshire County as a benefit of their membership



Ashley Barstow, Network Systems Engineer at FCTS, leads a demonstration on virtualization to technology professionals from schools in Franklin and Hampshire counties. FCTS has successfully implemented cost effective virtualization solutions at the school.

in TEP (Technology in Education Partnership of Western Massachusetts.) The October seminar was hosted by Frontier Regional High School. Participants tried their hands at free and open source software that is available for the K12 school environment.

Established in 1997 by Greenfield Community College, TEP is a model of regionalization. TEP members collaborate in bulk purchasing, which results in discounted costs for schools, grant writing, shared policy development, best practices discussions and reviews of emerging technologies. School districts interested in knowing more about TEP can contact David Greenberg, Director at dgreenberg@tep-wm.org or 413.624.5557, or visit www.tep-wm.org.

Emergency Dispensing Drill a Success



Susan Sharbaugh, RN, a member of the Medical Reserve Corps from Erving, administered a flu shot to Montague selectboard member Pat Allen

BY DAVID DETMOLD
TURNERS FALLS - About two hundred and sixty residents of Gill, Erving, Wendell, and, mostly, Montague showed up at the Turners Falls High School on Saturday morning, November 22nd, to get a free flu shot. But it was more than just a flu shot clinic. The event was a first test of the local emergency dispensing site for the four towns, in case a real health emergency breaks out in the area.

John Peterson, the public health emergency planner for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments said, "This is the first time an emergency dispensing site (EDS) has been tested in Montague. We've tried it three times already at Frontier, for the towns of Deerfield, Conway, Whately and Sunderland." The EDS site at Frontier has been giving out multiple vaccinations, for pneumonia and tetanus as well as flu vaccine, Peterson said.

Peterson said regional Homeland Security grant money pays for supplies for the clinics, as well as overtime for police and fire department personnel, who assisted with the EDS test in Montague on Saturday. But town public safety employees were outnumbered by the nearly two dozen student nurses from Greenfield Community College, who were joined on Saturday by representatives of Bay State Franklin Medical Center, other health providers, and local volunteers.

Don Snyder, the regional preparedness director for the Massachusetts Division of Public Health, based out of

Northampton, toured the site on Saturday. He said planning for EDS sites began nationwide shortly after 9/11, to give municipalities the tools to prepare for health emergencies like SARS, pandemic influenza, or a bioterrorism attack.

"We're doing very, very well," said Snyder. "Boards of health are coming together and forming public health coalitions, health agents are publicizing the information, and everybody is working together to develop these emergency dispensing sites."

Snyder mentioned several times, "We don't have county health departments any more," which he cited as a reason why individual towns were banding together to plan for health emergencies. He said he hoped the initial drills would be followed by "continual, ongoing" tests of the EDS sites in the region - he has toured similar sites in Springfield, Amherst, and South Deerfield - which he hoped could become "self-sustaining."

Asked whether that meant towns should begin planning to pay for EDS sites by themselves, Snyder declined to answer directly, but made reference to the present fiscal difficulties at the state and federal level.

Montague health agent Gina McNeely said the first EDS test at the Turners Falls High School went "extremely well".

"We had a line of 30 people when we opened the doors. We had six tables open [to deliver the flu shots], and immediately opened two more. That was a very good drill," for a real emergency, McNeely said.

Great Falls Discovery Center Opens for Arts and Icicles

The Natural History Museum at the Great Falls Discovery Center will be open for self guided nature tours of the Connecticut River dioramas on the Arts and Icicles weekend of December 6th and 7th. The Museum Store will have a special 10% off everything holiday sale. A hands-on Discovery and Learning table will be set up between 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. for ongoing nature explorations for all ages, with environmental educators Dawn Ward and Steve Winters on hand to assist. Local dinosaur tracks will be on display as well. Come see!

Back in the Day Night: Lenny Zarcone at the Disco Center

The Great Falls Coffeehouse presents "Back in the Day Night Variety Show" hosted by Lenny Zarcone of the the Wright Brothers comedy troupe on Friday, December 12th, at 7 p.m. A fabulous evening of music and song, juggling, comedy, and more! Performers include percussionist Drew Hutchison, singer Sam Boyden, juggler Rob Peck, and hula hoop artist extraordinaire Shenandoah Sluter. Also in the lineup are guitarist Bruce Kahn, who will join in on Beatles songs. There will also be a few surprise guests as well. Bring the whole family.

Antiques Trucks Take the Road to Support Veterans

GILL - Once again, as Christmastime approaches, Fred Chase will be taking his 1979 Mack Super-Liner on the road in support of veterans, as part of a convoy of antique trucks heading to veterans hospitals and soldiers homes in Vermont and Western Mass. The convoy, made up of participants from the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the Antique Truck Club of America, will be leaving from Chase's Four Wheel Drive Service yard on Route 2 in Gill on Sunday, November 30th, at

about 12:30 p.m. and joining up with the Vermont Bulldog Chapter en route. Among the local enthusiasts who will be taking part in the run is Craig Gaudry, who will be driving an antique Mack B-73, and bringing a lowbed trailer in case there are any breakdowns en route. A total of ten trucks will be participating, overall, Chase said.

The truckers will be stopping in Bennington, where a Christmas tree will be cut and loaded onto one of the trucks.

Then the convoy will travel to the veterans hospital in White River Junction, distributing cards and holiday ornaments to veterans there before helping to raise the holiday tree at the state capital in Montpelier.

After that, the convoy will travel to Leeds and Holyoke, Massachusetts, before returning home on Wednesday.

Anyone who would like to drop off Christmas cards, or ornaments for the veterans may do so at Chase's shop on Sunday, before 12:30 p.m.

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BY DAVID DETMOLD - More than a dozen Montague bar owners and managers came to an informational meeting with the Montague selectboard on Monday, November 17th to discuss new regulations about closing hours, which the board had imposed on November 3rd. The owners and managers had criticisms of a number of the new regulations, which stipulated that 'last call' should be fifteen minutes before closing, closing for most drinking establishments should be at 1:00 a.m. (unless they close earlier) except on New Year's Eve, when closing hour can be extended to 2:00 a.m., all patrons need to be out of the bar fifteen minutes later, and employees need to complete their clean-up tasks and be out of the bar by one hour past closing time.

Bar owners particularly objected to this last requirement. Even though the selectboard made it clear that a courtesy phone call to the police department would be all that was needed in the event a bar employee needed to stay later, the owners felt that the requirement was unreasonable.

"I own my business, and if I can't sleep and want to go down there at three in the morning and do some paper work, I have every right to. I don't have to call anybody," said Bill Holbrook, of Jake's Tavern.

Lew Collins of Between the Uprights on 2nd Street said his workers routinely carried 36 cases of beer up from the cellar, cashed out, and performed numerous other closing tasks that would be likely to keep them at work at least an hour and a half past closing time.

He asked the selectboard to imagine they had just had 100 friends over for a cocktail party, and then had less than one hour after the last guest left to make their home look the same as it did before the first guest arrived.

Chris Janke, co-owner of the Rendezvous, said efforts were being made to make Montague a destination for people from other communities to travel to. He pointed out that Northampton, Springfield and North Adams allowed 2:00 a.m. closing hours, and so Montague establishments were already operating at a competitive disadvantage with clientele trying to decide where to go for an evening out. He objected to the 12:45 last call stipulation for this reason, and because he thought it gave the message to clientele to order another drink and drink it fast.

The board eventually agreed to stipulate merely that alcohol sales should end by 1:00 a.m., and that all patrons should be out of the bars by 1:30 a.m. No stipulation was made for an hour by which employees should leave the premises.

Parks and Rec Programs

Jon Dobosz, director of the Montague parks and recreation, gave the selectboard an update on his department's winter

program schedule, which includes popular programs like Open Swim at the Turners Falls High School and new entries like Tae Kwon Do for kids and parents. The parks and recreation department will team up with the Knights of Columbus for the annual basketball free throw contest at the Sheffield School gym, on Saturday, January 17th, at 1 p.m. For a complete program listing, pick up a copy of the parks and recreation department's brochure at any of the branch libraries, town hall, or the field house in Unity Park, or go to their website at www.montague.net and click on the parks and recreation department. For more information, call: 863-3216.

Dobosz said volunteer parent coaches were still needed for a number of activities.

He also announced that the parks and recreation department was resuming the popular Sawmill River 10-kilometer run on New Year's Day, 10 a.m., in Montague Center, which will now become a fundraiser for the department. Selectboard chair Allen Ross, who formerly organized the Sawmill River Run, congratulated Dobosz for picking up the reins on this annual event.

Ruth Nervig, the Americorps worker at the Brick House who has been coordinating the Turners Falls skate park during the course of the last year, asked whether there was some part of Unity Park where the popular skate park could be relocated, since the lease is up on the current lot. She said a recent survey at the Turners Falls High School elicited responses from 61 students who said they have been using the skate park regularly.

Dobosz said that his department was planning a redesign of Unity Park, with more parking areas, and perhaps the addition of volleyball courts. "There's really no space for the skate park," Dobosz told her.

Dobosz said the parks and recreation department may turn a 1200 square foot plot of land near the Masonic Lodge in Montague City into a play area, and move the play structure from the former Montague Center School to that location.

Fashion Show

Chris Janke, owner of Suzee's 3rd Street Laundry, asked for and received permission to hold the fourth annual leftover laundry fashion show, with a one day liquor license, on Saturday, December 6th, as part of the upcoming Arts and Icicles open studio walking tour of downtown Turners. Janke said the garments crafted for the show would be auctioned off on Sunday, December 7th at 3 p.m. at the Rendezvous, with a question and answer session with the designers. The proceeds from the auction will go toward the Brick House.

Pam Kostanski, president of the Montague Business Association, asked for and

received permission to hold a holiday tree lighting at Peskeomskut Park on Saturday, December 13th, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. She said the event will include lighted luminaries on the walkways, cookies and hot chocolate, and performers.

The board granted permission for the Montague Center Fire Department Relief Association to put up the crèche scene on the common in Montague Center from December 7th to the 28th, as they do every year.

The board approved a request from the capital improvements committee to spend \$20,000 from the program income fund to pay for a feasibility study of the possible reuse of the Montague Center School building. This follows town meeting action of earlier this year allocating \$30,000 for heating and maintenance of the building through the winter.

The board held a dog hearing in a matter of a complaint against a pitbull owned by Maria Lonergan, of 63 5th Street. Lonergan's dog is alleged to have bitten a dog owned by Laura Callahan, a neighbor of Lonergan's. The board ordered Lonergan to secure her front door, and only to allow the dog to be walked by an adult, with a leash and muzzle.

The board signed an annual monitoring agreement with Tighe and Bond for \$11,900 to monitor leachate from the capped landfill on Turnpike Road. Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the reported levels are low. "All we are seeing is iron and manganese and other chemicals in not too toxic quantities." Ross read from the most recent monitoring report, saying, "Little water quality impact to Randall Brook," was detected.

The board gave Abbondanzio the go-ahead, and considerable leeway, to write a grant application this week for a \$25,000 regional planning grant "to enlarge the Gill Montague Regional School District to include at least one other town." Or perhaps, one other city, since the Greenfield city council, under some pressure from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has also agreed to seek such a grant.

The board approved the outlines of a spending freeze prepared by Abbondanzio, limiting all departments to essential spending for the duration of the budget year, without selectboard approval.

A special town meeting to deal with remaining budget items, pending resolution of the Gill-Montague school budget impasse, for Thursday, December 4th. The location is to be determined, since the high school auditorium is not available that week.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Firefighters Turn Out for Special Town Meeting

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Volunteer firefighters were well represented at the Erving special town meeting on Monday, which featured an article to appropriate \$109,578 from free cash to purchase self contained breathing apparatus (SBCA) for the fire department.

Town moderator Richard Peabody looking over the crowd of approximately 30, said, "I know three quarters of the room know what this article is about."

Selectboard chair Andy Tessier said the town had spent \$50,000 to purchase nine SCBA last year, and had intended to continue allocating \$50,000 a year until the department acquired a full complement of 30 units. But it turned out, if the department spent \$109,578 to purchase the remaining 21 SBCA this year, it would realize significant cost savings.

With that brief explanation, Peabody put the matter to a vote, and got what he called "a boisterously unanimous" vote of approval.

In other business, the town meeting also unanimously approved spending \$20,000 to purchase new software for the tax collector's office, \$30,000 for legal and consulting fees related to the town's wastewater treatment plants, \$150,000 to inspect, reline, and repair leaking sewer mains in Erving Center, particularly on Church Street, Swamp Road and East Prospect Street, and \$20,000 to purchase a three quarter acre plot of land adjacent to the Erving water tower on French King Highway. Tessier predicted the town would cut down the trees near the water tower, and be back with an additional request for funds at annual town meeting to paint the

water tower inside and out.

In the final act of business, town meeting approved spending \$2,112.50 for legal fees associated with the recently signed ten-year extension of Erving's cable television contract with Comcast.

After the meeting, cable advisory committee chair George Bohrer said the town had received funding from Comcast to purchase video equipment, and would be sharing facilities with Montague Cable Television in Turners Falls, and broadcasting Erving programming on their channel, Channel 17. He said town meetings from the Erving Elementary School would be broadcast live, in the future, and laid out plans for other shows that could be taped and aired in Erving, such as profiles of local businesses, and perhaps even the weekly selectboard meetings from the town hall in Erving Center.

Bohrer said the ability to broadcast live from the elementary school could lead to video training for older elementary grades. He said a meeting would be held in early January to gather volunteer energy to get Erving's cable access television up and running. For more information, contact: gbohrer@FSC.edu.

In a meeting of the selectboard prior to the special town meeting, the board received a letter from the Department of Environmental Protection's drinking water program, ruling that the town's aquifer protection bylaw prohibited the construction of a gas station in Zone II of the town's aquifer.

Eric and Ralph Semb, owners of the former Countree Living Restaurant on Route 2,

had proposed building a gas station, a drive through quick stop at this location, which happens to be in Zone II of the aquifer. At a previous meeting, the selectboard had pointed out to Eric Semb that the town's recently revised zoning bylaws also prohibit restaurant or convenience store drive-throughs.

"Back to the drawing board," said the younger Semb.

The board approved the first payment on the \$6 million renovation project underway at the Erving water pollution control facility, in the amount of \$258,762, for R.H. White Construction Company out of Auburn, MA, the contractor. Tessier said rotted decking had been discovered under the treatment plant's roof; which would have to be replaced.

At their next meeting, the board will discuss a proposal by the Franklin Regional Council of Government's Peggy Sloan, to divide a Chapter 43-D expedited permitting application into three parts: \$75,000 for legal fees to make sure the town's bylaws conform to the requirements of expedited permitting (granting a major developer of a targeted project assurance of start-to-finish permitting in 180 days); \$42,500 for consulting services to examine the sewer infrastructure of the former IP paper mill in Erving, and the costs of retrofitting that for smaller businesses who may wish to use that plant; and \$10,000 for a consultant to perform a study of a vertical realignment of Arch Street, to improve clearance under the railroad trestle which has been cited as a limiting factor in redeveloping the former Usher Mill site.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE LOG POLICE LOG

Burglary, Breaking and Entering

Wednesday, 11/20
11:22 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a K Street address.
Saturday, 11/22
12:18 a.m. Report of general disturbance at a Millers Falls Road address. Arrested [redacted] Charged with disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace.
1:35 a.m. Report of accident with property damage. Arrested [redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, operating to endanger, marked lanes violation and speeding.
Sunday, 11/23
7:25 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Montague City Road address. Investigated.
Monday, 11/24
6:20 p.m. Report of identification fraud at a Main Street address.
Tuesday, 11/25
2:23 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Taylor Hill Road address. Investigated

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Breaking, Entering and Malicious Destruction

Friday, 11/18
9:41 a.m. Assisted Gill police with a medical emergency on French King Highway.
8:08 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle without insurance.
Monday, 11/21
9:45 a.m. Citation issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration and without insurance.
Tuesday, 11/22
10:09 p.m. Report of breaking and entering in progress on Old State Road. Responded and investigated same.
Wednesday, 11/23
8:02 p.m. Report of disturbance at a Mountain Road address. Citation issued to [redacted] Athol, for malicious destruction of property, breaking and entering, assault and battery. Citation issued to [redacted] for malicious destruction of property and breaking and entering.
Thursday, 11/24
10:15 p.m. Assisted Gill police with report of domestic disturbance at a Walnut Street address.

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Masons Court Tradition, Dispel Myths

BY ANNE HARDING

MONTAGUE CITY - Neither the *Wall Street Journal* nor the *New York Times* - nor, apparently, the *Montague Reporter* - covered one of the most interesting, and yet quietest, mergers of 2004.

That was when the Mechanics Lodge of Montague City, the Bay State Lodge of Montague Center and the Harmony Lodge of Northfield came together to form the Harmony Lodge of Montague - a Freemasons' Lodge with about 160 members.

Given the Masonic reputation as a "secret society," local folks may have been surprised to see a banner across Avenue A, along with notices in local newspapers, announcing an Open House.

So who are these mysterious Masons, and since when do they hold Open Houses?

A visitor may enter with a little trepidation, only to find a group of gregarious gentlemen eager to share stories about their involvement with the oldest and largest fraternal organization in the world. Masons can be found in virtually every country of the world regardless of race, religion, age, income, nationality, education or political views.

The roots of the

organization date back to the craft guilds of the medieval masons who built European castles, palaces and cathedrals. In addition, much of the ritual practice of contemporary Freemasons is inspired by the history and construction of King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, around 945 BC. Masons draw meaning from the architecture, engineering, masonry and construction of the temple, and use the symbolism of certain tools or props as a means to teach a code of ethics and

behavior. Of the three lodges that now comprise Harmony, Northfield was the oldest of the three lodges, and owned the only "Revere" charter. Proudly displayed among their artifacts is a fragile framed charter signed by Paul Revere on June 15th, 1796, who was the Massachusetts Grand Master at the time.

Don Campbell, the



The Mason's candle lit meeting room.

Master of the Harmony Lodge, has been a member only since 2001. Like many members, his father was a Mason before him and he'd been interested in the organization for many years before joining. Masters generally serve a two-year term, so I also met a number of past masters

developing friendships, enhancing community and furthering education. While belief in a Supreme Being is a requirement, the organization does not dictate theology. A new member is designated an "Entered Apprentice" and is expected to follow a course of study for several months, progressing through the next two degrees - "Fellow Craft" and "Master Mason."

Marty Glaser, a special needs teacher and Past Master of the Mechanics Lodge, has been a member since 1974. He remembers studying and moving through the degrees - not knowing some of his co-workers were Masons until he was conferred as a Master Mason.

Members point proudly to the group's international, statewide and local charitable contributions. The Shriners hospitals are probably the most well known example of their work, with a burn center in Boston and an orthopedic hospital in Springfield. These institutions are funded by the collective efforts of Masons throughout the world, and patients are cared for free-of-charge. Massachusetts also has a retirement facility in Charlton that was originally opened to care for aging Masons and their families, but now offers support to a much broader audience.

see MASONs pg 9



PHOTO COURTESY OF EDWINA KREPS

Old school building in Montague City, now the Harmony Lodge of Montague City

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From the 2008 survey of Turners Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School parents.

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MASONS from pg 8

Locally, the Montague lodge is gearing up to spread the word about their new program called the Harmony Bread Basket, which is intended to fill the gaps between traditional social services and food banks. To that end they are building an in-house reserve of non-perishable items to help families in difficulty. More details will be forthcoming as the program unfolds.

The Bread Basket is typical of the Masons' brand of local community strengthening - a Mason sees a need and is encouraged to do something about it. Often the work is done behind the scenes without public fanfare. Many years ago, Glaser was approached by one of the Sisters of the Farren Hospital about a gap in services for Jewish residents of the facility. Since that time, he has been offering Shabbat services there on alternate Fridays.

Fundraising is part of the work of all lodges, to maintain their own programs as well as the state and national charities supported by the fraternity.

The Harmony Lodge has a Christmas Bazaar to raise money. About six years ago Mike Aldritch was on site as a vendor peddling his watercolors. The next thing he knew, he had become a member of the lodge.

Passionately interested in historic preservation, Aldritch has amassed a wealth of memorabilia that are now displayed throughout the lodge. In addition to the Harmony Charter, there is an interesting poster of George Washington (another well-known American Mason). In the poster, Washington is wearing arguably the most famous of Mason's aprons - reportedly embroidered by Adrienne Lafayette, the wife of the Marquis de Lafayette. A gift from his dear friend, the apron was presented to Washington in 1784 and is commonly referred to as the Lafayette Apron. It is famous for its intricate work and heavy use of symbolism.

Lodges across the country issued ceremonial aprons in honor of George Washington and

reproduced the apron in a myriad of ways.

Aldrich fondly recounted an incident when he was about five years old and was discovered playing with his grandfather's white apron. The purpose of the apron was not discussed, but he

clearly remembers his grandfather saying, "Don't worry Mikey, someday you'll have one of your own."

Attending the Open House with his son and namesake was Nick Prokovich, a Mason for 50 years. He spoke of the

camaraderie of the organization and the cross cultural bonds and friendships he made over the years - from his shipmates aboard the *Montague* in 1949 to friends at the Harmony Lodge. Dan Morgan, the current secretary of the organization, boasts 49 years.

Others, he said, have been members for more than 60 years.

To learn more, "just ask a mason" — or visit the Massachusetts information site www.massfreemasonry.org



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CHURCH from page 1

"It's quite a thing to have been at St. John's for so long," said Father Bombardier. "I gave a great number of our communicants first holy communion, performed confirmation, and presided over their marriages. As a result, the members of my parish have truly come to be like members of my own family."

"We have many elderly people in our community. Their grandparents were the ones who really founded the parish and helped build it up. It was once a very thriving parish."

In reviewing his years at the church, Father Bombardier pointed to a very active women's council and other hard-working members of the church as two reasons for the parish's success. "Our women's council put on many wonderful parish suppers," he said, "and our church was known far and wide for our annual chicken barbecue in Gill each summer, for more than 30 years."

Father Bombardier cited lack of attendance as the chief reason for the closing of St. John's. "In New England, there were churches on every corner following the waves of immigration, but today ethnic backgrounds have blended. The Catholic Church, though, is growing in the Southwest with newer immigrants from Mexico and Puerto Rico. As we let go of the past, the Lord wants us to please Him in new, different, and various ways, serving where we are needed."

The closing of St. John's is difficult for the parishioners, he said. "We all have so many fond memories here. It hurts to see the parish close. However, we're confident our parishioners will move into churches in the area and be very welcome."

For example, residents of Erving Center will probably shift church membership to St. Mary's of Orange, while Millers Falls residents, in all likelihood, will attend Our Lady of Peace and Our Lady of Czestchowa in

Turners Falls.

One of the longtime active members of St. John's Catholic Church is Terry Miner, who has been a parishioner and involved in its community for more than 40 years. Miner wrote a history of the church for its 100th anniversary celebration in 1998. Always aware of the historical context of St. John's, Miner is looking forward to the dinner "to look back at the wonderful past and then look to our new future."

"It's a very sad thing to see our church close," said Miner, "but we want our last mass and dinner to be happy events. So many people in our parish wanted to have that chance to get together. I myself have three children who were brought up in this church, and St. John's is like a large, extended family."

Another prominent contributor to the good works of the church over the years has been Tom Graves, former chairman of the parish council. "We had a really close parish

community," Graves recalled. "We had so many community events like dinners and barbecues - so many activities. Everyone in the parish worked hard to make sure these efforts were successful."

Graves takes special satisfaction in looking back to the days of those famous chicken barbecues that marked the long, hot summers. "A group of ladies would start preparations four days ahead of the barbecue to make sure we would be ready. The pit crew would begin work at 7:30 in the morning and would work hard until 4:00 or 4:30 in the afternoon."

Another parishioner who contributed greatly to the St. John's community is Dennis Grader, who according to his peers, "would do anything asked of him." A modest man, Grader refused to take credit. "There are others in this community who have done so much more than me," he said.

Grader has three children

who grew up in the parish. They were baptized, received holy communion, and were confirmed at St. John's.

What is Grader's fondest memory of St. John's Catholic Church? "Every Saturday before Christmas and before Easter, several of us would go out through the auspices of the St. Vincent DePaul Society, visiting folks at nursing homes and other shut-ins. The joy that we brought was beyond compare. There would be cards and flowers, good wishes, and good cheer. I enjoyed that so much. I'm going to miss it a great deal."

The cost of the farewell dinner at the French King Restaurant December 7th is \$21 per person, with tax and tip included. Please contact either Terry Miner at 659-3400 or Tom Graves at 423-3902 if you would like to attend. November 30th is the deadline for getting in your payment, along with entrée choice.



TFHS 1st Quarter Honor Roll

Grade 12	Brandon Breault	Josephine Faneuf	Dylan Bocon	Justin Sessions	Kristy Dunbar	Third Honors	Haley Fiske
First Honors	Jacqualin Morin	Shelby Sayer	Christopher	Lauren Flynn	Daniel Skarzynski	Rachel Ariel	Patrick Moretti
David Bennett	Lacy Cardaropoli	Thomas Field	McMahon	Christopher Shattuck	Sarah Foster	Emily Robertson	Matthew Fowler
Jodi Hallett	Kimberly Nelson	Chad Thorne	Hannah Brown	Samantha Horan	Andrew Turban	Derek Sicard	Quincy Ortiz
Nicholas Clark	Ashley Costa	Kimberlee Fritz	Justin Pacheco	Kurt Sumner	Nicole Fuller	Brittany Yolish	Stacy French
Amber Henry	Ethan Reipold		Nataliya Buhakova	Joshua Lapachinski	Taylor Varilly		Katelyn Phillips
Samuel Colton	Nicole Dubay	Grade 11	Carlyn Perry	Chelsea Tela	Brooke Hastings	Grade 9	Christopher Gordon
Kelsey Kane	Kevin Wegiel	First Honors	Emma Butynski	Mitchell MacConnell	Second Honors	First Honors	Brittany Rawson
Eric Dumas	Adam Felton	Tia Demers	Evan Pleasant	Yaritza Torres	Brandon Ambo	Jolina-Rose Blier	Colton Hallett
Angela Marguet	Thomas Willard	Danielle Dolhenty	Daniel Cruz	Cayla Pollard	Emily Mailloux	Corban Mailloux	Angelica Renaud
Theodore Dunbar	Jacob Field	Mackae Freeland	Kathleen Rinaldi	Matthew Wozniak	Anna Bocharnikova	Zacharie Boisvert	Sara Hanley
Sara Pease	Lindsey Wilson	Megan Grimard	Brandon Deputy	Jovan Rivera	Katarina Palso	Alyssa Nicotra	Aria Roberts
Benjamin Foster	Joshua Gammon	Jacob Lapean	Tam Roberts		Jacob Eugin	Samantha Caouette	Alicia Hathaway
Joseph Rinaldi III	Third Honors	Olivia Nicotra	Elizabeth Dill	Grade 10	Ryan Pelis	Haley Ozdarski	Samantha Shaw
Nicholas Skarzynski	Joseph Auger	Dustin Rivard	Cassandra Rounds	First Honors	Uriah Forest-Bulley	Daniel Colton	Seth Lemieux
Second Honors	Tranae Gallagher	Amanda Singleton	Lucas Foley	Zhanna	Anthony Reed	Emily Pollard	Shawna Williams
Kimberly Arsenault	Benjamin Banash	Second Honors	Kimberlee Savage	Bocharnikova	David Garcia	Taylor Croteau	Samuel Letcher
Christopher	Immaculata	Juliana Aprileo	Matthew Garber	Vance Herzig	Kenneth Rounds	Todd Richardson	Third Honors
Humphrey	Gonzalez	Corey Hescock	Ashley Sears	McKenna Brunell	Krysten Hawkins	Stephanie French	Dakota Albano
Emma Banning	Jordan Boisvert	Ashley Bailey	Ryley Harriman	Taylor Howe	Meghan Smith	Caroline Sena	Corey Bassett
Brenden Jacobs	Lisa Jackson	Cassandra Kazar	Sarah Underwood	Erin Casey	Julie Howard-	Mark Hudyma	Daniel Eddings
Amy Baxter	Adrian Cook	Chelsea Bailey	Third Honors	Katherine Kuklewicz	Thompson	Kayleigh Turn	Latisha Felton
Erin Kelley	Susanna Khasanova	Morgan Kyser	Tricia Carignan	Sarah Crowell	Tashi Tsering	Jesse Langknecht	Shelby Lapinski
Leah Booker	Anthony Denofrio	Eric Bastarache	Elena Rushford	Kelsey O'Brien	Jack Hubert	Second Honors	Emily Mongeau
Shamari Kelly	Whitney Sanders	Jacob Lewis	Amanda Carlisle	Nina Dodge	Natasha Vaughn	Trevor Berman	Matthew Parenteau
				Elysia Ollari	Kelliann Humphrey	Jeremy Mankowsky	Krystal Radzuik
				Makayla Dolhenty	Cody Wells	Jenna Costa	Dylan Tanner
				Yelena Sherstyukov	Morgan MacConnell	Breanna Miller	

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Commission for Education Forms

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The selectboard, finance committee, and town moderator are nearly finished making appointments to the Commission for Education in Gill, the body that will study options for educating Gill students in the years to come. Ten of the twelve available appointments have been made; the selectboard is holding two seats open until their next meeting, so they can consider the people who have offered to serve before naming the last two appointees.

The finance committee (which is now chaired by Tupper Brown; Lee Nowill has stepped down as finance committee chair and resigned from the committee) appointed Peter Conway, Liz Gardner, Tom Hodak, and Kyle Maurer to serve on the new commission; moderator Ray Steele appointed Ted Castro-Santos, Joanne Rabideau, Dot Storrow, and Sue Sibley; and the selectboard so far has appointed Jen Waldron, and, at their meeting on November 24th, Joanne Wallace.

Other names under consideration include Larry Underwood, Megan Bathory-Peeler, Robin Paris, Ann York and Bob Tombs.

The commission is charged with researching all possible configurations of public education in Gill, including, but not be limited to, studying whether leaving the Gill-Montague Regional School District would be beneficial to

students, whether joining another district would be beneficial, maintaining the elementary school and tuitioning students to high school, or tuitioning students K-12 to other schools. The commission will present a final report to the annual town meeting in May of next year.

Selectboard member Ann Banash worked with Tupper Brown to draft a letter to the Gill-Montague Regional school committee urging them to adopt the budget passed at the November 18th district meeting. Montague selectboard member Pat Allen co-signed the letter, which was emailed to committee members before their meeting on the 25th.

The letter began, "We are writing to strongly encourage you to support and adopt the budget that was voted at the District Meeting on Tuesday, November 18th. If the school committee were to do so, that recognition of town perspectives would form a much improved basis, indeed a strong foundation, for going forward cooperatively with the FY '10 budget process, as called for by the resolution the school committee adopted November 13th."

The school committee rejected the district budget, however (see page 1).

The board agreed to seek a date convenient for the selectboard in Montague to hold a joint advisory meeting with Robin

Hamlett, of the GMRSD, on the search for a new superintendent for the regional school district.

"Can we tell them we don't think they should be getting a school superintendent at all?" asked board chair Nancy Griswold.

The board has signed a letter seeking a \$25,000 state planning grant to explore forming a joint superintendency with the Greenfield school district.

Speaking of the ongoing negotiation with Northfield Mount Hermon school over a proposed \$350,000 donation to the town to purchase a new fire truck, town administrative assistant Tracy Rogers said, "I'm getting nowhere on the purchase of a new fire truck by NMH. I'm unsure of how to proceed." The private school, located within the town's borders, is presently embarked on an extensive, multi-million dollar building campaign.

Griswold suggested the board invite the school's top officers to a future selectboard meeting, to discuss the matter further.

"I'm sure they're hurting also," said Banash, "and waiting for their investments to be less volatile."

At the NMH website, the private school's endowment is currently listed at \$148 million.

On a different topic, the selectboard agreed to ask the next special town meeting to give

them the power to appoint highway superintendent Mick LaClaire as the town's supervisor of trenches, according to a new state mandate that requires permits to be issued for trench work in Massachusetts communities beginning the first of the year.

Banash said the Franklin Regional Council of Governments is seeking clarifications on some questions about the new state mandate, including whether agricultural swales are considered trenches.

"Why can't the state mind their own stinking business?" asked member Lee Stevens.

He wanted to know why MassHighway was constructing drainage culverts — as they have on Main Road — with eight-by-twelve-inch gaps on either side of the grates. He considered these openings likely to cause injury to unwary pedestrians, or horses.

The board gratefully accepted a donation of \$1257.55 from David Manning, a resident of Riverside, to be used toward the purchase of paint for the exterior of the Riverside Municipal Building.

The board decided to spend \$200 to repair the front door lock on the town hall, after Rogers got her key stuck. The lock has caused problems for other keyholders recently.

The board has heard feedback from the town administrators of

Bernardston and Northfield that those two towns are considering pursuing sharing a police chief between themselves, but not with the town of Gill. Bernardston and Northfield both have interim police chiefs, Gill has a permanent chief, David Hastings, under contract.

"Everybody wants to stay in control," said Stevens.

Bidget Logan, of the Gill agricultural commission, updated the selectboard on the commission's work. They have drafted a "Right to Farm" bylaw for Gill, which will be presented to the next special town meeting, and they are working on a brochure that will highlight all the farms in Gill, locate them on a map of the town, and indicate where their farm products are for sale.

"That's absolutely fantastic!" said Griswold.

Shirley Flagg, Bruce Yuki, and Dick French are the other members of the agricultural commission; one seat is open and a volunteer is sought to fill it.

The board set the date for an override election to try to resolve the town's '09 budget deficit, for Tuesday, January 6th. A special town meeting will be held directly following the override election, on Wednesday, January 7th.

The board appointed Mitchell LaClair, Jr. and Greg Parody to the Gill fire department, pending physical check-ups.

PLASTIC from pg 5

Gasoline for example is 'light,' and one of the first fractions collected, while the heating oil that warms our house is thicker, heavier and consists of longer carbon chains. Carbon chains can also be 'cracked' into shorter chains, like ethylene, a simple two-carbon molecule. Ethylene is a highly versatile molecule used in hospitals and medical offices for sterilization, fruit ripening (it is also a naturally produced fruit hormone which initiates fruit ripening — try storing some apples next to an

overripe banana and see what happens), antifreeze, a one-time gasoline additive, and plastics.

Ethylene is one of the highest volume organic (carbon containing) chemicals in production. According to a recent report by SRI Consulting in 2006 "...global ethylene production amounted to about 110 million metric tons, with an estimated value of \$122 billion."

One hundred and ten million metric tons, and guess what? Over half of that goes right into the production of polyethylene plastics, including bags and plastic wrap.

"Everyone's asking about plastic wrap in the microwave," said my mother one afternoon. Apparently some of her friends had read or heard about the email promising death and destruction by dioxins and other "toxins dripping into your food." For years she's been using plastic wrap when reheating. Her reheated food is moist and her oven is encrusted with splatter and my food dry. Turns out the email was a hoax, but - according to both the American Chemistry's Plastic's Info site (Better Living with Plastics), and

the FDA (for what it's worth these days), consumers should be wary of combining their wrap with their food when microwaving. According to the site, "...most manufacturers recommend leaving at least an inch between the food and the wrap covering the dish. This is to prevent the plastic wrap from melting, which could result from

contact with extremely hot foods." Not to mention allowing chemical additives present in some of the clear cling wraps to leach other chemicals into your see **PLASTIC** pg 13

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POLICE from page 1

sheets, exuded a kind of kid in a candy store can-do optimism about the building project, despite the onset of cold weather. With the concrete poured and the underground systems in, Fiffy said, "It's possible now to build the building in cold conditions."

The start of construction was held up while the building committee waited to hear whether Montague received the \$700,000 block grant the town applied for to help defray construction costs (it did not). Another SNAFU developed when the Zoning Board of Appeals required the contractor to install a storm water run-off system sufficient to handle a "100-year storm."

That ran the project an additional \$50,000 in redesign and drainage work.

But despite those early setbacks, and a late start date of September 11th, Fiffy predicts the project will be done before the 365 day contract with RAC Builders of Agawam is up.

"If [Montague police chief] Ray Zukowski isn't in his new office by June, I'll eat my hat," said Turners Falls fire chief Raymond Godin.

Godin said so far the only disruptions to normal operations at the adjacent fire department project have been minimal distractions like noise and

parking, and vibrations from the steam roller shaking his desk.

Godins said the administrative offices at the fire department are now being warmed with geothermal heat, recently installed by Climate Heating and Cooling out of Pittsfield. This project was installed separately from the new police station construction. Godin said he expected the fire department's oil bill to drop by a third or more during the course of a year (the equipment bay will still be heated by oil).

Prudential committee member Mark Allen said the fire department chose to install a geothermal system now because the construction of the new police station would have rendered the fire department's old HVAC system, located on the outside wall adjoining the new building, inoperable.

At first, the police station building committee considered simply extending the geothermal heating and cooling system for the new police station to cover the administrative side of the fire station, but it turned out the cost for doing that — \$175,000 — would have been prohibitive. But since the fire department needed to install a new HVAC system anyway, they chose to go with geo-thermal, to realize long term cost savings. The fire department had two 400-foot wells drilled, and the new heat pump and ductwork was

installed on the inner wall of the equipment bay, all for about half of what it would have cost to tie into the new system on the police station side. Now, the ambient temperature of the ground water below is heating the fire station to a comfortable 68 - 70 degrees.

Godin and Allen agreed that if oil prices had stayed close to the



DETMOLD PHOTO
Bill Freeman (left) and Tim Carlisle pull wire through an underground conduit to connect the new police station to the new utility pole on Turnpike Road

level they had been at earlier this summer, the new system for the fire department would have paid for itself within 12 - 14 years. If oil prices stay at the levels they are now, it will take longer to pay back the cost of geo-thermal, "but nobody expects them to," said Allen. "They will go up."

Fiffy, who is enthusiastic about almost every topic related to the new police station, was particularly bullish on the geothermal heating and cooling system ready to be installed there.

"It's astonishing to see there's an effective system that can literally heat this building off of the energy from ground-water," said Fiffy. "They get enough energy out of 55 degrees —take five degrees out [through the heat exchanger] — to make hot water at 70 degrees to heat the building. The system will work in reverse in the summer to cool the building. It's a m a z i n g stuff."

Fiffy said cost savings were realized when CES Builders, out of Middletown, CT, drilled the first test well on the

property, and found conditions 400 feet down good enough [wet enough] to cancel the need for five of the fifteen geo-thermal wells originally planned. The ten back up wells were also put on hold. Fiffy got the company to bid a standard price for each well, saving \$35,000 overall. The geothermal wells are all drilled now, and the interconnected piping should be complete by the first week of December, Fiffy said.

Fiffy had high praise for the assistance given to the building project by the Turners Falls

Water Department, which helped reconfigure the water line that used to run beneath the discontinued extension of Montague Street. The water department was able to perform that work for considerably less money than if that job had gone out to bid at prevailing wage.

The clerk of the works said the building project also caught a break due to the competitive bidding climate brought on by the poor economy. The town should save \$95,000 on the total building construction cost of \$3.53 million because of the bidding climate, Fiffy said. (On the downside, he said the town spent an extra \$6000 on duplicating and mailing costs, sending out plans to the number of companies wanting to bid.) He said the cost of materials had been skyrocketing over the summer, but they have dropped way down again, causing him to continually readjust his projected totals. That's all part of the job for Ted Fiffy.

DIVING from page 1

What was the Underwater Recovery Unit trying to recover down there?

According to Montague chief of police Ray Zukowski, the divers were searching for the State Championship Team sign that had been put up at the intersection of Canal Street and Fifth Street, facing the White Bridge to Greenfield, to welcome people to Montague from the Greenfield side of the river. The sign, which cost an estimated \$850 to prepare and install (with most of that cost paid for by the Greenfield Savings Bank as a donation to the town), had been put up on Friday, October 17th by the Montague highway department.

Eight days later, at 12:55 a.m. on Saturday, October 25th, surveillance cameras on the side of the Southworth paper company picked up the sight of two cars pulling into the Canal Street parking lot, and a number of individuals getting out. Moments later, the cameras

picked up the images of the same people carrying the sign rapidly down the hill in the direction of the power canal. Right after that, the same individuals reappeared in the surveillance tapes — this time with no sign — jumped into the cars and drove away in the direction of Greenfield, according to Zukowski, who had requested access to the video surveillance cameras from Southworth.

After two members of the team dove individually (at the point where some blue paint had been found on the top of the canal safety fence), five members of the team linked up by safety rope, plunged into the canal, swam to the bottom, and with Fleming hugging the wall near the bike path, drifted down along the canal bottom as far as the 11th Street Bridge, searching for the sign.

"With the pressure treated posts, and the flow in the canal on October 25th similar to the flow today (not very fast), we figured the sign would not drift very far before it sank,"

Zukowski said. He added, "It never made it as far as the gatehouse," of Cabot Station.

With a phalanx of police officers, First Light Power officials, local fire department and police personnel, a selectboard member, and a number of curious bystanders trailing them downstream, the five submerged men kept in communication with their support team on the bike path by radio, and gave intermittent signal of their whereabouts with bursts of exhaled air. When they approached the railroad trestle to the former Griswold Cotton Mill, the divers were ordered to pull in closer to the bike path wall so as not to get tangled in the pilings.

But when they emerged more than half an hour later by the 11th Street Bridge, they had turned up no trace of the missing "Welcome to Montague, Home of the Turners Falls Indians" sign.

They divers did not come up entirely empty handed, however. "They found the stop sign that had been installed at the end of

the bike path," said Zukowski. "That was probably worth \$300, right there."

Though it may take another nine months — until the canal is drained for annual maintenance — to determine the whereabouts of the State Championship Team sign, the Turners Falls football team will have a chance to defend their honor on the gridiron in Greenfield tomorrow for the annual Turkey Day game. And though no one is saying whether the young people who dumped the sign in the drink in fact live on the side of the river toward which they drove in such a hurry at 1:00 a.m. on October 25th, the police chief does have a message for them, whoever and wherever they may be:

"We've sent the videotapes off to the state crime lab to be enhanced, to try to get the plate numbers off the cars," said Zukowski. "If these individuals would like to come forward and do the right thing, work out some restitution, it would be in their best interest, before we come to find them."

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI
LEONIA, NJ - Q. *What is the leading cause of brain injuries?*

About 1.4 million people suffer a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) each year in the United States. Half of all TBIs are caused by accidents involving automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles, and pedestrians. These accidents are the major cause of TBI in people under age 75.

Falls cause the majority of TBIs in people 75 and older; this group has the highest rates of TBI-related hospitalizations and death.

[A note to older people who suffer a blow to the head: If you are taking a blood thinner such as Coumadin, get immediate attention from a healthcare

provider to check for internal bleeding.]

TBIs fall into several categories:

- Concussion, which is an injury produced by a violent blow or impact. A concussion is followed by a temporary, sometimes prolonged, loss of function. If you suffer a concussion, you may pass out, feel dazed and may lose vision, balance or memory for a while after the injury.

- Contusion, which is a bruise of the brain. This means there is some bleeding in the brain, causing swelling.

- Skull fracture. Sometimes the edges of broken skull bones cut into the brain and cause bleeding or other injury.

- Hematoma, which is bleeding in the brain that collects and clots, forming a bump.

Symptoms of a serious head injury may include: headaches, vomiting, nausea, sleepiness, convulsions, dilated pupils, slurred speech, weak-

ness or numbness in the arms or legs, loss of coordination, confusion, agitation, bloody or clear fluids emanating from ears or nose, blurred vision or seeing double, dizziness, respiratory failure, paralysis, slow pulse, ringing in the ears, inappropriate emotional responses, and loss of bowel or bladder control.

Anyone with signs of moderate or severe TBI should receive medical attention as soon as possible. Because little can be done to reverse the initial brain damage caused by trauma, medical personnel try to stabilize an individual with TBI and focus on preventing further injury.

Patients with mild to moderate injuries may receive skull and neck X-rays to check for bone fractures or spinal instability. For moderate to severe cases, tests such as a computerized tomography (CT) or a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan are required. Approximately half of severely head-injured patients will need surgery to remove or

repair hematomas or contusions.

Moderately to severely injured patients receive rehabilitation that involves individually tailored treatment programs in the areas of physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, psychiatry (physical medicine), psychology and psychiatry, and social support.

Treatment and outcome depend on the severity and location of the injury, the patient's health and age, and the time it took to get the proper medical treatment. Healing of the brain takes time and a lot of rest.

After an injury, about 40 percent of TBI patients suffer from postconcussion syndrome (PCS). Symptoms include headache, vertigo, memory problems, trouble concentrating, sleeping problems, restlessness, irritability, apathy, depression, and anxiety. These symptoms may last for a few weeks after the head injury. Treatment for PCS may include drugs and ther-

apy. Many TBI patients have sensory problems, especially problems with vision. Also, TBI patients often have difficulty with hand-eye coordination. Other sensory deficits may include problems with hearing, smell, taste, or touch. Some TBI patients develop tinnitus, a ringing or roaring in the ears. Language and communication problems are common disabilities in TBI patients.

Most TBI patients have emotional or behavioral problems that fit under the broad category of psychiatric health.

In addition to the immediate post-injury complications, other long-term problems can develop after a TBI. These include Parkinson's disease and other motor problems, Alzheimer's disease, and post-traumatic dementia.

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

Cardiac Risk Screening
GREENFIELD - Baystate Franklin Medical offers a Cardiac Risk Cholesterol Screening on Wednesday, Dec. 10th, from 8:30 - 10 a.m. in Conference Room A. Participants must fast for 12 hours prior to screening. Results will be forwarded to participants and their primary care providers. Cost for the screening is \$7.00; pre-registration is required. To register, call Baystate Health Link at 413-773-2454 or 1-800-377-HEALTH.

PLASTICS from pg 11
food. Plastic wraps are made both from LDPE and polyvinylidene chloride or polyvinyl chloride (PVC). It was concerns about PVC wrap that started the rumors flying. Although plastics are incredibly versatile materials, sometimes they are tweaked with chemical additives to get just the right clinginess, or color or flexibility. That meant adding diethylhexyl adipate (DEHA) in the case of chlorine

containing cling wraps. The problem is that under the right circumstances, like heating in a microwave — particularly when you're heating things with high fat content like cheese or meat — DEHA, a reproductive and developmental toxicant, migrates from the plastic wrap resting on top of last night's Buffalo Chicken Wings into the wings. So far as we know, DEHA is only toxic in relatively high doses. While the FDA acknowledges that substances like

DEHA can and do transfer from plastic to foods during reheating, the controversy is over how much leaches and how toxic it is. The FDA maintains whatever leaches out is safe — otherwise the product would not have been approved for use with food. But these days, given FDA's recent track record and the response to DEHA by other countries — it has been banned from use in food wraps in Korea and China — we'd all be better off without it. Thankfully, S.C. Johnson, producer of the

granddaddy of all cling-wrap, Saran, has taken the "better safe than sorry approach" dropping the chlorine containing wrap. Johnson has turned instead to LDPE, winning an EPA "Designing Greener Chemistry Award" in the process. Now if we just can figure out how to consistently recycle all that wrap and all those LDPE baggies we'll all be a little bit greener.

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JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28th
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Nexus*, dancing tends to break out! Harmonic, eclectic rock and alternative, 9 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse: *Mike Stetson Band*, rock & roll covers. Members of Tracy & Co will rock you! 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *DJ Pushplay post-Thanksgiving Workout*, \$3 cover.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29th
At The Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Freshwater Mussels in Our Watershed*. Hands-on activity for youngsters, info on habitat protection efforts for adults. 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The Shea Theater, Turners Falls: The Hampstead Stage Company's production of C.S. Lewis' popular classic *Prince Caspian*. Fast moving stage play finds the four siblings, Lucy, Edmund, Peter, and Susan, pulled back into the land of Narnia, where a thousand years have passed since they last visited. \$5, 2 p.m. show. 863-228, www.theshea.org

The Shea Theater Date Night Series presents: *Comedy Hypnotist Hypno Lorenzo*. A hilarious evening of comedy and audience participation, Hypno Lorenzo's amazing comedy stage hypnosis show is ideal entertainment for adults and teens and will arouse the interest and curiosity of everyone, including skeptics! \$10, 8 p.m. show. (413) 863-2281, www.theshea.org

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Lord Jeff*, a psychedelic folk quartet, 9 to 11 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse: *Drunk Stuntmen*, original alt. country/rock & roll, 9:30 p.m.

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Watcher/Ghostie/Brook Pridmore*,

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30th
Family Dance, Montague Grange, Montague Center, 4 to 6 p.m. Family-



Full Moon Follies! It's a show you can only see once a year when the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse crew dishes up the annual Follies and offers a feast of fine music, spoken word, belly dance, and good company; all to benefit the Wendell Free Library. Saturday, December 6th at 7:30 p.m. Info: www.wendellfullmoon.org

style contra dancing with caller Kathy Torrey. Live music from traditional contradance band *Shingle the Roof*. Simple contras, circle dances, and singing games with instruction for beginners of all ages. \$4/person or \$10 - 15/family. Last Sunday of each month til April. 367-9608, www.MontagueMA.net/Montague_Grango

At The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Le Cabaret de Open Mic!*, no cover.

MONDAY & TUESDAY DECEMBER 1st & 2nd
Historic Deerfield, History Workshop: Help create beautiful natural wreaths to decorate doorways of Deerfield. Bring creativity, enthusiasm, and an extra pair of pruning shears. No experience required. Supplies & refreshments provided. 12/1, 5:30 - 8 p.m. 12/2, 2-5 p.m. (413) 775-7214. Free.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1st
Evening Sing-a-Long, Montague Center Library, 6:30 p.m. Children's librarian Linda Hickman plays guitar and banjo and performs a variety of children's music. Info., call the Carnegie Library 863-3214 during the week, or the Montague Center Library, 367-2852, on Monday evenings.

Soup & Games Night at Hope & Olive, Greenfield. Benefit downtown Greenfield Holiday Lighting. Donations encouraged. Free soup, snacks & games. 5 to 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2nd
Reduce, Reuse, Rejoice! Northfield Mountain Program with Amy Donovan, Program Director, Franklin County Solid Waste District. Ages 12 and older Amy shares strategies for creatively wrapping common gift items like CDs,

DVDs, jewelry boxes, books, etc. She'll show sample wrapping ideas and share some techniques to save paper and money. A suggested list of wrapping items to bring from home will be emailed to registered program participants, some materials shared. 7 - 8:30 p.m. Free. (413) 659-4461.

THURSDAY, DEC. 4th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: What do your local farmers say about our food? Four Rivers Charter School investigates locally grown food by interviewing farmers. Meet the farmers; hear their

findings. 6 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5th
At The Bookmill, Montague Center: *Writers' Night Out* featuring Bob Flaherty. His semi-autobiographical novel *Puff*, set in the aftermath of the Blizzard of '78, was published by HarperCollins in 2005 and has been optioned as a movie. Flaherty reads from his new work and talks about novelistic approaches to news stories and his one man show, "Bob Flaherty in Effigy," and the tightrope dance of performing comedic monologues while maintaining impartiality as a reporter.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6th
At The Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Seasonal Nature Crafts with Rachael Roberts. Crafting for all ages! 1 to 2 p.m.

Juried Craft Fair at Greenfield Center School. Admissions Open House: tours, meet teachers, current parents and students, gift-making workshops for children ages 3-12. Silent Auction with over 40 works of art and fine craft from the region's best-known artists from around New England. 10 to 4 p.m. www.centerschool.net.

Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell Town Hall: Full Moon Follies. A feast of music, spoken word, belly dance, and good company; all to benefit the Wendell Free Library. Guests including guitarist Francis Doughty, Richard Chase & Co., north Quabbin's talented youth ensemble 'Ned Zebner', Hadama and Shalom Habibi, Paul Richmond. 7:30 p.m. \$6 - \$15 at the door; kids 6-12 \$2, under 6 free.

At The Bookmill, Montague Center: *Chiara Quartet*, Rebecca Fischer, Julie

Yoon violin; Jonah Sirota, viola; Gregory Beaver, cello. The group presents exhilarating contemporary works for newcomers and committed chamber music fans alike. 8 p.m., \$12 in advance at the Bookmill.

Amherst Symphony Orchestra performs at 8 p.m. in Buckley Recital Hall, Amherst College. Tchaikovsky's colorful Nutcracker Suite and Prokofiev's captivating tale of Peter and the Wolf, narrated by Benson Lieber. Mark Lane Swanson, music director, and Daniel Curtis '08 will conduct. \$8/\$4 for seniors and children 12 and under. Reservations: concerts@amherst.edu.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY DECEMBER 6th & 7th
Arts & Icicles Open Studio Walking Tour, Turners Falls (come early, stay late!)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7th
Big Band to begin holiday season in Montague with *Classic Christmas*. Nationally recognized drummer Gregory Caputo and his acclaimed 18 piece big band will ring in the holiday season with a performance sure to rekindle your wonderful memories of Christmas past. Held in the Turners Falls High School Theater, Turners Falls. Advance tickets \$15 are available at these locations: Scotty's Convenience Store, World Eye Bookshop, by calling Sandy-TFHS 863-7218, or www.thegmf.org At the door: \$20.

TRUCKERS ON LOVE, A short film by Léa Donnan, screening at 6 p.m., the Rendezvous. Filmed at the Whately Diner, long haul truckers share their impressions of life, love and lovelessness. Bring someone you love.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12th & 13th
Pothole Pictures, Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Wuthering Heights*, 1939, b & w, directed by William Wyler, 7:30 p.m., music before at 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13th
Tree Decorating in Peskeomskut Park, Turners Falls 4:30 - 6 p.m. sponsored by the Montague Business Association. We'll decorate an evergreen tree set up in the Band Shell. Free refreshments. Musical entertainment providing sounds of the season, as well as a visit from Santa. Bring any type of ornament to decorate; homemade ornaments encouraged.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12th TO 14th
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ONGOING
At the Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Winning entries of the Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp competition on display through December 13th.

Select Photographs: 1956 thru 2005 by photographer Paul Capinagro on display in Gallery 52 & 56 at the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, Turners Falls. At Gallery 85: Lois Greenfield - Celestial Bodies, Infernal Souls. Through Dec. 14th.

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3. MADAGASCAR ESCAPE 2 AFRICA DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG WED, FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
4. ROLE MODELS R DAILY 6:45 9:15 WED, FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
5. TRANSPORTER 3 DAILY 6:45 9:15 PG13 WED, FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
6. TWILIGHT PG13 DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 WED, FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
7. QUANTUM OF SOLACE PG13 DAILY 7:00 9:30 DTS sound WED, FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30

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"Over the River and Through the Woods to Grandmother's House we go..."



Lydia Maria Child's grandfather's house in Medford, now owned by Tufts University

BY FRAN HEMOND
MONTAGUE CENTER - And that's how it was...

Some generations ago, like much of the country, New England had not yet succumbed to Santa Claus and our exciting Christmas holidays. It was Thanksgiving Day that gave the warmth of the harvest accom-

plished and the family rejoined. This was the holiday that modified the chill and darkness of the dying year.

Lydia Child, back in 1844, one of the erudite eastern Massachusetts social activists of her day, (she stood for abolition, women's suffrage, and Indian rights) wrote it for us all. Her

song is straightforward, no mystery, no pretension. "To grandmother's house we go," ("grandfather's farm" in usual conversation). But with a fabulous feast forthcoming, it was grandmother's day.

In the following century, as we kids rode up the Connecticut Valley in a 'flivver' on dirt roads, we thought that song had been written for us. An occasional November matched the weather the song remembers. "The horse knew the way to carry the sleigh in the white and drifted snow," and father had to put chains on the skinny tires. The nippy cold must have been apparent in an open car, but we forgot "how the wind doth blow."

"Hurrah for the fun, is the

pudding done, hurrah for the pumpkin pie" quite wiped out any memory of the "freezing toes" and "bitten nose" of Child's poem.

"Over the River and Through the Woods" was published in 1844, and surely captured the carefree spirit of the truly American holiday. Child's grandfather's farm is on South Street in Medford, Massachusetts, and was restored by Tufts University in 1976. The Mystic River is still there. The woods of 1844 are just a memory.

Governor Bradford mentions in *Plimouth Plantation* the happy harvest of 1621. He writes that various Plymouth folks had written letters to England about

the celebration, and that their good words were all true. Edward Winslow, later a governor of the group, is more specific in his December 11th, 1621 letter to a friend. He characterizes it well. "In a more special manner we might rejoice together after we had gathered the fruits of our labors."

Massasoit and ninety of his men joined the party for three days. Abundant wild turkeys and waterfowl, Indian corn and venison added to the feast. The Indians brought five deer to the celebration, and the Pilgrims and Wampanoags shared plentiful food and challenging games. It is thanks for this food and friendship we celebrate some 387 years later.

Happy Thanksgiving
from Franklin Community Cooperative

If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world. ~J.R.R. Tolkien

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Households Receive Thanksgiving Birds and Fixings at the Franklin Area Survival Center

BY DON CLEGG
TURNERS FALLS - The Franklin Area Survival Center at 96 Fourth Street in Turners Falls continued its annual Thanksgiving holiday assistance this year, providing more than 250 local households with the fixings for a Thanksgiving Day dinner. Pre-registered households of one or two individuals were given a chicken. Turkeys were given to households of three or more. Households also took home generous care packages of potatoes, squash, corn, sweet potatoes, fresh baked banana

bread and various other dinner items.

The Thanksgiving dinner giveaway began on Friday, November 21st. That day, 122 customers came to pick up their dinner and fixings. They were lined up 30 deep when the Survival Center opened at 10:00 a.m.

Survival Center volunteers continued to give out chickens and turkeys to pre-registered households on Monday and Tuesday. By day's end on Tuesday, 246 families had received holiday birds and every-

thing needed to make a complete Thanksgiving meal.

Survival Center board member Everett Hatch, of Greenfield, said, "The turkeys were supplied by numerous anonymous donors, along with the Second Congregational Church of Greenfield and the Greenfield Elks and Emblem Club."

In addition, Hatch said, "The chickens and other dinner fixings came from the Western Mass Food Bank in Hatfield. The Girard Family Farm in Gill supplied butternut and acorn squash.

Lou Hood, a Greenfield resi-

dent who has been volunteering at the Center for the past 23 years, said, "We have been giving away turkeys on Thanksgiving for as long as I have been here."

One person who received the gift of a Thanksgiving turkey from the Survival Center this year, a woman from Greenfield named Vivian who heads a family of three commented, "This is a wonderful thing the Center does each year." She thanked everyone involved in the Center for assisting her family throughout the year.

Hector from Turners Falls said he is grateful to receive all the items on his Thanksgiving dinner list. "I thought I was just getting a turkey. This is great!"

Rick, a senior citizen from Turners Falls who picked up his chicken on Monday, said, "I came by on Friday but the line was out the door. Thank you, very much."

During the three day Thanksgiving giveaway, one the other side of the building, the food pantry maintained its regular Monday through Friday hours, 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., helping households in need of general food assistance. Friday, November 21st, set a one-day record on the Food Pantry side of the Center, where 39 households obtained their monthly food assistance. In addition to all this activity, volunteers estimated 130 individuals came to the pantry just to pick up bread, which is available daily.

Volunteers who assisted at this year's Thanksgiving Day giveaway could not help but notice the wide range of households seeking assistance. They came from single households and multi-generational households, the young and unemployed to senior citizens on fixed incomes, just families having a difficult time.

Programs like the Franklin Area Survival Center are an invaluable asset and support to so many members of our community, we can only hope the future need is never greater than the resources available to meet it.



DETMOULD PHOTO
Ev Hatch and Nathan Kari, of Charlemont Academy, loaded up customers with chickens, turkeys, and all the fixin's at the Survival Center

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