



**ARTS & ICICLES DEC. 1-2**  
Open Studios in Turners Falls  
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**THEY NEVER GAVE UP**  
Turkey Day Blow Out in Turners  
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LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 6 - NO. 9

also serving Gill, Erving and Wendell

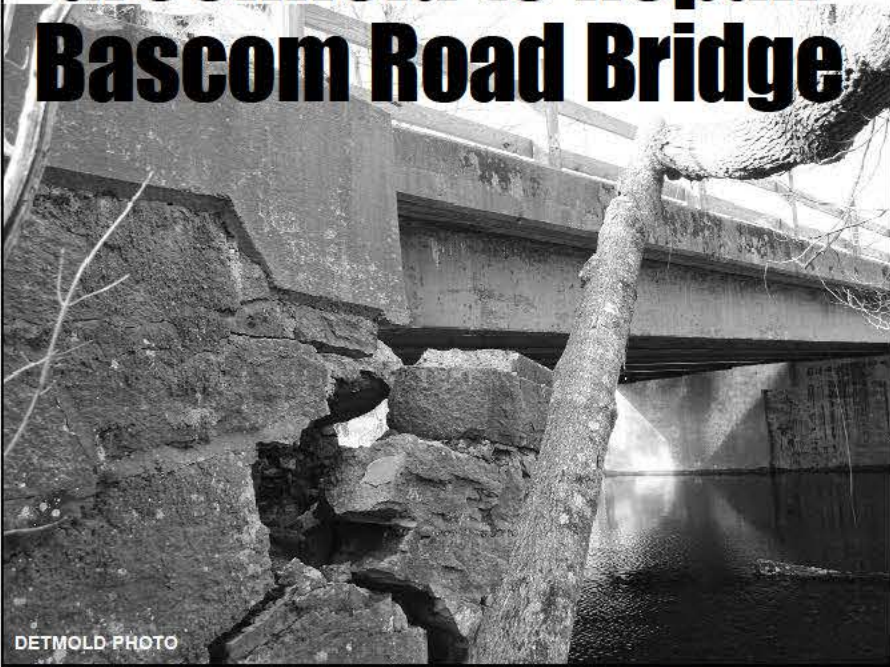
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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 29, 2007

## Greenfield to Repair Bascom Road Bridge



DETMOLD PHOTO

The Bascom Road Bridge, showing the washed out abutment on the Gill side of the Fall River.

**BY DAVID DETMOLD GILL** - The city of Greenfield will uphold their end of a bargain formalized in 1798 to maintain the Bascom Road bridge, which crosses the Fall River between the northern end of Greenfield and Gill. The 26-foot wide, two-lane bridge, with a concrete deck on steel stringers has been closed to pedestrian, bike and vehicle traffic since flooding in October of 2005 damaged the abutment on the Gill side of the bridge. Repairs to the bridge, which will be paid for with funding from the Massachusetts Emergency

Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency ((FEMA) are expected to cost \$162,500, and should be completed by the middle of summer, 2008, according to Greenfield DPW engineering superintendent Laurence Petrin. Of that amount, a contract for \$33,700 was signed last week with Stantec of Northampton, for engineering and design work, and they are already on the job.

Petrin said, "The bridge deck needs to be supported. The stringers are all see **BRIDGE** pg 7

## School Closing Plan Fails by One Vote

**BY DAVID DETMOLD GILL-MONTAGUE** - On Tuesday, the Gill-Montague school committee came within one vote - 7 to 2 - of closing two schools. But it also advanced a proposal to the town meetings of Gill and Montague to amend the district agreement to lower the number of votes needed to close a school

to a two-thirds majority of the entire school committee, rather than the eight out of nine votes presently required. An additional majority vote of the town meeting of the town where a school is going to be closed would also be needed to close a school, if the district amendment passes.

Interim superintendent

Ken Rocke said he would send a letter to the towns of Gill and Montague in the coming week, advising them of the school committee's decision to amend the district agreement, and asking the towns to place the item on the warrant for their next town meetings for an up or down vote. "Since the see **SCHOOLS** pg 10

## Adams Scholarships Awarded at TFHS



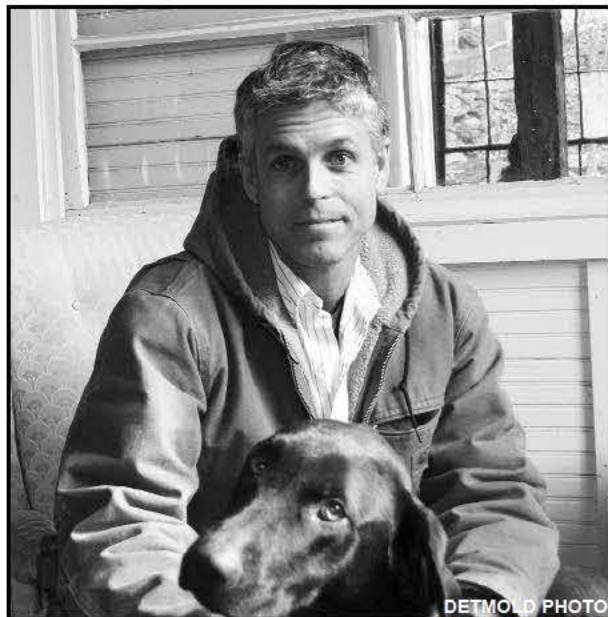
CORI URBAN PHOTO

Among this year's recipients of the John and Abigail Adams scholarships at Turners Falls High School are (left to right) seniors: Stephanie Joly, Ali Urban (back row), Gina Varuzzo, Sam Johnson (back row), Alix Ackerman, Molly Perry, Corey Leveille (back row, obscured), Alex Tufano, Lara Ames, Sean Crowell (back row), Amanda Golembeski, Kyle Pelis (back row), Erica Zajac. Adams grant scholars must rank as advanced in either math or English language arts, proficient in the other subject, and must rank in the top 25% of their district's MCAS scores. Adams scholars receive a guarantee of eight semesters of free tuition at any Massachusetts community college.

Not pictured: Kara Bassett, Brian Campbell, Aaron Cappucci, Katie Christenson, Ethan Crane, Amber Marion, Kayla Pecor, Charles Peterson, Corey Shearer, and Jeff Tela.

## Local Author Signs Big Book Deal

**BY DAVID DETMOLD MONTAGUE CENTER** - Who says you have to be crazy to quit your job and take up writing for a living? That's more or less what David Lovelace, former owner of the Book Mill in Montague Center, has done, and earlier this month he got a six figure contract with Dutton/Penguin for his first book to show for it. A week later, he sold the English rights to Harper/Collins for another insane amount of money. Why would these reputable companies throw this kind of cash at an unknown author who is "still several more chapters" away from even finishing the book? Well, aside from the fact that Lovelace has impressed local audiences as a fine



DETMOLD PHOTO

David Lovelace and his dog, Django.

Lovelace, former owner of the Montague Book Mill, has found a buyer for his first book, Scattershot.

writer, with a trenchant voice and a biting sense of humor, it doesn't hurt that the book itself is about mental illness, his own and his family's.

"It's about bi-polar disease, which is the disease *du jour* for mental illness," said Lovelace, who most days is still to be see **BOOK** pg 12

## Community Donates Generously to Replace Local Woman's Loss

**KATHY LITCHFIELD TURNERS FALLS** - Yesterday afternoon, Montague Police Sergeant Chip Dodge and patrolman Jim Ruddock delivered over \$1,700 to an 83-year-old Turners woman whose pocketbook was carried off outside Rite Aid Monday, caught in the tires of a huge semi-trailer delivery truck.

According to Ruddock, Mary Olive Corbiere's pocketbook, filled with holiday shopping cash, was in the front seat of her shopping cart, while she loaded items into her vehicle.

A semi-trailer truck delivering flowers to Rite Aid caught the pocketbook's strap in its rear



LITCHFIELD PHOTO

Sgt. Chip Dodge, left, and patrolman Jim Ruddock display more than \$1,700 generously donated by local residents and community members to replace cash lost Tuesday on Avenue A by an 83-year-old Turners Falls resident.

mud flap as it drove by, then dragged it into the truck's dual tires. The truck rolled, and utterly destroyed the pocketbook on its way down Avenue A, strewing its contents, broken and tattered, along the street until the bag finally fell off on the Gill-

Montague bridge, said Ruddock.

"The keys were worn down and some were broken in half," said Dodge. "We found a lot of half pieces (of cash bills) and broken credit cards, bank books..."

see **CASH** pg 7



**PET OF THE WEEK**

**Beagle Boys**



**Wilbur & Orville**

Hi! I'm Wilbur, and this is my best friend Orville. We are five-year-old neutered male beagles looking for a good home. We were strays waiting to be claimed at an animal control facility, and no one ever came for us. Our future was grim until we were rescued and brought here. We are very thankful to have a chance to find a family, and we are hoping to be adopted together. We are 2-fur-1: do you think you could adopt us both? We keep each other company. We are fun little guys that would be great family dogs! For more information on adopting Orville and Wilbur please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at 413-548-9898 or via email at levrett@dpvhs.org.

**CARNEGIE LIBRARY NEWS**

**Gingerbread House Building**

BY LINDA HICKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** - Children of all ages and their families are invited to make easy gingerbread houses at the Carnegie Library on Saturday, December 8th at 10:30 a.m.

Ruth O'Mara will run the free program and all of the materials, which include graham crackers, candy, and frosting, will be provided. For more information, please contact the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

**WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS**

**Allen Young to Speak**

There will be a special focus on Wendell when local journalist Allen Young gives a presentation about his new book, *Make Hay While the Sun Shines: Farms, Forests and People of the North Quabbin*, November 29th at 7 p.m. at the Wendell Free Library.

The discussion and reading is open to the public free of charge, and there will be ample time for questions and conversation. The

tions featured include Charles Smith, longtime member of the town's conservation commission; the Diemand Egg Farm; the Route 2 Environmental Coalition; and the Slavas and Jeweler families when they lived off the grid.

The original articles first appeared in the 1970s and 1980s in the *Athol Daily News* and the *Valley Advocate*.



DIANE KEIJZER PHOTO

Allen Young, left, with Annie, Peter and Faith Diemand, at the Diemand Farm in Wendell

photo-illustrated 160-page book will be available for purchase, with proceeds to benefit the Friends of the Library. An ideal holiday gift, it can be personally autographed.

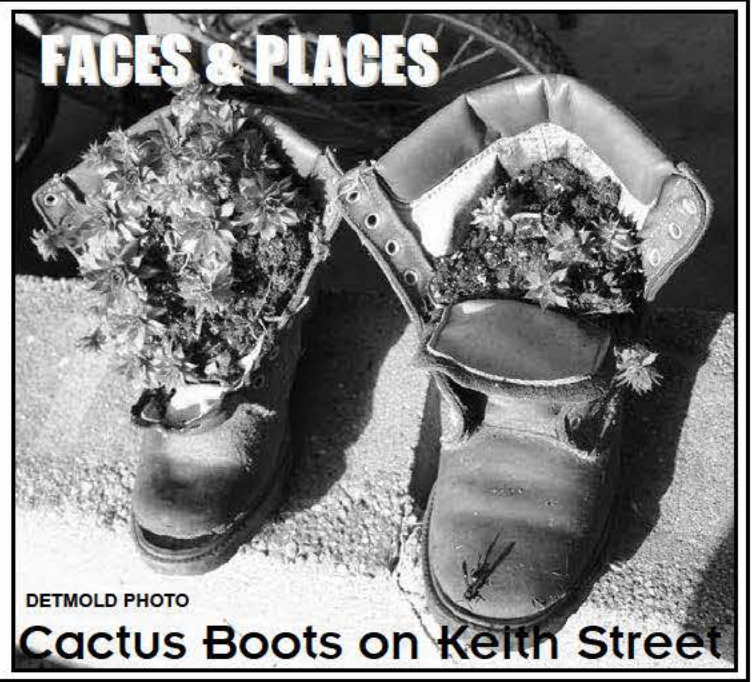
Young is the author of the regional guidebook, *North of Quabbin Revisited*, as well as 12 other books. Here, he has collected and updated 30 of his favorite pieces about the North Quabbin Region. The title comes from a chapter in the book about how hay is grown, mowed and sold in the region.

Wendell people and institu-

Young has lived in Royalston since 1973. Now semi-retired, he worked for ten years at the *Athol Daily News* and ten years as director of community relations for Athol Memorial Hospital.

**POETS WANTED**

To submit original poems for publication in the *Montague Reporter*. Send poems, accompanied by a 25-word biographical note, to: reporter-poems@montaguema.net or to the *Montague Reporter* 58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376. No prior experience as a poet required.



DETMOLD PHOTO

Cactus Boots on Keith Street

**Montague Stipend Hearing**

BY JOHN HANOLD - The finance committee started the '09 budget-preparation cycle with a public hearing on the nominal stipends paid to certain town boards and positions, on Wednesday, November 28th, and listened to comments from many of their recipients. A total of 22 positions receive stipends. The committee is considering what size the stipends should be, and whether the amount paid for various positions reflects conscious choice or historical habit.

Recipients described their duties, the training required to perform them, and the time involved. Chris Boutwell of the board of health expressed clearly what others said indirectly. "We don't do it for the money. It involves being on call 24 hours a day." Town clerk Deb Bourbeau and others cited the laws mandating the positions, and the increasing scope of regulations with which towns must comply. Boutwell and all three assessors spoke of the initial certification required of some board members, and moderator Ray Godin and selectboard chair Pat Allen said communication with counterparts in other towns and liaison to other committees was part of their duties.

The hearing ended on a lively note when several speakers discussed possible reasons for the assessors being paid more than

the selectboard. An electronic copy of hand-outs provided at the hearing is available by sending a request to jthanold@comcast.net. The committee welcomes further input from the public, and will begin preparing their recommendation to town meeting at its next scheduled meeting, 5:45 p.m. on December 5th in town hall.

My sincerest gratitude goes out to my customers and staff at Avenue A Cafe for their gracious support of our sister in need.  
**Thank you, Evelyn Daly**  
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Local Subscription Rates:  
\$20 for 6 months

**SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES Dec. 3rd - 7th**

**GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center**, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Council-on-Aging Director is Bunny Caldwell. For information or to make reservations, call 863-9357. Meal reservations need to be made a day in advance by 11 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Mealsite Manager is Chris Richer. The Center offers a hot noon meal weekdays to any senior. A reservation is necessary and transportation can be provided.  
**Monday, 3rd**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
**Tuesday, 4th**

9:30 a.m. T'ai Chi  
**Wednesday, 5th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday, 6th**  
THANKSGIVING  
**Friday, 7th**  
10 a.m. Senior Aerobics  
11 a.m. Easy Aerobics  
**ERVING Senior Center**, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at 413 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity by

calling Dana Moore at 978 544-3898.  
**Monday, 3rd**  
9:30 a.m. Exercise  
9:45 a.m. Library  
12 Noon Pitch  
**Tuesday, 4th**  
9 a.m. Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting  
**Wednesday, 5th**  
9:00 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Weight Loss Group  
12 Noon Bingo  
**Thursday, 6th**  
THANKSGIVING  
**WENDELL Senior Center**, located in the town offices on Wendell Depot Rd. Call Kathy Swaim at 978 544-2020 for info, schedule of events or to coordinate transportation.

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# Icicles or No, Come Early, Stay Late, for Arts Tour

**BY KAREN STINCHFIELD**  
**TURNERS FALLS** - The "Arts and Icicles Turners Falls Open Studio & Downtown Walking Tour," featuring eleven downtown Turners Falls studios, galleries, cultural centers, and eateries will take place December 1st and 2nd, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Along with tour favorites Jack Nelson, Great Lighting, Peterman's Baskets and Bowls, Mike Langknecht's Hotsapp Woodworks, and the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography, this season's tour is offering two artists' collectives, featuring more than ten local artists who specialize in a myriad of artistic mediums. Breathtaking paintings created with Dutch techniques from James Whitbeck, edgy images from Turners Falls native Derrick Zellmann, amazing fiber art from Anne Tearle Harding, and handcrafted wood furnishings from Ben Whitbeck make up one of these stops. The second collective features "Panorama" from Vern McClish, fabulous stone and steel sculptures from Joe Landry, paintings from Chris Sawyer-Laucanno, nature-inspired work from Darryl

Ballou, "Transmediation" from Jan McClish, and "odds and ends" from Peter Monroe.

In addition, the Brick House Community Resource Center will again be hosting its consignment art gallery, showcasing fabulous local art and craft work, music CDs, and books from local artisans, musicians, and authors. This event, as always, offers visitors the opportunity to purchase quality, locally-made art and craft work at reasonable prices, with a portion going to the Brick House in support of its community-based programs. Tour participants can also view the progress at the site of the future 3-D Collaborative Sculpture Park, where young people will have the opportunity to display their sculptural work; enjoy the four public art installations and wandering musicians; and participate in a fascinating walking tour on local geology with Steve Winters from the Great Falls Discovery. At the end of the day on Saturday, be sure to drop by Suzee's Third Street Laundry in time to



Steel sculpture "Together" is crafted by Joe Landry, whose work will be exhibited this weekend at Arts & Icicles.

catch the Third Annual Leftover Laundry Fashion Gala and Art Show. Better yet, e-mail manager@suzeesthirdstreetlaundry.com for more information. This event sells out every year!

There's food too! The 2nd Street Bakery will be serving up delectable baked goods and light lunch, as well as taking orders for holiday goodies. While devouring fabulous homemade treats, walkers can enjoy the work of local artists which will be adorning the walls. The Rendezvous will be serving up snacks before 3:00, and its full and fabulous menu after 3:00, but visitors can stop in for a gander at this destination's new look throughout the two days. Even the bathrooms are works of art!

"Arts and Icicles" brochures are available at locations throughout Montague, Greenfield, Northfield, Bernardston, Gill, Deerfield, Northampton, Amherst, West County, Orange, Brattleboro VT, and beyond. For more information regarding the walk or its participants, please feel

free to call Karen at the Brick House (863-9576) or Eileen at Carriage House Designs (863-9499), or visit www.thebrick-houseinc.org and download the brochure. Then, come spend your day and evening in the lovely village of Turners Falls. "Come early and stay late!"



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## Laughing Dog Farm Growing Workshops

**December 2nd - Alternative Approaches to Growing and Overwintering Food Crops in New England:** Managing a supply of local food crops through the winter for both actual consumption as well as food 'security' should be the concern of every forward thinking food consumer and neighborhood. This class includes discussion and hands-on contact with cold-hardy plant species and low-tech winter growing and preserving methods for New England. We'll look at drawings and models of simple, alternative designs for

backyard hoopouses, greenhouses, coldframes, and boxes, and discuss variables for successful winter growing and preserving of cold-tolerant brassicas, Asian greens, lettuce, spinach and alliums.

**December 9th - Growing and Saving Heirloom Vegetables and Seeds:**

The buzz on heirloom varieties has long passed the fad stage. Serious farmers and gardeners alike today realize the full value of heirlooms consists not just in their aesthetic novelty of history, shape, size and

color, but also in their inherently more sustainable, resistant and often more flavorful character. We'll review the basic botany and genetics relevant to seed production, selection and collection in the garden, including self and cross-pollination. And we'll talk shop about the most amazing heirloom tomato and winter squash varieties available. Participants are invited to glean samples from the ample LDF heirloom seed collection while we taste-test some of the world's densest and sweetest heirloom (baking) squashes.

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**Wendell Holiday Fair**  
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 Sunday: 11am-4pm  
**Wendell Town Hall**  
 Live Music by Local Artists\*  
 Saturday-11:30 "Francis Doughty"  
 1:30 "Blame it On Tina"  
 Sunday-11:30 "Kevin Skorupa & Mario Cote"  
 1:00 "Moonlight" & "Morningstar"  
 Live Music from our Youth Artists Starts 11am-  
 Saturday: "Erik Winter"  
 Sunday: "Django & Graham Skorupa"  
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 The Wendell Historical Cookbook and Food & Drinks,  
 Fiber Arts, Evergreens, & food sales to benefit  
 Hampshire Franklin Children's Day Care Center  
\*Musicians are partially funded by the Wendell Cultural Council, a local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council

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# The Montague Reporter

58 4th Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376

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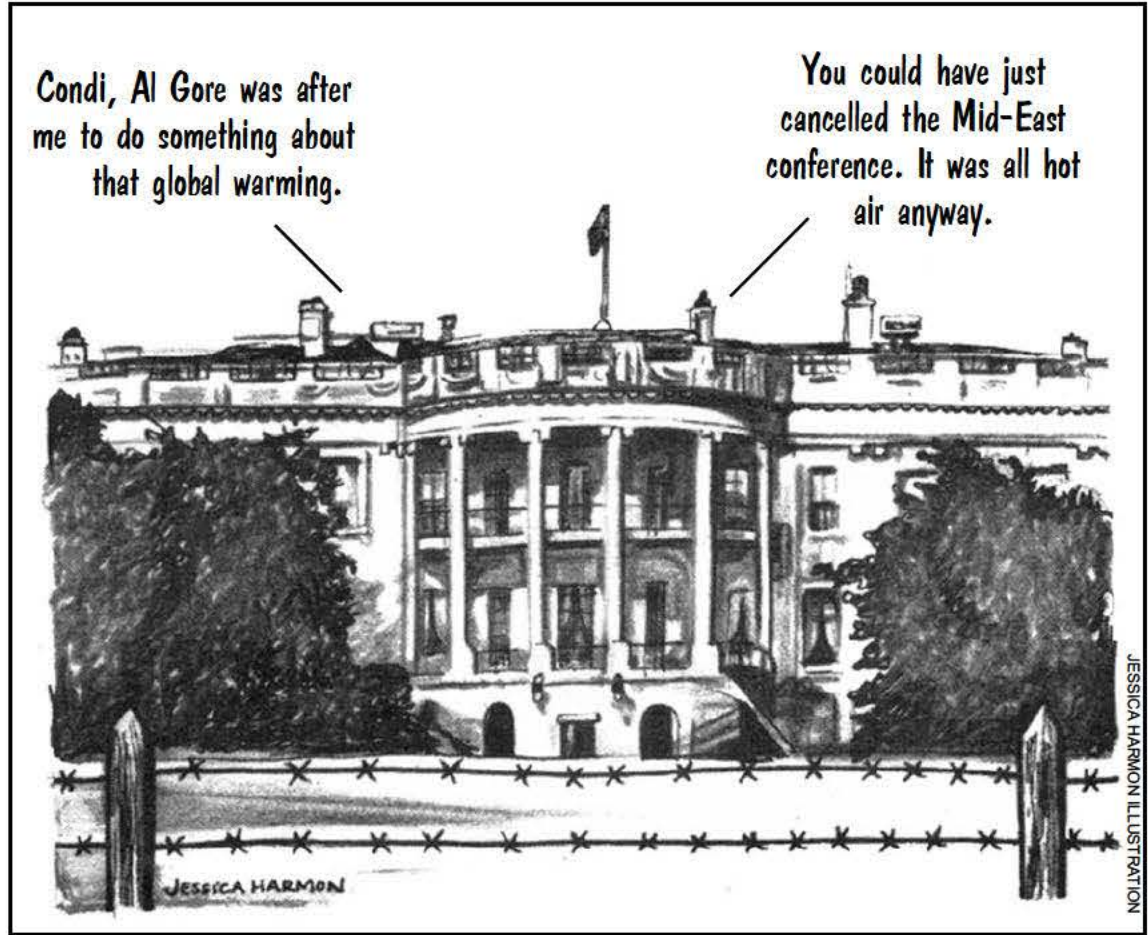
## Vermont Governor Joins Call for Independent Safety Analysis at VY

An interesting thing happened on the way to extending Vermont Yankee's license to operate for another twenty years. Earlier this month, Vermont's Republican governor Jim Douglas, one of Entergy Vermont Yankee's staunchest supporters in state government, caved in to public pressure and joined the growing call for an independent safety assessment (ISA) of the 35-year-old nuclear power plant in Vernon. A series of dramatic accidents, including a 37-minute transformer fire, the misplacement of highly radioactive spent fuel rods, multiple cracks in the steam dryer, the failure of a critical core cooling system, an unanticipated plant shut-down in August of this year due to a stuck valve, and the collapse of one of the plants' cooling towers a week earlier, finally shook the governor's belief that the plant could continue to operate without an independent assessment of its safety. By calling for an ISA at Vermont Yankee, Douglas joins Vermont



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW ENGLAND COALITION

This photo is of the cooling tower collapse at Vermont Yankee. To judge the size of the damage, note the pipe spewing water is 52" in diameter. This is called "deferred maintenance" in the nuclear industry.



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

tive John Olver, all the Franklin County state representatives and a long list of local government bodies including the Gill and Montague selectboards and the Gill-Montague regional school committee. The Vernon reactor, which contains over 700 tons of lethal radioactive nuclear waste in a seventh story swimming pool, is operating at 120% of its original design capacity, eight miles from the Gill Elementary School.

Vermont Public Service Department commissioner David O'Brien announced the governor's shift in position on calling for an independent safety assessment at a meeting of the Vermont State Nuclear Advisory Panel in Vernon, on Tuesday, November 15th. The Vermont PSD then unanimously endorsed a resolution backing an ISA that same evening.

"It's safe to say the public's confidence level in the plant has been shaken," O'Brien said Tuesday. "I know the governor,

from talking with him, has been affected by the failure of the cooling tower this summer and how the public reacted to that."

It would seem a minimum requirement, when operating an aging reactor that contains a radioactive inventory that could devastate an area the size of New England, to conduct a thorough, independent study of the plant to make certain it can operate safely. Yet the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the plant's owner continue to resist the growing demand for an ISA. Perhaps this is because the only time a thorough independent safety study was ever conducted at an operating nuclear plant in this country, at the Maine Yankee plant in Wiscasset in 1996, independent nuclear engineers uncovered so many problems at that facility that it ultimately led the plant's owners to close the plant and decommission it ahead of schedule.

operating an unsafe nuclear plant?

The people who live downwind of Vermont Yankee - everyone in our readership area - deserve a definitive answer to the question: is Vermont Yankee safe to operate? Until an independent team of experts can answer that question, no extension to the plant's license should be granted. Indeed, given the recent series of accidents at Vermont Yankee, nuclear regulators should act preemptively on behalf of public safety - rather than corporate profit - and shut Vermont Yankee down until a complete safety analysis of plant systems can be conducted.

**Breakfast with Santa at the Montague Elks Sunday, December 9th 7 - 11 a.m. to benefit TFHS Class of 2011**  
Adults: \$4 • Students/ Seniors: \$3 • 10 and under: \$2

matic accidents, including a 37-minute transformer fire, the misplacement of senator Bernie Sanders, representative Peter Welch, along with Massachusetts representa-



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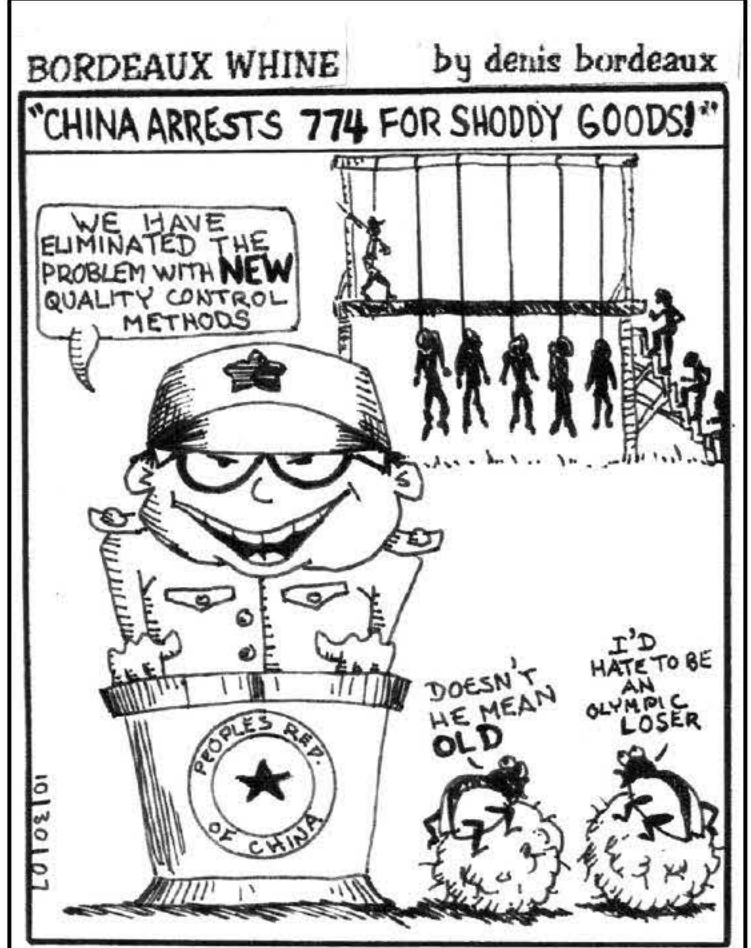
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**American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 11/28/07**

<b>US FORCES</b>	
Casualties in Iraq as of this date	
	<b>3,878</b>
Afghanistan	<b>469</b>
Wounded in Action	<b>38,234</b>
<small>USMC 1st Marine Division</small>	
<b>MARINE CORPS LEAGUE</b>	

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



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# EARTH TALK

## They Paved Paradise and Put Up a Parking Lot

FROM THE EDITORS OF E/THE ENVIRONMENTAL MAGAZINE

The history of paving dates back to Roman times, if not earlier, but our modern society has taken the practice to the extreme. Originally conceived as a way to make dirt- and mud-covered thoroughfares passable, roads (and parking lots) now cover the majority of urban and suburban areas around the world. In the U.S. alone, pavement covers some 60,000 square miles, or about two percent of the nation's total surface area. One out of every 10 acres of arable land is paved over.

Beyond larger issues like urban sprawl and the loss of farmland, paving itself is an environmental scourge, preventing the natural seepage of rainwater at the soil surface, and increasing the volume and speed of water runoff. The result is often severe soil erosion on adjacent unpaved areas. Also, paving reduces the total area through which the soil absorbs rainwater, forcing pollutant-laden run-off

quickly to lower ground, increasing the risk of flooding accordingly.

Another environmental problem created by our overzealous application of asphalt is that,

*"In the U.S. alone, pavement covers some 60,000 square miles, or about two percent of the nation's total surface area."*

because the soil underneath paved areas absorbs very little water, natural aquifers below can dry up, reducing the overall amount of potable water available to people, wildlife and the larger ecosystem. Paving also prevents the growth of plant life and destroys wildlife habitat.

According to the nonprofit American Farmland Trust, which works to preserve farmland and promote healthier farming practices, Americans lose three acres of productive farmland to new paving every single minute of every day. The group reports that since the first Earth Day in 1970, the U.S. has lost

more than 40 million acres of farmland to development. With Americans now spending upwards of \$200 million a day building and rebuilding roads, such problems are only getting

worse.

In response to such concerns, a diverse coalition of 170 community groups, individuals and businesses came together in 1990 as the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium (APM), with the goal of addressing the "tremendous environmental, social and economic damage caused by endless road building." The group charges that our society's obsession with paving and road-building draws public funds away from alternative transportation projects in service to the automobile, destroys inner cities as it promotes sprawl, fouls the air and water, con-

tributes to global warming and because most asphalt is a product of fossil fuels-plays into ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

Jan Lundberg, a former oil-industry insider and transportation policy analyst who helped create APM, sees a bright future in putting less emphasis on paving and roads: "Money would immediately become available for public transportation and making cities more walkable. It could also go toward refurbishing existing downtown buildings so that people could live in them. Parking lots could be de-paved to make gardens and parks. Cities can be pleasant places, you know."

Got an environmental question? Send it to: EarthTalk, c/o E/The Environmental Magazine, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881 or e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php.

**Memorial Service for Ari Brown-Weeks**  
December 15th, • 1:00 p.m.  
Second Congregational Church  
Court Square • Greenfield  
A Celebration of Life honoring Leyden resident Ari Brown-Weeks, a Specialist in the U.S. Army, paratrooper, 82nd Airborne Division, who died September 10th, 2007 in Baghdad. All friends and community members are invited to attend.

### Potassium Iodide Pills Available in Gill

Gill residents living within the Vermont Yankee Emergency Planning Zone may obtain free potassium iodide pills at the town hall. In a nuclear radiation emergency, radioactive iodine may be released in the air. This material may enter the thyroid gland and damage it. Children are most likely to have thyroid damage. If you take potassium

iodide, it will block or reduce the chances that radioactive iodine will enter your thyroid gland.

The last potassium iodide pills to be distributed expired in March 2007, so residents are encouraged to obtain a new supply before. The pills are available at town hall Monday - Friday 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### Travel Kuz Raffle Winner

The Turners Falls Band and Chorus Boosters are pleased to announce the winner of the Travel Kuz \$200 Raffle. The winning ticket was drawn at the Thanksgiving Day Football game and was won by Mike Little of Gill. Thanks to everyone who participated in this raffle for making it such a great success.

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### The Montague Reporter

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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# \$93,000 Override Delayed Again; New Date Set for February 5th

### But the Cable Bulletin Board Is On!

BY DAVID DETMOLD - It's official! The Gill cable access community bulletin board is now up and running.

As their meeting got underway Monday evening, November 26th, administrative assistant Tracy Rogers gave the Gill selectboard a demonstration of the newly operational bulletin board, which features news and notes of interest to the local community. An announcement for free potassium iodide pills at town hall, to be taken in the event of a nuclear disaster at the nearby Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant, was among the first public service announcements on display.

Board member Ann Banash said more than half the residents of Gill are now hooked up to the cable network, provided by Comcast to many neighborhoods in town. Rogers said residents are welcome to contact her at town hall (863-9347) or by email (administrator@gillmass.org) to place items on the community bulletin board. She hopes it will be used for announcements from non-profit groups, departments of town government, and any "items of interest to the Gill community."

The cable access service is paid for through a surcharge on cable subscribers' monthly bills.

After that, the board got down to business, voting once again to delay the proposed \$93,000 Proposition 2½ override to fund current year

departmental expenses and the Gill-Montague school assessment. The reason the vote was once again pushed back is because the state Department of Revenue has not yet finalized the town's property value assessments, and until the town can set a tax rate, the board feels an override will have a poor chance of passage. The board believes the first thing taxpayers want to know about an override is, "How much will it cost me?" Until a tax rate is set, the board will not be able to answer that question.

Although the latest from DOR is that the town may receive a preliminary tax rate sometime next week, still, rather than take a chance and push the date forward to a Tuesday in January, the board decided to move the override

forward to February 5th, which is the probable date for the Massachusetts presidential primary. "That will save us a little money, and there will already be people out at the polls," said Banash, and the extra time would allow the board a chance to communicate with residents about the facts leading up to the override vote.

The board discussed, but took no action on, a recommendation by the town's accountant, Joyce Muka, to place a spending freeze on all departments, pending the outcome of the override vote. "What do we spend money on except salaries?" asked Rogers.

Banash replied, "We don't."

In other news, the board approved fire chief Gene Beaubien's annual request for pump testing and service for

Gill's three fire trucks, to the tune of \$3,000, and decided to have the furnaces cleaned at town hall, the highway garage, and the library.

The board also heard a complaint from Ray Steele, a Main Road resident, that F&J Construction had failed to pave an apron to the south entrance to his U-shaped driveway. When Steele mentioned this to F&J, the contractor reconstructing the northern stretch of Main Road for MassHighway, he was told the south entrance to his driveway was "not on the plans."

Steele said he had also been to see the state engineer, who showed him a different set of plans for the Main Road project than the set of plans at town hall. On the state engineer's see GILL pg 7

## MCTV Schedule Channel 17: Nov. 30th - Dec. 6th

### Friday, November 30

8:00 am Discovery Center: Woodpeckers  
9:00 am Montague Select Board (11/26/07)  
10:00 am Turkey Day Game (2007)  
1:00 pm Common Man Concerts: Stephanie Marshall  
6:00 pm About Arts & Icicles 2007  
7:00 pm GMRSD Meeting (11/27/07)  
10:00 pm Power Canal Draw Down  
11:30 pm Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient

8:30 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 4  
9:00 am Coffeehouse: The Fabulous Maurice  
10:00 am Thomas Jefferson Speaks  
10:30 am Positive Profiles in Courage  
11:30 am Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony  
12:30 pm Coffee House Series: Taft Mountain Toppers  
6:30 pm Independent Voices 39  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (Live)  
9:00 pm Montague Update: John Hanold  
10:00 pm Common People Concerts: Stephanie Marshall

### Saturday, December 1

8:00 am About Arts & Icicles 2007  
9:00 am GMRSD Meeting (11/27/07)  
12:00 pm Power Canal Draw Down  
1:00 pm Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient  
6:00 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Passion & Compassion  
7:00 pm Montague Update: Paul Mariani  
8:00 pm Common People Concerts: Cowbell Prescription  
9:00 pm Encore Body Art: Mermaid in Net  
9:30 pm Independent Voices 38  
10:00 pm Naturalist Laurie Sanders

### Tuesday, December 4

8:00 am Independent Voices 39  
8:30 am Montague Update: John Hanold  
9:30 am Common People Concerts: Stephanie Marshall  
6:00 pm Windchanger: Water Vessel  
7:00 pm GMRSD (11/27/07)  
9:30 pm Changing Face of Turners Falls  
11:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks

### Wednesday, December 5

8:00 am Windchanger: Water Vessel  
9:00 am GMRSD (11/27/07)  
11:30 am Changing Face of Turners Falls  
1:30 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks  
6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Tridentine Mass  
7:00 pm Discovery Center: Open Mic Night  
8:30 pm Independent Voices 35  
9:00 pm Turkey Day Game 2007

### Sunday, December 2

8:00 am Carlos W. Anderson: Passion & Compassion  
9:00 am Montague Update: Paul Mariani  
10:00 am Common People Concerts: Cowbell Prescription  
11:00 am Encore Body Art: Mermaid in Net  
11:30 am Independent Voices 38  
12:00 pm Naturalist Laurie Sanders  
6:00 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 3  
6:30 pm Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 4  
7:00 pm Coffee House Series: The Fabulous Maurice  
8:00 pm Thomas Jefferson Speaks  
8:30 pm Positive Profiles in Courage  
9:30 pm Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony  
10:30 pm Coffeehouse Series: Taft MT Toppers

### Thursday, December 6

8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Tridentine Mass  
9:00 am Discovery Center: Open Mic Night  
10:30 am Independent Voices 35  
11:00 am Turkey Day Game 2007  
6:00 pm Power Canal Draw Down  
6:30 pm Flotilla  
7:00 pm Montague Select Board: (11/26/07)  
8:30 pm Carlos W. Anderson: Passion & Compassion  
9:30 pm Coffee House Series: Jeff Martel  
11:00 pm Physician Focus: Becoming a Smarter Patient

### Monday, December 3

8:00 am Chronicles of Czestochowa: Volume 3

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GILL POLICE LOG

### Traffic Violations and Subject on Bridge

#### Friday 11-23

4:00 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [REDACTED] for operating with a suspended license.

#### Saturday 11-24

5:20 a.m. Report of large amount of debris in roadway on Boyle Road. Officer sent, removed hazard from roadway.

12:35 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [REDACTED].

Charged with operating with suspended registration, and speeding.

4:03 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [REDACTED].

Charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, attaching false license plates, and unregistered motor vehicle.

#### Monday 11-26

8:37 p.m. Report of subject dressed in dark clothing,

standing in middle of French King Bridge in heavy rain. Responded to area, found subject parked in vehicle, stated all was OK.

9:12 p.m. Checked Gill-Montague Bridge for a report of a female who stated that she was going to jump off of a bridge in Turners Falls. Checked area, subject later located in Montague.

10:55 p.m. Checked alarm sounding at French King Highway business. All secure.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WENDELL POLICE LOG

### One Car Accident on Montague Road

#### Monday 11-12

One car accident on Montague Road. Two individuals transported to Athol Memorial Hospital.

#### Wednesday 11-14

Locke Hill Road resident reported her handicap placard either lost or stolen as of last

week.

#### Wednesday 11-21

Request for a welfare check of elderly woman on Stone Road. All OK.

#### Friday 11-23

Trash reported dumped beside

road on Jennison Road.

#### Saturday 11-24

House alarm on New Salem Road. All secure.

#### Sunday 11-25

Vandalism to two tractors on Montague Road.

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**BRIDGE** from p. 1

in fine shape. The repairs will not cost Greenfield anything," other than the time and attention of DPW workers.

Petrin said Greenfield had agreed long ago to maintain the Bascom Road bridge, in exchange for Gill agreeing to maintain the other bridge over the Fall River, at Factory Hollow. But as Petrin pointed out, the bridge at Factory Hollow is no longer there. Still, Petrin said, Greenfield would honor their side of the deal. "We're always happy to help out our neighboring towns; we have a larger department, and more personnel."

According to the Massachusetts State Acts of

1798, "An act in addition to an act, intituled (sic) 'an act to incorporate the east part of Greenfield in the county of Hampshire into a town by the name of Gill,' passed the 28th day of September in the year of our Lord 1793, Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled and by the authority of the same, that the bridge over Fall River, so called, between Stevens' Mills, shall in future be built, supported & maintained wholly by the Town of Greenfield so long as the Road over the same shall be continued; and that the bridge over said River, near the mouth thereof, shall be built, supported & maintained wholly by the Town of Gill so long as the road

over the same shall be continued, anything in the Act to which this is an addition, to the Contrary notwithstanding," was approved on June 19th, 1798.

In reference to the lower bridge, at Factory Hollow, Allan Adie of Riverside, quoted from Ralph Stoughton's *History of Gill from 1793 to 1943*, "The usefulness of the bridge ended in 1932 when the French King Highway was opened, and the structural steel was sold by the town, and the bridge was removed five years later."

Though this will not deter the Greenfield DPW from repairing the Bascom Road Bridge in 2008, Petrin allowed, "It might be time to review the agreement."



**CASH** from pg. 1

While a few people ran to collect the cash they saw flying around the Avenue, at least three brought found items into the police station, Dodge said.

"I've been told that even though the amount of money she lost has been collected, people still want to donate," said Dodge. "It shows us there's still a lot of good left in this world."

Yesterday morning, Avenue A Café owner Evelyn Daly and her morning shift employee Nikki Barre of Turners Falls decided to

donate all of their morning's tips to Corbiere.

"We don't usually make that much in tips, but in four hours we had \$75," Daly said.

One anonymous customer from outside the Franklin County area retrieved his checkbook and wrote a check for \$1,100, said Daly, in an awed voice.

"It was my customers and staff who really went above and beyond for a person they didn't even know," said Daly. "It makes me feel fantastic about the community."



**GILL** from page 6

plans, Steele said, the south apron appeared to be paved.

Steele said he felt like a human ping pong ball, and wanted to know, "Where does a citizen go?" to get an issue like his addressed. "What I don't want to hear some day is, 'Officially, that southern driveway does not exist.'"

"I can vouch for the fact there's always been a driveway there," said board chair Lee Stevens. "I've been here for 70-odd years, so I should know."

Banash promised Steele, "In spring, we'll pave it."

The board reacted positively to a proposal by board member Nancy Griswold to institute a policy of inviting department heads and committee chairs on a rotating basis to make presentations to keep the board updated about their activities. They directed Rogers to ask that copies of decisions made by the zoning board of appeals, planning board, and other town boards be made routinely available to the board, in their mail. And they suggested Rogers get in touch with Montague town officials to see whether Gill could join in the committee that will oversee a five-year budget plan for Montague and the Gill-Montague regional schools.



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# Paulie Sicard Retires

BY ANNA VIADERO

**MONTAGUE CITY** - In 1965, Congress passed the Older Americans Act to improve the lives of older Americans and give them more opportunities and access to a better life as they aged.

Paulie Sicard was one of the first advocates for elders in Franklin County under the Older Americans Act. A graduate of Turners Falls High School and an alumna of Greenfield Community College, Sicard settled here in town where she grew up, and when the call for helping seniors came, she rose to the occasion. In fact, she and other first wave elder advocates created the footprint of services that continue to grow and help seniors in our area.

From 1966 to 1973, Sicard was

an outreach supervisor, managing an information and referral service that assisted low-income individuals. She hired and trained staff, organized low-income residents in four Franklin County towns into neighborhood councils, organized food donations and clothing thrift shops to benefit those in need. She acted as a liaison with area landlords, so when a senior needed housing she was there to help.

From 1973-1979, Sicard was Senior Center director and outreach worker, making home visits to seniors in Montague. She was also instrumental in starting the Montague Senior Center, and coordinated groups of volunteers needed to maintain the senior center and its activities.

She went on to become the Erving mealsite manager and, since 1987, has been housing coordinator at Franklin County Home Care (FCHCC). For the past twenty years she's been responsible for researching and developing an information and referral service for seniors' housing issues, assessing and meeting the housing needs of seniors. That sounds neat and tidy, but the reality is that she would help seniors get housing - often in a pinch - including Medicaid, Social Security benefits, food stamps and more.

All these years, Sicard has helped area seniors get what most of us take for granted: the most basic needs of food and shelter. In addition to her career as an elder advocate, Sicard also volunteered for the March of Dimes, the Farren Hospital, the Montague planning board, Montague town

bicentennial committee, various senior and handicapped transportation authorities and more. All the while, she was devoted to her lovely children and grandchildren. Ask people who've worked with her and they'll tell you she moved through her work and life stylishly dressed, with a gracious smile and kind words for all.

At Franklin County Home Care Corporation's 2007 annual meeting, Elizabeth Foster, director of human resources, honored Sicard for her 30 years of service. "She's been here almost as long as the furniture," Foster teased. She and Roseann Martocchia, FCHCC's executive director, thanked Sicard

on behalf of the agency. Paulie Sicard will retire on November 30th.

The number of seniors she helped get food and shelter over the years is incalculable, especially if you count the ones she just listened to and made a difference in their lives. I love the example she set for me, someone new to elder services. If I'm able to accomplish half of what she accomplished, I'll feel blessed.

Thank you, Paulie Sicard, for giving of yourself and helping seniors in our community live better lives for so many years. Thanks for taking the Older Americans Act to heart and putting it into action.

## HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

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5	\$61,950.00
6	\$66,550.00
7	\$71,100.00
8	\$75,700.00

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### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

#### Numerous Assaults

Wednesday 11-21

8:57 a.m. Report of a fight in the alley between 3rd and 4th Street.

██████████ was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery, aggravated assault and battery, and intimidation of a witness.

██████████ was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and malicious destruction of property over \$250.

Thursday 11-22

12:05 a.m. Report of a loud noise disturbance from 2nd Street Sports Bar/Fatboyz Night Club. Officer advised them to close the door.

9:10 p.m. Request for a well being check at Jake's Tavern. Officer transported subject to hospital.

Friday 11-23

3:22 a.m. Walk-in to station reported she had been beaten up by a male party several hours before. Subject spoke to officer and then left.

12:33 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a lock and chain on his property was missing and some items had been removed. Requested extra patrols near his property.

10:22 p.m. Report of a fight behind a 4th Street address. Subject placed in protective custody.

Saturday 11-24

12:57 p.m. Report of an assault at

a 3rd Street address.

██████████ was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery, aggravated assault and battery, and intimidation of a witness.

2:35 p.m. Walk-in to station reported a motor vehicle theft from a W Main Street address. She stated her ex-boyfriend took her truck and failed to return it. Truck later found by Orange Police in Orange. Under investigation.

Sunday 11-25

1:55 p.m. Report of an assault at a 3rd Street address. Caller states she was assaulted by a male party and her shirt ripped. Officer determined nothing physical took place. No action needed.

10:51 p.m. Request for an officer in the alley between 3rd and 4th Streets. A man and woman were arguing. One of them left for the night. Peace restored.

Tuesday 11-27

7:09 a.m. Report of an abandoned motor vehicle at an 11th Street address. ██████████, was arrested on a default warrant.

8:22 p.m. Report of an animal complaint on Federal Street. An owl had been hit by a motor vehicle. A passerby moved the owl to the side of the road. Owl was flying around when officer arrived.

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# They Never Gave Up



BY MATTHEW ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** - The Turners Falls Varsity Football team never gave up, from a hot afternoon in Easthampton when several players became sick from the heat, to a cold, foggy Thanksgiving morning. Facing a 40-point deficit at the very end of this year's Thanksgiving Day game and needing to move the ball almost half the field just to get a first down, they never gave up.

The first half of the Turkey Day game was decided on three special team plays. On the opening kickoff, Greenfield recovered their own onside kick, which led to their first touchdown. Later in the half, Greenfield ran back a punt for their second and last score of the half. The third critical play came when Turners Falls missed a field goal, keeping them off the scoreboard. That's how the half ended.

In the second half, Greenfield exploded. They took a forty-point lead. And Turners Falls was facing a shut out. But with a minute left in the game, Turners committed two 15-yard penalties in one

play, and faced a 1st and 40. I've been to 41 Turkey Day games, but I don't remember ever seeing a 1st and 40. It might as well have been "1st and a mile."

But with the game already decided, the Turners squad prevented a shut out in the last seconds of the last game of the 2007 season. C.J. Peterson scored a touchdown, and they ended the season on a positive note. If experience is the best teacher, next year Turners will have the best team in the league, and they will never give up.

CORI URBAN PHOTO

Joshua Gammon, a junior at Turners Falls High School, performs a trumpet solo on the foggy TFHS football field during the school marching band's halftime show at the annual Thanksgiving Day football game.

## Letter Writing for Amnesty International

**TURNERS FALLS** - Join other community members during an evening of letter writing for Amnesty International on December 7th, 5-8 p.m. at Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography.

The event is part of Amnesty International's December 7-10 Global Write-

a-thon on behalf of human rights defenders, prisoners of conscience, and other victims of human rights abuses.

There will be refreshments, writing material, sample letters, and a warm & friendly space in which to write. The museum is located at 85 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

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## Montague Business Association Meeting

The next meeting of the Montague Business Association (MBA) will take place at Patty Cake café and bakery on 4th Street in Turners Falls on Thursday,

December 6th at 6:00 p.m. At that meeting, the MBA steering committee will report on their progress, and collect information from people interested in being involved

with the MBA. There will be time to network with other business owners, and light food will be served. A donation at the door is requested to subsidize the food. Bring ideas and enthusiasm.

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## SCHOOLS from 1

towns may have an interest in resolving this [question of elementary school configuration] sooner rather than later, it is incumbent on us to move this forward," he said. Roche has called the provision requiring the agreement of eight out of nine members of the school committee to close a district school an insurmountable obstacle to resolving the issue of elementary configuration in Montague.

And so it appeared on Tuesday night, as Mike Langknecht of Montague and Sandy Brown of Gill cast the dissenting votes on a lengthy compromise proposal hammered out during the course of four school committee retreats in the past month (see sidebar for the complete text of that proposal). Indeed, the committee kept hammering away at it, in an attempt to pick up the last votes needed, for a solid hour and a half Tuesday, including an unusual five minute recess at about 9:20 p.m. to allow people to walk the halls and gather in odd corners of the room to fine tune the proposal. But by the time the meeting adjourned at ten o'clock, a weary and visibly frustrated committee once again found the formula for school closing just outside their grasp, as it has been for the past

year, and more.

The defeated proposal was a refinement of a plan Roche proposed in October for consolidating elementary education in Montague at Sheffield School, by first closing Hillcrest School (except for Pre-K classes) in 2008, then closing Montague Center School a year later. Roche had proposed "keeping the door open" to the possibility that a community group could form in the interim to support keeping the Montague Center School open under an alternate form of governance, perhaps as a charter school, a Horace Mann School, or a 'pilot school'.

The proposal that emerged from the series of school committee retreats differed from the superintendent's proposal by opting to close Montague Center a year earlier, by August of 2008, sending the kindergartners from Montague Center to Hillcrest and the Montague Center first, second and third graders to Sheffield along with the first and second graders from Hillcrest. Hillcrest would remain a Pre-K and kindergarten center for Montague for another year, while renovation funds were sought to renovate Sheffield to accommodate all the Montague kindergartners a year later, thereby to achieve the school committee's goal of providing K-5 elemen-

tary education for district schools.

Under this plan, Hillcrest would become a Pre-K center for the district, and the only district school that would not conform to the K-5 model would be in Gill. (Earlier this year, Gill town meeting voted to retain sixth graders at Gill Elementary, rather than send them to the Great Falls Middle School with the Montague sixth graders, who made that switch this fall.)

After the meeting, Roche explained the tightened timeline for a save Montague Center School community group to form and advance a credible plan for alternative governance of that school. "If no group comes forward, then why wait a year?" He said the plan to move kindergarten classes from Hillcrest to Sheffield in '08 had been pushed back a year simply because of "toilet fixtures," or more precisely the lack of age appropriate bathrooms for kindergartners at Sheffield.

He offered a rundown of some possible alternate governance structures for Montague Center School, including an independent charter school, a Horace Mann charter school, which operates as a charter school but within the school district, or a pilot school, which also operates within the district, but is governed by the

school community council, who can request services as needed from the district and have budgetary authority within a framework of per pupil costs equal to other district schools. At the meeting, Roche also mentioned the idea of creating a magnet school for the district at Montague Center based on an expanded environmental education curriculum.

After the meeting, Montague Center School advocate Jeff Singleton called the defeated motion, "a potentially good compromise. But we've got to know that the benchmarks for the committee to accept a community proposal are firm."

Before Tuesday's vote on the amended proposal, Langknecht explained his opposition. "This plan is contingent on the town of Montague coming up with the funds to renovate Sheffield. We could end up in the campus model [Hillcrest and Sheffield remaining open as side by side elementary schools], which is something we've said we don't want." Langknecht, who served on the school buildings capital needs committee last winter, estimated repairs to Sheffield to allow all Montague elementary students to attend school there would cost \$1.3 to \$1.5 million, and he said he doubted Montague town meeting would approve a sum that large, when all Montague elementary students could be housed in Hillcrest and Sheffield for perhaps \$150,000.

Joining him in opposition to the motion, Brown explained her vote after the meeting, saying, "The plan assumes renovations at Sheffield in 2009 to provide for extended grade spans K-5, but there's no actual planning for these renovations, how they will happen, or who will pay for them." She added, "As to Montague Center School, I think the plan pretends to offer an opportunity to the community to continue that school, but it's not real. The bar for them is too high. It's not at all clear how many members of the school committee are prepared to support any plan the community comes up with."

Seated in the audience, Montague Center parent David Leh commented, "I think it's more feasible to renovate Montague Center as a district school, as opposed to the renovations that would be needed at Sheffield to allow K-5 to go there." Leh also served on the task force to study the capital needs of the schools last winter.

In defense of the proposal, Roche said, "I believe the town of Montague would support modest renovations at Sheffield, and I would stand up at town meeting," and advocate for that. Roche said once the committee came to agreement on school closing, he would aggressively seek state funding for renovating Sheffield, "but I can't promise that it will be forthcoming."

Roche said he met with Sheffield principal Chip Wood on Wednesday, in the aftermath of the vote. Of the possibility that Montague kindergarten classes could end up permanently housed in Hillcrest, if a similar proposal eventually passes and money for renovating Sheffield is not forthcoming, Roche said, "Chip and I feel that is also a viable long term option for early childhood education in the district."

Commenting at the meeting on the probability of Montague supporting renovations at Sheffield, committee member Kristin Boyle said, "If we're doing a five-year plan with the town, they'll probably support us. But we have to move past this point."

After the vote failed, school committee chair Mary Kociela said, "Last year, everyone was so frustrated and divided. We've done a lot right now, so please just hold onto that. We are moving forward. We'll keep trying."

The problem of how to reconfigure the elementary schools in Montague will be back on the committee's agenda in coming weeks, with alternate proposals welcome, Kociela said.

In other news, the state Department of Education issued the final draft of the District Leadership Evaluation report, which Roche characterized as

see SCHOOLS pg 11

### Proposed Language for a Motion on Elementary Configuration Voted Down 7-2 on Tuesday, November 27th by the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee

"In order to implement a K-5 elementary broad grade span configuration by September 2009, and in order to increase the equitable distribution of resources across the district, promoting equal access to services and programs for all students, we make the following motion:

1. Move grades 1 and 2 from Hillcrest to Sheffield by August, 2008. Pre-K and K will remain at Hillcrest.

2. Close Montague Center School by August 2008 and move K to Hillcrest and grades 1, 2, and 3 to Sheffield, unless the school committee approves an alternate plan as provided in paragraph 5, below.

3. Move all K from Montague to Sheffield by August, 2009, pending funding and completed renovation.

4. Immediately research appropriate alternative educational uses for any unused portion of the Hillcrest building. These may include a special education collaborative, early childhood learning center, district administrative offices, etc. We will also actively pursue collaboration with the town of Montague for other use of the building.

5. Any community group can form a committee to research and present an alternative plan for use of the Hillcrest or Montague Center buildings.

The group must inform the school committee chair of their intent in writing and state their intent to the full committee prior to or at the January 8th, 2008 meeting. The group must then develop and present a plan at the March 11th, 2008 meeting that includes a timeline, business plan, education plan, and governance plan. A successful application would include components consistent with the proposed plan and application. The school committee will then vote on the plan at the March 25th meeting. A school committee vote to reject this plan must include a detailed explanation of why it fails to meet the criteria."

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**NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD**

**Broadcasting Live: MCTV**

**BY DAVID DETMOLD**  
Now they've been back in operation as the town's cable access provider for two years, MCTV is hoping to expand the number of locations in town where cable feeds are located, so volunteer producers can expand their ability to cover live events. Speaking for the cable advisory committee, Chris Sawyer-Laucanno told the selectboard on Monday, November 26th, that he had been in touch with Stephen Fitzgibbons, manager of government and community relations for Comcast, the town's cable television provider, to ask if the company would install more 'drops' in town for live cable feeds.

Laucanno said Fitzgibbons was receptive to the idea. "His sense is this would be good for Montague." Laucanno said Fitzgibbons told him the town of Amherst has eleven live drops, and the town of Deerfield has six. Montague has three. "The trouble is, we should have asked for [the additional drops] when we were negotiating our contract, and we didn't." So Laucanno asked the board to draft a letter to Fitzgibbons, formally requesting additional cable drops, and asking to set up a meeting in January

with Fitzgibbons, to work out the details. "The question is, who will pay for them, Comcast or us," Laucanno added.

MCTV board president Michael Muller told the board MCTV was willing to assume the cost of installing locked boxes and live drops at various locations around town, if Comcast refused to pay for their installation. "We said when the town voted to give the assignment back to MCTV it would not cost the town any money, and we aim to stick to that," Muller said. MCTV brings in about \$90,000 a year from cable subscriber fees.

After the meeting, Muller said he would like to have live feeds installed at Peskeomskut Park, to cover musical events at the bandshell as well as events at the veterans park. He'd also like drops at the Unity Park playing fields, the Discovery Center, Avenue A near Spinner Park (for future parades and block parties), as well as at the three branches of the Montague public libraries.

In other news, the board appointed Mark Olchowski as a new reserve police officer, and heard that the Montague police department has received a \$40,019 community policing grant, "about the same amount as



**DETMOLD PHOTO**  
A sign and barrier blocked the Strathmore Mill's east loading dock on Wednesday. A call to the phone number listed on the sign yielded no response at press time.

last year."

The board granted a Class II used car dealers license to Nate Bastarache at 460 Turners Falls Road, with the stipulation that only two cars be stored in the garage at a time for sale, and not displayed outside, and no repair work conducted. Bastarache runs his business over the Internet. A number of neighbors voiced concern that the residential character of the area not be disturbed.

"We want to be sure this doesn't lead to an expansion," said Les Cromack. "We don't want to see vehicles displayed. That would devalue our property. We

feel it is not unreasonable to seek the protection of the town in these matters."

The board approved an application by the Montague Center Firemen's Relief Association to place a crèche on the town common for a period of 21 days, from December 9th to December 30th. They also approved a two-day entertainment license for Suzee's Third Street Laundry, for Saturday and Sunday, December 2nd and 3rd, for their annual fashion and art show.

The board approved a \$90,000 contract with Royal Steam Heater Company of Gardner to

convert the sprinkler system at the Strathmore Mill to a dry system. That work is underway this week, after a freeze-up early Saturday morning resulted in a ruptured pipe elbow in Building #1, which sent a geyser of water through the burned out roof until it was isolated and shut off.

Meanwhile, around the east end of the mill, the abutting company, Montague Energy Group, has cordoned off access to the Strathmore's main loading dock with wire cord, as of Tuesday evening. Building inspector David Jensen said the Strathmore property has a "permanent deeded easement to the loading dock."

Police chief Ray Zukowski said, "My understanding is the town has an opinion from counsel that the wire should be taken down. Our counsel will be in contact with their counsel and if they don't take it down, we'll probably remove it ourselves."

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio was more definite. "We're going to be asserting our rights of access and taking the wire down. It's a matter of public safety."

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ERVING POLICE LOG**  
**Stolen Car Crashed**

**Wednesday 11-14**

11:04 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with burglar alarm at Town Spirits. Breaking and entering into building.

**Thursday 11-15**

1:11 a.m. Stolen motor vehicle from Mountain Road. Found crashed and abandoned in Guilford, VT. Suspect fled the scene.

1:30 p.m. [redacted], was arrested and charged with larceny of a motor vehicle.

**Friday 11-16**

8:38 p.m. Car vs deer accident on Route 2

**Saturday 11-17**

3:45 p.m. Found Black Lab with Erving tags. Left message for owner.

4:25 p.m. Disturbance reported on North Street. Report taken.

9:12 p.m. Lost dogs from River Street. Puppies recovered on Lester and Gunn.

11:38 p.m. Report of excess smoke coming from Erving Paper Mill. Erving fire department on

scene. Building checked. Determined to be excess steam due to weather conditions.

**Sunday 11-18**

8:00 a.m. Destruction of property. Stolen Native American statue found burned in Wendell. Wooden statue retrieved.

5:45 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle in French King Restaurant parking lot. Attempted to locate owner.

**Monday 11-19**

10:28 a.m. Welfare check on High Street. All OK.

3:36 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Route 2 at Holmes Street. Owner intention to move vehicle same night. Not a hazard.

**Tuesday 11-20**

8:12 a.m. Motor vehicle accident with injury Route 2 at top of West bypass.

**Wednesday 11-21**

12:17 p.m. Accident near Bridge Street in Wendell. Stood by for state police.

2:15 p.m. Report of tractor trailer hitting stop sign at Route 2 and Route 63 intersection. Truck

stopped on Route 63 in Northfield and issued a citation for marked lane violation.

**Friday 11-23**

9:00 a.m. Responded to Pratt Street residence for suspicious substance. Substance recovered and packaged for testing.

9:35 p.m. Car vs deer accident on Route 2 at Wheelock.

**Saturday 11-24**

9:25 a.m. Alarm on River Road; residence secure.

12:30 p.m. Assisted Northfield police at Barney Hale Road with motor vehicle stop.

10:47 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for domestic assault and battery.

**Sunday 11-25**

12:20 p.m. Possible erratic driver on Route 2 in Erving Center. Unable to locate.

7:50 p.m. Out of control female West Main Street. Situation controlled; parties calmed down.

**Monday 11-26**

1:41 p.m. Breaking and entering into International Papermill. Papermill Road and mill searched.

8:30 p.m. Report of suspicious subject in middle of French King Bridge with a black coat. Subject located in a vehicle on Gill side of bridge. No action taken.

**SCHOOLS from pg 10**

"positive in tone." The DOE placed the Gill-Montague school system on the state's "underperforming" list earlier this year. Rocke said the state now believes, according to the report, "Our district is heading in the right direction... continuing to make progress on educational goals despite the lack of resources and turnover of staff."

Rocke also said, "It's clear the people who wrote the report feel very strongly the students in Gill 6th grade should be over at the Middle School. It's an open question. Perhaps in the future the community of Gill can look at this again."

Gill school community member Ted Castro-Santos asked

Rocke to track the test score performance of sixth graders who attend school in Gill and who attend school at Great Falls, throughout their school career.

The school committee approved a policy requiring a two-thirds affirmative vote of the entire school committee to move grades from one school to another within the district, as long as the move is consistent with the district agreement (which provides that Gill school students have the right to attend elementary school in the town of Gill).

G-M business manager Lynn Bassett said the state Department of Revenue has certified the schools' excess and deficiency [free cash] fund for '07 at \$244,643.

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**BOOK** from pg 1

found at the Book Mill, which he owned and ran for the last fifteen years. Only he's no longer to be found behind the main desk; he's more likely to be found at a writing desk. (Why is the Book Mill like the Raven?) working on those last few chapters. Lovelace said he was able to sell the book, and for a price "ten times what you usually get for a first book," because of the subject matter. And, "even though the market is saturated with memoirs, there's still a need for more."

As Lovelace tells the story, "It has a socko first chapter. My mom was mentally ill when I was a kid. Then, in 1986, my dad had a manic break - it happened really late in his life [when he was in his 50s] - he went completely bonkers and was hospitalized. I bugged out; I couldn't handle it. I went to Central America, tried to distance myself from the family."

Then, on a phone call home, he found out his brother had been hospitalized with the same diagnosis as his dad, bipolar disease. "I felt like I was being pursued. Bad things run in threes." Returning from Central America, Lovelace soon wound up at a party in Olympia, Washington, "drinking [hallucinogenic] mushroom tea" and going on a psychedelic trip that did not wind down for another month, after an arrest and hospitalization in San Francisco, and a subsequent trip back home - with his father - and a second psychiatric hospitalization in Beverly, MA.

"I smoked a lot of pot, in those days," said Lovelace, somewhat ruefully, "and did some psychedelics. Bad, bad things to do," for someone in fear for their mental stability. After his second, two-week stint in the mental hospital, nevertheless Lovelace said he went eight years "self-medicate" and maintaining a somewhat manic frame of mind, avoiding the need to take prescription drugs for his condi-

tion. After the birth of his daughter, now twelve, Lovelace said, "I was having anxiety attacks, and I really wanted to get some work done." So he began taking lithium, a mood stabilizing prescription drug, which he has been on ever since.

"I couldn't have written this book without it," he admitted. "I needed calm." He said the combination of talk therapy and lithium has allowed him to take advantage of the creative aspects he feels attend manic illness, without losing sleep or his hard-won balance of mind.

If bipolar illness is a genetic illness, as Lovelace's family experience and his research into the disease show, then why would talk therapy be any good at helping to treat it?

"I'm not a doctor, but the research shows without a doubt that [bi-polar disease] is genetic." But, regardless of its origin, Lovelace said, the disease has left him in need of more than one coping strategy.

"It's extremely hard to deal with the fact that you've lost your mind -- that you've lost control of your mind -- especially when it's a cyclical thing. Plus there is the fear that you'll be mutilating your personality if you take medication. So you can't do it [manage the disease] well without talk therapy."

Lovelace allowed there may be a "chicken and egg" factor between 'recreational drugs' and mental illness. "Research has shown marijuana can exacerbate the disease; psychedelics can kick start something [like bipolar illness] that is latent in a person." And he warns against relying on non-

prescription drugs - or alcohol - to "self-medicate" the illness. "It's a very lethal disease if it isn't treated."

One out of five untreated manic depressives commit suicide, according to the book *Manic Depressive Illness*, which Lovelace called "the bible of manic depression," authored by Kay Redfield Jamison and Frederick K. Goodwin.

Lovelace said his parents and brother are fine now, taking prescription medication and managing the illness. He added that none of his family members had taken drugs or abused alcohol prior to the onset of their bouts with bipolar disorder. His sister, a psychotherapist, has never shown symptoms of mood disorders or mental illness.

"It's a funny thing. It's genetic, but it can skip a generation. It can do anything it wants to," said Lovelace. He talks about the disease as if it's a family ghost, whose time for exorcism is at hand.

"Writing the book has allowed me to work through all this stuff," he said. And now that the book has found a buyer, Lovelace said it will give him a chance to talk to his children about bi-polar disease. "Because it's a genetic thing, it doesn't mean they'll have the disease. But I need to talk to them about it."

As for his family of origin, Lovelace said they are supportive of his decision to write his memoir -- even though they figure in it -- and excited for his success in selling it.

Lovelace has made his home in Shutesbury for the last eight

years, with his wife Roberta, his daughter and his seven-year-old son. When he is not at home in the bucolic New England countryside, Lovelace has spent time in some of the centers of American urban decay, including the Lower East Side of Manhattan in the mid-80s, where he was part of the squatters movement that took over about 40 city-owned tenement buildings, "jacking electricity" from Con Edison, and heating their apartments with lathe ripped from the walls and burned in little wood stoves. "It was like camping out rent free for three years in the middle of New York City. Nobody cared. We had politicians, artists, musicians, plus people who actually needed a place to live," all making a go of it together. "You need a hair cut to even walk through the Lower East Side these days," he added. Where the city once demolished interior staircases and knocked holes in the roofs to render tax title apartment buildings uninhabitable, now rents go for \$4000 or \$5000 a month.

Lovelace, who moonlights as a carpenter when he is not pulling down six figure book contracts, journeyed to another urban wasteland in 2006, with a carpenter friend.

"About six months after the flood, we threw a bunch of tools in the trunk," and drove down to New Orleans, where they "worked for a relief organization called Common Ground, that was founded by an ex-Black Panther." Lovelace said they lived in an abandoned Catholic School and helped reframe the interior of an

African-American woman's house in the 9th Ward, one of the hardest hit neighborhoods in the Katrina disaster. "She was about 60 years old, a real live wire, a former jazz dancer."

Lovelace recalled when they first met the woman whose house they would help rebuild, she had laid out some of her possessions in front of her house, including former dance outfits. "There were pink tutus and feather boas all over her fence," in a neighborhood surrounded by empty houses, with spray paint on the doors indicated which ones had had dead bodies or stray pets inside.

Asked whether his journey from calm New England countryside to scenes of urban apocalypse might be a mirror to his interior state, Lovelace said, "It's weird. Maybe."

Look for Lovelace to give readings from *Scattershot* in the near future. Or look him up at the Book Mill and find out how it ends.



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THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# A Healthcare Associated Infection



JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

BY FRED CICETTI

**LEONIA, NJ** - Q. My son picked up an infection in the hospital recently. It sounded like the doctors were calling it "see-diff." It gave him terrible diarrhea. Do you know what this is?

The doctors were referring to the bacterium *Clostridium difficile*, which is often called C. diff or *C. difficile*. There's a good chance you'll be hearing more about C. diff because infections are increasing throughout the world.

In recent years, C. diff has

become one of the most common infections in hospitals, and it can be fatal. C. diff can produce two virulent toxins that attack the lining of the intestine. In the United States, C. diff causes at least 5,000 deaths annually.

C. diff is what is called a 'healthcare-associated infection,' which means that it is one you pick up in a hospital or similar facility such as a nursing home. About one in five hospital patients get C. diff, but only about one in three of these suffer symptoms. C. diff isn't just an institutional threat; you can get it elsewhere.

C. diff bacteria are omnipresent, but they don't pose a threat unless they multiply abnormally in the intestines. This can happen when you take antibiotics.

There are hundreds of types

of bacteria in your intestinal tract that you need to maintain good health. Antibiotics often destroy these beneficial bacteria while trying to kill off the ones that are making you sick. If you don't have enough good bacteria in your body, C. diff can proliferate.

C. diff can cause diarrhea with 10 or more watery bowel movements daily. C. diff can also produce severe colon inflammations including fatal colitis. C. diff is suspected of causing almost all intestinal infections following therapy with antibiotics.

Older people are at greater risk of getting C. diff because they are more likely to be hospitalized and treated with antibiotics, and they are especially susceptible to recurring infections.

While C. diff can be brought on by antibiotic thera-

py, it can also be fought off with certain antibiotics. However, in recent years, C. diff has become more virulent. Stronger strains of C. diff can make about 20 times as many toxins as common strains. The new strains are more resistant to treatment.

There are several ways to test for C. diff.: a stool test for toxins, a colon examination with a scope, and a CAT scan.

The number of C. diff infections can be reduced by avoiding the unnecessary use of antibiotics.

Antibiotics are used to combat bacteria, not viruses. So, these potent drugs should be used for infections of the ear, sinuses, urinary tract and skin. They're also used to treat strep throat. They should not be used for viruses that cause most sore throats, coughs, colds and flu.

However, doctors in the USA write about 50 million antibiotic prescriptions for viral illnesses anyway. Patient pressure is a major cause for these prescriptions.

If you must take an antibiotic, ask your doctor for one with a narrow range; broad-spectrum antibiotics are more likely to disrupt intestinal bacteria.

*Saccharomyces boulardii*, a natural yeast, is effective in treating *C. difficile* infections in conjunction with antibiotics. It is classified as a 'probiotic.' Probiotics help restore a healthy balance in the intestines. Probiotics are available in many pharmacies and natural food stores.

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

THEATER REVIEW

## PILLOWMAN

Presented by the UMass Theater Department  
REVIEWED BY FLORE

**AMHERST** - I was warned, right before the lights went out: "This play is a hard one!"

How does one feel, when a play is razor edged, demanding you to follow the pain, the brutality the interpretation demands?

The students at UMass Theater Department have done it again!

Ten of them, on and off the stage, rotating in a confined interrogation cell.

Jeremy Browne, Shaun Hall, Michael Cordeiro, the young Henry Weis, Tucker Merrick, Lianne O'Shea, Duncan Grossman, Malgorzata Tolak and voices over of Julian Olf and Julie Nelson.

While you are pretending to be sitting quietly, what happened?

Were you really dropped into the bullring?

Perhaps that is really the case, after listening to the author, Martin McDonagh's, lacerating text. It operates like lashes, applied by the actors to the public.



JON CRISPIN PHOTO

Michael Cordeiro, Jeremy Browne, and Shaun Hall (l-r) in *Pillowman*, at UMass Amherst through December 16th.

It unfolds with exacting intensity on moral issues, keeping everyone on their toes: torture, injustice, conflict and power, all of these dissected before our eyes.

As the play unfolds, the writer-actor himself is put

on trial, for inventing such dark, horrifying characters. But are they not just mirrors for our times?

A word of caution:

Reserve well ahead, for the UMass Theater Department's

next (light and witty) play by Oscar Wilde: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, December 6-7-8-9 and 13-14-15-16.



The theater, remember, holds only 80 seats; *Pillowman* has been playing to full houses.

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# JEP'S PLACE: Faith, Hope and Other Disasters Part XLXVI

## The NMH Dump

**BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH GILL** - It was during the period when Ma was sewing for the WPA that I got my first glimpse of Mount Hermon School for Boys.

As we rode past the rear entrance to the school one day, I looked out at hundreds of pigs rooting in a fenced piggery on one side of the road while a herd of cattle grazed in a pasture on the other. A little further on, flocks of chickens roamed on a

fenced range.

"What are all these animals here for?" I asked.

"This is a school where boys learn to farm."

"Will I be able to go here, some day?"

"Oh, no; you have to be rich and very smart to go here."

Like my older brothers, Pa had pretty much cured me of farming. I wondered why a rich boy would need to learn how to shovel manure. And if he were smart, it seemed that he'd find something better to do. I wished that I were rich, or at least smart.

In truth, Mount Hermon is a college prep school. The pigs, roaming the piggery and feeding on garbage from the dining hall, would end up as pork on the table. The cattle produced milk, butter, and beef for the students. Chickens produced eggs and meat. Though the school work program required boys to work ten hours a week, farming was usually the furthest thing from their goals. In reality, the hard work may have also cured them of ever entertaining the idea of farming for a living, and made them study harder.

The next time we visited the school, we drove to the Mount Hermon school dump with our two-man crosscut saw in the back of the Essex, where the cushions had been removed. We didn't own a wood lot and Pa struggled to find wood to fill the woodshed each winter.

Pa bought or begged wood where he could. We were at the

dump to salvage elm wood, discarded by the school maintenance crew. I felt good about being chosen to go with my parents. In reality, I was the only one left at home to partner on the two-man saw. The back and forth action on the saw was too taxing for Pa's heart condition. Ma and I teamed up well.

We lugged the near-useless elm wood home in the back seat of the Essex, Pa's pride and joy, now tainted with the smell of burning garbage. The only good part was that, with the rear cushion removed and the back loaded to the ceiling with wood, I got to ride in the front seat between Ma and Pa.

Elm wood does not throw much heat, but we needed firewood. We probably generated more heat cutting and stacking the elm than the wood produced when we burned it in the stove that winter.

One evening, as we were sawing away, the Mount Hermon farm manager drove down the road to the dump.

"Someone's coming," Pa said. "I wonder if we'll get in trouble for taking the wood."

Pa and Ma knew the manager because he was also the town tax collector. They smiled nervously, and waved. He made a U-turn and left without waving back. Maybe he did not see us wave, and meant no offense, but Pa left with the load of elm wood, and we never went back.

I felt Pa's shame and embarrassment at the snub. No one talked on the way home. I wished that we had a wood lot, or money to buy wood or a load of coal. I wished we didn't have to pick wood out of the dump.

Pa eventually purchased a wood lot when both he and Ma were working and piling up the money. Owning a wood lot restored his dignity, but it still took a fair amount of time and energy to cut, haul, split, saw and stack wood in the

woodshed.

We originally used a "one-lunger" single cylinder gasoline engine. Sometimes, on the way home from school, I could hear the "putt-putt" of the engine and the scream of the circular saw tearing its way through a log, long before the saw was in sight.

When I was about ten years old, Pa put me to work taking wood away from the saw. I'd hold onto the end of a log, just inches away from the whirling blade, fearful that the saw would bind and pull my hand into it. Doing such dangerous work boosted my self-esteem.

Long after the screaming saw was silenced, the sound continued to roar in my ears. The act of preparing for the long cold winter appealed to me. Maybe it was from reading the ant-and-grasshopper story, or maybe I just wanted to be warm.

Pa replaced the one-lunger with a 1927 Dodge car engine and eliminated the belt drive. The belt had served as a safety factor, falling off if the saw jammed. He now had the saw arbor welded solid to the car drive shaft. The six cylinder engine was far more powerful than the single cylinder putt-putt engine, making it a treacherous set-up. I dared not mention it to Pa, but someone who saw the lethal solid connection had warned him. Pa ran the engine at a lower speed, after that, and fortunately, no one was maimed before he gave up cutting wood.

I missed the hustle and bustle of sawing the winter's wood. I always liked doing a man's job even though I was just a kid. I would casually mention to other boys about taking wood away from the saw, operating the mowing machine, working as a teamster or driving a farm tractor, when many of them were not allowed to so much as open a can of beans for fear the can opener would maim them for life.

- Continued Next Week

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brought to you by Greenfield Garden Cinemas in Greenfield in conjunction with the VFW in Turners Falls to benefit the Center for Self Reliance with food for this holiday season. Bring Five Cans of food or non-perishable food items and see a first showing movie of the evening. It is that simple. Seating is limited so come early to get a seat. Here is a list of the movies and their starting times:

Cash donations welcome.

6:00 American Gangster - R  
 6:30 Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium - G  
 6:30 Enchanted - PG  
 6:45 Bee Movie - PG  
 6:45 Fred Claus - PG  
 7:00 Hitman - R  
 7:00 Beowulf - PG13

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

**THURSDAY - SUNDAY, NOV. 29TH TO DEC. 2ND**  
Arthur Miller's searing drama, *The Crucible*, performed at Northfield Mount Hermon School. The play about the witch trials in 17th century Salem, Mass., is widely seen as an allegory for the Red Scare of the 1950s. Performances Nov. 29 at 7 p.m., Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m., and Dec. 2 at 2 p.m. in the Music Building, \$5.

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Mother Turtle* - Soul Rock, 9 to 11 p.m., no cover.

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

Concert performance by *American String Quartet*, Sweeney Concert Hall, Smith College, 8 p.m. At the door, tickets \$32 for adults and \$10, children/undergraduate students.

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOV. 30TH & DEC. 1ST**  
Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls - Truffaut's *FAHRENHEIT 451*

Neil Simon's *Lost in Yonkers*, performance by Ashfield Community Theater, Ashfield Town Hall, Ashfield. 7:30 p.m. Directed & produced by Elisa A. Martin, starring: Alexander Bianchi, George Funk, Dolores Griel, Jerri Higgins, Galen Knowles, Rona Leventhal, and Jim Lobley. *Continues December 1, 7, & 8 at 7:30 p.m. plus a matinee on*

Sunday, December 9 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 (only \$6 opening night and at the matinee!) Reserve tickets at (413) 628-4574 or [www.acth.org](http://www.acth.org)

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1ST**  
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Usguabe* - jazz, 9 to 11 p.m. No cover.

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Loose Change* - Rock Covers, come dance! 9:30 p.m.

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

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

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2ND**  
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Adam Bergeron* - classical piano, 7 to 9 p.m., no cover

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

At The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet*, progressive electric jazz trio with guest (ghost) vocalists, trumpeter and other soloists, 8 p.m., no cover.

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5TH**  
Reel World documentary film: *The Ironwall*, Palestinian filmmaker Mohammed Alatar show Israeli settlements in the Palestinian landscape. 52 minutes (2006) 7 p.m. Held at the Arms Library, Shelburne Falls. Info. 625-9959.



Winter Solstice storytellers & performers this year include Tim Van Egmond, John Porcino, Rona Leventhal, Rochelle Wildfong, Katie Green, Rebekka Tippens, David Arfa, Rob Peck, Davis Bates, Otha Day and Joe Kurland on Saturday, December 15th at 7 p.m. at the Roundhouse, Colrain. The performers invite folks to join with them in this community fund raiser, bringing desserts or other snacks to share and a thought or two on what it means to hold onto the Light. See calendar listing for more info.

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6TH**  
At The Rendezvous, 78 Third Street, Turners Falls: *Robert and Glenda Holmes* Lounge Duo Former Til Tuesday member Robert and wife Glenda interpret tunes from the 60s to the 80s, everything from Bill Withers to Ozzy Osborne and back. 5:30 p.m., free.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Kellianna* - Acoustic Rock, 8-10 p.m.

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

Rt. 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Rescue Lola* - rock & roll covers, come dance! 9:30 p.m.

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

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

*Taking Control of Change, Embracing Simplicity*. New England Gathering of War Tax Resisters & Supporters. Woolman Hill Conference Center, Deerfield. Info and registration (802) 257-5725 or [andbefree@yahoo.com](mailto:andbefree@yahoo.com)

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH**  
*Montague Reporter* Holiday Party at The Night Kitchen. Celebrate 5 years as the voice of the villages. 5 to 7 p.m. Sliding scale donation \$10 to \$1,000! Free hors d'oeuvres, cash bar.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**  
Great Falls 2nd Friday Coffeehouse: Musician/composer Michael Nix celebrates the release of his CD *Barton Cove* in the historic Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center. Nix performs on the seven string Banjar, an instrument he designed which combines elements of the five string banjo and classical guitar.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15TH**  
The 25th annual Winter Solstice Celebration at The Roundhouse, Colrain. Storytelling, music, juggling, and a Mummies play, with refreshments to pass the longest night of the year and welcome back the light. Benefit for The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts and Oxfam America, suggested donations \$10/ adults and \$26/ family of four and \$3/ each additional child. 7

p.m. Info., reservations and directions 624-5140 or [info@roundhouseculture.com](mailto:info@roundhouseculture.com).

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

Memorial Hall Theater  
**POTHOLE PICTURES**  
Friday & Saturday  
Nov. 30th & Dec. 1st 7:30 p.m.  
**FAHRENHEIT 451**  
Based on the Ray Bradbury novel. The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association's 2007 Big Read co-sponsors this harrowing story of a futuristic world where firemen start fires - with books. Discussion by PVMA's Big Read Project after the movie on Friday night. 1966. 112 min. NR. Color.  
Music before movie 7 p.m. Friday: Eco Drum Corps Ensemble Saturday: Abdul Baki & Family.  
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# Lyme Disease An Emerging Epidemic

BY EMILY MAIELLA  
MONTAGUE CENTER – Western Massachusetts used to be somewhat of a safe haven from the deer tick, and all the devastation it causes, but that is no longer the case. Many people in this community have been stricken by Lyme disease in recent years, often after going misdiagnosed with other serious neurological and musculoskeletal disorders.

While it is true that Lyme disease is an emerging epidemic, it is not a new disease. The history of Lyme disease dates back further than the often told story of the 1975 Lyme, CT outbreak. In that outbreak, a significant number of children (and adults) in communities located in close proximity to Lyme, CT, were found to have a unique form of inflammatory juvenile arthritis, 100 times the national average.

However, 1975 was not the first time this tick-borne disease was isolated. The earliest accounts of the disease in the medical literature date back to the 1880s, though it is unlikely that humans were being infected at that time. During the 1940s, people were visiting their family doctors with signs of this 1880s tick-borne disease, illnesses that usually started with a ring-like rash which then developed into a multi-system illness. In 1982, the spirochete (a spiral-shaped bacteria) was identified in *Ixodes scapularis* (the deer tick) and given the name *Borrelia burgdorferi* after the scientist who discovered that this bacteria was the probable cause of Lyme disease.

## The Life Cycle of the Deer Tick

The life cycle of a deer tick lasts for two years, during which time it has three blood meals, or three opportunities to become infected, and to transmit tick borne infection to its hosts. After deer tick eggs mature, they develop into larvae, then nymphs, and finally into adults.

Adult ticks are active in the

fall of their second year. The female adult *Ixodes scapularis* is black, somewhat shiny and has some red or orange near the mouth. Females are larger than males. They feed and mate on large animals in the fall or early spring. The female then lays her eggs in a pile of leaves (usually about 3,000 eggs), and dies. If the ticks did not get a blood meal in the fall, they go dormant over winter and seek a meal in the spring. A frost does not kill deer ticks. Adult male ticks do attach, but do not feed or become engorged, therefore they do not transmit disease.

How long it takes a tick to transmit disease after it has attached is debatable. The Center for Disease Control states a tick must be attached for 24 to 48 hours before it can transmit Lyme disease. Other reputable sources such as the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society believe it may only take four hours for an attached tick to transmit disease. Deer ticks are responsible for at least five different known diseases in humans in the U.S., including Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, babesiosis, anaplasmosis and ehrlichiosis. If Lyme disease is left untreated, it may spread throughout the body, causing what some physicians refer to as "Chronic Disseminated Lyme Disease." This can be very debilitating, especially if complicated by a co-infection, or another of the tick-borne diseases mentioned above.

Lyme disease is becoming known as the "Great Imitator," mimicking many neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis, ALS, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and other strange and non-specific musculoskeletal and neurological diseases. It is rare that Lyme disease presents the same symptoms in all individuals, though some common early warning signs may include headaches, chills, rash, fatigue,

fever, muscle pain and joint aches. Kids generally present more acute symptoms, with a single large joint pain (such as a knee), while adults tend to present more generalized, flu-like symptoms. Many people never remember pulling off a tick, and never see the characteristic bulls-eye rash (as few as 30% of people have the typical rash).



*Why are we seeing more deer ticks in the western and colder parts of Massachusetts, as well as the rest of the country?*

More than 90% of the reported cases of tick-borne illness are from the Northeastern and North-central US. The mid-Atlantic region reported the most cases, followed by New England. Most cases come from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and finally Connecticut.

Wild animals are the main carriers of the disease. In addition to the deer, experts now believe that there are 100 species of migrating birds, as well as chipmunks, foxes, hedgehogs, rabbits, sheep, voles and white-footed mouse that contribute to the geographic spread of Lyme disease.

A second factor in the wider geographical spread of deer ticks is global warming. Warmer climates, later frosts and less snowfall enable ticks to survive and reproduce over a larger territory.

Humans have impacted the spread of Lyme disease in other ways as well. When North America was colonized, old growth forests were cleared and have been replaced by younger

forests, characterized by brushy undergrowth. Larger and older forests provided optimal habitat for large predators such as wolves, who helped to keep the deer population down. New growth forests common now throughout the northeast have very few predator animals, as well as a safer brushy habitat for smaller animals such as mice, which carry Lyme disease.

As houses replace forests, mice and birds live closer to humans, and become prime disease vectors.

*Where do we find deer ticks?*

Deer ticks live in wooded, brushy areas, as well as rock walls and woodpiles. This habitat provides shelter and the humidity ticks need to survive. Exposure to ticks may be greatest in the woods, especially along trails, and the fringe area between the woods and border. Bushes act like tick elevators, as deer ticks search for hosts from the tips of grasses and shrubs, not from trees. Generally, ticks attach to a person or animal near ground level. Deer ticks crawl; they do not jump or fly. They grab onto people or animals that brush against vegetation they are sitting on, and crawl upward.

Lyme disease has now reached endemic status in Western Mass. People have reported being bitten by deer ticks not only in local woods, but also at Puffers Pond, the Amherst common and even in their own backyards.

*What can be done to control tick populations and prevent Lyme disease?*

You can take measures to reduce the number of ticks around your home. In general, drier conditions mean fewer deer ticks. Keep lawns mowed, brush trimmed, and leaf litter, wood and rock piles away from your home. Tuck your pant legs into your socks and wear light colored clothing to allow for easier identi-

fication of ticks. Check yourself and then check yourself again. Check every time you come in from the outdoors. Don't forget those harder to see places, as ticks love the groin area.

*Treatment for Lyme disease:*

The key to successfully treating Lyme disease is immediate treatment. Remember that traditional testing for Lyme is very poor, with many false negatives. The CDC states that Lyme disease is a clinical diagnosis, therefore a negative ELISA and Western blot does not rule out disease. If you have had a tick bite, with or without the typical bulls-eye rash, you should immediately seek the advice of a Lyme literate physician, as you could have Lyme disease. Even if you do not remember pulling a tick off (as many as 50% of infected people do not), and you are experiencing some symptoms mentioned above, seek advice.

Antibiotics are absolutely the most effective treatment for early Lyme disease. For late stage, chronic Lyme disease, many patients require a prolonged course (months to years) and high doses of antibiotics, sometimes intravenously. Though many people feel well when on antibiotics, they may relapse as soon as they discontinue the medication. This is not a sustainable treatment, as bacteria may become drug resistant, not to mention the harsh and sometimes intolerable side effects of antibiotics. Thankfully, there are many wonderful natural medicines emerging in the research as potential anti-spirochetal agents.

For example, the invasive species *Polygonum cuspidatum*, or Japanese knotweed, may be part of an effective treatment for Lyme disease. Wouldn't that be a wonderful example of how nature provides humans with exactly what we need?

*Emily Maiella is a naturopathic doctor with a practice in Montague Center.*

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