



SOLAR SOUND

In Turners Falls

Page 9



HOBGOBLINS AT PLAY

In Montague

Page 16

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 9 - NO. 6

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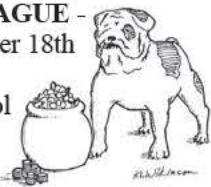
EYE ON TOWN FINANCES

Planning for School Budget Unity

BY MIKE NAUGHTON

GILL-MONTAGUE

At the November 18th Gill-Montague Regional School District (GMRSD)



meeting, voters from Gill and Montague are likely to be presented with a sight unprecedented in recent years: district and town officials jointly recommending a school budget based on a plan they believe is our best hope of achieving financial stability for the district. Those familiar with past meetings will appreciate how surprising this is, and how much of a shift in district - town relations it represents.

Not surprisingly, agreement on the plan has only come about due to a lot of effort by all of the parties involved. Although town and district officials have been saying for years that "something needs to be done" to solve the long term budget woes, about a year ago an ad hoc group decided to try to figure out what that "something" might be. That group eventually brought together members of the Gill and Montague selectboards and finance committees with our state legislators and representatives of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which has been in fiscal control of our school district during the last two years of failed budgets.

This meeting, dubbed the 'oversight group,' agreed that something did, indeed, need to be done, but that the large group was too unwieldy a forum to perform the necessary grunt work. That task was delegated to the so-called 'technical panel,' consisting of Gill finance chair Tupper Brown, school committee member Jeff Singleton, superintendent Carl Ladd, and myself. We met repeatedly over the ensuing months. It was understood that we would work closely with both DESE and our state legislators, which we have done.

Building on Singleton's earlier work, we developed spreadsheets that showed how the budget course we have been on would lead to financial disaster. We then developed a tool that allowed us to easily plug in different assumptions about revenues and expenditures and see how they played out over time.

Using this tool, we lobbied state officials on the need for adequate and predictable school see FINANCES pg 11

GMRSD Signs on for Fiscal Stability

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE - GILL - MONTAGUE

On Tuesday, October 26th, the Gill-Montague school committee voted to approve a five-year budget plan for fiscal sustainability for the district. The plan, which includes a 0% budget increase for the district for the coming year, coupled with one-time investments of \$200,000 each from reserve accounts for the town of Montague and the school district, was developed by a technical committee of the so-called oversight group, made up of school, town, state and DESE officials. The technical group that hammered out the plan included G-M superintendent Carl Ladd, finance committee members Tupper Brown of Gill and Michael Naughton of Montague, and Jeff Singleton, school committee member from Montague.

On the 26th, Brown led a detailed presentation of the "Compact for Funding Education" which includes commitments to meet certain budgetary goals from the state, DESE, the towns and the school district.

The plan assumes a 2% increase in state Chapter 70 funding in FY '12, followed by a 3% increase in state funding for the district beginning from FY '13 through FY '15. Since the state cut Chapter 70 funding in the present fiscal year by 4%, and projects a \$2 billion budget deficit for the coming year, Jenn Waldron, school committee member from Gill asked if the plan's assumptions are overly optimistic.

Naughton said historically post-recession periods have seen a return to the kinds of increases in Chapter 70 funding outlined in the plan. He said the committee plugged in a 2% increase for FY '12 to encourage the state to make a commitment to move in the direction of the 3% level of annual Chapter 70 increase the technical group believes is essential for the district to attain financial stability.

Also problematic is the compact's expectation that the school committee can produce a second level funded budget in a row for the district in FY '12. The district made deep cuts this year, and further cuts could prove "very difficult," according to Ladd, who nevertheless signed off the technical group's plan.

Naughton said a basic premise of the compact is that "school assessments must be affordable." He said the towns have been saying this for years and finally asked, what did affordable mean? The towns looked at the reliable see GMRSD pg 13

Gill Votes for Andrews, Patrick - and Local Farms



Danny Hescoek, Jr. (holding Amelia) and Jessamyn Hescoek were among the 389 Gill voters who helped Denise Andrews win election as the new state rep for the 2nd Franklin District. On Question #3, Jessamyn said, "It was a hard decision. I'd like more money in my pocket. But we need our schools, and recycling programs. We need to pay for them."

BY DAVID DETMOLD - "The more money you give 'em, the more money they want," said Tom Murley, as he exited the polling station at the Gill fire station on Tuesday afternoon, in a statement that seemed to reflect the national mood in this week's Tea Party infused mid-term elections. "And if you give 'em that,

they'll want some more."

Murley may have been in the mainstream of voters who kicked incumbent Democrats out of the House of Representatives to regain the speaker's gavel for Republicans. But in Massachusetts he was crying in the wilderness, as Deval Patrick swept away his gubernatorial

rivals and all House seats remained solidly in Democratic hands.

Murley voted in favor of repealing the state sales tax on alcohol, and 52% of the voters in the Commonwealth joined him on that one. The state will lose approximately \$100 million from

see VOTES pg 5

Home for the Holidays at Turners Falls High



Sergeant Dan Clark and his wife, Mary Colarusso

BY JOYCE PHILLIPS

TURNERS FALLS - On Sunday, December 5th, at 2:30 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School Theater, the Gill-Montague Education Fund proudly presents "Home for the Holidays," a heart-warming celebration of young people, families, and the military with an afternoon of inspiration and entertainment featuring Sergeant Dan Clark and his wife, Mary Colarusso.

According to Clark's press statement, he is known as the Singing Trooper, and has enter-

tained, energized and 'touched' the lives of his audiences in more than 2,500 performances. His unique style has inspired audiences with the sounds of the national anthems to military tributes to his unforgettable journey through Broadway, opera, Elvis, Irish, Italian, and patriotic songs.

You will enjoy not only the traditional sounds of the holiday season, but also a tribute to our troops and veterans as Sergeant Clark celebrates the simple blessings of family and friends with "Christmastime, Back Home."

Mary Colarusso, a coloratura soprano, has been the lead soprano for both the Lowell Opera and Boston Bel Canto Opera companies where she performed her title roles of Violetta in La Traviata and Gilda in Rigoletto. Colarusso delivers spectacular performances, from opera to

popular repertoire.

Home for the Holidays will also introduce "Rhapsody Blue," in their first public performance. A select group of seven very talented vocal students, ranging from grades 10 through 12, form the new Turners Falls High School a cappella group.

Seth Lemieux, tenor, and Corban Mailloux, bass, are both juniors at Turners Falls High School and involved in every musical activity the program has to offer, including concert band, jazz band, marching band, chorus and now "Rhapsody Blue." Junior Jolina Blier and sophomore Brooke Martineau sing alto; senior Rachel Dillenbeck and junior Kayleigh Turn sing soprano. Mary Morris, a junior, will sing both alto and soprano parts for "Rhapsody Blue."

Join the GMEF for a performance that comes from the heart and will get everyone in the spirit of the season. Tickets go on sale Saturday, November 6th at the World Eye Bookshop in Greenfield, and Scotty's Convenience Store in Turners Falls, or by calling Sandy at TFHS 863-7296, or at the GMEF website - www.thegmef.org.

PET OF THE WEEK

Sweet Angel



Starlight

My name is Starlight and I'm a six-year-old female shorthair cat in need of a good home. I have this pretty name for a few reasons. I look like an angel and I am very sweet. I had a rough start in life and have to tell you that I have lived in a basement the whole time. The wonderful staff here has helped me come out of my shell and I am more confident now. I want very much to share my love with a special person, but would prefer not to live with other cats. I dream of someone who will love me, pet me, feed me yummy food and maybe buy me a cat perch so I can sit near the window and star gaze - you know, Starlight, Starbright... Are you that person I wish for? To find out more about adopting me, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

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WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Open Your Voice, and Let It Sing

Wendell resident, actor and musicologist Josh Warren will lead a four part voice training workshop called Finding Your Resonance, Tuesday nights in November, to help participants discover quality of breath and quality of sound for singing. The free workshops begin on November 9th at the library, from 7:00 - 8:15 p.m.

Participants will learn to tap into their own natural resonance by exploring the sounds that come most easily, the vowels. Participants do not need to know how to read music. All that is required is a desire to express oneself vocally. Much of the workshop will be based on interactive group exercises. At times, participants will be encouraged to demonstrate what they have

learned through self-exploration, either through words or song, but there will be no obligation to do so.

Warren said, "I hope that this workshop will provide unexpected nourishment to the lives of those who attend, as the material and method have added an undoubtedly rich quality to my own life."

The series should be great preparation for the second year of the Wendell Community Chorus, which we hope will run mid January 2011 through mid March.

Please pre-register for Finding Your Resonance by calling or emailing the library at (978) 544-3559, or rheidkam@cwmar.org. This workshop is free and open to all adults and older teens.

LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

Documentary on WWI, Talk on Caring for Our Own

• On Sunday, November 7th, from at 3:00 pm, the Leverett Library will sponsor a free showing of the new documentary *Yanks Fight the Kaiser: A National Guard Division in World War I*. Following the one-hour film, the film-makers, Ed and Libby Klekowski of Leverett, will discuss their experiences making the film and take questions. Artifacts from the trenches of France will be present for viewing. Directions to the library are at www.leverettlibrary.org.

In the First World War, the 26th Division, or "Yankee Division," was the first full American division to arrive in France. A National Guard division, most of its companies were from Massachusetts and Connecticut, with a large number from Western Massachusetts. "In the 1920s, nearly everyone knew of the Yankee Division in the Great War, but with time their exploits were overshadowed by WWII. That's why we wanted to tell their story — it is a story that needs remembering," according to Ed and Libby Klekowski

The film tells the story — through still photographs and silent movie footage — of the division on the Western Front in 1917 - 18.

Planning Ahead for Health Care Directives

• Are you thinking about your parents' well-being or your own future? Is creating a health care proxy for yourself or other family members on your to-do list? Do you wonder what kind of senior assistance is already available in your own community?

On Tuesday, November 9th, at 6:45 p.m., Terry Gaberson of Hospice of Franklin County and Barbara Bodzin of Franklin County Home Care will speak at the Leverett Library. Gaberson will explore "planning ahead" with advanced health care directives, and Bodzin will review FCHCC programs that help seniors live independently at home with the support they need.

The talk is sponsored by the Leverett Council on Aging and is free to the public. For more info, call: the Leverett COA at 548-1022x5.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – November 8th - 12th

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

Monday, November 8th
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
5:00 p.m. TRIAD Dinner
Tuesday, November 9th

9:00 a.m. Walking Group
10:30 a.m. Yoga
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting
1:00 p.m. Canasta
1:00 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, November 10th
9:00 a.m. Foot Clinic by appointment
10:00 a.m. Aerobics
11:15 a.m. Friend's Meeting
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, November 11th
9:00 a.m. Tai Chi
10:00 a.m. Coffee and Conversation
No Lunch Served Today
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, November 12th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
1:00 p.m. Scrabble
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

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



Students from the Great Falls Middle School after school program gathered at Joe Landry's studio to paint a giant face on Tuesday. The students worked to build the sculpture from wire mesh and concrete, using a satellite dish for a base. Once complete, it will hang with other works of art by area youngsters at the Turners Falls Youth Sculpture Park on Canal Street. (L-R) Joe Landry, Jemma Dickson, Clarissa Schotanus, Alyson Rose Perkins, Cally Hubert, and Catherine Landers

Historic Bridge Facts

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

D. O'Connell & Sons of Holyoke were the Massachusetts General Contractors. Work on the bridge commenced on May 17th, 1937 when the Montague approach was excavated and concrete for

pier number two was poured.

• Steel erection began during the first week of November, 1937, by the Phoenix Bridge Company of Phoenixville, PA.
More bridge facts next week!

UMass Amherst Librarian Wins Career Achievement Award

LEVERETT - Gordon Fretwell, retired associate director of UMass Amherst libraries, has received the 2010 Library Assessment Career Achievement Award from the Association of Research Libraries. Fretwell was instrumental in creating the definitions for standardized use of statistical data for research libraries. He helped make it possible for research libraries to contribute and use high quality comparable data for effective library management.

Gordon Fretwell, who began his career at UMass Amherst Libraries in 1970, contributed to and led many ARL assessment efforts prior to his retirement from UMass Amherst in 2002.

For 16 years, he was the editor of the ARL Annual Salary Survey. In 2002, he was a visiting program officer working to collect and analyze e-metrics data recommended from the ARL E-Metrics project. A resident of Leverett, he continues to work part time at the UMass Amherst Libraries.

Jay Schafer, Director of Libraries, observed, "Gordon has a keen and careful eye for collecting, reviewing, and reporting data. He interprets data with a perceptive mind; his astute observations bring the story in the data to life. Gordon challenges us all to do our best and maintain the highest standards of integrity."

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6
Clarissa Schotanus
Grade 7
Sabrina Petrowicz
Grade 8
Hayley Black
Henry Kilanski

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

Local Briefs

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG – The Farren Festival, at the Farren Care Center, 340 Montague City Road will take place on Saturday, November 13th, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Limited space is still available for crafters, vendors, artists and more. Call Denise Vassar at 863-9137 or 774-3111 to reserve booth space.

The First Congregational Church, located at the corner of L Street and 7th Street, in Turners Falls will hold its **Annual Country Fair** on Saturday, November 6th, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will be jewelry, crafts, gift ideas, raffles, and locally grown vegetables along with old and new treasures. A luncheon will be served from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Eat at Friendly's Restaurant, 368 Federal Street, in Greenfield on Wednesday, November 10th, between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to help support the Erving Elementary School's PTO, for field trips for students in pre-school through grade 6. Baskets filled by each grade will be available for viewing, and raffle tickets will be available for purchase. You may also purchase tickets for turkey raffles.

Crew members and equipment donated from Snow and Sons Landscaping of Greenfield were hard at work planting a permanent evergreen tree, donated by Stewarts Nursery and Garden Center of Turners Falls for **Hospice of Franklin County** in preparation for the sixth annual Lighting of the Tree of Hope and Remembrance Celebration on Sunday, November 7th, at 5:00 p.m. This outdoor ceremony is a way of honoring loved ones and includes candle lighting, tree illumination and choral music. Refreshments and music will follow the celebration held at Hospice of Franklin County, 329 Conway Street, in Greenfield. A rain date of November 18th has been set and for more information

please call 413-774-2400.

The last **Great Falls Coffee House Concert** of 2010 will be held on Friday, November 12th, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, in Turners. This month's performance features Roland Lapierre, singer songwriter from Greenfield, along with Kate Lapierre and Michael Pattavina. Doors to the Great Hall open at 6:30 p.m. The museum and museum store are open at intermission. Donations are accepted to benefit the nature and education programming at Great Falls Discovery Center.

An open forum, question and answer workshop on **nurturing children and healthy communication** skills will take place Tuesday, November 9th, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Greenfield Family Center, 90 Federal Street. Bring questions, concerns and ideas about communicating with young children and family to this interactive discussion guided by Sandra Boston, local family therapist and communication expert. All families are welcome. A free dinner and transportation will be provided. For more info or registration please call 413-475-1553.

A **strengthening families community workshop** will take place on Tuesday, November 9th, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at the Greenfield Community College downtown campus, 270 Main Street, in Greenfield. The workshop will focus on the five protective factors that are the foundation of the Strengthening Families approach and identify seven programs strategies that organizations serving families with young children can utilize. Continental breakfast will be served and for registration email fmisnews-ski@communityaction.us or phone Sandy Bastone at 413-475-1546.

Send items for local briefs to: reporter-local@montague-ma.net

Wendell Playground Committee Meets

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – Jerry Barilla came to the library meeting room to be what he called "an obstructionist," as six other Wendell residents gathered to discuss the future of the Wendell playground on the library property. Barilla said the basketball court should be reduced to half court, because virtually all pickup games are played half court. Only organized league games with adult supervision are played using a full court.

No one argued with him, although instead of tearing up half the blacktop, which would be expensive, Charles Bado suggested putting up a wall for handball, racquetball, or wall ball. Then the idea of a climbing wall came up.

Kathy Swaim suggested painting games like hopscotch on the second half of the court. Others said young children ride bikes or skate there. Parents of young children lower the intensity of their supervision when their children are inside the fence.

Swaim said Bob Marinelli, who looked over the playground for the town's insurance company, MIAA, had offered to make himself available to consult on any changes to the playground the town wishes to make. Makers of playground equipment can void their guarantees unless they provide the installation as well as the product, but Marinelli said possibly with his supervision and certification, volunteers could install equipment without voiding the guarantee.

Marinelli's earlier report to the selectboard recommended

replacing the metal slide because it is tilting to one side, and the metal surface becomes hot when the sun shines on it, but several people said metal slides are faster and better than the plastic slides now in vogue. Both problems with the slide could be corrected if it were moved and reinstalled securely in the shade of the large maple tree.

Craig Townsend said, "We would be fools to lose that slide."

Children like to crawl through tubes and Paul Newcombe brought up a structure in Leverett made from a length of culvert, with tires and wood chips as filler, so there is no place for a child's foot to get caught. He offered to do a four kid survey of what structures a playground should have. Townsend suggested taking kids around the county, clipboard in hand.

Another suggestion was a living maze using living bamboo (not Japanese knotweed).

Swaim said she would contact the library's architect Margo Jones to request a site plan, so the committee knows how much land

it has to use. Bado said he could use a computer program to see how various ideas and structures fit together. Jenny Coy suggested a physical model with physical pieces so children can come in and be part of the process of putting the playground together.

The committee will meet again at 7:00 p.m. on November 9th, at the library.

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Montague Business Association Meets

The Montague Business Association will meet November 9th at 4 p.m. at the Greenfield Saving Bank, on Avenue A. Carol Heath, job development supervisor for Servicenet will give a brief presentation. Jamie Berger will speak about the recently launched Thrive program. All Montague business owners are welcome to attend.

The Montague Congregational Church

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Saturday, November 13th
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"The Voice of the Villages"

Democrats Celebrate the Election Returns in their Usual Style



TIM VIELMETTI CARTOON

Hold On... (It's 1994 All Over Again)

When power shifts, a lot of bilge sloshes around in the ship of state. But before progressives turn tail and start to swim for Canada, hold on. Cling to a little perspective.

Democrats despaired in 1994, when Clinton lost majorities in both the House and Senate after a failed attempt to enact universal health care, and the GOP picked up 10 races for governor across the country in what was termed the Republican Revolution.

Clinton was widely written off as a one-term failure. But he hung on, faced down impeachment and went on to be considered the most successful post-war president, turning the staggering deficits he inherited from Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush into three consecutive years of budget surpluses by the end of his second term.

In the heady aftermath of Tuesday's election, when even more House seats changed hands than in 1994, Republicans and their wealthy donors are popping corks up and down K Street, vowing to repeal 'Obamacare,' deregulate Wall Street, and extend the Bush tax cuts for the rich on into the sunset.

The Tea Party, too, is celebrating the victories of many of its chosen candidates, from Rand Paul in Kentucky to Marco Rubio in Florida, and vowing to continue their campaign for small government until they "take our country back."

These two parties are going to make strange bedfellows as the onus now shifts to the Republicans - at least in part - to govern, rather than to simply oppose everything Obama tries to do to pull this country out of the worst fiscal disaster since the crash of '29, a disaster brought on by the financial deregulation and corporate pilfering Republicans espoused and enabled. Unless the new leader of the House, John Boehner, can pull his party together to work constructively to revive the nation's economy, the wave of discontent that swamped Democrats this year will fall on Republicans with equal force in 2012.

The dysfunctional Senate has

been tied in knots for years, and Tuesday's outcome will leave minority Republicans more empowered to carry out their obstructionist platform than before. That platform is personified and articulated succinctly by minority leader Mitch McConnell, who told the *National Journal* last week, "The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term president." By fighting him every step of the way.

Or, as Tea Party godmother Sarah Palin puts it, "How's that Hope-y Change-y thing working out for ya'?"

The Republicans adopted a do nothing strategy on November 5th, 2008, and they have clung stubbornly to it ever since - figuring their quick ticket back to power was to deny, derail, or diminish every initiative Obama undertook in the worst economic emergency an incoming president has faced since FDR. Then, working with the toxic flood of unregulated, secret cash unleashed by the conservative Supreme Court majority in the ironically named *Citizens United* case, the Republicans hit the hustings, blaming the slow pace of economic recovery and lack of jobs on the Democrats. Neat trick. But now the Republicans have responsibility for improving the heartland's sour prospects, and they will be held accountable.

It is important that the Dems held on to their teetering majority in the Senate on Tuesday, if only to protect Obama's ability to make court appointments. For he will be able to accomplish no more major initiatives this term, unless Republicans finally decide it is in their long term interest to work together with the man they have derided as a socialist, and get something done for the people who elected them - an all too unlikely prospect.

Meanwhile, it is not just the political rhetoric that is heating up. The atmosphere of our planet and all life that struggles to survive upon this blue green orb hangs in the balance, as our nation - the largest per capita

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How Democracy Works

In response to the article "Closed Door Discussion of G-M Teacher Contract Disputed" that appeared in the October 21st issue, I would like to point out that the members of the school board are our elected representatives. We voted for them, presumably, because of their knowledge about education and because we agreed with their views. Therefore we do not have to "weigh in" on every decision the school board makes. This is how our democracy generally works.

Here in Montague most of us

probably know someone on the school board. If we care enough about the issues to have opinions, it is easy to share those opinions with school board members, and there are also open meetings which we are allowed to attend.

I read the rest of the statement by Lise Bang-Jensen which is quoted in this article. It seems that Ms. Bang-Jensen is particularly worried that towns will secretly! give medical and retirement benefits or salary increases to teachers and firefighters. These are people who

devote their lives to protecting us or to watching over our children. We pay them a decent living wage and offer them medical and retirement benefits. Is this more than they deserve? I believe we can trust the members of the school board to do the job we elected them to do. Anyone who feels a strong desire to be present at every single meeting of the school committee should try to get elected him or herself.

- Eloise Michael
Turners Falls

greenhouse gas polluter - remains paralyzed to enact any meaningful energy policy to mitigate the damage. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan grind on, wasting well over a trillion dollars needed desperately at home, and snuffing out or permanently damaging hundreds of thousands of lives. President Hamid Karzai stuffs bags of cash into his cronies' pockets in Kabul, and the Iraqi parliament has yet to be seated, seven months after their election, in the democracy we set up in our image in Baghdad, as the factional blood-letting in Iraq continues. Is this what our troops are dying for?

Whatever the Pauls and Palins of our country may claim, Obama is no socialist. He has lowered, not raised, taxes on the middle class. The government payroll has shrunk, not expanded, on his watch. He has made

middle of the road compromises to enact less than sweeping reforms of the banking industry that brought us near to ruin under Bush II, and the health industry that has left millions of Americans suffering without adequate care, or going bankrupt in pursuit of it.

Do you believe America would be better off if the Tea Parties get their way and repeal these reforms? So that people who have pre-existing illnesses, the unemployed, and sick children can once again be denied insurance and preventative care? If you want to see an overtaxed system, visit the emergency room of an inner city hospital.

Rand Paul wants to abolish the Department of Education, even as Education Secretary Arne Duncan proceeds to enact the smartest, results oriented, 'laboratory of the states' educa-

tion reforms of the modern era - as Republican an initiative as ever came out of a Democratic administration.

Do you believe America's children will be better off returning to a time when state and local governments decided which students would have access to decent public schools, and which would not?

Should we take the loose fetters of federal oversight off of Wall Street as a reward for recent good behavior?

It has been a tough few years, and progressives have many reasons to despair. But abandoning ship will lead only to further shoals, and imminent disaster for our nation, and our planet. We need some real boxers in the Senate, to knock out the Republican obstructionists. And we need to find some stalwarts who can stand on their principals, instead of running from them, to retake the House in 2012, when the country gets a clearer view of what the policy of Just Say No to every meaningful reform will bring.

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ANOTHER LETTER

Reduce Speed in Wendell

I'm writing to ask that drivers use caution in certain parts of Wendell. Especially at dusk or dark, please keep an eye out and your speed low on Locke Hill Road, Jennison Road, and the south end of Lockes Village Road.

I am a power wheelchair user who walks my service-dog-in-training along these routes. Of greatest concern are the southern two miles of Locke Hill (the unpaved part) and along Jennison (either direction) up to two miles from its intersection with Locke Hill.

These days, we are often out at dark. But even in good light, these roads can be treacherous for pedestrians. I've heard from other dog walkers they've had scary moments on these routes, too. This is more dangerous for me because even if I walk near the side, I can't usually "step

off" the road, as ambulatory pedestrians do when a car is coming.

My dog and I both wear orange vests with reflective tape, and my chair has headlights, which increase my visibility greatly. Recently, I was very low on battery power when a car came around a blind turn and over a hill. I only had moments to get my lights on before the driver saw me, braked, and swerved out of my path.

If you drive any of these routes, especially at dusk or dark, I'd appreciate very much if you kept to a moderate speed and took particular care when going around bends or over hills, where visibility is worst. I appreciate your consideration.

-Sharon Wachslar
Wendell

VOTES from 1

the repeal of the year-old sales tax on store sales of alcohol. That money had been dedicated to drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs. But package stores in border towns like Gill will regain a competitive advantage with New Hampshire and Vermont liquor stores.

Murley voted with the minority on Question #3, to roll back the state sales tax overall from 6.25% to 3% - a measure that would have cost an estimated \$2.5 billion in revenue as the Commonwealth tries to maintain public services and pull out of the recession. That question lost statewide by 57%.

Jessamyn Hescocock said voting No on Question #3 was a tough choice for her. "I'd like to have more money in my pocket," said the young mother. "But we need our schools and recycling programs. We need to pay for them."

Jeff Lewandowski said, "The taxpayers are getting hit hard enough," but he voted No on #3. He said, "If we repeal, it'll just boomerang back on us, won't it?"

"If you cut sales taxes you are cutting teachers, police and garbage collectors," said Linda Batty.

Batty and her husband Bill were among the majority of Gill voters who backed Patrick in his 48% - 42% defeat of his closest rival, Republican Charles Baker, with independent Tim Cahill and Green Party candidate Jill Stein coming in a distant third and fourth in the governor's race. Gill, where 59% of the town's 1074 registered voters came to the polls (a "magnificent turnout," said town clerk Lynda Hodsdon-Mayo) backed Patrick 386 to Baker's 149, with Cahill beating Stein 57 to 38 in the race for third place.

Bill Batty said he voted for Patrick because, "He's learned a lot in the time he's been in. He'll grow from there, not send the

state back to zero to start over again."

"If it had not been a close election, I would have voted for Stein," his wife cut in.

"I wouldn't," he replied.

Looking to the national scene, Bill Batty said he hoped Democrats would stay the course, despite predicted setbacks in the House and Senate. "I'm encouraged by health care reform," he said. "I think we needed a bigger stimulus. We're a day late and a



DETMOLED PHOTO
Linda Batty would have voted for Jill Stein, if the governor's race had not been close.

dollar short on these things. We're all worked up. We're mad about this; we're mad about that. Most politicians are doing the best that they can."

"I dislike the idea of taking away taxes, especially on alcohol and cigarettes," said Susannah Lerman, as she strapped her child into a car seat outside the fire station. "We need to pave our roads and educate our children. How else are we going to pay for that?"

But Stan Johnson voted to repeal the alcohol tax. "It's already taxed," at the wholesale level, said Johnson. "I don't like the idea of people going out of state just to buy beer."

Even though their town sits on the border, Gill voters parted company with the majority of the state and backed the alcohol tax 372 - 240. They voted in favor of retaining the affordable housing

law (Chapter 40B) 394 - 191, agreeing with the majority of Massachusetts voters, and also were in the mainstream of opinion on keeping the sales tax at 6.25%, by a vote of 447-172.

Johnson, a Jill Stein voter who described himself as an independent, passed up the chance to back independent state representative candidate Genevieve Fraser and went for Republican Steve Adam, instead.

Adam, the Orange selectboard chair, worked hard flipping burgers with the Gill firefighters at the Gill Arts and Crafts Festival, but he could not flip many Gill votes his way on Tuesday. Democrat Denise Andrews swamped Adam 389 to 196 (with just 25 votes for Fraser) in Gill, contributing to her overall victory in the race to succeed 2nd Franklin district representative Chris Donelan, who stepped down to run unopposed for county sheriff.

Andrews, a political newcomer from Orange who works as a diversity training consultant, won big in Greenfield too, and bested Adam, who piled up 500 vote margins in both Orange and Athol. Andrews took 6,885 votes throughout the district to Adam's 5,552, and Gill played a large part in her win.

Fraser, an online professor and former aide to state senator Robert Wetmore, placed third in that race with 669.

The anti-incumbent tide came up short in the hill towns of Massachusetts, where Gill voters chose to return Democrat John Oiver for a 10th term in Congress over Republican William Gunn, 445 -151, with 34 voters going for independent Michael Engel.

Voters in Gill also agreed, by a vote of 407 to 206, to do away with the excise tax on farm equipment and animals. This tax, which had been assessed on about seven farmers in town, had raised a total of about \$1400 last year for Gill.

Area Towns Stick with Dems

JONATHAN VON RANSON WENDELL - Election results Wednesday morning indicate the voters in all five towns served by this newspaper moved a bit to the right, particularly in the race for U.S. of House of Representatives, but otherwise held steady in their preference for the Democratic Party and liberal values, despite the Republican advance in national midterm elections this week. Results for other Western Massachusetts communities were generally similar.

In Wendell, at least, people also appeared to survive the barrage of pettiness and negativity that characterized the most publicized high-level campaigns.

Nearly everybody was smiling Tuesday afternoon and evening as they emerged from the booth and slid their ballot into the town's hand-cranked wooden ballot box with the mechanical counter. By closing, the bell on the lacquered, antique machine rang 428 times, according to its brass-framed counter.

That translates to a Wendell voter turnout rate of 63%. The comparable figures are 52% for Montague, 46% for Erving and a laudable 70% for Leverett. (The election results for Gill, where 59% of the voters turned out, are reported in the front page article, and raw numbers for all the towns

see **ELECTION** pg 12

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Assault, Disorderly Conduct, Break In

Tuesday, 10/26
5:20 p.m. Assault and battery on G Street. Referred to officer.
Wednesday, 10/27
12:38 a.m. Unwanted person on East Main Street. Services rendered.
Thursday, 10/28
9:49 a.m. Suspicious auto on East Chestnut Hill Road. Investigated.
11:15 a.m. Report of larceny at Our Lady of Czestochowa Cemetery.
11:35 p.m. Report of illegal dumping at the Airport Mobile Home Park. Report taken.
1:36 p.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Fourth Street. Report taken.
5:27 p.m. Unwanted person on Davis Street. Referred to officer.
Friday, 10/29
12:06 a.m. Arrest on Avenue A of [redacted] for disturbing the

peace and subsequent offense of disorderly conduct. Arrest of [redacted] for subsequent offense of disturbing the peace.
8:12 a.m. Disorderly conduct at Second Street Baking Company. Advised of options.
12:43 p.m. Suspicious auto on Elm Street. Services rendered.
6:23 p.m. Warrant arrest of [redacted] on a default warrant.
6:53 p.m. Suspicious other at Southworth Paper Mill on Canal Street. Investigated.
Saturday, 10/30
7:55 a.m. Burglary, breaking and entering on Hatchery Road. Investigated.
1:38 p.m. Littering on Canal Street. Services rendered.
4:19 p.m. Suspicious auto on Old Northfield Road.
5:18 p.m. Trespassing on dirt road across from Green Pond Road. Dispersed gathering.

9:39 p.m. Suspicious auto on Turners Falls Road. 10:54 p.m. Motor vehicle disturbance on Hatchery Road. Dispersed gathering.
Sunday, 10/31
2:18 a.m. Loud noise disturbance on Meadow Road. Services rendered.
1:28 p.m. Loud noise disturbance on L Street. 2:05 p.m. Domestic disturbance on Park Street. Services rendered.
4:59 p.m. Assault on Griswold Street. Services rendered.
9:31 p.m. Arrest of [redacted] for aggravated assault and battery, assault and battery on a police officer, intimidating a witness, domestic assault and battery.
Monday, 11/1
8:43 a.m. Illegal dumping on the Montague Sand Plains.
Tuesday, 11/2
5:09 a.m. Attempted breaking and entering on Country Club Lane. Investigated.

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NOTES FROM MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD**Second Time Around for Unity Park Improvements**

BY JANEL NOCKLEBY Unity Park improvements, if approved and granted funding, would "be like a diamond for the whole community," said Dennis Grader, chairman of the Montague parks and recreation commission. Monday night's selectboard meeting included a public hearing on the fiscal year '11 community development block grant program, and the selectboard subsequently approved the application.

The grant, as expected, seeks \$575,000 with a town match of \$77,700 for Phase I of the Unity Park improvements and \$143,200 to provide zero interest loans for five units or more of rehabbed housing for low or moderate income residents in Turners Falls and Montague City.

Unity Park improvements, if funded in the CDBG grant cycle for the spring of 2011, will include new playground equipment, new bike racks, benches, trash containers, more accessible parking and picnic areas, better signs, better crosswalks, and new plantings. Additionally, the plan would include skate park designs, leading to eventual construction of a skate park at Unity Park.

"I haven't been this excited in many years," Grader continued.

Bruce Hunter of the regional housing authority

noted there were 277 signatures from Montague residents recommending that skate park implementation at Unity Park be included in the master plan phase.

"They're working very hard," he said, of the skate park committee.

Last year, Montague's request for an identical amount of CDBG funding for Phase I improvements at Unity Park was turned down, not for any failing of its own, but because it was tied to a grant request for \$50,000 in funding sought by the Montague Catholic Social Ministries. The MCSM aspect of the grant did not score high enough with reviewers to allow the entire grant package to gain approval, thus the town is trying again for just the Unity Park improvements, along with housing rehab funds.

In other news, possibly coming soon to a Montague public safety complex near you, an ATM for bail and general cash convenience. Montague police chief Ray Zukowski presented the idea to selectboard members, who seemed open to the idea, although they preferred a more formal RFP process to keep it fair. (Greenfield Savings Bank had already provided a proposal to install an ATM.) Zukowski described the first few hours of jail time as the most serious for new detainees, as suicide rates are the highest then. "The

sooner we get them out, the less liability there is for the town, and they can get back to their friends and family," he said. The proposal may also come before town meeting, since the ATM would be on town land.

The selectboard approved a \$15,000 allocation of program income town funds to Turners Falls RiverCulture, now in its sixth year. Lisa Davol, cultural coordinator, and Walter Ramsey, town planner, both noted the challenge of the one-way Gill-Montague Bridge as a reason that Turners needs cultural programming to continue in the town.

"RiverCulture is good at turning negatives into positives," Davol said. The Water Under the Bridge music festival this past June succeeded in drawing people into town, as it will in years to come while the bridge is still one way. Also in honor of the bridge construction, a Hard Hat Auction will be held, likely in the first week of March, 2011, which will feature the modeling of hard hats decorated or otherwise altered by local artists.

The Franklin County Pumpkin Festival will return again next year, as the selectboard has approved a day alcohol use permit, an entertainment permit, and use of public property for Peskeompskut Park, and to block off streets from Second Street to Seventh Street for Saturday October 22nd, 2011.

The 2010 festival was successful beyond everyone's expectations, and organizer Mike Nelson promised improvements for next year, including more shuttle busses to alleviate parking woes, an improved traffic flow and

see MONTAGUE pg 11

NOTES FROM WENDELL SELECTBOARD**Mass Audubon Offers One Free Summer Camp Scholarship**

BY JOSH HEINEMANN Responding to a request from the Wendell selectboard to provide some in kind service to the town, Bob Wilber, director of land protection for Mass Audubon, has offered a full one week scholarship to one Wendell resident for the Audubon Society's Wildwood camp in Rindge, New Hampshire, for the 2011 summer season. The camp is geared for children aged from 12 to 16, and focuses on learning about the natural world by having fun in the natural world.

At an earlier meeting, Audubon offered a half price scholarship for the summer camp, when the selectboard asked the non-profit agency for consideration of the fact that Wendell provides fire, police, and road access (where applicable) to properties Mass Audubon owns and conserves in town.

Given the camp's \$900 cost, and the economic situation of many Wendell families, selectboard chair Christine Heard had expressed doubt whether the half price offer would be used.

At the selectboard's October 27th meeting, Wilber returned with the offer of a full scholarship. Heard asked if that scholarship would be ongoing, and Wilber answered that it would.

Wendell has a great deal of conserved open land in town. The state makes PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) payments for state owned land according to what the legislature decides it can afford each year, and private landowners can get Chapter 61 deductions on their property taxes for conserved land, but as a non profit agency, Mass Audubon pays nothing to the town.

At that earlier meeting,

Wilber said Mass Audubon has no money it can spare, but he agreed the organization would contribute to the local schools with education programs on wildlife and ecology. On the 27th, he said the society had put programs in place at the Mahar Middle School.

Wilber's other business at the meeting was to oversee a conservation restriction Wendell resident Robbie Leppzer is putting on part of his land. Leppzer's property helps maintain a wildlife corridor at the southern end of Orcutt Hill and Whetstone Wood, and he is selling ten acres directly to Mass Audubon. The conservation commission has validated the public benefits of conserving that property.

Leppzer will keep his house lot. The conservation restriction will cover the remainder of the property.

The selectboard voted to accept the conservation restriction.

As chair of Wendell's broadband committee, Leppzer scheduled a half hour briefing on the committee's work starting at 7:30 p.m. at the next selectboard meeting, November 10th.

Money Management

The board gave former town accountant Janet Swem the new temporary job of creating a job description for the town's newly created post of money management director. Town administrative coordinator Nancy Aldrich was appointed to that new post.

Swem called Wendell a unique town, and commended it for being forward looking enough to improve its money management. She said the first job would be to pick someone in each department to be the liaison with the finance committee and the money management direc-

tor. The next goal would be to get the tax rate set and tax bills out on time.

Heard said she spoke with dog officer Maggie Houghton, and together they decided a hearing was necessary following a second complaint about a dog on Kentfield Road owned by Claude Masson. Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser suggested holding the hearing at the next regular meeting, November 10th. Selectboard member Dan Keller said the sooner the better, as the complaint was made in September.

Energy Savings

Aldrich will forward the Siemens Building Technology energy audit of town buildings to the finance committee, the energy committee, the highway department, and fire department. The audit shows Wendell could realize the largest energy savings by converting the heating system in the highway garage and fire station to radiant heat.

Aldrich said Wendell household use of electricity is already the lowest in the North Quabbin area, a fact that ironically would make it harder for the town to achieve Green Community status to qualify for state energy saving grants, by lowering usage another 10%.

Hot Water in Town Hall

Selectboard members discussed what type of water heater would be best to replace the leaking electric water heater in the town hall. Town hall use of hot water is low and sporadic: one evening a month at the Full Moon Coffee House, one afternoon a week for Good Neighbors (if they need it) and occasional special events.

The installation cost for a new heater or heaters will be high, and finance committee see WENDELL pg 11

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Groundbreaking Planned by Thanksgiving for New Senior Center

BY KATIE NOLAN - On October 28th, the Erving selectboard unanimously awarded the contract for building a new senior center to the low bidder, MCMUSA, for a bid of \$1.9 million.

Sixteen general contractors bid on the project. All of the bids were lower than the \$2.1 million budgeted for construction of the new 6,000 square foot senior center on Route 63, just north of the elementary school. Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority's Bruce Hunter said MCMUSA wanted to start work as soon as possible. A groundbreaking is planned before Thanksgiving.

Hunter will act as project manager, keeping track of construction costs and change orders and communicating with the building committee and selectboard. He told the selectboard there would be additional "soft costs" for the building, such as engineering fees, architect's fee, and furnishings, budgeted separately from the contractor's costs. At annual town meeting in May, the town budgeted \$300,000 to cover those soft costs.

Hunter recommended that two of the alternate features suggested by the architect, a coffee bar and a window seat, be eliminated, saving \$6,000. Included in the bid were \$52,000 for kitchen equipment, as well as \$6,000 to install picture rail and an \$11,000 movable partition to divide the main 1700-square-foot multi-purpose room in to smaller spaces.

"We're really pleased the bid

came in about \$100,000 under budget, even with these three additional items we wanted," said senior center director Polly Kiely. "I'm very happy."

Kiely said MCMUSA is just finishing up a very similar senior center project for the town of Kingston. Pictures of that construction project, which is about 1,000 square feet larger than Erving's planned senior center, are available online at: www.kingstonmass.org.

"Weather permitting, they're projecting the building is going to take 10 months to complete, so we hope to be in by early fall," Kiely said, speaking from her cluttered office on Wednesday, as the sounds of a busy flu clinic vied with space for the noon meal at the senior center's present quarters, on the crowded first floor of the former elementary school on Moore Street.

Shared Employees

Union 28 superintendent Joan Wickman came to the meeting to discuss shared employees with the selectboard.

She said currently there are six staff members working in multiple schools, four of them in Erving Elementary School.

In this context, a 'shared employee' would be a person who works part time for two separate school districts in Union 28 but would be considered full time for the purpose of receiving insurance or retirement benefits. Examples include physical education teachers, music and art teachers. Some employees working in multiple schools are not

considered "shared," and would not be eligible for benefits, she said. The advantage for district schools would be in hiring and retaining skilled teachers for some of these shared part time positions.

According to Wickman, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32B requires the government entity using the larger percentage of a shared employee's time to pay all of the employee benefits, and doesn't allow cost sharing. However, she said the interpretation of Chapter 32B varies, and "there's some real gray, murky stuff there."

Because of the varying interpretations, she recommended that selectboards in Union 28 towns communicate with each other about shared employees.

Wickman said Union 28 was working with representative Steve Kulik (D-Worthington) to amend Chapter 32B to allow towns to come up with their own agreements for sharing costs for such employees.

She asked the selectboard to reconsider a two-year-old draft agreement that would define when an employee is shared or not shared, and would set up a system for sharing costs. She said that at the time it was proposed, the draft was accepted by the school committees and selectboards of the other four towns in Union 28 (Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell), but was rejected by the Erving selectboard.

Chair Andrew Goodwin see ERVING pg 12

Half the Man He Used to Be



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

Jason Czernich

BY ANNE HARDING

MILLERS FALLS - Millers Falls resident Jason Czernich is half the man he used to be - well actually closer to 70% of the man he used to be. Tuesday, November 2nd was the anniversary of his year-long experiment of living meatless and blogging about the experience. This is a guy who used to order a cheeseburger special without the lettuce, tomato or onions! Not only that, he was a yo-yo dieter who made fun of his vegetarian friends. Why the big change?

It all started when Czernich was referred to nutritionist Mary Sieruta at the Turners Falls Community Health Center in July of 2009 because of his weight. At the time he weighed 222 pounds, when a healthy weight would have been more like 155 pounds. What resonated with him at that meeting was a demonstration of the average American dinner

plate compared to the nutritionist recommended dinner plate. He learned nutritionists recommend a diet of 75% vegetables and 25% meat, while the average American dinner was 75% meat and 25% vegetables.

For a guy who grew up avoiding vegetables this was quite a revelation. Czernich acknowledged he was routinely served vegetables as a child, but found creative ways to avoid eating them. If he wasn't tucking veggies into his napkin and surreptitiously dropping them in the trash, he was sliding them under the couch or behind the radiator.

His parents and grandparents discovered the hidden food caches and dinner time became more of a battleground. Czernich spent many hours pondering creative ways to avoid his vegetables once the eagle eyes of parents and grandparents were focused on his dinner plate. Eventually he found a partner in crime - a canine compatriot who would stealthily slink up to the table and eat anything Czernich handed down - Doyle, the family dog.

Eventually, his bad eating habits caught up with him and led to his meeting with the nutritionist. His attempt to eat a healthier diet led to the loss of about ten pounds by November 2nd, when he publicly declared, "I am going

see CZERNICH pg 10

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG
Fights, Fireworks, Vandalism

Tuesday, 10/26

2:20 p.m. Assisted Northfield police department with a fight between two male subjects.

Wednesday, 10/27

2:10 a.m. Report from North Street residence for an out of control juvenile, transported same to Franklin Medical Center.

4:10 p.m. Report of a fight between two juveniles on the bus. Under investigation.

Friday, 10/29

1:34 p.m. Report of a woman walking on Route 2 with a cross. Subject located and moved along.

6:40 p.m. Report of prior suspicious activity on Mountain Road.

6:42 p.m. Assisted Montague Police with report of fireworks on Bridge Street at Crescent Street.

Saturday, 10/30

7:30 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at a High Street residence. Located same, report taken.

Sunday, 10/31

2:39 a.m. Report of fireworks coming from Usher Plant. Investigated same.

4:15 a.m. Report of people throwing eggs at cars, porta-potty in roadway, on East Main Street, at Box Car Restaurant. Officer on scene.

8:00 a.m. Vandalism to motor vehicle on Flagg Hill Road. Vehicle covered in shaving cream sometime last

night.
7:20 p.m. Assisted lost motorist with directions. Monday, 11/1

9:00 a.m. Report of breaking and entering at a High Street residence. Under investigation.

1:18 p.m. Report of wires torn down by a tractor trailer on Mount Road. Comcast advised.

8:05 p.m. Call of a male in a vehicle following a young female at Forest Street and Northfield Road. Found to be a father picking up his daughter.

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Hold on to Your Hat - It's Lake Street Dive

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - Lake Street Dive returned to the Rendezvous on Friday night, touring behind their third CD, (self titled) on Signature Sounds, for another knock-out show. Fans who caught the Brooklyn-based band at the Green River Fest this year took the opportunity to hear them in a more intimate setting, and anyone who happened to drop by was immediately pop riveted to the floor and converted to a true believer on the spot.

At first glance, the combo makes no sense. A trumpet player, a stand-up bass, a stripped down trap set, and one bespectacled gal standing loosely at the mic - what's that about? But once they start to play - cast all doubt aside; they are bound for glory and you are there at the take off.

What began as an experiment

in "free country" when the band members first gathered from Nashville, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and Iowa City at the New England Conservatory in 2005, soon evolved into one of the most exciting pop music acts in the country today. Their originals sound like standards, their covers redefine soul, or discover the luxe underlining of a throw-away hit like Hall and Oates' "Rich Girl." Their sound is so spare, but so lush; their vocal arrangements are superb, yet tossed off with nonchalant verve. They make going out to hear live music totally new, and fun again. You've got to see this band the very next chance you get, even if it's only in the basement of the bass player's family home in Iowa on YouTube, or on the front porch of their pad in Brooklyn. Some day we're going to be able to say,

"We saw them at the Rendezvous," and that's an experience no one in the audience will want to forget.

Bridget Kearney on bass is a powerhouse, and she locks into the rhythm with the wildly inventive Mike Calabrese on sometimes nothing more than snare and brushes to get the whole place rocking. Mike Olson, no slouch on guitar, plays trumpet with the punch of a featherweight prizefighter, and somehow that is all you need



Bridget Kearney, Rachel Price, Mike Calabrese, and Mike Olson are Lake Street Dive

behind Rachel Price's voice. It's a voice that makes Norah Jones sound small and helpless, and Billy Holiday sound short of breath. And it's her voice that makes you feel like you are float-

ing on air after the very first number, and keeps you stomping the floor for more.

Miss Disregard, come back and play for us again, and bring your friends, soon.

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

School Lockdown, Anti-Bullying Policy Discussion

BY DAVID DETMOLD - Fourth grade teacher Bill Stewart asked the Leverett school committee to consider reducing the number of lock down drills the Leverett Elementary School runs each year, and to focus safety protocol training as much as possible on teachers, rather than on students.

School committee chair Farshid Hajir said the school committee establishes policy, but does not manage day to day activities at the school.

On Tuesday, November 2nd, principal Anne Ross told the committee, "By law we have to develop a plan to deal with these emergencies." Ross was referring to emergencies that might require students to stay safely in their classrooms while the school is locked down to external or internal threats. She said it would not work to train students "in the moment," when a threat occurs. Students have to be part of a training program beforehand, in order to respond appropriately to a threat.

Three state troopers attended the last meeting of the school's safety committee, to debrief the committee on the results of the most recent drill. According to Ross, the troopers stressed, "This

is the culture we live in; we don't do this to alarm the kids."

Stewart's written remarks asked the school committee to consider how to "address the culture of school safety, in a climate of increasing fear."

School committee member Dawn Sacks said, "If I had a kid in pre-school in lockdown, I'd be very upset. They're not stupid. They know it's about a bad person coming into school. With all due respect, [the safety committee] has a lot of folks who are paid to be paranoid on it. The larger community has not been in support of increasing locked doors, and increasing the drills." Aaron Samoja cautioned his colleagues on the school committee not to speak for what the entire community wants based on the relatively small number of people who show up to meetings to protest a certain policy.

Stewart asked that the number of drills be reduced to one a year, but Ross and superintendent Joan Wickman pointed out that both planned and unannounced drills needed to be run in order to work out glitches in procedure, so a minimum of two drills a year will need to be conducted.

Police chief Gary Billings said the purpose of coordinating the

drills with the state police was to insure that all schools in the troopers' coverage area would be trained to similar protocols, so the troopers would be better able to provide backup in a real emergency.

Stewart said, "We have skilled and dedicated police and fire officers in Leverett who are committed to keeping our children safe. We should welcome their input and friendly presence in the school community, and not just in times of crisis." He praised the effectiveness of the fire department's fire safety program in the school, and wondered if the police could provide a similar program, outside of the lockdown drill procedures.

"We should know each other - teachers, police and community - and make good connections. Beyond strategies and drills, we should work as allies and at the same time get to know each other and keep each other safe," he said.

Bullying Policy

The committee next turned to a lengthy scrutiny of the school's draft "Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan," which must be finalized and adopted before the end of the calendar year, according to the state's new anti-bullying

legislation.

Ross said, "This law really represents a sea change in the relationship between the school and the parent." Before, Ross said, "I was the primary authority," in disciplinary matters involving students' interaction, but, "the authority is now more shared."

She said, "These days I'm a whole lot faster to pick up the phone," and call parents to report behavioral issues that could lead to a bullying investigation, and consequent disciplinary procedures, in accordance with the law. For a working definition of bullying, Ross said the behavior would need to involve "someone with more power than another deliberately and repeatedly harassing or intimidating," a person with less power, to rise to the level of bullying.

Although the law mandates the anti-bullying policy be put in place, Ross stressed bullying has not been a problem at Leverett Elementary. "We have a lovely elementary school," Ross said.

She added she has always approached discipline in the following manner. "If there is a problem, I think there is a cause. I've tried hard to find that cause and help the students involved."

Ross said she was heartened by the aspect of the new state law that includes language about "age appropriate responses," to inappropriate behavior. "Half our students are under the age of 7," said Ross, who added developmental psychologists consider 7 to be the average age when children develop the ability to clearly determine right from wrong.

On November 18th, at 9:25 a.m., LES will hold a school assembly to begin "trying to educate the children about what bullying is." But despite best efforts, Ross predicted, "There will still be children who won't recognize what bullying is." She invited the school committee to attend that assembly.

In other news, the school committee took a first look at the Union #28 draft \$528,700 budget for FY '12, which is built around an increase of less than half a percent above last year's budget.

Ross said three children had left LES in October, and one new student enrolled, leaving the total school population at 157.

Hajir said all four Union #28 schools were enjoying fairly stable enrollment at present, in contrast to the Amherst-Pelham district schools, which he said show, "downward trends at all levels of regional school enrollment.

"That will have an impact on the budget," for the region, Hajir predicted.



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Sun Boxes: Coming to Turners

a Solar Sound Installation
by Craig Colorusso

TURNERS FALLS - For the first three weekends of November, Turners Falls RiverCulture will present Craig Colorusso's Sun Boxes, allowing participants to observe the piece evolve as it moves through downtown Turners Falls from 11 a.m. to sunset.

From November 5th - 7th, the piece will appear on the lawn of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A; from November 12th - 14th it will appear at Peskeomskut Park, Avenue A and 7th Streets; and from November 19th - 21st it will appear on the lawn at the beginning of the bike path along the river on 1st Street, all in Turners Falls.

Sun Boxes is a solar powered sound installation, comprised of 20 speakers operating independently, each powered by solar panels. Inside each Sun Box is a PC board that has a recorded guitar note loaded and programmed to play continuously in a loop. These guitar notes collectively make a B-flat chord.

Because the loops differ in length, once the piece begins they continually overlap and the piece slowly evolves over time.

"The piece creates space; it's an environment for one to enter

and exit," said Colorusso. "Sun Boxes interfaces with the environment and collaborates with nature."

Participants are encouraged to walk among the speakers, and surround themselves with the piece. Certain speakers will be closer and, therefore, louder so the piece will sound different to different people in different positions throughout the array. Allowing the audience to move around the piece will create a unique experience for everyone.

When the sun sets the music stops and doesn't start until the sun rises. The piece changes as the length of the day changes. Since the amount of sunlight varies from day to day so does the composition of Sun Boxes.

Turners Falls RiverCulture works to create a vibrant and connected Turners Falls community through innovative partnerships and cultural programming. This piece is made possible by the Adams Art Program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the town of Montague, Western Massachusetts Electric Company and Hillside Plastics.

More info can be found at www.turnersfallsriverculture.org.

Please check website for cancellation due to weather.

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Richard G. Haas, board member

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CZERNICH from pg 7
 meatless for a year. No beef, no pork, no poultry, no seafood and no whole eggs for at least one calendar year." It wasn't long before the vegetarian friends he teased were being solicited for advice on ways to survive without meat.

Within days of eliminating meat from his diet and eating more greens, Cznerich noticed his energy level and stamina improving dramatically. At the same time, he cut out refined carbohydrates – switching from white rice to brown rice and white breads to whole grain breads. He ate more fruits, nuts and legumes, and cut refined foods from his diet.

He began following Michael Pollin's (author of the *Omnivore's Dilemma*) advice about food labels, "If a third grader can't read it, you shouldn't be eating it."

Czernich was surprised to lose six pounds in the first three weeks. After day 44, when he started working out, the weight

loss was even more rapid. In just over nine months, he dropped from 212 pounds to 146, where he has been holding steady since August. It has been at least ten years since Czernich was at this weight, and he believes his energy levels are even better than his high school days.

Czernich attributes his success to many factors – the advice and recommendations of friends; treating his new eating habits as a lifestyle change rather than a deprivation diet; and maintaining a blog about his experiment. By blogging about his health goals, he kept himself in the public eye of thousands of readers and decided he did not want to let them down – partly out of pride and partly because he wanted to inspire others. Czernich considers himself an average guy and says the most important reason for maintaining the blog is, "to show that anyone can eat healthier if they are willing to make the effort and educate themselves."

Now that his pledged year of vegetarianism is up, will he be returning to his days as a 'hold the veggies' carnivore?

"Why would I go back to something that didn't keep me well?" said Czernich. "I'm so much healthier now."

You can visit Czernich at his "A Man Finally Eats His Veggies: A Meatless Year Blog" at ameatlessyear.blogspot.com/ and join his hundreds of followers. There have been over 12,000 visitors to the blog site – he started off slowly, but now averages about 8,000 viewers a month. He also sends out updates on Twitter. You can get updates via SMS by texting follow MeatlessYear to 40404.

CORRECTION

Tree Work at Free Library not Entirely Free - Due to a reporting error, the article about tree work at the Wendell Free Library (*MR IX #4*) inaccurately stated that tree work expert Matt Edwards, of Edwards Tree Service, had offered to perform all the needed work at the library ground free of charge.

In fact, Edwards offered only to trim the large maple in the center of the playground without charge, but estimated a "very reasonable" cost of \$2,200 for the remaining work, said select-board member Dan Keller.

We apologize for the error.

Legal Notice

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
 TOWN OF WENDELL PLANNING BOARD**

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 11, the Wendell Planning Board will hold a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. on November 16, 2010 at the Town Offices, 9 Morse Village Road.

The subject matter of the proposed amendments is/are as indicated below. The complete text and maps relative to the proposed amendments are available for inspection during regular business hours at the Wendell Town Office ordinarily Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., by phone at (978) 544-3395, and at the Wendell Library. Any person interested or wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated.

- Nan Riebschlaeger, Chair
 Wendell Planning Board

- Article III Definitions - Add three definitions, "Project Area" referring to the area within a Conservation Development proposed Site Plan, "Net Project Area" referring to the area without prior restrictions, and "Applicant" referring to a person or persons requesting approval for a Site Plan or Special Permit, including a Conservation Development proposal.

Changes to Article VI and X are both part of this new proposed Conservation Development:

- Article VI changes describe how rapidly building permits are allowed for lots subdivided from a larger lot under two by right options: (1) traditional roadside lots meeting minimum Zoning requirements (3 acres and 200 feet of frontage, with exceptions as allowed by the Wendell Bylaws and Massachusetts General Laws) and (2) Conservation Development which allows lots without minimum frontage or acreage requirements within a site plan review with at least 75% of the Conservation Development project under a Conservation Restriction and 25% available for the development. Both development options would be considered "by right" in the revised Zoning Bylaws. Conservation

Development lots are excepted from the Article VI pace on issuance of building permits.

- Article VI. Special Permits, Use Regulations and Site Plan Review

Amend Section F to add new "Site PB" permit category, add additional language to the Residential Uses table heading, and add a new "Conservation Development" entry at the end of the residential section of the table, as shown.

{Add to list of kind of permits and reviews available}

Site PB = By right with site plan review from the Planning Board

Insert the following in the Residential Uses Table as follows:

- I. Residential Uses
 {insert following entry in table heading}

- 1. Except for Conservation Developments under Article X, new primary dwellings are allowed, subject to all other provisions of these Wendell Zoning Bylaws, at the rate of no greater than one new primary dwelling in any 7 year period on either: 1) a lot in existence on [insert date of first Town Meeting Warrant notice or adoption]; or 2) a new lot divided from a lot in existence on [insert date of first Town Meeting Warrant notice or adoption].

Conservation Development (in accordance with Article X) Site PB

Conservation Development (Proposals deviating from Article X)

Special Permit PB

- Article X Conservation Development. Delete entire current text and replace with entire Article X text to provide for a by right Site Plan review for Conservation Development as cited in Article VI changes. Conservation Development is described in detail below.

- Article X changes describe a Conservation Development review in detail. A Conservation Development project area is divided into two areas: 75% of

the land, would be set aside with a permanent Conservation Restriction., 25% of the land, may be developed with greater flexibility, streamlined reviews, without dimensional requirements, and allow creative building layout design consistent with the rural character of Wendell. A Conservation Analysis prepared by the applicant identifies the land for residential development and the land for protection from development. The Planning Board reviews the Conservation Analysis and prepares a Conservation Finding.

The Conservation Development's project area includes the protected and developed land which can be located on one lot, multiple lots or a portion of one or more lots. The Conservation Development Applicant may be one or more property owners. Also, if the Applicant has land with an existing restriction that acreage is not included in the net project area, but the Applicant may designate some of that land to reach the 85% threshold and request a waiver of the full Conservation Analysis.

The Conservation Restriction may allow activities consistent with a working landscape, like agriculture, tree cutting, gardening, hunting, fishing, gathering, and trails, or it could limit one or more of those activities, at the option of the Applicant. If necessary, the protected land could contain a septic system or play area, subject to Planning Board approval. The Applicant defines this area, consistent with the Conservation Finding.

The Conservation Development uses a formula for determining a maximum number of dwelling units, since frontage and acreage requirements don't apply. Credit - to allow more dwelling units - is given for affordable housing as defined by MGL chapter 40B or for work the developer does to enhance public access to the protected land. Bonus density is also allowed in the developed area if 85% of the original project area is preserved.

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FINANCES from pg 1

aid from the state. The discussions were frank, and state officials shared their view that GMRSD per pupil spending is higher than average, perhaps unsustainably so. This prompted us to probe more deeply into both the mechanics of state aid funding and district expenditures, and to press DESE for more proactive help in figuring out how to change things.

Our legislators also came to feel this problem needed to be solved quickly, and they encouraged DESE to help us find a

solution by November 1st. Since DESE was already planning to perform a district review this fall, Dr. Ladd suggested they do it sooner rather than later, and that they add a fiscal component not normally included in such reviews. In the meantime, Brown and Singleton delved deep into the state aid formulas and how they work.

We also used our software to put together a proposed plan that combines adequate state aid with sustainable town contributions and modest district budget growth, together with significant

(but, we believe, affordable) use of both town and district reserves over the short term, to achieve balanced budgets without using reserves by FY '15. The plan is solidly based on historical patterns. But of course nothing is guaranteed, and legitimate questions have been raised about some of our assumptions.

The plan itself recognizes that conditions may change, and it calls upon all the parties — district, towns, and state — to work together in that event to come up with a viable alternative. Its key goals are to provide a rough road map to future sustainability for the GMRSD budget, and also to provide an alternative to the budget battles that have characterized district financing in recent years.

To date, the plan has been presented to the Gill and Montague selectboards, the GMRSD school committee, and the Gill and Montague finance committees. It consisted of a spreadsheet — the so-called 'Table B' — and what we called a 'compact,' which is a document outlining the responsibilities of the various parties (*read these documents on montaguereporter.blogspot.com*).

Essentially, the compact says we will all try to make Table B work, and if for some reason that doesn't seem possible we will work together to figure out what changes to the plan *can* work.

All the committees have endorsed it — out of twenty-four total votes cast, there was just a single "no" vote and one abstention. DESE officials have also reviewed the plan, and while the uncertainties surrounding the recent election made them reluctant to make any definite commitments, they have expressed general support for our work and offered the opinion that our assumptions about state aid are not unreasonable.

We expect to have a more in-depth meeting with DESE and our state legislators in the coming days, and we hope to get their official support for the plan. We then expect to go to the district meeting on November 18th, where district and town officials will jointly support a budget and town assessments that implement the first phase of the plan.

When that happens, we will all be witnessing what we hope is a new era of district — town

cooperation: one in which we all work together to build, to paraphrase Montague finance chair John Hanold, the best educational system that we can afford. There is every reason to believe that it will be second to none.

Mike Naughton has lived in Montague since 1974, and been a town meeting member from Precinct 2 for over a decade. He rejoined the finance committee in July, 2008. He can be reached at mjnaught@crocker.com or by looking in the telephone book. The opinions expressed here are his own.



MONTAGUE from pg 6

parking plan to be coordinated with the police department, better access to electrical outlets for vendors, more port-a-potties in more convenient locations, and improved staff coverage at the beer tent, to prevent underage and excessive drinking.

Lew Collins of Between the Uprights requested a special use permit for the night before Thanksgiving, for patron use of the public sidewalk, including carrying alcoholic beverages between the sports bar and night club sections of the establishment, on the busiest night of the

year for the bar. The selectboard approved the request. Collins had taken into consideration how to keep the sidewalk accessible for wheelchair access, and sufficiently fenced off and staffed to prevent alcohol use beyond the designated area.

The next special town meeting will be on January 6th, 2011, and school budget items will be up for consideration.

Town administrator Frank Abbonozio announced the town won a sustainable materials recovery program municipal grant of \$750, which will include recycling bins and traffic



WENDELL from pg 6

mittee member Jim Slavas learned that a tankless demand heater would corrode quickly with such occasional use.

Plumber Bruce Whittier recommended using a tanked 5 gallon or one gallon electric heater for the washrooms, and possibly a 20 gallon heater for the kitchen, if it fits. Those small tanks are not well insulated, but Keller said insulation could be added. The water heaters would be off most of the time. People using the building would have to turn them on as needed when they open the building.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser suggested having a timer on the switches so that if anyone forgot to turn off the water heaters they would shut off automatically.

Town meeting appropriated \$3,000 to purchase and install hot water heaters for the town hall on October 6th.

Aldrich asked if the town

could spend money to consult counsel about a fourth abutter by the Cooleyville Road bridge, which is in need of repair. Three abutters have given permission for engineers and construction workers to cross their land to work on the bridge. The fourth abutter is a trust, and no one from the trust has responded to her letters. Avoiding that trespass in the bridge repair would add \$25,000 to the project's cost, so Aldrich said she would like the town to advertise for concerned parties for a required time period, and then proceed with the project if no one objected.

Kathleen Swaim is resigning from active membership in the Council on Aging. Byron Ricketts will take over writing the senior center newsletter, and Nancy Spittle will take on the majority of the tasks related to the COA. Ginny Schimmel will run the monthly blood pressure clinic and manage the Council's finances.

Melissa Newcombe said she would like to resign from the school committee, but because the position is elected, the selectboard may not appoint a replacement until she submits a written resignation.

Tree Work

Librarian Rose Heidkamp said the library can pay some of the \$2,200 bill for needed tree work on the library grounds from money remaining in the library's construction account. The Friends of the Library can chip in some of the additional money. The town's share should amount to only \$200, Heidkamp said.

Matt Edwards, of Edwards Tree Service, has a low impact plan to cut the large three-trunk ash that leans over the library. He will cut both that ash, and another that has branches too close to the playground slide. Edwards will also cut a cherry on the neighbor's property to five foot lengths, and truck the pieces as the neighbor requires.

Saplings on the north side of the library can stay in place until the Arbor Vitae planted there grow large enough to replace them as a screen.

Edwards will chip the brush and leave the chips for the library grounds.

Open Space

Aldrich reported a late bill from the Franklin Council of Governments for work on updating the town's open space plan. A town meeting authorized money to pay for the service, but that money was not spent in time, so it returned to the general fund. The amount must now be reauthorized, or come from the reserve fund, but Keller said the finance committee is conservative about taking money from the reserve fund.

The open space committee will hold a forum at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 4th at the town hall, to get citizen input on the update of the open space plan.



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ELECTION from pg 5

are found in the accompanying chart).

Leverett voted the most decisively in a number of categories, with 79% choosing to return Deval Patrick to the governorship (compared to Montague's 62%, Erving's 58% and Wendell's 70%), and 85% backing Democrat John Olver for Congress. (Montague gave Olver 78%, Erving 67% and Wendell 84%). Leverett also topped the charts in its percentage voting No to ballot questions 1, 2 and 3. The first asked whether to repeal the tax on bottled alcohol; the second would have repealed the state's affordable housing law; the third sought to cut the state's sales tax from 6.25% to 3%.

There were two more questions, non-binding ones, on the ballot in Montague, Leverett, and Wendell. The most succinct summary of the results for Questions 4 (support for single-payer health care) and 5 (whether to regulate and tax marijuana) would be, 'Yes!'

On the health care question, Montague registered 73% support, Leverett 82% and Wendell 85%.

Statewide, voters approved the single payer health care idea in 78 out of the 80 towns and cities that had the question on their ballot.

As to whether to regulate and tax marijuana, Montague said Yes (67%), as did Leverett (78%) and Wendell (84%).

Erving joined Gill in supporting Democrat Denise Andrews over Republican Steve Adam and independent Genevieve Fraser, helping Andrews to victory in the 2nd Franklin state rep race.

Erving gave Andrews 59% of the vote; Gill gave her 64%.

Governor Patrick's main opponent, Republican Charlie Baker, got his best support in Erving (26%), where Tim Cahill got 13% and Jill Stein 2.6%.

In Montague, it was Baker 21%, Cahill 10% and Stein 6.5%. Leverett recorded Baker at 15%, Cahill at 3% and Stein at 7.3%. Stein got her best support in Wendell, where 12% checked off her name. There, 13% went for Baker and 5% for Cahill.



ERVING from pg 7

remarked that creating shared positions with benefits increased costs. He said shared employees should be considered only on a case by case basis. "There should be some due diligence to prove you can't hire help without sharing."

Selectboard member Eugene Klepadlo said if Union 28 works on revisions to the draft agreement, Erving wanted to be included in the revision process.

Wickman told the board, "I'll be back at another time," to continue the discussion.

In Other News

Fire chief Bud Meatty asked the selectboard to allow the fire department to accept a free

1989 International four-wheel-drive truck from the state. He said the department could put a tank on it and use it for carrying water to structure fires and wildfires.

Meatty said, "We're looking into getting a 2,000 gallon fuel tank," to use as a water tank. Goodwin said he would like to see a cost-benefit analysis for that project, calculating "the cost of getting it on the road and the benefits to the town." He said it sounded like a good deal, but the town needs to be careful with expenditures.

The selectboard put off making a decision about the donated truck until its November 4th meeting, pending additional information from Meatty.

Meatty also provided the selectboard with a draft standard operating procedure for fire hydrant flushing. Selectboard members said the procedure would be "good to go" after a few small edits.

At the October 7th meeting, the selectboard had changed responsibility for flushing and maintaining hydrants from the water department to the fire department.

Sarah Meuse from Farley attended the meeting to inform the selectboard about traffic safety issues for Holmes and Wells Streets, off Route 2. She said Holmes Street is only wide enough for one car, and it is hard for drivers on Wells Street to see if anyone is coming from

Route 2.

Selectboard member Jamie Hackett said he would go to Holmes and Wells Streets and look at the situation with highway supervisor Paul Prest.

The selectboard reviewed a letter from Winston and Margaret Lavallee, whose property abuts the new senior center lot. The couple expressed concerns about the proposed locations of senior center signs, the dumpster and the transformer, the extent of security lighting, changes in traffic patterns, and the start and completion dates for construction.

The selectboard sent a reply to the Lavallees, responding to all of their concerns.



Election Results - November 2nd
Competitive Races and Referendum Questions

	Montague	Gill	Erving	Leverett	Wendell
Patrick	1863	386	289	737	293
Baker	629	149	131	153	56
Cahill	313	57	67	31	21
Stein	195	38	13	73	52
Olver	2236	445	331	841	354
Gunn	615	151	142	120	52
Engel	130	34	24	24	17
Andrew		389	289		
Adam		196	168		
Fraser		25	31		

Question	Montague	Gill	Erving	Leverett	Wendell
Question 1 - repeal liquor tax					
Yes	1082	240	198	192	110
No	1907	372	289	796	309
Question 2 - repeal low-income housing law					
Yes	825	191	125	208	119
No	2039	394	347	730	283
Question 3 - reduce sales tax to 3%					
Yes	778	172	136	153	105
No	2211	447	353	833	316
Question 4 - single payer health care					
Yes	2042			761	345
No	740			167	60
Question 5 - regulate & tax marijuana					
Yes	1886			712	334
No	909			205	71
Voter Turnout	52 %	59%	46%	70%	63%

State Rep Congress Governor

Chart compiled by Jonathan von Ranson

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Rare Diseases

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ - Q. *A friend of mine was diagnosed with Jumping Frenchmen of Maine. Have you ever heard of this?*

Not until now. Jumping Frenchmen of Maine is a rare, unexplained disorder that produces an extreme startle reaction to a sudden noise or sight.

Jumping Frenchmen of Maine

was first identified during the late 1800s in Maine and the Canadian province of Quebec. It was discovered among an isolated population of French-Canadian lumberjacks. Since the discovery, the extreme startle reaction has been found in other societies in many parts of the world.

Jumping Frenchmen of Maine is one of almost 7,000 rare diseases. In the United States, a disease is classified as rare if fewer than 200,000 people have it. About 25 million people in the U.S. have a rare or orphan disease.

Some familiar orphan diseases

are cystic fibrosis, Lou Gehrig's disease and Tourette's syndrome.

Orphan diseases don't attract as much research funding as major diseases because they aren't as profitable to the healthcare industry.

In 1983, Congress passed the Orphan Drug Act (ODA). The ODA created financial incentives for drug and biologics manufacturers, including tax credits for costs of clinical research, government grant funding, assistance for clinical research, and seven-year periods of exclusive marketing. At the same time, federal programs began encouraging product development, as well as clinical research for products tar-

geting rare diseases.

Since 1983, the ODA has stimulated the development of more than 250 orphan drugs, which are now available to treat a potential patient population of more than 13 million Americans. In contrast, the decade before 1983 saw fewer than ten such products developed without government assistance.

An excellent source of assistance for these diseases is the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD), a federation of more than 130 nonprofit voluntary health organizations. The NORD website includes information on medication assistance programs and networking programs, a resource guide, and

links to other online resources. Here's the contact information: National Organization for Rare Disorders 55 Kenosia Ave., PO Box 1968, Danbury, CT 06813-1968 (800) 999-6673 www.rarediseases.org

New rare diseases are discovered every year. Most are inherited and caused by alterations or defects in genes. Others can be caused by environmental conditions.

If you would like to browse through a list of rare diseases, go to the Genetics Home Reference website at: ghr.nlm.nih.gov/BrowseConditions

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

GMRSD from pg 1

The towns looked at the reliable increases in town revenues (new growth and the 2½% increase in the tax levy allowed each year), and split that roughly equally between the town and school district to come up with a formula for an affordable assessment for Montague. Brown said the total assessments generated by Montague's affordable budget projections averaged about 2½% over the next four years, in line with what Gill has historically been able to afford. But he warned that slight changes in enrollment from the Gill side would shift the percentage for the town's assessment, so an accurate projection would be difficult.

Singleton said, "If these assumptions are not able to be accomplished, then we have to admit this district is not viable, and we have to look at other options. It's not going to get passed onto the town anymore."

Waldron said, "These are our schools and our towns, let's fix this together."

That theme was repeated throughout the meeting. Naughton said with the towns and the school district constantly in dispute, they have not been able to work together to fight for what they needed from the state. Of the ongoing discussions with the state legislators and the DESE officials in the oversight group, Naughton said, "If they want this to be a successful district then they have to be involved with providing sufficient funding. We are all in it together."

The technical committee also presented a revised FY '11 oper-

ating budget for the district for consideration, based on the compromise of using an increase of roughly \$200,000 in excess and deficiency (E&D) funds from the district and a similar amount of money from the Montague stabilization fund. Ladd, who has frequently stated his priority is to get a budget agreement this year and remove the state from fiscal oversight of the district, said a vote to approve the budget compromise would have to be taken by the school committee prior to the special budget setting district meeting on November 18th at the high school (6:30 p.m., to which all Gill and Montague voters are invited).

The DESE has maintained fiscal oversight of the district for the last two years, due to the budgetary impasse between the district and its member towns.

Members of the technical committee then asked the school committee to approve the compact. The school committee approved the plan 8-1, with Joyce Phillips abstaining.

Teacher Contract

The school committee will take a vote on November 9th to ratify contracts with teachers and support staff. The ratification vote had been delayed earlier this month at the behest of the DESE. All contracts worth more than \$25,000 must be approved by the DESE.

The DESE had asked the district to delay the ratification of the teacher and staff contracts until after the results of the department's review of the district are made public. Those results are expected by next week.

On Tuesday, October 26th, the committee followed the lead of Michael Langknecht, who has argued that the DESE's fiscal oversight does not abrogate the district's responsibilities to ratify contracts negotiated in good faith. After meeting on October 14th, the committee agreed to reach out to the bargaining units for teachers, cafeteria workers, custodians, and administrative assistants to seek their input on whether to proceed to a vote, regardless of the DESE's instruction to delay.

Superintendent Ladd said he had not heard back yet from the review board, but he said the teachers union responded to his request for guidance by saying, "Please do what you think is best for the district."

The motion to schedule the vote for November 9th carried 7-2 with, with Jeff Singleton and Marje Levenson voting against. Singleton and Levenson have tried to open up the process of ratifying the contract for public comment, arguing that a contract of this size will have a major impact on the district's plan for long term budget sustainability.

Ladd reported he has submitted an application for Race to the Top grant funding to the DESE.

At the beginning of the meeting, 19 students from the Class of 2011 were honored for being awarded John and Abigail Adams Scholarships. These scholarships provide tuition waivers for eight semesters of undergraduate education at the University of Massachusetts, the eight state colleges and the fifteen community colleges. The students awarded scholarships are: Zhanna

Compost those Pumpkins!

BY AMY DONOVAN

GREENFIELD - Wondering what to do with those ghoulish rotting pumpkins on your doorstep or those leaves piling up in your yard? Compost them!

Autumn, with its many chores of raking leaves, cleaning up gardens and reaping the harvest, is a great time to start composting. Composting is easy, and it can be even easier with an effective compost bin.

Attractive, durable bins for home composting are available for sale through the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District for district residents, at several locations.

The "Earth Machine," (\$40), is made of tough recycled polyethylene plastic and has a twist-on locking lid. The bin stakes to the ground and is easy to assemble, rodent resistant, and designed for good aeration. This bin features a door in the bottom that can be lifted up to easily shovel out finished compost.

Residents can save money and reduce waste by using

home compost instead of purchasing bagged fertilizers and topsoil every spring. Residents of towns that require "Pay as You Throw" trash bags can also save money by composting food waste rather than filling up town bags with compostable waste.

The Earth Machine is available at these four locations: Colrain Transfer Station, Saturday 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Wendell Transfer Station, Tuesday, noon - 6 p.m., Saturday, 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.; Orange Transfer Station, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday: 8 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.; and the district office, 50 Miles Street, Greenfield (hours vary; call 413-772-2438).

For more info on composting or waste management programs, call 413-772-2438 or go to: www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.



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GO GREEN FAMILY

Episode 31: Escape from Oz

BY JEANNE WEINTRAUB-MASON

MONTAGUE CENTER – The alarm clock read 5:00 a.m. when Gerry Bartlett’s arm reached away from the bed and fumbled out towards the phone.

“G’day, mate — it’s your brother-in-law Brian. Howsits going, Gerry?”

“Brian? Do you have any idea what time it is here? It’s not even light yet. What’s up?”

“How do you feel about a coupla visitors this month? Me, Sylvia and Maggie are thinking

of flying over to the States next week.”

“Next week? Why would you want to come here in November? Remember, it’s much colder here now than it is in Australia,” Gerry reminded him.

“Well, I was going to wait to tell you this, but we’re packing up our kits to leave Oz. The economy’s in the toilet, and we’ve had it with Adelaide’s bloody never-ending water crisis — the place is gone to the dogs. If we have to keep living under level five water restrictions for another month we’ll go berko!”

“You can’t be serious! I know

Maggie’s ready for college, but you’re going to tear her away from all her friends? And what do you mean, level five water restrictions?”

“They’re like Nazis here, Gerry. Use more than 800 liters of water a day, and ya get hit with a \$1,000 fine — or they restrict your water flow. We’re all drinking bottled water. We can only water the garden with a bucket — a bucket! For god’s sake, we can’t hardly afford to do laundry any more — our electric utility bill has gone through the roof — almost triple last year, would ya believe it?” Brian exclaimed.

“Isn’t it just temporary — because of the drought? Can’t you just wait it out?”

“No, mate. They say it’s climate change. When the temperature in Adelaide is over 40 C in the summer, you know why they invented beer. They’ve taken all the bloody water out of the Murray River and now it’s too salty. Now they want to build a desalination plant.”

“Won’t that help?”

“Cripes! Me — drink recycled sewage, no thanks, mate. Sales at all the vineyards are down by fifty percent — so I’m not bringing in any commissions. I can’t make a living here anymore. We’re gointa bail.”

“You’re immigrating here?”

“Right-oh. We’re thinkin’ itsa handy thing that Sylvia’s got American citizenship. So can you

handle a coupla Aussies for a while?”

“It will be our pleasure,” said Gerry, nudging his wife awake to share the news.



At breakfast, Jayden and Connor were thrilled to learn their aunt Sylvia, uncle Brian and cousin Maggie were coming to live in the US.

“Where will they stay, Dad?” asked Jayden.

“Your mother and I have decided to convert her design studio into an apartment for the Dugans. She wants to rent space in Turners Falls — she says that’s where the action is. And to do our part for the Go Green Family ‘stuff’ challenge, we’ll furnish the apartment with environmentally-friendly furniture!”

- Continued next issue



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

BY SALLY PICK

MONTAGUE — When it began in the fall of 2008, the Montague energy committee hit the ground running. You may remember that was the year energy prices skyrocketed. The committee set its sights on educating residents about ways they could save energy, and in doing so, avoid a big increase in their energy bills.

Participants attended workshops on energy efficiency techniques and programs at the senior center in Turners Falls, at the Montague Center library, at the Brick House in Turners, in Lake Pleasant, and at the Maezumi Institute in the Chestnut Hill neighborhood of Montague. They also attended an open house at the Zero Energy prize-winning home in Montague City.

MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

Energy Committee Sets Goals for Coming Years

Next the committee focused on qualifying Montague as a Green Community, to make the town eligible for new state grant monies for energy efficiency projects. The committee worked to make Montague one of the first Green Communities in Massachusetts, in order to better position the town to get the first of the grants. With a great deal of collaboration with town planner Walter Ramsey, the town met all five criteria required to qualify as a Green Community in time for the first grant deadline.

Last summer, Montague secured a Green Community grant for just under \$155,000; the funds will be put toward the cost of an energy performance contract with Siemens that will lower the town’s energy use and electric and heating costs.

Taking time out of its action-oriented process to define clear

goals for the coming years, members of the Montague energy committee met on Friday, October 29th, for a three-hour retreat. An initial discussion of what motivates volunteers to be on the committee brought out some common themes: focusing on bringing energy efficiency to residents as well as municipal buildings, leading with vision and establishing energy efficiency as a norm in Montague, finding ways to actively motivate committee members and the community to make such changes, increasing the use of renewable energy and working to support its financing, looking for ways to measure the impact of its programs on energy use, and ensuring the committee’s efforts are sustainable for its members.

The committee brainstormed short and long-term visions of Montague related to energy.

Some potential five year visions include: establishing a zero or low interest loan program to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy for residents; getting 25% of the homes and apartments in Montague retrofitted for energy efficiency; procuring a fine bubble aeration system to make the town’s largest energy user, the waste water treatment plant, more efficient; supporting increases in energy efficiency with local work parties, sponsoring events, posting lawn signs that increase the visibility of efficiency efforts, and using a logo; locating green industry in Montague; collaborating and planning energy programs with local organizations, faith-based entities, and neighborhood groups; seeking area college and university energy program involvement; and supporting a green building and operations for the department of public works.


Long-term visions discussed include: retrofitting 75% of Montague homes and apartments for energy efficiency in ten years; developing hydro-power oppor-

tunities at the Montague Mill, the Connecticut River canal, and the wastewater treatment plant; developing local food systems such as more Turners Falls community gardens; and running town vehicles on biodiesel. With the example in mind of a formerly impoverished town in Italy that installed wind power and now finds itself to be wealthy and green, one member suggested an overall long-term vision of a green and economically thriving Montague.

For the coming year, the committee plans to help the greater community and the town reduce their energy use by working with other organizations and groups in the town to achieve measurable results. In the coming months, the energy committee will take a closer look at its visions and refine them into next steps and clear short and long-term goals. If you would like to participate, the committee invites you to come to its meetings, currently the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the town hall in Turners Falls.

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Slope Editions Reading Series* featuring the work of Greenfield's Poet's Seat poet, Frederick Goddard Tuckerman. 5 p.m.

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15th
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo*, 8 p.m. Free.

Bookmill, Montague: *Therese Soukat Chehade* reads from her new novel, "Loom" 7 p.m. Free.

Bookmill, Montague: *GWYNFYD and Tongue Oven*. Psych-folk duet from Wales, featuring Pamela Wyn Shannon and Eifion Wyn Williams. Original and traditional Welsh songs. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th
The Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The Shea PYP Series* presents *Tony Vacca's Rhythm Griots*. 10 a.m. & 1 p.m.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18th
Leverett Town Hall: *Echo Lake Coffeehouse*. Dana and Susan Robinson: original songs about the American landscape with old time Appalachian mountain music. 7:30 p.m. 548-9394.

FRIDAY - SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5th TO 6th
Shea Theater, Turners Falls: The Country Players present *Love, Sex and the IRS*. Fri and Sat. 8 p.m. (Continues Nov. 12th & 13th at 8 p.m. & Nov. 14th at 2 p.m.)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5th
Bookmill, Montague: *Ray Mason and Dennis Crommet*, 8 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Shokazoba Afrobeat Ensemble*, Funk. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *John Kurtyka's Limp Flamingo*, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson, Renegade Blues*, 9 to 11 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6th
Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Fire by Friction*, outdoor skills workshop. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

JaDuke Black Box Theater, Turners Falls: *The LaClaires*. Acoustic roots, bluegrass & gospel music. 7 p.m. 863-0001.

Wendell Free Library: "Earth Girls Are Easy," movie. 7:30 p.m. Free.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Larry Berger and the Electric Fence*, folk. 8 p.m.

Bookmill, Montague: *Steve Nelson and Austin & Elliott*. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Kristen Ford & friends*, rock/folk, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites, Reggae Fantastico!* 9 to 11 p.m.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7th
Public Forum on Greenfield Town Farm; 2 p.m. Greenfield High School, Silver Street. Speakers, panelists, small group discussions. Local food advocates welcome!

Academy of Music: Northampton: *Living Along the River*, a benefit concert for the CT River Watershed Council. Original songs by: John Currie, Claire Dacey, Charlie Conant, Sparkie Allison, Russ Thomas, Drew Hickum, John-Michael Field, Katie Clarke, Sheila Moschen, and Roland Lapierre. 2 p.m. www.ctriver.org.

Art and Poetry exhibit, Millers Falls. Abstract painter *Paul Palmgren* and poet *Randy Welner*, 2 to 5 p.m. Renovators Supply Factory, 1 River St.

Leverett Library, Documentary "Yanks Fight the Kaiser: A National Guard Division in WWI." Artifacts and discussion. www.leverettlibrary.org. 3:00 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Rik Rolski*, Acoustic Guitar, 8 to 10 p.m.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9th
Northfield Coffee & Books: *Slate Roof* poets Ed Rayher, Jim Bell and Janet MacFadyen will read from their work, with a slide show by nature photographer Stephen Schmidt. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10th
Pioneer Valley Regional School's Kiva Auditorium, Northampton: *Steve Alves*



GWYNFYD, Psych-folk duet from Wales, featuring Pamela Wyn Shannon and Eifion Wyn Williams play at The Montague Bookmill on November 15th at 8 p.m. Original and traditional Welsh songs.

Bookmill, Montague: *Murray and Falkenau*, 8 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Roland Lapierre*, alt country, at the Great Falls Coffeehouse, 7 p.m. Free.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13th
Montague Grange: *Montague Scandia Dance*. 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Music: Steffan Ohlström, Matt Fichtenbaum, Andrea Larson, & Lydia Ievins. All levels welcome. www.montaguescandia.org

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bela's Bartok*, 9:30 p.m.

Bookmill, Montague: *Toughcats*, 8 p.m.

Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *Zydeco Connection*, 8 p.m.

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4. SECRETARIAT PG
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:10
5. RED PG13
DAILY 12:15 3:15 6:40 9:10
6. SOCIAL NETWORK PG13 in DTS sound
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7. DUE DATE R in DTS sound
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Ghouls and Goblins were on the loose in Montague on Hallowe'en!

(Clockwise from top left): Brooke, Alana and Kolbe went trick or treating in Montague; Chris and Jenavieve Filanowski looked spooky in Turners; Lucy came from Hadley for the fun in Montague Center; the Rag Shag parade marched down the Ave in fine style; Jaka came from Greenfield; an unknown alien invader was sighted on Main Street; and Sydney looked sharp in green eye shadow.

Kip Williams, who keeps track of such things, said 483 trick or treaters knocked on his door in Montague Center this year, up from 391 last year, 408 the year before, 338 in 2007 and 384 in 2006! So, paranormal activity is definitely on the upswing in our villages, keeping candy counters and dental hygienists busy.

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