

CHARLES NEVILLE
At Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse
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100th ANNIVERSARY
Our Lady of Czestochowa
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YEAR 8 - NO. 1

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 1, 2009

Bid Opened for Repair of Gill-Montague Bridge



PHOTO JOHN HAIGIS @ PASTTIMESPRESENT.COM

The long-delayed bid opening for renovating the Gill-Montague Bridge finally took place on Tuesday. The apparent low bidder is SPS New England, at \$40.7 million.

BY DAVID DETMOLD
GREAT FALLS – On Tuesday, the long-delayed bid opening for the renovation of the Gill-Montague bridge finally took place. At \$40.7 million, SPS New England out of Salisbury, MA was the apparent low bidder, according to Adam Hurtubise, spokesperson for the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation.

The project first went out to bid a year ago, on September 20th of 2008, with an expected price tag of \$42.3 million, but Hurtubise said the bid opening kept getting pushed back to allow

contractors more time to respond.

News of the low bid caused Maureen Mulvaney, transportation manager for the Franklin County Regional Council of Government to breathe a sigh of relief on Wednesday. "That's great," she said. "That's significantly lower than expected."

Montague town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said SPS New England is a reputable contractor with a lot of experience in major bridge renovation projects. The company website lists the I-495 interchange in Lawrence, the rehabili-

see **BRIDGE** pg 11

District Meeting Again Votes Lower Budget for G-M Schools



G-M school committee chair Michael Langknecht (left) and superintendent Carl Ladd listen to debate at Wednesday's district meeting

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE
GILL-MONTAGUE – Less than 100 residents of Gill and Montague voted at the district meeting in Turners Falls High School auditorium on Wednesday night to approve a budget \$213,000 lower than the amount

see **BUDGET** pg 3

Leverett to Discuss Regionalization, Affordable Housing

BY DAVID DETMOLD
LEVERETT – Which school district will be responsible for our children's education, and will they be able to afford to live in town in years to come? These are two of the long term questions Leverett will consider at an upcoming town meeting on October 20th.

At present, the Leverett Elementary School is part of the Union 28 school district, along with the elementary schools of Shutesbury, New Salem, Wendell and Irving. But with the topic of school regionalization heating up across the region and the state, Leverett has decided to take advantage of an upcoming special town meeting, on Tuesday, October 20th, at the elementary school gymnasium at 7 p.m., to allow townspeople time to discuss the possibility of regionalizing with another school district.

Since high school students from Leverett now go to school at Amherst High, joining in a

K-12 regional district with Amherst might be a logical step, and Alberto Rodriguez, superintendent of Amherst schools, will meet with the selectboard on October 19th, at 7:00 p.m., the night before the town meeting, to discuss that option.

The topic of school regionalization will be followed by another informal discussion at town meeting, in response to a plea for guidance from the town by the Leverett Affordable Housing Committee (LAHC) on Tuesday.

After working for more than a decade on a plan to provide 10 units of affordable housing, LAHC members Fenna Lee Bonsignore, Barbara Carulli, and Arlyn Diamond, told the selectboard on September 29th, "The impression the Affordable Housing Committee gets is that the selectboard is not particularly supportive of this project," as Carulli put it.

The committee has been see **HEARING** pg 12

Community Leaders Gather to Discuss Homelessness



PHOTO COLLAGE DETMOLD & WELLS

The emergency shelter in Montague City has maintained a heavy waiting list all summer, when demand is typically lighter. With winter coming on, community leaders are seeking a place to provide an overflow cot shelter, with 4 - 6 beds.

BY DAVID DETMOLD
MONTAGUE CITY – "I want to support a permanent solution," said Greenfield mayor Bill Martin at a breakfast meeting about homelessness in Franklin County at the Farren Care Center on Tuesday morning.

Martin was talking about the same thing city mayors and policy experts are talking about all across the country these day as

they move away from a reliance on emergency sheltering to dealing with homelessness and toward a 'housing first' approach.

Housing first is an initiative developed in the city of Seattle, and given major nationwide impetus by a pair of independent studies that show the city saved millions of public dollars in the first years of operating two staff-supported public housing

facilities for the chronically homeless (defined as people who have experienced three episodes of homelessness in the past two years, or have been homeless for the past year).

Bill Hobson, director of Seattle's Downtown Emergency Service Center, a pioneer of that approach, has been quoted saying, "You've got no idea how many times I've heard the phrase,

see **HOMELESS** pg 7

LEVERETT COVERAGE

Beginning with this issue, the first of our eighth year of publication, the Montague Reporter will provide regular coverage of news from Leverett. The towns that border Montague share a long history of economic and social relations, and the lack of coverage in this community has been a gap in our ability to present a cohesive

weekly summary of events that affect each. From now on, look for proceedings from selectboard meetings, town meetings, cultural events, and other news and views from Leverett in the Montague Reporter. Subscriptions for Leverett residents will be offered in the month of October for just \$30 a year, delivered.

PET OF THE WEEK

Playful & Curious



Pita

Pita is a six-month-old female mini rex rabbit in need of a good home. She enjoys being petted and will greet you when you open her cage. She is playful and curious, and loves tearing apart egg cartons and chewing apple branches. Pita did not understand the concept of a litter box initially, but she is getting the hang of it.

She does not currently have any rabbit friends, but with a proper introduction and some patience, she could be your rabbit's companion. (Female-male bonding is the easiest.) Pita needs to be spayed and then she will be ready to join you at home. Please call or email to arrange a meeting with Pita.

For more information on adopting Pita, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or via email: info@dpvhs.org.

WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Monsters vs. Aliens

BY ROSIE HEIDKAMP—Kids of all ages are invited to watch this fun spoof of an old science fiction movie – in 3-D – at the Wendell Free Library on Friday, October 2nd, at 6:30 p.m. Bring 3-D glasses if you have them!

It's supposed to be the happiest day of her life. But shortly before Susan (Reese Witherspoon) marries local weatherman Derek (Paul Rudd), she is struck by a meteor. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. And taller. As Susan grows to the size of a giantess, the government shows up and takes

her away to a secret facility, with four other freaks of nature.

The five monsters might have stayed locked up forever if it weren't for an alien invasion. The government, led by President Hathaway (Stephen Colbert), makes the monsters a deal. If they will defeat the aliens, they will be released from prison. Can they save San Francisco from the menace?

There's only one way to find out, and it's free for the whole family. Kids might want to bring a blanket or pillow to sit on the floor.

Southworth Pitches in for United Way

BY ED DRISCOLL
TURNERS FALLS - The employees at Southworth Paper Company have teamed up with local businesses in the Turners Falls area to kick off the 2009-10 United Way of Franklin County Campaign.

In spite of the poor economy, most local businesses were very generous, donating products to be auctioned off in a Pick-a-Prize Auction designed to raise money and increased awareness of the upcoming pledge drive. The raffle held over 20 prizes that showed off the wares of the local retail community, and combined with other fundraising at

Southworth raised almost \$500 for the United Way, so far.

The shops and stores that participated were: Ristorante DiPaolo, Jay K's Liquors, Oak Ridge Golf Course, F.L. Roberts, Adams Donuts, Turners Falls Pizza, The 2nd Street Bakery, Ciesluk Farm Stand, Sammy K's Driving Range, Jake's Tavern, Aubuchon Hardware, Ed's Barber Shop, Monadnock Vending, and Don Lorenz GMC.

Southworth employees and members of the public are encouraged to patronize these stores and restaurants, who donated generously to help their neighbors.

Chair Yoga Classes at Montague Senior Center

Chair Yoga classes with Jean Erlbaum will be held at the Montague Senior Center on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. on the following Tuesdays: Oct. 13, 20, 27, Nov. 10, 17, 24, Dec. 8 and 15. These classes offer a good stretch and strengthening for muscles, oil-

ing for joints and fun!

People from all towns and of all skill levels are invited, including folks in wheelchairs. There is a discounted price of \$2.00 for each class. Pre-registration is not required. For more info, please contact Roberta Potter at (413) 863-4500.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – Oct 5th to Oct 9th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. Meal reservations must be made a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. Meal site Manager is Becky Cobb. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter; call 863-9357.

Tai Chi classes begin on October 15th, 10:00 a.m. Painting class begins October 13th. Register now, \$10 Gill Montague Seniors and \$15 from other towns for six sessions. Chair Yoga classes begin Tuesday, October 13th. See above for more info.

Upcoming Senior Pot Luck lunch will be Monday, October 12th. Please call the center to sign up.

Monday, Oct. 5th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, Oct. 6th
9:00 a.m. Walking group
10:00 a.m. Brown Bag
No Chair Yoga
1:00 p.m. Canasta
Wednesday, Oct. 7th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics

12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, Oct. 8th
9:00 a.m. til noon: Flu shots at the police station
10:00 a.m. Coffee & Conversation with Reconnecting Youth guests
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, Oct. 9th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Scrabble

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Ervingside (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. For info and reservations, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3308. Lunch is daily at 11:30 a.m., with reservations 24 hours in advance. Transportation can be provided for meals, Thursday shopping, or medical necessity.

Monday, Oct. 5th
9:00 a.m. Exercise
12 noon Pitch
Tuesday, Oct. 6th
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, Oct. 7th
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
12 noon Bingo
Thursday, Oct. 8th
8:45 a.m. Aerobics



Welsh Takes First Place

Turners Falls – *Jordan Welsh, age 7, of Turners Falls, took first place in the 7- and 8-year-old novice division in the Vermont State Nationals Martial Arts Tournament, on September 26th in Bellows Falls, VT. Jordan studies at the Central Tae Kwon Do in Turners Falls, under the instruction of Master James White.*

Booster Day Parade

Come see creative floats, a marching band and spirited students from Turners Falls High School at the Booster Day Parade!

Parade begins at 11:30 leaving from Unity Park, making its way up A Street, 7th Street, L Street and Montague Street before heading up Turnpike Road, to TFHS. (Parade cancelled in event of rain)

Hearing Postponed

The Franklin Regional Transportation Authority's public forum on senior transportation issues, scheduled for Friday, October 2nd at the Gill-Montague Senior Center, has been postponed. Senior Center director Roberta Potter said FRTA decided to delay the meeting after hearing from a number of bus riders who intended to come to the meeting to discuss issues not directly related to seniors' bus service.

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Montague Prepares for Flu Season

BY JOE KWIECINSKI

MONTAGUE - The board of health of the town of Montague will hold a seasonal flu clinic on Thursday, October 8th from 9 a.m. to noon at the new police station, next to the Turners Falls fire department on Turnpike Road.

The preventive doses will be available to the public, with priority given to children from six months old to their 19th birthday and adults 50 years of age or older, along with all those with chronic medical conditions.

"We've been promised a number of each type of vaccine (nasal form or needle)," said Jay DiPucchio, a member of the board of health. "But the state hasn't confirmed the exact numbers yet."

But will the vaccine adminis-

tered on October 8th ward off the the new H1N1 virus making headlines worldwide this year?

No.

Gina McNeely, the town's director of public health, stressed the distinction between the two varieties of flu circulating this season.

"We're trying to distinguish," said McNeely, "between the seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus, which people erroneously call 'swine flu.'"

The H1N1 virus has nothing to do, McNeely added, with eating pork or being exposed to pigs.

McNeely said the two types of flu will require two separate vaccines.

"There's a lot of confusion," she said, "for the general public, due to the two different types of flu. The annual flu seasonal vac-

cine," which the town will administer at the clinic on October 8th, "will not protect a person from the H1N1 virus."

At a later date, the town will administer the H1N1 vaccine, as soon as the vaccine is received from the state of Massachusetts.

The public health director said there is a lot a person can do to protect themselves from any type of flu.

"The main line of defense against getting the flu," McNeely said, "is personal hygiene. Wash your hands before you eat, after using the bathroom, and after touching any doorknobs in the general public. Use hand sanitizers as much as you can when soap and water are not available."

"Also, avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with your hands, unless you wash first.

"There is a cough and sneeze etiquette. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. If you don't have a tissue, direct your cough or sneeze toward the inside of your elbow. Since people don't shake hands or open doors with their elbows, that's pretty effective at cutting down the spread of germs."

Another serious circumstance occurs when people force themselves to maintain their regular schedule despite becoming ill.

"If you're ill," said McNeely, "stay at home. If you have a fever and body aches, stay home from work or school. Stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever has subsided."

McNeely emphasized the need to be immunized, noting that all people should get their flu

shots when they are available.

Board of health member DiPucchio notes the course of a flu pandemic is an extremely complex matter.

"No one knows the scope of a possible pandemic," he said. "One of the biggest problems is that the media tends to condense what information is released by the Centers for Disease Control. That's understandable when you consider the time and space constraints the media works under."

DiPucchio added, "Every citizen is individually responsible for keeping himself or herself informed about what is happening with the H1N1 virus. The changing nature of the disease makes that difficult. The news about this virus changes daily. For an excellent source of current information, go to www.flu.gov."

"The H1N1 flu season could be no different in scope than the typical seasonal flu, or it could be much worse. No one knows."

BUDGET from pg 1

sought by the school committee to operate the Gill-Montague schools in the present budget year. The regional school committee asked residents of the member towns to approve the temporary budget figure set at the beginning of July by the commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: \$16,657,788.

But district voters chose instead to support a lower budget number offered by the Montague finance committee with the support of the Montague selectboard: \$16,441,403.

During the course of discussion, some spoke in support of the school committee's budget, saying approval would take back fiscal control of the district from the state, which assumed budgetary oversight of the GMRSD

after the towns and the district failed to agree on a budget last year.

Others felt strongly the only way to solve the long-term problem of a school budget built on excessive reserve fund spending, unsustainable over the short term, is to "keep the state at the table" by voting the budget down.

Among those speaking in support of the budget was Mary Kociela, former chair of the

school committee, who said, "Not passing the budget makes us look pretty inept." She added, "It looks like we're trying to manipulate the state," by voting down the budget just to make a point and keep the state engaged in local budget deliberations.

Others expressed doubt the about the degree of state involvement in the district's budget deliberations. Superintendent Carl Ladd, asked earlier in the week whether DESE planned to

send a representative to the district meeting said, "They do not have any answers, so I don't imagine they want to be put in a position of having the questions put to them. They will say that it is a local issue and a local decision, although they are - technically - responsible for our fiscal oversight. I don't think they know what to do with us."

Speaking in support of the Montague finance committee's amendment to strike about

\$216,000 from the GMRSD's budget was school committee member Jeff Singleton, who has consistently argued that the only solution to the schools' structural budget gap is to keep the state engaged, to increase state aid, reduce unfunded mandates, and work together with localities to solve the chronic budget problem with the district schools.

In the end, the finance committee's amendment passed, 59

see **BUDGET** page 6

Donations Sought for Senior Center Bazaar

The Gill-Montague Senior Center Friends of Mealsite is making preparations for its annual Christmas Bazaar. This is an important fundraiser for the center.

We are looking for support from local businesses and would appreciate donations of gifts, business certificates or money for our raffle. Your contribution would be displayed on Saturday, November 21st at the Christmas Bazaar with an acknowledgement of your business. Raffle tickets will go on sale Monday, October 19th.

The Friends of Mealsite provides funding for kitchen supplies, social events,

repairs, maintenance of equipment and many senior center expenses not covered in the Council on Aging budget. Please support the seniors of this community and make a donation to this event.

Donations may be dropped off at the center on Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., or mailed directly to Montague Senior Center, P.O. Box 166, Turners Falls, MA 01376. If you prefer to have your donation picked up at your place of business, please call (413) 863-9357 and a volunteer will stop in to get it. You are invited to attend, and thank you!



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A Gas Station on an Aquifer Means Permanent Risk

BY IVAN USSACH

ATHOL – This is addressed to residents of Erving, who will vote Monday night to accept or reject zoning bylaw changes that would allow operation of a gas station over their drinking water aquifer, located next to the Connecticut River. The Millers River Watershed Council urges you to reject the changes and protect your aquifer.

Why? Because once a groundwater aquifer gets polluted, it may become unusable for decades, and is often impossible to clean up quickly and inexpensively.

If you don't think you need to worry about pollution occurring, just check out the fuel spill cleanup underway at the former Northfield Mobil station at 24 Main Street in Northfield. The July 27th, 2009 Immediate Response Action Plan is available on the Mass Department of Environmental Protection website, file # RTN-1-17458. The station closed in 2006, and in May of this year the intact fuel tanks were removed. And as of this writing, so were over ten thousand gallons of contaminated ground water and thousands of tons of contaminated soil.

The tanks didn't leak, which means the fuel must have been spilled repeatedly over the lifetime of the station, due to human error or mechanical failing during refueling: a gallon here, five gallons there.

Seventy gallons of diesel spilled during refueling on March 19th, 2007 at a gas station in Orange (file # RTN-1-16550). Another gas station pollution cleanup is now underway across from my office on Main Street in Athol (file # RTN-1-2000880). There are hundreds and thousands more examples around the state and the country.

The point is, no matter how well the fuel tanks are built, even above ground, you can never – never! – be free of the risk of contamination of your current and future drinking water supply if you build a gas station on top of it.

Good people of Erving, think ahead and choose wisely.

Ivan USSACH is the watershed coordinator of the Millers River Watershed Council in Athol. He holds a masters degree in public health.

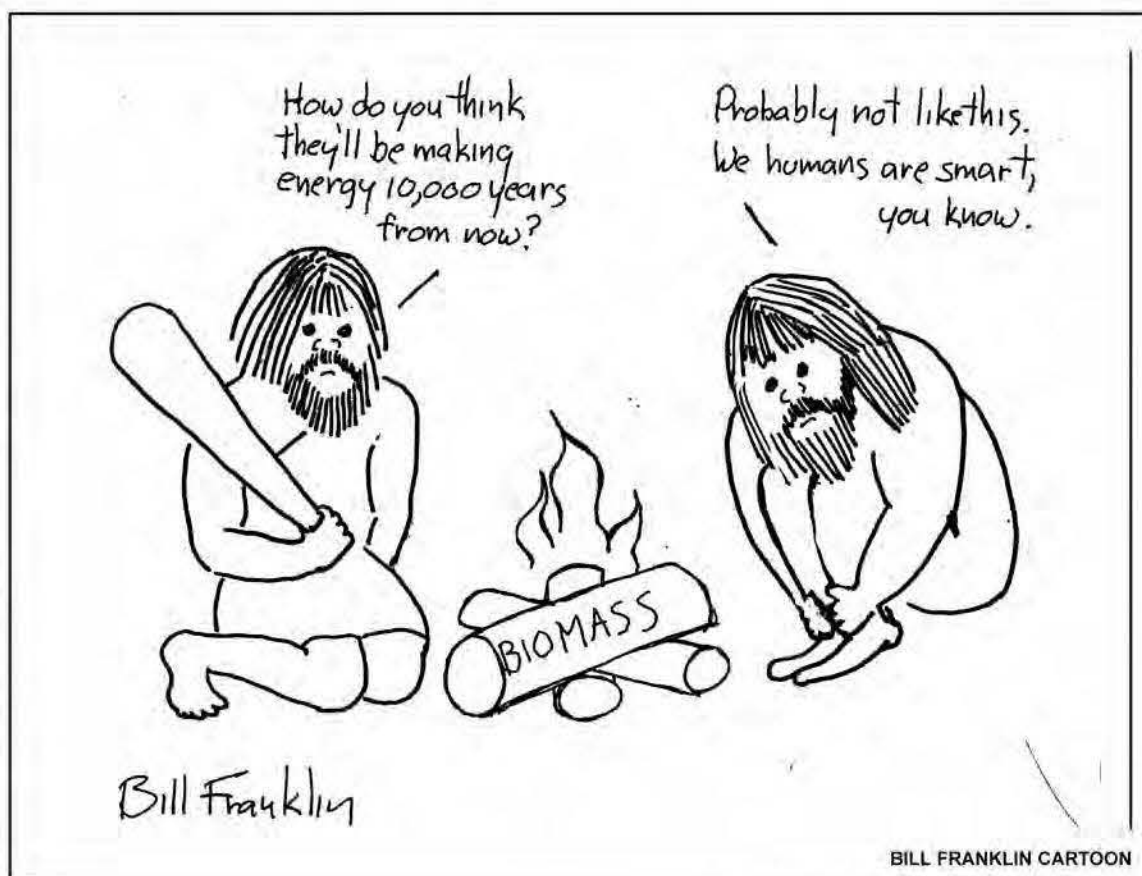
The Erving Planning Board issued the following majority recommendation on the proposed change to the town's aquifer protection bylaw, to be voted on at a special town meeting on Monday, October 5th at 7:00 p.m. at the Erving Elementary School:

"The Erving Planning Board does not recommend the adoption of Warrant Article #3 to amend the Groundwater Protection District (Zone II Recharge Area) to allow siting of gas stations. Allowing gas stations in our Groundwater Protection District increases the risk of contamination of our Public Water Supply Well.

Groundwater can be contaminated by gasoline as a result of leaking tanks, accidental spills or stormwater runoff. As a result, the Zoning Bylaws of communities in Franklin County typically do not allow new gasoline stations to be sited in their water supply recharge areas....

To reduce the risks associated with leaking gasoline storage tanks, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's model groundwater protection district bylaw calls for tanks in Zone II Recharge areas to be above ground on an impervious surface and either in a building or in a containment area that has sufficient storage capacity to contain any spill or leaks. However, Aboveground Storage Tanks (ASTs) have their own set of risks related to fire and explosions. Public safety concerns with Aboveground Storage Tanks include arson, vandalism, lightning strikes, and improper procedures such as welding during maintenance.

The Fire Department will need trained staff, access to the ASTs, adequate water, and supplies and equipment for emergency responses. In the event that Town Meeting decides to amend the Groundwater Protection District section to allow the siting of gas stations, the Erving Planning Board has provided for annual inspections and monitoring of the groundwater to help protect our public drinking water supplies."



Bill Franklin

BILL FRANKLIN CARTOON

Coverage Appreciated

As a member of the Turners Falls fire department, I would like to take a second and commend David Detmold for the very well written and informative article in last week's issue regarding the structure fire on L Street.

I feel he did an excellent job reporting on the fire and on the work we have to do at these calls. Thank you for your professionalism and dedication to this newspaper and to your fellow citizens.

– Charles Emery Jr.
Turners Falls

Four Arrested at VY

Settled on their stools inside the security fence at Entergy's Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant on Monday, September 28th, were Ellen Graves, 69, of Springfield; Frances Crowe, 90, Paki Wieland, 66, of Northampton; and Hattie Nestel, 70, of Athol. The four women entered the open main security gate despite a guard's warning, and just as the gate was ordered closed to keep them out. Vernon and Vermont state police arrested them within half an hour and charged them with trespassing.

Acting on behalf of the Shut It Down affinity group, the four women wanted to demonstrate that inadequate safety at Vermont Yankee is not limited to radiation leaks and collapsing cooling towers. The women carried signs calling for the closure of the nuclear plant, and Nestel carried an additional sign reading, "Yom Kippur – September 28th – Time to Atone – Shut Down Vermont Yankee."

– Marcia Gagliardi
Athol

American Dead in Iraq and Afghanistan as of 9/20/09



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Take Action on Climate Change

After his election victory a year ago, President Obama urged his millions of supporters to stay active and organized, and to push him to fulfill his campaign promises despite certain opposition in a divided Congress.

I believe now's the time to stand up and be counted on the overarching issue of this century: climate change.

The vast majority of the world's leading scientists are raising the alarm: global warming is real, mostly caused by human burning of oil, coal, and gas, and getting worse faster than they thought even just a few years ago.

The House of Representatives passed a weak climate change bill this summer, and there's plenty of reason to doubt the Senate will do any better. The world must unite and take strong action, at the international Climate Change conference in Denmark in December, to reduce

our energy use and switch to cleaner energy sources.

I urge everyone who's concerned about what kind of world we'll leave for our children and grandchildren to come to the Climate Change Carnival on Saturday, October 24th at the Greenfield High School. It will end with a parade around the neighborhood, and hundreds of people of all ages forming a gigantic 350 on the football field.

Three hundred and fifty is theorized to be the safe upper limit of carbon in the atmosphere, and we're nearly at 400, way past the danger point.

Greenfield is only one of several thousand communities around the U.S. and the world participating in this day of international climate action. More info is at 350.org, or locally at (413) 625-6374 or johnberk@crocker.com.

– John Berkowitz
Shelburne

Mission: Wolf

An amazing program will be offered in honor of National Wildlife Refuge Week at the Great Falls Discovery Center. On Saturday, October 17th, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. and again from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., the Center's Great Hall will be the venue for the Ambassador Wolves.

Come and have a personal encounter with a live wolf. View an audio-visual show covering subjects such as an introduction to wolves and hybrids, wild wolf issues, wolf communication and behavior, and the current status of wild wolves in North America.

This program is being funded by a generous donation from the

Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center and many local community organizations and businesses, including the Montague Reporter, Montague Community Television, the Great Falls Farmers Market, the Montague Business Association, La Bodega, McCarthy Funeral Home, and the Greenfield Savings Bank.

There will be two programs, one at 1:00 p.m. and one at 6:00 p.m. You must call the Discovery Center to register; space for the programs is limited. Call (413) 863-3221 for more information, and to sign up for Mission: Wolf!

– Dog Clegg
Turners Falls

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KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

BY SALLY PICK

MONTAGUE – On Saturday, October 3rd, neighbors will open their doors as part of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's (NESEA) Green Buildings Open House tour. Montague will be one of 3,000 communities participating in the American Solar Energy Society's National Solar Tour. Tours are self-guided, and maps, descriptions, and open hours of the host sites are on NESEA's Green Buildings Open House webpages at www.nesea.org/greenbuildings. Participants are encouraged to bike to area green open houses, or park in a neighborhood and walk around to see the green buildings.

The Montague Energy Committee is promoting Montague's participation. If you would like to be e-mailed the

MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

See How Montague Neighbors Save Energy & Dollars

detailed maps of tour sites in town, please e-mail a request to SJP@crocker.com.

Here is a taste of what you can see on the tour:

Turners Falls:

John and Pam Hanold, 62 Prospect St., Open hours: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Featuring an old Victorian home retrofitted with a geo-thermal/hot air system. The Hanolds also replaced some single panes of glass with double-paned glass in the same frames, insulated and air sealed.

Montague Police Station, 180 Turnpike Road, Open hours: 10 a.m. to noon

This new station was built with ground source heat pump heating and cooling, heat recovery ventilation, and outside air economizer cooling.

Jack Nelson and Eileen Dowd, 26 J St., Open hours: 10 a.m. to noon

This three-story brick building

was built to house mill workers in late 1800s and overlooks the canal. Now an artist's studio space with geothermal heating and cooling.

Franklin County Technical School, 82 Industrial Blvd., Open hours: 10 a.m. to noon

The school has just finished a complete replacement of the heating and cooling system, attaining their primary objective of reducing energy consumption by 35 to 40%. It uses a solar domestic hot water system, high efficiency lighting with occupancy sensors, new high efficiency rooftop units for heating, air conditioning and ventilation, a new energy management system, and a sun tracking photovoltaic array. Their curriculum includes training and maintenance for renewable energy systems.

Montague Center:

Alice and Ted Armen, 68 Main St., Open hours: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Showcasing solar domestic

hot water, grid tied PV, passive solar, Energy Star appliances and weatherization. Renovations done in a way appropriate to a house listed in the Registry of Historic Places.

Sheryl Sadler-Twyon, 23 Union St., Open hours: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Featuring an Arcadia Heat Pump, a newer technology being used in the northeast for efficient heating and cooling. Prior to installing the heat pump, the owners had their home insulated and sealed to stop air leaks.

Sally Pick, 25 Union St., Open hours: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

This home, built in 1856, has been retrofitted with energy-saving features such as attic cellulose insulation to R-60, sealing of air leaks along the basement sill, and landscaping to direct water from basement (reduces need for energy-intensive dehumidifying). Green building materials include FSC-certified birch flooring, grown and harvested sustainably by the Massachusetts Woodlands Cooperative. The home minimizes water use with low-flow fixtures, a dual flush toilet, and a rain barrel for collecting roof runoff, to water outdoor plants.

Solar hot water added in 2008. *David and Jean Dempsey, 143 W. Chestnut Hill Road, open hours: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.*

At this 1972 log home, you can see a solar hot water system, check out a masonry stove, ask questions about their two-kilowatt grid tied PV system, and find out about how their home uses passive solar. By incorporating many of these green systems into the roofs of new additions, the Dempseys have minimized the systems' visual impact, while reducing the home's use of fossil fuels.

Montague City:

Tina Clarke, 14 Marstons Alley (off Greenfield Road), Open hours: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Winner of the MA Zero Energy Challenge competition (see www.zechallenge.com), this new home showcases excess production of electricity: from January-August, 2009, it used 36% of kWh generated. It is Platinum LEED certified, has affordable construction, a metal roof, double-stud walls, passive solar heat, super-efficient windows, healthy house/low-toxic construction, recycled building materials, and more.

Montague Grange Elects New Master

MICHAEL MULLER

MONTAGUE – Like many fraternal organizations, Montague Grange #141 elects their officers once a year. For the past 15 years, Grange members have elected David Kaynor of Montague Center as their Worthy Master, with other officer positions rotating among the membership. At the September 2009 meeting, however, Kaynor stepped down, and Chris Wise, also of Montague Center, stepped up.

Kaynor joined the Grange back in 1988, for several reasons. One was to ease and speed the process of gaining approval from the membership for running contra dances and other musical activities. Another reason was his wish to connect with more of his neighbors. As a musician who was out of town frequently, joining the Grange introduced him to people he might never have otherwise met.

In the fall of 1994, Suzanne Kretzinger passed the gavel to



David Kaynor served as Master of the Montague Grange for 15 years.

Kaynor. He notes that "during these past 15 years, the membership of Montague Grange has changed dramatically. Our demographics changed such that now only two members of the Grange are lifelong Montague residents."

Organizationally, too, the Grange went through dramatic

changes. For example, the long-standing, strictly regulated use of "ritual" to open and close meetings "in full form" was relaxed to the point where most meetings are now held informally in the anteroom of the Grange Hall, without the traditional regalia and procedure. Montague Grange now does the full ritual only once or twice a year.

Looking back over the past 15 years, Kaynor feels most gratified by the considerable increase in use of the hall by members of the community. In the early- and mid-1980s the Grange Hall was seldom used other than on meeting nights, as a backup facility during Old Home Days, and when Kaynor ran contra dances. Today, the hall is used for a wide range of activities including environmental education, language classes, lectures and seminars, village meetings, holiday celebrations and music and dance activities, including the popular "family dance" series. Most recently, the Grange partnered with the

see GRANGE pg 6

Field Report from the Wendell Energy Task Force Hanging Out the Laundry

BY GLORIA KEGELES

WENDELL – My decision earlier this year to hang my clothes out on a line has saved me more than \$20 per month on my electric bill! That's more than enough to meet a 10% challenge to reduce energy use and lessen our impact on the planet.

Among the other advantages – the clothes smell so fresh. They don't lose fibers in the dryer. (Do you ever wonder why the "lint" filter gets so full?) They don't get static electricity. They're less apt to shrink. I spend more time enjoying the peace and quiet outdoors.

When the sun is shining, I turn colored clothes inside-out to minimize fading, and bring the clothes in as soon as I can. I use an indoor wooden rack for clothes that didn't finish drying. I haven't sold my dryer – some weeks there just aren't enough good-weather days.

Wood stoves are also good dryers if you can hang laundry around them without risking clothes falling onto the stove. Or you can put a rack of laundry near the stove.

Think of ways to make it fun for kids! Maybe build a line that's low enough for kids to hang their own (smaller) clothes on. I remember, as a child, watching my mom hang the laundry and wishing I could reach the line to hang clothes too.

If you can make the time, it's very satisfying to hang out the laundry!

Wendell has officially declared itself a deliberate energy-conserving community. This report arrives via the Wendell Energy Task Force, now working on ways for citizenry and government to significantly conserve energy, thus reducing Wendell's output of climate-changing gases.

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Funds Approved to Repair Montague Town Hall

BY BILL DRAKE – The selectboard approved a reserve fund transfer of \$11,760 for the department of public works maintenance and repair fund, to repair and repoint brickwork on the old Montague Center town hall. The finance committee must approve the reserve transfer fund at their meeting next week.

Built in 1858 at a cost of \$7,000, the brick building housed not only the town offices but also the public library. With town offices moved to Turners Falls, the two-story brick building on the north side of the town common today still houses a branch of the town library.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio reported on a recent trip to Boston with Jordan Quinn, the owner of the former Ste. Anne's church and rectory on 6th and J Street, who is seeking an all alcohol license to open

a night spot and music hall at that location.

Abbondanzio said he and Quinn testified before the legislature's consumer protection and license committee, in support of the town's – and Quinn's – request for an additional license for her proposed Montague Performing Arts Center. Presently, all of Montague's all alcohol licenses are in use. To grant an additional license would require a special act of the legislature.

Abbondanzio said the testimony was over quickly, and the request was approved by the committee in less than five minutes' deliberation.

Montague's representative, Steve Kulik, predicted the measure would gain approval of the full legislature within a month.

If the legislature grants the request, and the all alcohol license is subsequently approved

by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission, Quinn will return the beer and wine license approved for her project to the town, for use by a future applicant.

In other news, on Saturday, October 3rd, a new Turners Falls state championship sign is to be unveiled during halftime of the Turners Falls Varsity Football game. The sign celebrates the 1942 Baseball State Champions, the 2003 Varsity Golf Champions, and the four-time Girls Softball State Champions.

The last championship sign was removed from its location at Canal and 5th by vandals and tossed into the Power Canal, after being up for about a week. It was eventually recovered, months later, waterlogged, in Chicopee.

Game time on October 3rd is 1:30 p.m. vs. Springfield Science and Technical School.

GRANGE from page 5

Montague historical society to renovate the old choir loft as a storage and display facility for their historical collections.

"It has been bittersweet," mused Kaynor, reflecting on his time as Grange Master. "It often seemed like I got involved with people only to lose them as they either moved away or passed away. But I felt like I've been able to participate in important community processes and developments; the membership is still extant; the hall is still standing, and we have a future."

The new Master, Chris Wise, joined the Grange eight years ago, and served previously as Secretary. "The Grange hall has so much potential. In years past it was a focal point of the community, providing social networking, dances and community service. Our most pressing concern at the moment is preserving the building so that it can continue to serve, and expand its role in the community," Wise said.

The Montague Grange may

become the unofficial home to the growing "Local Resiliency" movement in town, and will begin hosting seminars in apple cider pressing, canning, and similar sustainability programs. In this, the Grange will be reaching back to its roots as an agricultural and farmers' support organization.

The Grange is also planning a "Volunteer Fair," which will work much like a job fair but will allow local volunteer organizations to pitch themselves to residents who wish to give back to the community but don't know whom to go to or what their options are.

The Montague Grange meets once a month, typically on the first Wednesday, at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting will be on October 7th. Meetings are open to the public, and snacks are made available during the meeting. Come join a local community organization with deep roots in our town, which aims to continue to improve rural life.



NOTES FROM THE MAHAR REGIONALIZATION COMMITTEE

Mahar Discusses K-12 Regionalization

BY KATIE NOLAN

ORANGE – "There are significant risks in regionalizing: loss of autonomy, loss of budget control. So there must be significant gains in order to overcome the risks," Kenneth Roche of Curriculum Design Associates told the Mahar K-12 Regionalization Committee on Tuesday, September 29th.

Roche, the former superintendent of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, now acting as an educational consultant, presented his views on the issues, stumbling blocks, and opportunities facing the Mahar K-12 Regionalization Committee and the towns of Wendell, New Salem, Petersham, and Orange in the Mahar library. Swift River school committee member Dick Baldwin, Wendell finance committee member Jim Slavas, state representative Chris Donelan of Orange, Mahar superintendent Mike Baldassarre, Petersham Elementary superintendent Patricia Martin, educational consultant Dave Tobin, and representatives from Orange and Petersham were present.

The agenda for the meeting was to introduce Roche to the

committee, discuss his initial evaluation of educational issues in K-12 regionalization for the towns, and prepare for an informational meeting on Thursday, October 8th at Mahar.

The regionalization committee scheduled the October 8th meeting for the selectboards, finance committees, and school committees from each of the district towns to begin a four-town dialogue about K-12 regionalization.

Currently, Wendell and New Salem elementary grade students attend Swift River School as part of Union 28 with Erving, Leverett, and Shutesbury, while their grade 7-12 students attend Mahar with Petersham and Orange students.

According to Baldwin, people in Wendell are satisfied with the educational program and management they get at Union 28. "We are pleased with the education at Mahar, but it's hard to see the advantage of elementary regionalization with Mahar," he

said.

Slavas noted, "The fiscal advantages for K-12 regionalization would be modest at best. I have never had a good answer to what is the compelling reason that would drive K-12 regionalization."

Both Baldwin and Slavas emphasized that any regionalization plan would need to address these questions.

Donelan and Dana Kennan of Petersham said that Orange and Petersham favor K-12 regionalization with Mahar. In 2005, both towns voted at town meetings to pursue K-12 regionalization with the Mahar district.

The regionalization committee has been meeting for more than three years, and was working on a 'hybrid' regionalization plan, with K-12 regionalization for Orange and Petersham, while Wendell and New Salem would remain in Union 28 for K-6 and remain regionalized with Orange and Petersham for 7-12.

see MAHAR page 10

"We're heading toward a state funding cliff. And we're Thelma and Louise."
– Dave Tobin

BUDGET from pg 3

yes, 35 no. The amended budget passed next, 61 yes, 33 no, with one blank ballot.

However, the passage of the lower budget figure by district voters does not mean the school committee will adopt the lower figure approved by the member towns. When asked, school committee members Joyce Phillips of Montague and Jenn Waldron of Gill both said they did not believe the school committee would take any further action on the FY'10 budget.

If the school committee does not act to approve the budget number approved by district voters, the so-called 1/12th budget set by the state in July will remain in effect, and will become permanent as of December 1st, 2009.

School committee chair Mike Langknecht differed with Phillips and Waldron in his interpretation of Wednesday's vote. "We have to respond to the vote," he said. "It's part of the democratic process. We're not going to just pocket veto this vote. It will be brought up for discussion."

He added, "The major failing of the FY'10 budget was the process we used: it did not satisfy the concerns of town meeting in

either town."

While he stopped short of saying a majority of school committee members could be found to support the lower budget approved Wednesday by district voters, Langknecht did say, "The best way to deal with the FY'10 budget is to deal promptly and well with the FY'11 budget. We need to respond to the issues raised by the towns and district meeting."



Fifth Annual Holiday Fair

WENDELL – The Fifth Annual Wendell Holiday Fair will be held on Saturday and Sunday, December 5th and 6th in the Wendell town hall.

Once again this year the event will be a fundraiser for the music and art departments at the Swift River School. Please tell your friends and note the day.

Beautiful gifts, local products, lunch from Diemand Farm, and lots of goodness to share.

Vendors may contact us via email at blcaruso@aol.com. We will open up to vendors beyond Wendell and New Salem after October 30th, but call now to get on the list: (978) 544-3478.

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HOMELESSNESS from 1

'I don't want my hard earned tax dollars spent on somebody who ain't helping themselves.' My response is, 'Dude, you're already doing it. You're doing it in emergency room visits. You're doing it in jail incarcerations. You're doing it in the drunk tank... And it's an irrational use of public dollars.'

Hobson explained, "Housing first means housing first. It doesn't mean willingness to take psycho-active medication first. It doesn't mean willingness to engage with a service provider as a pre-condition to accessing housing. You put people into housing immediately."

Governor Deval Patrick, in 2008, ordered the creation of a five-year plan to end homelessness in the state of Massachusetts, and has made millions of dollars available this year to regional interagency planning commissions to implement that plan, including \$1.1 million for homelessness prevention in the Pioneer Valley.

As part of that initiative, Father Stanley Aksamit, pastor of Our Lady of Peace parish here in Turners Falls, called together community leaders and service providers at the Farren for the Tuesday breakfast, to discuss ways of supporting people at risk of being homeless. These include pooling resources to provide first month, last month or security deposit rental supplements for families or individuals at risk, but also, and more immediately, developing an overflow emergency cot shelter, possibly in Greenfield, to handle the unmet need of a population already homeless in the county, as winter approaches.

It was the latter proposition

that Mayor Martin took some issue with. Martin said Greenfield already receives a disproportionate amount of financial resources to provide shelter and support for the homeless.

"Greenfield has a ton of money coming in, because it is the center of the county," and human service agencies are located there, said Martin. But, he said, "We also experience a huge fiscal impact to serve a transient population," either by enrolling them in public schools, transport them to school in their original communities, or providing other mandated services.

Martin also alluded to homeless people congregating on downtown streets in Greenfield during the day as a drag on commercial activity.

He said if a new shelter were opened in Greenfield, it would just lead to an influx of more homeless people, a strategy he called more of a band-aid than a permanent solution.

Rick Willhite, the point person for emergency services for ServiceNet, one of the main providers of support and shelter for the homeless population in Western Massachusetts, told the gathering that 146 individuals accessed the emergency shelter his agency staffs in Montague City last year. Of these, 76% of the guests came from Franklin County; 67 (45%) came from Greenfield, and 33% met the definition of chronic homelessness.

At any point in time, Willhite said, there is a two-week list of about 20 people waiting to get into the shelter.

Lisa Goldsmith, director of Dial/Self's youth service programs, said these numbers do not take into account homeless teenagers in the county, as 18 is

the cut off age for access to the Montague City shelter.

"We regularly see 20 to 30 homeless youth each year at our warming center," said Goldsmith. "We know the statistic is much higher, because these are only the ones who decide to come in. At any one time, we estimate there are at least 100 Franklin County youth who are homeless, who do not have permanent housing. The vast majority are 'couch surfing,' with probably 20% living in cars, the woods, abandoned buildings, or shelters."

Goldsmith said in addition to the Night Owl teen warming center her agency provides in Greenfield, Dial/Self also provides counseling, referrals, and a transitional living program to help youth make the move to self-sufficiency.

An outreach worker for Franklin Community Action Corporation said there were at least three dozen more homeless adults living in the woods from Rowe to Athol, "on the Montague Plains or down by the Green River," at any point in time, who are not included in the statistics Willhite presented. The population of uncounted homeless adults in Franklin County may be two or three times larger than that estimate.

Aksamit said the \$1.1 million state grant to fund an 18-month pilot homelessness prevention program in the Pioneer Valley would be used to support "300 families and 80 individuals," to stay in permanent housing.

"But still, because of the economy, you will find people out on the street. There is still a need for emergency shelter."

Reached after the meeting, Pamela Schwartz, the recently hired director of regional coordi-

nation for the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, the primary recipient of that grant, said that money has now been divided up between agencies in the four counties of Western Massachusetts, "some of whom work with homeless families, some of whom work with individuals at risk of homelessness."

"This money is specifically intended to prevent homelessness or provide a resource for rapid re-housing," she continued. "It is part of a general approach of providing housing first, with supportive services to match, the best bet for success in staying housed. This funding is intended to prevent the need for emergency sheltering, as vital as that service may be. If we do our job right during and beyond this 18-month pilot project, there will be a major reduction in the need for shelters, and significantly greater success in retaining or obtaining housing instead."

In Franklin County, the Franklin Community Action Corporation received \$28,147 of that state money, and the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority received \$46,095 to work with at risk homeless families, while ServiceNet received \$115,185 to work with individuals at risk of homelessness, Schwartz said.

At the breakfast, a variety of suggestions for places to set up an overflow emergency shelter - initially to handle just four to six guests, staffed by trained volunteers - were offered. A task force will explore the possibilities prior to a larger community gathering to address the issue this fall.

"We're dealing with a human problem. We're all here, first of

all, as caring human beings," Aksamit told the gathering.

Afterwards, Aksamit said he was very pleased with the breakfast meeting, which saw about 18 representatives of social service agencies, town government, realtors, the Franklin Medical Center, and the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce put their heads together about the problem of homelessness in the county.

"We feel this is a community issue. It's not something one agency or one little department can take care of by itself. The Interfaith Council of Franklin County has had sort of a convening role to bring people together over the years; that's what we did here."

And though the governor may be hoping to end homelessness in Massachusetts in five years, or ten years, in fact there may be no permanent solution to a problem with so many root causes, from health emergencies, to foreclosure, loss of income, mental or physical disability, or substance abuse.

Jack Bonsignore, director of shelter services for ServiceNet said even in the midst of the coordinated statewide effort to end homelessness, he has seen an uptick in demand at the Montague City shelter, which can house up to 20 individuals for a maximum 60 day stay. (Guests have to be out of the shelter by 9:00 a.m. each morning.)

"Normally in the summer, we don't have a heavy wait list for the emergency shelter. But we had a heavy wait list this summer: 20 men and women. And there are 1,000 families waiting in hotels throughout Massachusetts for emergency shelter."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Homeless on Riverview Drive

Tuesday, 9/22

7:50 p.m. Assisted with a medical emergency on Walnut Street

8:53 p.m. Checked an alarm on Wood Ave. all OK.

Wednesday, 9/23

4:56 p.m. Assisted with a medical emergency on Mount Hermon Campus

8:43 p.m. Suspicious

vehicle on Main Road, checked area unable to locate

9:50 p.m. Subject requesting to see an officer at Gill Mobil station regarding a vehicle dispute. Advised that it was a civil matter, vehicle later located and person was advised of location.

Thursday, 9/24

1:52 p.m. Loud noise complaint on West Gill Road, report taken.

2:50 p.m. Checked alarm on Vassar Way, all OK, accidental alarm.

11:20 p.m. Assisted Erving police with motor vehicle stop and arrest on River Street.

Friday, 9/25

7:43 a.m. Alarm at Gill

Elementary School, checked OK, accidental alarm.

10:22 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with a warrant arrest.

Saturday, 9/26

10:23 p.m. Criminal complaint sought against [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

Sunday, 9/27

10:59 a.m. Report of

loose cows on West Gill Road, attempted to locate owner.

1:58 p.m. Assisted Northfield police with a motor vehicle accident on Millers Falls Road.

Monday, 9/28

5:25 a.m. Report of a tree or limb blocking Mountain Road, removed from roadway.


6:53 a.m. Possible despondent person checked on Gill-Montague Bridge. all

OK.

9:05 a.m. Report of a subject passed out underneath a tree in a lawn on Riverview Drive. Checked, was a homeless subject, all OK.

4:04 p.m. Report of an on-going animal complaint on Walnut Street, dog owner located and spoken to.

7:10 p.m. Subject located and taken to emergency room for an involuntary committal.



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Local Nature Notes *October: Things to See, Hear, and Do*

Watch for Halley's Comet Debris

BY JEN AUDLEY

WEST DEERFIELD – The moon is full on October 4th, then waning until the 18th. This month's full moon, nearest to the autumnal equinox, is the Harvest Moon.

Animals fattening up. Squirrels, raccoons, bears, groundhogs, and chipmunks are gorging on this month's abundant supply of nuts, seeds, and fruit. The fat they put on now will help them live through the winter when food is scarce. Watch out for nut-crazed critters dashing across the road – at this time of year, roadkill rates often spike.

Absence of insects, amphibians, and reptiles. Those who aren't fattening up use other strategies to make it through the colder months. Insects lay eggs and die, or find a protected spot to hunker down and wait for spring. Cold-blooded frogs, toads, snakes, and turtles can't maintain a constant body temperature, and as the air temperature drops, their metabolism slows. They shelter in mud,

woodpiles, and crevices until things warm up.

A killing frost usually comes before the end of this month, spelling the end for tomato and basil plants, zinnias, and marigolds. Kale and collard greens, on the other hand, taste sweeter after a few frosty nights.

Orionids meteor shower, which occurs every October when the Earth's path around the Sun passes through a patch of cosmic debris left behind by Halley's comet. Watch for shooting stars after midnight from October 18th to 25th – the trails will appear to radiate from the constellation Orion, high in the southern sky.

Dark-eyed juncos returning. These small seed-eating birds breed up north during the summer and migrate south to spend the winters with us. Look for groups of them eating weed seeds and on the ground under birdfeeders. They have gray (slate-colored) backs and heads and white bellies. When a junco flies, look for a flash of white feathers in its tail.

Sunset, right now at about 6:30 p.m., with sunrise closing in on 7 a.m. Daylight hours continue to decrease rapidly all month, and on November 1st, daylight savings time ends.

Learn more:

Connecticut River Source to Sea Cleanup 2009

Saturday, October 3, 9:00 to 12 noon

Get involved in the 13th year of the Cleanup! In 2008, 275 volunteers in eastern Franklin County filled three 30-yard dumpsters with trash and also removed 512 tires, 4,000 pounds of scrap metal, nine televisions and assorted appliances from the Montague Plains and along rivers and streams in Montague, Gill and East Deerfield. Co-sponsored by Northfield Mountain, the Connecticut River Watershed Council, and many other groups. Free. For ages 7 and older. Meet at Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

New England Forests

Through Time

Thursday, October 15, 7 to 8:30 pm

Come hear John O'Keefe, co-author of *New England Forests Through Time*, share information on the present state and history of our local forests. Dr. O'Keefe has been studying New England Forests for many years and is semi-retired from Harvard Forest in Petersham. Free. At the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center Open House

Saturday, October 17, 10 am to 4 pm

In conjunction with USGS Earth Science Week, the fish lab at the end of Migratory Way is hosting an open house. Come to see exhibits, demonstrations, sturgeon, and fish ladders! Free. Turners Falls, MA. Call (413) 863-3900 for information.

Otter and Mink

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Otter and mink share many

things – these rarely observed fish eaters often bound along waterways in Massachusetts, where they can travel and hunt on land or water. Massachusetts Wildlife Furbearer Biologist Laura Hajduk will help participants understand the behavior, biology, tracks and sign of these two semi-aquatic, carnivorous mammals – how they are alike and how they differ. For ages 10 and older. Free. At Northfield Mountain Education and Recreation Center. To register, please call (800) 859-2960.

Family Nature Discovery Day

Saturday October 24, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Discover nature through your child's eyes. Pumpkin painting, making food to feed the birds, making dried leaf and flower crowns, and making your own healthy snacks are some of the workshops that will be offered. For children ages 5 to 11 with their parents, at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls. Please call (413) 863-3221 to sign up.

Gill Boards Cry Foul on G-M Budget Process

BY DAVID DETMOLD – In advance of Wednesday's Gill-Montague budget setting district meeting, the Gill finance committee held a joint meeting with the selectboard to prepare a statement. Even though the Gill town meeting on September 14th agreed to the assessment figure required to meet the school committee's \$16.658 million budget request (and for Gill, that meant adding \$29,927 to the \$1,363,274 town meeting voters approved to fund the town's share of the district school budget in June) still the statement the two boards came up with on Monday, September 28th was hardly a ringing budget endorsement.

The board called the budget process "seriously flawed," due to the fact that

Commissioner Mitchell Chester of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education had not only imposed a so-called 1/12th budget (of \$16.658 million) on the district at the beginning of July, but also because as he did so, the Commissioner informed the district and the towns that this would become the final budget figure for FY'10 if the towns and the district could not agree on a budget before December.

This diktat resulted in "a complete short circuit of the local budget process," said finance committee chair Tupper Brown. "The towns and schools, under statute, are supposed to work these things out, and the DESE commissioner is supposed to step in only at the last minute, after two district

meetings, when everything else fails."

Instead, a divided school committee voted in July to adopt the commissioner's budget, and Gill followed suit, considering this the worst case scenario that they would have to budget for. (Montague held out for an "affordable" assessment, some \$200,000 less than the commissioner's budget would impose.)

Finance committee member Timmie Smith said, "I see no reason the school committee can't lower its budget below the 1/12th if they want to."

Brown added, the imposition of a final budget figure by the DESE commissioner before district meetings were held, "relieves the school committee from the necessity of reviewing their budget down to the soles of their feet to see if they can save money."

In other news, the selectboard

• Appointed Timmie Smith,

Sorrel Hatch, and Tupper Brown to a committee with Jen Waldron, and Dorothy Storrow to review the terms of the regional school agreement between Gill and Montague.

• Appointed Ben Storrow, Tupper Brown, Kevin Cameron, and Claire Chang to the Gill Energy Commission.

• Paid \$930 to repair brakes on the fire rescue truck, and \$850 to repair brakes and wheel bearings on the police chief's Ford Explorer.

• Agreed to allow two more years for members of the police and highway department to use up accrued vacation time – up to five weeks, for some employees.

• Appointed Chris Polatin, an ecologist specializing in ecological restoration, invasive species control and wetlands management, to the conservation commission.

• Noted an application from Rusty Fish to the Mass DEP to construct a pier at his Barton Cove property.

• Noted an application by the Storrows to Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation for a conservation restriction on 33 acres of land on River Road, recently purchased from Dick French.

Also, board chair Ann Banash reported briefly on a September 24th meeting with Northfield and Bernardston officials regarding the possibility of sharing police department resources or personnel. The meeting was facilitated by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. Former Amherst town manager Barry Del Castillo is consulting on the issue.

A party to celebrate more than 20 years of service by Tony Mathews on the conservation commission will take place November 4th at 5 o'clock at the Gill Tavern. Donations for the event may go to Kimberly Sprinkle, at 84 Boyle Road, 863-2975.

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Nighthawk by L. A. Fuentes

It's a long, long way
From May to December,
And the days grow short,
When you reach September.

BY DAVID BRULE

MILLERS FALLS – These have been the golden days of September, when the morning mist lingers long over the banks of the river and then burns off before mid-day to reveal a faultless blue sky. We do deserve these days after the monsoons we tolerated in July, and most of August.

September always brings subtle changes to the world outside your window, where already the seasonal page has turned along with the turning of the leaves. Our hummingbirds bid us farewell after a last spin through the fading bank of bee-balm, and the skies have emptied of our swallows. The nighthawks flew down the skies at dusk early in the month,

West Along the River September Almanac

angling through the air, knifing right and left over the river. Then they were gone too. The “confusing fall warblers” move quietly through the woods, having changed their bright spring feathers for subdued fall traveling clothes. They’re off to Belize and Costa

Rica, ahead of the crowd. A walk through the golden wood in the morning is mostly silent, except for rustling leaves, until someone sings out “*Bonjour, cousin!*” The response from me is “*Bonjour cousine!*”

It’s cousin Annabelle from across the Flat, walking her spaniel Daisy. We chat for a moment in the language of our *québécois* grandparents, before sharing news of birds and beavers in the woods we patrol.

Those beavers have been busy putting up small neat dams across every little bit of flowing water. I call them practice dams, most likely done by youngsters who have been tossed out by their parents to fend for themselves after two years of being tolerated in the family lodge. Those early attempts at dam building will likely be swept away by the rising river the first time it rains hard.

I pass by the secret wood thrush nest, empty now since mid-August. The parents reared their two offspring in a nest along the path, a piece of plastic woven into the structure. And in spite of a whole woods filled with predators, squirrels, raccoons, opossums and far-too numerous house cats, the babes fledged and were gone. I get just a little wistful when I pass that empty nest, if you know what I mean.

“*Nothing gold can stay,*” our poet Robert Frost admonishes us, maybe with September and October in mind. But what about the deep green of that big dragonfly hawking insects in the yard? How long has *he* got, now that it’s late September?

Our pale blue wild-growing asters still pull in the bumblebees, our orange and black woolly bears are tucked into a cozy warm curl in the firewood stack, but how many stripes does he have and can he really foretell the severity of the coming winter? Wild fox grapes not yet touched by frost scent the woods, mingling their sweetness with the spice of the yellowing ferns.

September has brought out the cricket chorus, indoors and out, but the katydids seem less insistent than in the past, their ratcheting call already slower. The scent of the skunk’s nightly visit lingers where he has been

busy rooting out ground wasps and grubs from the back lawn. The white-throated sparrows are down from the tall pines of the nearby hills, but despite some of these early signs summer won’t be quite over until the main, last, summer event.

That final rite of summer for many of us is the ‘Bake at the Schuetz!’ Tickets are hard to come by, and you need to know where to look, but it’s always worth the effort. Sure, all 500 of us get together for the love of the clams and the lobster, but it’s also about the end of summer ritual, going back generations.

This legendary feast brings together people from all parts and from all walks of life, but you’re sure to find among those gathered there many who keep our community in good working order: the firemen, the policemen, the mail carriers, mechanics, teachers, all those who keep the offices and shops up and running. It’s a class reunion of sorts too, if you’re lucky enough to have grown up here, with old TFHS grads mingling maybe just this once a year.

For me it’s the yearly chance to chat with Brian SanSoucie, or to exchange wisecracks with Dean Letourneau and Benny Rubin, to mingle with the extended family gathered around cousin Tom Gessing. Once even Sen. John Olver

showed up to glad hand the crowd during election season.

It’s always the same familiar scene that brings the summer to a close: billowing pure white steam escaping from the tarps that cover the clams baking on the stones, men and some women quaffing bushels of quahogs as though their lives and reputations depended on it.

I stopped Dean Elgosin heading back to the tent with two fistfuls of quahogs. “Dean! You’re really into the quahogs!”

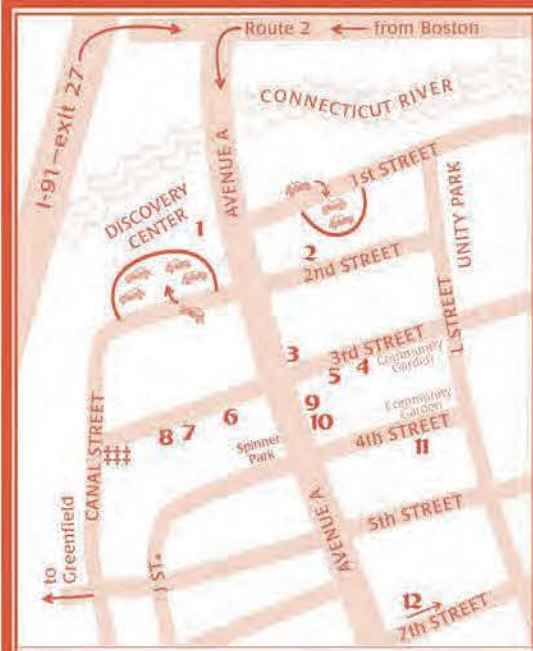
“Nah,” says he. “Can’t stand ‘em; they’re for the others back at the table! They can have them!”

I go back for more hot dogs. There’s an endless supply of clam chowder and dogs before the main event, while the tent and pavilion emit a dull roar of excited devotees of the clam-bake.

Soon three bags of clams, hot melted butter, a lobster, corn, and baked potato are delivered to every person, and you see everyone digging into the closest thing to a feeding frenzy we humans can come up with. All is consumed within an hour and the revelers settle into that glow that comes from a full belly of clams, not just a few bottles of beer, and the warmth of raucous good company. That’s about the time the golden sun starts slanting through the pines along the river.

Many in the crowd melt away as the music starts, mindful of Monday morning responsibilities. People like me make the rounds to say good-bye to

see **ALMANAC** pg 14



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Clean It Up!

BY ELLEN BLANCHETTE
DEERFIELD – On Saturday, October 3rd, hundreds of volunteers from around the area will gather for the annual Connecticut River Watershed Source to Sea Clean-up. Locally, volunteers will meet at the Great Falls Discovery Center at 9:00 a.m. before heading out to collect illegally dumped trash and predetermined locations from the Montague Plains to Riverside in

Gill. But students from the Franklin County Tech School will once again get the jump on them by 24 hours, as they journey to Deerfield, to tackle an illegal dumping site near the railroad depot.



PHOTO: ELLEN BLANCHETTE

Ray Purington says the cost of bringing a computer monitor to the dump – about \$10 – is one of the reasons people dump them illegally.

Ray Purington, of Gill, be discarded along the way. Purington said, "By remov-

Wednesday, and found tires along the road, fast food trash, beer bottles, and remains of household furniture. He marked areas for the volunteers to clean up on Friday, and picked up a few things to

ing litter, it helps show people that somebody cares, which helps deter future littering." In this respect, he mentioned the bike path itself as a self-sustaining success, where people who use it now keep it clean themselves.

"The bike path took a lot of years of hauling away trash, but now it's very well kept."

You can help reclaim other areas along the watershed by joining the Source to Sea Clean-up on Saturday morning. For more information, call (413) 835-1843.

from MAHAR pg 6

In 2008, Jeff Wulfson, associate commissioner at the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), told the committee a hybrid plan was not acceptable.

Kennan characterized the current status of K-12 regionalization for the four towns as a "stalemate".

Rocke, under whose leadership the divisive process leading to the consolidation of elementary schools in the town of Montague was concluded in 2008, told the committee his approach is to identify common interests and create a dialogue between the towns involved. He stressed he has no agenda for any specific scheme, but sees his role as helping the communities move toward more effective organizational structures for their schools.

In preparation for this meeting, Rocke met with each superintendent or principal, visited each elementary school and Mahar, reviewed the history of the regionalization committee, and reviewed the database and financial modeling prepared by Tobin.

Rocke identified the educational advantages in unified K-12 school districts. A unified district could devote more time and financial resources to educational improvement, rather than district and building management. In Rocke's view, "If the

towns work toward greater sharing of management costs, gains will be felt immediately in the classroom."

In addition, a unified district could provide greater professional development opportunities for teaching staff, including regular communication with staff from other elementary schools. A K-12 region would have "vertical articulation," in which all students would arrive at grade 7 with equivalent educational experiences. "Vertical articulation" would not necessarily mean that all classrooms would use the same textbooks or other instructional materials, Rocke explained.

"The term 'vertical articulation' sounds almost pornographic," remarked Baldwin.

Expanding on the financial resource topic, Rocke explained that a larger organization could share human resources, payroll, and custodial costs more efficiently. Savings are also possible in regionalized health insurance and special education costs.

Tobin, Rocke, and Donelan all cautioned the committee members that state funding for education will be decreasing in the next two fiscal years. If the school districts don't find ways to use their current resources to the greatest advantage, educational programs may face cuts as the towns vote their budgets.

"If we don't change, we're in trouble," said Donelan.

According to Tobin, "We're heading toward a state funding cliff. And we're Thelma and Louise."

To counter concerns that local control of school programs and budgets will be lost, Rocke suggested local control could be maintained by adopting the Boston Pilot School model, in which elementary school staffing, budget, and scheduling would be regulated by a school council of parents, staff, and community, empowered by the school committee. In addition to providing local control of the local school, the school council would also reduce the supervisory workload for regional administrators.

Rocke indicated other local governance models are also available.

Another potential concern is that per-pupil funding and programs might be reduced at Swift River. Currently, Wendell and New Salem spend more per elementary school pupil than Orange and Petersham.

Rocke said that traditionally each student in an elementary school region would have the same per-pupil expenditure. He wondered if it would be possible to design a regional agreement so that New Salem and Wendell could choose to provide extra funding to Swift River Elementary School, greater than the basic regional assessment, if the towns so choose.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Loose Dog Incurs Bylaw Citation for Owner

Thursday, 9/24

2:45 p.m. Report of harassment of a subject on Reynolds Street. Investigated same, unfounded.

5:15 p.m. Report of a loose dog on Forest Street. Owner identified, town bylaw citation issued.

11:10 p.m. Arrested [redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, third offense, and

operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license.

Friday, 9/25

2:40 p.m. Report of past attempted breaking and entering into a vehicle on Forest Street.

4:40 p.m. Report of a minor motor vehicle accident at the entrance to Erving Paper Mill. Checked area, vehicles gone upon arrival.

6:00 p.m. Report of car vs. animal in the area of Route 2 and Mountain Road.

Upon investigation, found to be a two-car motor vehicle crash, one car leaving the scene. Investigated same.

Saturday, 9/26

4:20 p.m. Report of a family disturbance on Old State Road. Subject agreed to leave the residence and a No Trespassing Order issued.

Sunday, 9/27

12:40 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle while

under the influence of liquor.

1:30 p.m. Responded to Northfield, Route 63, to assist with a motor vehicle accident near Northfield Mountain Project.

Monday, 9/28

5:05 p.m. Report of erratic vehicle eastbound, entering Orange, hit guardrail in Erving. Checked entire eastbound lane, no damage and vehicle gone on arrival.

11:35 p.m. Assisted Montague police at a Second Street bar with an unruly patron refusing to vacate the premises.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

New Ethics Law in Force

BY BILL FRANKLIN – The main topic of discussion at the selectboard meeting on September 28th involved changes to the state ethics law, and how it will affect Erving.

The new law goes into effect on September 29th, and makes important modifications to the state's conflict of interest law and to the state Ethics Commission Enabling Act. The law requires mandatory education and training for all public employees and volunteers at every level of government, including at the small town level. The provisions also cover vendors and consultants hired by public agencies.

The only persons excepted from the requirements of the new law are elected members of a town meeting and members of a charter commission. A complete copy of the bill can be found at the Ethics Commission's website at www.mass.gov/ethics, where a summary of the law will be posted for municipal employees under 'Education and Training Resources'.

The new act also requires

the city or town clerk of every municipality to provide a summary of the law to every municipal employee within 30 days of such person becoming an employee, and thereafter on an annual basis.

Among the act's requirements: all employees must take an on-line exam prior to December 28th, 2009 demonstrating familiarity with state ethics regulations. Also, the old law that allowed an employee to receive up to a \$50 per year from anyone doing business with the town is now abolished; employees may no longer receive any monies from potential vendors, for example.

Town administrative coordinator Tom Sharp said the town will make accommodations so that persons not able to take the exam on their home computers can come to the town hall, the library, or some other public place to take the exam.

The selectboard discussed the fact that the new requirements may be burdensome to the town as well as to individuals. The new law has the effect

of being an "unfunded mandate," costing the town additional funds to implement the changes. "Some folks," said town clerk Dick Newton, "may resist taking the exam, which consists of 25 multiple choice questions and takes approximately an hour or more to complete."

Selectboard member Andy Tessier said he had taken the exam himself, and felt "You should be able to pass it, if you can read and comprehend." The questions, said Tessier, are structured so that one cannot get to question two, for example, without passing question one.

Gas Station Vote

Among other matters discussed was the upcoming special town meeting to be held on Monday, October 5th at 7 p.m. at the Erving Elementary School, to decide on proposed changes to Erving's zoning law. Two articles would permit a gas station to be built within the town's aquifer protection zone, and a drive-through restaurant to be built in the

same area of town. Both changes were initiated by businessmen Eric and Ralph Semb, who seek to build a fast food restaurant, convenience store and gas station next to their French King Entertainment Center on Route 2.

Jeff Dubay, a member of the planning board, was present to ask if the selectboard or water commissioners intend to make any statement regarding the issue. "People look up to you guys," said Dubay, adding, the proposed changes could have a "serious, long-term, negative impact."

Both Tessier and selectboard member Andrew Goodman expressed concern for the potential economic consequences of the proposed changes. "It's about dollars and cents," said Goodman. "Do we have any data on how much it would cost if there was a spill?"

Dubay referred to a diesel fuel spill in Palmer that cost over one million dollars to clean up.

Tessier asked, "Where is the money going to come from? Some people would be outraged at having to pay for this."

Dubay added, there is "the potential for water bills to go

through the roof," pointing out that human error is a real problem. "You knock over a five gallon can and you've got a problem." He also pointed out that some of the new additives, like ethanol, may have unknown effects.

Tessier said that although he was personally against the proposed gas station, he is in favor of giving people the democratic choice to make the decision for themselves.

Those intending to attend or speak at the upcoming meeting on October 5th should be advised there will be a three-minute time limit on all speakers from the audience. Peggy Sloane, planning director for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, will provide a packet of information for all persons attending the meeting.

Clover Green

In other matters, the selectboard discussed what color to paint the town's water tower.

After much consideration (it was a toss-up between "Irish Spring," and "Clover Green,") one member of the board stated he'd better "ask his wife."

Bravely, the all male board settled on "Clover Green."

BRIDGE from pg 1

tation of the Fall River Government Center over I-195, the Commerce Way interchange in Woburn, and the Route 128 Canton, Dedham, Westwood Interchange among their recent major construction projects.

Hurtubise said until the contract is formally awarded, a notice to proceed is issued, and a preconstruction meeting is held for the renovation of the 1733-foot bridge, no estimate can be given for the start of construction. He added that further repairs to the surface of the General Pierce Bridge between Montague City and Greenfield

are scheduled to be completed prior to the start of construction on the Gill-Montague bridge.

Those repairs are needed to handle the expected increase of traffic leaving Montague to the west, once the four year renovation of the Gill-Montague bridge gets under way.

Abbondanzio said he expected the start of major construction on the Gill-Montague bridge would start next spring, while Gill highway superintendent Mick LaClaire, who attended a meeting about the project on Friday with MassHighway representatives, guessed July of 2010 for a start date.

LaClaire said it would take four years to complete repairs to the bridge, which is expected to be open for westbound traffic (from Gill to Montague) only during the course of construction. Traffic leaving Turners for points east or west on Route 2, or traveling to Gill, will exit town on the White Bridge from Canal Street, and travel up the hill to the French King Highway. LaClaire said local police, fire and highway officials are trying to persuade MassHighway to leave Turners Falls Road in Greenfield open to two-way traffic from the White Bridge to the intersection by Stop and Shop, although the

current plan is to have it open one way only, leaving Turners Falls.

The ability to turn right on red at the Gill side of the Gill-Montague bridge will soon be eliminated, LaClaire said, so that a special traffic light can be set up at that end of the bridge, to allow for emergency vehicles to travel eastbound over the one lane left open during construction, in the event Turners fire or police vehicles need to exit town that way on an emergency call.

According to the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the Gill-Montague bridge is structurally

deficient, with an American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials rating of 26 (out of 100). Bridge railings are separated from traveling lanes by Jersey barriers because they appear incapable of sustaining vehicle impact, and nets are erected below the steel deck to catch falling debris. The bridge is of a similar design to the Minneapolis Bridge that collapsed in July of 2007, killing 13.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Fourth Offense, Reckless Endangerment

Tuesday, 9/22

8:00 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Hillside Road address. Investigated.

Wednesday, 9/23

1:30 a.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]

with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, fourth offense, and reckless endangerment to children.

11:22 a.m. Report of larceny at the Survival Center on Fourth Street. Investigated.

7:50 p.m. Report of disorderly conduct at a Fourth Street

address. Peace restored.

8:35 p.m. Report of disorderly conduct at Jake's Tavern on Avenue A. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with disorderly conduct, subsequent offense.

Thursday, 9/24

9:50 a.m. Report of larceny at an Old Sunderland Road address.

6:07 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on a default warrant.

6:57 p.m. Report of larceny at a Unity Street address.

a domestic disturbance at a Vladish Avenue address. Peace restored.

Friday, 9/25

11:23 a.m. Report of an assault and battery at a G Street address.

2:02 p.m. Report of a possible suicide attempt at an Adams Street address. Services rendered.

Saturday, 9/26

12:21 a.m. Officer initiated investigation of a domestic disturbance on Avenue A at Third Street. Peace restored.

5:36 p.m. Report of larceny at

an L Street address.

Sunday, 9/27

6:09 a.m. Report of a motor vehicle accident with property damage. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, driving as to endanger and marked lanes violation.

1:52 p.m. Report of larceny at ExxonMobil on Third Street.

4:19 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Woodland Drive address. Peace restored.

8:05 p.m. Report of larceny in the area of Montague Machine Company on Rastallis Street.

Monday, 9/28

1:53 p.m. Report of vandal-

ism at a G Street address.

11:28 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at Between The Uprights on Avenue A. Investigated.

11:51 p.m. Report of a barking dog in the area of Bulkley Street. Investigated.

Tuesday, 9/29

2:38 p.m. Report of officer wanted in the area of Norman Circle. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor, operating to endanger, failure to obey traffic signs and signals, possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle and leaving the scene of an accident.

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HEARING from pg 1

working to secure about nine acres of land along the south side of Montague Road, between Cave Hill and Route 63, to build at least ten clustered units of below market rate housing, on land to be donated for the purpose by Cows Lumber. In return, Cows would retain two building lots on the property and access to infrastructure improvements (entry road and utilities); a majority of the land would be preserved for conservation and recreation purposes.

The AHC proposes to spend up to three quarters of a million dollars from the town's present and future Community Preservation Act funds in order to put the infrastructure in place on the property. Much of this amount would be borrowed against the town's future CPA allocations.

Leverett CPA committee chair Laura Kahn said the fund presently holds about \$500,000

in unencumbered money. The town approved the Community Preservation Act in 2002, Kahn said, and from the funds accumulated since then has already set aside \$77,570 in an "affordable housing trust fund." This amount represents about 10% of total contributions to the fund, a minimum level that must by statute be reserved for community housing projects, Kahn said.

At present, the town of Leverett has "zero" affordable housing, as determined by the Commonwealth, which seeks a minimum of 10% affordable housing units in each city and town in the state, as one measure for awarding state grants, Bonsignore said.

She added the LAHC's intent was to award units on the proposed Montague Road development, some of which would be priced at 80% of average market rates in the area, by lottery, with some units reserved for Leverett residents, and some for Leverett seniors. At least two of the units

would be in a duplex home, the others in freestanding houses.

The money the AHC has used to work with consultants and to develop a topographic map of the land has come from multiple sources. These include a \$10,000 planning grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, and \$35,000 set aside by town meeting vote in 2000 to seek a means of providing senior housing in Leverett. (The mandate for that expenditure was expanded to include affordable housing by a later town meeting.)

Selectboard chair Richard Brazeau proposed the committee seek guidance from town meeting on October 20th before going too much farther with their work, but also encouraged them to spend up to \$500 as needed to hire an engineer to review the topographic map and the site itself, to determine how much it would cost to construct the entryway and build infrastructure, before town meeting weighs in on the proposal.

"The more mechanical questions you can get out of the way before town meeting, the better," said Brazeau.

Both he and selectboard member Julie Shively expressed concern about committing the entirety of the town's CPA funds for the near future to a project where, "We're going to spend three quarters of a million dollars and not have a house yet, just house sites," as Shively put it.

If town meeting signals approval and the project goes forward, the town would be able to borrow against only the

amount of money the town puts in to the CPA account, not against state matching contributions to the fund, Shively said.

If Leverett were to subsequently abolish the local option CPA funding mechanism (3% of the cost of local real estate transactions, up until this year matched 100% by state funds), then the town would be obligated to pay for the remainder of the infrastructure costs on the Montague Road land, once bonding was approved.

There are only two items formally on the agenda as warrant articles on October 20th. The first is a measure to appropriate \$5000 to cover costs the town may incur as a result of an energy service company contract (ESCO) for an in depth audit of energy savings potential at town buildings, including the town hall, the library, the school, safety complex, and highway garage.

Once Siemens Corp performs this analysis, the town is obligated to pay the cost of the energy audit if it does not authorize Siemens to do the work to retrofit the town buildings. Should the town approve the work, the costs of the renovations would be paid for over 20 years from energy savings, guaranteed by the contractor.

The other warrant article will ask voters to approve spending up to \$30,000 to put in a new well to provide clean water to the Duffy residence at 7 Cushman Road. Her well has been contaminated, along with the wells of four other nearby residents, by a plume of seepage (including manganese) from the town's old landfill, near the border with

Amherst.

For more than a decade, Brazeau said, the town has been paying about \$30,000 a year for filtration and testing of the affected wells, and lately providing the Duffy household with regular deliveries of bottled water.

The money sought would pay for the installation of a new well and hook-up for the Duffy residence only, and if the attempt to drill a new uncontaminated well is not successful, some of the money would be used to install additional filtration in the present well.

In other news, the board approved spending \$22,800 from funds set aside by town meeting to hire RCI Roofing out of Southampton to replace the second half of the roof of town hall. The first half of the roof repair was funded and completed two years ago.

The board agreed with assessors to keep a single tax rate classification for all residential, commercial and personal property in town. The assessors said 97.2% of property in Leverett is residential, so moving to a split rate would have little impact on residential property taxpayers, but a disproportionate affect on commercial owners. The assessors estimated about \$53,000 in new growth this year, but said applications for new building permits are down in 2009. They said the tax rate would come in somewhere around \$15.40 per thousand dollars of valuation, but did not have that figure finalized yet.

The board approved a request by the Leverett Family Museum to hold a Hallowe'en fair on the town common, all day on Saturday, October 31st, with a jack-o-lantern contest, scarecrow making, and gravestone rubbings.

Brazeau will work with volunteers to mark the town's new educational trail, clear brush and bridge wet areas on Saturday, October 10th at 9 a.m. Residents interested in helping should meet at the Leverett Library.

The trail runs from the library behind the school and up part of Brushy Mountain. Signage for flora and fauna and geological formations will be added along the trail in time to come.



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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Three for the Price of One

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ – Today we'll go into the mailbag and answer three questions, instead of the usual one.

Q. Is there some way to prevent getting shingles?

Shingles is a painful skin disease caused by the chickenpox virus awakening from a dormant state to attack your body again. Anyone who has had chickenpox can get shingles.

Some people report fever and weakness when the disease starts. Within two to three days, a red, blotchy rash develops. The rash erupts into small blisters that look like chickenpox.

The pain of shingles can be severe. If it is strong and lasts for months or years, it is called post-herpetic neuralgia.

There is a vaccine for shingles called Zostavax. The vaccine is approved for use in people 60 years old and older to prevent

shingles. Zostavax does not treat shingles or post-herpetic neuralgia once it develops.

In a clinical trial involving thousands of adults 60 years old or older, Zostavax prevented shingles in about half of the people and post-herpetic neuralgia in 67% of the study participants. While the vaccine was most effective in people 60 to 69 years old, it also provided some protection for older groups.

Once you reach age 60, the sooner you get vaccinated, the better your chances of protecting yourself from shingles.

Q. Is there such a thing as a painless migraine?

Sometimes we see light flashes that appear to be little lightning bolts or waves. This type of flash is usually caused by a blood-vessel spasm in the brain, which is called a migraine. These flashes can happen without a headache and they are called ophthalmic migraines or ocular migraines.

An ophthalmic migraine may end in only a few minutes, but usually lasts as long as a half hour. This type of migraine is considered harmless. Usually, they cause no permanent visual or brain damage, and do not

require treatment.

However, if you experience what seem to be ophthalmic migraine symptoms, you should get to a doctor immediately because what you think is harmless may be a retinal detachment.

The retina is the light-sensitive layer of tissue that lines the inside of the eye and sends visual messages through the optic nerve to the brain. When the retina detaches, it is lifted or pulled from its normal position. If not promptly treated, retinal detachment can cause permanent vision loss.

Q. Do you have any tips for avoiding colds?

There are two ways you can catch a cold: inhaling drops of mucus full of cold germs from the air, and touching a surface that has cold germs and then touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

So, for starters, avoid close facial contact with people who have colds. Also, if you can, try to avoid touching your face after you have been around someone with a cold.

Washing your hands thoroughly and often is important. Washing with soap and water doesn't kill the cold virus, but

removes it. The scrubbing is more important than the soap.

Cleaning environmental surfaces with a virus-killing disinfectant might help prevent spread of infection. The worst room in the house for germs is the kitchen. And the greatest concentration is found in sponges and dishcloths.

Laundering a dishcloth does-

n't eliminate germs. And putting a sponge through the dishwasher makes it look clean but doesn't remove the infection. Instead, moisten the sponge or dishcloth and microwave it for two minutes. Then you'll have safe, germ-free tools to use.

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

Sustainability Charter School Advances

BY HYRUM H. HUSKEY JR.

MONTAGUE – Tuesday, September 29th, was a good-news day for Franklin County's proposed Discovery Charter School of Sustainability. The proposed school was one of eight chosen by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education charter office to move to the next step in the process of approval. The founders' group members received the go ahead to submit a prospectus by November 14th.

The group has already put much work into that document, and expects to receive a final application decision in February, 2010. The group previously applied for a Horace Mann Elementary School to be formed at the Montague Center School – essentially a charter school within the district – but that proposal was turned down in 2008 by the Gill-Montague School District

"We are very excited and honored," said Deborah Foucault, a Lake Pleasant resident who serves as spokesperson for the Discovery School founders' group. "Our hope is that the whole community will benefit," Foucault exclaimed.

Those sentiments were echoed by group members Michael Langknecht and Arthur Evans, both of whom are listed as prospective board members for the new public school. Langknecht currently also serves as the chair of the school committee of the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Asked about these dual roles, Langknecht noted that Commonwealth policy encourages a cross-fertilization of educational practices between district schools and regional charter schools. The Discovery School

will draw students by lottery from across Franklin County school districts.

"I feel an equal responsibility to represent all students in the district, not just those in the district schools," said Langknecht. "One of the mandates of charter schools is to develop programs and explore new strategies that can be used by the public schools." He noted this sharing has not always happened in the past.

While Langknecht said the Discovery School, if finally approved, "will have an impact," he believes it is "an impact the school district needs to meet appropriately. Whether in a district school, or a charter school environment," community begins at school, Langknecht added.

Evans said students at the proposed Discovery School will "focus on the environment as a personal lens" in their learning.

The founders' group is seeking a suitable, centralized location that would provide easy access for all areas of Franklin County.

The Discovery School, when in operation, will initially consist of grades K-3, with three additional grades to be added during the first three years of operation. The school will encourage its students to "be engaged in sustainable practices in their lives, their school, and their communities," according to its mission statement, and will nurture the growth of dynamic thinkers "working together to implement the best sustainable practices for their community."

The Discovery School's need statement emphasized: "Sustainability needs to be a focus of this and future generations, as never before in modern life."

MCTV Channel 17 Afternoon/Evening Schedule 10/2 - 10/7
visit www.montagueTV.org for complete schedule

Friday, 10/2	Rosemary Caine	Montague Dec 06	1:25 p.m. Brown Bag
12:00 p.m. The Western	10:30 p.m. Common	Monday, 10/5	1:30 p.m. Common Man
MASS Democrat	People Concert	11:30 a.m. Luke Massery	Cowbell Prescription
12:30 p.m. Tapping Maple	Amandela	Live Piano Recital	2:30 p.m. Common People
Ridge	11:30 p.m. Common	1:00 p.m. Keep Warm	Concert Amandela
1:30 p.m. Systems Out of	People Concert	Keep Safe	3:30 p.m. Common People
Balance	8/11/09	1:30 p.m. The Katie	Concert 8/11/09
2:00 p.m. Sustainable	Sunday, 10/4	Clarke Band	4:30 p.m. Common People
Energy	10:00 a.m. Gill Select	3:30 p.m. Coffee House:	Concert Trumpet
3:00 p.m. Surviving the	Board 9/28/09 Part 1	Katie Clarke 09	8/18/09
Vernon Reactor	11:26 a.m. Gill Select	4:30 p.m. Inside The	5:30 p.m. Darker Image
4:00 p.m. Songs For Wee	Board 9/28/09 Part 2	Artists Studio: Ted	6:30 p.m. FRTA
People	4:30 p.m. Montague	Graveline	Demonstration
5:00 p.m. Skin N Bonz	Finance Committee	5:00 p.m. History of Gill	Wednesday, 10/7
7:00 p.m. GMRSD	9/23/09	Congregational Church	11:46 a.m. Discovery
9/22/09	6:30 p.m. Select Board	5:30 p.m. Grouse Attack	Center Open Mic
Saturday, 10/3	9/28/09	6:00 p.m. Fate of the	Night 2007
2:00 p.m. All About Bats	7:30 p.m. FRTA	Stallion	12:30 p.m. Discovery
2:30 p.m. Allagash 2007	Demonstration	9:00 p.m. Francis Doughty	Center Pop Rockets
3:00 p.m. ASPCA	8:00 p.m. Women Girls &	10:00 p.m. FCHC Estate	2:00 p.m. Discovery
4:00 p.m. Both Sides of	HIV:Role Models	Planning	Center Importance of
the Bridge	8:30 p.m. Wendell Old	Tuesday, 10/6	Pollinators
4:54 p.m. Brown Bag	Home Days 09	11:00 a.m. Back In The	3:00 p.m. Coffee House: 7
5:00 p.m. Charlie Conant	9:00 p.m. Turners Falls vs	Day Night Variety	Mile Line
and The Green River	New Leadership	Show	4:30 p.m. Discovery
Band	11:00 p.m. Thomas	1:00 p.m. Baystate	Center: Northern Bats
7:00 p.m. TBD	Jefferson	Healthbear September	
9:00 p.m. Coffee House:	11:30 p.m. This is	2009	

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300th Series



300th Combat Engineer Battalion repairing the under piling of a bridge destroyed by enemy fire along the Carentan - Cherbourg Road in France - June 30, 1944.

Dispatches from Belgium September, 1944

Don Richter, veteran of 300th, described life in Belgium in the midst of battle:

"We finally broke out of the beachhead, raced across France through Paris, and came to a stop in the nice and friendly land of Belgium. There we set up the engineer dump at "Mud Hill" in Modave. When the wet, cold weather and stiffening German resistance brought our advance to a halt, we settled into life in nice old chateaus in the area, seemingly to spend the winter. The 300th was ordered to go back to logging, something we became familiar with back in the pine forests of Oregon when we were there on maneuvers the previous year.

"We were sent to a fine estate with a nice chateau, along with a great stand of fir trees, some of them twelve inches in diameter. The estate was owned by a Count who had a brother named Charles, who objected strenuously to losing his beautiful trees that he had seen grow up during his lifetime. We tried to console him, but we needed the trees and his brother, the Count, had made a deal to furnish them to us.

"The weather was damp and cold when we arrived to begin cutting the trees, and to keep warm we would pour a bit of gasoline from a jerri can and set it on fire. Charles could not believe that we could be so wasteful, as he had a beautiful automobile stored on blocks in a shed that he could not drive due to lack of petrol. To make him feel a little better we supplied

him with a five gallon can full of gasoline, which later became most useful to him.

"I was sent on a detail to a sawmill in the small village of Failon, where we oversaw production of lumber and took turns guarding the facility twenty-four hours daily. This was great duty, almost like being at home. The people were so friendly, we lived in the living room of the sawmill owner and we ate most meals with one family or another.

"Sadly, several young men of the community had been shot down by a German firing line shortly before our army had liberated the area, so we were welcomed there with open arms.



Donald Richer of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion in dress uniform

The Thomas family had lost the eldest son, while the second son and father worked in the saw mill and youngest son, Louis, just hung around there and became a great young friend of mine. There were lovely young ladies who resided there, and made life so much more interesting. The civilians became restless as word somehow came



The 300th operated this sawmill in Belgium in the fall of 1944

back from the front that there was a lot of German buildup beyond the Siegfried Line, and some became fearful that a counter offensive might overrun Failon, as had happened in 1940.

"Before long we were ordered to Ciny, another lovely little town where we set about preparing a stone arch bridge over a small stream for blowing when the enemy arrived. We made a daisy chain (a rope with activated land mines tied to every few feet with a length of rope across the road bed).

"Late in the night, a dark auto approached our road block, and when ordered to halt slid its tires upon the daisy chain rope jerking the mines out of the ditch and scattering them along the shoulder. When we looked into the fine old touring car expecting to find German army officers, there was our friend Charlie, brother of the Count, with his entire household. They were escaping, using the gasoline that we had supplied to them. We greeted him affectionately, telling him to drive carefully and to expect other road blocks as he proceeded to the

rear. "The next afternoon Company C took over our positions in Ciny. Before driving away from Ciny, Pfc. Roy Welchel told Sgt. Jesse Ruffin that he had no intention of moving up into harm's way without some cognac, and that he knew where he could trade five gallons of gas for a fifth. Jesse agreed and Roy drove the truck with all of the Third Squad aboard to my little town of Failon, where a prosperous farmer would finalize his deal.

"All of the residents of the village crowded around our truck and when they saw me they asked, 'Bosh return (Germans coming back)?' My friend, Louis Thomas looked fearfully into my face and asked me to stay with him and keep him safe. I assured him and all of my friends there that I and my buddies would be going forward and there was no way that we would allow the enemy to return. I never was able to return to Failon, and I only hope the German Army did not come back there."

- to be continued

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

TOWN of ERVING

The Town of Erving's Tax Classification Hearing will be held at Town Hall, 12 East Main Street on Monday, October 19th at 7:30 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE TOWN OF WENDELL PLANNING BOARD

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40, Chapter 40A Section 5 and Section 9 of M.G.L., the Wendell Planning Board will hold a public hearing on October 20th, at 7:00 p.m. in the town offices at Morse Village Road to consider changes to the Wendell Zoning Bylaws as described herein: In Article XIII. Wireless Communication Facilities, (1) In Section C, Definitions and word usage, in the paragraph defining Personal Wireless Services, delete the phrase "unlicensed wireless services." and (2) In Section D, add to the list of exempted facilities at the end of the first sentence: "unlicensed wireless broadband receivers and transmitters, consumer wireless routers and laptop computers, home television and internet satellite dishes, and cordless telephones." On or before October 6th, the proposed text of the bylaw changes under consideration will be posted outside the town offices for review and are available from the Town

ALMANAC from pg 9 friends I may not see for another year.

I take a last stop at the bar to toss back a toast to the memory of my father, a lifelong member, as was his father, of this Schuetzen Verein Club, but gone from us and this feast now for the past five years. Some of these fall rituals are private.

The day, and in some way the season, close for me with a solitary paddle across Barton Cove, as the partying still goes on at

the clambake. I slip away as the noise of the feast fades over the water. The sun is going down beyond the steeples and I let the kayak drift to my favorite spot near the Bear's Den where I can watch the sunset, sitting in among the cardinal flowers and the cattails. Three bald eagles chatter and flap about their nightly roosting spot on the island. Hundreds of shiners leap out of the water like the twinkling stars in the dusk. The renewed sense of place and

belonging, the eagles and heron moving over the water: well, that's a fine way to bring the month to a close.

*Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only for an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay.*

Robert Frost

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JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1st

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band* (old timey, americana, etc) 7:30 p.m. no cover.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2nd

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Evolution Trio* (jazz) \$3 cover.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3rd

13th Annual Source to Sea Clean-up! Volunteers needed for clean-up and hauling: call (800) 859-2960 to register your helping hand for this important event. Meeting with instructions 9 a.m., Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Erving Fall Festival, 10 to 4 p.m. at Veterans Field. Games, music, crafts and wildlife displays. Info: 442-2800 x105.

Public Art Unveiling, 1 p.m. Artist Sebastian Gutwein will give a tour of his new Turners Falls Public Art installation, *Woven River*, exposing some of the history of Turners Falls and the reincorporation of the past into the present through a series of installations connected by a woven wall of branches. The artist will be present to give a tour of the work from 1 to 3 pm.

Arts and Leaves seasonal Art Walk in downtown Turners Falls. All Day.

Artist's Reception for Jim Gambaro, for insights and information on his photographs. These will be exhibited in the Great Hall of the Discovery Center during the month of October. Light refreshments will be served. 1 to 3 p.m.

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels cons its way into the Shea Theater as JaDuke Inc. brings you the Franklin County premiere of this



Barry White Crow Higgins at the Great Falls Coffeehouse on Friday, October 9th at 7 p.m. Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls.

Broadway smash hit. Fri at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. \$12/ \$10 ages 12 and under and 65 and over. Continues 10/9 to 10/11. www.jaduke.com.

Wendell Full Moon Coffee House: *Charles Neville Quartet*. 7:30 p.m. \$6 to \$12; partial proceeds to benefit the Wendell Full Moon Coffee House. Mr. Charles Neville will grace the stage of the Wendell Full Moon Coffee House, opening the new season with his "indefinable something." The second eldest and most musically diverse of the Neville Brothers, Coffee House listeners have described his horn playing as spiritually healing. Jazz fans will appreciate the chance to see Mr. Neville perform in such an intimate venue. Desserts you won't want to miss! www.wendellfullmoon.org

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Opel, Watcher, The Original Cowards* (rock, indie) \$5 cover.

At Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Girls, Guns & Glory*, Americana / Country / Rock band from Boston, 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4th

Early Bird Birding. Join Jeff at 7 a.m. as he explores the North Quabbin area for fall migrant birds. Come for as long as your schedule allows. Meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. Severe weather cancels. Info: Jeff Johnstone, (978) 249-9052.

Monthly Scandinavian workshop/dance, Montague Grange, Montague Center. Open request dancing follows teaching. All levels of experience are welcome! No partner necessary. featured dance: hambo. 2 to 5 p.m. \$10 / \$8 students, seniors, low income.

At the Bookmill, Montague Center: *Marissa Nadler* with *Arborea*, singer/songwriters. \$12 advance/\$15 door. www.marissanadler.com

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7th

The Great Falls Farmers Market, corner of 2nd Street and Avenue A, Turners Falls. 2 to 6 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: Knitting & Crafts Night: 7 to 10 p.m. Any craft and any skill level welcome. Get a chance to win our monthly crafty gift with every \$5 you spend at Craft night. Drawings held on the last Wednesday of the month.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8th

At the Bookmill, Montague Center: *Utah Green*. Accompanied by mandolinist, Billy Bodway, whose circus style playing lends blues and jazz to Utah's frontier original sound. 8 p.m. \$5. www.myspace.com/greenuah.

Live jazz every Thursday at Ristorante DiPaolo, Turners Falls. 6:30 to 9:30 pm. (413) 863-4441.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ameri-MF-Cana*, 8 p.m. no cover.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9th

Barry White Crow Higgins at the Great Falls Coffeehouse. A special evening of Native American story & music at 7 p.m. Barry will tell tribal stories of the flute's origin and evolution, discuss tribal differences and influences, and perform both traditional and contemporary songs. Held in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Coffee & homemade baked goods. The museum and museum store open during intermission. \$6 to



Rod Hart & David Neil in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, not just another musical! It could well be the funniest show you see this year. The material contains adult humor and may not be suitable for children under the age of 13. Saturday October 3rd, 8 p.m. and Sunday, October 4th at 2 p.m. at the Shea Theater, Turners Falls.

\$12, free for children.

At the Bookmill, Montague Center: *Oh Liza Jane*. Country folk from Brooklyn, New York? Sound incongruous, no? *Oh Liza Jane* can play well-structured and heartfelt songs that resonate for fans of the Mammals, Greg Brown, Paula Frazer, & Ida. \$5 adv./\$7 door, 8 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ben and Ansel Have a Party!* (for everyone with records and stuff) 9:30 p.m. free.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10th

Free music workshops at Brattleboro Music Center: Round-Robin Chamber Music, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Drop in with your violin, viola, or cello, and play chamber music with others! Music will be continu-

ous, with a variety of levels of pieces available. It is likely that a Mozart quartet would be followed by a four-part rendition of "Twinkle, twinkle," for instance. Drive-by Piano Lessons, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Music School faculty member Raquel Moreno will spend a few minutes teaching you some of the fundamentals of piano playing. Watch others and learn yourself. Traditional Music Open Session, Check with BMC for Session Time. Bring your instrument and come and play traditional tunes with Becky Tracy and Keith Murphy during this open session. Keith and Becky lead the BMC's weekly Celtic Sessions on Wednesday evenings. All instruments welcome, music will be played by ear. Brattleboro Music Center, 38 Walnut Street, Brattleboro, VT. (802)-257-4523 or www.bmvt.org.

GreenTeen concert! *Phone Calls From Home, The Venetia Fair, Signal the Escape* and more! 6:30 p.m. at the Greenfield Teen Center, 20 Sanderson St. Greenfield, \$10. All ages welcome.

Lake Pleasant Energy Saving Workshop at the The National Spiritual Alliance Meeting Hall, Lake Pleasant. 9:45 a.m. to noon.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sweet Dynamite* with *DJ Studebaker Hawk & Co.* (house/funk/disco) no cover.

Memorial Hall Theater in Shelburne Falls kicks off its new season of live high-definition broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera on the big screen on Saturday October 10 with a production of Puccini's *Tosca* at 1 p.m. Tickets \$23 www.shelburnefallsmemorialhall.org.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14th

The Super Fun Bowling Club is a non-competitive club devoted solely to the enjoyment of bowling. At the French King Entertainment Center, Erving. The SFBC meets every other Wednesday at 7:30 pm This week's theme: Wild West! Questions contact: Laura (413)-423-3027 or laura@ladyelvis.com.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15th

Mission: Wolf at the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls. The Come experience a personal encounter with a live wolf with the Ambassador Wolf program. View an audio-visual show covering subjects such as an introduction to wolves and hybrids, wild wolf issues, wolf communication and behavior, and current status of wild wolves in North America. Two programs, 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. Registration required. Call the Discovery Center: 863-3221.

UNTIL OCTOBER 27th

Greenfield Community College, downtown center, exhibition of works by Claudine Mussuto. Maps painted on kraft paper, entitled 'kraft triptych: eugene, far east, truro, & provincetown.'

ONGOING

Social Ballroom Lessons at the Montague Elks, Turners Falls. \$8 per person, 7:30 to 9 p.m. every Wednesday night. (413) 885-8888. October focus is Rumba!

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HOT SPOT TEEN CENTER

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



www.gardencinemas.net
Showtimes for
Friday, October. 2nd to Thursday, Oct. 8th

- ZOMBIELAND** R
DAILY 6:30 9:30
- FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00**
- 2. CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS** PG in DTS sound
DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN 12 3:00
- 3. JULIE & JULIA** PG13
DAILY 6:30 9:00
FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- 4. THE INFORMANT** R
DAILY 6:45 9:15
FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- 5. JENNIFER'S BODY** R
DAILY 6:45 9:15
FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- 6. I CAN DO BAD ALL BY MYSELF** PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 7:00 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30
- 6. PANDORUM** PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN 3:30
- 7. SURROGATES** PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 7:00 9:30
FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30



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FRI: 10/02 | 9:30 PM | \$3
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Opel | Watcher | The Original Cowards (rock, indie)

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Fall in the Garden



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK

BY LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – I awaken in the early hours to the call of the screech owl: a mournful descending neigh. When I wake again to the cat's nudging it is morning and the yard is wrapped in fog.

Grateful for this reprieve from frost, I look forward to checking the color of the turning sweet peppers and hope that this week's unseasonable temperatures will start the green tomatoes' change to red or yellow.

The garden looks like early fall. The winter squash plants have died back, succumbing to powdery mildew and a season which was all too damp and cool. I will harvest just two small

delicata squash and one acorn, the size of an apple.

This yield is very disappointing. I have troubled to grow this crop even though it takes up space for the whole season because most local winter squashes have been highly sprayed, and I have read that this fruit is high on the list of crops that absorb and retain chemicals. For this reason, I will try again next year, and hope for better weather.

The onion tops have dried, and I have picked a nice crop to dry in the sun. After any residual moisture in the greens has left the plant, I'll brush them free of dirt. These onions will store into the winter, provided I keep them in a cool place. The garage will be a fine storage area, as it is dark and cool and rarely below freezing as it shares an inside wall with the house.

The leeks are fattening nicely. They can be left until we have warning of a hard freeze. The leeks are easily stored and require only the removal of the tops and the outermost layer of

flesh. Put in zip lock bags, they can be removed and chopped while still frozen, and then sautéed to begin a soup or stew.

This year's leeks, onion and garlic seemed to enjoy this summer. They enjoy the cool temperatures and found no fault with the abundant moisture. Maybe they will be all the juicier when sliced for winter cooking.

This year's tomato crop is the worst in my 30-plus years of gardening memory. While there was some nice fruit, the large varieties rotted before finishing their ripening. I harvested three beautiful beefsteaks called 'delicious'. They did live up to their name, so I will happily grow that variety again.

The crop of mid-sized tomatoes was not worth mentioning. One small tomato, red zebra, which tends to have a firm, meaty fruit did well, as did the sungold cherries. I have become a complete convert to this variety of firm orange fruit. The sweet, tart taste is yummy and even in this year of monsoon, most fruit avoided cracking.

Like the squash vine, the cucumber plants are dying, but there are plenty of round lemon cukes to harvest. I am enjoying them sliced in salad, and will also save some for the winter in the form of ripe cucumber pickles.

The green beans were another crop that responded well to this season's weather. I planted a tepee of pole beans, Kentucky wonder, and enjoyed several meals of thin, tasty green beans both as a hot vegetable and as cold salad. Then the plants' production got ahead of me.

Happily, these beans are good both as a string bean and as a shell bean. When the pods are fat and not so tender, you can pick them and save the bean seeds inside. Shell beans are the fresh version of the dried beans that are sold year round. Steamed gently, then mixed with cooked chopped garlic and herbs, or served as a succotash with cooked corn and peppers, they are delicious. They are also easily frozen for later enjoyment.

The late summer bloom of

flowers is such a treat, when all of the farm stands are featuring mums. I'm always reluctant to knuckle under to these symbols of fall any sooner than I have to. Right now, the marigolds are at their peak. The butterfly bushes are resplendent, and just the right fly-by treat for the gorgeous gypsies that will soon be leaving us for good.

Lastly, the late summer roses are most treasured. The late blooms of fragrant, spring colored flowers are a nostalgic memory of an earlier season. The pinks, yellows and apricots form a bouquet that helps the end of season gardener hang on to the growing season and its splendor just a bit longer.

There is a way to extend this growing season. Soon I will plant lettuce and spinach seed in the cold frame, for harvest next April. These seeds, planted in mid-September, will start to germinate and then put growth on hold. When the winter chill gives way to the thaws of early spring, they will grow dramatically, producing a delicious crop long before it is available locally. It's almost like creating year-round gardening, even here in New England!

Our Lady of Czestochowa Celebrates 100th Anniversary



Girls in traditional Polish dress carry flowers and gifts to the altar.

BY JOSEPH A. PARZYCH

TURNERS FALLS – Despite the rain, it was standing room only at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church on Sunday, September 27th. Timothy McDonnell, bishop of the diocese of Springfield, offered 10:30 Mass in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the church, called by parishioners the Gem of Franklin County.

Girls in traditional Polish dress, who were part of the processional, presented Bishop McDonnell a traditional Polish gift of bread and salt, representing the staff and flavor of life. The girls wore Polish dresses with garlands of flowers in their hair, reflecting the traditional design of the Krakow area.

"I know you're not supposed to look around at church," Bishop

McDonnell said, "But look at the stained glass, look at the artwork, look at the human effort to reflect God's glory."

Bishop Emeritus Joseph Maguire as well as many other area priests also took part in the celebration.

Men from as far away as Pennsylvania came dressed as Polish knights in armor, carrying dress swords. "The Hussars were never defeated in battle," said Rev. Charles DiMascola, pastor of the church. The knights sported feathered wings on their backs.

According to Stas Radosc, head of the Polish cultural department at Elms College, the purpose of the wings was both psychological and practical. "To see two hundred armored knights charging on horseback carrying four foot swords, galloping with flags waving and wings fluttering was a formidable sight. It has been said that



Bishop Timothy A. McDonnell, left, and Rev. Charles DiMascola with the altar of Our Lady of Czestochowa in the background. The Bishop holds a staff presented to him along with bread and salt, representing the staff and flavor of life.

it was also practical, since the Turks used to lasso riders and pull them from the horses. This way, the lasso got the wings, instead," he said.

Parishioners have been preparing for the celebration for the past year. The streets of Turners Falls were lined with cars throughout the entire neighborhood for a considerable distance from the church.

At a time when Catholic churches are closing in record numbers, the spirited celebration on Sunday at Our Lady of Czestochowa is a tribute to the enthusiastic parishioners and the pastor who leads them, Father Charles DiMascola.

It's just more fun at the Gill Craft Fair.
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