



The Montague Reporter

YEAR 8 - NO. 4

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 22, 2009

Former Water District Treasurer Implicated in Misappropriated Funds

BY DAVID DETMOLD

RIVERSIDE – Over the course of her ten year tenure as treasurer of the Riverside Water District, Theresa Peffer, a resident of Oak Street in Gill, allegedly siphoned about \$40,000 of district funds into her personal bank account, making partial payments back to the district from time to time to cover up the misappropriations, according to Dennis Banash, Riverside Water Commission chair.

Peffer resigned as treasurer in July of 2008.

Banash said Peffer admitted her theft of funds to the commissioners. He said she transferred sums of money back and forth between her account and bank accounts she controlled as bookkeeper for the Temple Israel in Greenfield, and for her husband's TV and electronics business in Shelburne Falls in what amounted to an elaborate Ponzi scheme.

Temple Israel president Joanie Cohen-Mitchell declined comment on the matter, pending the handing down of an indictment against Peffer in Greenfield from the Northwestern District Attorney's office, expected this Friday, other than to confirm the

misappropriation of funds by Peffer during her ten-year tenure as bookkeeper at the Temple.

Cohen-Mitchell said Temple Israel had joined with the Riverside Water District in the court case, seeking restitution of the misappropriated funds, which in the Temple's case far exceeded the amounts taken from the Water District, according to members of the Temple who have knowledge of the situation.

Peffer, reached by phone on Tuesday, offered no comment on the matter.

The Northwestern District Attorney's office also declined comment, during an ongoing investigation.

Banash said he had noticed a discrepancy in the amount charged by the town of Greenfield for water supplied to the district and the amount charged to users of the water in Riverside in records presented to the commission by Peffer, and questioned her about the discrepancy in the summer of 2008. She resigned her post shortly thereafter, Banash said.

At about the same time, Banash said the commission received a letter from the

Greenfield Savings Bank, dated July 11th, 2008, which read in part: "We have seen a small apparent co-mingling of [the Riverside Water District's account] with one of Ms. Peffer's former personal accounts here at the bank. It appears as though Ms. Peffer ordered checks for her personal account with the checks saying the owner of her personal account was Riverside Water District. We are aware that on at least two occasions these checks were used by her."

"We are aware that on at least one occasion she deposited checks payable to Riverside Water District totaling \$583.93 into one of her personal accounts here at Greenfield Savings."

The letter, signed by Alan Blanker as senior vice president and general counsel for Greenfield Savings Bank, recommended the Riverside Water District conduct an audit of statements and balances for their account.

Banash said the district went further, and hired the accounting firm of Edward Margola, of Greenfield, to conduct a forensic audit of the treasurer's activities

see **IMPLICATED** pg 5

Mission: Wolf



Canis Lupus visits the Great Falls Discovery Center on Saturday

BY TARA GORVINE

GREAT FALLS – Visitors to the Great Falls Discovery Center were given a rare treat Saturday, October 17th, when Kent Weber from Colorado's 'Mission: Wolf' came to talk about the status of wolves in the United States.

Weber runs a wolf sanctuary, a 50-acre fenced refuge, where roughly 35 wolves, all born into captivity and therefore unfit for the wild, can roam freely. They

come to him from zoos and movie sets, or rescued from owners unfit to care for them.

Though none of the wolves at Mission: Wolf can be out in the wild, Weber is passionate about educating the public on the need to reintroduce wolves to their former territories. He hopes one day sanctuaries like his will be a thing of the past.

Wolves used to roam through- see **WOLF** pg 9

Leverett Funds a Private Well on Cushman Road

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Leverett approved spending at least \$30,588 to install, test, and connect a new well to the house owned by Pat Duffy, at 7 Cushman Road. But selectboard chair Richard Brazeau made it clear to the nearly 100 voters gathered at special town meeting on Tuesday that town coffers will be tapped again over coming years to deal with problems affecting wells at up to half a dozen homes in the path of a plume of groundwater contamination, stemming from the town's former landfill on Cemetery Road.

"The old landfills were just pits. Whatever is in there is going to keep leaching out," said Brazeau.

One Dudleyville Road resident asked whether it wouldn't be wiser to "buy that piece of property," on Cushman Road, "sell the house off and turn the land into

conservation land, and cut your losses."

This was the same tack members of the finance committee took in preliminary conversation with the selectboard on Tuesday, October 13th. But subsequent discussion between the finance and selectboard members on Monday, the 19th, led to unanimity in support of putting in a new well at the Duffy residence.

Brazeau explained the topography of the Duffy property lent itself to the specific solution of drilling a new well, in ledge 50 feet above the level of the road. The current well serving the household is in a trough or valley in the ledge, where the plume of contamination from the former landfill appears to travel on through in the direction of four or five more affected homes on Teawaddle Hill Road.

Brazeau said the Department see **LEVERETT** pg 5



Researcher Erika Parker holds a Shortnose Sturgeon during Saturday's open house.

Conte Fish Lab Showcases Innovative Design and Research

BY DAWN MONTAGUE

TURNERS FALLS – Migratory Way was bustling on Saturday, October 17th, as the Silvio Conte Anadromous Fish Research Laboratory hosted an open house for the public. More than 230 visitors of all ages toured the facilities, with staff on hand to answer questions and describe the research projects currently underway.

If you didn't already know, staff at the facility would have

been happy to inform you that anadromous fish are those species that return from their adult salt water habitat to spawn in fresh water streams.

On Friday, 60 sixth graders from Great Falls Middle School visited as part of Earth Science Week. According to Kathleen Pietryka, office assistant at the fish lab, the open houses "gave everyone the opportunity to have a hands-on experience exploring science, to see it in

action, and learn how it impacts their lives."

Erika Parker, who researches fish behavior, stood by a tank of immature shortnose sturgeon and sea lamprey. She fielded a number of questions about the species, and took the creatures out of the tank to point out distinct features, like the sturgeon's protruding pectoral fins.

Behind Parker stood a trial design for a spiral-shaped fish ladder, which accommodates bottom swimming fish like the sturgeon that have difficulty passing through step-style fish ladders to navigate man-made barriers in the path of their spawning run, on rivers like the Connecticut.

Innovative research is a hallmark of the Fish Lab, which boasts the only flume facility in the U.S. In it, engineers and other scientists work together to improve fish passage structures. Alex Haro, a research ecologist at the lab, said among other efforts, one upcoming project

see **CONTE FISH** pg 9

PET OF THE WEEK

Princess



Xena

My name is Xena and I'm a seven-year-old female mastiff mix in need of a good home. Calm, sweet and snuggly, I'm like a giant teddy bear, over 100 pounds! I am an ideal dog for someone who is home most of the time and wants a low maintenance, easy companion. I don't have the best leash manners but it's not too late to teach me!

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WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

Artists Sought for Herrick Room Gallery Shows

BY ROSE HEIDEKAMP

WENDELL – The Herrick Meeting Room Art Gallery at the two-year-old Wendell Free Library is designed to provide opportunities for local artists to show their work to the public, as part of the cultural and educational mission of the library.

The gallery is curated and scheduled by an arts exhibit committee, including representatives from the library trustees, the Friends of the Wendell Free Library, and members of the Wendell community.

The first round of applications will be accepted until

October 31st. The Arts Exhibits Committee will review these applications in early November. Generally, exhibits will run for one month.

The Herrick Meeting Room Art Gallery has approximately 140 square feet of available wall space for display of art work. The space is not available to display three-dimensional work.

Interested individuals can pick up a copy of the two page gallery policy and application at the Wendell Free Library. For more information, call (978) 544-3559.

LEVERETT LIBRARY NEWS

Annual Meeting Guest Speaker Dean Cycon

Friends of the Leverett Library Annual meeting will take place Wednesday, October 28th, 7:30 p.m. at the library.

Special guest speaker will be Dean Cycon, author and founder and owner of Dean's Beans Organic Coffee in Orange. Dean will share his experiences of his thirty years in development work and activism in indigenous communities, including coffee villages in Africa, South America, Central America, and Asia. Join us to hear how Dean's business practices have promot-

ed positive economic, social and environmental change at the third world source. His book was awarded the Gold Medal as best travel book of 2008 by the Independent Publishers Association.

This talk is another of the Leverett Author and Artist Series sponsored by the Friends of the Leverett Library. It is supported in part by a grant from the Leverett Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Kitchenware Needed at Brick House

BY KATIE SACHS – Forgot to have a tag sale this summer? Here's your chance!

The Brick House is seeking mugs, bowls and silverware to expand our snack area. We are also looking for donations of various kitchen appliances such as crock pots, water kettles, blenders, and hotpots. We are requesting these items in an

effort to offer healthier options to our participants and begin an "easy-to prepare" cooking workshop.

Please contact Katie (Katie@brickhousecommunity.org) or bring donations of items in working condition only, please, to our location at 24 Third Street, in Turners Falls. **Thank you!**

Arbor Day Foundation Gift of Trees to New Members

Green the planet in your backyard. Those who join the Arbor Day Foundation in October will receive ten free trees to plant between November 1st and December 10th. Membership is

\$10 and can be mailed to Autumn Classic Trees, Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Avenue, Nebraska City, NE, 68410 by October 30th. Or join online at arborday.org.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES – Oct 26th to 30th

GILL/MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Friday at 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. For information or to make meal reservations, call 863-9357. Feel free to call the senior center for information on any programs. Call to sign up for "Enhance Your Memory" workshop with Wanda Landry at 10:00 am on November 5th and SHINE at 1:00 p.m. on November 23rd.

Monday, Oct. 26th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
1:00 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday, Oct. 27th

9:00 a.m. Walking group
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 noon Lunch
1:00 p.m. Canasta
1:00 p.m. Painting Class
Wednesday, Oct. 28th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:30 a.m. Monthly Health Screenings
11:00 a.m. Halloween Party
12 noon Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, Oct. 29th
10:00 a.m. Tai Chi
12 noon Lunch
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, Oct. 30th
10:00 a.m. Senior Aerobics
10:45 a.m. Easy Aerobics
12 noon Lunch
1:00 p.m. Scrabble

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant St., Erving (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



JOSEPH R. PARZYCH PHOTO

Solar Craft

Sunshine and good crowds defied the weatherman on the first day of the Gill Craft Fair last weekend. John Ward, co-owner of the Greenfield Solar Store, came to the rescue of the Falltown String Band, who were looking for a place to plug in their amps on Saturday. He had enough power to provide from his demonstration photovoltaic panels, batteries and inverter to power their 150 watt load, allowing the Falltown pickers to play their first solar-powered gig in 20 years. "About time!" said Jason Burbank.

While the sun shone, the Friends of Gill sold 120 of their 130 apple pies on Saturday, and managed to find buyers for the last dozen or so on Sunday in the persistent rain. Oh well. One sunny day in late October is better than none!

Birds of Prey

The Leverett Family Museum, a new museum housed

in the old library in the center of Leverett, will present a Birds of Prey program with Julie Collier Crow, on Saturday, October 24th.

Three programs are scheduled for the day – at 10 a.m., noon, and 1:30 p.m. – all free and open to the public.

GREENFIELD LIBRARY NEWS

A Perfect Recipe

The Friends of the Greenfield Public Library will be hosting their annual fall event on November 7th, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Stonleigh Burnham School in Greenfield. This year's event is called "A Perfect Recipe."

All food and library lovers are invited to attend for a fun-filled night that will include a silent/live auction of food related gift baskets. Hors d'oeuvres, beer, and wine will be served. Tickets are \$15.00 and are available at the library. For more information visit greenfieldpubliclibrary.org

Correction

Due to an editing error, one of the people in a group photo that appeared on the front page two weeks ago (*MR VIII #2*) was misidentified as Connie Henry. Her correct name is Connie Hall. We apologize for the error.

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Grade 6

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Trevor Mankowsky

Grade 7

Serena Smith

Grade 8

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Montague Briefs

JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION
with the field hockey team, and then got taken up by the football team in their match-up

orange pumpkin to display in your door or window. This will be the invitation to trick or treaters, letting them know they will be welcome to enter and be rewarded with goodies.

Everyone is welcome to participate. Please call soon, so the MBA can compile a list of participating business.

While recruiting and gently persuading vendors to set up at the Wednesday afternoon **Great Falls Farmers Market**, on Avenue A and 2nd Street, I was consistently asked if the customer base was mainly from downtown Turners Falls. At first I could not answer that question, but after doing a few market basket drawings, I found our customer base had grown to Gill, all the villages of Montague, Greenfield, Erving and Amherst.

I was fairly satisfied with this, until I found out some customers from Pennsylvania bought house plants from Cold Brook Farm's Fran Hemond. Now I could tell vendors we were an interstate Farmers' Market.

However, one day I saw two men walking back to their truck with bags of corn from Johnson Farms and tomatoes from Bloody Brook Farm. Curious, I asked where the men were from. Turns out they come to Montague almost weekly to pick up fresh fish from a local fish farm, then drive back to Toronto, Ontario, frequently stopping by the market en route.

I can now say the Great Falls Farmers Market has gone international.

Welcome to "Local Briefs," a new column in the Montague Reporter, in which we will invite you, the reader, to mail, call or email us with tidbits of news and items of interest pertaining to the people and events that make up the daily life of our community. They don't need to be earth shattering. Entertaining stories are always welcome. A laugh or a smile while you read the paper is a good experience. Send in your local briefs to reporter-local@montaguema.net

COMPILED BY DON CLEGG
TURNERS FALLS – The "Battle of Power Town" is this Saturday, October 24th, at 1:00 p.m. as Franklin County Technical School hosts Turners Falls High School. This is for bragging rights for the best football team in Montague.

Franklin Tech Wears Pink on Gridiron. Student athletes and coaches of the Franklin County Tech School's football team are wearing pink ribbons on their helmets at football games to raise awareness of the need to battle and find a cure for breast cancer.

Football coach Joe Gamache said the consciousness-raising effort started

with Pioneer, when both teams wore pink shirts during warm-ups. On Saturday, the football team and coaches wore pink stripes on their helmets and coaching shirts, all to raise awareness of breast cancer.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer (after lung cancer) in U.S. women. This year, more than 192,000 women in America will be diagnosed with breast cancer; an estimated 2.5 million women living in the United States have a history of the disease.

The entire Technical School community had a "Pink Out Day" on Friday, October 16th. Everyone was encouraged to wear pink on that day, according to principal's secretary Terry Lapachinski.

Trick or Treat on Avenue A! Prior to the Rag Shag Parade from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on October 31st, the Montague Business Association will promote safe Halloween fun for community children. If your business would like to participate, please call Linda Ackerman at Greenfield Savings Bank, 863-4316, to receive a bright

Reducing Window Energy Loss

BY ELAINE REARDON
ORANGE – Brian Nugent of North Quabbin Energy will demonstrate how to build interior window inserts at free workshops on the third Saturday of the month, November 21st, December 19th, January 16th, and February 20th, from 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wheeler Memorial Library in Orange. Nugent will explain how the

inserts work, and how quickly they pay back time and low material costs.

This presentation can save you money by halving the energy loss through your windows, and improve the comfort of your home.

Nugent will provide instructions and demonstrate the process for making the inserts. The simple design uses low-cost materi-

als, available locally. Online instructions are also available at northquabbinenergy.org.

Nugent is also available to lead free, practical work sessions for volunteers to produce window inserts for local community buildings.

For contact information, please inquire at the Wheeler Library: (978) 544-2495.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Weekend Arrests

Wednesday, 10/14

6:20 p.m. Report of burglary / breaking and entering at a Newton Lane address.

Thursday, 10/15

8:34 p.m. Report of an unwanted person at an East Main Street address. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on two default warrants.

Saturday, 10/17

1:46 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on a default warrant and for violation of an abuse prevention order.

5:15 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on a probation warrant.

11:23 p.m. Report of an assault at a Fifth Street address. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with indecent assault and battery on a person 14 or over and intimidation of a witness.

Sunday, 10/18

7:27 p.m. Report of a pos-

sible suicide attempt at a Turnpike Road address. Investigated.

Monday, 10/19

11:23 p.m. Following a traffic stop, arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on a default warrant.

Tuesday, 10/20

7:59 p.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] on a default warrant.

MCTV Channel 17

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Mid-Year Cuts to Towns and Schools?

As rumors of impending mid-year cuts in state aid to localities filter west from Boston, we took the time to talk with Representative Steve Kulik (D-Worthington) on Wednesday, to get his 'View from the Statehouse' on the latest in Massachusetts' ongoing fiscal meltdown.

Kulik said, "Last Thursday, the governor made a determination, as he is required to, regarding the benchmark revenues the budget is based on. He determined state revenue is not meeting those benchmarks, so he is also required to revise the budget by October 15th. We are \$214 million down in the first quarter – and the governor projected a \$600 million shortfall for the current budget year, through June 30th, 2010, which I think is an entirely reasonable projection.

"The governor also has to propose a plan for dealing with the shortfall. Through the executive office he pretty much controls all of state government except for the court system, constitutional officers, local aid and Chapter 70 aid for education. He can only cut in those areas if the legislature grants him expanded 9-C authority. The governor asked for that authority last Thursday, and the legislature will consider his request. We've taken no action on it yet."

Kulik said giving the governor the authority to cut local aid more than three months into a budget year is, "a big deal, coming after cities and towns have established their budgets. It happened last year, remember," (when Montague, for one example, lost \$153,000 in state aid part way into FY '09) "and we're very mindful of the devastation it would cause to cities and towns," if the state imposes mid-year local aid cuts again.

"We're going to be looking at this over the next weeks and months. If you're going to make cuts, it is better to make them as early as possible in the budget year."

Kulik said the governor was considering "possible furloughs of state employees, and reduc-

tion of positions, but he hasn't given us a detailed plan yet. That should come soon."

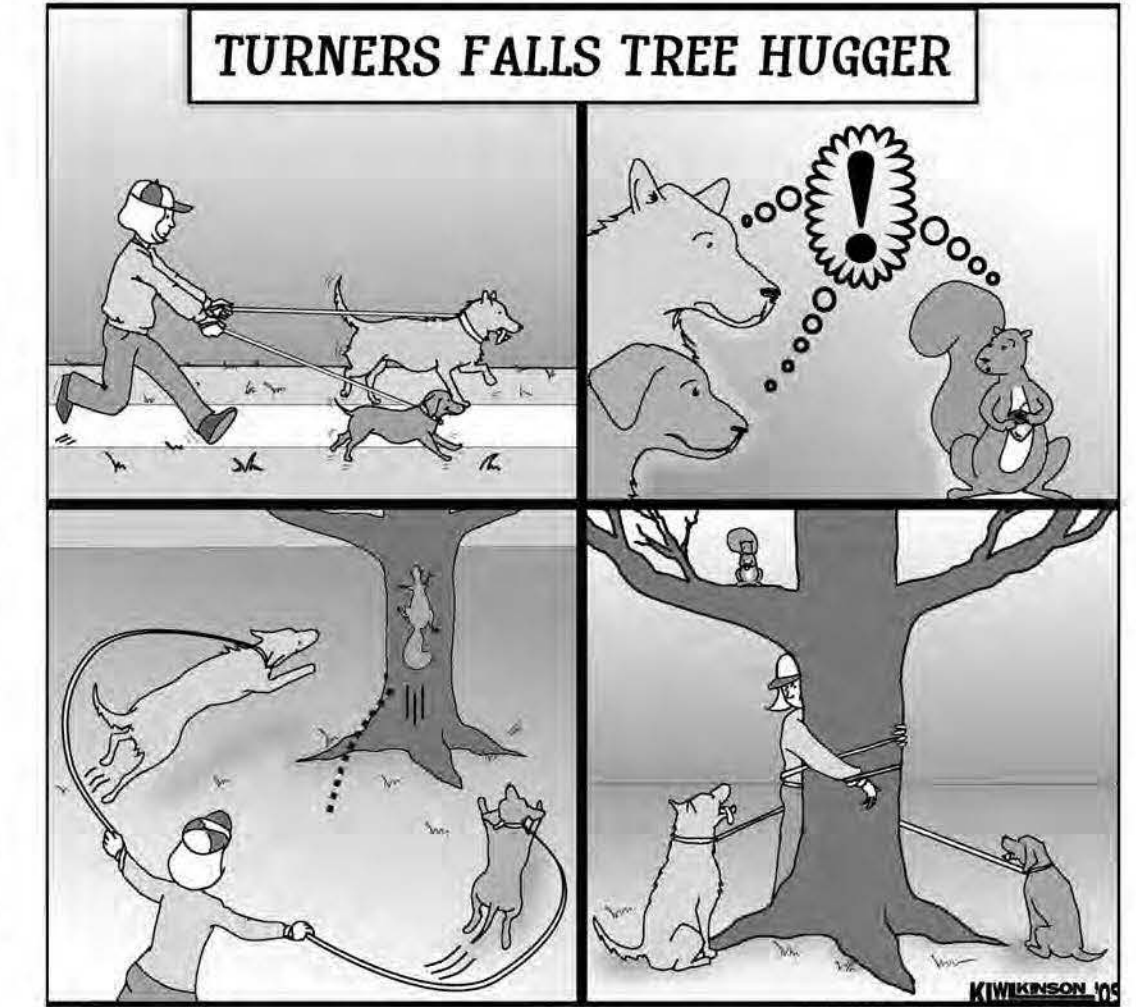
Kulik, who serves on the House Ways and Means committee, said this is the most difficult budgetary time he has seen in his 16 years in state government. To get out of the deficit, he said, the state is going to have to "look for increased efficiencies; we're going to have to reduce what the state provides in services; we're going to have to reduce the workforce. I don't think there's any way to get around that. We have to live within the limits of revenues coming in."

Regarding the major choice confronting the legislature – whether to allow cuts in state aid to local governments and schools, Kulik said he has heard from many people in human services who are advocating in favor of giving the governor expanded 9-C authority, so local governments can share the burden of the coming cuts. Otherwise, Kulik said, they are afraid the axe will fall most heavily on those who are the most vulnerable: the poor, clients of food shelters, homeless shelters, battered women's shelters and the like.

"It is particularly difficult to make these cuts in a time of economic distress," said Kulik, "when people place more demands on social safety nets."

Asked whether Deval Patrick has been bending Barack Obama's ear about additional federal stimulus spending for the states, so the federal government's efforts to create jobs aren't counteracted by new rounds of job cuts at the state level, Kulik said he was not aware of that. But he added, "We are using about 2 million dollars of stimulus funding in the current budget, for things like higher education and public education. But the decline is so significant that even with large infusions of stimulus money, it is not enough to avoid further cuts."

What about the state's reserves? "We currently have about \$550 million in the rainy



KAREN WILKINSON ILLUSTRATION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

G-M School Committee Accepts State Budget

Watching the Gill Montague regional school committee meeting October 14th, I learned why the majority of members refused the town's affordable budget, and kept their own budget, which is identical with the amount the state would give them. The reasoning by most members was, "It's too late into the school year to cut; the teachers were already hired, classes underway, and students placed in programs.

The school committee neglected to mention these facts:

In June of this year, Montague town meeting rejected the school committee budget and lowered it about \$200,000, so the town could afford it. In

July, the school committee said it would review the budget and determine what cuts could be made.

That same month, the state informed the school committee of the budget they would impose (\$16.658 million) if the towns and the school district failed to agree on a budget. Coincidentally, this was the same amount the school committee adopted for their budget number.

In September, voters from Gill and Montague rejected the school committee's budget at district meeting, and agreed on a budget lowered by \$200,000, as requested in June. In October, the school committee agreed to

stick to their \$16.658 million budget.

The conclusion? Despite what the voters and the towns say they can afford, the school committee knows how to get what they want.

The only way to resolve this problem is to end the district, or bankrupt the town.

The outlook for next year looks even worse. My suggestion is, ask the towns what they can afford, then build a budget on the amount of money available, not on dreams again.

-David Thompson
Precinct 4
Turners Falls

Market Thanks

The Great Falls Farmers Market comes to a close on Wednesday, October 28th after another great season selling local produce, baked goods, arts and crafts on the Avenue. On behalf of all the vendors and myself, I would like to thank our many customers for their patronage. I would also like to thank the

Franklin Community Cooperative for sponsoring a weekly advertisement, the *Montague Reporter* for a listing on the Arts and Entertainment page, WHAI for the Community Calender, MCTV for their PSA, the *Town Crier*, Franklin Chamber of Commerce, Local Harvest, and the Great Falls Middle School Students that starred in our Farmers Market Show.

See everyone on May 5th, 2010!

- Don Clegg,
Market Master
Great Falls Farmers Market

Seeking Poets

to submit original work for the Montague Reporter's poetry page. Include 25 word bio sketch. No experience necessary, as a poet. Email to reporter-poems@montaguema.net or mail to 58 Fourth Street, Turners Falls, MA 01376

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Laroche to Leave Town Planner Post



SHAWN WOOLSEY PHOTO

Dan Laroche

BY DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE – Dan Laroche, who became Montague's town planner almost three years ago, is leaving for a job as land use program manager for the Franklin Regional Council of Government's planning department. Before coming to work for Montague, Laroche served as Greenfield's land use planner, and as the director of land protection for the Mount Grace Land Trust.

Laroche said in his new job he will be working with communities in Franklin County to provide them with technical assistance on matters like the Green Communities Act, open space and community development plans, and the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

Laroche said he would also work with towns on special permits, site plan reviews, subdivision regulations and zoning bylaw reviews, and assistance

for specific projects. He will assume his new post in mid-November.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said the selectboard had not yet met to consider how to fill the town planner position, once Laroche leaves.

Looking back on his three-year tenure in Montague, Laroche said one highlight was securing a competitive Chapter 43-d designation and state funding for expedited permitting of the redevelopment of the Strathmore Mill. He acknowledged that the down economy had made it difficult to market that project. He pointed to collaborative work with the RiverCulture project, developing the plans to renovate Unity Park with the parks and recreation commission, acting as point person for the town with the newly formed energy committee, surveying the needs for artist live/work space and updating Montague's open space plan as other high points of his work in Montague.

Selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt called Laroche a quiet but effective presence, "who knows his stuff." She said he will be missed.

She said a tension between the need to hire a replacement for Laroche and expected mid-year cuts in state aid that may cause a crimp in funding to the town has yet to be resolved.

LEVERETT from pg 1 of Environmental Protection would not allow the town to continue the temporary solution of providing bottled water to the Duffy residence much longer. Test wells in the area near the proposed new well came back clean of contaminants, so, he said, there is a good chance the new well will also test clean, perhaps solving the problem for that one household permanently.

The water at the Duffy residence had been showing manganese levels of around .03 parts per million until last year, when the level of manganese spiked to 30 parts per million. Brazeau said the DEP considers the spike in manganese levels to be an indicator of the infiltration of other contaminants – he mentioned benzene and toluene – leaching from the landfill toward the private wells in the area.

He said well testing also showed manganese levels rising sharply at the Nagy residence on Teawaddle Hill Road in the last few weeks. The town is now delivering bottled water to the Nagy residence.

Brazeau told voters the town was exploring the possibility of putting in one public water supply well, or four individual wells, to serve affected homes on Teawaddle Hill Road. But if wells cannot be sited there, or fail to test clean, he said the town might consider "possibly taking the homes," a comment which produced low whistles in the hall. Admitting it might cost \$1.5

million for the town to take the affected houses on Teawaddle Hill Road, Brazeau said, on the other hand, "I don't want any of my friends coming in and saying 'I'm sick, and it's due to the town'."

He pointed out the town has spent upwards of a third of a million dollars over the last 15 years addressing contamination to the private wells near the landfill.

The money approved on Tuesday will pay for cutting an access road to the site above the Duffy residence from Cemetery Road, drilling the well, testing it, and connecting it to the house if it tests clean. The money will also pay for clean-up of the town's former stump dump, located beside the former landfill. The stump dump may be contributing to the manganese levels in the groundwater, Brazeau said.

Should the new well fail to test clean, then the money appropriated, added to \$10,000 set aside earlier to address the contaminated wells, will pay for the installation of a new filtration system at the Duffy residence, and operation of that filtration system (with

chlorine added in the home every two weeks or so) until next annual town meeting.

Brazeau proposed forming a committee to come up with a long term cost/benefit analysis for resolving the issue of affected wells on Teawaddle Hill Road.

Voters approved the warrant article by a vote of 83 to 3.

A separate measure to set aside \$5,000 from stabilization to cover costs of an investment grade audit of town buildings – including the elementary school, town hall, library, former library, safety complex, and former fire station – in the planned energy performance contract to be conducted by Siemens Corporation passed unanimously. The money will only be needed if the town decides not go forward with the energy upgrades to town buildings. It would then be used to cover the cost to Siemens for performing the audit.

But selectboard member Peter d'Errico said, "Our sense is there will be multiple opportunities going forward," to save energy in town buildings. Those energy see **LEVERETT** pg 8

IMPLICATED from pg 1 back to the year 2001, no records existing for transactions in the two previous years of Peffer's tenure as treasurer for the district.

It was Margola who informed the water commissioners that Peffer had been involved in similar misappropriation of funds for Temple Israel, Banash said.

Margola provided documentation of at least \$38,000 in misappropriated funds under Peffer's control at the water district during the years 2001 to 2008; during which time she also apparently repaid \$23,000 to the district. She also presented a bill to the district for \$3,000 for a false audit, which she prepared using fabricated numbers

and delivered to the water commissioners under Ed Margola's own letterhead, Banash said. He said Peffer has since repaid the district for the \$3,000 charged for the false audit.

As for the first two years of her tenure with the water district, Banash said, "Our assumption is that the two years we don't have records for are also suspect. The files were in horrendous condition."

Banash said he and the other commissioners spent 60 to 70 hours reconstructing the files so they could be presented to the auditor.

Banash said as chair of the water commissioners, he receives a stipend of \$1,000 a year, while the other commis-

sioners, Louis Chappell and Jeffrey Suprenant, receive \$750 a year for their work. Peffer was paid \$750 a year in her role as treasurer until 2005, when her stipend was raised to \$1,000 a year.

The Riverside Water District serves 110 households, and has an average revenue stream of around \$60,000 a year. The district paid Margola \$5,000 to conduct the forensic audit on the financial records.

"We were a little mom and pop organization," said Banash, interviewed in the district's small office in the Riverside Municipal Building, piled high on every horizontal surface with aromatic apple pies in advance of the Gill Craft Fair last week-

end. "We all volunteered to get tasks done, and trusted each other. [Peffer] violated that trust."

The district won competitive awards from the state Department of Environmental Protection for providing safe, clean water three years in a row, from 2005 to 2007; those plaques are proudly displayed on the office walls.

Banash said a severe water main leak on Walnut Street led to the loss of many thousands of gallons of water, and the resulting overages due to Greenfield may have allowed Peffer to cover up some of the misappropriated funds. He said the district was forced to implement a maintenance fee at the time the water

main leak was discovered and repaired of \$90 per household per quarter. That fee was subsequently reduced and then eliminated, he added.

"There was such a disparity between what we were taking in and what we were paying out. We couldn't see the forest for the trees," Banash said.

In his annual report issued in June of 2009, Banash wrote, "We continue to deal with the aftermath of our former treasurer's misadventure with our funds... We will continue to pursue this matter with all appropriate authorities to ensure that the Riverside Water District and its clients are made whole from their losses."



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LENDER RCT

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Group Home Discussed

BY JOSH HEINEMANN – Police chief Ed Chase presented information to the Wendell selectboard on October 14th about a residence for developmentally disadvantaged sex offenders recently established on Wendell Depot Road by an agency called Community Resources for Justice (CRJ).

Chase said the program is located in a house that was owned by the former Lake Grove School, but that is the only relationship between Lake Grove, Maple Valley and CRJ.

Chase met with the staff at the house prior to the selectboard meeting, and said they seemed very professional. Now, with two residents on site, there are three staff on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Chase said he had posted information on the two current residents, as is required for all level III sex offenders. When the

full complement of five residents are housed at the group home, four staff people will be assigned to supervise them, along with an on-site clinician.

The building is totally alarmed, and no resident will ever be unsupervised, or be allowed to leave the premises without staff accompaniment, Chase reported.

The agency that operates the facility, CRJ, has stated they want to interact with the town, including arranging possible community volunteer work. They plan to hold an open house at the group home, or drop-in days when Wendell citizens can visit.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard said even if only a few people from outside attend, the fact CRJ holds an open house might soften some critical attitudes that have already been expressed toward the residence. It might be a good idea to invite representatives from the agency

to a selectboard meeting, she added, or include information about CRJ in a town newsletter.

Phone calls to Community Resources for Justice seeking comment on the new group home on Wendell Depot Road were not returned by press time.

The organization's website (www.crjustice.org) describes the group's philosophy this way:

"At Community Resources for Justice, we believe that society wins when all people are given the support and tools to lead responsible, productive, and dignified lives.

"Whether transitioning inmates back into mainstream society, diverting troubled youth away from crime and towards productive and fulfilling lives, or providing those with developmental disabilities with a chance to grow and flourish in the community, Community Resources for Justice welcomes and fosters change.

"Our research and consulting services advance evidence based practices that inform systems-level change while our community-based programs promote public safety and individual growth for some of society's most challenged individuals through structured independent living."

Jogger Still in Critical Condition

In other police department news, on Saturday, September 26th, at about 8:30 a.m., a small pickup truck driven by Jan see WENDELL pg 7

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Montague City Polls Will Move to Police Station

BY BILL DRAKE – Precinct 6 will now vote at the fully accessible community room of the new Montague police station at 181 Turnpike Road – in Precinct 3.

Selectboard member Mark Fairbrother, who grew up in Precinct 6, said he regretted the decision. He called the move of the polling place from the former Montague City elementary school building, now the Masonic Lodge, "a final knell to that community. When I grew up [in Montague City] I walked past a library, a general store, a hospital, a church; now there is none of that. And this is just one more thing gone."

Still, Fairbrother joined the rest of the board in voting unanimously at their October 19th meeting to change the polling venue to the new police station, located just outside the boundary of Precinct 6, in Precinct 3. The special primary election on December 8th, for Senator Ted Kennedy's vacant seat, will be the first election at the new polling station.

On election days, "Signs will be placed at the end of the road [Masonic Street]," on the way to the old polling place, "to remind voters of the change," said town clerk Deb Bourbeau, who added, "I'm not picking on the Masonic Lodge."

To continue polling at the Lodge, the town would have had to put money into the building to improve accessibility, specifically: redesigning the wheelchair ramp angle, front landing, and adding automatic door opening hardware for handicapped voters. The board felt the costs of these improvements outweighed the benefits of keeping the polling station in the precinct.

The move to the police station community room will ensure equal voting access to all Precinct 6 voters, Bourbeau said, and bring the town of Montague one step – or perhaps one wheelchair ramp – closer to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In other news, the selectboard voted to permit research by

Deborah Picking and the UMass Plant and Soil Science department on a possible vernal pool located on town land just south of the Turnpike Road transfer station. Vernal pools, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, offer critical spawning areas for amphibians, such as salamanders and frogs. The study is part of a larger work mapping vernal pools throughout southern New England; a hydrology and soil study of the area will be provided to the town.

In a follow-up meeting on Wednesday, at 4 p.m., the selectboard met with Roland Butzke, a representative of Siemens Corporation, to answer final questions about the proposed energy performance contract Siemens will provide for the town. As planned, Montague will contract with Siemens, along with about ten other towns in Franklin County, to perform energy upgrades on town buildings. The improvements will be paid for over 20 years through savings on utility bills, guaranteed by Siemens.

In Montague's case, the buildings slated for work include the wastewater treatment plant, the town hall, the three branch libraries, the field house at Unity Park, and the highway garage.

The finance committee approved a transfer of reserve funds of \$3,847.80 on Wednesday to pay for, and the selectboard voted to approve an investment grade audit of these buildings, also to be conducted by Siemens. That money will only be spent in the event the town does not decide to go forward with the work, once the detailed energy audit is completed.

The town hopes to apply for federal grant funds totaling \$150,000 to help defray part of the long term cost of the energy upgrades, allowing the town to realize more savings in departmental utility bills. The town hopes to secure financing for the rest of the contracted work with Siemens through the USDA, which may also provide a capital grant to pay for some of the work.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill to Commission Management Study

BY DAVID DETMOLD – Members of the Gill selectboard interviewed candidates on Monday, October 19th, for a job consulting with the town on a management study. The study will review the operation of town departments and determine if they are running efficiently, or whether cost savings can be located without sacrificing services to residents.

Four consulting firms have applied for the job, which will be paid for with \$10,000 from the payments in lieu of taxes given to the town annually by Northfield Mount Hermon, to help pay for emergency services, police and fire protection.

Selectboard chair Ann Banash said the consultant picked will help the town by “looking at our police, fire and highway departments, to provide us an objective opinion of what Gill really needs.”

She said one study that is more than a decade old determined the town needed to have three fire trucks, for example. One of the town’s fire trucks is approaching retirement age, and efforts to get Northfield Mount Hermon to buy a new fire truck for the town (since the tallest buildings in town are at the private school) have so far been inconclusive.

Banash pointed out there is “a lot of discussion in town about

how many police officers we need,” which an objective management study could help to resolve.

Selectboard member John Ward, who participated in the interviews with two consulting firms on Monday, and will take part in the two remaining interviews on October 26th, said, “What I’m most looking for is someone with no preconceived agenda, who has the experience and expertise to do the job. Experience working with small towns is a definite plus,” he added.

The four consultants in the running are: Municipal Resources of Meredith, NH; Groux Associates of North Chatham; Matrix Consulting Group of Andover, and the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

In other news from their October 13th meeting, the board congratulated departing highway employee George Emery for his successful bid to become the new Sunderland highway superintendent. Gill received 28 applications to fill the truck driver/laborer position left open by Emery’s departure; interviews took place on Tuesday, the 20th.

Representative Chris Donelan and state senator Stan Rosenberg will hold office hours at the Gill town hall on Monday, October 26th, at 3:30 p.m. to hear con-

cerns from the public. Town officials will also be asking the lawmakers to file special legislation to combine the tax collector and treasurer positions at town hall, and make them appointed position, as a recent Department of Revenue review of Gill’s financial practices recommended.

A recent closed auction of the so-called Dawson property on Main Road, abutting the Yarnac property, failed to turn up a minimum bid of \$10,000. Tax collector Ronnie LaChance will hold an open auction soon (“Going once, going twice...!”) on the tax-title property, at a time and date to be determined.

The Franklin County sheriff’s department crew has been scraping and painting the Riverside Municipal Building over the past week.

The study committee appointed to look into maintenance issues at the Riverside building reported to the selectboard on the 13th that the roof seems good to last for the next three to five years. The 19 twelve over twelve, single pane windows are a focus of more immediate concern, as the glazing is weak, and a lot of heat is being lost through the windows. The committee wondered whether a party of volunteers couldn’t remove and reglaze the windows one at a time before the heating season is too far advanced.

If the town proceeds to work with Siemens Corporation on an energy-saving performance contract, replacing the windows and the boiler at the Riverside building would be top priorities. A leaky toilet and crumbling front steps are smaller items needed for replacement at the building, which the town’s highway department could probably help with.

Pam Shoemaker, of the Gill historical commission, is attempting to get the building listed on the Massachusetts Registry of Historic Places.

Banash cautioned the study committee to develop an overall plan for maintenance at the building, rather than follow a haphazard approach to renovations. The board appointed Maurice Dumas to the Riverside building study committee.

The study committee will present a double feature of children’s and family-oriented films outdoors, against the back wall of the Riverside Building, on Friday, October 30th, the day before Hallowe’en.

Ken Sprankle, chair of the Gill conservation commission, said the commission was hoping to set up a subcommittee to develop a 10-year stewardship and recreation plan for the use of the new 174-acre town forest on Hoe Shop Road. The board gave him approval to set up the new committee.

“Ultimately, the conservation commission is responsible for decisions, but a town forest board

could do a lot of the legwork to manage the property,” Sprankle said. He said Ray Purington, Dick French, and newly appointed conservation commission member Chris Polatin have all offered to serve on the new subcommittee, which will identify the natural resources present on the land and determine where to place walking trails.

“That property was bought because it has a lot of great ecological resources, and great recreational opportunities as well,” said Sprankle.

Banash recommended the land be posted for “No Snowmobiles or All Terrain Vehicles,” before trails are developed, so there would be no question in the public mind that motorized vehicles are prohibited from the new town forest.

Sprankle said the new subcommittee could look at management plans for town-owned land in other parts of town, as well, like the old ferry landings, the land behind the elementary school, and other parcels.

He said the conservation commission would put \$3,500 of previously appropriated funds toward the Agricultural Preservation Restriction purchase of the Urgiel property, an approximately 80-acre dairy farm on Munn’s Ferry Road. This leaves just \$3,500 in the town’s land conservation fund, presently, and Sprankle said another APR purchase is in the offing for which town matching funds may soon be needed.

from **WENDELL** pg 6

of Wendell, traveling west collided with a jogger, Terry Desaultels, heading east up the hill on Mormon Hollow Road, seriously injuring Desaultels, who was taken by Life Flight to UMass Memorial Hospital in Worcester. As of Wednesday morning, Desaultels is still in critical condition, now in intensive care at Baystate Medical in Springfield.

Chase responded to the scene of the accident. After the jogger was in the air on her way to Worcester, he returned to the scene, called in the state accident reconstruction team and turned the investigation over to them. He did not provide the driver’s name to local papers.

Wendell citizen Steve Broll, formerly a member of the community policing committee, questioned Chase about why the driver’s name was not initially publicized.

Chase said he did not know the driver; met him the first time on the day of the incident; and wasn’t protecting anyone from publicity. After the investigation was under the state police jurisdiction, releasing the driver’s name was up to them, Chase

explained. While an investigation is under way, names may be withheld.

Broll also asked if Chase could provide more timely submissions of the Wendell police log to the Montague Reporter.

Chase said he sends the logs in regularly, but there is often little of significance to report. He gave an example of a typical call: for a tree down on electric wires. Chase said he types the logs on a typewriter, and sends them in by fax. “I am not the most proficient computer user.”

Broll offered to help Chase by sending the logs in by email, and offered to call Chase at the appropriate time every two weeks to remind him.

He thanked Chase for close to 30 years of virtually uncompensated work serving the town as police chief.

Frozen Food Fight

Harry Williston, chair of the board of health, met the selectboard to give the health board’s side of the story about frozen food seized from the town office freezer. The removal of the frozen food in question was the topic of a recent complaint to the board from assessor Tom Mangan on September 16th, who

said the food was his personal property, left there for his future use, since his home freezer was on the fritz. Mangan wants the town to reimburse him for the food, which he said was sealed and frozen and provided no health threat.

Williston said the food was in the freezer a week before the board of health left a sign for the owner, explaining they would remove the food if not claimed. There was no label identifying the food, and no one came forward to claim it, so even though it was frozen the health board disposed of it.

Selectboard member Dan Keller agreed that sanitation in the town office kitchen is a responsibility of the board of health, and said they acted within their authority.

Heard said she did not see a need for incurring the expense of a conversation with town counsel on the matter.

Williston told the selectboard the highway department would be able to load the old generator from the highway garage onto a trailer, but it would then be the responsibility of Pine Brook Camp to move it and unload it.

Insulating Town Hall

The board voted to accept a bid of \$8,815.20 from Eastern Weatherization for insulating town hall. Because the building has been a heat sink, the policy has been to leave the thermostat set at 55 degrees, so in the event of electrical power failure there is more time before the pipes freeze. But once the building is better insulated it should be possible to keep the thermostat at a lower setting.

The original town hall windows were replaced by double glazed windows, but those are old now and need some repair. Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser suggested that insulating window quilts would make a big difference in keeping the building warm, and Keller asked him to write up the appropriate specifications and start looking and comparing prices.

Pooser suggested the town could save more by protecting the pipes with heat tape and insulation.

A special town meeting was set for Wednesday, November 18th to authorize spending money for weatherizing town hall, and also to officially appoint the emergency management committee, to accept any changes to the cell tower bylaw that fol-

low from the planning board hearing of October 20th, and to pay bills from prior years.

Regionalization Report

The finance committee met the selectboard and reported on a recent school regionalization committee meeting, and their ongoing quest to bring Wendell’s per student assessment at Mahar in line with other district towns.

At the October 8th regionalization meeting at Mahar, consultant Ken Rocke said he saw little reason for Wendell and New Salem to join a K-12 region with Orange and Petersham, either financially or academically. Swift River School spends more per student than Orange, and MCAS test results at Swift River School are significantly higher than the scores at Orange elementary schools. A regional district would put teachers in all the elementary schools on the same seniority list, and would open the possibility of transferring them district wide. Rocke offered ways that might reduce some of the negative impact of a K-12, but the push for forcing the issue at the state level has weakened in the past year.


State senator Steve Brewer see **WENDELL** pg 12

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Amherst - Pelham Superintendent Calls for an Override



DETMOLD PHOTO

Amherst-Pelham Superintendent Alberto Gonzales

BY DAVID DETMOLD LEVERETT – Amherst-Pelham superintendent Alberto Rodriguez paid a visit to the Leverett selectboard on Monday, October 19th to introduce himself to the board and begin discussion of the FY '10 budget process.

He began by saying, "I know my talk with the Leverett school committee about moving the 6th graders to the middle school created much consternation among parents who are happy with their K-6 school. I was coming from a purely pedagogical angle. I

think the curriculum would be more rigorous."

Rigor was a word Rodriguez returned to in different formulations to describe his philosophy of education time and again as his hour-and-a-half presentation continued.

He sought to allay fears that a move of sixth graders would happen anytime soon. "We have a little bit of a leadership issue at the middle school right now," Rodriguez admitted.

By this, he referred to the see **VERRIDE** pg 9

LEVERETT from page 5 efficiency upgrades would be paid for from guaranteed savings on utility bills for the town, over a 15 or 20 year period.

Informal discussions on the prospect of school regionalization and the progress of the affordable housing committee followed action on the two warrant articles.

In the first presentation, Leverett school committee chair Kip Fonsh told town meeting the threat of regionalization being forced by the state had receded. But, he said, Governor Deval Patrick's effort to raise the cap on charter schools "poses a very serious threat to public education

throughout the Commonwealth, and it poses a threat to Leverett as well. If there is the perception that the quality of education here at Leverett Elementary is diminished, people will vote with their feet and take with them significant money: \$10,000 to \$18,000 per student. If we do not fund a level of education that is sound here at Leverett Elementary, people will leave. I believe that is a very serious threat to this community over the next 12 months, and we ought to think very seriously about how we respond."

Regional school committee chair Farshid Hajir said the proposal put forward by Amherst-Pelham superintendent Alberto

Rodriguez to consolidate sixth grades at the middle school in Amherst was now "on the back burner." He attributed the proposal, at least in part, to the fact that the middle school used to house ninth graders, but with that grade moved to the high school, under-capacity left a "vacuum that is sucking the sixth grades up."

As to regionalization, Hajir spoke of a national movement to consolidate schools, a movement that had faded only temporarily.

"The giant has not been slain," he said. "The giant has gone back to his cave. When he comes out again, we'll be prepared."

Then, as the clock ticked toward nine p.m., affordable

housing committee co-chair Fenna Lee Bonsignore launched into a decade's long history of attempts – so far all in vain – to secure land or rehab housing to create units of affordable housing in a town that currently has none, according to state measures.

But the committee did present plans for creating 11 units of clustered affordable housing on Montague Road, west of the intersection of Cave Hill, on land presently owned by Cows Lumber. Cows would donate the land in return for two housing lots, and town supplied infrastructure improvements (access road and utilities). The town would be able to offer the other

homes by lottery, with preference given for children of Leverett families and seniors. Development of the infrastructure would be paid for by bonding around half a million dollars against future community preservation act funds, to reduce unit costs.

The selectboard had asked the affordable housing committee to hold a discussion with town meeting voters prior to committing more funds to developing plans for the Montague Road site, in order to gauge town support for the project. But given the exhaustive presentation, and the exhaustion of the voters, no back and forth on the subject took place.



• fashion windows



DAVOL PHOTO

Katie Pray Creations in the Window of the Crocker Building

Turners Falls RiverCulture has organized a Fashion Windows project in empty storefronts on Avenue A, as a way to draw attention to the potential of the empty spaces to possible renters, and to showcase the talent of local fashion designers.

Other establishments whose storefronts are not vacant also jumped at the chance to spruce up their windows and be part of the excitement.

The fashions currently on display are works from the Fabrication Fashion Show that took place at the Turners Falls Block Party in August.

There is a long history of fashion in storefront windows, but on the Avenue all the items on display are made from recycled

materials and are all created by local talent.

RiverCulture coordinator Lisa Davol notes the lack of opportunity for clothing designers to show their work. It may not find a home in art galleries, mainstream clothing stores, craft fairs, or other venues. On the Ave, designers have a unique space to showcase their talent.

All windows have contact information on the designer whose work is being shown, and most are available to take special commissions. Perhaps a costume, holiday dress or other one of a kind fabulous article of clothing is needed? The perfect outfit is only a call away.

RiverCulture hopes the project will continue until the

storefronts are rented. Currently, the window displays are in the Crocker Building, former Dips and Clips, Montague Catholic Social Ministries Playgroup, Northeast Foundation for Children and the AV House. More storefronts are expected to be added, pending approval from building owners; Riverculture expects to expand the designers to include Suzee's Laundromat's annual fashion show designers as well. Designers on view currently include Sarah Pruitt, Katie Pray, Nina Rossi, Yoshi, Rachel Teumim, Ami Podlenski, Sarah Swanson, and Mahajoy Laufer.

For more information on the Turners Falls RiverCulture project, visit www.turnersfallsriverculture.org.

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MOVE Members Visit the Brick House

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS—On Friday, October 16th, Ramona Africa, communications director for the MOVE organization, made an appearance at the Brick House Community Resource Center, in conjunction with a screening of a documentary—also called *MOVE*—by Benjamin Garry and Matt Sullivan, of Cohort Media.

The filmmakers, who said they put the film together when they were fresh out of college in Philadelphia, combined live interviews with journalists who covered the story of MOVE's confrontation with the City of Philadelphia with archival news reel footage, still photography, and voice-over narration by Boston College professor emeritus of history Howard Zinn.

The film documents the story of the Black radical group's challenge to the power structure in

Philadelphia in the 1970s, culminating in the firebombing of their row house headquarters by the Philadelphia police in 1985.

Ramona Africa was the only adult member of the MOVE organization to escape the blaze that day, along with one of the group's children.

The MOVE organization was inspired by the teachings of John Africa, who proposed that the System, as he called it, was guilty of enslaving life, whether animals in zoos, or human beings in prison bondage, or other forms of political and social oppression. Members took the last name of Africa, refrained from cutting their hair, and preached revolution, sometimes at all hours of the day and night via megaphone, which upset their neighbors.

A crowd of about 40 people jammed the community room on the ground floor of the Brick

House Friday to hear Ramona Africa, her fellow MOVE member Carlos Africa, and the filmmakers discuss their work.

As the opening credits punched the screen in type stamped like prison license plates, an image of a rifle toting, dreadlocked MOVE member in white fatigues set the scene. MOVE was not only a revolutionary organization, but, to all appearances, an organization like the Black Panthers, committed to armed self-defense.

During an August, 1978 shoot-out at the MOVE communal home in Powelton Village in Philadelphia, a police officer, James Ramp, was shot and killed. Conflicting claims of where the bullet came from—with members of the news media interviewed in the film contending it came from behind police lines, striking Ramp at a downward angle in the



Ramona Africa at the Brick House

back, not from the basement of the MOVE house, where members were holed up and inundated with water from fire hoses—were disregarded in the trial that fol-

lowed. Nine MOVE members were sentenced to 32 years to life for the officer's death. Eight remain in jail. The ninth, Merle see **MOVE** page 14

from **OVERRIDE** page 8 sudden departure of principal Glenda Cresto on August 31st of this year, three days into the school year. The administrative void at the middle school is being filled temporarily by Amherst high school principal Mark Jackson taking on the additional responsibility of middle school principal, aided by Michael Hayes as assistant principal, a role Hayes filled before Cresto was hired one year ago.

Rodriguez promised to wait until the curriculum was "more rigorous" at the middle school before reviving the proposal to move 6th grades there.

He also said, "The intricacies of the regional agreement are new to me. They are quite com-

plicated. Moving sixth grades, whether they be from Shutesbury, Leverett, Pelham or Amherst, would basically require an abrogation of the regional agreement itself."

Saying, "It's not going to happen any time soon," Rodriguez let the matter drop.

Rodriguez said he would like all the students in the Amherst-Pelham school district, and the associated elementary schools of Leverett and Shutesbury "to be exposed to the same curriculum, K-12, while we can still maintain the individual character of the towns and their communities."

Turning to the budget, Rodriguez dove right in, saying, "I think there is a need for an override. I know there is concern

and Shutesbury had voted for higher school budget numbers than the voters of Pelham and Amherst agreed to last year, due to "a lack of override capacity in Amherst." Others in the room expressed the conviction the Amherst selectboard and finance committee were united in support of an override this year.

Brazeau said his son would have been better off taking his senior year at G.C.C., rather than have to fight to get into the classes he wanted at Amherst High.

"The high school has been highly rated," said Brazeau. "We moved here for that reason. It's been cut so much in recent years, the Russian program's gone now," that its reputation is no longer matched by the reality of

Much of the ensuing discussion focused on how to preserve educational programs at the high school.

Selectboard chair Richard Brazeau pointed out that Leverett

and Shutesbury had voted for higher school budget numbers than the voters of Pelham and Amherst agreed to last year, due to "a lack of override capacity in Amherst." Others in the room expressed the conviction the Amherst selectboard and finance committee were united in support of an override this year.

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"The high school has been highly rated," said Brazeau. "We moved here for that reason. It's been cut so much in recent years, the Russian program's gone now," that its reputation is no longer matched by the reality of

students' experience there. "We are living more and more in a world of diminishing choices and resources," responded Rodriguez, ruefully.

Amherst-Pelham school committee chair Farshid Hajir said the present trimester system at the high school was not affording students as much teacher contact time as a semester system would, and it costs the district \$270,000 more annually than a semester system, but cannot be changed without negotiating schedule changes with the teachers' union.

Rodriguez said students now have study hall periods two trimesters a year, and if cuts continue, that could easily become study halls for all three trimesters. **MQ**

WOLF from page 1

out the country, but were practically extirpated in the lower 48 by the mid-1800s. Even now, outside of protected territories like national parks and wildlife refuges, wolves are regularly killed for sport or by ranchers.

Wolves have been successfully reintroduced in Yellowstone National Park, and are making their way back to their original territorial range on their own, descending from Canada into the northern states. So far, however, wolves have not made it into New England, and New England states have been disinclined to take part in their reintroduction or to protect their habitat.

Weber explained that the absence of natural predators like wolves leads to ecosystem stagnation. Where wolves are reintroduced, many benefits are found. For instance, in Yellowstone, the reintroduction of wolves has led to the

increased movement of elk. Their hooves aerate the soil, which in turn creates healthier grass, and the increased running, rather than all that standing around and munching, allows trees in the park to grow taller. Beavers return, and along with them, aquatic habitats.

While the talk was of great interest, the real treat came with the introduction of three animals, two wolves and one wolf-dog mix. Used as ambassadors and taken around the country to educate the public, the wolves walked among the well-behaved crowd, sniffing the audience members and occasionally licking those with pets at home.

According to Weber, the wolves are typically much more standoffish in crowds of three and four hundred, but our intimate setting put them at ease. The three of them: Magpie, the dog-wolf mix Abraham, and Illiamna cavorted and played, sounding at times like they might

be fighting, though Weber explained that real fighting between wolves takes place in absolute silence and is impossible to mistake.

The animals enjoyed being the center of attention and were clearly making the most of it, much to the delight of adults and children in the audience.

As Weber explained, people breed wolves with dogs to get half-breed animals they can sell as expensive and exotic pets. Unfortunately, this practice is not only illegal, it creates animals that are not fit to be either pets or wild animals. The resulting offspring are usually mistreated and come to harm. Weber estimated there are nearly a quarter million wolf-dog crossbreeds in the United States, some of which end up at sanctuaries like his.

Weber illustrated some of the differences between dogs and wolves with Magpie and Abraham. For instance, wolves have a wedge-shaped head, long

neck and slanted eyes. In contrast to dogs, their legs are close together under a narrow chest, their elbows pointed straight back for pivoting at fast speeds. Their large feet are equipped with webbed toes for ease of movement over snow, and their hind paws come down in the exact same spot as their front paws for more efficient movement.

Their leg structure gives them their smooth gait and speed—up to 35 miles per hour.

Another difference between dogs and wolves is one that might seem surprising: dogs are the more aggressive species. Weber emphasized that wolves do not eat people, and in fact will run away from them in the wild.

If people understood wolves, and were fascinated by them rather than frightened, wolves would stand a better chance in the world. Which, after all, is what Mission: Wolf is all about. **MQ**

CONTE FISH from page 1

will evaluate "hydrokinetic turbines, which are small turbines placed in open flowing water that work like underwater windmills." The lab will run tests to determine if these turbines harm fish that pass through their rotating blades, and whether fish can actively detect and avoid the turbines in open flowing environments.

The open house on Saturday provided the public a rare look into the Conte Fish Lab facility. As Pietryka said, visitors "learned how dams and natural barriers effect migration, fish passage, spawning, and life cycles."

For many years, mankind has made it difficult or impossible for fish to make their return trip upstream to spawn. Now, the scientists at the Conte Fish Lab are working to ensure the circle of life continues for anadromous species. **MQ**

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It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

Poetry Page edited by
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Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at 24 3rd Street,
Turners Falls, MA 01376;
or email us your poetry at
reporter-poems@montaguema.net

AN EXORCISM FOR THE HELL OF IT

we are laughing
we are in this room laughing
now and a glass or two
I WILL NOT THINK OF YOU DEAD
I WILL NOT THINK OF YOU DEAD
(mantra against too much loss)

tonight the myth of healing will allow
the machine of sleep to make us on
the other side

our new minerals
new technologies will rise to meet

towns collecting on the
map maker's desk a coffee stain or
mountain range lights swept into the valley as if
miracles wander too close to the door

cut walls until
no criminal
can hide

who will prevent our
knowing stability of
a new holdout?

organize a slipping tone of gray
arrange a landing for a thousand
models of loneliness

something fits a
situated darkness despite the
whimpering "no"

starved of patience
taste of release

only in the brightest day we find two
colonies of ants battling under a tree
we learned from them my god
we learned from them
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL ANTS
STOP FIGHTING!

--CAConrad
Philadelphia



CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES:

Susie Timmons was born in Chicago, grew up in New Jersey, and moved to New York City in 1975 where she lives now. Her poems have appeared in the Poetry Project newsletter, Boog City Reader, ecstatic peace, Court Green, Satellite Telephone, and the anthologies: UP IS UP BUT SO IS DOWN and New York's Downtown Literary Scene 1974-1992. Susie's book publications include: HOG WILD; LOCKED FROM THE OUTSIDE, the first winner of the Ted Berrigan Award; and THE NEW OLD PAINT (forthcoming from Faux Press, 2010). She has been awarded grants from the Fund for Poetry, nominated for the Rome Prize in Literature, taught workshops at Poetry Project St. Marks Church, appeared in the film MONEY by auteur Henry Hills, danced in a Sally Silvers piece, per-

formed in the opera DEAD STORIES by Christian Marclay, collaborated with artist Rebecca Howland, and written lyrics for TOY KILLERS: THE UNLISTENABLE YEARS (ugExplode records). In addition to Toy Killers, she's played with John Zorn & Judy Dunaway, among others. Susie graduated Smith College with a degree in Geology in 1995. She went on to pursue graduate studies in invertebrate paleontology at the University of Chicago.

CAConrad is the recipient of THE GIL OTT BOOK AWARD for The Book of Frank (Chax Press, 2009). He is also the author of Advanced Elvis Course (Soft Skull Press, 2009), (Soma)tic Midge (Faux Press, 2008), Deviant Propulsion (Soft Skull Press, 2006), and a forthcoming col-

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(Soma)tic Poetry Exercise & Poem

by CAConrad

YOU IN YOUR SOUP

for Juliana Spahr & David Buuck

First we must gather ingredients for the soup. It's whatever you want, but my soup included: carrots, onions, beets, burdock root, celery, kale, mustard greens, chard (4 roots, 4 stalks & greens, or, an even exchange with yang underground and yin above-ground), salt and water. Before chopping, sit with all the ingredients in your lap, or at least near you while you meditate however it is you meditate. But try to meditate on how this FOOD SOURCE is about to become your body. Chop and cook your soup. After soup has cooled, place the soup in a deep bowl, deep enough that you can submerge your hand. Unplug the phone, ignore the world. If you are right-handed then your left hand will be submerged into the soup, or the reverse, if the reverse. Sit for awhile with eyes closed, FEELING the soup with the submerged hand, pinch bits of carrot, or whatever is in there, FEEL it FEEL it, feel IT before IT'S eaten. Take notes about your body and the soup in the bowl before it becomes your body. The roots have recently been HUMMING underground forging themselves; stalks and leaves stretching into the light, and rain, and slight flutter of insect wings, ALL have now COOKED TOGETHER to become YOU. Take notes, take notes, many notes. Use a HUGE spoon if you have one, this to reduce your sense of your own size. Take notes about what THIS MEANS TO YOU to reduce your sense of your own size. Dip the spoon into the soup, scraping your hand, eat. Take notes about how this tastes, take notes about YOUR marinated hand-soup. Are the ingredients organic? Take notes, take notes, source of THE SOURCE is for the notes now. If ingredients are not organic, were there labels at the store telling where they were from? Take notes. Were any ingredients GMO? How do you feel about GMO foods? Notes, notes. Cup your submerged hand and eat from it. Run your tongue along the surface of your hand, and lick your fingers clean. Put your hand back in your soup. Can you feel the soup in your body, in your blood, coursing through you, can you feel this yet? Eat your soup with your HUGE spoon and cupped hand eat it eat it eat it all, licking the bowl and licking your hand CLEAN. Take notes about ANYTHING that comes to mind, pressing your now SOUPLESS hand to your forehead thinking thinking thinking about ANYTHING at all running your now SOUPLESS hand ALL OVER YOUR HEAD while thinking and writing. Now take all of your notes and use THE FILTERS "ACCENTUATE" and "ENGINE" to shape your poem.

KICK THE FLUSH

when I die I want the blue
lights in my head to
come on when I
wake tomorrow I want the
blue lights to disappear
it's not extinction
it's a new bloom who
weeds can grow up with
a marvelous
understatement opening miles
we never counted how many
dents we made in
HIS head we just wanted
the giant unconscious
we wanted safety
we were too frightened to
fucking count
we're driving away
faster, then faster and faster
no one needs
to know how many
dents we put in HIS head
give me over listless to a
grass-filled mote
whose seismic odor
gives me up easy as
anyone some days
it's the impossibility of
innocence pleasing this
gonad plantation but it
ain't coming up through me
bonus-ing out the systems with
a fade-away sentence of
the sun
keep your threats at
blade-level so THEY
see we mean it
this is not a fucking
joke you dirty pothead
death hurts faster when flying
the giant
held us to the
light to
squint at our
translucent qualities
we were never traded cold
we were wild by the inches
we were always HIS favorite
as my smell of memory insists
HE could if HE
wanted to develop
an odor to please us take
HIS shirt off
aid our anticipation
but when HE demanded respect HE
was surprised to
find out what HE
really deserved
the problem with
giants is THEY believe
THEIR mothers
THEY imbibe tears of
suffering flowers
we grab umbrellas
gravitate toward
a past vantage of water
"planes is how WE hear the sky" the
idiot giant would tell us
it was HIS need to
apologize that drove HIM
to uploading
rude sensations
HIS fracture of listening
causing whistle blanks
that's when
we woke the blue
lights in HIS head
it's how we earned our freedom
now I open my gorgeous entrails to
the sun
let birds circle with
watering mouths
sew myself up before
they land
teasing birds with my
beautiful guts my
lifelong dream fulfilled

--CAConrad
Philadelphia

Continuity

Poem for the 100th Birthday of Our Lady of Czestochowa

September 27, 2009

In our age of flash drives, flash floods,
Wild fires, and bottoms falling out,
Of temporary measures and interim
Appointments, onsets, and upsets,
Regrets and Town debts, comes
Our Lady of Czestochowa and her
Parishioners who, in Time, have created
An unbroken line from the first desire
For a church of their own through building
The Place where the Faithful have gathered
For 100 years, one century into the next.

Brick on brick, bead by bead,
wedding by wedding,
Baptism to burial the Church has served –
Endured, and been served in turn
by its members and priests.
It is a community, a continuity,
A strength and a treasure.

--Patricia Pruitt
Turners Falls



How the mountain comes down to the stream

how the mountain comes right down to the stream
puts its sister in the distance
rocks pebbles boulders all perfectly sorted by size, weight
well you might argue water is the hand of God
impartial, and beneath the rocks planaria worms
when you cut their heads in half
they grow a second head, If we could
do that, would we? You'd never be
lonely again, but
could you just shut up for one minute
so we can enjoy the solitude?

--Susie Timmons
New York City

(Soma)tic Poetry Exercise & Poem

ANTENNA JIVE
for Ben Malkin

Find a small tree, prepare the ground with blankets for you and your partner on either side of the tree. Get undressed, completely, get on your blanket, your partner facing you. Have the flats of your feet pressed together, the tree in between your pairs of legs. Both of you rest on your backs, and press your feet, press them with legs raised, then lowered. For a little while work together in this meditation of pressing and moving legs and feet with the tree quietly growing between them. Take notes about how you're feeling. Make it clear ahead of time that he or she working with you is free to do, say, sing whatever they want, so long as you keep the bottoms of your feet connected around the tree. My boyfriend Rich did this with me, singing, humming, and finally masturbating, sitting up and smearing his semen on the bark. His orgasm PUSHED our feet together at a critical moment of note taking for me, good for my note taking. Let this (Soma)tic exercise have as much freedom for the two of you as possible, the frequency given and taken and shared with the tree between you, a living antenna between you, pulling nutrients from the earth and sun rays. The tree between us is where the notes came most clearly for me. WHATEVER YOU DO please do not give any additional instructions to your partner, let THEM do EXACTLY what they want to do once you're both on the ground naked together with the tree between you. THEIR freedom to express themselves depends upon this poem as much as your feet pressing together between the tree. But take notes, take many many notes. Now take all of your notes and use THE FILTERS "Handful" and "Overtone" to shape your poem.

When my cat dies

I want 24 hours where my shortcomings are forgiven
which means for once not to hear
I guess you didn't remember to bring my newspaper.

Somehow it's a girly-girl deal
even if I did use a sawzall to get her out
& Maybe your discomfort isn't very important

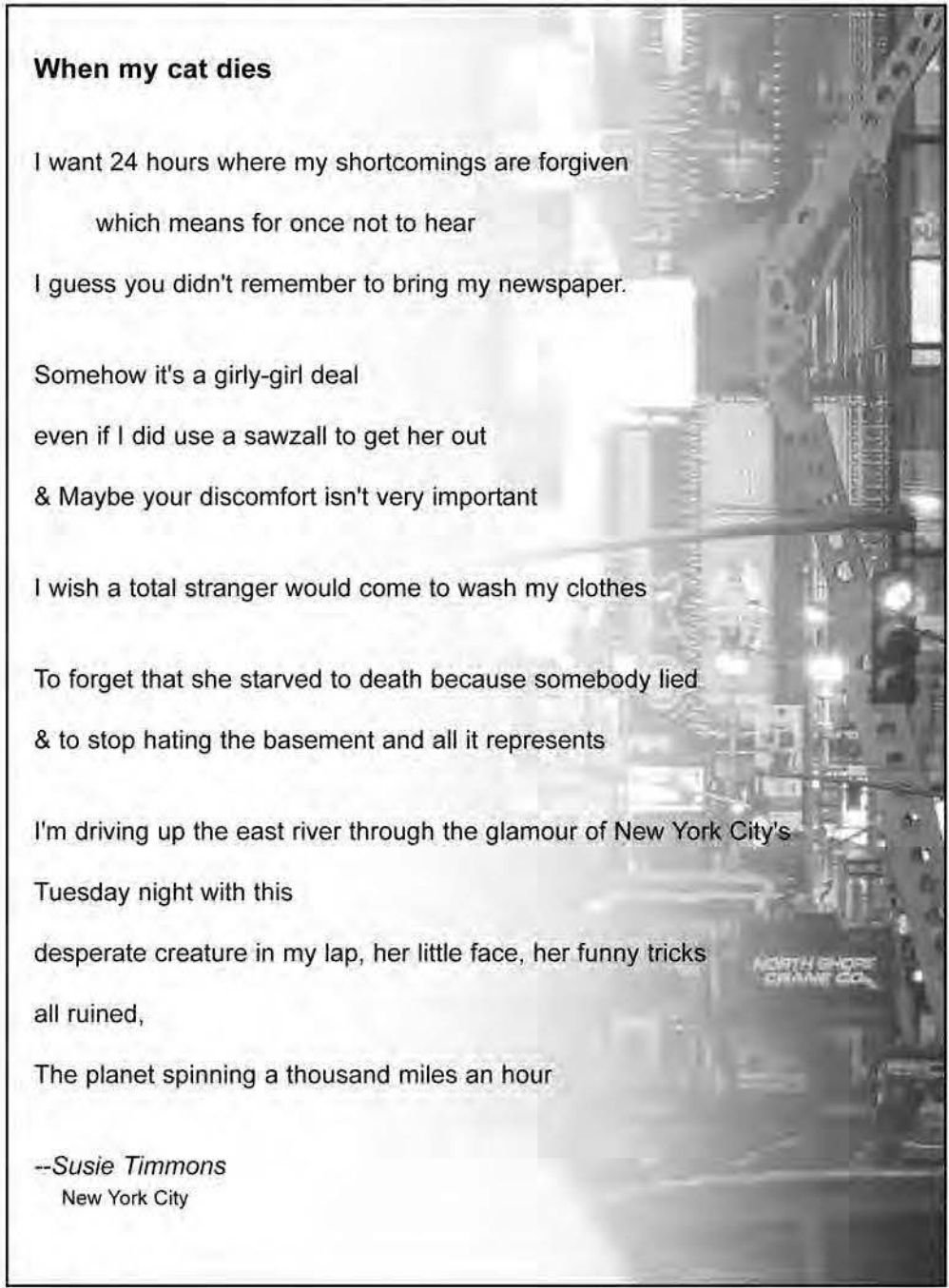
I wish a total stranger would come to wash my clothes

To forget that she starved to death because somebody lied
& to stop hating the basement and all it represents

I'm driving up the east river through the glamour of New York City's
Tuesday night with this
desperate creature in my lap, her little face, her funny tricks
all ruined,

The planet spinning a thousand miles an hour

--Susie Timmons
New York City



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MONTAGUE ENERGY CORNER

Focus on Renters for Next Energy Saving Workshop

BY SALLY PICK

TURNERS FALLS – Renters and homeowners alike can learn how to reduce energy bills for what is predicted by the *Farmer's Almanac* to be a harsh winter this year. According to the almanac, "Winter will be colder than normal, on average, primarily due to persistent cold temperatures in January, with only brief thaws. Other cold periods will occur in mid-December and mid-February."

At an upcoming energy savings workshop, on Saturday, November 7th at the Brick House, 24 3rd Street in Turners Falls, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., residents will learn how to save on heating and electric bills this winter. Renters will learn ways to seal up drafty air leaks to make their apartments more comfortable, along with other energy saving tips.

Although the focus of the

workshop will be on hands-on, no- or low-cost energy saving ideas for renters, homeowners and landlords will also benefit. Along with small steps to seal up a building, owners will learn how to take advantage of the MassSave program, which offers up to \$2,000 on insulating a building and sealing its air leaks.

They will also find out about the HEAT loan program, which provides a 0% loan of up to \$15,000 for insulation, high efficiency heating systems, Energy Star windows and thermostats, and solar hot water systems.

Montague residents who attend an energy saving workshop can enter a drawing to win a new hot air furnace. Deerfield Valley Heating and Cooling will donate time and materials toward the installation of the free furnace, and Lennox Industries is donating the furnace. (The new furnace can only replace an existing forced hot air furnace system.)

The workshop is being organized by the Montague Energy Committee, with the Brick House as community collaborators. The Massachusetts Municipal Association is sponsoring the event.

For more information, call 367-0082 or e-mail SJP@crock-er.com.

Barn Social in Wendell

A Barn Social will take place this Saturday, October 24th, at the newly rebuilt barn of Susan and Jonathan von Ranson, in Wendell Center, across from the town common at 6 Lockes Village Road, from 4 to 8 p.m. The community potluck and hoedown is Wendell's version of the Global Day of Climate Action initiated by Bill McKibben (www.350.org), and one of more than 4,200 demonstrations around the world intended to spur meaningful government action on the climate at forthcoming international talks this December in Copenhagen, Denmark.

At 4:30 p.m., a photo will be taken of the gathering at the Barn Social to help spur delegates (and the governments that send them) to produce a strong protocol to help reduce the build up of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere.

McKibben, author of *The*

End of Nature, has been the main initiator of a series of escalating public demonstrations over the last three years to awaken politicians to the climate crisis and the public's demand for change to stabilize the Earth's atmosphere.

The von Ransons' barn is the location of a would-be non-electric apartment, now in the application process, as an attempt to reduce one family's carbon footprint.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Residents Protest Timing of Gas Station Vote

BY BILL FRANKLIN

ERVING – Forty-one Erving citizens signed a letter protesting the scheduling of the special town meeting held on October 5th to decide, among other issues, whether to permit a gas station within the town's protected aquifer zone.

The letter, presented to the selectboard on Monday, October 19th, expressed concern over the scheduling of important town meetings at late hours when young parents, the elderly and others may find it difficult to participate. "The scheduling of town meetings at 7 p.m.," stated the letter, "prevents parents from attending these meetings."

Noting the vote on the contentious gas station issue did not occur until late in the evening,

the letter stated that a number of Erving citizens had to leave early due to child care concerns, and were unable to participate in the voting process.

The letter proposed that whenever town meetings are held to decide "large" issues, the town should be cognizant of all voters, and place articles of most interest first on the warrant, and also limit discussion by individuals to a shorter period of time.

Moderator Rich Peabody limited individual comment from audience members to three minutes during the discussion on the gas station, although he allowed the first speaker, Ralph Semb, the property owner backing the bylaw change, to exceed that limit, saying afterward that Semb had important points to make.

The letter noted some other speakers went on for a long period of time.

Finally, the letter proposed that residents from other towns be allowed to speak only after registered Erving voters "have had the opportunity to speak."

The letter of protest was presented by Erving residents Laura Bezio and Melinda LaBelle, who argued their case before the board.

Selectboard chair Andy Tessier said in the past it has been difficult to get the 17 people needed to make a quorum at town meetings. Tessier said the town had, in the past, tried to accommodate residents' needs by moving town meetings to Saturdays, but because of poor

see **VOTE** pg 16

WENDELL from page 7

attended that meeting, where he said state finances look bleak this year and bleaker for next.

Open Space & Other Matters

Marianne Sundell, chair of the open space committee met the selectboard asking for their input for an action plan and goals for an update of the town's open space plan. Sundell suggested

developing a walking trail from the Maple Valley School buildings to the Wendell Country Store.

Keller said there is room for the community garden to expand. Creation of a ball field was once a town priority, and Heard or Keller thought the town might have had a ball field at one time, on the Fiske Pond property, where a young pine forest is growing now.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL POLICE LOG
Revoked Plates Removed

Wednesday, 10/7

Tree down on wires on Jennison Road. Stood by with fire department until National Grid arrived.

Thursday, 10/8

Car off the road along Stone Road. Towed and removed revoked plates.

Saturday, 10/10

911 abandoned call at a Montague Road address. All OK on arrival.

Wednesday, 10/14

A Farley Road resident reported two unlicensed dogs in his yard. Advised to report same to the dog officer.

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JESSICA HARMON ILLUSTRATION

THE HEALTHY GEEZER:

Male Menopause

BY FRED CICETTI

LEONIA, NJ — *Q: My husband told me he has no energy to do chores around the house because he's suffering from male menopause. He's a very funny guy.*

Your husband was obviously trying to yank your chain, but there's some truth in his joking. Fatigue is a common symptom of male menopause, also known as andropause (*andro* means male).

Both andropause and male

menopause are used to describe decreasing levels of the male hormone testosterone that come with aging. Most men see testosterone levels drop as they get older. Some have described andropause as puberty in reverse.

Age-related decline in testosterone levels is also called testosterone deficiency, androgen decline in the aging male (ADAM) or late onset hypogonadism (LOH).

Andropause is different from the menopause women experience. In menopause, the production of female hormone drops suddenly. In men, there's a gradual decline in hormone levels.

When men reach about 40, testosterone levels usually begin to drop about one percent a year.

The reduction is rarely noticeable in men younger than 60. By the time men reach their 80s, about half have low testosterone.

Young men often have testosterone levels exceeding 1000 nanograms per deciliter (ng/dl). The average testosterone level in 80 year-old men is 200 ng/dl.

Some men maintain normal testosterone levels into old age. And there are men with low testosterone levels who have no symptoms. The only sure way to learn if you are low on testosterone is by taking a blood test.

The following are some symptoms of low testosterone: diminished sex drive, reduced muscle bulk and strength, night sweats, infertility, fewer spontaneous erections, depression, loss of

body hair, swollen breasts, palpitations, shrunken testes, height loss, fatigue, reduced self-confidence, poor concentration, memory loss, sleep problems, increased body fat, and anemia.

It is normal for erections to occur less frequently in older men than in younger men.

However, erectile dysfunction (ED) is usually brought on by medical or psychological causes, not simple aging. About 90 percent of ED is believed have medical origins, such as in drugs taken to treat high blood pressure.

Here are some recommendations to deal with andropause:

- See your doctor for a check-up. Discuss symptoms, medications you are taking, treatment options, and lifestyle changes.

- Many older men suffer from undiagnosed depression. Depression in men can be more than feeling down. Depressed men can be irritable and with-

drawn. They often work too much, drink to excess, and try to get thrills from taking risks. If you think you might be depressed, get help.

• Regular exercise helps physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) is the primary treatment for declining levels of testosterone, but it is enveloped in controversy. It has helped some men, but TRT has risks, especially for men with prostate cancer and heart disease. And, TRT may not improve symptoms. More studies need to be done to determine the safety and efficacy of TRT.

There are claims that herbal supplements can relieve symptoms. Not one of these supplements has been proven to be safe and effective for age-related low testosterone.

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

Frontier Beats Turners 14-0 in Defensive Battle

BY LEE CARIGNAN

TURNERS FALLS — After struggling against the run last week, the Turners Falls defense put in a great effort last Friday night, in an epic defensive battle. Turners eventually lost, 14 to 0, to the Frontier Red Hawks in an Intercounty League game at Bourdeau Field. The loss drops Turners to 0-5 on the season.

Turners struggled on offense the whole night, gaining only 39 total yards, and completing two first downs. The team tried to use

the speed of freshman Ryan Wilder to attack Frontier. But the Red Hawks looked fresh, and their defense held Wilder to only 12 yards on 11 carries.

Frontier also dominated the Turners passing attack, intercepting quarterback Eric Bastarache two times, and sacking him once. Bastarache only managed two completions for seven yards on the night.

However, the Turners defense was much improved from its last outing against Mohawk, when it

gave up over 300 yards on the ground. In this game, the Turners defense played very tough, tightening up when its back was against the wall in the red zone. Turners seemed to play better the further Frontier got downfield.

This was exhibited most on Frontier's second possession of the night, when they drove the ball to the Turners one-yard line, with a first-and-goal. Turners stuffed Frontier on four straight plays, as running back Austin Watroba and quarterback Erik Abramson were denied the end zone. Turners also had four sacks and pressured Abramson all night.

Penalties were also a big issue for Frontier, who finished the night with eight penalties for 75 yards, compared to only two, for ten yards, for Turners.

The game remained scoreless into the fourth quarter. After sacking Abramson, Turners had the Red Hawks in a fourth-and-long situation at the Turners 30-

yard line. More pressure came at the Frontier quarterback, and it looked like Turners was going to sack Abramson again.

But the Frontier quarterback managed to elude the rush and make the throw while being flushed from the pocket.

The pass sailed into the end zone and was caught by Chris Bowman for a 30-yard touchdown.

A tough break for Turners. Frontier made their two-point conversion when Abramson connected with tight end Dan White

to put Frontier up 8 to 0.

Turners, desperate for some offense, tried a fake punt midway through the fourth quarter. The receiver, Josh Lapachinski, was open, but the pass sailed incomplete giving Frontier the ball with good field position.

The Red Hawks scored again when Watroba ran it in from five yards out in the closing minutes, to seal the game for Frontier 14 to 0.

Turners Falls travels to the Franklin Tech Eagles next Saturday afternoon.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Break In at Mount Hermon School

Friday, 10/16

10:40 a.m. Past hunting complaint on Barton Cove, referred to environmental police.

2:40 p.m. Assisted with possible rabid raccoon on Mount Hermon Campus.

3:20 p.m. Suspicious person vending items

from vehicle on Main Road.

Saturday, 10/17

7:27 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police department West Gill Road / Turners Falls area looking for suspicious person.

Monday, 10/19

7:55 a.m. Breaking and

entering and larceny report taken at Mount Hermon School.

Tuesday, 10/20

11:25 a.m. Report of possible larceny in progress on Oak Street.

3:45 p.m. Loud noise complaint on West Gill Road.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Report of Harrassment

Tuesday, 10/13

8:00 a.m. Dog complaint at East Prospect Street. Dog removed from residence and brought to kennel. Under investigation.

2:20 p.m. Responded to Reynolds Street for report

of harassment. Spoke to reporting party.

Thursday, 10/15

10:30 a.m. Officer to a Mountain Road residence regarding a dog complaint.

No one home.

Saturday 10/17

6:53 p.m. Report of past theft at a River Street residence.

Sunday, 10/18

1:18 a.m. Arrested [redacted]

[redacted] Charged with operating under the influence of liquor and marked lanes violation.

Monday, 10/19

9:10 a.m. Two-car crash on

Route 2 westbound in the Farley area. Minor damage and no personal injury reported.

5:27 p.m. Citation issued to [redacted]

[redacted] for marked lanes violation and operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license, second offense.

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300th Series



BRAD PETERS & JAN ROSS ERVING – In recognition of the 65th anniversary of the U.S. campaign in Europe in WWII, the Montague Reporter will follow the men of the 300th Combat Engineer Battalion as they moved through France, Belgium and Germany from their landing in Normandy in June 1944 to VE Day on May 8th, 1945. Donald Ross, father of Jan Ross of Erving, served with the 300th.

The following letter from 'Somewhere in Belgium,' from 300th sergeant Donald Ross, provides a view of the recently liberated Belgian people from an engineer's standpoint, just before everything changed for these men in the Battle of the Bulge.

"Dear Mom,
At the same old location, maybe I'll spend the winter here

Dispatches from Belgium, October, 1944

– might just as well, it's warm and dry. We sleep in one house and eat in another. Had to let a couple of the boys leave for a couple of days for another job. While they were gone I had to do the cooking and done pretty well I guess; none of the boys had to hunt up their medics anyway.

"This noon we had sandwiches, Vienna sausages, peas, French fried potatoes, tomato soup, applesauce, bread and butter, coffee, also some warmed up Italian spaghetti we had the day before. As long as we keep eating like this I guess we'll be O.K.

"We are eating off plates again (Thank God) and using silverware. My own crew of four eat in a house over here with a civilian and his wife – namely Oscar and Marie. We pool our rations together and therefore have quite a variety, using their big stove and cooking utensils. One of the boys helps her cook and clean up the dishes and pots and pans.

"The place is like a second home to us, has a radio; we are listening to the States constantly.

"We sit around the fire at night, when we are not working, and talk about things in general, and try to pick up a bit of French. "You see, here in East

Belgium the people speak French, and most of us have got so we can speak in French among ourselves, as much as we can. One of the boys speaks German, so we will probably be talking a little bit of German when we get there.

"It seems as though we are kind of settling down for the winter now, although it won't take much to put us on the move again. The whole battalion is living inside now, with the boys living in a chateau. Quite the stuff, too, they tell me; they have beds and mattresses, heated rooms and all.

"We want to stay where we are. The people around here have adopted us practically, and we sure do get around.

"At the house where we eat, Marie managed to get some film for their camera. The other day when the sun was out we snapped some pictures; they came back yesterday. I am enclosing one of them in this letter. Maybe it'll get by the censor.

"You ought to see this house. The owner, Oscar, is a brick mason by trade. It's beautifully built – only three years ago, in fact – all of it made of quarried stone, beautiful masonry, plaster

finish inside, except for wood trim and doors. The floors are all ceramic tile, and here's what makes me like it so well. All the windowsills are marble and the fireplaces are all made of marble, really beautiful.

"Today, this place would cost quite a piece of money. On top of one of the fireplaces, (it happens to be the room I'm in now) rests a beautiful clock. The case is made of marble, pink and black, set in together with white strafes running all through it, any which way. It's just another example of the patience of these people. They really turn out some beautiful jobs, and America, in spite of all its machines, cannot equal it. It's mostly all hand work over here, and these people are really skilled at it. They can do wonders.

"Dress is the same as ours back home practically, except for the fact they wear wooden shoes. Due to the Boche, the people here were only allowed wooden shoes, as likewise in France. Some of the people, quite a few of them, in fact, do have good leather shoes, pre-war I guess.

"Wishing you all my best
– Love, Don"

Theater Improv

TURNERS FALLS – A free series of theater workshops for youth ages 12 to 21 will take place on Tuesdays, beginning November 3rd, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Brick House, 24 3rd Street, in Turners Falls. Join Ezzell Floranina and her troupe to find your voice with an hilarious acting style known as improvisation. Come play, laugh, and maybe even deal with issues that are important to you, in ways that will surprise us all!

For more information, contact Jared at (413) 863-9559.

Don Campbell Band Returns

MONTAGUE – The Gill Montague Education Fund in partnership with WIZZ Radio - AM 1520 will present a "Country Christmas" with the Don Campbell Band on Sunday, December 6th at 2:00 p.m. in the Turners Falls High School Theater.

Tickets go on sale Saturday, October 24th, at the GMEF website: www.thegmef.org

Advance tickets are \$15.00; tickets at the door will be \$20.00. Visit the GMEF website for more details.

MOVE from page 9
Africa, died in incarceration in 1998.

Shortly before the shootout in 1978, in an attempt at mediated settlement between the city of Philadelphia and the MOVE organization, police had searched the MOVE house in Powelton Village and found only inoperative weapons – fake guns. Within hours of the shootout, the city bulldozed the MOVE house, destroying evidence that could have established the direction of fire.

Following this incident, the organization regrouped in an Osage Avenue rowhouse, where

they continued to agitate against the inequities of the system, as they perceived them, exercising their First, Second and Fourth Amendment Rights, sometimes with very loud, profane speech, haranguing the neighborhood by bullhorn around the clock on Christmas Day, for example.

On May 11th, 1985, Judge Lynne Abraham signed arrest warrants for MOVE members at Osage Avenue on charges of disorderly conduct and making terroristic threats. On Mother's Day, May 12th, police evacuated the 6200 Block of Osage Avenue and towed away parked cars. The following day, beginning at 6:00

a.m., police commenced a full-scale assault on the MOVE house, firing 10,000 rounds of ammunition at the building in a 90 minute period. With MOVE members barricaded inside, police dropped an incendiary device on the building from a helicopter that afternoon, and allowed the resulting fire to burn out of control, though fire department equipment was on hand. The entire block was soon engulfed, and 240 people left homeless.

Ramona Africa told the audience at the Brick House that police fired on MOVE members as they tried to flee the inferno,

driving them back into the house. Six adults, including John Africa, died in the blaze, along with five of the MOVE members' children.

"Our work is to free life from the enslavement of the system," said Ramona Africa in the film.

The film and discussion were organized by the Undergrowth Farm in Gill, part of their Movements for Self-Determination Series at the Brick House.

Ramona Africa stands a little over five feet tall, but she is solid. She remains unrepentant for the past, and vehement about the work ahead. She is a committed revolutionary, and said so, adjuring her listeners to do whatever

was in their power to "move life forward."

"As long as you are not compromising and you're moving forward, then you are victorious," she said in the film. "It is that single principle that is defeating this system."

The eight MOVE members who remain in jail have been denied parole. They refuse to admit guilt in connection with the death of officer Ramp in the shootout at Powelton Village, and their unremorseful demeanor has been cited in the parole board's refusal to set them free, after 31 years behind bars.





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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22nd
At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Raised 5th*, jazz, 8:30 p.m. No cover.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Larry Kopp*, Country and City Blues Guitar, 8 to 10 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23rd
Deja Brew, Wendell: *Heather Maloney*, 9 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Lin Preston Band*, rock \$3 cover.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24th
Pumpkin Pie Supper at the Community Church of North Orange and Tully. Resevation deadline: 10/23. \$9; \$4 for children 12 and under. (978) 575-0402 or (978) 575-0119.

Montague 350: As part of the International Day of Climate Action, join Montague residents on the Montague Center Common for a group photo with the "350" banner. 11 a.m. Info: Susan Conger, 367-9269.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners



Zydeco Connection, Eileen Almeida, Mike Rose and Cynthia Rose, perform at Deja Brew on Thursday, October 30th 9 to 11 p.m. at Deja Brew in Wendell. Come on out, shake it loose and party down to some hot zydeco. We are a dance band serving up a spicy gumbo of Louisiana zydeco, blues and boogie woogie guaranteed to get your toes tapping!

Falls: Family Nature Discovery Day-Discover Nature through your child's eyes. Children 5 to 11 and their parents are welcome to register for a wonderful day of nature workshops. Activities include: pumpkin painting, making food to feed the birds, making dried leaf and flower crowns, and making your own healthy snacks. You must sign up to be a part of this wonderful day. (413) 863-3221.

Pumpkin Carving at Sally's, 34 Court Sq, Montague Center. Bring your own pumpkin, we will have snacks and apple cider. All welcome, 6 p.m.

Solidarity Tour at Seeds of Solidarity Farm and Education Center, Orange. Experience the farm, home and education center that integrates solar greenhouses, energy efficient buildings, market gardens, solar electric and hot water systems. Free. 10 to 11:30 a.m. After tour, stay for pot-luck lunch. www.seedsofsolidarity.org.

Falltown String Band and Leverett Historical Society present *Music and Voices of the Great Depression*, 7:30 p.m. at the Leverett Library. Multi-media event.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie* singing Johnny Cash favorites, 9 p.m.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Fine and Dandy Trio* and *Infinite August*, folk, Americana, et, 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover.

FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23th to 25th

Arena Civic Theatre presents Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic musical: *The King and I*. At the Shea Theater, Turners Falls. Friday & Saturday performance at 8 p.m. Sunday at 2 p.m. \$13; \$11 seniors; \$8 children under 12.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25th
Montague Grange, Montague Center: Family Dance, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Family-style contra dancing with caller Jim Fownes and his family band. Simple contras, circle dances, and singing games with easy instruction for beginners of all ages. \$4/person or \$10-15/family, includes snack.

2009 Ct River Songwriting Contest Finals Concert, 4 p.m., at the Second Congregational Church, Court Square, Greenfield. The twelve finalists with a fresh batch of songs are: Charlie Conant, Drew Hickum, Emily Samuels, Jeff Lee, John Currie, John-Michael Field, Nina Romanenko, Russ Thomas, Sheila Moschen, Sparkie Allison, Tom Kovar and Zach Wissman. Last years winners (John Currie, Claire Dacey and Charlie Conant) will perform their winning songs while the judges are deliberating.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Joe Laur* on Guitar, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26th
At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Open Mic*, 8 p.m., 7:30 for sign up.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *All Small Caps - A Night of Spoken Word*, open mic starts at 7 p.m. Guest Readers at 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28th
At the Rendezvous: Montague Phantom Brain Exchange #21 features Sord, Erin Schneider. Video by Torsten Zenas Burns + Darrin Martin. Lecture on OULIPO by Laura Duetsch and DJ Scott Seward. phantombrainexchange.suchfun.net. Montague Phantom Brain Exchange is a place where bodied & disembodied brains & nonbrains can safely gather to deconstruct solutions & create problems while soaking in an invigorating bath of provocative entertainments. Last Wednesday of every month, 9 p.m. to midnight, at the Rendezvous, Turners Falls. Five Bucks!

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

Dean Cycon, author and founder/owner of Dean's Beans Coffee speaks at Leverett Library. 7:30 p.m.

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

p.m. This week's theme: Zombie Fest! Crawl up from the crypt for this back from the dead bowling bash! Questions: Laura (413) 423-3027 or laura@ladyelvis.com.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29th
Zydeco Connection, Eileen Almeida, Mike Rose and Cynthia Rose, perform at Deja Brew on Thursday, October 30th 9 to 11 p.m. at Deja Brew in Wendell. Come on out, shake it loose and party down to some hot zydeco. We are a dance band serving up a spicy gumbo of Louisiana zydeco, blues and boogie woogie guaranteed to get your toes tapping!

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Thaddeous Hands*, instrumental progressive rock, 8:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Kellianna*, acoustic rock, 8 to 10 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30th
At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Play with DJ Lance* all night long, \$3, 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31st
Montague Center Fire Department Open House, 10 to noon. Everyone is invited to tour the fire house. Lots of "hands on" exhibits for all ages. Fire extinguisher demo, Communication Trailer, ambulance tours, safety info.

Great Falls discovery Center, *Bats are Cool*. What do you really know about bats? Are they really the scary creatures that a lot of folks think they are? Learn interesting facts, 1 to 2 p.m. 863-3221

Halloween Treats at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Come by and pick up your Halloween Treat from 10 to 4 donated by the Friends of Great Falls Discovery Center.

THROUGH OCTOBER 31st
On display at Burrito Rojo, Turners Falls: *connections*, recent work by Margaret Fasulo.

The Gallery at Hallmark, Ave A, Turners Falls: *A Second Look*, photographic exhibit by Tony Downer. Gallery open Fri-Sun, 1 to 5 p.m. (413) 863-0009 for info.

At the Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ghost Quartet* and *Walking Ghosts '70s Funk* Halloween Dance Party! 9:30 p.m. \$3 cover.

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Showtimes for Friday, Oct. 23rd to Thursday, Oct. 27th

- 1. ASTRO BOY** in DTS sound DAILY 6:30 9:00 PG13 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- 2. WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE** DAILY 6:30 9:00 in DTS sound FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00 PG
- 3. COUPLES RETREAT** PG13 DAILY 6:30 9:00 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:00 3:00
- 4. STEPFATHER** PG13 DAILY 6:45 9:15 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:15 3:15
- 5. LAW ABIDING CITIZEN** R DAILY 7:00 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
- 6. THE VAMPIRE'S ASSISTANT** PG13 in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30
- 7. SAW 6** R in DTS sound DAILY 7:00 9:30 FRI, SAT, SUN 12:30 3:30

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Sunday, 10/25, 7 to 10 p.m. Joe Laur guitar and friends
Monday, 10/26, 7 to 10 p.m. All Small Caps - A Night of Spoken Word Open Mic at 7 p.m. Guest Reader at 8 p.m.

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SAT: 10/24 | 9:30 PM | \$3
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MON: 10/26 | 8 PM | FREE
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Reconnecting Youth



ANNE HARDING PHOTO

One of the Turners Falls High School classes that has been volunteering at the Survival Center and Senior Center: Back Row: Matt Parenteau, Kelly McDonald (student intern); Middle Row: Matt Gibson, Kayla Power, Tia Demers, Jaritza Sanchez; Front: Cody Newton

BY ANN HARDING

TURNERS FALLS — On Thursday mornings, a small group of students from Turners Falls High School shows up at the Franklin Area Survival Center (FASC) to offer their services. Depending on the Center's needs they might unpack boxes of food, sort produce gleaned from local farm fields, put bread out on shelves, pull food out of coolers and stock the shelves. All this in preparation for the crush of daily visitors in need of food.

According to cashier Mary Cavanaugh, the TFHS students cheerfully make quick work of the daily chores.

A second group of high school students is volunteering at the Gill-Montague Senior Center's monthly "Coffee and Conversation," and has signed up with the Friends of the Meal Site to help with Brown Bag food distribution.

Both groups of community minded students come from Heather Batchelor's high school course, "Reconnecting Youth." They work together on another project — baking cakes for residents of Jessie's House in Amherst and the Greenfield Family Inn.

Jessie's House is the only shelter offering emergency housing for families in Hampshire County, and the Greenfield Family Inn is oldest of three Franklin County programs serving the needs of the homeless in Franklin County.

The students have also committed to making ten cakes a month for the Survival Center. Last week they brought cake to the senior center, to share during "Coffee and Conversation," and baked a retirement cake for former school resource officer Doug Brown, who recently retired from his post at the Turners Falls High School.

The cakes and icing are made from scratch by the students in the cooking facilities at the school, and are very professionally decorated. The students attribute their cake decorating skills to Christa Snyder at the 2nd Street Baking Company, who visited

their class and gave them a fast-paced, challenging course in decorating along with all kinds of decorating supplies to help them out. The cake they made for officer Brown was mistaken for a bakery creation!

"Reconnecting Youth" combines community service, life skills, goal setting, team building, effective communication, and social awareness. The students range from ninth graders to seniors, and meet daily in small groups for 90-minute classes, with the additional help of intern Kelly McDonald.

To decide on group projects, each class generated a list of ideas ranging from fundraising for community programs; toy, food and clothing drives; yard or maintenance work at non-profit organizations; volunteering with elementary school students; visiting elderly people in nursing homes; litter cleanup, and more.

The lists were narrowed down, and each group came up with a main focus, though all admitted their favorite task was the cake baking. The students shared this story, which brought home the impact of their work. Last Tuesday, they delivered a cake to the Survival Center. The next day, Cavanaugh asked whether anyone had a birthday. A little boy, maybe three years old, sadly replied, "I had a birthday yesterday, but I didn't have a cake."

It gave Cavanaugh great delight to respond, "Well this is your lucky day, look what I have for you!"

Student Dillon Dudek thinks Reconnecting Youth is about "helping others, and at the same time helping ourselves to be better people." The homework might be unconventional, but it requires introspection and self-knowledge. Students work to identify personal life skills they need to improve, then team up with other students to set measurable goals and realize them.

Tia Demers said the program "pushes us out of our comfort zone." She thinks the rewards are worth it.

Kayla Power thought "interacting with people I don't know" had been good for her, as she tends to be not very sociable.

Students said though they knew there were homeless families in the area, they were not aware of the numbers, and visiting the various centers has been a real eye opener.

TALKING PICTURES

Broken Dreams and Wild Things



1 eagle = The Pits 4 eagles = The Heights



BY TODD DETMOLD

CHICAGO — I saw an afternoon matinee of *Where The Wild Things Are* with two good friends in a theater full of families. Being a devout student of the Pixar school of filmmaking, this was certainly not the first time I found myself among the oldest non-parents in a movie theater audience. In fact, the same two friends went with me earlier this year for an afternoon matinee of the most recent Pixar release, *Up*.

There's a comparison to be drawn between the two films. *Up* features a crotchety, elderly protagonist trying to reclaim the dreams of his youth by floating his house to South America with the aid of a couple thousand shiny balloons. The young hero in *Wild Things*, nine-year-old Max (Max Records), spends the film dealing, directly and traumatically, with the pain of watching his youthful dreams die.

Allow me to be clear: based on Maurice Sendak's controversial classic children's book, *Where The Wild Things Are* isn't necessarily a children's movie. The film goes to great lengths to (successfully) capture the world (both real and imagined) through the perspective of a nine-year-old, but I suppose only nine-year-olds as precocious as Max are going to interact with the film in the way intended. (I heard one child after the film proudly pro-

claim to his mother that he had stayed awake the entire time.) If you're the lucky parent of a very smart and thoughtful kid, be prepared to answer a lot of questions about divorce.

I overheard somebody in a bar saying that *Where the Wild Things Are* is a movie that's been marketed not to children or adults, but to hipsters. This fascinates me. The movie does come with an inarguable hipster cachet: a song score by Karen O of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, a writing credit for Dave Eggers, Charlie Kaufman-collaborator Spike Jonze at the helm. The first trailer for the film was cut to an Arcade Fire song.

I'm sure plenty of my bespectacled, Chuck Taylor'd brethren will be drawn to the film, and I daresay even those heavily guarded behind shields of irony, skepticism and apathy will find themselves socked in the jaw and the gut.

Wild Things is a difficult, intelligent masterpiece, full of raw emotions yet devoid of explanations and answers. The story, such as it is, centers around Max, that hyperactive and hypersensitive nine-year-old boy with a penchant for fort building and a serious destructive streak. His older sister ignores him (she's got teenaged friends to concern herself with) and his loving mother (Catherine Keener) gives him the attention she can, but she has to juggle her son with her job and new boyfriend. Max is lonely, misunderstood, and angry.

Following a domestic dispute that climaxes with a nasty moment of violence, he runs out of the house, away down the street, across an ocean, and into a forest to the land of the Wild Things.

a split tax rate for the town, and to set the tax rate for residential owners at \$7.01 per thousand. The tax rate for commercial, industrial, and personal property will be \$12.14 per thousand.

The new rates reflect a nine cent per thousand dollar increase for residential owners (who will see about a \$15 increase on the average annual tax bill, for a house valued at \$160,000), and a 37 cent increase per thousand for commercial, industrial, and personal property owners, according to assistant assessor Jacqueline Boyden. She said values for both

These giant beasts — actors in costume with computer-aided expressions — make Max their king almost immediately, and for one happy evening they destroy trees and pile on top of each other like a true, united family might. But inevitably, fights break out and feelings are hurt, wounds (both physical and emotional) are received, and Max is forced to confront the fact that his new kingdom, meant to be a refuge from his unhappiness at home, is no closer to perfect than anything else in his life and that he certainly, absolutely, finally, is not in control.

What separates *Where The Wild Things Are* from the Pixar oeuvre (with the possible exception — as always — of the endlessly dark and thorny *Wall-E*) is hopelessness. *Up*, as one of my friends noted, "blows its emotional load ten minutes in." That film is marked by a tone of despair and tragedy, and the protagonist finds himself in the company of a fatherless child, taking the place of the son he never had.

There are no surrogate fathers in *Wild Things*, and after the film's own tragic prologue, our hero spends the film inside his head trying desperately to imagine one. Two of the beasts, Carol and KW, vie for Max's affection as a pre-existing rift between them grows wider and deeper. Voiced by James Gandolfini and Lauren Ambrose, respectively (finally getting some good work, those two, years after their tenures at HBO ended), they and the other animals, are manifestations of Max's desires and failures. Where the Pixar arc tends to follow triumph over adversity, Jonze and Eggers bring Max down, down and down.

What we have here is devastating and bleak, and every note rings true. This is art that reminds me how blessed I am for having had a comparatively normal and happy childhood, and if the red faces of my two movie-going companions — both hard-nosed hipsters and children of divorce — were any indication, it ought to provide some camaraderie and comfort to those of us who weren't so lucky.

VOTE from page 12

attendance the meetings were moved back to week nights.

Bezio said some sort of protocol was needed to make the timing of the meetings fair for everyone in town.

The board agreed, but noted the difficulty of this undertaking.

Tessier said, "You can never make it fair for everyone."

Board member Andrew Goodman indicated the board would "certainly try" to deal with the issue.

In other matters, the select-board voted unanimously to keep

categories remained essentially unchanged from last year.

In other matters, Tighe and Bond engineer Peter Valinski, consulting on the water tower repainting project underway in Erving'side, reported unanticipated and significant pitting in the surface of the tower. This pitting will have to be filled with welding material before the job can be properly completed. This, said Valinski, will cost the town between thirty to forty thousand additional dollars. The problem, he added, arose from a past coating failure.



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