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The Montague Reporter

REPORTER@MONTAGUEMA.NET

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

OCTOBER 28, 2004

Railroad Salvaged?

BY DAVID DETMOLD

THE PATCH - Leaving traffic concerns for another day, the Zoning Board of Appeals last night gave preliminary approval to Belchertown developer Mark Kislyuk's plans for a \$4.5 million renovation of the 110-year-old former Griswold Mill, known as the Railroad Salvage building, on Power Street. Kislyuk hopes to put together financing to purchase and redevelop approximately 120,000 square feet of mixed commercial and residential space, with 2/3rds divided into 60 1-bedroom apartments, 16 2-bedrooms, and 12 studio apartments. The commercial space will go for offices, or for other use with ZBA approval. The board added conditions including a traffic study, structural engineering study, completion of commercial space prior to rental of residential units, and 100% containment of runoff. The board voted to require Kislyuk to post a \$500,000 performance bond to insure the town will have funds for demolition of the building, should the project fail to reach completion.

Strathmore Purchase Fails Narrowly

Second Town Meeting Will Be Called

BY DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS - On an issue likely to be play a key role in the future of Montague's economic development, town meeting on October 21st failed to muster the two-thirds majority needed to approve the town's purchase of the Strathmore Mill. After more than an hour of debate, 52 of the 88 members in attendance at Thursday's special town meeting stood to authorize the town to purchase the approximately 250,000 square foot mill complex on Canal Street, while just 30 stood in opposition. But with six members leaving early or abstaining on the vote, the measure failed to reach the 66% majority needed by just three votes.

Following the vote, town planner Robin Sherman said



Concerns about access issues at the Strathmore Mill helped sway town meeting members to oppose the project

"We're not giving up." Before the meeting had adjourned, she reached the Strathmore's manager by phone, who agreed to allow the town four to six more weeks to answer concerns

raised during the debate, and to call a second town meeting on the subject. The following day, town administrator Frank Abbondanzio predicted another town meeting would be

called to take up the question of buying the Strathmore within that time period.

Western Properties LLC, a see **STRATHMORE** pg. 16

Rembrandt and Chrome



Jeanie Schermesser and husband Bryant Stewart pose in front of Stewart's painting of a 1934 Brewster at a show at Deerfield Academy in 2003

BY BARBARA STEWART
FARLEY - The other day I had the privilege of entering what might be the oldest intact building in the village of Farley, and was frankly overwhelmed with its transformation. What was once the Farley Union Congregational Church, built at the turn of the 19th century, has

been completely restored and transformed into one of the most colorful homes and artists' studios I have ever seen. It is the home of two artists - Bryant Stewart and his wife, Jeanie Schermesser. This article will focus on Stewart, but I will soon return to this wonderland of a house to interview

Schermesser. Bryant Stewart looks like a normal guy, and in fact has a normal day job as the park manager of Wendell State Forest. But entering his artist's workshop is something like entering another dimension - a

see **FARLEY** pg. 19

VIDEO REVIEW

Journey to Wissatinnewag



Journey to Wissatinnewag
Produced by Joe Graveline
Running time: 26 minutes

BY KATREN HOYDEN
GREENFIELD -

Journey to Wissatinnewag begins with a canoe's eye view of the Connecticut River in autumn, flute music in the background and a narrative

that frames an historical overview of the land referred to by the Native name Wissatinnewag (a place name meaning "shining hill"). The program, produced by Joe Graveline, is primarily intended for an audience of Greenfield citizens, who will shortly vote on a referendum to set aside 10 acres of

see **WISSATINNEWAG** pg. 7

PET OF THE WEEK

Say Cheese



Cheddar

Cheddar is a three-year-old shorthair cat in need of a good home. This calico is adorable with her gold, black and white patchwork coloring and golden eyes that match the gold in her fur. She's got medium length fur and is quite friendly and lively. Cheddar was found stray but clearly had plenty of good people experience in her life. She's looking for one of her own now!

To learn more about adopting Cheddar, please contact the Dakin Animal Shelter in Leverett at 548-9898 or via email at info@dakinshelter.org.

SIGN UP FOR NEW PROGRAMS NOW AT THE YMCA IN GREENFIELD

Session II begins November 1 for youth and adult programs. Swimming, gymnastics, fitness, sports & strength classes for the whole family! Join the YMCA in Greenfield now; start taking advantage of all the wellness and recreation programs we offer!

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bellybowl moves to 4th St.

BY LAENA SANTOS

TURNERS FALLS - While the 256 tulips, irises, daffodils, hyacinths and other spring bulbs that Elaine Fournier-LeMay planted in front of the Colle Opera House will surely bloom next spring, the flowering of her decade-old dream - bellybowl - has been transplanted to 4th and L instead.

bellybowl, a restaurant originally slated to open on the first floor of the Colle, will open at the corner of 4th and L streets, inside the former home of the Blue Skies Café, by mid-November, according to owners Michele and Elaine Fournier-Lemay, of Montague City. A misunderstanding between the Fournier-LeMays and the town over where a kitchen hood vent could be installed in the historic Colle Opera House's first floor space caused the planned restaurant's relocation.

"We needed to put a vent in for the hood, for the stove. It turns out that, unknown to us, we couldn't go through the (exterior) wall, as we had intended. There was a historical restriction on the building and we were limited to going up three floors through a center chase, instead of going straight out onto 3rd Street. The cost to do that was over \$70 grand. It wasn't initially clear to us that we had to use this chase," said Elaine Fournier-LeMay. (A chase is an opening in the center of the building from the first floor through the roof, created for ductwork to pass through.)

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio said he is disappointed about the lease having to be terminated.

"I'm disappointed that they may have misunderstood what was actually there and what the town was really in a position to do. Obviously we wish them well

at the other location on 4th Street and we're just going to have to move on," he said.

"I know that our representative Mark Abramson (of Benchmark & Pratt Real Estate in Greenfield) was pretty clear that the town was interested in developing the site for restaurant use. We put in 800 amp electric service specifically to handle restaurant use and the second thing we did was we put the central chase in. There was never any indication given that we would do anything beyond that," he said. "I think what happened is that when they (the Fournier-LeMays) started to get bids for actually con-

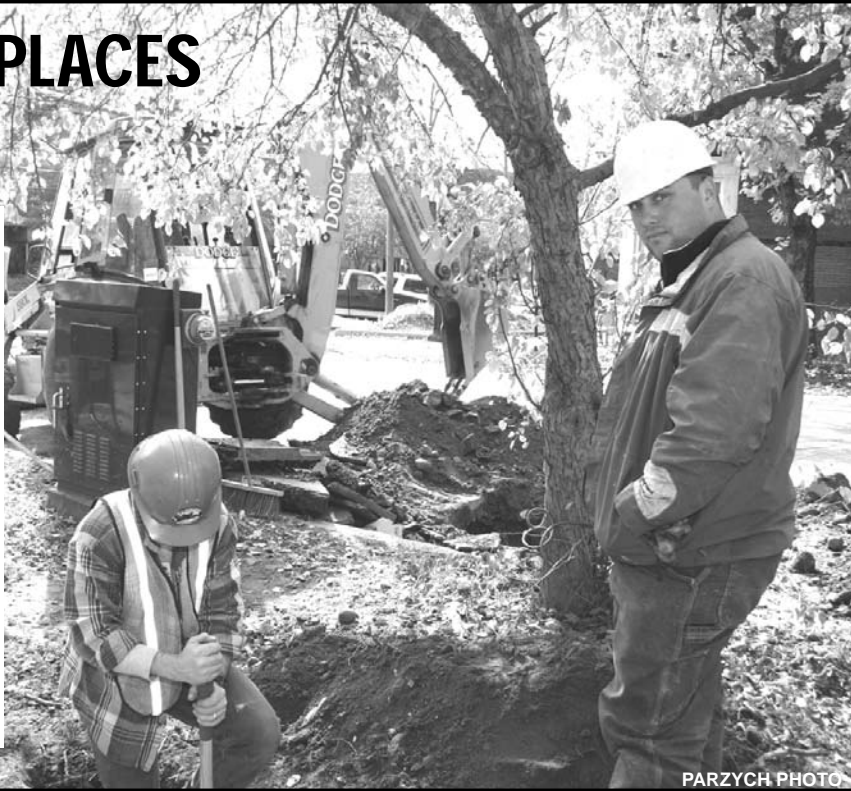


structing it, they found it was cost prohibitive. It was clear in the lease we signed with them, that with respect to alterations they had to comply with existing preservation restrictions."

The Colle Opera House is listed on the National Historical see bellybowl, pg 20

FACES & PLACES

Workers from Dodge Construction hooking up a 1-1/2-inch natural gas main to a 3-inch gas main for the Moltenbrey Building on Third Street, using a 4-inch sleeve Joseph A. Parzych tunneled under the sidewalk a decade or more ago. He also tunneled for a second pipe to connect roof drains to the catch basin on Third Street, and has tunneled under highways and sidewalks at a number of locations, when not busy perfecting recipes for the Gill Gourmet.



PARZYCH PHOTO

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES November 1st - 5th

MONTAGUE Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Advanced registration at many of our activities is necessary. We need to know how many people will be joining so we can prepare our space adequately. A suggested donation of \$1 per exercise class is appreciated. Lunch reservations need to be called in by 11:30 a.m. the day before. Call Bunny Caldwell at 863-9357 weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (Leave message on machine at other times.) Transportation to the center can be provided. Trip coordinator is Jean Chase. Make trip reservations by calling 772-6356. Payment and menu choice is due three weeks prior to trip. All Hawthorne trips leave from the Parking Lot on First Street across from the Police Station.

Monday, 1st

10:30 a.m. Brown Bag distribution. Bags can be saved but must be picked up by 1:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m. Council on Aging

Board Meeting
Tuesday, 2nd
Center CLOSED on Election Day
10:00 a.m. Tai Chi at St. Anne's Community Room
Wednesday, 3rd
10:15 a.m. Senior Aerobics
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 4th
1:00 p.m. Pitch
Friday, 5th
9:45 a.m. Senior Aerobics
11:00 a.m. PACE Aerobics

Please help support our **CHRISTMAS BAZAAR** to be Saturday, November 27th. Non-food donations may be brought in any day between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Food donations may be brought in Friday, November 26th.

ERVING Senior Center, 18 Pleasant Street, Erving (Old Center School, 1st Floor), is open Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. For information and reservations call Polly Kiely, Senior Center director at (413) 423-3308. Lunch daily at 11:30 a.m. with

reservations a day in advance by 11:00 a.m. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping (Thursdays), or medical necessity by calling Dana Moore at (978) 544-3898.

Monday, 1st
9:30 a.m. Exercise
9:45 a.m. Library
10:00 BROWN BAG
12:30 p.m. Pitch
Tuesday, 2nd
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:30 p.m. Painting
Wednesday, 3rd
10:00 a.m. Line Dancing
10 - 11 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
12:00 p.m. Bingo
Thursday, 4th
8:30 a.m. Foot Clinic
9:00 a.m. Aerobics
12:00 p.m. SERVE deadline
12:30 p.m. Shopping in beautiful downtown Orange

WENDELL Senior Center, located in the town offices on Wendell Depot Road. Call Kathy Swaim at (978) 544-2020 for info, schedule of events or to coordinate transportation.

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ATTENTION SENIORS

The flu clinics scheduled for November 8th at the Montague Senior Center, and November 3rd at the Erving Senior Center have both been postponed until further notice. Unlike past years when the clinic was on a walk-in basis, this year sign-up is required with strict guidelines being set so that the people most at risk are served. Those include seniors over 65, those with severe chronic illness, and health care workers who deal with those populations. People under 65 will be asked to bring proof of chronic illness.

Spooky Times in Lake Pleasant

Joyce Cote informs us the Lake Pleasant Women's Club will hold their annual Hallowe'en party at Rutter Park (on the post office side of the village) on Montague Avenue, Saturday, October 30th, at 1:30 p.m. "There will be games for the kids, and prizes for the best costumes,"

said Cote. Among the games will be a Hallowe'en version of Bingo, played with candy corn, and a round of "Pin the Eye on the Monster."

Cote said members of the Women's Club will make up the judges' panel for picking the prizewinning costumes. "I'm usually one of the

judges," said Cote. But her granddaughter will be in the contest this year, so Cote said she may have to let others choose this year's winners. "Naturally, my granddaughter's costume will be the best," she added.


Why wait for the Rag Shag parade? Try your costume out

a day early and sample some of the Women's Club's refreshments at Saturday's family fun event.

Celebrating Hallowe'en with a peculiar Lake Pleasant flair, Cote said people of all ages are also welcome to come and test their divination skills by guessing the weight of a large pumpkin on the table of the post office lobby.

"They can't pick it up," warned Cote. (They have to use their intuition.) Separate prizes will be given for the adult and child who comes closing to guessing the pumpkin's weight.

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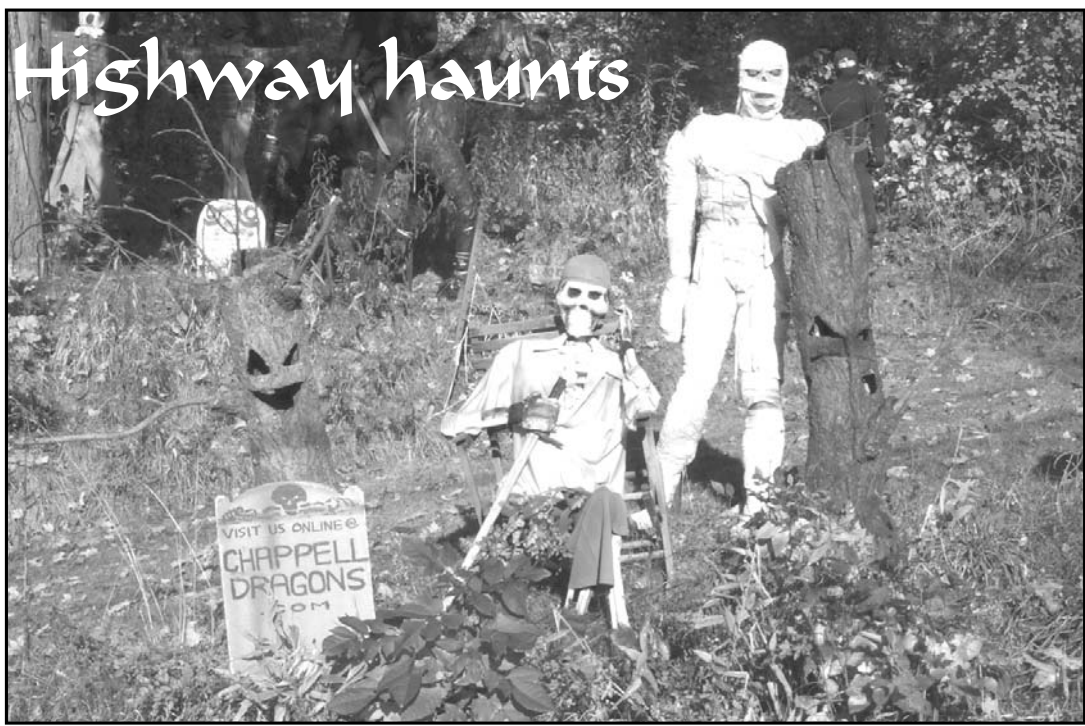
SPAGHETTI DINNER

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Nov. 6th at 5 p.m.

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\$16 per person



Highway haunts

Gill sculptor Jonathan Chappell's annual Hallowe'en display along Route 2 delights passersby, who can even sign a "guest book" recording their visit.

Country Fair

Saturday, November 6th

First Congregational Church
148 L Street, Turners Falls


Luncheon 11 am to 1 pm

Fair will feature a variety of crafts, gifts, food, jewelry, theme baskets, toys, bottles, wooden crafts, white elephant items, children's table, raffle and silent auction.

SPECIAL ATTRACTION:
a collection of old, embossed Turners Falls, drug, beer and milk bottles will be on display, courtesy of Edwin Potter

ANNUAL RAG SHAG HALLOWE'EN PARADE

The Turners Falls V.F.W. and the Montague Parks and Recreation Department wishes to announce the Annual Rag Shag Hallowe'en Parade will be held on Sunday, October 31st. Children should arrive *in costume* at Food City in Turners Falls parking lot at 4:45 p.m. Costume judging will begin at 5:00 p.m., with the parade starting at 5:30 p.m. *sharp*. The parade will proceed down Avenue A to the Turners Falls V.F.W. on Third Street, where refreshments and prizes will be given to all Montague children in 6th grade and under.

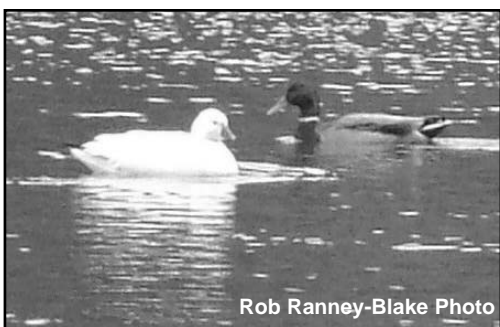


Loose Goose Vacations on Power Canal

If a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, how much is a goose on the power canal worth? Judging by the number of Audubon Society types flocking to the environs of Migratory Way these days to add a rare Massachusetts' sighting of a Ross's Goose to their lifetime list.

"This is only the third or fourth documented sighting for this particular bird in the state," said local naturalist Mark Fairbrother, of Montague Center. He said Greg McGuane and Susan Saffel of Athol first sighted the goose on Thursday, October 21st, hanging out with a gaggle of Canada geese. Since then the

round white bird (smaller than a snow goose) has been spotted each day, either above the dam or further down the canal near the Conte Fish Lab, Fairbrother



The Ross's Goose socializes with a mallard on the Power Canal.

said. Birdwatchers from near and far have staked out the area with binoculars and cameras, hoping

for a close-up. Rob Ranney-Blake, of Deerfield, said Ross's geese tend to migrate south through the middle of the country from their summer range in northern Canada, west of Hudson Bay, to their winter habitat along the Gulf Coast and further west. "The first Ross's Goose sighting in Massachusetts was 10 years ago the Hadley fields," said Ranney-Blake. "It hasn't happened often in Massachusetts, but it happens. They wander."

Reached at home for comment, selectboard member Allen Ross denied any involvement in the goose's rare visit to the scenic power canal.

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It's About Time

The Red Sox won the World Series. Eighty-six years is a long time to wait to repeat those seven simple words, but there they are, incredible but true. The Bambino sleeps soundly tonight, the curse is lifted, there is joy in Mudville at last.

Looking back on the unbelievable comeback from sudden death in the playoffs to clinch the pennant in a four game sweep, followed by a grand St. Louis slam to take the championship, there is only one thing left to say. The Yankees suck. The Sox rule.

We've just been toying with you all these years.

With that hurdle cleared, we can turn our attention to more mundane matters. Like choosing the leader of the free world, protecting America from terror, and picking a Halloween costume. If we could get over our unaccustomed giddiness to think things over clearly, we might find there's plenty to be spooked by in the outcome of next week's election, and precious little to celebrate, whichever team wins.

But it's a rare day in October when the entire Commonwealth gets to let loose and party, so forgive us if we put weighty matters of state aside for a day or two. Heck, after the parade in Boston, and the toasts at the local brew hall, get out the handbags and gladrags and take the kids door to door trick-or-treating. Try to put North Korea, global warming, Al Qaeda, ballooning deficits, flu shots and the rising price of everything out of mind, at least until Tuesday. Time enough then to worry about the future of the human race.

Just remember, no matter how many Supreme Court justices the next president will get to pick, no matter how many foreign wars he'll lead us into, how many treaties trashed, treasuries plundered, lockboxes broken and birthrights squandered, there is one thing the next president can never take away from us.

The Red Sox won the World Series. The Red Sox beat the Yankees. And the Cardinals. Red Sox rule. How sweet it is!



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5:30-9:00

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Health Article Appreciated

I would like to express my thanks to Darlene Clark for the research, and the compassion for her co-worker that went into the *Montague Reporter* article of October 7th on an important health topic, "Living with Celiac Sprue."

A year ago I read the book *Dangerous Grains* by James Braly, M.D. after it was suggested on a nutrition mailing list I subscribe to. Having had acute then chronic gastrointestinal problems over the last 15 years with no medical reason found, I decided to go gluten free to find out if and how the gluten grains wheat, barley, rye and oats may affect me. With that experience I found a number of reactions healed.

My research into food sensitivity and individual diet has gone on nonstop since then. Celiac disease or gluten sensitivity is found along with or suspect in more than 100 other diseases in *Dangerous Grains*. Any

maldigestion of gluten grains can result in the incomplete breakdown of the protein's peptides, short chain amino acids. Excess enters the bloodstream, produces biologically active exorphins and interacts with opiate receptors in the brain. The *Townsend Newsletter for Doctor's and Patient's* article, "Gluten intolerance: a paradigm of an epidemic," Dec. 2002 by Stacy Astor Saul at http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0ISW/is_2002_Dec/ai_94538644 is an excellent overview.

Food Intolerance.com's symptom chart <http://www.foodintol.com/matrix.asp> has gluten intolerance affecting 1 in 7 people worldwide.

I would like to share more of my experiences, research, and how to ease cost and stresses with others, and learn more, too. This could be a support group for those wanting to be involved.

Anyone interested? You can call me at 978-544-7198 or email me at wanitawa@berkshire.net.

- Wanita Sears Wendell

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Progressive New Hampshire?

By Anna Gyorgy

This past week on the road has been full of impressions, information, a few revelations, and some hope mixed with tension. Which way will this polarized country go on November 2nd? As the presidential candidates rush from one 'battleground' state to another, I was able to meet a key constituency of activists working to infuse progressive politics into the bedrock conservatism of the Granite State.

The night I spoke at a meeting of the Seacoast Peace Response there was a decisive baseball game - life and death for the Boston Red Sox. Luckily the game went on far longer than our discussion, and ended successfully, for Sox fans.

At the Seacoast meeting, many upcoming events were announced. A film showing: *Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear & the Selling of the American Empire*, a film produced by the Northampton-based Media Education Foundation, examines how a radical fringe of the Republican Party has used the trauma of the 9/11 terror attacks to advance a pre-existing agenda to radically transform American foreign policy while rolling back civil liberties and social programs at home. Other local events: Michael Moore would speak, also the 90+ year old peace

activist Granny D., campaigning for a New Hampshire Senate seat. A demonstration against Channel 13, one of the Sinclair Corporation's many TV stations, would oppose plans to run as a 'news' show an hour-long film defaming Kerry's war record. Already many across the country had reacted in outrage at this pro-Republican free 'advertisement.' Sinclair's stock had tumbled and plans were quickly changed to show only parts of the report. The grassroots were active; the "other America" simmering with focused activity.

After our meeting one man described a video shown at a recent conference. It just listed names of grassroots groups around the country active for peace and justice. The list went on and on, faster and faster, too quickly to read. The commentary: if this were shown at normal speed it would go on for hours - there are that many groups out there working for change.

Canvassing efforts for Kerry were announced by the environmental group Clearwater Action; local volunteers were needed to join the many coming from out of state to go door-to-door on the last weekend before the vote.

All this activity is now being reported locally, thanks to the recent opening of a community

radio station, which also broadcasts Amy Goodman's daily show "Democracy Now." My talk, "An international case for regime change in the USA," will also air.



In it I present some international views: on the militarism and unilateralism of "Bush & Co.", how illegal wars, killing and torture have resulted in huge majorities worldwide against US foreign policy and for Kerry. Too bad the world can't vote, but at least some Americans know that strong feelings abound. And then the issues of global concern hardly mentioned in the campaign: climate change, already happening and stimulated by the US's huge production (25-30 percent) of greenhouse gases; genetically-engineered food and agriculture being forced on the world; US support for WTO-based opening of markets and services around the world, while subsidies for US products allow them to flood out

unprotected local products.

"Do Europeans hate us, or do they see this government at fault?" Right now I think people do distinguish between the people and the government - but if Bush is 'democratically' elected? The sponsoring Seacoast Peace Response group had signed on to a request to Kofi Annan for international observers - and found out they would in fact be coming.

They will have plenty of company. Both the Democrats and Republicans are sending thousands of observers to key states and polling centers. The Republicans plan to challenge new voters, the Democrats will try to prevent delays and oppose or at least document unfair challenges. One team of international observers, the first time there was ever such a thing in a US election, has already called for reforms. This is because in dozens of states people are already voting, and there are problems. As in Florida, where faulty machines have been reported, also decisions against letting people vote in any polling place, as many have been changed and there is much confusion. There could be post-election day challenges in many states - Florida 2000's all over the place.

To avoid that, the major party candidates are out for a clear win. Dems are working to identify Kerry voters for follow-

up on election day, and to convince any undecided voters they may find. And there are some: an estimated five percent of eligible voters. According to 'conventional wisdom,' the majority of undecideds tend to vote for the challenger against the incumbent, so 'for change.' This should benefit Kerry. But the papers report that many undecideds are also wary of changing leaders in a time of war. The clock is ticking, and truly, with early voting - and problems - in many areas, election 2004 has already begun.

I check the internet this evening, and see that New Hampshire is in the blue Kerry column on one 'swing state' monitoring website. All right! It is traditionally a conservative state (motto: "Live free or die").

But maybe they have just had too much of the radicalism of Bush & Co. and are ready for some conservative change, back towards more democracy, for instance.

Franklin County Democrats (and associated others) will be taking a bus to Kerry headquarters in Keene, NH on Saturday, October 30th to assist with phone calling, canvassing and visibility efforts. The bus will be leaving at 8:45 a.m. from Greenfield and returning by 5:00 p.m. Call 774-2482 for details.

The Scientific Pollster

Swinging in the Rust Belt

Not content watching the teeter-totter tracking polls on the nightly news, our intrepid election observer decided to travel the blue highways of rural America, keeping pedal to the metal and finger to the pulse of the American electorate. Abandoning statistical samples in favor of direct contact with real Americans in random swing state settings where the future of the free world rests, Hyrum H. Huskey Jr. has pioneered a new form of polling, flying far below the radar of the national media. He calls it the Presidential Placard Poll, and he bases it on a simple yet profound theory. People with a lawn sign for a presidential candidate are likely to wind up voting for that person. November 2nd is around the corner, the frost is on the pumpkin, and the answers may still be blowing in the wind.

By Hyrum H. Huskey Jr.
Duluth, Minnesota - Oct. 20th

Ohio and Wisconsin appear to be in a statistical dead heat and may go to either presidential candidate as a result of last minute

decisions by 5% of the registered voters in Tuesday's cliffhanger.

Crossing Ohio from east to west on Highway 224, my official Presidential Placard Poll count tallies up to 57 for George W. Bush and 70 for John Kerry. Kerry/Edwards placards appear in greater numbers in the east near Canton and Akron, while the Bush signs increase in smaller towns and rural areas as I progress westward. Recent polls, though, by less scientific outfits like Gallup and CNN have shown Bush with a small lead in the race for Ohio's 21 electoral votes. So, go figure.

Moving north into the southwest corner of Wisconsin and following Bob Dylan's tracks up Highway 61, a ridge-top route rolling through dairy farms to La Crosse, Bush/Cheney posters outnumber Kerry's. Many Kerry signs in this area were homemade, as if the Democratic National Committee's supply lines were stretched a little thin this far into the rural heartland. By comparison, Bush signs were professionally printed and often oversized.

I detected a strong undercurrent of indecisiveness from potential voters queried at random about how Wisconsin would vote in the election. In Platteville, a Dairy Queen counter person in his late twenties answered, "I don't know. I think it's a toss-up at this point." He adds that a number of Bush placards in the area were recently vandalized with black spray paint.

I got a similarly inconclusive response from a female Kentucky Fried Chicken attendant in La Crosse. She said she didn't know how Wisconsin would go, but she was going to vote for "the lesser of two evils." By whatever calculus, she had determined the less evil choice was John Kerry. In Arcadia, a delivery truck driver in his early 30s said he thought the results were still "too close to call."

"We'll know on November 3rd, I guess," the truck driver said.

By the time I had traveled up Highway 53 and crossed into Duluth, Minnesota, the Placard Poll had Bush leading the liberal

senator from Massachusetts 77 to 53.

Devil's Lake, North Dakota: October 22nd

The Great Northern Route - US Highway 2 - gets lonely west of Duluth. As I head west to the North Dakota line, the towns grow smaller and farther apart. Long stretches of small yellow pine second growth forest line both sides of the highway and give testimony to the lumber industry of the late 1800s.

Today, my Presidential Placard Poll count is 13 for Bush, 13 for Kerry, a statistical tie, but within the margin of error.

In Erskine, I ask an elderly rest area attendant how Minnesota voters are likely to vote in the election. "Don't know," he said. "I'm tired of hearing both of them. They're just attacking each other."

I wonder where all the voters with intelligent minds have gone?" he adds.

Perhaps they're in Floodwood, Minnesota, I ask a convenience store clerk for her opinion about what is being billed coast to coast

as the most important election of our lifetimes. "I don't know," she replies. "I don't give it much attention."

Before I reach Crookston, near the North Dakota line, the pine forests give way to flat fields where beets and potatoes grow. Still, there doesn't seem to be much enthusiasm for a close race, or for the fact that Minnesota could play a key role in it.

"Don't know," said a waitress in Crookston."

There you have it.

Prediction

My prediction is that Senator Kerry will win Ohio by a very narrow margin due primarily to turnout in the larger cities, on economic issues. President Bush will likely take Wisconsin, after erasing Kerry's slight statistical lead in some recent polls. In Minnesota, despite the cliffhanger in the Placard Poll, I get the feeling Bush will carry the day as the "can't decide," or "don't know" voters opt to stay the course with the incumbent, or stay home on election day.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In Support of Kulik

I am writing in support of Representative Steve Kulik's campaign for re-election. Steve has been a strong advocate for small towns in Franklin County for the past eleven years. He has fought for our share of state resources for roads, schools, school transportation and payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) for state lands. He supports equitable tax policies that carefully balance our need for good schools, public health and safety, public works and environmental protection with our limited means and our need to be competitive with other states. Steve is both open-minded and accessible. He listens carefully to constituent concerns, and does not hesitate to embrace good ideas for reform from all ends of the political spectrum. His unique combination of progressive principles and pragmatic philosophy allows him to build alliances in Boston that are critical to ensuring that our voices are heard on Beacon Hill. We are fortunate to have a legislator that reflects and represents the character and interests of our communities so well.

-Robin Sherman
Montague

Build a Green Alternative

I appreciate the opportunity Nat Fortune is offering me to show my support for the Green Party in this election. Over the past several years, I have become disillusioned with the Massachusetts Democratic Party, specifically with its failure around Clean Elections. This party has neglected its chance to provide innovative legislative leadership for our country, and I hold the incumbent responsible for supporting his party leadership's mistakes. The Green Party offers vision and solutions in ways I find meaningful, and I support building this party through local elections. I look forward to voting for Nat Fortune on Tuesday.

- Kenneth Danford
Montague

Support Shared Parenting

On Nov. 2nd, Massachusetts voters will have the opportunity to vote on a non-binding question - Shared Parenting - which would allow children of separated or divorced couples to have access to both parents. Shared Parenting would in no way allow an abusive or unfit parent automatic access to the couple's children.

Studies have shown that children do better, and have a better quality of life, when they have the love and affection of both parents.

Shared parenting is law in 30 or more states. It allows children of divorced or separated parents to continue to receive the love and affection of not only the mother and father, but also grandparents, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and extended family of both parents. It is sometimes referred to as "joint legal and physical custody."

Those who have children's best interests at heart, please support bringing this issue before our elected officials for consideration. Please vote yes on this non-binding question.

- Joseph M. Parzych
Gill

We welcome your letters.
Letters must be 400 words or less and must be signed. Please include your name, address and phone number. Deadline is noon on Tuesday

The Montague Reporter

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I have lived and worked for several years in other countries, mostly in the employ of the US government. When people ask me why we only have two political parties, I respond that we have more than two, but the government is afraid of the others and censors them. For example, they are not allowed to debate (unless they're millionaires) if they oppose US sponsored wars for gas, oil, and other resources. Ralph Nader, for example, has done more for this country than any other name to ever appear on a presidential ballot, but he is vilified by the mainstream media and the Democratic Party because he speaks out against US global domination. Lesser known David Cobb, Green Party candidate, is also ignored by the media because he opposes the

Going for Green

war in Iraq, while supporting national health care and the rights of labor. He opposes NAFTA, GATT, WTO, their offshoots, and the \$500 billion military apparatus necessary to keep them in place. The money spent destroying Iraq could provide free health care and education here in the US. But this is kept out of the public eye.

John Kerry talks about the "good war" in Afghanistan to get a pipeline through that country for Turkmenistan gas; a war that was planned in the 90s. Kerry supports a Patriot Act he didn't read. He buys an army camouflage coat to go goose hunting to win votes in Ohio. I grew up in a small family farm culture where most everyone hunted to put food on the table. Does Kerry not realize how insulting it is to

us to kill geese (who mate for life) for a photo op?

Locally, Green-Rainbow state representative candidate Nat Fortune, member of the Whately school committee, has the best tax plan I've seen for supporting our schools. A proportional system will make taxes fairer and make essential services in our schools more affordable. I am also impressed by Nat's understanding and support of labor issues.

I have experienced first hand the violence of US corporate policy in other countries. I have experienced the violence of union-busting here in Franklin County. I support a movement for change. I will vote for Cobb and Fortune.

- Tom Neilson
Montague

Representative Kulik is Proven

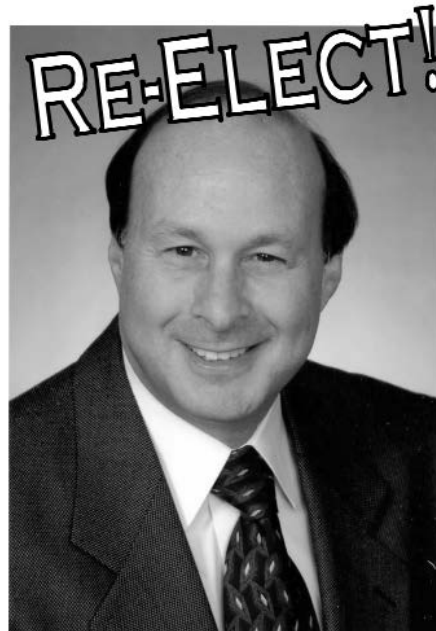
Representative Stephen Kulik will continue working for Western Massachusetts 1st Franklin District. As a former selectman and past president of the Mass. Municipal Association he was in the trenches fighting for Western Massachusetts' fair share of state resources. Kulik

took his experience to the state house and communicated what the 1st Franklin District needed. In Boston, Kulik has successfully represented our needs for local education support, and for highway aid.

A vote for Representative Stephen Kulik will keep him

working for us. We need his experience. He has proven that the 1st Franklin District's needs for a fair share of state resources is heard loud and clear in Boston.

- Mary Feeney
Turners Falls



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- ◆ MASS. TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
- ◆ MASS. AFL-CIO
- ◆ NARAL
- ◆ NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MASS. CHAPTER

AWARDS

- ◆ MASS. AUDUBON'S 100% RATING
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WISSATINNEWAG
continued from pg 1

swampland from the rezoned commercial land by the French King Highway. But the video is of general interest as a documentary of the living history of Native people and as a civic issue relevant wherever human remains have been interred. The program aims to educate the public at large about the importance of stewardship of Wissatinnewag and places like it, where human remains are known to be interred, in an effort to avoid disturbing them further.

The program features a gathering of harvest thanksgiving on the site of Wissatinnewag, which, according to Narragansett Medicine Woman Dr. Ella Sekatau and Deputy Historical Preservation Officer Doug Harris, was formerly the winter camp of the Pocumtuck tribe, along with many other tribes who would seasonally gather to share the wealth of the salmon and shad during their annual runs up the Connecticut River. [See Montague Reporter, Volume I #30 for more on the history of this site.]

As the video explains, Friends of Wissatinnewag is a non-profit organization that purchased land known locally as the Mackin sandpit, the last remaining undeveloped area of the ancient Native American village that originally surrounded the great falls on the Connecticut River. According to the group's president, Monique Fordham, the Friends bought the land in hopes to save a part of what her group refers to as the Peace Village, a joint use area where resources were shared by numerous tribes. The site is now listed on both the

state and federal registers of historic places. According to the vision statement found on their website, the Friends are dedicated to research, education and preservation relating to Native American sacred sites. In the future, they plan to offer education programs on Native history, and on the cultures and lifeways of the Native Peoples of the northeast.

Wissatinnewag was the site of sand and gravel mining during the construction of Route 2 beginning in 1964. At the time, the area was known to contain burial grounds. No protection was put in place to protect the remains buried there. According to historical evidence and eyewitness accounts, grave sites were desecrated and removed; some used to fill in a piece of swamp land nearby. That swamp land is now the 10-acre piece of land the Friends of the Wissatinnewag is asking the voters of Greenfield to direct town officials to remove from a 45-acre parcel rezoned as commercial land earlier this year to make way for potential development.

John Brown, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Narragansetts, interviewed on the video, said he is saddened by the strife that has developed over the issue and is thankful for the individuals and organizations who are involving themselves in the effort to preserve the historic property. With the location of the remains of interred human beings known, Brown said it is unconscionable for people not to make their best effort to respect and protect the remains from further desecration.

Several Greenfield area residents are members of the Friends of Wissatinnewag, and some are

interviewed in the video. They want the voters of Greenfield to participate in a special town vote on Tuesday, November 16th, with the understanding that honoring the sacred burial ground by removing the 10-acre wetland parcel is not counter to the potential for economic growth on the adjoining parcel. The wetlands protection laws currently in place are no guarantee against future development. While history cannot be rewritten, the people of Greenfield have an opportunity to protect the site and counteract the lack of respect and consciousness of 1964.

As an example of the site of the peace village as a tool for education, Wissatinnewag Caretaker Howard Clark describes signs of the land being reclaimed by wildlife. Historic photographs contrasted with current footage of flora in its autumn glory in the same former sand pit are another example. Gardening is taking place on the site with its produce being shared at spiritual, social and informative gatherings.

My own impression is that as the plans of the Friends of Wissatinnewag develop, so does an important asset to the town of Greenfield, strategically located on Route 2, a stretch widely known as the Mohawk Trail. This project too is smart growth.

Look for Journey to Wissatinnewag to be shown on local access channel 15 on Thursday, October 28th at 9 p.m. and on Saturday, October 30th at 10 a.m. Call your local access station for additional times. For further information on the Friends of Wissatinnewag, Inc. please visit www.wissatinnewag.org or call (413) 772-3743.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Moves on Dry Hill Road

BY DAVID DETMOLD - The Montague selectboard took steps to instigate legal proceedings against James Senn to open up access to the Dry Hill Cemetery via Dry Hill Road on October 25th. After Senn and his lawyer Michael Pill met with the board and interested parties on September 27th, the board agreed to revisit the Dry Hill Road controversy in a matter of weeks. The parties left with the understanding Senn would meet with representatives of the board and the DPW to walk the land in order to determine the easiest access route to the Dry Hill cemetery. The original intersection of Dry Hill Road and Wendell Road now lies buried beneath Senn's front yard, between his house and garage, but Senn has opened two other dirt roads nearby which connect to Dry Hill Road in the vicinity of the cemetery. The town had hoped to work out an agreement with Senn to swap easements for one of these private ways, but Senn did not return calls in the weeks following from town administrator Frank Abbondanzio, DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron, and selectboard member Allen Ross.

Board chair Patricia Allen said, "We need to move on with how we're going to open that road up again." She instructed Abbondanzio to "Tell counsel to let Mr. Senn know we're going to open up the original road."

Board member Ross said, "I hope things can be handled in a

non-litigious way. I wouldn't threaten him with bulldozers on his lawn at this time, but if it comes to that..." Ross said the simplest solution would be for Senn to remove the barbed wire fences and take down the No Trespassing signs on the public way. "An offer could be made to Senn to open up the roadway on the west side of his garage. That's something we can talk about. He could put up a moveable, unlocked gate if he needs to control pasturage."

Patricia Pruitt noted the presence of a large dog chained on the Senn property which could be intimidating to people trying to access the cemetery via Dry Hill Road.

Jeanne Golrick asked if the board were contemplating fines against Senn for blocking the right of way. "I don't see why not, actually," Allen replied.

Precinct 2 town meeting member Art Gilmore said he and fellow town meeting member Bob Sojka had tried to drive the long way around to the cemetery, but found the Cross Road impassable. Walking, they were unable to find the cemetery. Later, Jim Senn drove them in his own vehicle up one of the new side roads he had opened up to the cemetery, but when they approached, Gilmore said he was unable to discern the actual cemetery, it was so overgrown.

"I would hate to have family buried there," Gilmore said. "That cemetery is in deplorable condition."

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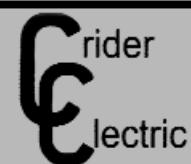
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VOTER GUIDE 2004

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES

We asked the candidates for the local house and senate races to submit answers in writing to a set of five basic questions, covering a range of topics facing the legislature. We hope the candidates' replies will allow voters to compare their positions on a few of the crucial issues at stake in Tuesday's election.

Candidates were given as much space as they wished to answer each question.

We believe a well-informed electorate is the best guarantor of democracy. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on November 2nd.

STATE SENATE, FRANKLIN-HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT

1

Do you believe local governments, school systems, Greenfield Community College and the University of Massachusetts are adequately funded? If not, what changes in tax policy would you propose or support to make sure they are?

Jim Miller, Republican Candidate, State Senate, Franklin-Hampshire District

I would seek tax cuts and greater funding for Greenfield Community College and the University of Massachusetts. If the legislature supported the Governor's reforms there would be enough money for all three of these objectives. Furthermore, tax cuts would stimulate the economy thereby increasing Massachusetts' total tax intake

while simultaneously reducing the Commonwealth's social welfare burdens.

Stan Rosenberg, Candidate for re-election, State Senate, Franklin-Hampshire District

No, they are not adequately funded. We need help from the federal government to address the state and local governments' health care financing problems. The steps federal officials should

take would, conservatively, save us at least hundreds of millions of dollars at the state level, money that could then be spent on education. If the federal government fails to act, or does not provide adequate relief, I would propose we first review the 42 tax cuts approved in the 1990s to determine if they are still warranted and effective. Also, there are many Massachusetts citizens who owe the state hundreds of millions of dollars in back taxes. I

will continue to support the Department of Revenue to give it the necessary tools to collect those legitimately owed taxes.

As a last resort, if additional revenue were still needed beyond these measures, a broad-based tax increase should be considered to help reduce the growth of property taxes. My penny-on-the-sales-tax bill has wide popular support if it were earmarked specifically for education.



Jim Miller, Republican Candidate, State Senate, Franklin-Hampshire District

2

Would you vote to subject the basic right of gay and lesbian couples to marry to public referendum?

Miller

I trust the people of Massachusetts to decide the gay marriage controversy. As a legal scholar I recognize that judges have no special training qualify-

ing them to determine whether or not gay marriage is indeed a basic right.

Rosenberg

I do not believe matters of

basic civil rights and principles contained within the Constitution should ever be placed before the voters. The question of who is granted equal opportunity and equal protection under the law

should not be answered by a popular vote. The Constitution grants and guarantees these fundamental rights, not the will of the majority.



Stan Rosenberg, Democratic Candidate for Re-election, State Senate, Franklin-Hampshire District

3

What action would you take to free up funds the legislature has allocated to support agricultural preservation or conservation purchases by local governments, or to ease requirements on the expenditure of those funds?

Miller

Because the United States has an extremely healthy agricultural sector that actually produces a surplus of food, state and local governments should not spend any money on agricultural preservation. By lowering the world price of food, agricultural preser-

vation harms food growers in third-world nations and so is, I believe, immoral. It amazes me that so-called progressives who pretend to care about the interests of the world's poor usually support U.S. agricultural policies that devastate third-world farmers.

I believe that local govern-

ments should be free to use any of their own funds to purchase land for conservation.

Rosenberg

Throughout my legislative career I have consistently supported legislation, budget appropriations and administrative poli-

cies that encourage and support the preservation of open space. Last year, when Governor Romney sought to reduce funding dramatically in these areas, I was one of the leaders of the coalition that convinced him to reconsider and restore some of those funds. This policy area is

extremely important for western Massachusetts. I will continue to aggressively support APR and other open space programs that benefit our region.





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VOTER GUIDE 2004

4

Do you support reinstating the death penalty for the Commonwealth? Why or why not?

Miller

Yes. Murderers who are executed don't murder again. Those who are merely sent to jail still have the opportunity to kill fel-

low prisoners, correction officers or (if they escape or are released) any member of our families

Rosenberg

No. Our justice system is imperfect, resulting in mistakes. Once the death penalty is carried out, if it is determined that

the individual is not guilty, it is too late to correct the error. Another reason I oppose the death penalty is that it's clear that it is disproportionately

applied to poor people who can't afford the best legal representation. I support life in prison without parole instead of the death penalty.

5

What action, if any, should the legislature take to protect the safety and economic security of the citizens of the Commonwealth in the impending 20% uprate request before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the 32-year-old Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon, Vermont?

Miller

I would support any necessary steps to insure the safety of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. Overall, I strongly support nuclear power production because I believe it is, by far, the most environmentally

friendly method of generating power.

Rosenberg

Because the plant is in Vermont, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not have direct control over it.

Nevertheless, the Commonwealth should vigorously oppose the proposed uprate request and push instead for energy policy changes that will use conservation, alternative energy sources and other means of generating power that are

more secure than nuclear reactors.

The Commonwealth ought to also ensure that there are tested and approved evacuation plans in place in the event of an accident at the plant. Given the continuing concerns about terror-

ism, the Commonwealth should insist that plants and storage facilities are sufficiently secure to prevent them from being exploited as potential targets.

HOUSE SEAT, FIRST FRANKLIN DISTRICT

including the towns of Montague and Wendell

1

Taxes

Jeffrey Cranston, Republican Candidate, House Seat, First Franklin District

First Franklin District

No, our schools, local town governments, and state colleges are not being funded properly. Over the past two budget years, \$527 million dollars in cuts have been made to local aid by the state. This has resulted in the elimination of 1400 teachers, and countless police officers and firefighters.

Changes in our state government are necessary if we are to fix these problems. We must move away from the status quo, and reform the way our government is run. We need to move away from the days of "Taxachusetts" and move to a government that runs more efficiently and more productively.

We should begin by eliminating duplicate agencies that perform essentially the same duties. Mergers of state agencies would not affect services, but would provide services at a cheaper price. One such proposed merger would be between the Mass Turnpike Authority and the Mass Highway Department. This merger would have saved the state over \$200 million in FY '04 alone. This savings could have nearly closed the 2004 budget gap of \$220 million. The incumbent refused to take this basic step, and in effect voted to cut money for our local towns. We

should also move to eliminate patronage jobs that abound in our state government. Politicians on Beacon Hill are known for placing friends and family in made-up positions that pay high salaries for little or no work. The Boston Court System and the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission are examples of havens for patronage that have been targeted for reform by the Romney Administration, but such reform was blocked by the current legislature.

Also, I believe by decreasing income tax rates in Massachusetts to 5% as the voters demanded more money will be put in the pockets of consumers, and they will be able to spend that extra money, bringing in more money to the state through sales tax revenue. This money could then be used to fund education, local needs, and out state colleges.

Nathanael Fortune, Green Candidate, House Seat, First Franklin District

No, I don't believe our towns, schools and public colleges and universities are adequately funded. Two school systems in our district --- Belchertown and Gill-Montague --- have even been forced to take the state to court (Hancock vs. Driscoll) in an attempt to secure the funding needed for a constitutionally guaranteed "adequate and appropriate" education. School committees across the district suffering from 20% budget cuts and two years of level funding have

deliberated over how many classes to eliminate, how many grades to combine, how many teachers to fire and how many schools to close. In Belchertown, the school committee even discussed how many additional cafeterias to convert into classrooms in an attempt to avoid opening a new school.

Our public colleges and universities have fared even worse. Higher education appropriations were reduced by nearly 30 percent from 2000 - 2003. Last year, Massachusetts ranked dead last in the nation in state appropriations for public colleges and universities. We are spending more on prisons than on higher education. Must we put really bars on the windows of our classrooms to give our students an education?

Our local communities have always been willing to pay their fair share, and we did not ask for these cuts in state funding. Four years ago, the people of Franklin and Hampshire counties voted against lowering the state income tax from 5.95 percent to 5 percent by the largest margins in the state. Just two years ago, the residents of our district reaffirmed this position by voting against the elimination of the income tax by the largest margin in the state. Our district recognizes that cuts in state aid invariably lead to cuts in services and hikes in local property taxes, rents and fees that fall heaviest on those who can least afford to pay.

We often hear that the people

of Massachusetts voted in 2000 to lower their income taxes and that we should honor that vote, even if our district did not. I think this vote has been misinterpreted. I believe that those Massachusetts voters who did vote for a reduction in the state income tax were really voting for lower overall taxes. Because they were only asked about income taxes, they voted to lower those.

In the most recent budget crisis, representatives of several neighboring districts - including Rep. Christopher Donelan, Rep. Ellen Story, and Rep. Peter Kocot - wisely voted to restore the income tax rate to 5.95% to balance the budget without endangering our towns, schools and universities. Our district's representative did not. Instead of representing the views of his district, he joined with then House Speaker Finneran and his supporters to defeat this measure and blame the economy for the cuts.

Our economy has started to improve, but the fairness of our taxes has not. Too much of the burden for our towns and schools continues to rest on the backs of those who can least afford to bear it. We are at the point where the more you earn, the less you pay as a percentage of your income. We are literally taxing the poor to pay for the rich. Every additional cut in local aid and every proposed hike in fees or the sales tax will make this worse. Our current laws call for a phased rollback of



Jeffrey Cranston, Republican Candidate, House Seat, First Franklin District



Nathanael Fortune, Green-Rainbow Candidate, House Seat, First Franklin District

income taxes to 5%, and our district's current representative proposes increasing the sales tax from 5% to 6%. Neither of these measures will do anything to make state taxes fairer and more efficient.

I believe that we can increase state revenue for all of us and still lower taxes for most of us --- the 80% of us not earning six figure incomes --- by making our taxes fairer. I have proposed a tax plan that returns an additional \$750 million to our cities and towns, that doubles the state income tax exemptions for individuals and dependents, doubles the low-income tax credit, and also increases the state income tax rate to 6%, reducing pressure on local property taxes and rents. My plan also repeals the special "Raytheon" and "Fidelity" tax breaks, repeals the sales tax exemption for lobbyists and related consulting services, and implements combined reporting and "throwback" rules for corporations shifting profits out of state to avoid taxes.

Taken together, these proposed changes would not only make state and local taxes fairer overall, they would also yield an additional \$175 million in state revenues over and above the additional \$750 million returned to the towns. This is enough to fully fund local school transportation (\$52 mil-

lion) and increase funding for higher education by 15% (\$123 million) in the coming year. Instead of cuts to our schools and hikes in our fees, we can have towns we can afford to live in, and schools that our children can thrive in.

Stephen Kulik, (D) Worthington, Candidate for re-election, House Seat, First Franklin District

Our local governments, school systems, and public higher education do not receive adequate state funding to effectively fulfill their missions. Each has suffered cuts during the fiscal crisis of the past three years, although local government and education were largely spared until last year. Cuts would have been much deeper if the legislature had not frozen the income tax rollback and increased capital gains taxes in 2002, and if we had not built up such a substantial reserve fund to draw on in tough economic times. These actions helped to mitigate the severity of some cuts, but they nonetheless have had the effect of reducing local services and increasing reliance on the regressive local property tax. Now that state tax revenues are beginning to increase, we need to restore funding to pre-recession levels for Lottery Aid, Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), Regional School

Transportation, and Chapter 70 school aid. At the same time, the legislature must work with local officials, the business community, educators, and the public to conduct a comprehensive review of all public services and how they should be paid for. Our goal should be to develop the most fair and equitable combination of state and local taxes to provide the revenues needed to support the services people want. Primary among these is education, starting with pre-kindergarten through higher education. We must focus on reducing the growing over-reliance on the property tax, and raising revenue at the state level through more broad-based and progressive taxation. We should revive the corporate tax breaks that were granted in the strong economy of the 1990s, and they should be repealed if they have not produced the desired results such as increased jobs and investment in Massachusetts. We should consider restoring the income tax to pre-rollback levels, and we should consider increasing the sales tax and devoting the entire amount of additional revenue (estimated at \$800 million) to local education. This proposal has been put forward by the Mass Teachers Association, and I am the lead sponsor of it in the House. Our sales tax is the lowest among neighboring and



**Stephen Kulik,
Democratic
Candidate for
Re-election,
House Seat, First
Franklin District**

peer states, and it is relatively progressive because of its exemptions of food and non-luxury clothing. It also collects more taxes from those with higher disposable incomes, who purchase more consumer goods. It is time to give this serious consideration as a new source of revenue for education.

2

Gay Marriage

Cranston

Anytime changes are requested at the state level that would forever change the fabric of society, it is important for the people to make the final decision. I believe that gay marriage is an issue that is too important to leave up to legislatures and judges. The people must be heard, and a real debate

on the issue must follow.

Fortune

No, there is no place for discrimination in our state constitution. I would oppose all efforts to deny to gay and lesbian couples the marital rights and benefits that have finally been recognized to be theirs according to the constitution of the Commonwealth. I take great pride in stating that the Green-Rainbow Party of Massachusetts and the Green Party of the United States have always supported the

equal rights of same-sex couples in not just marriage but also in housing, jobs, and child custody. Our party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates --- unlike the Democratic Party and Republican Party candidates --- support full legal and political equality for all persons, regardless of sex, gender, or sexual orientation.

Kulik

I do not support placing language that discriminates against some of our fellow

citizens on a referendum ballot. I believe the Supreme Judicial Court decision in support of equal marriage rights for all citizens was correct, and I worked hard to defeat the proposed constitutional amendment this year in the legislature. For me, this is a basic issue of civil rights and equality for all citizens. I will continue to fight for that principle in the next phase of the constitutional amendment process during the 2005-06 legislative session.

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3 Farmland

Cranston

I would work to have these funds released as soon as possible because the funds are going to the preservation of need-

ed farmland.

Fortune

I support the expansion of funding for agricultural preservation and conservation purchases by local governments. Our family have been shareholders in an organic CSA (community supported agriculture) farm in Sunderland since its founding. CSA's offer fresh, healthy, affordable food, preserve open space, provide us with a way of making a personal as well as global commitment towards the environment, guarantee farmers a minimum income and help create a sustainable local economy by reinvesting our dollars back into our community. More broadly, keeping agricultural land in production and environmentally endangered land in conservation preserves the rural character of our region and provides a net tax surplus to towns. As the American Farmland Trust likes to say, "cows don't go to school and corn doesn't dial 911."

One of the greatest dangers to the preservation of conservation land by local

governments is the recently enacted Section 548 land auction law. This law, passed as an "outside section" of the 2004 budget, undercuts community involvement in the disposition of "surplus" properties being auctioned by the state. Thanks to our Republican Governor, our Democratic Party-controlled state legislature, and special-interest funded politics, our communities have suddenly lost their traditional right of first refusal and their right to purchase state properties at a fair market value. The section 548 auction law allows the state's Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) to auction off properties to the highest bidder with essentially no warning and with limited ability to compete against deep-pocket developers.

One of the most glaring examples of this in our district occurred this August in the surprise auction of a 28-acre parcel on Depot Road that the state had preserved as open space for more than 125 years. The town of Williamsburg, the state Department of Environmental Management and the Audubon Society lost out in a last-minute bidding war to private developers, just days after Rep. Kulik prematurely announced that he had negotiated a six-month delay to the auction. Unfortunately, neither our towns nor our representatives now have any control over the actions of this state agency. This

is just one consequence of a legislature that enacts major changes in laws without holding public hearings or debate by attaching bills to outside sections of the budget. I have called for the elimination of this practice as part of my call for electoral and legislative reform. I would work for both the repeal of section 548 and the repeal of the entire practice of attaching bills to outside sections of the budget.

A second danger is the governor's increasing reticence to spend the Environmental Bond funds that have been allocated towards land protection, including the APR program. The Governor has reduced spending from \$50 million/year to less than \$20 million/year, leading to over a year's backlog in funding of APR requests. This suggests that one important action to free up these funds would be to free up the Governor's mansion for a new resident in 2006!

This, however, is unlikely to be sufficient. Legislative funding for the Massachusetts agricultural preservation restriction (APR) program has been inconsistent, losing most of its funding in the most recent round of budget cuts. This is consistent with the legislature's abandonment of full funding for the PILOT program, which provides payment in lieu of taxes to towns with state lands. Until the Democratic Party-controlled legislature is willing to return to a reliable level

of funding for land preservation and conservation programs sufficient to meet yearly requests, this and future governors are unlikely to feel obligated to fully fund these programs.

Kulik

I have worked hard through the years, both as a member of the Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee and the Ways and Means Committee to provide high levels of funding for open space and agricultural preservation. Unfortunately, the Romney administration is working hard to undo more than 25 years of bipartisan support for these programs. Romney is creating a highly politicized and bureaucratic process for the expenditure of funds that have been authorized by the legislature. Unfortunately, under our constitution, the governor has authority over capital spending. Once it is authorized by the legislature, we no longer have a direct say over how and when the money is spent. However, I have joined with an alliance of conservationists, sportsmen, environmentalists, and other legislators to pressure the governor to change his direction on this. The governor's new policies are a particular threat to land protection in rural western Massachusetts communities. I will continue to fight him on this when the legislature reconvenes in January.

4 Death Penalty

Cranston

Yes. In this day and age, with science being what it is, I would support the death penalty in cases

where DNA evidence has proven who is guilty of first degree murder.

Fortune

No. There are many practical reasons to oppose the death penalty: it is ineffective, expensive, racist and unreliable. These are reason enough. But even more fundamentally, I believe it is morally wrong to execute prisoners. We must be better than those whom we imprison for the crime of

murder.

Kulik

I do not favor reinstating the death penalty. It is not a deterrent to crime, it is more costly than a lifetime sentence without the possibility of parole, and it is discriminatory. Romney supports a so-called "error-proof" death penalty, but there is no such thing. Human beings, and their judgments,

can never be 100% perfect.

Other states with the death penalty have now discovered that mistakes are made in the criminal justice system, and innocent people have been sentenced to death. We do not need such a costly and imperfect system in Massachusetts, and I support life sentences without parole for capital crimes.

5 Vermont Yankee

Cranston

Given the history of nuclear power in the United States, I feel that nuclear power sites are the safest in the world, and one

of the most economical and cleanest energy sources we currently have. I support the further study of alternative sources of energy, but right now solar, wind, and hydrogen have not proven to be very economical on a large scale basis.

The state of Massachusetts should mandate that all towns within the area of Vermont Yankee should have a working and realistic plan for evacuation, in the unlikely event that an accident occurred at Vermont Yankee. I understand that most towns currently have an evacuation plan, but some are seen as not being realistic, and those need to be reevaluated, and improved if necessary.

Fortune

It has been an uphill struggle to convince the NRC to grant legal standing even to Vermont's residents and elected representatives on this matter. Our legislators can con-

tinue to write letters on our behalf and press the state Attorney General to take action, but I believe that Massachusetts legislators are more likely to achieve success if they are willing to put pressure on Entergy Nuclear, the owners of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vermont and the Pilgrim Nuclear Station in Massachusetts. The licenses for both Vermont Yankee and Pilgrim Nuclear expire in 2012.

The presence of Pilgrim in Massachusetts gives our state leverage to demand oversight of the engineering assessment by the state and citizens of Massachusetts for both VT Yankee and Pilgrim. This is an important precedent to establish, because we will see increasing pressure to develop new nuclear power plants now that worldwide yearly oil production is peaking and will soon be in decline. Nuclear power will be falsely advertised as a clean alternative to coal, ignoring both the radioactive waste that is generated and the possibility of radioactive contamination during operation.

The best way to protect our safety, our economic security, and our environment would be to shift away from nuclear power and coal towards locally produced sources

of renewable energy (including biodiesel and wind). An article in Science recently estimated that 30 years and \$300 billion in research and development will be needed to transform the United States to a completely carbon-emission free economy (and reduce carbon emissions below current levels). This is a lot of money, but we have squandered more than that in one year alone on the war on Iraq and a faith-based missile defense system that physicists like myself know cannot work.

Massachusetts could play a leading role in the shift towards clean energy and a sustainable local energy economy. Instead, our legislature voted to take \$17 million from the Renewable Energy Trust to balance the budget using one-time funding gimmicks.

Let's change what's possible from our government.

Kulik

The 20% uprate process at Vermont Yankee is a joke. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is now just a rubber stamp for such unwise and unsafe proposals. I organized and led the Franklin County legislative delegation in an effort to convince our Attorney General to intervene in the case on

behalf of the citizens of Franklin County (and indeed, all of Massachusetts). I am extremely disappointed that he declined to do so, and even more dismayed by his reasoning. He declined because he felt it would be a waste of time and money since he believes that the NRC process is flawed, and that it will approve the uprate no matter the evidence presented against it. What a damning opinion from our state's chief law enforcement officer about the NRC's concern for public health and safety.

As the case is being played out, we are seeing a closed process that shuts out public input and full scrutiny of this critical issue. Since Massachusetts is not an intervener, we are limited in the scope of our legal involvement. However, I will continue to lead our delegation and speak out strongly against the uprate. I believe it is unsafe, and poses more of a threat to the people of Massachusetts who live downwind of the plant than it does to many Vermont residents. I thank the many constituents who have contacted me about this with your concerns and support, and I will continue to speak out against this plant uprate and the NRC process.

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HOUSE SEAT, SECOND FRANKLIN DISTRICT

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1

Taxes

Chris Richard, Republican Candidate, House Seat, Second Franklin District

I believe local aid needs to be increased. We can do this by cutting wasteful spending in the state budget. By merging the Mass Turnpike Authority with the Mass Highway Dept, we will save over \$20 million each

year. We should also merge the Boston Municipal Court with the District Court Department to save several million dollars more each year. And, these are only two departments to start with. There are millions more to be saved by cutting waste, and then we can redirect those funds to increase local aid, and shift the burden away from property taxes.

We also must stop the constant increase of tuition and fees at state colleges and community colleges. These institutions must remain

affordable for our citizens.

Chris Donelan, Democratic Candidate, House Seat, Second Franklin District

Our schools are not adequately funded. We have level-funded or cut funds for three years. As I look to the future, I have hope that increasing revenues will allow us to begin to restore funds. Increasing revenues from the economic stimulus the legislature passed will help us find the money we need to re-invest in education.



Chris Richard, Republican Candidate, House Seat, Second Franklin District

2

Gay Marriage

Richard

I believe the citizens of Massachusetts have the right to vote their con-

science on the ballot, and that the state must then uphold the will of the voters. We must also stop the SJC from "legislating from the bench."

Donelan

I voted not to advance a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage. I do not believe the civil rights of any group or person should be subject to popular vote. I also believe the purpose of our constitution is to extend rights and liberties, not restrict them.

3

Farmland

Richard

The state should not be buying up private lands with tax dollars.

Donelan

The entire delegation has been working to free up funds for conservation and land preservation. A major obstacle with small towns has been the state getting a bad reputation by cutting PILOT money. Some towns have been reluctant to even discuss land con-

servation because other towns are collapsing under the weight of state owned property. We need to fully fund PILOT, establish a positive relationship with towns seeking to preserve open space and begin a committed relationship toward preservation.

4

Death Penalty

Richard

Yes, I support the death penalty for certain crimes, such as murdering a police officer in the line

of duty, terrorism against the US or Massachusetts, mass-murderers, and drug kingpins.

Donelan

I do not support the death penalty. There is no such thing as a foolproof death penalty

law. As long as human beings are involved, there is the possibility for error. When I see the number of death row inmates released because new DNA tests prove they are not guilty, it gives me serious pause about the reliability of our system and whether we can bet anyone's life on it.



Chris Donelan, Democratic Candidate for Re-election, House Seat, Second Franklin District

5

Vermont Yankee

Richard

The legislature should ensure that all possible safety issues and concerns are addressed before the uprate goes forward.

Donelan

I have not been pleased with the way the NRC has handled the uprate request by Vermont Yankee. I have been involved for months sending letters to the NRC as well as Congressman Olver and Senator Kennedy. I, along with Representative Kulik and Senator Rosenberg have demanded that no uprate be granted without extensive evaluation of the

plant and its current condition. Now, the NRC plans to go forward without making the findings public or inviting public input. I have voiced my outrage at this process and have worked with Congressman Olver's office to demand more public input and demand that the NRC be responsive to the concerns of our community.

Who Should Be Sheriff? No Debate.



Bob Hunter

BY JEAN HEBDEN

While most political races are heating up as the campaigns head down the home stretch to next Tuesday's election, one local race remains relatively quiet. Incumbent Franklin County sheriff Fred MacDonald of Deerfield is being challenged by political newcomer and former sheriff's department employee Bob Hunter, a native of Gill. The candidates have different

ideas about how the sheriff's department, particularly the jail, should be run.

During his tenure, MacDonald closed the farm at the jail, where the inmates used to work. He said that decision was made for purely financial reasons. At the time of its closure the farm was raising beef cattle. By the time the animals were sent for processing the cost of raising them sent the price of the meat to \$14 or \$15 a pound. The same beef could be purchased from the state for \$4.50 a pound. MacDonald said, "The same inmates that worked the farm can now be seen on litter patrol on the highway."

For his part, Hunter wants to reopen the farm and use it to grow produce to supplement the inmates' diet. This would lower the cost of running the facility, put more

inmates to work, and the surplus produce could be donated to area shelters and food pantries, Hunter said. He also believes working the soil and harvesting their own food is beneficial to the inmates.

This is only one example of an issue on which the two candidates differ, but the voters aren't hearing much about the positions of these two candidates. MacDonald and Hunter had one forum tentatively scheduled for October 20th on GCTV so the two could publicly air their differences and debate their ideas for the department. MacDonald said he was notified a couple of days before that occasion that Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey was going to be visiting the jail at 3:00 p.m. the same day, so he canceled his participation on short notice. He sent a letter to GCTV's director, Marty McGuane, stating his schedule was heavy for that week, but saying he

could possibly schedule a debate with Hunter for the week of October 25th. As a stipulation of that offer he did, however, request "that Mr. Hunter agree, in writing, to make the portion of his personnel file covering the years 1993 to the present available to the panelists 24 hours prior to the forum." MacDonald said he has received no reply to this letter.

Hunter said he is eager to debate MacDonald in a public forum, but states, "My personnel record has nothing to do with my problems with how MacDonald is handling the budget at the Franklin County Sheriff's Department." He claimed it would not be politically beneficial for the incumbent sheriff to debate him. He accused MacDonald of hiding from the issues.

McGuane said he forwarded a copy of MacDonald's let-



Fred MacDonald

ter to the two panelists, WHMP's Chris Collins and the Recorder's George Forcier. "It's up to them to contact the candidates to hammer out the conditions and reschedule the forum," McGuane said. "GCTV is only a conduit."

The race for sheriff is countywide, voted on in all 26 Franklin County towns. Stay tuned.

NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

More Concerns on Wendell Pub

BY JOSH HEINEMANN

WENDELL - The October 20th meeting of the selectboard focused on the special permitting process for the Deja Brew pub, proposed by Wendell Country Store owners Pat and Vic Scutari. Objections have been raised over the impact the pub may have on town resources, such as police patrols to control speeding on Lockes Village Road, and the way the selectboard granted approval to the project. Resident Marianne Sundell has charged the board with failing to follow the town's zoning bylaw governing special permit approval, which states in part there "must be no significant adverse effects to the town after consideration of the special permit and site plan review criteria."

Board member Dan Keller said the board had granted approval for a liquor license for the pub, with hours of operation limited to 11 p.m. on weekends, 10 p.m. on weeknights. He said a separate hearing would also be conducted for a special permit for the Scutaris to operate the proposed pub, since the town's zoning bylaws specifically mention pubs as a use requiring a special permit.

Accordingly, on the 20th, highway commissioners Dan Bacigalupo and Harry Williston presented the commission's concerns about the proposed pub to the board. They said their concerns centered on parking and traffic flow.

The diagram received by the commission does not include the entire property, and parking for the proposed pub is not addressed. The island that once held gas pumps should be replaced, the commissioners felt, because now the entire parking lot is an amorphous free for all. The state wants right angle entries to the road, 24' in width, rather than what is there now, 160' that is wide open.

Keller said the selectboard won't post further hearings until all town departments have detailed concerns they may have about the proposal at the all board meeting on Saturday, October 23rd. He noted the planning board had informally notified the board they did have concerns about the proposed pub.

The highway commissioners also presented the selectboard their choice of Pat Carroll from Northfield for the position open on the road crew. They liked him best of the three people interviewed. Carroll has a CDL license, but no plowing or sanding experience, and the selectboard voted to accept him subject to his passing a drug test and physical, as well as a 90-day probationary period.

The culvert work below Bowen's pond is complete, and the work has impressed everyone who has looked at it, but Bacigalupo said he is not paying for it until he gets the wage forms from the contractor, as required by the state.

Selectboard member Christine Heard gave the board a report on her research about sewerage options for the town center. Running a pipe of any size from the center of Wendell to either of the treatment plants in Erving on the Millers River would cost about \$1 million a mile for 5 miles (to Erving Center) or 7 miles (to Erving side). A large septic system serving the town center would cost close to \$500,000, but according to selectboard chair Ted Lewis would require periodic inspection by a licensed operator, an ongoing expense.

Sally Stuffin asked for the use of the town hall to teach Tai Chi classes. She said that Robbie Heller of the recreation commission told her she had the commission's support and could use the building for free, if the classes were free for Wendell residents. Lewis said building maintenance

is getting expensive, and Heard added that while the board wants to encourage classes like Stuffin's, they don't want town taxpayers subsidizing the classes. Administrative assistant Nancy Aldrich presented the town hall fee schedule, based on the number of people involved in the event. Stuffin said she has from one to 19 in her class, that she normally makes \$10 for a class when she gives them on the town common, and she does not want to pay for the privilege of teaching. The selectboard agreed to give her use of the building for a trial period of six Thursdays, until December 1st, at no charge. Classes will be from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., at no charge to Wendell residents for that period.

Clerk Eliza Graton was not able to attend the meeting, and plans to soon resign her post as she has recently moved to Belchertown. Anyone interested in the position should contact Aldrich at the town offices Tuesday or Thursday.

Whittier Plumbing and Heating came to town hall to repair the furnace recently, but first the road boss, Dan Bacigalupo, had to evict a skunk.

Keller said Jonathan von Ranson would like to be appointed to the town office design committee; the selectboard confirmed his appointment.

He also said that the ABCC had clarified their rule for him with the meaning that if the selectboard granted a pouring license the board had to allow the minimum hours of 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and could extend closing hours to 2:00 a.m. However, under a special permit the board can limit a licensee's hours.

Aldrich said library director Rosie Heidkamp had planned to attend the meeting. Heidkamp is uncomfortable negotiating the fee for the new library architect, Gail Sullivan Associates of

Boston. Keller suggested the architect submit a standard contract to town counsel, and the town suggest changes if need be. It is hoped the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners will pay 60 percent of the new library's construction, and will pay for the added expense of creating a green building.

Ray DiDonato of the open space committee will attend the next selectboard meeting on November 3rd. All three selectboard members have been receiving email about the conservation restriction proposed for Fiske pond with objections to the prohibitions on hunting, fishing, and removal of vegetation beyond what is necessary to maintain trails. DiDonato has been firm about maintaining those restrictions. Lewis said he hoped the selectboard did not have to go along with every decision of the open space committee, but he was not sure, and Keller hoped some consensus could be reached between the open space committee and the selectboard. The open space committee met on October 25th at the senior center, and at Heard's suggestion Myron Becker attended to represent hunting and fishing interests (see related article on page 14).

Health Regs Still in Limbo

BY MARIANNE SUNDELL

WENDELL - The status of board of health regulations in town remains in limbo, but health board members have agreed to seek the advice of town counsel to determine whether the procedure for adopting recent regulation changes was legal.

Chair Don Richardson said he believes a public hearing was not required to change septic regulations, including reducing setbacks from wells. Board member Andy Hamilton disagreed, and said he thinks a public hearing was required. The difference of opinion concerns interpretation of the wording. Chapter 111, Section 31 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that "no regulation or amendment thereto which relates to the minimum requirements for subsurface disposal of sanitary sewerage as provided by the state environmental code shall be adopted until such time as the board of health shall hold a public hearing thereon."



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Sportsmen Question Conservation Restriction at Fiske Pond

BY MARIANNE SUNDELL WENDELL - The terms of the conservation restriction for Fiske Pond have not yet been finalized and more community input will be gathered before a final document is crafted, members told a concerned sportsman at the Monday meeting of the open space planning and conservation committee.

Myron Becker said he was unofficially representing a group of anglers who opposed the proposed exclusion of hunting and fishing at Fiske Pond. He asked why this recommendation had been made.

Chair Charles Smith said Paul Godfrey, a biology professor at the University of Massachusetts, had studied the area with his students and described the collection of unique habitats at the site. He advised the committee that hunting, fishing and logging would be detrimental to the preservation of these habitats.

Ray DiDonato of the open space committee said hunting and fishing are not prohibited in the town forest, so it is not a general policy to prohibit these activities on town conservation lands.

Becker said not all land is equal in terms of habitat for species such as hare and birds. The thick tangles of brush make a

good cover for game, but it is a difficult terrain and not one that would likely appeal to hikers. Much of the state land that is open for hunting does not support the same diversity of wildlife, he said.

Becker said hunting and fishing has been a traditional use of the land at the site over many years. The number of people who hunt in this area has been declining, Becker said and it does not have great appeal for people from out of town because much of the land is not optimal hunting terrain. He expressed concern about people moving into town from urban and suburban areas and making restrictions that eliminate traditional land uses and alienate long term residents. He questioned the legality of restricting the land to certain recreational user groups.

There will be two documents that shape the use of land at the site. One is the conservation restriction, and the other is the management plan, Smith said. The management plan is easier to change than the conservation restriction. There was discussion about reserving some restrictions for the management plan, so that it would be easier to revisit those decisions.

Fran Doughty of the open

space committee said he would like to see the town arrive at a plan that considers the recreational needs of all residents. Often in a democracy the winner takes all, but he would prefer to see a solution that makes some accommodations for everyone, he said.

Selectboard member Dan Keller expressed concern about a proposed restriction on commercial logging. He said some members of the community would like to leave room for the possibility of sustainable forest management and requested that related prohibitions also be reserved for the management plan.

Smith said that Godfrey told them logging would be more detrimental to the habitats than hunting.

The group plans to hike the land with Godfrey and learn more about his concerns, along with gathering more input from residents.

Committee members scheduled a public meeting about the conservation restriction for Thursday, Jan. 13th. They will make copies of a draft conservation restriction available for public comment, and may include a related questionnaire in the December town newsletter mailed to all residents.



The mortal remains of Benjamin Porter lie beneath this gravestone, dated 1793, in the Wendell Cemetery. The epitaph "Memento Mori" is a Latin warning to the viewer to remember that they, too, will die. The stone displays an unusual "Medusa" style of imagery, which may represent the soul of the deceased being drawn up to heaven. Like many area gravestones, this one is in danger of being broken by a neighboring tree.

Fall and Hallowe'en are excellent times to visit old cemeteries in the area, if you dare. The Old South Cemetery in Montague also has many old and interesting gravestones.

Wendell Community Development Plan Public Forum & Discussion

November 9, 2004 - Wendell Town Hall
6:30 p.m. Refreshments - 7:00 p.m. Forum

Please join us to review the June 2004 plan & share your ideas!

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All my Villages



**SERIAL MONTAGUE
BY P. YORK**

While some real-life locations and events are used in the following, all characters are the invention of the author and are in no way intended to resemble actual persons living or deceased

Part XXI

With a flashlight nailing a narrow gold path before them,

Brigid, Barbara, and Sunny began the steep descent from the parking lot through the woods and down to the pond. In the daytime, Miller State Forest was a feast for the eyes. At night it was a feast for the nose, with its tangy pine, damp leaves, and sweet firs intermingling in a woody perfume.

"Smells like air freshener down here," complained Sunny.

"That's because it's fresh air, you dope," said Barbara. "Listen, there's an owl."

They stopped a moment to listen to the owl's lonely whoop.

"Sounds like somebody pretending to be an owl," said Sunny.

"You spend too much time in a bar," sniffed Barbara. "You need to get out more."

They tramped on for a while in silence, until the still gray sheen of the pond emerged through the trees ahead of them.

"Right or left?" asked Brigid when she came to the place where the path forked, one branch leading north around the pond, the other south to the picnic grounds.

"Left, past the picnic tables and the latrines."

They clambered up over a needle-covered knoll, stumbling over exposed roots and loose stones.

"OK, now off the path and through these bushes. Let me have your light, Brigid." Barbara shone it through the thicket ahead of them. "See, there's one of the abandoned cabins. People coming through on the trail don't even know it's there any more."

"I don't believe you carried those things down here yourself," said Brigid, whacking her way through the pricklers and low-hanging branches.

"Did I say that?" Barbara asked innocently.

Leaving Sunny still thrashing in the underbrush behind them, they approached the cabin door, which was solidly boarded over.

"Around this side," Barbara

gestured to Brigid to follow her. "This piece of plywood is just leaning against the window. It's not nailed. Any more, that is."

Sunny joined them, pulling pricklers out of his clothes and pine needles out of his hair, and grumbling none too courteously under his breath. They shoved the piece of plywood aside to reveal a gaping window frame. Brigid stuck her head in and shone the light around.

"Oh, Barbara," she laughed. "That's sweet." Rather than dumped on the floor or stacked on top of each other, the abducted crèche figurines were arranged against the far wall of the cabin, Joseph hovering worshipfully, Mary bent and sweetly smiling, the baby in the middle beaming up at them. "Anyone who peeked in here would think they were having a vision."

"It was never my intent to disrespect anyone's beliefs," Barbara said haughtily.

"Well, let's get at it," Sunny

urged, hauling himself up over the windowsill. I'll pass them to you. Here comes Joseph."

Out came Joseph, who, without the metal bar supporting his back, was both hard to handle and fragile. Brigid and Barbara leaned him carefully against the outside cabin wall. Next came Mary, whose sweet face and blue robes, despite being covered with cobwebs, caught enough starlight to make her glow from her position on the wall next to Joseph. Then came Jesus in his manger, whom Barbara tucked briskly under her arm, heading back for the path they'd beaten through the thicket.

"Hang on," puffed Sunny, "I need light to get out of here, for Gods' sake."

He was halfway over the windowsill when they heard it. They froze. After a few moments, they heard it again.

(to be continued)



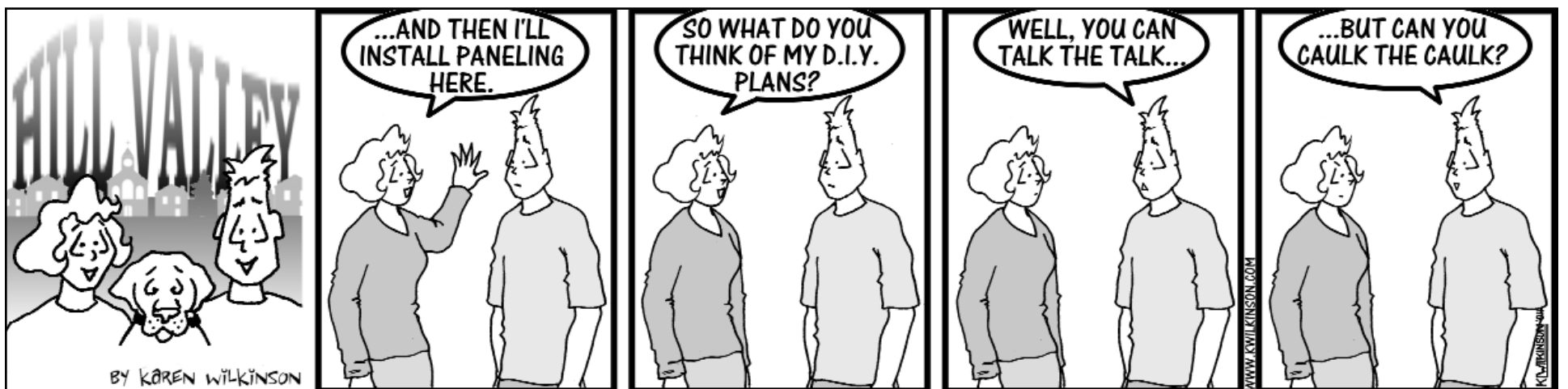


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STRATHMORE

continued from pg 1

Boston-based property management company bought the 133-year-old complex from International Paper two years ago for \$40,000. IP had mothballed the mill after the neighboring Indeck cogeneration facility shut down in 1999, depriving the mill of a cheap source of heat. The mill sat idle for three years. Following Western Properties' purchase, Jerry Jones has used Strathmore for the office and warehouse of his paper recycling business, Western Recycling. Although he asked for and received a substantial tax abatement from the town, Jones has paid no taxes on the mill, and has run up a \$53,000 tax bill to date. He has made some improvements to the sprinkler system to accommodate his use of the building as a warehouse for odd lot and damaged rolls of paper, but according to Turners Falls fire chief Ray Godin he has not brought the mill entirely into compliance with fire code regulations, a matter which Jones is now contesting in court. Jones has told town officials he does not intend to retain ownership of the building for long, and he has recently entertained an offer to purchase the complex from the Montague Energy Group, LLC, a holding company which has recently purchased the idle Indeck mill. This company has not communicated with town officials regarding their future plans for the cogeneration plant, and has no known track record regarding managing a redevelop-

ultimately run much higher, due to its close proximity to the Connecticut River, and the fact that it shares an adjoining wall with the Elseck paper mill. She gave an estimate of \$2 million as a minimal figure, were the town to be left in the position of having to pay for the mill's demolition in the future.

To his credit, Jones did allow the town and the Franklin Regional Council of Government officials to conduct a survey for hazardous materials at the complex. That survey came back clean. The mill was recently appraised at \$360,000, Sherman said.

Sherman predicted operating costs to keep the building heated and insured would run to nearly \$72,000 per annum. Abbondanzio estimated short term borrowing costs for the purchase price would run from \$6,000 to \$9,000 over the first four years of town ownership. Both Sherman and Abbondanzio said the town's goal would be to find a private developer to take on ownership of the complex within that time, but Abbondanzio conceded capital costs would rise significantly if the town were forced to go to long-term borrowing beyond the fourth year. He said the town would recover the \$53,000 in unpaid back taxes on the property if the purchase were eventually approved.

"Our assumption going in is that we won't be owners for any longer than we have to be," Abbondanzio said. "We would take advantage of our ownership

town sought predevelopment grant funding for the Strathmore mill in December of 2003, according to Sherman, was "to secure funds to research both technical and legal options for access," to the mill. At an earlier meeting of the selectboard, Sherman said that grant application, prepared in conjunction with the Franklin Council of Governments, was turned down by the Mass Development agency primarily because the town did not own the property.

Meanwhile, Sherman said town meeting members who had driven by the corner of Canal and 3rd Street in recent days would have noticed Shaw E & I of Hopkington, contactors working for the EPA, cleaning up hazardous materials and debris at the former DuBois garage, a site well-suited for parking near the south end of the pedestrian bridge that crosses the canal to the Strathmore. A recent study has shown the DuBois site could provide room for 30 to 60 parking spaces, once cleared of rubble. Later on in the warrant, members approved the transfer of the DuBois site to town ownership in lieu of roughly \$10,000 in unpaid back taxes.

Sherman said, "The town has a remarkable track record of success in redevelopment projects. Plenty of people spoke against the redevelopment of the Colle as too big and too costly. Similar comments were heard about the Crocker Building and the Great Falls Discovery Center. All are now contributing to the character and economy of downtown

issues." Expressing a common complaint, Radway said, "He bought that mill two years ago for \$40,000 and now he wants to sell it for it \$300,000. I'd love to sell my house two years later for seven and a half times what I paid for it, but who would be stupid enough to pay it?"

Peter Clark spoke next about the access problem. Clark is one of the principals of Turners Falls Hydro, a business operating out of the basement of the Strathmore, where, in 2001, IP subdivided 3,026 square feet of space through a complicated set of easements giving Clark and his business partner Davis Hobbs access to the powerhouse and the 83-year-old, 1000 kw GE hydro generator. By a 1951 agreement, Northeast Generation pays the owners a good sum *not* to run when the water in the canal is low. Apparently, this arrangement is worth it to Northeast, because the utility is able to generate more electricity at their downstream power stations with the same volume of water, because there is a greater "fall" or "head" at those plants.

"IP tried to gift the building to us in 2001," said Clark. "We looked at it, because we thought maybe we could preserve what we think of as a unique site. We looked at pedestrian access, handicapped access, parking, and so forth. We believe an eminent domain taking of what is really a private way (between the canal and the mill) is the best solution, to create two-way traffic to the site by adding another lane." Clark said his company, which

for the next big thing.

"While supporting the concept (of the town purchasing the Strathmore) conceptually," Montague Economic Development Industrial Corporation chair Jay diPucchio said, "The EDIC declines to authorize (the purchase) pending further review. We need 30 days just to answer some of the questions we have." This announcement prompted moderator Ray Godin to ask diPucchio, "Where are you going here?"

"This is an important opportunity, (which) we need to take up as a municipality. The impact will be enormous, for better or worse. Hence our interest in delaying for 30 days," to get certain questions answered, diPucchio said. He said his seven-member board currently has one vacancy, and the remaining members would like to clarify the liability they might be exposed to in a project of this complexity. "We need specific answers about the insurance relationship between the town and the EDIC. We need to have that nailed down," diPucchio said. He also wanted a lawyer familiar with EDICs to search the enabling legislation granting MEDIC the authority to work in the area of the power canal, and to research the organization's bylaws and articles of incorporation to make sure everything was in order.

Precinct 1's John Reynolds, whose wife is a member of the MEDIC board, asked if the town or MEDIC anticipated hiring a manager to handle predevelop-



DETMOLD PHOTOS

ment project of the size that would be required at the Strathmore Mill. They have not owned Indeck long enough to establish a record of tax payments on that property.

Framing the debate at town meeting, town planner Sherman said, "If the town does not take control of the Strathmore, ownership will be left to parties who do not have experience managing a property like this. It will likely be stripped and sold, and the taxes on the property will not be paid. The town will ultimately come to own the property when it is in much worse shape and will ultimately have to tear it down." She pointed to the \$1.1 million grant funded demolition of the GTD plant on Meridian Street in neighboring Greenfield as an example of what can happen when a town fails to act to redevelop an old mill building before it falls into incompetent private ownership. She said the cost for the town to demolish the Strathmore would

to access grant funding to resolve

the questions of access and parking," for the Strathmore. Town officials conceded these issues were the main stumbling blocks to private redevelopment of the Strathmore, but argued the town would be in the best position to resolve these problems.

Earlier, Sherman said the problem of access to the Strathmore along the canalside drive is "an immensely complicated issue. It appears that Northeast Generation owns about 10 feet of roadway," nearest the canal, while the two mills and the former Indeck plant own the remaining sections of the roadway adjacent to their buildings. This piecemeal ownership arrangement of the only vehicular access to the Strathmore complex leaves Elseck in the key position at the front of the drive.

One of the main reasons the

Town meeting members stand in support of purchasing the Strathmore Mill during the October 21st special town meeting

Turners Falls."

She added, "These projects were successful because people were willing to take risks. Saving the Strathmore will require leadership, trust, hard work and perseverance. I believe we can do it. The evidence is all around us."

In answer to a question from longtime town meeting stalwart Richard Guy, Sherman said the pedestrian bridge is owned by Northeast Generation. Saying she had spoken with a representative of the power company recently. "For what it's worth," said Sherman, "the power company said they will work with you," if the town purchases the mill.

Deb Radway, Precinct 1, said, "I'm afraid of the access issues too. I'm afraid of spending \$300,000 to \$400,000 on a project we want to have happen but can't because of these access

pays an annual tax bill of nearly \$28,500 to the town, would be happy to work collaboratively with Montague - or a future developer - to preserve the mill. He said, "the fenestration has to be replaced in short order," and he encouraged the town "to take control of the site."

If the town does take control of the Strathmore, even for a limited period of time, Precinct 2's Mike Naughton wanted to know, "Who is going to be in charge? The town in the person of Frank (Abbondanzio)? The town in the person of Robin (Sherman)? MEDIC?"

Sherman said the work of town officials was "cyclical." Many projects, such as the Colle Opera House and the High School - Middle School renovations had recently been brought to completion, or are nearing completion, freeing up staff time

ment of the mill. DiPucchio replied that MEDIC had been able to hire a manager to develop the Great Falls Discovery Center over the course of 20 years due entirely to grant funding. Although the future of the Discovery Center's hours of operation, staffing, and funding is presently up in the air, with director David Ziomek leaving shortly and no commitment yet from the Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation to hire a replacement for him, diPucchio insisted after the meeting that MEDIC's worries regarding the Discovery Center were entirely separate from their caution about the Strathmore. "The timing of this opportunity was not of our choice. We would have much rather negotiated a thoughtful option on the Strathmore for 18 months or a year, so we could answer some of the questions we need answered. But the owner was not willing to give us that option. So we needed

to behave responsibly and make certain our statutory basis in proceeding is sound." DiPucchio said MEDIC's participation would enable the town to move swiftly, without the necessity of a multiple bidding process, to hire an interim manager to work on predevelopment of the project.

The Montague Economic Development Industrial Corporation is a development holding company established by vote of town meeting for projects in which there is a public interest," diPucchio explained. For the Great Falls Discovery Center, MEDIC "managed the land, borrowed the money, and gathered grant funding for that project." Besides DiPucchio, the current members of the MEDIC are Richard Haas, Linda

Ackerman, Mark Bander, Lynn Reynolds, and Denis Superczynski. (DiPucchio said the board is seeking someone with "deep" financial skills to fill the open seat, and encourages such a candidate to contact him at 665-2901 or 863-8656.)

Les Cromack, chair of the Capital Improvements committee, said he had only had time to take a straw poll of his committee about the Strathmore, but "I would urge town meeting, 'Please don't kill this tonight. Please keep it alive for further consideration.'"

Barry Levine, of Precinct 3, thanked town officials for "an excellent, very informative presentation." He asked what the potential revenue from the Strathmore would be for the town. And he wondered,

although the building seemed to be in good shape now, what the cost of repairs might be 5 or 10 years down the road." Sherman admitted she did not have these answers. Several speakers, including building inspector David Jensen and Turners Falls Hydro's Peter Clark noted that the building had a fairly new membrane roof. Abbondanzio said the town will "doublecheck the structural integrity of the building before we sign the deed." On the subject of revenue, Abbondanzio related the details of a tour town officials took of a privately redeveloped mill in North Adams last week, where a 130,000 square foot building was divided into 2,200 to 3,000 square foot artist condominiums, which sold quickly for \$100,000 to \$150,000 each. Eric Rudd, the private developer who purchased that mill for \$150,000 in 2002, has looked at the Strathmore Mill and said the building itself is better suited to the type of mixed-use, artist loft and work space development he specializes in, if the access problems can be solved.

Precinct 4's Steve Ellis said, "We don't want to expose our town to unnecessary risk, but where does the greater risk lie?" He said, "The failure of leaving certain projects to the free market system," is evident to him every time he drives by the former Railroad Salvage building. The private owners who took on that project weren't prepared to develop it," Ellis said. He asked what some of the costs of not acting would include. "Right now we are getting zero tax money," from the Strathmore. "The valuation of the building has plummeted. If we lost that building," the two operations at either end may conclude that the costs of continuing to operate on the island could become "unbearable," said Ellis. "We might lose those businesses."

Precinct 2's Jensen noted the Strathmore had housed more than 30 small arts and industry start-up businesses in the late 90s, before Indeck pulled the plug on the heat and IP evicted

them. "The property may be more valuable subdivided into manageable size," he said.

Precinct 3's Don Valley asked which projects in town would fail to get sufficient attention, if town officials became involved in the complex work of preparing the Strathmore for development. He cited the landfill and a new industrial park south of Millers Falls Road as two examples of tax producing projects the town should be paying attention to now.

Selectboard member Allen Ross said, "Property values have done nothing but increase," in recent years. "We are at the cusp of one of the most desirable places to live in the Northeast. If we can nurture (the Strathmore) properly, its value will only go up. History is on our side. Look at Easthampton and North Adams. Our site is better," Ross declared.

At this point, Precinct 4's Rich Kuklewicz called the question. Although moderator Ray Godin had urged members on several occasions to hold statements for or against the project while questions and concerns were aired, after Ross' brief statement of support, members voted overwhelmingly to halt debate and vote the question.

As the votes were being counted, Precinct 3's Patti Dion turned to her neighbor and said, "We shouldn't be landlords. We can't take care of what we have now. One more year and (the Strathmore) would go into tax taking, we could take it that way." Later, Dion clarified that tax taking is a lengthy proceeding, even on simple parcels. A property like the Strathmore could be tied up in court for years, if the owner wanted to contest the taking.

After the motion failed, by a vote of 52 in favor, 30 against, Les Cromack said, "I hope and trust we will continue to work on this. Please keep this thing alive."

After the vote, former town planner Denis Superczynski,

Precinct 4, said, "I think the potential for that building is enormous. I don't see the town letting it become a pile of bricks."

Precinct 1's John Reynolds stood in opposition to the purchase, saying afterwards he had hoped to table the proposal for a month until more questions could be answered. (Town clerk John Zywna said tabling a motion on a town meeting warrant is not legal.) Lynn Reynolds, on the other hand, voted for the proposal. "I've seen a signed offer from another buyer for the Strathmore, for the same amount," she said after the meeting. "I think they have a real buyer," if the town does not purchase. Reynolds declined to say who that other buyer might be, but during the meeting Sherman confirmed that the new owner of the Indeck plant, Montague Energy Group, LLC, has made an offer to buy the Strathmore. "The information I have doesn't indicate they have much experience with a project of this size and complexity," Sherman told the meeting.

Julia Bowden, Precinct 5, said she voted against the proposal, "Basically because there were a lot of unanswered questions. I want to see a definite proposal about parking and how people are going to get in and out of that site."

The 89 town meeting members in attendance on October 21st represent a 71.2% turnout," according to town clerk Zywna, who noted that 14.4% of the members had been excused from the meeting. The remaining 14.4% of the members were what Zywna refers to as "No Shows." These included Charles Choleva (5), Jason Clark (4), Albert Cummings (5), Edward Cutler (6), Arthur Evans (1), John Fox (2), Lynn Godin (3), Tony Guglielmi (5), Kathy Hyson (3), Marilyn Kostanski (2), Darren Lenois (6), Don MacPhail (3), Donald Mays (5), Russell Skelton (5), Jason Valley (5), Edward Voudren (4), and Lynn Wasielewski (6), according to Zywna.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Thursday 10-21

1:03 p.m. Caller reported losing a wallet at the Montague Plains.
 2:36 p.m. Minor motor vehicle accident reported at the High School. Report taken.

Friday 10-22

8:11 a.m. Walk-in to station turning in remnants of wallet found on Montague Plains. It was what was left of wallet reported missing the day before.
 8:17 a.m. Report of a car blocking a driveway on 3rd Street. Parking ticket issued.

motor vehicle and hit two kids on bikes. No one was injured.

Saturday 10-23

2:02 a.m. Report of a loud party at a 4th Street address. Subject spoken to. Peace restored.
 6:20 p.m. Caller from Whitney's Way in Montague stating neighbor was engaged in some sort of target practice in their yard. Caller was concerned about the trajectory. Investigated.

8:05 p.m. Roommate dispute reported at a G Street address. Officer spoke to both parties.

Monday 10-24

8:12 a.m. While digging at a Hatchery Road address, workers hit a gas line. Fire department to notify necessary people
 2:22 p.m. Caller from a Montague Ave, Lake Pleasant address reported a rock thrown into her yard. She wanted the incident noted in the log.
 6:51 p.m. Report of stolen furniture from an E. Main Street, Millers Falls address. Furniture was returned 15 minutes later.
 7:47 p.m. Report of a domestic disturbance at a Whitney's Way, Montague address. Found to be a verbal argument between a boyfriend and girlfriend. Man left for the night.
 10:47 p.m. Report of a motor vehicle

accident with property damage. Driver hit a tree and a garage. He was summonsed.

Tuesday 10-25

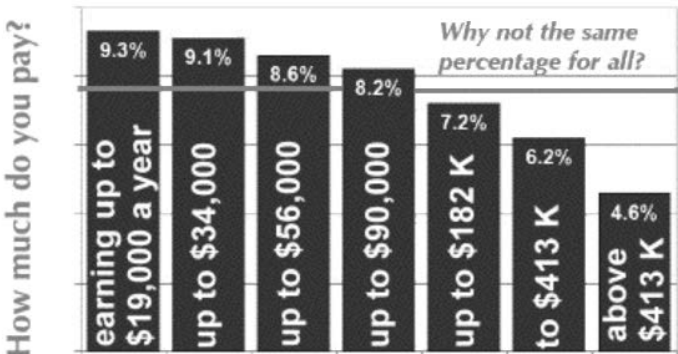
1:26 a.m. Caller reported hearing someone screaming for help from a 3rd Street address. Officer could not locate.
 11:25 a.m. Report of a traffic hazard on Turnpike Road. Paving equipment was parked in the road. Officer spoke to owner and equipment was moved.
 4:00 p.m. [REDACTED] was arrested on a straight warrant.
 6:47 p.m. After a motor vehicle stop, [REDACTED] was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor, second offence, failure to signal before turning, and failure to use care starting, stopping, turning, and backing.
 7:03 p.m. Car vs. deer accident reported on Turners Falls Road. Report taken.

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Cable Advisory Public Hearing

Nov 3rd; 7pm Town Hall

Local Access Criteria (Working Draft for Public Comment)

General:

- The proposed organization must be a 501(c)(3) corporation and must furnish evidence of this including by-laws, and membership on board of directors.
- The proposed organization must maintain a studio in Montague.
- The proposed organization must demonstrate a strong commitment to PEG (Public, Educational, Government) programming.
- Preference will be given to organizations with experience in providing local access

Specific: Each proposal should contain the following from each proposing organization:

- a mission statement;
- an organizational plan;
- a 3-year business plan that demonstrates allocation of resources, a capital plan, a financial plan including a line-item first-year of operation budget, as well as staffing plans, program development, community involvement, and proposed community training
- job descriptions;
- personnel policies
- a proposal for monitoring on an ongoing basis community

needs, interests and concerns;

- a proposal for monitoring on an ongoing basis customer satisfaction;
- a proposal for enhancing basic funding through grants, underwriting, etc. Any history of acquiring grants for public access purposes should be included;
- a detailed inventory of present equipment in working condition that could be used for local access purposes and/or what equipment the organization plans to purchase over the first three years to enhance community programming;
- a proposal demonstrating how the organization intends to conduct workshops in the community facility; what the topics will be; and a proposed schedule for these workshops;
- A statement describing how the organization will manage and maintain PEG programming including outreach to the community and schools;

The designated provider will:

- be responsible for programming free from censorship;
- be non-discriminatory in its hiring of staff and/or independent producers;
- make the studio available on a fixed schedule;
- provide detailed quarterly

reports to the Cable Advisory Committee and the Selectboard regarding activities, income and expenses. The report shall include all capital expenditures and a current inventory reflecting equipment purchased and retired and expenditure of resources. .

- be responsible for ensuring an acceptable level of technical quality of all programs;
- maintain a log of programming available to the general public.
- maintain a written complaint/compliment file available to the general public.
- broadcast all town meetings, all Selectboard meetings and, as determined by the MCAC in consultation with the provider, other important government meetings or public hearings.
- maintain a library of recent and current local access programs
- provide and maintain a community calendar as a PSA
- make every reasonable effort to encourage Montague-based programming

Contract Terms (these are suggestions; the MCAC recognizes that standard contract terms must be included per town counsel)

- a contract should be issued by the Selectboard to the

chosen local access provider for a term of three years;

- the designated provider will maintain worker's compensation, liability, general comprehensive and non-owned vehicle liability insurance naming the Town as co-insured in force throughout the term of the contract and will provide the Town with certificates showing compliance;
- the designated provider will require every access user to indemnify the Town and hold both harmless against any claims arising out of any program material produced and/or cablecast;
- the Town will assume the cost and responsibility for insuring Town-owned equipment used to meet the local access needs;
- Annually, within 90 days of the anniversary of the contract, the designated provider will take part in a public performance evaluation overseen by the Cable Advisory Committee. The purpose will be to determine whether the provider is performing its duties pursuant to this contract.
- The contract may be terminated by the Town if the designated provider files for bankruptcy or is found, after the annual review, to be in serious breach of its responsibilities to the citizens of Montague.

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ARTS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29TH

"A Bouquet of Music Concert Series" at Franklin Medical Center Courtyard (weather permitting) at 164 High Street in Greenfield. Noon to 1 p.m.

Fourth Friday Contra Dance with David Kaynor & Greenfield Dance Band, Guiding Star Grange Hall, 401 Chapman Street, Greenfield. 8:00 p.m. - midnight. 413-367-9380

Hot Spot Teen Center, Open Mic 5:30 - 9 p.m. just in time for Halloween. 24 Third St, Turners Falls. (413) 863-9576 to sign-up.

FRIDAY - SUNDAY OCTOBER 29TH-31ST

Enchanted Kingdom: An Alternative to Scary Haunted Houses. Bring your children and enjoy safe, fun, interactive fantasy spaces, including Fairy Princess Land, Magic Castles Forest & Surprise New Spaces. All Souls Unitarian Church, 399 Main Street, Greenfield. Friday 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., Saturday 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. 413-773-5018

SUNDAY OCT. 31ST

Griffin House will perform at 7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.) on Halloween night at Shelburne Falls Yoga, down by the Potholes in Shelburne Falls. Ticket Prices: \$10 at the door. Info: Hilltown Folk (413) 625-2580.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOV. 5TH & 6TH

Mudpie Potters Community Clay Center sponsors its 10th annual exhibit and sale of members' pottery, sculpture and artwork, in Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts. A "Gala Preview Party" will be held Friday, from 7 to 9 p.m. with music by Mother Turtle and dancing; a silent auction of gorgeous artworks, goods and services from 7 to 8:30 p.m. \$5 at the door enters you into a drawing for a beautiful clay vessel. Food, drink, and great company all evening! **Creative dress** appreciated. **AND** on Saturday, Firsts & Seconds Sale at Mudpie Potters Community Clay Center from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other Leverett Crafts & Arts artists will host open studios. Hot cider served all day, the pies come out at 2:30 p.m.! Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts, 13 Montague Road, Leverett.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOV. 5TH & 6TH AND FRIDAY, NOV. 12TH

The Country Players present *Crazy in Love: PG-14*, an evening of one-act comedies at The Shea Theater, Ave. A, Turners Falls at 8 p.m. Advanced reservations call (413) 863-2281. Tix avail. at Shea Box Office or World Eye Bookstore, Main St. Greenfield. \$10 general, \$8 seniors and students up to Grade 12.

SATURDAY, NOV. 6TH

Halloween Celebration with Roger Tincknell. Celebrate the season with Halloween songs, sing-a-longs, spooky stories and snack. Dress for a cool evening, bring flashlights, blankets and chairs (In case of poor weather held indoors.) Northfield Mountain Recreation Area, Route 63, Northfield. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. 800-859-2960

The Jeffrey Amherst Bookshop invites you to a reading and signing of a new book by Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno, *e.e. cummings A Biography*, 1 p.m., 55 S. Pleasant St., Amherst. (413) 253-3381

SUNDAY OCTOBER 31ST

Hands-On History Family Programs: Supernatural Sunday Halloween at Historic Deerfield is one of our most popular events chock full of exciting things to see and do. Hayrides, magic and tours of the Old Burying Ground. Make a unique Halloween mask with fun foam, feathers, jewels and more. Wear your costume and win a prize. Historic Deerfield, in Deerfield. 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. 413-775-7214

ONGOING THROUGH DEC. 5TH

Art exhibits and sales at Mudpie Potters Community Clay Center. Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 5th from 10 am. to 4 p.m. and by appointment during the week. Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts &

Arts, 13 Montague Road, Leverett. Call (413) 548-9070 or (413) 548-3939 for more information.

UPCOMING SATURDAY & SUNDAY, NOV. 6TH & 7TH

Northfield Arts 6th Annual Open Studio and Gallery Tour. Meet 16 Northfield artists exhibiting and working on paintings, illustrations, weavings, sculpture, ceramics and printmaking in their studios on Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday from 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.. Maps for the tour are available that day in Northfield at Mim's Market, the IGA Food Mart and Mockingbird Antiques. More info. at www.northfieldarts.com or (413) 498-2227.

TUESDAY, NOV. 16TH

"Planning for the Future of the Farm" is the title of a farming program by the Highland Communities Initiative focusing on preparing and planning for the future of the farm beyond one's lifetime. This half-day workshop will also offer plenty of opportunities for farmers to share their experiences. The workshop will take place at the Shelburne Grange Hall and is \$10 per person, which includes lunch. Please register in advance by calling (413) 268-8219 or emailing jchristensen@ttor.org. More information is available at www.highlandcommunities.org.

FARLEY

continued from pg 1

dimension where antique car and truck parts - especially Chevy truck parts - have been lovingly painted, restored, and transmogrified into bright, unique paintings and sculptures. Works of art in progress, and completed art is everywhere - hanging from the walls and ceiling above the bed, in corners, on the floor, in boxes. Here is an easel, there a pile of photos, over here some books and papers and brushes. But one of the astounding things about Stewart's workshop is that it is clean, not cluttered - inviting, energetic. He lives in a gallery of his work - paintings and sculptures so exceptional that it's a challenge to leave such a wonderful place behind, and return to the drab (in comparison) outside world.

Stewart is Canadian by birth. He was born in Montreal, and moved to Fitchburg with his parents at the age of seven. From there, they moved to Lunenburg, MA, where Stewart spent his adolescent years. After a stint in the military, he enrolled at Greenfield Community College and fell in with Budge Hyde, head of the art department, who became his mentor and started him on the artist's path. This led Stewart to Boston, where he met his wife, fellow artist Jeanie Schermesser, and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting and printmaking from the Massachusetts College of Art. From there, Stewart headed to England, where he studied classical art, drawing, painting and printmaking at the Ruskin School of Drawing and

Painting at Oxford University. While in England, he focused on artists of the Late Renaissance and Early Baroque period - artists like Rembrandt and Peter Paul Rubens.

An extraordinary piece of art in his foyer uses a technique called Anamorphoses, which was a popular and complex technique used primarily in the 17th and 18th centuries. Anamorphoses is a careful geometric layout of an image, which, when completed, appears to be a distorted representation of reality. The image is only restored to its true form when viewed from an oblique angle or reflected in a cylinder. Stewart's cylinder is a 2 1/8 inch wide exhaust extension from a tailpipe, which he has covered with Mylar tape to create a reflection. When the reflection is viewed, a beautiful painting of an antique car emerged. Looking at this artwork through the Mylar-covered cylinder gives the viewer a sense of discovery, somewhat akin to finding images hidden in a larger painting.

"I certainly don't compare myself with Rembrandt, but I do use his techniques," said Stewart, as I tore myself away from the Anamorphic artwork. "One technique I use is glaze. Very little paint, a lot of medium, makes the perfect transparent glaze. My medium is a combination of turpentine, linseed oil, and Damar varnish. Applying it repeatedly to a painting gives it a glaze and a

transparent depth. Sometimes it takes an oil painting a year to dry. Actually an oil painting really never dries, so some of my work takes a long time to complete."

As we moved from the foyer to another section of the studio, Steart mixed enthusiasm with technical information in just the right amount for me to understand. "The fun comes in creating images that really aren't there. Sometimes I paint



Stewart's prisma color pencil drawing, "Advanced Design Trucks"

from life, but usually I will get my basic idea from a photograph, and then go off from there. The visual image is my base - artists always need a base of some sort, a reference they can build from." He picked up an interesting item from a box. "This is an early 1920s Studebaker grill shell that I found in the woods of Wendell. What I did was to wire-brush and urethane the rust. That's what makes the

beautiful patina. I actually preserve the rust." He dug deeper into a box. "This is my boneyard - a collection of junked car and truck parts. Most of these pieces are from trucks manufactured in the 1930s and 1940s. Of course people who find out about my artwork frequently give me parts to work with."

With all this antique truck and auto imagery about the place, I asked Stewart if he was involved with the Chevy Truck Show, which takes place every August at the Wendell State Forest. "Yes, I started that show 24 years ago," he told me. "It's now called the Northeast Chevy/GMC Truck Club, and it has become a four-day event. This year's meet was held on August 5th - 8th. There were over 200 entries. Total membership in the club fluctuates from about 300 to 500 members, and the meet has become the largest standing Chevy/GMC truck show in the country. Members come from all over the country to

attend, and it's a rollicking good time; the vehicles are beautiful, and the families enjoy the forest, the camping out, and the good company."

Finally we talked about the former church building that houses all these automotive masterpieces. Stewart saw the building for the first time in 1971, and immediately fell in love with it. At that time, the church had a large sign on it that read "Antique Sale".

Montague Grange #141

MOVIE NIGHT Sunday Oct. 31st THE SHINING

Followed by
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At the Grange in Montague Center
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www.MontagueMA.net/Grange

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**SHOWTIMES FOR
FRI. OCT. 29TH - THURS. NOV 4TH**

1. SHAUN OF THE DEAD	R
DAILY 6:00 9:00	
MAT FRI SAT SUN WED 12:00 3:00	
2. SAW	R in DTS sound
DAILY 6:00 9:00	
MAT FRI SAT SUN WED 12:00 3:00	
3. SHARK TALE	PG
DAILY 6:00 9:00	
MAT FRI SAT SUN WED 12:00 3:00	
4. THE GRUDGE	PG13
DAILY 6:15 9:15	
MAT FRI SAT SUN WED 12:15 3:15	
5. TEAM AMERICA	R
DAILY 6:15 9:15	
MAT FRI SAT SUN WED 12:15 3:15	
6. SURVIVING CHRISTMAS	PG13 in DTS sound
DAILY 6:30 9:30	
MAT SAT SUN WED 12:30 3:30	
7. STIFF ODDS PREMIERE FRIDAY 3:00PM	
ALSO SHOWING FRI AND SAT AT MIDNIGHT - TICKETS \$5.00	
HALLOWEEN CARTOON CLASSIC	
FRIDAY 7:00PM (FREE TO THE PUBLIC)	

Bryant reminisced about meeting Clesson Field, who owned the building, and asking him about buying the building. Ten years later, after many visits to the church, and after becoming good friends with Field, Bryant got a letter which said simply "Come and see me. I have a plan." Shortly thereafter, Stewart was the new owner of the old church.

"In some ways it was a bit-sweet thing to finally own this place - it was a headache and a gift at the same time. A headache because the place was still filled with cartons and cartons of antiques and junk, and had no septic system. Parts of the building were falling apart, and it took many years and much effort to make it look as nice as it does today. And of course, it was a blessing as well, because I knew from the first moment I laid eyes on it, that this would be our permanent home."

Stewart and Schermesser raised their two sons in Farley - Seth, 21, who is a student at RPI (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), and Jacob, 19, who is a student at Skidmore.

As I said my goodbyes, promising to return soon to talk with Schermesser, Stewart mentioned that he has several pieces of artwork showing at the Greentrees Gallery in Northfield (105 Main Street) as well as at Mail Master, on Main Street in Millers Falls. Although Bryant is not a fan of computers, he does answer his phone calls, and can be reached at (413) 422-2657. Questions about the Northeast Chevy/GMC Truck Club meet can be sent to Bryant J. Stewart, PO Box 155, Millers Falls, MA 01349.

Fall Nature Walk in Montague Center

bellybowl

continued from page 2

BY LINDA HICKMAN

Eighteen participants braved an overcast chilly day and many dogs to learn about the native and non-native plant species in the Montague Center Conservation Land on Sunday, October 24th. Environmental educator Dawn Ward of Montague led the walk, which was organized by the Montague Public Libraries. Ward shared her extensive knowledge of plants and their uses throughout the program.

The group assembled in front of the Montague Center Library and slowly walked down North Street, where Ward identified and discussed Norway, silver and sugar maples. Norway maples are very popular as a street planting, but are now considered to be invasive. She pointed out how large and profuse their seeds are compared to the native species. Silver maples do not make as good a street tree, she said, because their branches are weaker and prone to breakage. She also pointed out a cedar hedge containing true cedars, unlike many other species, which are called cedars but are really junipers.

By the time the group reached the protected land, a locally organized dog party had largely dispersed, although there were still many dogs with their owners also enjoying the site.



Environmental educator Dawn Ward of Montague showed stinging nettles to participants in the Fall Nature Walk in the Montague Center Conservation Land on Sunday, October 24th. Dawn also pointed out the heavy concentration of invasive plants in this corner by the Sawmill River.

Dog walking is a very popular pastime in the Montague Center Conservation Land.

Ward identified many native and invasive species. She defined "invasives" as plants that are not native to a particular area, which thrive and crowd out native species. Invasives are often, but not always, from other countries. Many of these were originally planted as ornamentals. Ward identified large patches of Japanese knotweed (aka American bamboo), barberry, and multiflora rose. The Japanese knotweed spreads by self-propagating, and in a number of areas was the only plant present.

Ward also identified many useful native plants. Jewelweed helps prevent skin rashes, including reactions to poison ivy. Stinging nettles (once cooked) are edible and have medicinal properties. Milkweed, in addition to being the only food source for monarch caterpillars, is edible when very young. Even the fluff attached to the seeds had uses beyond seed transportation, including insulation for life jackets.

This fall has been relatively mild, with little frost. The sensitive fern was one of the few plants that had completely succumbed to cold weather, hence its name. Some plants were still

flowering, such as smartweed. Ward pointed out ways that plants are preparing for winter, including many different types of seeds and seed dispersal systems. She explained that burdock seeds were the inspiration for Velcro.

The walk participants came from around the Pioneer Valley. Two women from Greenfield, Rosalie Sargent and Roberta Gordon, said they have been going for walks together in different areas every weekend for three or four years. They were glad to find a spot they had never heard of. Other walkers came from Shutesbury, Turners Falls, Deerfield, Colrain, Northampton, and Amherst. One Montague Center resident said she walks in the conservation land every day, but came on the guided walk because she wanted to be able to identify more of the numerous plants in the fields and woods.

The nature walk was part of the Montague Public Libraries' Tree and Forestry Education Project, which is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Upcoming programs will be posted in *the Reporter*, at the Montague Libraries, and on montaguema.net. For more information, please call Linda Hickman at the Carnegie Library, 863-3214.

cal restriction originates from the "\$300,000 in state grant funds from the Massachusetts Historical Commission that helped restore the exterior of that 19th century building."

"We're in discussions now over how the lease is going to be terminated," he said. "Basically we'll be marketing that space along with the other commercial spaces."

The Colle Opera House presently has its three first floor spaces open. Already established in the building are the Northeast Foundation for Children on the second and third floors, Winrock Ecological Services, a global resource mapping service, on the third floor, and Ja'Duke Productions in the basement.

The Fournier-LeMays plan to maintain their vision for a healthy homestyle eatery in their new space, and in addition plan to invite local musicians, poets and artists to perform on the existing stage in the former Blue Skies Café to enhance candlelit "Date Night" dinners on Friday and Saturday nights. They are considering applying to the selectboard for approval of a beer and wine license as well.

"We're disappointed not to be in the Colle, but we're excited about moving into the former Blue Skies," said Elaine Fournier-LeMay. "We want to sell (Blue Skies' owner Patti McClelland's) pastries and have her be our pastry chef. We signed the lease with her to start November 1st. She's getting the kitchen ready for us and we're getting our hood installed. We're hoping to open by the middle of November."

The owners say they will ask town officials for permission to place sandwich board signs on 3rd Street and on Avenue A.



PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT ROBERT A. HUNTER, SR., SHERIFF

BOB HUNTER FOR SHERIFF

My Name is Bob Hunter and I am a candidate for Sheriff of Franklin County. Over the last twenty years I have dedicated myself to public service both as a Police Officer in Montague and Gill, and as Deputy Sheriff to better the quality of life in all our towns.

- I believe in the fair and equal treatment of all people.
- I believe that the clear understanding of one's role increases their effectiveness.
- I believe that accountability and cooperation serve the common good.
- I believe that quality services and quality employees begin with quality management.
- I believe that anything worth receiving must be earned.

"A vote is a horrible thing to waste. That's why I am supporting Bob Hunter. I've known Bob Hunter for over 20 years and known him to be a man of integrity-- one I could turn to in a pinch to get the job done. If you are more interested in politics than performance, vote for the other guy. If you want responsible leadership and a move away from local, political cronyism, Bob Hunter is your man."

--- Patrick F. O'Bryan, retired Montague Chief of Police

"Bob Hunter has been a life long friend. Bob has a good sense of family, and a long list of people that call him a friend. What I've always liked about Bob is his ability to listen and make decisions in a calm and rational manner. His twenty years of experience in Corrections gives him a great understanding of how our jail works. Bob Hunter is my choice for Franklin County Sheriff, he's someone we can trust to represent us fairly and with dedication."

---Joel M. Cole, former Candidate for Sheriff

"I support Bob Hunter. The past two Sheriffs have been ex-State Troopers with no jail experience and both have gained their contacts in Boston from those elected by us to represent this county. Bob is better qualified; he worked in the jail for 20 years and knows how to work with his people, treat his people, and motivate his people to do a very hard job. He will be a Sheriff that works at Elm Street in Greenfield and not out of his Ford Expedition, going from one out of state conference to another, leaving the decision making to subordinates and/or political hires. That is not how you run the office of the "Top Law Enforcement Officer of the County". I strongly believe that change is badly needed within the Franklin County Sheriff's office."

-- David McCarthy, retired Greenfield Chief of Police

For a personal message and more information about Bob Hunter, visit bobforsheriff.tripod.com

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