



VOLUME 15 NUMBER 6

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1994

HEATH HERALD

HEATH'S FIRST NEWSPAPER 50¢

PETTENGILLS HONORED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

by Susan Silvester

This February issue of the *Heath Herald* marks not only the fifteenth anniversary of our town newspaper, but also the end of Terry Pettengill's fifteen years of dedicated service to the paper. As one of the original founders, she has helped bring about many changes and improvements through the years. Terry has managed the growing circulation and kept the financial records in perfect order. Raymond Pettengill, her husband, has likewise been a great asset to the newspaper. He has contributed his time and expertise in the areas of advertisements, business, and circulation since taking over the position in 1987. Both Terry and Ray will be greatly missed on the staff of the *Heath Herald*, and it is in consideration of their combined twenty-two years of outstanding service to the newspaper that we dedicate this issue to them.

Terry and Ray have witnessed a continued expansion of the newspaper over the years and can remember when it took nearly all day for the address to be hand-written for each issue. Now Ray has computerized the mailing list, and labels are simply applied to each copy. The electric stapler which they bought has made mailing preparation much easier. The folding, labelling, and sorting tasks are streamlined by the assistance of Alli Thane. Terry recalls when she was away visiting family in Maine (very seldom was she ever out of town when the *Heath Herald* was being published); Caroline Smith and Alli spent hours putting the newspaper together using Scotch tape before the advent of electric staplers to bind it for mailing.

The *Heath Herald's* original founders fifteen years ago were Caroline and Newland Smith, Harriet and John Read, Terry Pettengill, Alli Thane, Michael Bakalar, and Pegge and David Howland. Under their leadership this small town paper flourished, developing a subscription list of more than two hundred people from literally all over the world. The columnists came to include such internationally recognized experts as Yale anthropologist Dr. Michael Coe and highly acclaimed gardener, Elsa Bakalar.

The newspaper has had many dedicated people on its staff in addition to Terry and Ray during the past fifteen years. John Read was instrumental in bringing advertisements to the paper so it would be self-sustaining, while his wife Harriet provided the art work. Her original "herald" is still our logo and graces the cover of every issue. Newland and Caroline Smith were indispensable in managing the paper during their ten years of leadership; their home

became the focal point for the typing, then computerization of each issue just as the Pettengill residence became the center for mailing and business. The Howlands are the only remaining original founders of the paper; Pegge does the layout and paste-up of each issue, while Dave delivers the completed document to the printer in Adams, then picks it up the following day. Now instead of taking it to the Pettengills' home for mailing preparation, it will go to

Deborah Phillips. We are fortunate that Deborah, a friend and neighbor of the Pettengills, will carry on the fine tradition in North Heath. Terry and Ray will undoubtedly be available when called upon to assist, but this will certainly be only on occasion. We will greatly miss their dedication and service to this newspaper. Their retirement is marked with sadness as well as a sense of accomplishment. We wish them much happiness and thank them for their many years of service!

EDITOR'S NOTE: If the *Heath Herald* is to continue to serve a growing population and utilize the wonderful community resources that it has, then we must seek new ideas, additional volunteers, and creative funding. If you are interested in joining a small but dedicated *Heath Herald* staff, please contact Susan Silvester at 337-4491. We would welcome your assistance!



RAY AND TERRY PETTENGILL
(Family photo)

ALMEIDA SETTLEMENT

by Town Counsel

The Town has reached a settlement with the Almeidas in a suit which they filed against the Town on behalf of themselves and their minor children, seeking damages which they alleged to have incurred as a result of the alleged release of salt and petroleum onto their property from abutting Town property.

The Almeidas had originally sought damages from the Town for the lost use and value of their property, and as compensation for medical injuries and emotional distress which they alleged to have suffered as a result of salt and petroleum contamination of their property. The Almeidas filed their case under the State Superfund Law, M.G.L. c.21E, and theories of negligence, nuisance, trespass, intentional infliction of emotional distress, and inverse condemnation.

One of the Town's former insurers, United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company, agreed to pay the Town's costs of defending the case. The Town vigorously defended the claims. The parties entered into extended settlement negotiations and agreed to settle all of the Almeidas' claims. The Town and three of the Town's insurers agreed to contribute toward the settlement. The Town's share was \$6,000, money which was available from a discretionary account established by the closing of the Community Development Building Grant program.

The Town obtained a complete Release, prohibiting the Almeidas from initiating any further legal action against the Town for contamination of their property by salt or petroleum.

MILESTONES

by Edith Rover

Twin girls, Morgan Lake and Taylor Brook, were born on December 16. Parents are Lynn A. (Tetreault) and John M. Kain of Heath. The grandparents are Nelson and Mary Anne Tetreault of Colrain, Bruce Kain of Heath and Astrid Kain of Greenfield. Their great grandparents are Alfred and Violet Tetreault of Greenfield, Mary Garland of Colrain and Frank Kain of Ithaca, NY.

Kassidy Bernice Churchill was born to Melissa (Swope) and Michael Churchill of Greenfield on January 10. Grandparents are Rosetta and John Kiablick of Buckland, James and Denise Swope of Ludlow and Donald and Janie Churchill of Heath. Kassidy's great grandparents are William and Bernice Underwood of Buckland, Hazel Churchill of Buckland, Ellen Miller of Colrain and Helen Swope of Merrill, WI. Geneva Purinton of Greenfield is the great-great grandmother.

Catherine F. Osciak, daughter of Linda and Frank Osciak, both of Greenfield announces her engagement to Roger L. Peace, Jr. son of Mr. & Mrs. Roger Peace of Heath. Catherine is a 1993 graduate of Greenfield High School. Roger is a 1992 graduate of Mohawk Trail Regional High School. They are both attending Word of Life Bible Institute in New York. An October 1 wedding is planned.

Clarence E. Cutter, 78, died at the Anchorage Nursing Home on December 29. He had lived in Heath for several years. Survivors include two sons, Richard of Andover, ME and Darryl of Heath. He also leaves four daughters, Virginia Vetromile of South Weymouth, Carol of Freemont, CA, Eleanor Evans of Claremont, NH and Arritta of Salem, OR, a stepson, Edward Cutter of Salem, OR and a stepdaughter, Penny Tower also of Salem. He is survived by two brothers, Jasper of Bainbridge, WA and Joseph of New Salem and two sisters, Gladys of Highland Park, NJ and Edith of New Salem as well as several grand children and great grandchildren. A memorial service was held at the Smith Kelleher Funeral Home.

James V. Mascolo, 74, of Jacksonville Stage Road, Heath died January 19 at the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. He moved from Long Island, NY to Heath in 1971. He served 27 years in the military and was a World War II veteran. He retired from the service with the rank of Major in 1963. Survivors include his wife of 47 years the former Marion (DeLu-tio) of Heath, a sister Gloria Mugno of CA and several nieces and nephews. A memorial service will be held in Worcester at a later date.

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

Due to escalating printing and postage costs, the *Heath Herald's* subscription rate will increase to \$5.50.

HEATH PRECIPITATION

by Alan Nichols
Observer for MA Division of Water Resources

Precipitation for the month of December was 4.70". Normal precipitation is 3.98". There was 10" of snow. During the month of January there was 4.55" of precipitation and 34.4" of snow. Normal precipitation is 4.46".



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CLASSIFIED ADS: \$2.00 per line.
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THE PROPOSED HEATH SCHOOL AND THE TOWN'S ABILITY TO PAY VERSUS IT'S WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR IT

(AN OPINION LETTER)

by D. F. Howland

Under normal circumstances when an individual or a corporate entity decides to construct a home or facility for which a loan or some debt instrument is necessary, the financing agency decides as to the applicant's ability to pay. This capability determines the rate of interest and the price in the case of a bond; the higher the risk the higher the rate of interest and related costs of issuance. In some cases the risk is so high that credit is denied or, if it is extended, then additional collateral must be in evidence to guarantee repayment.

A political subdivision such as the town of Heath, however, is somewhat different. A major difference is that the voters decide on the commitment to construct and finance a facility. Thus, it is their collective willingness to pay that drives the decision making. Such commitments can and are made on the assumption that credit of some sort is available, whereas in individual cases commitments are normally made after there are assurances of credit worthiness. Also, there is the matter of each voter's sense of what they can afford to pay in taxes that is tempered by the fact that other tax payers will share in debt. The fact that some taxpayers may not be able to carry more obligation is only vaguely perceived. Further, in Massachusetts once a tax rate reaches \$25 it cannot be raised higher, another fact that is remote in the voter's mind. While debt obligations can be excluded from the regular tax rate they still have to be paid. If overall town operating costs including possible non-exclusive interest costs hit the \$25 mark then school and debt costs have to be paid at the expense of police, fire, highway and other services of our local government.

Personal debt is something most of us have dealt with. We have had to make compromises when we bought a Ford instead of a Cadillac or purchased/built a 3 bedroom ranch when we wanted a 4 bedroom colonial house. These are decisions based on our ability to pay and often as a result of our credit worthiness. Government is not so personal. There is that notion that somehow the tax structure will take care of commitments. While the national debt is still something that has not hit home, fiscal reality in the Town of Heath is very much closer. Anyone who has been in business where debt is out of control knows the anxiety that accompanies that situation. Bankruptcy, inability to meet the bills, layoffs, etc, etc.; it is not any fun. Yet the town voted for an expenditure of up to \$240,000 for an architect for a school without knowing whether or not a bond will be voted much less whether or not it can be obtained and paid for. This is known as the willingness to pay for something perceived as being needed or desired. When the representative of the State Street Bank was in Heath recently he had an

answer for every problem - bridge loans to help pay for expenses and construction, use of State Cherry Sheet (local aid) monies to guarantee bonds that lacked credit worthiness, requests to the Legislature if we run into legal limitations - all of which he noted reflected on the Town's willingness to pay. Thus,

voting indebtedness for a school is a political decision which is the nub of the difference between the willingness to pay and ability to pay.

Last November the representative of Bay Banks offered to obtain an unofficial verbal opinion from Moody's Investment Service about Heath's ability to finance a bond for the proposed school. After studying data their reply was that "there is probably a less than 50% chance that Heath would qualify for an investment grade bond rating due to the size of Heath's tax base". This message was communicated to the School Building Committee, the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Because of my concern with a \$25 tax rate and the likely difficulty in financing the School Building Committee model much less being able to pay for it with a per capita income rated 341st out of 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts, I drafted a memo to the School Building Committee that was approved by the Board of Selectmen asking it to refrain from making financial commitments at this time. Further, the memo suggested holding off until the Town acted on a bond issue. Budge Litchfield felt the School Building Committee had to proceed because of the June 1 deadline for the state funding list. (See the Board of Selectmen minutes 1/18/94).

While I am supportive and appreciative of the School Building Committee's efforts (I really am), I do not think Heath needs nor can afford a 25,000 square foot school, twice the size the architect from New Hampshire thought reasonable for a 90 pupil elementary school. Sophisticated forecasts do not project an increase in our school population; in fact it is to decline in the foreseeable future. Recent reports from Margo Jones, the architect, indicate the School Building Committee school will cost \$3.2 to \$3.79 million, up from the \$2.8 million we've heard in the past. While these are preliminary numbers (but they were on a printout) this increase is disconcerting to say the least. I understand the lure of 70% state reimbursement money very well, but the end result is a Cadillac when a Ford fits our needs and our pocketbook. Twenty-five thousand square feet is a building 250' long by 100' for some 90 elementary school children, at least half again as large as the Rowe School! We could have had an adequate facility in place this fall without the bonding process and at better, more flexible terms. This is not a facility for a secondary school program; we are talking K-6 grades. Further, Educational Reform has cast new light on our relationship with Rowe about which little has been said. I think we need enlightenment in this regard. Finally, our main focus, I think, should be on the learning, educational process; it is very possible that resources for that purpose will be adversely affected by the costs and efforts necessary to construct and maintain the School Building Committee model school. I am sorry, but so far I cannot support

that model nor the tentative location for it especially when the proposed town library is to be moved to North Heath. This is another project in need of hard facts before commitments are made. In any event the town should have better financial data available by March at which time hard decisions will have to be made.

REMEMBER TO VOTE!

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By the Heath School Building Committee

The Heath School Building Committee is continuing to work very long and hard at providing the town with an affordable and quality elementary school. We are attempting to make the June first state deadline for funding approval in order for Heath to be included on the School Building Assistance Bureau's list for 70 percent reimbursement, we need to have architect's plans essentially completed and a favorable town vote to begin the construction project and purchase the land. We meet every Wednesday evening in the Community Hall at 7 PM. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

In order to meet this aggressive time schedule and to enable us to get more work accomplished in a short amount of time, the Building Committee has divided into three sub-committees: Land Acquisition, Architect/Education Concerns, and Finance.

Land Acquisition: The Committee has reviewed the three Requests For Proposals (RFP's) that it received, and has chosen the Thane property consisting of 12 acres on Jacobs Road as the most suitable based upon the selection criteria outlined in the RFP. The location, both to the center of town and to Route 8A, and its size, are strong advantages for this parcel. Unofficially, the Committee has conducted a couple of test digs checking the land for its viability as a buildable lot, receiving positive results so far. Negotiations continue, although any agreed-upon purchase price is contingent upon a town meeting vote, followed by an override vote.

Architect/Education Concerns: The Building Committee received 12 proposals from architects for the project, narrowed the field to 6, conducted interviews, chose Margo Jones Associates of Greenfield to be the architect, and are currently negotiating a contract. She is experienced in designing similar-sized schools for rural communities, has a proven ability to meet deadlines and is familiar with the paperwork and people associated with the Department of Education. We are very excited about working with her. Her accessibility should also prove to be a great advantage. A public meeting to present the architect's preliminary designs is scheduled for February 22.

Two public meetings were held to work on educational concerns and how they relate to the design of the school. With the guidance of Deb Porter, participants were able to offer insight and advice on issues such as: individual exits to the outside, a highly visible and accessible library, classrooms with adequate ventilation and full use of natural light from large windows, anticipation of community use, providing an organized and safe space, work areas for teachers, affordable educational programs, etc. A primary concern of participants who attended the meetings was that the facility be designed to be as accessible as possible to townspeople for events and the community-at-large.

Brian deVries, who works with Margo Jones Associates and is a Heath resident, has been working

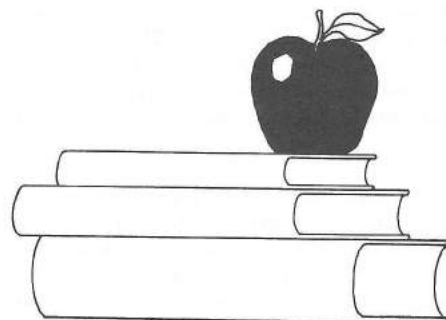
with the School Building Committee to help translate these issues to the actual physical structure. He has suggested that an informal meeting of educators from town get together to exchange ideas on what elements of a school's physical structure work best, and what types of things to avoid. Besides adhering to the classroom and facility requirements set by the School Building Assistance Bureau, there are many decisions still to be made about what goes into these rooms, how they are individually designed, how they relate to each other, and the actual layout of the school building. We are interested in hearing input from all community members, so any suggestions you might have should be communicated to us as soon as possible.

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee is working diligently regarding the funding of this project. The impact to the tax rate, of course, continues to be the major concern. To that end, the Committee has been working with Richard O'Meara of State Street Bank, in an unofficial capacity as Financial Advisor, free of charge. He is helping us to explore all possible options for funding in order to find the best solution for the town and the taxpayers. After a favorable vote at the March 19 town meeting to proceed with the project, we will then officially hire a Financial Advisor through a bid process.

The Committee and the Selectmen are currently focusing on projecting what Heath's expenses will be over the next 5 years (a very difficult task given the recent changes to Education Reform and the K-12 regionalization). This information, coupled with information from the Financial Advisor regarding the options for funding, will help to give us a better picture of what our revenue and expenditures might be and to further determine the effect on the tax rate, and to keep that burden as low as possible.

There will be two important informational meetings held at the Community Hall on February 22 and March 14. These meetings will allow you to receive updated information, financial and otherwise. Bear in mind that while projecting expenses and revenues over 5 years is an inexact science at best, this Committee is determined to provide you with as much detailed information as possible.

A town meeting vote will be held on Saturday, March 19 to approve the land purchase and to proceed with the elementary school construction project. This is an important vote with a 2/3 majority required. A debt override vote is scheduled for March 21. We encourage you to be involved in the building and educational decisions, to attend the informational meetings and to vote on March 19.



ANOTHER SIDE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING ISSUE

by Richard Giard, Selectman

The Heath School Building Committee has worked long and hard to research and come up with a plan that will meet state requirements to get the 70% state aid assistance to build a school. We appreciate all of their hard work. The estimated cost of said building is around 3 million dollars.

However, as nice as it would be to receive this state aid we have to look at the total cost of building a school. That includes: 1) The cost of getting a bond; 2) What type of bond we qualify for; 3) The interest rate of the bond or note; 4) When the aid will be forthcoming from the state, and 5) Architectural costs. All of these things should be known up front and made public before any money is expended.

1. A financial advisor should be on hand now to get the financial report ready, part of which is the town capital expenditure needs of the future, to see if we can qualify for a bond to start with. The estimated cost of this service is up to \$30,000 including the sale of the bond.
2. What kind of bond do we qualify for? We have been told that the town might meet the requirement for a BAA rating, which is the lowest investment grade bond out. But might is not good enough. We should know this up front. If it is lower than an investment grade bond, it then becomes a junk bond and the interest rate increases dramatically. To what rate? 8% ...9%??
3. The rate of interest the bond will carry should be known. Will a BAA bond have an interest rate of 4%, 5%, 6% or more? On a \$3 million bond that would be \$120,000, \$150,000, \$180,000 respectively a year payment for interest alone. Our whole town budget is a little 1 million dollars now. This amount would have to come out of the town budget.
4. When will the state aid start? The Building Committee has said that it will be between 3 to 5 years before we can expect the aid to start. That would mean the town would have to pay all the interest due each year until then. It is expected, that we can pay interest only for this period of time, (until the aid starts). Where is this interest money coming from? From the taxpayers of this town!
5. Architectural costs were given at a special town meeting; they could be up to \$240,000.

When the line items are already cut to the bone, there is no other place to cut the budget. Other major cost to the town that are forthcoming are:

1. Closing the 3 town landfill.
2. Replacing needed highway machinery and equipment.
3. Replacing one fire truck to maintain insurance rating (A reduction of 10% on your home-owners policy).

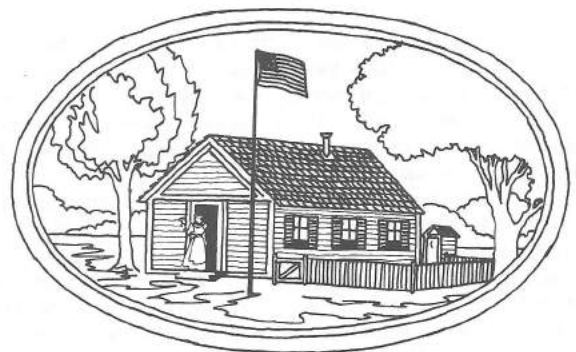
4. Town money to be put into our roads.

Also, what has to be considered is possible loss of tax revenue due to property put into land classification.

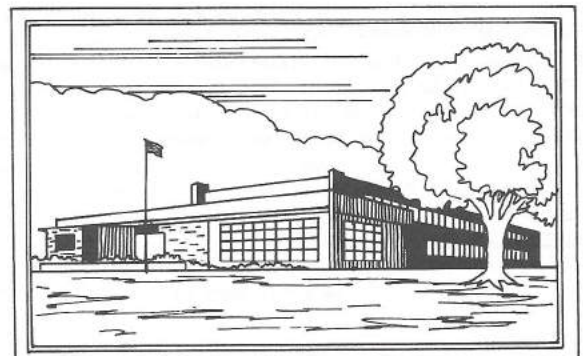
There is another alternative to the state aid schools and that is building our own school using the modular buildings. These have been estimated to cost around one million dollars and can be put in use this fall instead of an estimated 3 year construction period for the brick and mortar building. It would put the money being spent on interest only payments to paying off the principle. And the cost to the town would be less than the state aided building. Also, the tuition to Rowe would be spent on operating our own school instead.

It comes down to the townspeople to make the decision of what we want to build and what we can afford to build. So if we add all the cost of the state aid building together - interest, architectural cost and bond cost - it would be pushing 4 million dollars, instead of the 3 million dollars estimated and our cost would go from 1 million dollars to closer to 2 million dollars (our share of the state aid school). When our tax rate goes over the \$25 per thousand dollar of valuation, we are mandated by state law to cut our budget back to the \$25 rate.

That Golden Carrot of state aid can become an Albatross around our necks!



REMEMBER TO VOTE!





The Way It Is In The Country

*"If it's old, works well and has a purpose in life,
don't change it".*

by CARROLL STOWE

ANOTHER SUCCESS FOR THE TOWN'S M FARMALL

There's seldom a day goes by but comments are made about the terrible conditions of our hard surface roads. There's little wonder that our roads are in poor shape when it is considered that some of those old surfaces are in excess of 40 years old.

Years ago it was felt that if an oil and stone surface could be administered to the gravel roads that time and expenses could be saved by not having to scrape the gravel twice a year and on the hills it could save the washouts caused by hard rains. As the years passed it has become evident that more time and effort should have been spent on the road before sealing it with oil and stone. A lot of our roads could have lasted much longer if drainage could have been installed under the roads and in the ditches. The water must be eliminated if the road is to have a long life. So much for crying over spilt milk.

The Dean Company of Oakham, MA did the lion's share of Heath's oiling years back. They were a good outfit to do business with. On the days when more than one distributor load was needed, Parson's transport would be employed to bring a trailer load to complete the job.

Jim Parsons was having trouble with the 2 speed auxiliary transmission and needed to take it out of the tractor to get it repaired. Before taking the gear box out he had asked Howard Dean if there were any steep hill jobs coming and Howard told him there were none. So Jim pulled the gear box and put in a longer drive shaft so he could still use the tractor on level work. Wouldn't you know it? With the gear box out for repairs Dean Co. got an order for 2 loads of liquid asphalt and Jim Parsons got the nod to make the trip with a trailer load. Jim had no trouble till he reached the foot of Avery Brook Road. There was no way he had gears enough to master those steep grades. I have no idea how Jim made contact with Francis Galipo, but Francis got word that help was needed to get the second load fully into town and he arrived at the problem with a veteran problem solver in the form of the town's M Farmall and the task was soon taken care of.

I wasn't sitting in the M's seat but I would sure liked to have been. Some time later Mr. Parsons was at a party in his honor and was presented with a toy farm tractor. This little experience for Jim Parsons to have an old farm tractor leading a road tractor on a tough grade is just a bit of a come down.

This story about a most unfeeling lump of steel, cast iron and rubber will do no one a bit of good. But it is just another in a long list of tasks that old tractor has done. Truly these tasks haven't been completed without human guidance.

Another reason to think that every expenditure of tax dollars should last as long and be as well spent.

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WILD RAMBLINGS

by BILL LATTRELL

SOARERS OF THE NIGHT

Few mammals have such unique evolutionary adaptations as the flying squirrel. This member of the rodent family is about the size of a red squirrel. What makes this animal so unusual is the large flaps of skin that extend from its wrists to its ankles. This adaptation, perhaps the original parachute, is used by this creature for gliding from tree to tree, and more rarely from tree to ground. The flying squirrel is capable of directing these gliding activities through dense trees and branches with exceptional grace, partially due to the excellent night vision brought about by wide, large eyes.

In my countless hours in the woods, I have only seen a gliding flying squirrel once. It was on a moonlit night in 1975. As I was descending a steep set of ledges in the dark I heard a slight "whoosh" above me. Looking up I could see the silhouette of a flying squirrel, with flaps outstretched, against the moonlit sky. He landed high up in an oak tree. I could hear him clambering about on the bark, but could see him no longer. After waiting for quite some time for another glimpse, I started, once again down the mountainside. Again, this little guy soared above my head. This time he disappeared into the night and I could not relocate him.

It is very rare to see a flying squirrel. It is not because they are uncommon; in fact, they are very common in this region. It is unusual to see them because they are entirely nocturnal and spend most of their time in trees. The flying squirrel nests in three burrows or excavations about 30 feet above the ground. They are a social critter; up to 15 individuals have been located in one nest. They prefer hardwood forests near a water source. I have had great luck locating flying squirrels in oak and hickory forests near the edge of beaver meadows. The ponds created by beavers often kill nearby trees. These dead trees are eventually excavated by a wide range of excavator birds such as woodpeckers and sapsuckers. The large holes created by the larger birds in search of food, such as the Pileated Woodpecker make for a perfect flying squirrel nest. The flying squirrel will line the nest with fur, feathers, lichen and leaves. The nest is particularly important for rearing young which usually occurs twice a year around July and September.

On more than one occasion I have rapped on a dead tree snag with a heavy stick only to see the face of a wide eyed flying squirrel stick its head out of a hole to see who was creating all the noise. This somewhat questionable activity of rapping on a snag should never be done between June and October. Mothers-to-be, and nursing mothers will move their families if they are too loudly disturbed.

In our region there are two varieties of flying squirrels. The ranges of the northern and southern varieties overlap in central New England. There is very little observable differences between the two

species. The northern flying squirrel is slightly larger and is grey at the base of its coat. The southern flying squirrel is just a little smaller and has a white color at the base of its coat. The two have very similar habits, including what they eat. The flying squirrel has a similar diet to many other types of squirrels. Fruit, nuts, lichen, fungi, seeds, and an occasional insect make up much of its diet. I have found the remains of the flying squirrel diet at the base of a hickory tree on several occasions. The way these little guys open the hickory nut can be distinguished from other squirrels by the elliptical hole and smooth edge of the cut.

The flying squirrel shares the night forest with several species of owl, one of its primary predators. It also is occasionally the victim of other predators like the members of the weasel family, fox, and hawks. Despite this predation, the flying squirrel more than holds its own due to a lively reproduction rate. Breeding occurs usually in March and July. After a 40 day gestation period the mother usually bears from 2-6 young. The young are out and about on their own in just a few months.

If you are ever inclined to night walking into the forest you might just get lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one of these little beauties. And if you don't you can use your imagination to picture the flying squirrel gliding from tree to tree. No other mammal in our area has the uncommon ability of night gliding. The flying squirrel; soarers of the night.

FREE MAMMOGRAMS OFFERED BY BREAST HEALTH PROJECT

The Breast Health Project of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts is offering eligible women free mammograms at Athol Memorial Hospital. This service is available for women with no health insurance who are over 40 years of age and younger uninsured women who have a family history of breast cancer. Women will first be seen at the FPCWM Breast Health Clinic in Greenfield, where they will receive a free physical examination, instructions on breast self-exam, and a referral for a free mammogram at the Athol Memorial and other area hospitals. Women on Medicare may also receive a free screening mammogram in those years when Medicare doesn't pay for one.

Breast Health Clinics are held at the Family Planning Council's Greenfield Office, 80 Sanderson Street. To schedule an appointment, call (413) 773-5403 or, on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays (508) 249-2013.

The Breast Health Project is a program of the Family Planning Council of Western Massachusetts, Inc., Northampton, MA (413) 586-2016.



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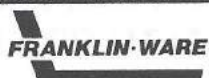
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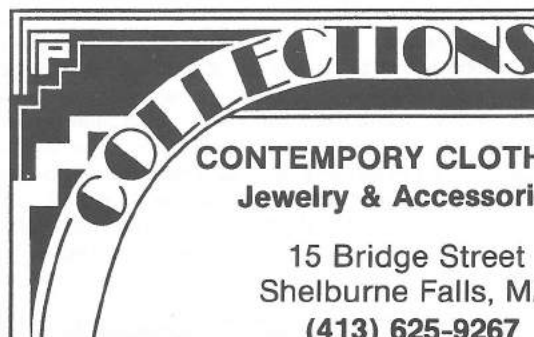
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HEATH PUBLIC PRESCHOOL NEWS

by Suzanne Crawford, Director

Winter is most definitely here! And with it comes the opportunity for play that is unique to the season. Young children never seem to tire of sledding, and it is wonderful to see their delight in zipping down a hill. They also have a lot of fun shoveling - who else would think of shoveling snow into a house through the windows?? We occasionally enjoy skiing in the meadow behind the Community Hall, thanks to some volunteer assistance with helping the young skiers get back on their feet. Making snow angels and snowmen, and examining snow flakes under magnifying glasses are just a few more of the wonderful winter possibilities. Of course, when the snow gets deep as it has, even just walking becomes an adventure for those with shorter legs!

The children enjoy a visit from the Road Crew each winter, with a close-up look at a snowplow. In addition to delighting those who love big trucks and machines, it gives us an opportunity to learn about and appreciate some of the work that our community members perform that helps us all. (And there is no time like the winter to appreciate the good work of the Road Crew!) We also talk about keeping a safe distance away from roads and snowplows. We appreciate the Road Crew for taking the time at this busy time of year to visit us.

The Early Childhood Advisory Council had a successful booth at the Hobby Horse Bazaar in December. Our thanks to Deborah and Bruce Phillips for helping us with their time, experience and merchandise to sell. We also sold wrapping paper that the children had made themselves. We hope that it brought as much pleasure to the people receiving it as it did to the children while making it. Our next fund-raiser will be selling lunches at the Heath Ski Race.

Debbie Gilbert, who has been the preschool's custodian for many years, plans to leave this position at the end of February to pursue other work opportunities. We will certainly miss her excellent work, and we are very grateful for her dedication and conscientious approach. We are fortunate that she is willing to help her successor get to know the job. As of this writing, we are looking for interested applicants. You may call me at the preschool (337-4847 Monday - Thursday) or speak to the Selectmen for more information.



PRESCHOOLERS BUSY AT PLAY

(Photo by Suzanne Crawford)

LIBRARY LINES

by Alli Thane

Videocassettes have been the big item in the library this winter. It is not unusual for 100 of these to be checked out on a library day. Fortunately, the Friends of the Library donated \$600 from their last book sale. We are very grateful and now have purchased many new tapes. Some of the titles are City Slickers, Silence of the Lambs, Sarah, Pain and Tall, Fortunes of War, Moonstruck, Thunderheart, Shadow of the Wolf, Pretty Woman, Sommersby, Unforgiven, Homeward Bound, an assortment of the "Oldies" starring Cary Grant, Katherine Hepburn, Peter O'Toole, Audrey Hepburn, Marilyn Monroe and so many more. For the young ones, we ordered 9 more Faerie Tale Theatre and several of the latest Walt Disney productions.

However, we have many new books, too. Helen Mackie and I discovered a great book sale in Springfield and came back with several new novels, mysteries, cookbooks and children's fiction and non-fiction books, too numerous to mention.

Audio books have become very popular lately especially with the people who travel many miles to work and back each day. They claim it makes the distance less boring. I am in the process of ordering some new ones for us to have. The Bookmobile now allows us to borrow 30 titles at a time so we have a good supply.

There is a very exciting development on the library scene too. The Trustees, Helen Mackie, Caroline Armstrong, and Pat Leuchtman are proposing a new idea - to combine the school and public libraries in the new school building plan. Be sure to read Pat's article in this issue.

Hope to see you at the library. Come and enjoy. We are a very busy place.



Mohawk Trail Regional High School

by Magen MacDougall

Bright and early on the last day of school before winter vacation, December 22, 1993, the Mohawk Student Council members were cooking breakfast for the teachers at 5 AM. For the past few years the Student Council, which is made up of five representatives from each class, and the class officers (high school only), have had a Teacher Appreciation Week. Each student draws out of a hat two teachers' names. Every day of the week prior to vacation the teacher receives a little gift, like a pencil or pen, and a clue about who his/her "secret snowflake" is. Then on the last day before vacation, the breakfast is held. The teachers don't have to do anything except eat. French toast, donuts, bacon, scrambled eggs, and drink o.j. and coffee. The students set-up, cook, and clean-up. During the meal students tell their teachers who they are and give a final gift of a candle.

Later, the same day of the teacher breakfast, the Student Council puts on a talent show. People who are in it have tried out already, but the try out is basically just to make sure that the act is decent to be performed at school. This year there was everything from classical piano, to comedy and dancing. Also the Student Council performs a skit at the end while the judges are busy deciding the winner. This year the skit was titled "The Twelve Days of Vacation", which was sung to the tune of "The Twelve Days of Christmas". It described how some of the teachers would be spending their vacation.

Heath members of the Student Council are, Adam Almeida, Jim Cerone, Magen MacDougall, and Mary Tuterice.



ANNUAL POTLUCK LUNCHEON FOR
SCHOOL AND PUBLIC LIBRARIANS AT
MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL
LEFT TO RIGHT: JULIE DUPREE, BEVERLY WILLIAMS
VICE PRINCIPAL TRACY RAMIREZ, PAT HINDS,
TONI WILCOX AND WANDA MUSACCHIO
(Photo by Susan Silvester)



CHURCH NEWS

by Pastor Roger L. Peace

Not only are we into another year, but one part of that is already past. The Bible tells us that life is just a vapor, and the older I become, the more I understand those statements. But as time marches on, so do plans and activities at the Heath Union Church. First, there was a potluck dinner on February 13 to celebrate some fun, food and fellowship. This was the first of six dinners planned this year, one every other month.

The youth will be traveling to Schroon Lake, NY to attend the Word of Life snow camp. This will be not only a fun time, but also a very challenging time as well. The youth are planning to meet every other Saturday at 6 PM in the Heath Church.

The church choir has been keeping their voices active by practicing the Christmas Cantata which was planned to be sung again on January 30. The Easter Cantata has been selected and ordered by the Music Committee. If you enjoy singing, we would love to have you join us for practice every Sunday after Worship services. This is also a great time of fellowship. Several Pastors will be meeting soon to plan another West County Good Friday Service. What a wonderful experience these have been in the past, and I am sure will continue to be in the future. Hard to believe that by the time you read this, there will be less than two months to Easter. A great way to start your Easter morning is to join us for our Sunrise Service (or Sunrise Service).

We at the Heath Union Church would like to invite you to join us for Sunday Services. Sunday School begins at 9 AM for all ages. Worship Service begins at 10 AM. Hope you can join us this week.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

by Dave Howland

BARN UPDATE

Phase I of the Barn Project, the foundation and cap, and Phase II, disassembly of the barn, have been completed. The pieces were marked by Fred Burrington and have been stored at the Fairgrounds.

Phase III, the reassembly of the barn, is slated to begin on or about May 1st. Bruce Cromack has prepared a list of materials needed (see below). We did have some material left over from the construction which is stored under the cap, but we will need considerably more as follows:

- 4300 bd. ft. hemlock - 1" random width for the walls and roof
- 18 spruce poles for rafters - 22' x 6" - with 4" cut on one side (not too close to the center) If not spruce, then hemlock or pine in that order.
- 3200 bd. ft. pine - 1" random width for finish walls, shiplap, if possible.
 - 1120 bd. ft. - 16' long
 - 980 bd. ft. - 14' long
 - 1100 bd. ft. - random lengths
- 1200 bd. ft. oak - planed on one side for flooring
- 8 hemlock posts - 4" x 4" x 12'
- 80 bundles (4 to a square) cedar (or pine) 18" shingles
- 12 rolls 15 lb. felt

Putting the barn back up is going to be a major task. There will have to be some splicing of beams, posts and rafters, doors and windows reconstructed, etc. This is fussy and costly work. While we have raised over \$28,000 so far, we will probably need another \$8,000 to complete the project. Our original guesstimate of \$30,000 was just that - an educated guess. We have spent \$20,063 to date (the building inspector's criteria for a public building raised the cost of the foundation and cap considerably). Our objective is to have the barn finished for the Fair.

We hope the materials described above will be donated, and the Society will start raising the additional funds soon. If any of you can help us out with any of the building materials, will you please call one of our Lumber Managers, Buck denOuden (337-4002) or Carroll Stowe (337-4498). Thanks!



MARY LYON EDUCATION FUND

by Susan Silvester, Executive Director

The third annual Board of Directors' Retreat was held January 17 at the Mary Lyon Education Fund office on Bridge Street in Shelburne Falls. Among topics discussed were a Life Skills Curriculum proposal by Board Member Hank Samoriski, the possible acceptance of a gift of land, and evaluation of programs. Retreat facilitator John Bos of Ashfield led the planning process as ideas for next year were considered.

A series of four fundraising workshops are currently being held on alternate Wednesday nights through early March, and a conference on Education Reform jointly sponsored with the Western Massachusetts Special Education Directors will be held March 29, 30 and 31 at Greenfield Community College.



THIRD ANNUAL RETREAT
LEFT TO RIGHT: BOARD MEMBERS SYLVIA SMITH,
SECRETARY SHARON HUDSON, CAROLYN JARMULOWICZ
PRESIDENT BRUCE WILLARD & JUDY VETTER
(Photo by Susan Silvester)



A TOWN-SCHOOL LIBRARY?

by Pat Leuchtman, Library Trustee

For the past few weeks the Heath Library Trustees, Helen Mackie, Carolyn Armstrong and I, along with Alli Thane the librarian, have been discussing the possibility of moving our town library, which is severely overcrowded, into the proposed new school. We feel there would be advantages to everyone, the school and the community at large if this could happen.

The many people who use the library know that space gets tighter and tighter - the shelves get taller and taller, but in spite of our on-going discarding process, there always seems to be a few more books and tapes than we really have room for. It is a good thing the library is so well used that a substantial portion of the collection is in the borrower's hands at any given moment. If the library moved to larger quarters in the school there would be room for the current collection, room for growth, and room for the borrowers to sit down and browse or read more comfortably.

The school children who use the library know that although encyclopedias and other reference works are available, there is nowhere near the number of books for their studies as there are at the school library. If the town library moved into the school, the school collection would be available to the children during non-school hours when they want to do their homework.

Those who have town business to transact at Sawyer Hall know that there is overcrowding there, and that the meeting space is not handicapped accessible, as required by the new Act for Disabled Americans. If the library moved into the school, the library space would be available to the town, meeting those legal requirements for public meetings, etc. It would obviously cost the town a great deal of money to add on to the building or modify it in any other way.

The trustees have had several conversations with Patience Jackson at the state Board of Library Commissioners about the feasibility of creating a town-school library. In fact, there are several such libraries around the state, libraries which share space and facilities, but operate under two separate budgets. In Heath this would mean that the school would fund the school library, and the town would continue to fund the town library just as it does. The town library would still be eligible for state funds as long as we meet state requirements as we do now. There is some cost efficiency because the school collection would provide elementary school age children with a larger number of books during non-school hours, at no additional cost to the town. The town library could then focus its book buying on pre-schoolers and adults without short-changing the children.

Of course, if we grant all the advantages, we still need to build the school and the library, which brings up other questions. As everyone knows, if we build a state approved school, the state will reimburse us for 70 percent of the cost, including the cost of the school library construction and outfitting.

In the past there have been state library construction funds which would reimburse a town 50 percent of construction costs. Governor Weld is expected to request a 55 million dollar appropriation for library construction this spring, and when he does so, we can request a grant. In order to apply for the grant

the library needs to have the town's voted permission to apply for the money, plus 25 percent of the total estimated cost.

As a working plan, the trustees have considered a 4,000 square foot library, half of which would be charged to the school budget and half of which would be charged to the town library. The rule of thumb for construction costs is \$100 per square foot or \$200,000 covered by the state. That would leave us with a need for the other \$100,000 covered by the state. Therefore, we would need to have the town set aside \$50,000 for construction costs, in order to apply for funding. Even though we need to approve the setting aside of this money, actually using it would be contingent on getting state funds. We could also apply for federal funds and other grants. In addition library trustees currently have \$10,000 in their trust fund, which is available for construction.

The Friends of the Library, who have generously given of their time and effort in the past to meet special needs of the library, have expressed their willingness to mount a major fund raising campaign.

Because of the differing schedules of planning and funding for the school and the library, it is the trustees' hope that the architect could design a library plan that could either be abbreviated - or added on to - when decisions about the town library are made.

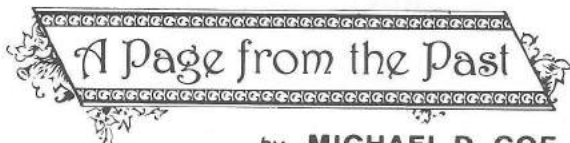
Since there is more to a library than funding, the trustees have been discussing other issues. Patience has pointed out that while there are other town-school libraries, there has never been such a joint building project and this could be a model for other towns. It would be very important for the town library to maintain an identity separate from that of the school library and this would include an exterior entrance with a Heath Free Public Library sign, close to parking and removed from the school bus area. The state also requires a building program plan and Sue Silvester, Wanda Musacchio and Bev Thane have agreed to serve on that planning committee along with the library trustees, the librarian and a representative of the school committee.

Governance of a joint library would also need to be designed by a committee made up of the Heath Library Trustees and representatives from the school committee. It is important to remember that the trustees are proposing moving the library into the school, but not dissolving the town library. The town/school library would share space and resources, possibly even a librarian, but the town and school libraries would be separate entities with separate budgets and some separate responsibilities.

The Library has always been important to Heath. This is clear from our circulation numbers, from the number of people who volunteer time, who donate books and magazines, and who set up trust funds for the library's use. The library makes an important contribution to the kind of life we all seek in Heath

and its ability to meet the needs of the town is being strained. Now we have an opportunity that will not be repeated soon. We, the trustees, hope the town will be able to seize this opportunity.





by MICHAEL D. COE

HISTORY BEHIND THE HEADLINES

The recent New Year's uprising against the Mexican government in the southeastern state of Chiapas was a featured news story in the media around the world. Whenever I read a story or an article in a newspaper or news magazine, I always take a sharper look when the topic is something I know something about (in my case, archaeological discoveries, and the native Indian peoples of Mexico and Central America). In all too many cases, I'm sorry to say, the reporting is bad or, at best, incomplete, even in such respected publications as *The New York Times*. If that is the case, what about the coverage of topics on which I'm not an expert, say nuclear disarmament? It gives one food for thought.

Let's take a closer look at the events in Chiapas. The media have generally presented this as a dispute between groups of Mexican citizens, with one group (the so-called Zapatista Liberation Army, the guerrillas) fighting for the economic rights of poor peasants in the impoverished back country of Mexico. What they have failed to do is to put these events in their larger historical and anthropological context (this is the kind of thinking that got us in the mess in Viet Nam). They have failed to see that the Chiapas conflict is part and parcel of a vastly larger situation that began with the Spanish invasion of Mexico and Central America (what anthropologists call "Mesoamerica") and continues to this day. The Conquest was not an event that happened early in the 16th century and then was over, but a process that is still going on, with continuing tragedy for the native peoples of this area.

What the reporters covering the uprising usually fail to mention, and which the official Mexican sources (these include the Mexican newspapers, I'll get to that later) deliberately omit, is that the people in revolt are Maya, not just ordinary Latin American peasants. There are, today, about six million living Maya, the genetic and cultural heirs of a brilliant civilization that was destroyed by the Spaniards -- a civilization that had writing, mathematics, advanced astronomy, and great cities, as well as some of the most beautiful art and architecture the world has ever seen. Over the centuries since the initial Spanish invasion, they have been ravaged by European-introduced diseases, and by cultural, political, economic, and religious oppression. The four million Maya who live in the highlands of Guatemala have fared worst, especially under the military or military-controlled regimes which have ruled that small country during the last quarter-century; the Guatemalan army unleashed a program of genocide and ethnocide against the modern Maya that has resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of natives, the uprooting of over a million Maya, and the flight of thousands over the border into Chiapas.

At least for the moment, these millions of Maya have not been united against the Spanish-speaking oppressors. For one thing, they are ruled by two mod-

ern countries (Mexico and Guatemala) with modern armies. For another, they are split into about 25 mutually unintelligible linguistic groups (the only common language, unfortunately, is that of their oppressors). Two of the largest of these Maya-speaking groups are the Tzotzil and Tzeltal, who together number over a million souls. They occupy the mountainous highlands of Chiapas, near the Guatemalan border, and have been engaged in a struggle over the centuries to keep their language, their culture, their religion (now an amalgam of Catholicism and native Maya), and above all their lands from being taken away by the government and by their Spanish-speaking neighbors. It has not been an easy task.

Arrayed against them is a formidable force of persecutors. In this part of Mexico (and in Guatemala), white or lighter-skinned people who speak only Spanish and who are culturally European are called ladinos; the ladinos control all commerce, run the local stores, own vast cattle ranches, and occupy all the local positions of power. San Cristobal de las Casas (which the guerrillas briefly occupied) is a purely Ladino town: until quite recently, Maya Indians were forbidden to even spend a night in this bastion of "civilized" culture. The ladinos generally consider themselves as gente de razon, "reasoning people", as opposed to the Indians, whom they think are unreasoning, superstitious brutes.

Now we turn to the Mexican government, which has been consistently on the side of the ladinos in Chiapas. During the recent NAFTA hearings and debates, Americans got some glimpse of what this government is like, but not much. Essentially it is a one-party dictatorship that has been in power since the year of my birth, 1929. Known as PRI (an acronym for its Spanish name), the party controls everything in Mexico, even the press). PRI controls the newsprint, and keeps reporters of the major newspapers on salary. All elections, whether state or Federal, are rigged by PRI; in fact, the current President, Salinas de Gortari, almost certainly lost the last election! The entire judicial system is hopelessly corrupt from top to bottom, and the police follow suit. Bribery, from the payoff to the local traffic cop up to corporate payoffs to high-ranking ministers, is a way of life in Mexico. This doesn't bother the average American tourist, or even the business community, but to peasants, and especially indigenous ones, the total lack of real justice, and their continuing and even worsening poverty, are an intolerable burden.

So what do the Maya of Chiapas really want? At present, there is not enough information on the guerrillas to know who they are. The fragmentary interviews by U.S. reporters had them mouthing some Marxist slogans, but that may be "black propaganda" put out by the state and Federal authorities. The thoroughly corrupt Chiapas state government has been in the hands of the ladino cattle barons, and has been stealing Indian lands for decades, so that may lie at the bottom of the dispute. But the real bottom line is surely cultural. These Maya have been trying to maintain the integrity of their lands, their language, and their way of life not by doggedly hold-



ing to old ways, but by adapting to changing circumstances. They may at last have the chance to reach a modus vivendi with PRI and its army that will guarantee their future survival as a people.

Actually, a lot will depend on the attitude of the United States, since PRI has its own future riding on the success of NAFTA. Americans and their government can bring considerable pressure on the Mexicans to change its ways regarding the human rights of its indigenous peoples, including the Maya. Tourism is one of Mexico's major industries, and hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of tourists, have gone to Mexico to see the ancient Maya cities. Negative publicity about how the "ruling party" in that country treats the living descendants of those who built those cities might have considerable effect. If not, then the problem will only get worse, and all will lose, especially the Maya.

One final word. I don't know if those reporters who have gone to Chiapas actually read history, but there has been a major Maya uprising in that state in every century since the Spaniards took over! As they say, those who ignore history are condemned to repeat it.

HEARABOUTS

By Jesse Seaver

Since this is my first "Hereabouts," I'm not quite sure what to write about. This article is supposed to be just talk and that's the trouble with it. What do people like to hear someone talk about, if they want to hear someone talk at all? Personally I really don't like to sit and hear someone talk for a couple hours. Even though it won't take you that long to read this article, you get the point.

There sure is a lot to read and write about in Heath. I guess as I get more experienced my articles will get better, longer and more interesting for people to read.

I have been looking at other people's articles and trying to get ideas for an article. I would appreciate any input, on your behalf, on my article so I know what people want to hear in this article.

One thing I have been noticing in Heath is that there are a lot of things to draw, both just sketching, drawing in thoughts and control in your mind. I studied this in school and at a place in New Hampshire. This is how you do it.

1. On a sheet of paper draw three rectangular formats. Gather some objects - scissors, keys, shovel or a photograph that has many negative spaces - black and white. These nameable objects are called positive forms. Be sure that there are some fully enclosed negative spaces. Look at any picture, look at the differences of the black and white spaces, where are they, how do they relate. Choose some objects.

2. In your first format, draw the objects you have chosen. Complete the drawing; this satisfies the mind with the positive forms, since you were using the negative.

3. Next, concentrate on the negative spaces that remember are bounded by the format. Draw or trace the spaces, completely focusing your mind on what you are drawing. Think, for the mind, that the negative spaces are just as real as the positive ones. Reinforce these, real, negative spaces by filling them with ink or pen.

4. Next gaze at one of the spaces until it pops into focus as a shape. This takes some time. This is where the left and right brains kick in. The left brain looks at it and stumbles and stumbles then finally says, "I don't know what this is. If you are going to continue looking at it you're going to have to get the right brain to do it!!" Good! That is what you want; you want the right brain to take the responsibility of doing this task.

This is what I do quite often, not necessarily on paper but in my mind with an object that I see. I think it is fun because it gives you mind control, right over left.

Remember if you want me to write about anything in this article please call me at (413) 337-4866 or call the editor of the *Heath Herald*. Thanks.

Well, I hope you enjoyed my article and I hope you

try that drawing project sometime. I'm Jesse Seaver.

SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!!!, OOPS!! (Not this month) ...

Some of the information obtained from this article was from the book, Drawing On the Right Side of the Brain, by Betty Edwards.

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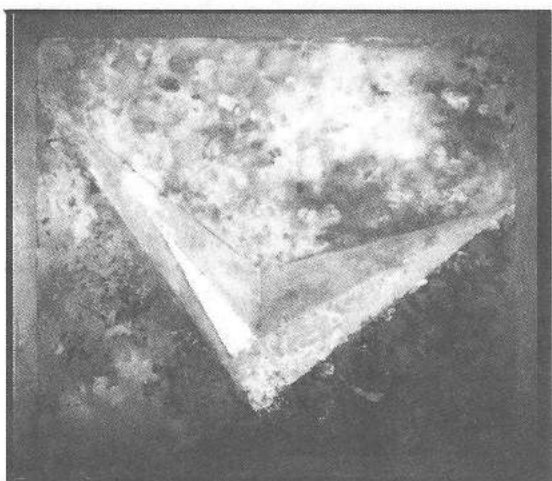
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LOCAL ARTIST FEATURED

Residential Arts, a program of the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst is pleased to present Margins, Vectors, and Verifications: Paintings of Loss & Renewal, by Marlene Housner of Heath. This new collection of works on canvas features sumptuously colored oils textured with metallics, pastels, chalk, conte, dyes and stains. The Hampden Gallery exhibition opened with a reception for the artist on February 10 and will continue through March 11. The public is invited to attend. Regular gallery hours are Monday through Friday 3-7 and Sundays from 2-5.

Known to the University community primarily as an administrator, Arts Council Program Director Marlene Housner is also an accomplished painter. The upcoming exhibition of new works will offer an opportunity to see the 'artist-side' of this multi-faceted woman. The Fine Arts Center is also honored by the opportunity to showcase 'one of their own.'



APPROPRIATING LUMINOSITY FOR PASSAGE
(Photo by Peter Brown)

Housner studied at Hunter College in New York with William Bazilotes, Ray Parker, and Gabor Peterdi and in Europe and Mexico. She also studied with John Grillo at the University of Massachusetts. The artist has exhibited widely in the Northeast, with several solo exhibitions to her credit. She has taught studio art for years, in New York and Franklin County where she now resides. Credentials are not Marlene Housner's top priority, however; the process of making art has always been her greatest drive. As UMass Arts Council Director, Housner inspires others through encouragement and support.

Regarding her own new collection of paintings, the artist explains: "The margins of a painting have traditionally been described by the periphery of the rectangle. There are also decipherable margins within the painting which the artist infers and verifies through a highly personal process of trial, examination and association. Determining vectors interpret the boundaries inherent to the vast space within the canvas; they create the force of action, and make the implicit, explicit. Beneath the veil of appearance the hidden aspects of these margins of probability and risk inform the emergence and declare the verifications."

"It is both the objectivity and the transient nature that mysteriously captivates and encourages the ongoing search. One sees but one must also watch."

"It is the stillness that is sometimes silent that I find engaging in this new series of my paintings. And then it is the slow effect that can haunt and obsess."

Hampden Gallery is located in the Hampden Student Center in the Southwest Residential Area of the University, at the top of the horseshoe turn off University Drive. For more information call (413) 545-2804.

SPECIAL NOTE: Marlene Housner extends special thanks to several Heathens who have helped her in this endeavor: Peter Brown who took Marlene's exhibition slides and photos, Janice Boudreau who developed and printed the black and whites, and Bob Dane who shared needed equipment and sound advice.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

by Earl Gleason, Chief

The department responded to seven incidents since the last report. Five firefighters and two engines responded to a reported cellar fire on South Road on December 1. It turned out to be an over-heated stove pipe. Later that day, Engine two and seven firefighters were called to a mutual aid fire on Legate Hill in Charlemont. The next call was on December 7 when two firefighters and two EMTs aided Charlemont Ambulance with a man who was ill. Engine 3 and fourteen firefighters responded to a Judd Road chimney fire on December 30. The next day, six EMTs and six firefighters responded along with police Chief Rabbitt for a reported snowmobile accident. Due to poor directions given to the dispatch center, a long delay in finding the incident resulted in the victim being transported in a private car. Engines one, two and three responded to a partition fire on Route 8A on the twenty-first of January. Twelve firefighters quickly brought this incident under control. The last call was the next day when one EMT and one firefighter responded to Rowe to aid Colrain Ambulance on a mutual aid call for a person who had broken a leg.

The Fire Association met in both December and January. There were no drills as the drill night in December was the department's annual Christmas Party, and the January drill night was a special meeting to discuss and make a list of surplus government property that the department should request.

The Chief attended a two day seminar in Springfield put on by the State Fire Marshall's Office. This December 2 & 3, a seminar was attended by fire chiefs and fire prevention officers from all over the state. Bob Gruen and the Chief attended a seminar on raising money for fire prevention. This seminar was in Orange on the evening of January 25.

The EMS group met in early January to make plans for the new year.

The State Forestry Department has given the department a 1977 Ford automobile from the Government surplus property program. This auto will be used by the Fire Chief on business as well as transport firefighters to mutual aid calls and to schools.

Eight permits or inspections were made and the Chief attended the Deerfield Valley Mutual Aid Meeting and the Massachusetts call/volunteer meetings.



TREE WARDEN

by Jack Cable

Since this past summer, our town has been buzzing with the sound of chain saws as the Asplundh Tree Company working for the utility company has been trimming the power lines along our roads. Most prominent of the victims of the saw are the stately sugar maples. Yes, our sugar maples are dying - young and old, at an alarming rate. "Salt used on the roads killed them," many say. Then what is killing them deep in the woods - in sugar camps? Throughout the Northeast? Gypsy Moth, Pear Thrip, drought, and acid rain are all evils to the maple. The Tree has a disease - Maple Wilt - I learned of its existence in college in the 50's, yet no one really publicizes it including the maple syrup industry. It is a fungus and it takes the tree about 3 years to die after contracting the disease. The leaves of a diseased maple will not be as deep green as its neighbors the first year. The second year the leaves are paler and smaller and twigs at its extremities will be dead. The third year many major limbs are noticeably dead with very few leaves which discolor early. The only way to preserve a tree is to keep it healthy. Contact a tree company or nursery on soil, insects and fertilizer requirements. I have been disheartened for many years over the loss of our sugar maple. There has to be a scientific breakthrough or they will go the way of the chestnut and elm.



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SELECTMEN'S REPORT

by D. F. Howland

A major objective was recently achieved when Joyce Karpinski was appointed Administrative Assistant effective February 1, 1994. Joyce was selected from a strong field of candidates and brings with her fifteen years of administrative experience in a public service, non-profit organization. She is a graduate of UMass/Amherst and lives in Greenfield. We look forward to Joyce's association with the Town of Heath.

Another major objective was met when the K-12 Mohawk School District was formed by legislative action and signed into law by Governor Weld on 12/31/93. Senators Rosenberg and Swift and Representative Kulik were instrumental in effecting the outcome which included a compromise to allow Hawlemont Regional Elementary School to continue operating outside K-12. Compromise never makes everyone happy, but the parties involved had their wishes granted. Budge Litchfield and Dave Howland were the local representatives to the K-12 Committee. Because of endless delays in making K-12 a reality, the incentive money that was supposed to help our budgets this year is in doubtful status. Superintendent Cormier has written state officials requesting this incentive aid now, but such support is subject to a supplementary state budget and this is always a difficult process. We believe it unlikely for it to happen in time to help us. This year, however, we were able to reduce the budget by \$32,000 at a special town meeting held February 1. This is worth about \$.75 and reduces an estimated tax rate of \$20 per \$1,000 valuation to about \$19.25. This is still a 17.2% increase over last year's \$16.43. The \$32,000 is made up of 1) \$25,000 in the Heath/Rowe School budget due to a reduction in FTE and administrative costs, 2) \$3,000 in the cost of the Administrative Assistant position and 3) \$4,000 in the general insurance accounts due to credits and lower premiums. The special town meeting also addressed a bookkeeping change in the school budgets that do not affect the tax rate. (At press time the Assessors recap of all income and costs indicates a tax rate in the \$19.50 range).

The Selectmen met with the new Standing Committee on Commercial Development on November 30, 1993. The members of the committee are: Elizabeth Canali, Nancy Clark, Jim Gleason, Bruce Phillips and Richard Voytko. The charges of the Committee are: 1) ascertain what type of capital investment would be acceptable to the townspeople, 2) seek out investors, 3) cooperate with neighboring communities with respect to economic development and 4) make reports to the Selectmen as appropriate. It was agreed that the first report would be on March 1.

The Selectmen wrote a letter to the School Building Committee asking it to refrain from committing funds to an architect until financial projection data as agreed to on January 3 was available and reviewed by the School Building Committee, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. It also recommended deferring

commitments until the town votes on a bond issue. The Board of Selectmen met with School Building Committee representative Budge Litchfield to discuss the request which was made out of concern for Heath's ability to honor commitments and a tax rate that could adversely affect other town services. Budge expressed concern that delaying the tight time frame would put the 70% state reimbursement money at risk.

Debbie Gilbert resigned as custodian of the Town Hall and Community Hall because of her acceptance of a part-time position at the Charlemont Post Office. Her resignation was accepted with regret. She will continue to be the backup for Marcella Lively at the Heath Post Office. The Board of Selectmen will be interviewing candidates to replace Debbie shortly.

Alicia Tripp was reappointed to the Nilman Scholarship Committee at the Mohawk Trail Regional High School.

Harris Mountain Road was closed for the winter. If anyone has questions about access to property there please call Jack Cable at 337-4462.

June Day arranged for the binding of all the Town Reports - about 100 years' worth. This will be a great resource of information for posterity. The cost is just over \$100.

A meeting was held with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Health, Highway Superintendent, Fire Chief and the Building Inspector to review the application procedure for building permits. This rather complex process has worked fairly well, but there have been misunderstandings. Modest changes were suggested to clarify procedures.

Budget time for FY95 is upon us. Meetings with department heads will start in February.

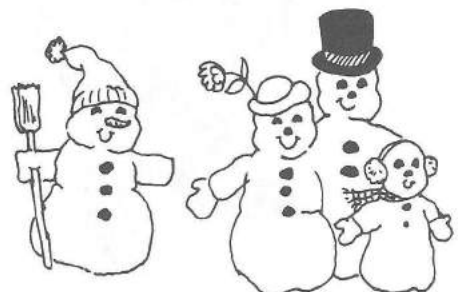
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION 1994 OFFICES AND INCUMBENTS

Selectman - 3 years
Assessor - 3 years
Town Clerk - 3 years
Town Treasurer - 3 years
Tax Collector - 3 years
Constables - 1 year

School Committee - 3 years
Planning Board - 5 years
Finance Committee - 3 years

Finance Committee - 2 years
Library Trustee - 3 year
Dog Officer - 1 year

Arthur Schwenger
Donald Dekker
Karen Thereault
Kristi Nartowicz
Karen Thereault
Robert Markert
Charles Kaempfer
Budge Litchfield
Robert Dane
Frank Rocchi
Gerald Gilbert
Karen Moore
Helen Mackie



PERCS, PERMITS AND TRANSFERS

PERC TESTS

Percolation testing has been suspended until April except for repairs.

BUILDING PERMITS

Arlene Thane, Brunnell Road, repair and extend porch, new deck.

Richard Gary, Avery Brook Road, remove barn.

Heath Historical Society, Branch Hill Road, relocate barn on fairgrounds site.

Harry Baldino, Jacksonville Stage Road, deck.

Richard Housner, Hosmer Road, demolish porch, new deck.

Clark Johnson, South Road, garage.

James Coursey, Bassett Road, interior, exterior renovations to residence.

Ruth Churchill, Jacksonville State, apartment in barn, change one-family to two-family.

Brian Drumney, Route 8A, one-family, garage.

TOTAL: \$196,680.

DEED TRANSFERS

Valley Land Fund, Inc. of Hadley to Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Dept. of Environmental Management of Boston, off Colrain Mountain Road, approx. 69 acres. \$1.

Jean B. Wilson to Margaret M. Sitko of Palo Alto, CA, Avery Brook Road, \$22,500.

David Whiteman to David and Temple A. Whiteman of Turners Falls, 12 Colrain Stage Rd., less than \$100.

David A. and Ellen I. Sorensen by Multibank West to Heath Development Corp. of Boston, Number Nine Road, \$26,950.

Elizabeth Wolfe Sazinski to Chester B. Mott of Riverside, RI, Chippewa Drive, Lots 8, 9, and 10. \$8,500.

Renee Dezielle to Russell C. Dezielle of Westfield, 2 State Farm Road, \$5,000.

Russell C. Dezielle to Karen Foley of Stonington, CT and Russell D. Dezielle of Westfield, 2 State Farm Road. No consideration.

Charles and Mary Maguire to Gedeon LaMontagne of Middletown, CT., Cascade Drive, Lot 35. \$5,300.

Charles and Mary Maguire to Gedeon LaMontagne of Middletown, CT, Cascade Dr., Lot 37. \$5,200.

Robert McAfee Brown and Sydney Thomson Brown to Brown Family Trust Robert M. Brown and Sydney T. Brown as Trustees, Ledges Rd., Whitingham Rd. & North Heath Rd. No consideration.

George D. Morse and Bonnie J. Wilcox to International Paper Co., of Park Ridge, NJ, Jacksonville Stage Rd. \$192,500.

Howard C. and Jeannette V. Crowningshield to Gary R. and Susan C. Josefiak, West Branch Rd. \$95,000.

Kerrie Latino to James R. Demers, Mohawk Estates, Lot 12. \$2,500.

Gertrude C. Gimby to James H. Demers of Chicopee, Mohawk Estates, Lot 11. \$2,500.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT

by Jack Cable, Superintendent

SNOW, WIND, COLD, RAIN, ICE = all ingredients of our winter wonderland. Since New Year's the Highway Department hasn't seen a single day away from the above ingredients. Dohn, Steve, Dave and myself have been working to try to keep the roads clear and safe, but sometimes we had encountered obstacles which prevented us from getting the job done. Drifting and blowing snow plus our latest (January 28) freezing rain are our worst elements to battle. The freezing rain drained our sand supply to zero. We have a limited capacity for storing sand and salt. The shed we use for the salt and sand - which is required in Heath to be under cover, was only designed to house our salt. Therefore we can only house a very limited supply of sand (other towns can pile theirs outside). Well, we exhausted our supply Saturday, January 29. We ran three sand trucks 16 hours on Friday and 5 hours on Saturday and our sand/salt mix has gone.

Hillman's was hired to wing back our roads with their loader which is equipped with a wing plow. This unit was fast and very maneuverable to do an excellent job. We also use our wing truck when not plowing and sanding. We have tried to push the snow back as far as we can to prepare for future storms. The snow piles are high, and we try to push the snow back as far as we can - sometimes in blinding conditions. We have hit trees, stones, signs and also some mailboxes. We are sorry for these "hits", but believe me, they are not intentional. We are only trying to keep the roads clean so people can get to work and school buses can get the children. Thanks to all residents who have been patient and understanding. Many have been very helpful in making our jobs better. Warning to those who park in roadways and obstruct the highway equipment in doing our job - you will be towed if you are in our way! Also snowmobiles - it is against the law to ride on public roads - Beware!

The Transfer Station office has had a 220 volt electric heater installed with a timer. It heats up the office 2 hours before opening. It not only heats up the room for Bud or Cleon, but heats the oil and pump which operate the ram for the trash compactor. This should add longevity to the unit. We are still cautioning people about recycling cans and bottles - We must do this!! Also, mercury batteries are an important item to recycle. Give them to the attendant who will deposit them for you.

We all need to drive safely. Please slow down in this wintery season!



ELECTION SCHEDULE FOR 1994

| | | |
|-----------|--|---|
| Thursday | February 24 | Presentation of prelim. architect's plans & estimates |
| Wednesday | March 9 12 noon-5 PM Library 5 PM-8 PM Town Clerk's home | Voter registration for school votes |
| Monday | March 14 | Informational meeting on school project |
| Thursday | March 17 | Last day to obtain nomination papers for town elections |
| Saturday | March 19 9 AM Community Hall | Town meeting for school issues |
| Monday | March 21 12 noon-7PM Town Hall | Debt Exclusion vote for school |
| | March 21 | Last day to submit nomination papers to registrars |
| Tuesday | March 22 4-8:30 PM Town Hall | Voter registration for town election |
| Tuesday | March 29 4-8:30 PM Town Hall | Voter registration for town election |
| Saturday | April 9 9AM-1PM at Town Hall 1 PM - 5 PM location posted at Town Hall | Voter registration for town election |
| Saturday | April 16 2-4 PM & 7-10 PM location posted at Town Hall | Last day to register to vote for town election |
| Friday | May 6 12 noon-7PM Town Hall | Town election |
| Saturday | May 7 9 AM Community Hall | Annual town meeting |

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Sunday - 10 am - 7 pm

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