



VOLUME 17 NUMBER 4 OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1995

HEATH HERALD

HEATH'S FIRST NEWSPAPER 50¢

TECHNOLOGY AT THE NEW HEATH SCHOOL

by Doug Wilkins, Director of Technology

It has been wonderful watching the progress on the new Heath School these past few months. From the first week the steel was going up you see the shape of the building and rooms, and get a feel for that wonderful common area in the middle. I have dreams about teaching in one of the corner classrooms to the south with views of both the woods and the fields, and can picture students gazing out on the hayfield while Ernie Thane cuts and processes the hay in early summer. I am thrilled my two children will be in that atmosphere, that serene location.

With these peaceful surroundings, it will make the task of educating our children a bit easier, but of paramount importance is what goes on inside the building. What skills and concepts will our children be learning? What processes will they be using to accomplish this? Will our students leave our school ready for learning in the 21st century? Will the children have the resources and equipment for these realities?

Few will disagree that computers are an integral part of our society today. Virtually all areas of work and higher education require use of these marvels of technology and many elementary and secondary schools across the country have reasonably new equipment. Franklin County does not. Blame it on Proposition 2 1/2, blame it on Education Reform, or blame it on hard economic times. Whatever the reason, Franklin County, or more specifically our school district, is technologically way behind.

Mohawk Trail Regional High School has about 50 computers, half of which are 1980s vintage apple IIs, for over 700 students. There is no way with these ratios that our students can go into the workplace or to college and compete on equal footing with students from school systems where there is reasonable technology. Our kids leave the school "a day late and a dollar short". The elementary schools have only a handful of computers newer than 5 years old, and most students leave the schools with little

computer time, and few applicable computer skills.

What can we do?

With the building of our school, and the state reimbursement of 72%, we have a golden opportunity to make the learning environment in our new school meet the demands of our modern society. The State reimbursement covers the cost of construction AND the costs of equipping the school. This simply means that the state is willing to pay \$72 out of every \$100 spent on equipping the school.

I estimate that it will cost about \$90,000 to properly equip the school with technology. This means three or four computers in every classroom, a "lab" of 12 to 15 computers that can be brought from room to room, and a central network server to allow school wide access to software, e-mail and the internet. Very little of this is built into the equipping budget.

What I propose:

The state will allow us to spend about \$45,000 more on the new school than is in the budget. We would need to raise about \$12,500 of that amount; the state will provide the rest. The town tax base cannot afford this. We are hoping that private contributions will.

Continued on page 3



DOUG WILKINS

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Petty Officer 3rd Class Keith Sherman, a 1992 graduate of Mohawk Regional High School, has had a different kind of summer. Recently married, he spent his 1st anniversary away from his wife Brandi in the service of his country. Assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt, he has been supporting his Carrier and Country with air strikes against the inhumanities in Bosnia. The Roosevelt was also sent to Jordan following the Iraqi threats against Jordan. Sherman joined the US Navy in 1992, and is completing a 6 month tour of duty aboard the Roosevelt. Sherman is the son of Leland and Cecelia Sherman of Heath, MA, and is stationed at the Naval Air Station in Virginia Beach, VA.

Hilma Avis Ayers and Richard Arthur Sumner were married on May 20, 1995 at the home of Hilma's parents, Clyde and Ruth Churchill, in Heath. The children of the bride and groom all participated in the ceremony. The couple will reside in Heath.

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Send all correspondence to: Box 54, Heath, MA 01346-0054

MILESTONES

by Edith C. Royer

Annalee Sarah Holmdahl born March 29, 1995 in Lummi Island, Washington - daughter of Arria Merrill and Lars Holmdahl, granddaughter of Gunnar Holmdahl and the late Inga Elisabeth Holmdahl of Vasteras, Sweden and Lisa and Ted Merrill of Shelburne Falls, MA, and great-granddaughter of Elizabeth Dyer and the late Randolph Dyer of Heath and Newtown, Pennsylvania. Arria and her daughters, Inga, age 3 and Annalee, 3 months are spending the summer with Mrs. Dyer in Heath.

Born June 14, a son, Rowan Levi, to Faith (Burrington) and Arnold Jones, of Ashfield; grandson of Constance D. Burrington of Shelburne Falls and Emory Howes of Ashfield; great-grandson of Hannah Burrington of Shelburne.

Born June 16, a son, Kenneth Joseph, to Justinia (Tanner) and Kevin W. Purington, of Charlemont; grandson of Donna and Robert Tanner Jr., and Mr. and Mrs. Roger Purington Sr., all of Heath; great-grandson of Mildred Decker, of Heath; Mr and Mrs. Joseph Lawrence of West Hawley and Geneva Purington of Greenfield.

Born September 14, a son, Patrick Alan, to Phyllis Crowningshield, of Greenfield; grandson of Frederick Crowningshield.

Albert J. Mooney, of Ashfield, died July 7 at home. He was born in Wallingford, VT, October 9, 1928. He was the son of Paul K. and Anna (Cook) Mooney. Money was a Master Sergeant in the Army in the 38th Infantry. A veteran of the Korean War, he spent a year on the front lines. He was a member of the President's Honor Guard for three years, serving under President Harry S. Truman. He received a Good Conduct Medal, as well as the Wharang Distinguished Service Medal with Gold Star from the Republic of Korea. Survivors include his wife Anna, a son John A. of Heath and two daughters, Deborah Herzig of Colrain and Rebecca M. of Greenfield, and four grandchildren. Burial was in St. Mary's Cemetery in Leeds.

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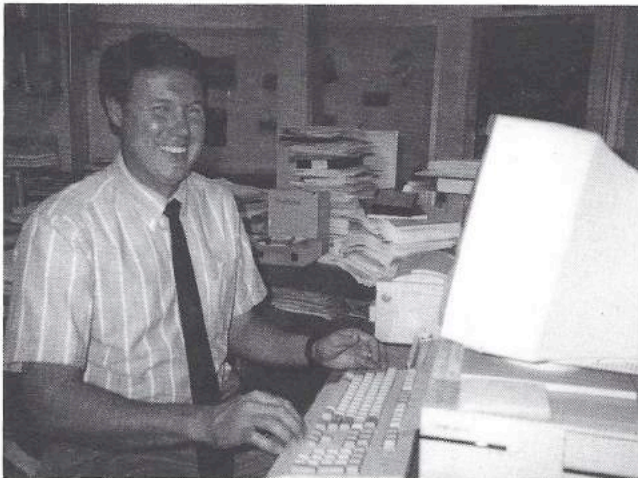
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Continued from page 1

If you have any questions, please give one of us on the committee a call. And if you haven't had the opportunity to see the new school, you should go on up. It's an incredible sight!



DOUG WILKINS AND FRIEND

~~~~~

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Hope and pray you all have a safe winter. If you need me I am available most any time - just call 337-5755. I count it a privilege to help and serve God. Have a great fall and if possible join us this Sunday. God Bless.

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## HEATH HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

By Pegge Howland

The 95th Annual Meeting of the Heath Historical Society was held on Sunday, August 13, 1995 in the Solomon Temple Barn Museum with about 30 members and friends attending. It was preceded by a delicious pot luck supper eaten outside on picnic tables under beautiful Heath summer skies.

Visitors to the Barn were treated to a new farm tool and implement display which had been moved from the Old School House. Old timers recognized and seemed to enjoy the pump log and auger, scythes and sickles, trapping gear, and all manner of hay moving devices.

The Rev. Richard Gary led us in a short memorial service for Esther Dickinson and Marion Patterson, two faithful members who had passed away in the past year.

The By-Laws of the Society were amended to add the Barn to Article II Purpose so it reads "The purpose of the Society shall be the preservation of the Old Town House, the Center School, the Fort Shirley site, and the Solomon Temple Barn".

The following officers were elected: Dave Howland, Treasurer; Alice Kinsman, Secretary; and Jack Cable and Laurie Wheeler, Directors. Many thanks were offered to Craig Barry for his 14 years of service as Treasurer, and to Catherine Cromack for her 4 years as Secretary. Kudos to both!

The business meeting was followed by a delightful talk and beautiful slides given by our long-time member, Elsa Bakalar, on her Heath garden. It was a lovely program and enjoyed by all.

## JACK'S FAVORITE

The 1995 Heath Fair was a fun time for me in an extra way. Beverly came up with an idea to help draw more interest to The Exhibit Hall by having a blueberry related contest. With enthusiastic support from President Mike Peters and Hall Superintendents Ali Thane and Catherine Cromack, we went ahead with the idea of "Jack's Favorite". The Hall committee gathered all Blueberry related entries - baking, art work, crafts, etc., after they were judged in their respective categories, placed them in a specially prepared booth at which I judged my favorite entry.

The winner was Carli Nartowicz, aged 12, who made a "blueberry pizza". She received the Blue Ribbon and a twenty-five dollar cash prize.

Thanks to all who entered and made the event fun and added to The Exhibit Hall. Get your blueberry ideas ready for next year's Fair.

## HEATH LADIES AID

by Edith C. Royer

The Ladies Aid will have their Christmas sale at the Community Hall on Saturday, November 4 from 10 AM to 3 PM. It will also be the day of the Church Craft Fair with fancy articles, toys, decorations, pillows, baked goodies and more on sale. Lunch will also be on sale.

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## HEREABOUTS

by Jesse Seaver

I am sorry I haven't written anything for the Heath Herald for awhile, but I have been really busy during the summer and now that school has started. I have also been writing for the West County News, so I have been focusing my writing towards them.

Is anybody who is reading this into or familiar with the internet and its features? I like using it and think maybe, if you can, you should try it. There are several parts to it: E-Mail, which is basically written text that you send back and forth to different people; FTP, which are software databases; Newsgroups, which are groups of files about one thing; and the World Wide Web. I like the World Wide Web the best. It is a huge "world" of "pages" that contain links to other places. It also has a graphic side to it. If you have the means, I suggest looking into the information super highway; it's worth it.

I've been raising four little calves. They are in the center of Heath behind the post office now. I had them across from my house for awhile, but they needed more grass, so I moved them. Calves really get big fast. I know, or have seen, a cow that is pretty good size now (4'9" high and 6' long) that was as small as my little calves a year ago. My calves are pretty small. Smaller than a baby horse anyway.

They are coming out with all sorts of "tobaccoless" stuff now. They have herbal cigarettes, herbal chewing stuff, herbal mold cigars, etc. I thought people smoked because it gave them a buzz or something. What's the point of smoking if you are pulling this smoke into your lungs, just to pull smoke into your lungs. I guess it's good because you don't get the nicotine, but why, that's what I want to know. Now herbal chew I can see being o.k. It's a taste that you like and you are chewing on something that gives off that taste, but it doesn't hurt you. That seems smartish.

You know what a good response to someone is if they say, "O.k., ask me only one question", just say "What's the story of your life?"; that is, if you want to hear a long story, depending on how old they are, and if they are nice enough to tell you. I'm

Jesse Seaver.....

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## HEATH-ROWE JUNIOR AND BROWNIE GIRL SCOUT TROOPS

The Heath-Rowe Girl Scouts are back! Since 1912, Girl Scouting has been recognized as an active club, exclusively for young girls. Our activities give girls the opportunity to experiment, create, challenge, and grow in a nurturing and supportive environment. Most young girls are yearning for this kind of social interaction, with plenty of FUN in their minds.

If you have a daughter or know of a young girl in your neighborhood, encourage and support her to join our troop. Don't let her miss out on one of the most exciting adventures she could possibly hope for.

The Heath-Rowe Girl Scout Troops are open to any girls who live in Heath or Rowe. This would include girls from Rowe Elementary, Hawlemont Elementary, or privately educated. We are hoping to get a few more girls from the Hawlemont Elementary School to join, so that the transportation of girls from one school to the other can be done by car pooling. The meetings will be held weekly at the Rowe Elementary School. The Junior Troop (ages 9-12) will meet on Mondays at 3:15-4:45 PM, for the month of October. Starting in November, the meetings will be held on Tuesdays. The Brownie Troop (ages 7-9) will meet on Fridays at 3:15-4:15 PM. Our first meetings will begin the week of October 1, 1995.

There is no deadline to registering as a Girl Scout; you may register at any time throughout the year. We also give everyone from the communities an open invitation to serve as volunteers to help with the girls or to share a special interest with the troops. If you would like to register as a Girl Scout, have any questions or would like any further information, please call the Troop's Leader, Jeanne Charles at her home anytime, (413) 339-8351.

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# A Page from the Past

by **MICHAEL D. COE**

## CUBAN INTERLUDE

Last June, about five minutes after we boarded the Cubana Airlines plane in the broiling heat of Santo Domingo, the Russian pilot turned on the air-conditioning, such as it was, in the Soviet-built, Havana-bound aircraft. Immediately, quantities of mist poured from the ankle-level vents, and the cabin took on the appearance of a Grade B Dracula film: Sarah and I could barely see the passengers across the aisle. Such was the beginning of a memorable week in Castro's revolutionary Cuba. Along with the rest of my family, we were there to attend my daughter Natalie's wedding to a Cuban electronics engineer, and it was an unforgettable experience.

I had last been in Cuba in 1947, in the days before the thoroughly corrupt Fulgencio Batista took over the island, and a dozen years before Castro's victory over him. The changes which had taken place in Havana were truly astonishing. The most obvious was that the place is literally falling apart, economically and otherwise. Buildings come tumbling down of their own accord every week, especially in beautiful Old Havana, which UNESCO is bravely trying to save; but also at risk are wonderful, Miami-style, art-deco hotels and apartment houses and hotels. Turn-of-the century, *belle epoque* mansions once inhabited by families made wealthy by sugar and tobacco are crowded with squatters or crumble from neglect. Uncollected garbage rots in the streets, buses barely run (sometimes not at all from lack of gasoline), and the only cars one sees are down-at-the-heels Soviet imitations of Fiats, or huge American ones from the 1950's, often with many layers of paint hiding the rust.

Natalie's wedding was a civil ceremony in "La Maison", a sumptuous villa now used as a showcase for various functions, and restored by the Castro regime to its former, turn-of-the century elegance. We staged the post-wedding celebrations on the roof terrace of the old Hotel Nacional, the best in Havana; there, our Cuban guests would forget their troubles for a while, consuming mountains of food (this was the first time many of them had eaten properly for a long time) and dancing to the music of a Cuban band, under bright moonlight.

So much for romance, now back to reality. The conditions in which the ordinary people of Havana live boggle the imagination. I had never seen anything like it. Large families occupy spaces which we would consider barely adequate for single persons, with uncertain electric and water services, if any at all. Typical of these quarters is what Cubans call *barbacoas* or "barbecues": rooms are subdivided not by additional walls, but by extra floors, to create spaces one can hardly stand up in. One of Natalie's friends ekes out a living in Old Havana as a shoemaker, in a top-floor *barbacoa*, hot, windowless, and infested with cockroaches. So low is the ceiling that we had to stoop to avoid scraping our heads on the foot-high moldings that grace it.

Food is rationed, and there is not enough of it. What little they can get in the way of rice, beans, and other staples is extremely expensive. If, however, one has access to precious dollars, all sorts of items are available on the flourishing black market, or in government-run dollar stores. Needless to say, you see no overweight citizens on Havana's streets.

Unlike the Soviet Union in former times, one sees relatively little presence of army or security personnel. The only arrests we saw were of some noisy Canadian youths who had tried to lift daiquiri glasses as souvenirs from the famed "Floridita" bar. But all ordinary Cubans are under constant surveillance, not least from "block-watch" type snitches. Ever-present on almost everyone's mind are the Florida Keys only 90 miles to the north. An indication of this is that there are almost no fishing boats to be

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seen -- either they have already fled to Key West, or Castro has impounded them. In their place, every day you can see dozens of fishermen in black inner tubes bobbing on the harbor's waters.

This is a world never seen by the Canadian and European tourists who are flocking to Cuba, as they are whisked to their dollar-only resorts like Varadero Beach, effectively cushioned from the Cuban reality. Do they see the potholes in the streets away from the airport road? Do they glance at the prostitutes -- some of them little more than children -- at every highway intersection? Have they ever visited a barbacoa? One wonders.

The Cuban people -- about the nicest human beings I have ever met anywhere in the world -- know how to cope. One way to cope is to play the illegal numbers game, and hope for a windfall. Another is to participate in the Cuban national religion, which is not Marxism-Leninism, nor even orthodox Catholicism, but Santeria, the cult of African gods worshipped under the guise of Christian saints. This is not devil-worship, or even black magic, as many Americans believe, but a serious faith which gives meaning to people's lives. Even the "Supreme Leader" Fidel is said to be a believer!

Now, what about the famous American embargo on Cuba (and travel to Cuba)? Of all the many counter-productive policies perpetuated by our government, this must take the prize. About the only ones hurt by this are the ordinary people of Cuba. The policy of isolation and deprivation perfectly suits Castro and his circle, who as Soviet-style apparatchiki live high on the hog in their walled villas, self-righteously portraying their regime as the innocent victim of Yankee imperialism. Meanwhile, in lobby and dining room of the Hotel Nacional, one can overhear countless business deals being clinched between Cuban functionaries and businessmen from Latin American, Europe, and Asia. It doesn't take a Ph.D. in political science to realize that the chances of Cuba moving toward democratic political and economic reform can only be increased, not diminished, by pulling down the walls we have erected. But, since our policies towards Cuba and the rest of Latin America have usually been dead wrong for the past half-century, I am pessimistic that they will change very much.

Yet the Cuban people deserve something better than what we and Castro have been serving up to them for almost four decades.

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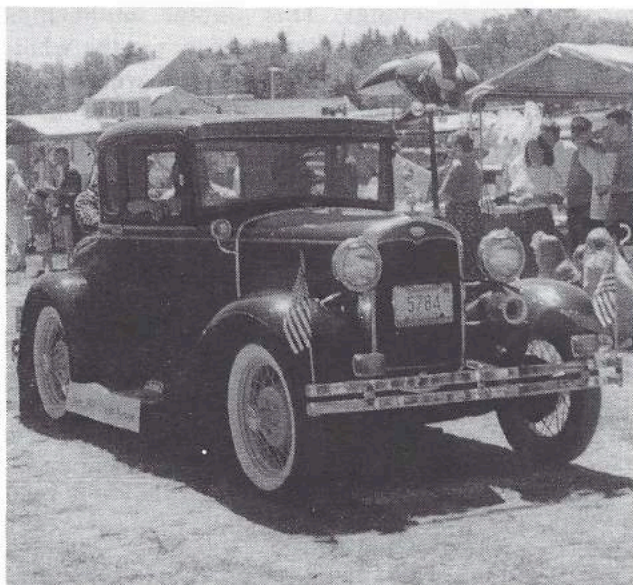
## WORLD WAR II - 50 YEARS

by Jack Cable

Let us not forget the veterans of World War II and that they sacrificed for our freedom. What if the Germans and the Japanese had been successful in invading our shores fifty years ago? Many made the supreme sacrifice so we may live in the freedom this country possesses.

At the Heath Fair parade we honored our Heath heroes of World War II. They rode in antique cars -- Ron Corey, Ernie Thane and Jake Tripp in a '38 Packard; Clyde Churchill and David Howland rode in a '64 Chevrolet; Harry Hall and Bud Kaempfer rode in a Model A Ford. One distinguished veteran who was too ill to ride but certainly should be remembered is Charles Kades who was instrumental with General McArthur in writing the Japanese constitution.

Thank you gentlemen - we are proud of you!  
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## HEATH PRESCHOOL NEWS

by Suzanne Crawford

It's back-to-school time at the Heath Preschool, and we're off to a wonderful and busy start. There are many preschool-age young children in Heath and Rowe these days - about 38 - and nearly all of them were interested in attending the preschool. I believe this is the first year that we have not been able to serve all interested families (our maximum number is 30 children). It was challenging to decide who would attend, but I believe that all families did eventually make arrangements that were satisfactory. This year 21 of the children are from Heath.

We begin the year with home visits, allowing the children to meet us in their most secure setting and to share their pets or favorite toys. Then we have a day for the children to visit the school with their parents. The rest of that week we have half the class at a time for 2 days each. These smaller groups allow us to give the children all the attention and support that they might need to feel confident and safe in their new surroundings. This careful introduction really pays off and it is gratifying to see the whole group happily at play. The first several weeks are a time for the children to become comfortable at school and with school routines and to get to know each other. We focus on taking good care of our friends and our school - and these simple guidelines really cover most situations.

Many people have made contributions to the preschool in the past couple months. Our thanks go to all the people who helped make the fund raiser at the Heath Fair so successful. Special thanks are in order for the people who contributed the wonderful array of prizes for the raffle - many of them handmade. Also our thanks go to the dunking booth

crew for their splishy-splosky entertainment. Special thanks go to Mary Vilbon, Deborah Phillips and David Adie for their invaluable help with planning, organizing and keeping things running smoothly at the fair. Special thanks also go to Michelle Howe for creating our prize-winning parade float as well as a number of other projects over the summer. We also give our thanks and a fond farewell to Becky Bradley, David Adie and Mary Vilbon, who are stepping down from the Advisory Council. We had a great crew of parents to move the furniture back from its summer storage and get it clean and ready for the children: Geoffrey Bagley, Don Moore, Jim Taylor, Jill Kuehl, Sally Strom and Alice Lemelin. The Heath Preschool is fortunate to have such great community support.

## HEATH LADIES AID

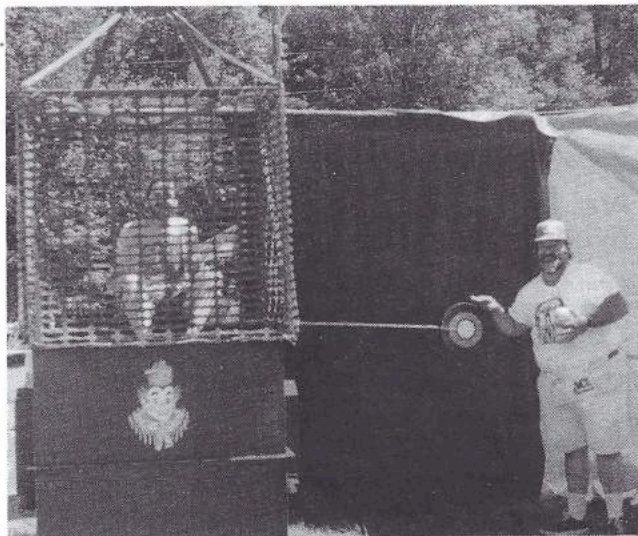
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# OF HERBS AND HEIRLOOMS

by Laurie Wheeler Burrington

Have you just finished your last bout of pickling? Or maybe just wishing you had finished for the year? I'm running a little behind, so have a few batches of things still to make.

At our house we use an "old-time" book called The Complete Book of Home Preserving by Ann Seranne. Think of the herbs pickling or relish recipes called for: Allspice, Cardamom, Cayenne, Cinnamon, Cloves, Ginger, Nutmeg, and/or Tumeric.

Most of these aromatic herbs are not ones easily grown in this climate, being either tender annuals or tender perennials. (It must be noted though that one or two pretty pungent peppers have come from Heath gardens.) Their original homes are the warmer climes of this planet.

Many of the spices themselves are "warming" herbs, ones which warm the person, as well as promote good digestion. Originally from South China and the East Indies, first the Romans, then later the English consumed these spices. They were used in Medieval times by cooks catering to the wealthy. They are now found commonly in every cupboard.

The dried, unripe fruit Allspice, *Pimenta dioica*, is used primarily in pickling or in curries, and as a mulling spice. It also relieves flatulence, and has been used in the past to treat rheumatism.

Cardamon, *Elettaria cardamomum*, related to ginger, is an excellent digestive aid and is reputed to help clear thinking. It also is said to make coffee less toxic. So, if you need to stay awake while studying or while driving, throw a couple of cardamom pods into your coffee! It is also traditional in Auyurvedic medicine.

I don't use Cayenne, *Capsicum frutescens*, as I always have a reaction to it, but many hardier souls than I are "able to take the heat" and use this herb readily. (You know, those folks who will sit down and eat them out of hand...). The southwest United States is well known for its ability to produce these fiery fellows. Native Americans used it for the circulatory system and as a heart tonic. It is a disinfectant, antiseptic and stimulating.

Cinnamon, *Cinnamomum Zeylanicum*, is one of the first of these spices I met, in the little cinnamon-sugar bear my mom used to buy at the grocery. It is made from the inner bark of the tree. A perfect winter herb, it is great as a mulling spice in wine or cider, and of course in applesauce or apple pies. Along with its digestive properties it is antiseptic. I used to chew on cinnamon sticks during college to help nerves and to stay awake, until I found it to be habit-forming.

The Clove, *Syzgium aromaticum*, is another

antiseptic good for digestion. It has been used to relieve headaches, and I'm fond of it for relieving minor toothaches. Either chew on it, or use a drop of clove oil on the offending tooth. At Christmas time orange-clove pomander balls are made. These harken back to plague times when people would carry them to ward off germs.

Ginger, *Zingiber officinale*, of course I've talked about before. It is a stimulant, and a very good herb to have extra of during cold season because of its warming and stimulating properties. It is traditionally used in Chinese medicine and in the Indian Auyurveda system of healing. In cooking it is a wonder: there is even a cookie called Pepperakhar which includes ginger, as well as most of these aromatic spices.

Nutmeg (and Mace), *Myristica fragrans*, are from the same plant. The nutmeg is the center of the nut, and the mace is the outer part of the fruit. It is used to flavor milk, cheese, and liqueurs, but I prefer it in pumpkin pie. It is good for the digestive system and calms the nerves. Perhaps this is why it is perfect after a Thanksgiving dinner. References have been made to its being a mild hallucinogenic, but I have never ingested enough of it to experience this effect. Nor do I know anybody who has.

Turmeric, *Curcuma longa*, is the least well known to me. I only recently met this herb during long summer pickling nights. The root of the plant is used medicinally, in cooking, and as a yellow dye. It has long been used in Indian medicine, with myriad uses, such as a blood cleanser, to help with bruises or burns, and to relieve excess catarrh. It is a natural antibiotic.

Isn't it amazing that these spices from so far away have such an appeal to us? Besides liking the taste of these aromatics in our foods, maybe on some level we know they're good for us, that they are acting in other ways within us.

Next time you open a jar of spice-laden Cucumber Pickles or Apple and Green Tomato Chutney, remember the qualities of these herbs. Relish them!

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## PARENT TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

By CoChairs Deborah Lively and Mary Vilbon

The first PTP meeting of the year was held on September 6, 1995.

The treasurer's report was submitted with a balance of \$730.15. Michelle Cutter has offered to stay on as treasurer for another year. Thanks, Michelle!!!!

The PTP would also like to thank Cathy Geyster for attending the meeting and informing the parents about the K-1-2 math program that will have four (4) different segments. It sounds both educational and exciting.

Elections for two (2) parent representatives for the Education Council have been completed. Jim Lively and Peter Bryant both of Rowe were elected by the parents. Currently the Education Council is seeking a community representative.

Mark your calendar, on October 27th, the PTP will be sponsoring an Autumn Costume Dance along with a scarecrow contest! See separate article for details. All members of the community are welcome to attend for a ghostly good time!

In closing, the annual wrapping paper fund-raiser is underway. Please help support the PTP in this, our biggest fund-raiser of the year. Without your support it would be impossible to bring enrichments such as the USMASS Dancers (which are scheduled for January) to the children to enjoy.

Each month the PTP looks forward to a productive, well attended meeting which is held on the first Monday of the month at 6:30 PM at the school. The next meeting is scheduled for October 2nd; childcare is provided. Hope to see you there!

## MEETING ON NEW PRINCIPAL

by Deborah Philips

On Thursday, October 26, there will be a community-wide meeting for all residents of Heath to meet with Al Cormier, the Superintendent of Schools for the Mohawk District. It will be held at the Community Hall at 7:00 PM. The focus of the meeting will center on the hiring of a new principal for the elementary school.

This is an opportunity for all Heath residents to voice opinions and concerns about the kind of principal they would like to see; the process involved in hiring a principal; and to meet members of the interview committee involved in facilitating that decision. Mr. Cormier will make the ultimate decision on whom to hire; and he is committed to making a good match between the needs and desires of Heath and the prospective principal.

Remember, the choice of principal is one of the most important decisions made in the entire process of creating a new school. Please be sure to attend the meeting so that your viewpoints can be heard and your questions answered.

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## 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**

### A PORTABLE PIG PEN

I like pigs and enjoy raising them, even though the outcome costs the animal his existence.

Some years back we were fortunate to be able to raise four pigs at a time. We fed these pigs for three other people plus one for ourselves.

My plans for housing and confining these creatures was to have a portable pig pen. This way the growing animals could have a fresh clean spot every few days.

I built this pen out of two light poles about eight feet apart with slabs for the sides. There were eye bolts on either end to hitch a tractor to move this creation. To be sure it was not the prettiest work of art, but most serviceable. The pigs all grew to maturity in this portable palace and really enjoyed being moved each time. The first of our using this pen there was a platform for them to sleep on. This platform was a problem when the pen was moved; it was hitched to the cross piece with heavy wire and it rather floated and would get under the side poles some times and leave a space that the little pigs could get out through.

Our dear friend Howard Thompson gave us a V shaped cast iron troth to feed with. When it was time to change their ground the feed utensils would be put upon the roof and our cab tractor did the grunt work of moving the pen.

All the pigs raised in this pig motel would get real excited when they heard the tractor coming. How they would tear around in anticipation of fresh grass to root in. This pen was a good load for the cub to move but it did as it was asked. This pen was moved all over our pasture land.

After we got our model 22 caterpillar tractor when it wasn't needed for other work it was left hitched and it was much easier for the crawler to move the pen. The crawler was much noisier than the cub and this seemed to excite the pigs more.

The point of this story is that one day the pigs were out of the pen and were roaming at will wherever they wished and to get them back in confinement seemed quite a task. I had a thought that perhaps if the pigs heard the "cat" running they might come back into their home. Sure enough, that is what they did and we never had to chase them a bit. Those pigs had the whole of North Heath to run in and they were happy to get back where home was.

When it came time to dispatch this livestock a horse trailer would be parked in line with the gate opening and feed would be put in the trailer and after a day or two the four pigs would be eating and sleeping in the trailer, so it was a simple task to shut the tailgate and latch the truck and head for butcher shop. A countless number of pigs have been loaded with a great deal more stress that those pigs suffered. We don't raise hogs any more and the old pen has been dismantled, but were pigs ever to be raised here again, it would be done in like manner.

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## SELECTMEN'S REPORT

by D.F. Howland

How to get our property taxes down for FY 96? That question has been the center of attention of the BOS and the Tax Fairness Committee these last two months. Since meeting with representatives of the Department of Education and the Legislature in July where hope for special aid was held out to the Town, we have been preparing required reports for the Departments of Revenue and Education (DOR and DOE). In the process of reviewing documentation we discovered that certain Education Reform aid called Excess Debt was not given Heath for the past two years. Excess Debt refers to money the Town has appropriated for construction of the new school. If such amount exceeds the average spent per pupil for construction there is Excess Debt, which in turn reduces our required Minimum Contribution and school tax assessment. In FY 96, \$79,000 was budgeted. However, even though it was reported by the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD), our Minimum Contribution figure was not reduced as it should have been. This error was acknowledged September 8, 1995 by Commissioner Antonucci. His letter notes that our Excess Debt credit is \$64,794 which reduces our Minimum Contribution from \$378,646 to \$313,852. This is worth about \$1.50 on our tax rate! Subsequently we determined that a similar error occurred in FY 95. A combination of factors caused this situation - a new and very complicated Education Reform package, the fact Heath committed to a new school before the MTRSD was formed, and the formation of a new school district which changes reporting procedures. At this time a comprehensive report is being prepared for the DOE outlining Heath's fiscal plight as well as noting the oversights in granting proper Education Reform credit the last two years. With the help of Senator Swift and Representative Kulik we are asking for \$250,000 NOW to bring our taxes down to levels comparable to other towns in the District. Whether or not we will get that much cannot be promised, but we feel strongly that we are entitled to substantial relief.

The Tax Fairness Committee, the Assessors and the BOS met to discuss regulatory ways that taxpayers in need can be helped. A letter has been sent to all property owners explaining procedures and sources of information in this regard.

We expect there will be a Special Town Meeting this fall to address among other things a reduction in appropriations for FY 96 which, of course, means lower taxes. We may have some Free Cash to help do this, but most importantly the special State Aid referenced above is essential for this to happen. We will keep you informed.

Selectman Hilma Sumner has been working closely

with Highway Superintendent Jack Cable on road projects. South Road reconstruction has been completed. Colrain Stage Road has been oiled and stoned while Number Nine Road is being resurfaced. We hope to hear shortly on a grant to upgrade Jacobs Road to the new school and a major facelifting for Avery Brook Road is on schedule for next summer.

Selectman Rollo Kinsman has been working with engineers relative to closing the Three Town Dump. There have been technical and legal problems to get this project on track, a time consuming job.

Joyce Karpinski, Town Coordinator, has put the finishing touches on a comprehensive Personnel Handbook. She has been instrumental in preparing the above mentioned reports as well as a fire safety grant in the amount of \$1,800 for Chief Gleason that focuses on educating our pre-schoolers.

The Cemetery Commission prepared guidelines which, when ready, will be presented to a town meeting, probably in the Spring. This is a much more complex job than it appears. We appreciate their efforts. (Members are Clare Rabbitt, Ron Corey and Dick Gary.)

The Square Dance group donated \$125 to the Town for maintenance of the Community Hall. There have been some personnel changes. Bruce and Catherine Cromack resigned from the Small Business Loan Committee and Registrar positions respectively. They are moving to Northfield and will be sorely missed. Eileen Tougas was appointed as Registrar; we still need someone for the Loan Committee. Gerry Gilbert resigned from the Finance Committee; we need someone there. And Dick Newton replaced Karen Mozalak as Manager of Town Buildings. All resignations were accepted with regret.



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## HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT

by Jack Cable, Superintendent

Work on the Heath roads is still going on as we try to beat the winter weather. It has been an excellent summer for road work (not good for blueberries and vegetable gardens however). Of course our State aid money came late, but at least we got it. We finished the South Road project and the Colrain Stage project - the latter being shimmed and topped with a chip-seal-oil base. This will add many years to the life of this road. By the time you read this, Number Nine Road will have been resurfaced with asphalt from Eight A to Cyrus Stage. Many people have questioned why this section was done instead of from Cyrus Stage to the Vermont line. First, the section of the road we are resurfacing was the newer section, but it had only been oiled and stoned plus it had a very poor base (sand); it was deteriorating - cracks, ruts, shrink cracking, etc. If we didn't address this section, it would look like the northerly section in about two years. We paved it to save it - this is called preventative maintenance of roads. (This is also why we sealed Colrain Stage.) The second reason is money. We had enough money to save this road, but the second part from Cyrus Stage to the Vermont line needs to be completely rebuilt. This means breaking up the surface, adding drainage and new culverts, adding one foot to two feet of good gravel, then paving. Present costs to do this stretch is in excess of \$250,000.

We had to lower the section in front of Peter's store because it was much too high. The center line was a foot higher than the porch of the store. There was already a wall of bricks to try to prevent water from going into the store. We dug out about two feet and found the original road -- then we added good gravel to the base.

South Road up around Whittmore Spring from Burrington Hill to Todd Sumner's has been cut back - some places had over two feet of material - no wonder the water ran down the road instead of in the ditches. We put the material (sand, loam, clay mix) on Harris Mountain to built it up - we added gravel to the top of some - more at a later date - at least it's passable. Please - drivers, when going up hills on dirt roads, please use caution and try not to spin your wheels; this causes the washboarding and material loss on these hills.

The Transfer Station is busy - our recycling effort is commendable. Listen to the attendant - he is the boss and is responsible for our excellent record of trash separation as are our residents.

In your travels around Heath - look out for MOOSE. Yes, we have moose in the area. A male was in our blueberry field and irrigation ponds throughout the season. Drive careful - enjoy the beautiful scenery.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

by Earl Gleason, Chief

The fire department responded to five emergencies since the last Heath Herald. August first saw a call for a tanker to Hawley. This call was aborted immediately when it was found not to be a structure fire. An EMT and a fire fighter assisted Charlemont Ambulance with a motorist on Taylor Book Road who apparently had a heart attack. This incident was also on August first. The day before the fair a propane tank setting in the sun vented and five firefighters and engine one cooled the tank with a stream of water. Three EMTs, five firefighters and Charlemont Ambulance attended to a man on Deer Run Path who had fallen a reported forty feet from a tree. This accident occurred on Sept first. On Sept third, three EMTs and three firefighters together with the Charlemont Ambulance and the State Police aided a man having emotional problems.

The department had two workbees in relation to the Heath Fair, one to get ready and one after to pick up. The Fair was a success for the department. There were no major traumas or injuries reported to the first aid booth, the wheel did well, the root beer, though not up to our usual quality, sold out, and the chicken barbecue sold out both days. The only down side of the fair was the reminder that we need more help. On Sunday at noontime serving the barbecue, getting vehicles and drivers for the parade, and wetting down the horse show area showed us how really short of help we are.

The August meeting of the Association was devoted to making the root beer for the fair. The Fire Association met at the fire station on Sept 7. No drill was held in August because of the fair, and the Sept. drill was on Pump Operations and was led by Deputy Chief Walt Gleason. The EMS Association met on two occasions.

The department gained a new member in August. He is Fred Golba of Taylor Brook Road and he brings to the department a strong interest in rescue and search.

The Chief attended four out-of-town meetings, did five inspections, and worked with Joyce on a grant for fire and nonsmoking education for the preschool.

Fire Prevention Week is coming up October eighth to fourteenth. Let's extend it out to fire prevention year.

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## PERCS, PERMITS AND TRANSFERS

### PERCOLATION TESTS

Earl Gleason reports that one repair was conducted this period. Perc tests have been suspended until next April.

### BUILDING PERMITS

No building permits were issued this period.

### DEED TRANSFERS

Martha L.H. and Norman F. Rose to Dorothy Hanni Hulbert of Brooklyn, NY Colrain Brook Road, \$30,500.

Alice M. Delaney and John Weston to Paul R. and Deborah M. Guilmette of Chicopee. Mohawk Estates, lots 18 and 19. No consideration.

Carol Baker Cornish to Anita M. Cornish of Warren, CT Knott Road. 130 acres, partly in Rowe. \$1.

Catherine Cornish VanVoorhis to Anita M. Cornish of Warren, CT Knott Road. 130 acres, partly in Rowe. \$1.

Thomas Harrison Cornish to Anita M. Cornish of Warren, CT Knott Road. 130 acres. partly in Rowe. \$1.

Ann Cornish Kutter to Anita M. Cornish of Warren, CT Knott Road. 130 acres, partly in Rowe. \$1.

Benjamin William Cornish to Anita M. Cornish of Warren, CT Knott Road. 130 acres, partly in Rowe. \$1.

Alvar C. Thornbloom to Mark D. and Karen E. Thornbloom of Andover, CT Chicksaw Street, lot 58. No consideration.

John A and Margaret Roethel to Kim A. Prevost of Granby, CT Underwood Hill Road, lot 5A. \$9,474.

Emma A. and Wendell T., Brown of Charlemont to Emma A. Brown. Jacksonville Stage Road. No consideration.

Alfred M. and Phyllis A. McGloin of Washington Depot, CT to United Bank. Underwood Hill Road, lot 5B. \$15,541.

Gerard E. and Peggy L. Blais to Jan A and Jolanta

H. Kusy of Enfield, CT 10 Papoose Drive. \$25,000.

Olivine M. Syriac to Richard R and Daisy C. Syriac of Belchertown, Mohawk Estates, lot 71, less than \$100.

Jeffrey I. and Carolyn Goldwasser to Russell C. Lindgren of Heath, Burrington Road \$160,000.

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