



HEATH HERALD

Heath's First Newspaper

75¢

Volume 24, Number 6

February/March 2003



A "Real Heath Winter" or so say folks who have been around these parts for many years -

According to Ralph Dickinson, writing in the February/March 1988 edition of the *Herald*, the average snowfall since the winter of 1968-69 was 92.72 inches. Highs for the period were 128.5 inches during the 1970-71 season and 120 inches in the 1986-87 winter. Lows were, in 1980-81, a mere 61.75", and in 1985-86, 58.5." In the 1986-87 season, the first measurable snowfall was on October 4. In 1988, the total was 105.5 inches until a further inch in April made it 106.5. At that time, beginning in 1956, there were six Aprils with no snowfall, but in 1961, '72, and '82, there were 19", 19.5", and 18.5" respectively.

So far, Alan Nichols tells us, we have had 61 inches through January 24. And we have at least two months to go, with April a third possibility. I wonder if we will break the record??

Of course, in addition to the snow, we have endured a long cold spell of Arctic air and zero and below temperatures, the trade-off being gorgeous blue-sky, sunny days. There's always a trade-off.

Ralph who served as an observer for the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission and as a reporter on Heath precipitation

for the *Herald* beginning with the December 1979 issue, wrote in the February/March of 1982 edition, "The January snows totaled 27 & 1/2 inches. If the remainder of the winter keeps on at this rate, we may have an old-fashioned winter like many of us remember in the mid 1930s and 40s."

How Have Heathans Handled the Heath Winters?

Here are some excerpts from past *Heralds* and some memories.

In the February/March 1986 edition, Pat Leuchtman, in an article entitled "Life in Heath," wrote:

Heath is a town where time is measured by winters survived.

and told a story of the storm of '83.

It took us almost four hours to make it from Greenfield including walking in the last mile and a half though knee deep snow and 9-degree temperature. Our progress was spurred on by the thought that if we did not get home and get the wood furnace going again the pipes would freeze.

Getting out after that storm was "almost easy." The snow was so deep and had drifted so badly across our road that we had to ski out for two days until the town bucket loader was repaired and could clear the road.

Once I asked Henry why Heathans take such delight in telling others how difficult life is in Heath. Alli Thane says it's because we don't want everyone rushing to live in our Arden. Fred Burrington says it's because Heath is more a concept than a reality. Henry says it's because people who live in Heath have a sense of humor. That's the real reason we survive.

"Wintering in Heath" by Amy Barry, a former resident who was active in town affairs and was a frequent contributor to the *Herald*, appeared in the February/March 1981 edition. Mrs. Barry offered another perspective.

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The Heath Herald is a nonprofit newspaper staffed by volunteers and published six times a year. Donations are tax deductible and are greatly appreciated.

THE HERALD DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL/MAY ISSUE IS MARCH 10, 2003. Photographs, drawings, and articles are the property of the Heath Herald unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Call (413) 337-8594 or E-mail Jane at jdeleew@crocker.com.

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("A Real Heath Winter" continued from page 1)

What I have come to appreciate about winter is that it gives us the opportunity to enjoy a slower pace of life. With the wood supply piled up and the summer's harvest in the freezer and basement, winter gives us time to sit, watch, think, and dream. Winter is a time for remembering the past and savoring the present. It is also a time for planning and anticipation. The days have begun to grow longer and the sun rises higher in the sky. Winter is a beginning as well as an ending. I no longer have second thoughts about spending a winter in Heath. I wear my long underwear everywhere and I put on three pairs of socks when it gets cold. What is most important is that I look at winter in a different way. For the cold, the ice, and the snow are as much a part of the rhythm of nature in New England as are our glorious summer days and celebrated fall colors. Winter has special gifts for us, although they may seem more subtle and secretive than those of other seasons. Let the cold wave come again. I will put on an extra sweater, stay close to the woodstove, and order my seeds from the Burpee catalog.

A Snow Story

Our father, Clyde Churchill, was often a very last minute Christmas shopper. One year (probably in the early 1970s) when he was working at the Veterans Center in Shelburne Falls he again left his shopping until the day before Christmas. Unfortunately we were also having a major snowstorm with high winds blowing that day. He started home in mid-afternoon and came up Route 8A from Charlemont. He made it up Dell Hill but got stuck in the drifts filling the road on the corner where Long Hill Road and Route 8A intersect. The snow fences which used to decorate many of the fields were unable to make much of a dent.

Our mother was periodically taking breaks from her Christmas preparations to look for Dad's car, and, on one of these checks, she called out to us to look out the window because someone was walking down the road. As the person got closer we realized from his coat that it was Dad but we couldn't figure out what he was dragging behind him.

After he got in the house and shook off most of the snow he explained he had gotten stuck and wasn't able to get out so he loaded his Christmas presents into a burlap grain sack that he had in the trunk of the car and dragged them home since he didn't know when he would get the car out. Fortunately he was able to get in touch with our highway department somehow and get the car home that day with their help but he wanted to be sure we got our presents from Santa no matter what happened!

~ Charlene Churchill and Hilma Sumner

Many Moons Ago

Thinking back many moons ago, there was one winter with tons and tons of snow like now ! Paul had plowed our long driveway which seemed to take forever. I went to see how he was coming along, and the banks were so high that it gave us the feeling we were going down a topless tunnel! It felt very claustrophobic and eerie! Our boys sure had fun playing king of the hill, so high up!

~ Marcella Lively

Moving Through the Natural World..

De-Icing

A Journal Entry from February 2002

I feel as though I'm trying on one of those "skinny dresses," and the natural curves I once knew are long gone. I know academically my cells are of this potent mixture of life, but I've watched in recent days how I skid past the world; a flyby in my car, moving from one human destination to another. I'm always viewing from behind glass, am always "on ice," aloof from my surroundings. It's a cold way to live, with less warmth than the 15-degree mornings showing in the air and on my skin.

I once walked invincible in the boundaries of human and nature. Arid brown desert burned my soul and forged my desires. Cooled by high forests of green, with tiny snaking paths a base note of human presence, my passion was to save it all. There was only a hint of covert activism on my breath as I cheered on Bella Abzug. "Wilderness" our Country has designated these places. I did not name them. I drank them. I sweat than from my pores. I lay in secret places of sand, of rock. I tasted the stones, the grit on my tongue a crystalline crunch. I knew in these wild places I was most "me." The edges of safety thinned; survival lay entirely in my hands, or those of my hiking partner. And that was fine. Weather, wild animals, insects, flash floods were preferable to threats from the human race.

From heat I move to cold. New England. Decades later. It is appropriate that I begin these writings in an ice storm.

Winter scales fall and adhere to solemn trees, and the morning's sullen sky has let loose. The air has changed and the thrum, thrum, thrum of a pressure headache is subsiding. I know we're in for it. It? "It" an encounter with nature in full, howling form. Such human terms for a force not bound by our words, and, eventually, not bound by our actions. The next day finds the south-sloping field out back a glossy sheen of white, this, with the rose bushes coated like glass-maker's canes let me know I'm not going anywhere, walking or otherwise. The light fades and the wind picks up as I watch for any wildlife to brave the field beyond. A crash of limbs in the night alerts me to "more interesting times" to come.

Morning finds us without electricity or easy source of heat. A half-inch of ice coats everything and the sparkles bedazzle me. I can't help it, but I'm out of the door, in mismatched pajamas, coffee mug in hand, trying not to become a casualty. Across the way is a hillside of glory and mystery. Burnt Hill sunrise greets us every morning, but not in quite so spectacular a manner as on this one. Biting brilliant air, scalloped tree branches wave in the air like glass anemones, and all has become blue and silver and brown black. Then, the fairy lights, more colors than I can give name to, twist in the sunlight. Long seconds go by before I realize I've gone elsewhere. The woods are off limits, the branches still tender from the night's windstorm, "widow-makers." It's always a dance though. A life goes and another is born. For now, it is enough to be out, to awaken my senses again to being out from under glass.

This skin, this boundary of mine, with hands, eyes, ears, mouth, and nose, is *meant* to know the world. Why else would our bodies be so "wired" for interaction?

~ Laurie Wheeler Burrington

Indoor Ice Skating Rink at Fairground



Heath now has its own community skating rink thanks to the cooperation and joint efforts by the Town, Heath Elementary School, Heath Agricultural Society, and the Parks and Recreation Committee. The rink is located in the cattle barn at the fairgrounds and is open daily to the public. Lights are provided for nighttime skating as well. All involved hope the rink will be available on an annual basis.

The 2003 Fair plans are underway. Fireworks are scheduled for Friday night along with a DJ for dancing under the big tent. Saturday we will have the square dance in the cattle barn and the Lonesome Brothers will be rocking from 8:00 p.m. to midnight thanks to Flamingo Construction of Cummington. We are hoping to have a return visit from the Wright Brothers, the Balloon Buffoon, Cecil B. DeClown, and Garbanzo the Story Teller.

The Society is still looking for one or two people to manage the food booth Saturday and Sunday of the Fair. This is very important as proceeds from the food booth help to offset some of the losses from the rest of the Fair. Please, if you or any one you know is interested I would love to talk to you.

The first project this spring will be tightening the silo bands and straightening it. Thanks to advice and tools from Ralph and Howard Dickinson the silo will look like new.

Regular meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month, 7:00 p.m. at the school in the winter and at the fairgrounds during warmer months. If you would like to help or would like more information please call me at 337-5716.

~ Bob Delisle
Heath Agricultural Society

Heath People in the News

Wanda and John Musacchio spent a family Christmas in Italy visiting their son Dominic, a Brown University student taking his junior year at the University of Bologna, and finding and spending time with relatives and friends of John's parents.

Instead of bringing Dominic home for the holidays, John and Wanda decided to take their first trip to Italy. With daughter Sadye, they arrived in Bologna on Christmas Eve and celebrated their reunion attending Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Dominic. Christmas Day found them at a five-hour, many course feast at the home of one of Dominic's friends where they were treated as family. Their hosts did not speak English but Dominic ably acted as interpreter, a role he assumed for the remainder of the trip. Prior to leaving for Italy, he had intensive Italian language training and, according to his parents, does very well in his university classes which are all taught in Italian..

The Musacchio itinerary was formidable. In just under three weeks, they traveled, driving most of the way, the length of the peninsula south of Bologna and back. To experience the Italian trains, they did go to Venice and Padua by rail before setting out.

For the trip, they picked up a comfortable and roomy BMW that was equipped with an electronic mapping device that allowed them, according to John, to take the back roads instead of the Autostrada and thus to enjoy the beautiful Italian countryside. They had few travails, an exception being a detour through a rather rough patch in the mountains.

The journey took them to Florence, with a side excursion to San Gimignano (which was one of Wanda's favorite places), to Siena, to Assisi and the Cathedral of Saint Francis, and then on to Rome for several days. A highlight of the trip was attending New Year's Eve Mass at St. Peter's which was conducted by the Pope. A regret was missing the Sistine Chapel which was closed for the holiday. The following day, long, long lines deterred them. They are eager to return to Rome.

Traveling south from Rome, they went to Naples, then to Sarno where they stayed with relatives and met up again with a former Greenfield resident who had worked at the Naples Bakery. Then an exciting trip to Pompeii and Herculaneum and to Paestum on the Gulf of Salerno, where, for John, finding an almost intact Greek temple was a high point.

In Amato in Calabria, they visited with John's mother's family and met several cousins and a 96-year-old aunt, who spoke very good English, and had a tour of the home in which his mother grew up. This was followed by an eagerly looked-forward-to pilgrimage to the shrine dedicated to Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo which they learned is the third most visited religious shrine in the world.

Driving north along the Adriatic coast, they stopped in Portocannone, Dominic Musacchio's birthplace. John pointed out that his father had never talked about the past or about his family in Italy. He thought of himself as an American. As a result, John knew little about what family he might find still there. What they did find was a town filled with friends of the family and many Musacchios who had known both John's father and grandfather. The house in which his father grew up still stands complete with the tin gutters made by his grandfather,



Wanda, John, Dominic, and Sadye by the Ionian Sea.

a tinsmith. Needless to say, this unexpected meeting with the Musacchio clan was a special delight. John learned that these families were originally from Albania, many still speaking Albanian, although they had been in Italy for many generations.

After this, the quartet was ready to return to Bologna. On the way back, they stopped to see a cousin of John's mother who received them with open arms and yet another five-course meal!

Wanda allowed that if she had one complaint it would be the over-abundance of food that was plied on them in every Italian home they visited where good manners dictate eating everything on one's plate. The one exception was gelato of which she never got her fill. For John, however, the food was "just right."

Returning from the sunny, balmy, palm tree south, they found it snowing as they reentered Bologna.

Daughter Sadye flew back the next day but Wanda and John had two more days in Bologna to relax before returning and were treated by Brown University to a dinner with the students - a "nice send-off."

John and Wanda felt good about seeing their son's community and his spacious apartment, and about meeting his roommates and friends, thus reassuring themselves of Dominic's well-being.

All in all, "a great trip," being all together and having their son as their guide not only to the sights and pleasures of present day Italy but also to John's parents' past. "A great way to see, through his eyes."

John says he feels very fulfilled for the trip filled a void of long-standing. Asked if he had felt "at home" in Italy, he replied that he had felt very comfortable and now had important knowledge and fond memories.

They look forward to a return trip!

~ Jane de Leeuw

Pegge Howland is currently at the Buckley Nursing Home in Greenfield before returning home to complete her recovery from a heart bypass operation at Bay State Medical Center.

Pat Leuchtman is now recuperating at home following successful surgery at Bay State.

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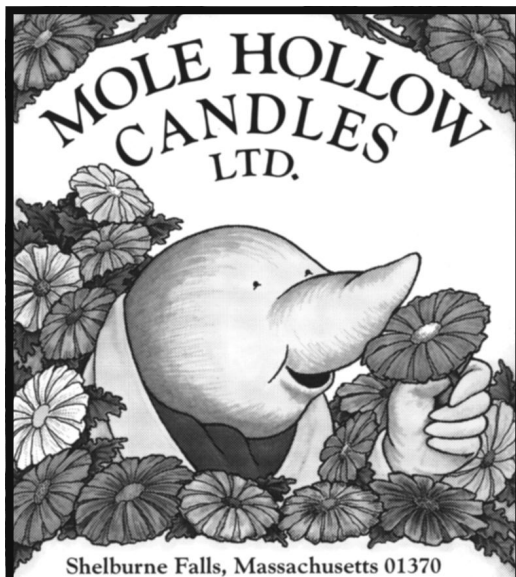
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New Neighbors



Jodi with her dog Cody

Allow me to introduce myself. I am two years new to Heath and live in the house that was once owned by Harry Terrill. Most of you may have seen me walking my dog, Cody, along Branch Hill Road and through the center of town. Which, by the way, is how I have come to be known as “the girl that walks her dog.”

I moved into my house on Branch Hill Road in July of 2000 and about a month later, my landlord, Carl Chimi, put the house up for sale,

and I saw no other alternative than to buy it from him. This was a big step on my part since not only did the house need work, but so did the landscaping! Amazingly enough, I was able to see the house through the weeds and overgrown bushes and realize that it had some potential. And besides, it was just so cute, how could I resist? What better opportunity for a full-time college student working two part-time jobs! I really needed something else to do! But, hey, I have always enjoyed a good challenge, and I was about to face the biggest one of my young adult life. I soon realized that the house wasn't as cute as I thought.

My first winter in Heath was one that I will never forget. It didn't take long to figure out that there wasn't a stitch of insulation in my little palace and my doors and windows were about as airtight as a paper bag. There's nothing cozier at night than lying in your bed watching the curtains blow in the breeze and getting windburn on the tip of your nose. But that didn't stop me. Down to Avery's I went and bought myself a plastic window insulation kit. Never underestimate the power of a woman and her hair dryer. The insurance company soon informed me that if by springtime, I didn't put on a new roof and build a new chimney I'd be looking for someone else to carry my policy. So, off went the wood stove and I just prayed that the roof would last through the winter. Somehow, it did.

I survived my first winter in Heath. The rest was just downhill from there, right? Wrong. In order for the snow to disappear, it has to melt. And when it melts, where does it go? Inside my house, that's where. I came home from a weekend up north for Easter only to find the Deerfield River running through my backyard pooling up against my foundation and washing down my driveway and into my garage. At the rate the water was flowing, I was surprised my house didn't end up across the street in the Cote's pasture. My first reaction was to cry. So, I did. Then I got out my trusty shop vac and sump pump and proceeded to get rid of the ankle-deep water in my bedroom. I only had to sleep in the living room for

about two weeks before my room dried up. No big deal. There are worse things that could happen.

Summertime wasn't so bad. I had never had the pleasure of experiencing a spring fed well. It seemed that every time I needed some water, I didn't have any. Just as I think I've got the hang of it, it throws me for another loop, but thanks to my wonderful neighbor, Dave Cote, it's usually up and running in no time. Only in Heath do you run out of water in the middle of a shower because a bull stepped on your pipe and pulled it out of the main water-line!

I think it's safe to say that I have officially been initiated into Heath. I'm sure there will be many more fun-filled seasons ahead to conquer and that's okay because despite my many mishaps, I still love it here. I have since graduated from college with my Bachelors in Computer Science and I'm a few steps closer to turning my cottage into a castle. I love Heath, I love my neighbors and, yes, I love those bulls! Oh, I almost forgot....my name is Jodi Walsh. Nice to meet you.

~ Jodi Walsh

(Editors' Note: Jodi has joined the Heath Herald staff as Assistant to Eileen. We are overjoyed to have her computer expertise and her writing ability. We look forward to future articles.)

Origin of “Dozen”

Have you ever wondered why, in the base 10 world that we live in, we use the number 12 to buy eggs? I have often wondered where and when we started using 12 as a base for everyday use. I have searched the Internet, encyclopedias, and other sources, but am still not clear as to its origin. I guess I am asking for input from anyone who has a good explanation. If you have one, please drop a line to the editors of the *Heath Herald*. I would like that.

Some say, because there were twelve Apostles, others point to the twelve signs of the Zodiac, still others believe it was because of the twelve hours of day and of night. Still other historians consider it was derived from the twelve tribes of Israel.

The next time you buy a “dozen” eggs think about it. Remember that a “dozen” of eggs really is sold by the pound. Small eggs weigh 18-21 ounces, medium eggs weigh 21-24 ounces, large eggs 24-27 ounces, extra-large eggs, 27-30 ounces. You figure it out.

This line of thought is brought on by spending too much time “enjoying” this old-fashioned winter. The Halloween snow that is at the bottom of it all is going to be the last to melt before we can get back to the annual ritual of digging in the dirt and answering our primeval urge to nurture this good old earth that means so much to us “primitive” Heathans.

Regardless—The next time you buy a dozen, be they 21-24, or 27 ounces by weight, remember that a “dozen” of eggs is still a good nutritious food, and # for # you can't beat them without a dish to put them in.

~ Doug Stetson

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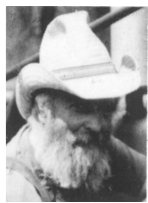
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The Way It Is In The Country

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

The Passing of Old Iron

By Carroll Stowe

Here in Heath just off of Route 8A to the south is an address of 10 Magee Hill. In a close area of field stand two old F12 Farmall tractors. One has steel wheels with a single flat steel front wheel. This unit was the first Farmall to come to Heath. Also it was the first tractor sold by the late Doc Streeter. This old iron served the Burrington family well and faithfully for a lot of years. It mowed hay, plowed, sawed wood, and powered an ensilage cutter to fill lots of silos, and did the many other tasks on a working Heath family farm.

The other tractor was owned by three Heath people, the Ralph Sessions family, John Churchill, and Leonard Brown before Paul Burrington bought it for parts. Every item anyone ever bought of this type of merchandise should always serve as well for the dollar.

Truly these old pieces of iron are not as handy as the newer equipment, but if all the good times at the dinner tables at noon on the days of silo fillings could have been transcribed, the entertainment value would be precious!

Recently in a publication that I subscribe to that deals with the salvation of old Farmall tractors and related equipment, there's a very good description of a fellow's innovation to allow this vintage iron to be most useful again. He uses these old F12 Farmalls to create easily-operated lawn mowing units at much less cost than a modern lawn tractor. This reclamation process uses standard over-the-counter parts and all manner of easily available fixtures. This innovative idea has made this model Farmall a very sought after item.

I never used one of these units of Farmalls but they've paid their dues many times over, and it would do my heart good to see both of the tractors at 10 Magee Hill get a new lease on life and be put back to work.

Perhaps by the time this is read in the *Herald* these tractors will have gone to a new home. Hopefully they will be able to be seen at an old iron show at some point. The Burrington tractor was given the loving name of "Stinky." All living in south Heath were aware of Stinky. If there is anyone reading this who could possibly know the whereabouts of the original owner's manual, it would be great if this rare family heirloom could be returned to the Burrington family. Let's all hope that Stinky and the parts tractor can be brought back to life. It will take some dedication but others worse off have survived.



Library Lines

Feeling the Effects



By Charlene Churchill

As many of our library patrons are aware, the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System (WMRLS) has suffered severely in the state budget cuts of the past two years. WMRLS had its budget cut 24% for Fiscal Year 2003. These cuts have made it necessary for the region to close on Fridays with no pay for employees, to close their Berkshire County office in Pittsfield, to not replace two key staff people who have left for other jobs, and to not purchase new materials for their collection for this year.

The region had decided it could no longer supply all of the needs of the public libraries in Western Massachusetts and is in the process of phasing out all of their adult nonfiction and adult general fiction collections. When the Bookmobile makes its next visit to our library there will be no adult nonfiction books on it. Those are the beautiful (and expensive) cookbooks, gardening books, craft books, and photography and travel books, to name just a few types of materials that will no longer be available from WMRLS.

I made two trips to Pittsfield when that office was closing and about four trips to Hatfield to "rescue" books to be added to our library's collection. These books would literally have been "dumped" if no library claimed them. Look for these "new" books over the next few months as they are catalogued. It is unfortunate that WMRLS had to take the step of eliminating parts of their collection. They will still be able to get materials through interlibrary loan from other libraries to fill our patrons' requests but it will be more difficult and definitely take more time than just reaching into their collection to fill requests.

The new adult fiction books include: *As Above, So Below* by Rudy Rucker, *Dangerous Behavior* by Walter Marks, *Feathered Serpent* by Colin Falconer, *Forever* by Pete Hamill, *Hotspur* by Rita Mae Brown, and *Prey* by Michael Crichton.

New adult nonfiction books are: *Herbs and Spices* by Jill Norman, *Plundering Paradise – The Hand of Man on the Galapagos Islands* by Michael D'Orso, and *Portrait of A Killer: Jack the Ripper - Case Closed* by Patricia Cornwell.

Selectboard's Report

The Selectboard meets every Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m. in Sawyer Hall.

Community Hall

The Town has received notification of the approval of its CDBG Grant application for the renovation work related to establishing a Senior Center in the Community Hall. A contract with the state for the grant will be signed in April. In the meantime work will begin on the process of selecting and hiring an architect for the design and construction documents for the project

Sawyer Hall

The design work is underway for the elevator project in Sawyer Hall. A building committee has been established to review the progress of the work of the architect. The construction documents are nearing completion and it is expected that the project will be put out for bids this month. Construction will start in the spring as soon as the weather permits.

Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting

A Public Hearing on the CDBG Grant was held recently at the Heath Elementary School. Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Amy Shapiro of the Franklin County Community Development Corporation, and Don Hafner of Architects Inc. reviewed the status and details of the CDBG grant program which includes the elevator project for Sawyer Hall and a program for assistance to small businesses. The Public Hearing was followed by a Special Town Meeting. The warrant consisted of eight articles, six of which were concerned with transfers to overdrawn accounts, one to increasing the Town Coordinator's position and one to correct a typo in the dog bylaw. All articles passed unanimously.

Highway Department

The condition of the town roads has been excellent despite the relatively harsh winter we have been experiencing. We are indebted to the highway crew for their dedication and vigilance in keeping the roads clear and sanded during the long stormy nights.

Employee Reviews and Budget Hearings

The Board is about to begin employee performance reviews and conduct budget hearings with town boards and departments to develop the FY04 budget in anticipation of the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Heath On-line

Take some time to visit the town's home page www.townofheath.org. You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, school information, and much more. The home page is a work in progress. Thanks to the computer committee for getting this project up and running. Contact the Board at BOS@townofheath.org. Send messages to any board or individual via the E-mail address, or visit the Heath home page.

~ Heath Selectboard
Thomas Lively-Chair
Brian De Vriese
Hilma Sumner



From the Desk of the Town Coordinator

By Rebecca Jurek

Great things still continue to happen in this tiny town. As efforts continue from all town staff, here are just some of the highlights since the last issue of the *Herald*.

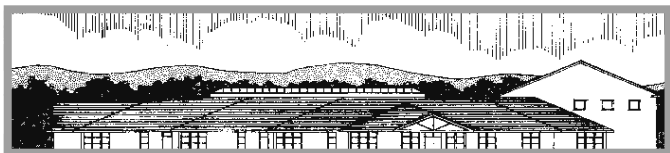
Our most recent Community Development Block Grant through the Department of Housing and Community Development for upgrades to the Community Hall Senior Center totaling \$236,486 was very welcome. As part of the grant application, we will also be in receipt of \$15,000 for micro-enterprise funds for small businesses, as well as \$125,000 (five projects at \$25,000 each) for housing rehabilitation projects. This block grant award will be not be kicking off until late spring, but small business people please contact me if you wish to be considered. For those who may have housing rehabilitation projects, let me know me so you that you can be included as well for these secured funds.

In other departments, the Executive Office of Public Safety has made two awards to the town of Heath. A total of \$15,400 has been obtained through the Police Department for the purchase of four generators and transfer switches for same. The Fire Department has also submitted and received \$15,000 for the purchase of voice amplifiers, personal alert safety systems (PASS devices), and turnout gear. Many thanks to Police Chief Lorin Gowdy and Fire Chief Mike Smith for their efforts to obtain these funds. As a result of securing these grants, these items will not need to be built into the FY04 budget, and it also allows for the generators to be deleted from our Capital Planning Needs list as submitted with our FY03 block grant application.

This time of year also means gearing up for the next fiscal year. All town officials will be busy in the coming months in putting together a fiscally sound budget for the residents. With the tax rate having been reduced tremendously with the FY03 budget, please know every effort will be made again to provide a lower rate. Knowing that all towns across the Commonwealth will be faced with anticipated cutbacks from the State, FY04 will be a difficult year. Rest assured, with the staff in place in Heath, tax dollars will be carefully scrutinized. Keeping these factors in mind, however, I stand behind the fact that the 'status quo' isn't always the best way to maintain a business. Change can be for the better - so long as the intentions are solid and get to the heart of the matter(s). Making informed decisions, and allowing for compromise, all aid in the building of financially responsible budgets. Heath is very fortunate to have so many extremely dedicated employees and residents who are the foundation of this vibrant community. Being a part of all that is offered for services is something to be very proud of.

(*"From the Desk of the Town Coordinator"* continued on page 11)

Heath Elementary School News



By Susan Todd

What is the Mission of the Heath School?

The Heath School has set in motion the fascinating process of revisiting its founding mission statement. Short of being a fly on the window, it is difficult to know exactly how the words evolved as community members and staff came together to articulate their hopes and dreams for this new school. What is clear is that it is a remarkable statement, one that lives in the school as it exists today. As much change has occurred at the Heath School in the seven years since it first opened its doors, it is important to review how the school has evolved and to revisit the founding statement. We want to reflect on the words of the original mission to see if it still articulates all the beliefs that this community still holds in its cherished school. We also need to examine if we, in the present, would like to contribute any new language. We know you all will read and remember the founding statement, which follows:

The Heath Elementary School community is committed to providing a well-balanced education for children in an environment, which supports their development into confident, resourceful, and joyful learners. We will challenge each other to think critically and creatively; motivate each other to strive for personal best, and celebrate each other's abilities and contributions while nurturing responsibility, confidence, and respect.

- *Responsibility as caretakers of ourselves, each other, and the environment*
- *Confidence in the willingness to pursue, embrace, and express one's beliefs*
- *Respect for ourselves and others*

These values, integrated into the daily life of our school, empower children to effectively and compassionately interact with local, national, and global communities. By demonstrating a commitment to these values as a community of learners, we recognize and honor our connection to those who have come before and our responsibility to those who will follow.

A Philosophy Forum was held on January 9, to begin the formal discussion. I offered a reflection at that time on where I saw the school at the moment.

I also suggested we express our collective view of intellectual quality as a possible addition to the statement. To provide further clarification, I proposed adding a separate section that would provide some practical ways to implement the ideals present in our mission. In other words, the mission would stand alone, with a set

of shared beliefs or a vision to guide us day-to-day in realizing our founding philosophy. Then the parents, community members, and staff eloquently shared their thoughts and responses.

At our LEC meeting on January 16 we clarified the process for engaging as many people as possible as we move along in our dialogue. We agreed on the following next steps with a tentative timeline:

- Staff discussion to see if there were any modifications in the original statement with additional clarifying shared beliefs (January to March)
- Outreach to the community to receive their ideas and suggestions for improvement (January to March)
- Coming together of staff, parents, and community members in the spring to share ideas and suggestions (March - April)
- Spring meeting of the LEC to finalize any revisions or additions that have evolved from this process (April - May)

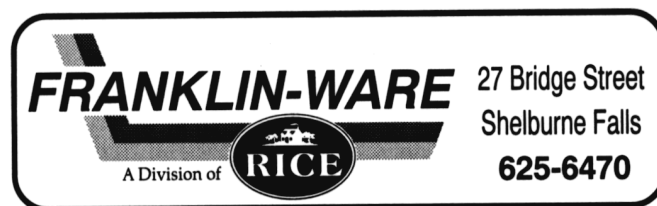
I would like to ask any of you who worked on the original statement to consider, as the person you are today in the world we now inhabit, if these words still represent your beliefs. We will have forms available throughout town on which you may respond. And for all community members, we welcome your thoughts as well. The fact that so many people in such a small town have contributed to this school and care about the words and values that guide it is a wonderful thing.

Wherever this process ultimately leads, I hope, above all, that the grown-ups that these children become lead good lives. I hope also that the values they absorb within this learning community encourage the wise use of their knowledge in this world and they will want to send their own children to a school that looks a lot like the one in which they grew up.

("From the Desk of the Town Coordinator" continued from page 10)

Having the Community Hall Senior Center up and running again with monthly meals has been truly wonderful. While surrounded by a good old-fashioned New England winter landscape, our Highway Superintendent Mike Smith and staff, Dohn Sherman, Dave Clark, and Jason Lively, have made it easy to deal with. Roads have been maintained at a level they should all be proud of. With the most recent large storm, a thank-you to Bud Kaempfer for being able to keep the Transfer Station open - unlike surrounding towns which closed for the day. Same goes for the Post Office - thank you, Margo. It's efforts such as these that make you fully aware of the type of quality service that the citizens of Heath receive on a daily basis.

It is a pleasure to coordinate efforts on behalf of the town. Thank you to all staff, committee members, and volunteers alike for all that you do all year long. Looking forward to another prosperous year.



Heath Police Department News

Secretary of Public Safety James Jajuga has notified the town that the police department will again receive \$10,000 to continue our Community Policing program. Approximately \$3,300 will be used to help pay for Police and the Parent Teacher Partnership (PTP) sponsored educational, cultural, and athletic activities at the Heath Elementary School. The remainder of the funds will be used to help augment the 2003 police budget.

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE.) funds were eliminated this year from the Commonwealth's budget, therefore, there will be no formalized DARE program for our children at the Heath Elementary School this year. DARE funding had provided our fifth grade children with a structured course on drug resistance and had also helped reduce the cost of the Winter Enrichment and the After School Program.

Parents and relatives of children attending the Heath Elementary School already know that our children have the opportunity to receive an outstanding academic education. The PTP/Police sponsored activities help provide for that "little" extra that has been proven to be effective in preventing delinquent behavior. Due to budget cuts, some of these programs have been reduced or eliminated. If you have time or money to give to help keep these programs alive, I urge to contact our Principal Susan Todd or plan to attend a PTP meeting.

Everyone is aware of recent terrorist activities both in the United States and abroad. Not everyone is aware that the Town of Heath is involved with State and Federal planning to prevent, prepare for, and properly respond to acts of terrorism. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety has formed the Statewide Anti-Terrorism Unified Response Network (SATURN). The Selectboard, Fire Chief, Emergency Management Director, and the Police Chief have been working and training with SATURN for over a year and remain committed to help provide for the safety of the community in the event of any emergency. It is slow going, but work continues on the Local Emergency Plan and a regional/statewide emergency plan. When completed, these plans should provide for the coordinated sharing of resources allowing us to know what help is available to us and what others can expect from us.

SATURN and the State Executive Office of Public Safety recently made some money available to help purchase equipment. The Town of Heath was given \$15,500 and has contracted with the State to purchase four emergency generators. These generators will be installed at the Town Garage/Fire Operations Facility, the Community Hall, the Heath Union Church, and the Community Chapel.

Everyone has a resource they can share. Some reading this will want to become more involved in emergency planning and response to emergencies. Step forward, no experience necessary. For more information on SATURN and emergency planning, visit www.Mass.gov/SATURN.

In parting, I wish everyone an enjoyable and safe 2003.

~ Chief Lorin Gowdy

Council on Aging Report

Our Council On Aging is alive and as busy and active as you seniors would like it to be.

Our Senior Luncheons are held the first Thursday of every month and the "Brown Bag" program distribution is the third Wednesday monthly. Call Dorothy Sessions at 337-4896 for reservations or information about these.

Ray Pettengill has donated and installed two computers in the Community Hall, has paid for one year of Internet service, and is willing and available to instruct seniors interested in becoming computer literate. Call him at 337-4804 to become as smart as your grandchildren.

Joanne Fortune will arrange a bus to come to Heath on two Fridays a month to take seniors to Shelburne Falls and Greenfield. Call her at 337-5716. We need at least four people to get this going. She is also working on having a podiatrist come to our Senior Center to trim nails. Let her know if you are interested in this kind of a clinic.

Theresa Peters is looking into senior bus trips for the spring season. Give her suggestions at 339-5354.

Charlene Churchill will be glad to supply us with books, large-print books, audiobooks, etc. and bring them to the senior luncheon for anyone to borrow. Let her know what you would like.

Join us, especially for our luncheons. Our able food servers are Val Kaempfer and Eileen Tougas. We really have a good time. If you have any ideas for entertainment at these times or would like to perform yourself, let me know at 337-4852.

See you at the Community Hall!

~ Alli Thane-Stetson



Heath Dog Officer

Greetings from the Heath dog officer. Just a reminder - if you haven't already done so, please get your dogs licensed. With the new Heath dog bylaws now in effect, the fine structure is such that that it can be costly to you if your dog is picked up. Also, with this recent cold weather, please be sure that your dog has proper shelter. Any questions or complaints can be directed to me at 337-4705.

~ Dave Cote
Heath Dog Officer



Green Thoughts

by
ELSA BAKALAR

You may be made of sterner stuff than this gardener. I hope so! Holed up in snow turning to ice in layers, I cannot bring myself to order the quantity of seeds I usually send for with so much enthusiasm at this time of year.

Well, I have a few suggestions for some surefire colorful beauties for the dog days of summer, most likely August-September in these parts.

I grew up thinking that summer meant dahlias and "glads," because that's what grew in my grandfather's vegetable garden - in rows, of course. Even then, I didn't like them very much. Size appeared to be the criterion, towering height for gladiolus, and huge top-heavy blooms for dahlias, necessitating stout wooden stakes for support and leaving the poor things "lashed to the mast" as it were. Forget color; my Grandpa Ted went for two colors, red and yellow, bold and brassy.

One of the great things about these valuable August-September flowers is that they grow from bulbs (some are tubers, and some corms.) They don't have to be sown, grown, and cosseted in the house for weeks, as so many seeds do. The other thing in their favor is that nowadays so many of them are already in display racks locally, each with an accurate color photograph and information as to expected size. They don't go into the ground until frost is gone (and who knows when that might be.)

There will still be dahlias and "glads" in my garden, not in rows but playing their part in the perennial beds and borders. Backing them up will be a number of summer-blooming bulbs. Each year there are more offerings under this heading. Herewith a few I have grown and enjoyed.

If you're aiming for ribbons at the Fair, you'll probably opt for the giants, but I have a fondness for the smaller types, that combine well with perennials.

Gladiolus, small size, often listed as dwarf (12-24 inches), but not full-size flowers on small low foliage, which can be extremely ugly.

Especially lovely (and useful) in my garden are the following:

"Atom" scarlet with silver edging

"Joy" sunny yellow with green eye

"Candy" peach/burgundy

Among the dahlias:

"Park Princess" (cactus type) a clear pink prolific bloomer

"Arabian Nights" darkest wine red

"Bishop of Llandaff" nearly black flowers and mahogany foliage

So much for the two standbys.

Some of the following may be new to you, but I know once they have bloomed in your garden you will never want to be without them:

.....Acidanthera (the name under which it is most often found, but really Gladiolus callianthus murielae) fragrant pure white flowers with burgundy throats (walk round your garden at dusk or later -the perfume calls out to you.)

.....Tigridia (Mexican Shellflower, Tiger Flower) 12"-18" leaves, brilliant color flowers. Note: this makes a great container plant, as well as for front of border.

All these, and more, are available locally, or you may write for their "Summer-flowering Bulbs Catalogue" to: Brent and Becky's Bulbs, 7463 Heath Trail, Gloucester, VA. 23061 and enjoy the color photographs, as I have done for years.

ALL TOGETHER---SPRING WILL COME!

Community Hall

After eighteen months, we were able again to have our Senior Luncheon in the Community Hall. Over thirty people attended. It was great starting up again!

The town was awarded the grant for the Community Hall this last round. Nothing will be started until the spring of 2004. We hope to have the downstairs (kitchen and dining hall) completely renovated. Then that part of the hall will be designated as a senior center for a period of five years. Other renovations will include a new roof, septic system (if needed), and drainage work.

After completion of the renovations, the Committee would like a fund set up for repairing and replacing the cupola. This would come from private donations so as not to burden the town. More on this issue down the road.

~ Val Kaempfer

Heath Emergency Services News

The following calls were answered since the last issue of the *Herald*:

11/22/02 - Rt. 8A North - Motor Vehicle Accident

11/29/02 - Avery Brook Rd. - Medical

12/08/02 - Brunelle Rd.- Medical

12/22/02 - Rt. 8 A North - Medical

12/26/02 - Bray Rd.- Medical

The Department would like to thank Charlemont Emergency Services, Shelburne Falls Ambulance, and BHS Ambulance Service for all their help in the past year.

We ended the year with 47 EMT calls; the breakdown is as follows:

Medicals - 35

Accidents - 10

Assisting - 2

~ Timothy Lively - EMT



Town Nurse Notes



When the Lights Go Out

By Joanne Fortune, RN

If the power goes out for a short bit, we can get along. However, if it goes out for more than a day, there are safety issues to be considered.

Do you have heating arrangements that don't rely on electricity? Gas ovens were not designed to be used as heaters. Please don't use open flames or charcoal grills indoors. Camp stoves and heaters not approved for indoor use should be avoided because of possible carbon monoxide poisoning. The symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, headache, dizziness, mental confusion, faintness. If you feel any of these symptoms while running a generator or heater, call 911 and leave the house.

If you don't have heating arrangements, you will need to have a backup plan such as going to a neighbor's house or community shelter. Will you need transportation? Do your neighbors know whether or not you have wood heat? Do you have a neighbor or relative who can check in on you should the power go out for more than a few hours?

Would you be able to get drinking water should the power go out? You probably will need a minimum of one gallon per person per day. Please be sure your containers are clean and have not been used for any other purpose. You can use dishwater and sponge bath water to flush the toilet.

To keep your food cold or frozen, remember not to open your fridge or freezer any more than you absolutely have to. If it's 40 degrees or below, food can be put outside instead of returned to the refrigerator. Thick blankets can be thrown over the freezer to keep all those blueberries frozen and separated.

Please keep flashlights and spare batteries in one place so you know where they are when it's dark. Have a radio with good batteries handy.

Generators are for **outside** use only. They should not be put in a basement or garage, even if the door is open. My in-laws lost a barn to fire from using a generator. A generator shouldn't be connected into your home's electrical system except through an approved transfer switch. If it isn't connected correctly it will energize utility lines hurting utility workers and, when the power comes back on, your generator will be reduced to scrap.

There is a home emergency checklist kept on file with the Heath Civil Defense. If you would like a copy, please call me at 337-5716. I am at the Community Hall on Tuesdays from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. I also see people in their homes. If you or anyone you know would like a visit, don't hesitate to call, Please be careful on the ice!

Annual Town Election 2003

As the days get longer it is time to begin planning for the Annual Town Election. **May 9** seems a long way off but there are important deadlines that need to be met long before election day arrives. **Wednesday, March 19, is the last day to obtain nomination papers.** They may be picked up anytime before that either at the town office or by contacting me at home. The completed papers, with at least twenty-five signatures of registered voters, must be returned by **Friday, March 21.**

The following is a list of the offices that will be on the ballot, the length of term, and the individual whose term is expiring.

Selectman	3 yrs	Hilma Sumner
Assessor	3 yrs	Donald Dekker
Town Clerk	3 yrs	Hilma Sumner
Finance Committee	3 yrs each	David Cote
		Budge Litchfield
		Edwin Wolf
Library Trustee	3 yrs	Deborah Porter
School Committee	3 yrs	Robert Gruen
Planning Board	5 yrs	Deborah Phillips
Dog Officer	1 yr	David Cote
Constable	1 yr each	Charles Kaempfer
		Robert Tanner

~ Hilma Sumner

Milestones

Born November 29, 2002, a daughter, **Amaris Isabel**, to Victoria Anderson and Benjamin Lentz of Greenfield; granddaughter of Mary and Robert Anderson of Bonita Springs, FL, Patty Lentz of Heath, and Steve Lentz of Berkley, MI; great-granddaughter of Eunice Lentz of Willoughby, OH, and Kenneth Lentz of Cleveland, OH.



Heath Deed Transfers

Glenn J. Boyd and Mary Boyd, to Mary Boyd, Colrain Road. No consideration.

Judyth Crystal of Glastonbury, CT, to Thomas J. and Kathryn E. Balistreri of Worcester, 2 Judd Road. \$59,000.

Wayne J. DeAngelo of North Bergen, NJ, to Dennis Kratt of Conway, 21 Jacksonville Stage Road. \$70,000.

Paul and Joan Fournier, to Frank L. Barker and Caleb J. and Seth T. Snow, 59 Waterfall Drive. \$97,500.

William H. and Jean M. Gran, to Peter A. Charow and Lorraine E. Berger, 118 Royer Road. \$587,500.

John C. and Angela K. Graves, to Angela K. Graves, Colrain Brook and Taylor Brook Roads. \$1.

Angela K. Graves to Stanley P. and Mary Ann Waluk, Colrain Brook and Taylor Brook Roads. \$128,750.

Robert T. and Arlene G. Markert, to Robert T. Markert, 136 Hosmer Road. No consideration.

Regina M., Raymond J., George H. and Patricia A. Martin and Francis J. and Mary Y. Amellin, to Debora N. Cavalier and Dennis J. Hanken, 11 Shawnee Dr. \$12,000.

Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc., to Kenneth M. and Lorraine G. Bishop of Suffield, CT, Mohawk Estates, Lot 10. \$4,000.

Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc., to Phillip and Patricia Reed of Hinsdale, NH, Mohawk Estates, Lot 35. \$1,000.

Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc., to John Stewart, Vic Stewart, and Robert Guillemette of Chicopee, Mohawk Estates, Lot 24. \$1,000.

John Monks Jr. to John J. Doherty Jr., 14 Mohawk Beach Drive. \$47,000.

Kevin and Karen Mozalak of Readsboro, VT, to David Kwochka of Conway, 4 Vincent Road. \$52,000.

Mark L. Patenaude and Victoria S. Griswold, to Scott B. Olmstead, 295 Number Nine Road. \$110,000.

Peck Realty LLP, Stuart F. Young Jr. and John I. Simpson Jr., partners, to Peter E. Schriber, 3 Flagg Hill Road. \$175,000.

Peter P. and Donna M. Pierzchala to Richard A. Brown Jr., Mohawk Estates Lot 4. \$5,000.

Normand A. and C. Ann Terault, to Jeffrey A. and Jeanna M. Simmons of Westford, 2 Navaho Lane. \$145,000.

Joyce Welch of Chicopee, to Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc., Mohawk Estates, Lot 19. \$1.

Raymond E. Williamson of New Canaan, CT, Robert W. Williamson of Stamford, CT, and Roger C. Williamson of Sandy Hood, CT, to Raymond E. Williamson Jr., Robert W. Williamson, and Roger C. Williamson, all of Connecticut, 124 Long Hill Road. No consideration.

~ Compiled by Pegge Howland

The *Herald* encourages all Heath writers and those who have never thought they could but have been itching to give it a try to submit their creative efforts on any subject of their choosing.

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these three;
and the

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