



HEATH HERALD

Heath's First Newspaper

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February/March 2005

A Valentine to a Special Lady, Gail Hall, "Artiste de la Cuisine,"

who, in her role as Cafeteria Manager at the Heath Elementary School, gives to our children the gift of food with love throughout the school year.

A person who sees herself as blessed with both loving parents and her own family,

Gail loves her job and gives her all to make sure in the interest of their good health and well being the children of the Heath School eat nutritious breakfasts and lunches.

Everything served, with a few exceptions, is homemade including bread that she makes three or four times a week and the very popular pizza. The menu includes plentiful amounts of fresh vegetables, salads, and fruit. Gail explains, in trying to introduce other foods to the kids, she experiments. She tries a recipe three times and if it then doesn't appeal, she discards it, but most often, by the third try, the kids are enjoying it. She reports that one of her challenges was to move from all-iceberg salads to ones with other greens such as arugula, fresh spinach, and field greens, and raw vegetables. She went about this by lessening day-by-day the amount of iceberg and slowly increasing the amounts of the other greens and including broccoli and cauliflower, as well. The result: "The kids love the salads."

Gail's mother and father owned the Sweetheart Restaurant until after Gail was married. She began her career in food service by helping out her parents from age ten on, graduating from dishwashing to waitressing when she was old enough, and continued it in her choice of college, Endicott College in Beverly, where she majored in food management.

When her kids were small, she took the job as cafeteria manager at the Rowe School so she could be home after school and during vacations with them, expecting later to move into a full-time job. But she so loved her work that she stayed at the Rowe School for 22 years and has been at the Heath School for nine. Her children are now both in their 30s; Steven, who lives nearby, is a paramedic, and Shelley is a mortgage originator, and there is a granddaughter.

Gail sees all of her life as surrounded by love. When this reporter mentioned how lucky the kids were to have home-cooked meals every school day, she repeated how much she loves her job, the kids, and the staff members and how lucky she is.

She is a key member of the school staff. An example of her involvement in school activities was the recent "Cookie Election." Fourth and Fifth grade teacher Kare Marshall, in order to teach her class about elections, came up with the idea of holding an election for the school's favorite cookie. The three candidates were peanut butter, whole-wheat sugar, and oatmeal raisin. (Chocolate chip was not included as it would have been a hands-down winner). After a campaign that included posters, TV appearances, and loudspeaker pitches, the kids voted peanut butter the winner. On Inauguration Day, Gail made peanut butter cookies for the whole school, and the class members presented her with flowers, one by one, making a gorgeous bouquet to express their thanks.

To which we add, on behalf of the community, our gratitude and appreciation for her ongoing devotion to our children's well-being.

~ Jane de Leeuw

A reminder - Any member of the community can lunch at the school. Best to call ahead to let her know.



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Church News

Easter Celebration

By Hilma Sumner, Minister

Before the next issue of the *Herald* comes out the Lenten season will have come and gone. Everyone is welcome to join in the special services that will be held. On March 24, the Lord's Supper will be remembered at the Maundy Thursday service. On March 27, there will be two Easter services to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection. First there will be a Sunrise service at 6:00 a.m.. followed by a continental breakfast. Then at our regular hour, 10:00 a.m., we will have a service filled with music and special presentations.

The next men's breakfast will be held at 8:00 a.m., February 12, at the church. All men in the community are welcome to attend. Please call Richard Sumner at 337-4845 to reserve a seat.

The youth group meets each Sunday afternoon from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the church basement for a study, games, and refreshments. In February there will be a sledding party. For more information, contact the youth leader, Tracey Brooks, at 337-4008.



Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

	<u>Rain</u>	<u>Snow</u>
December '04	4	11
January '05 (up to the 10 th)	3/4	9 1/2

In this Reporting Period:

The most snow was on January 6 = 5 inches
 The highest temperature was on December 30 = 56 degrees
 The coldest temperature was on December 20 = -4 degrees
 In general, (except for a few days around or below zero) this has been a mild spell. Any snow that we had was melted by Christmas Day.

The first part of January also has been on the mild side.

(Editors note: Thanks to Heath School Staff and Students who have undertaken to keep track of our weather.)

From your Traveling Correspondent: It's Hard to Impress a Heathan

My work takes me to many places around the country, so here are dispatches from our nation's capital and from Aspen, Colorado.

In Washington, D.C., earlier this week, the city was all in a flurry, getting ready for the inauguration, which will be over and done by the time you read this. On my morning walk, I watched guys erect bleachers along streets where the presidential parade would pass. The seats looked like choice viewing spots, but cold. I wondered whom the folks would be to get these places (sure hope they think to bring cushions to keep their bottoms warm). Politicians and their families? Business people who gave large campaign contributions? Probably lots of drug companies, health insurance reps, and investment firms that stand to make millions from Medicare and Social Security "reforms." Off to the side, bunches of homeless men were keeping themselves warm over the heating grates of our federal buildings.

The big news in today's paper was that President Bush is going to stick the city with a \$40 million bill for the inauguration, the first time in our history that an incoming administration has not paid for the celebration - and this one by far the most lavish. I do think the short swearing in part is the true part, belonging to each of us as we bestow a leader with our power, that we share, for a term. The other parts - balls, parades, gowns, slick guests, all the rest - seem more like the Academy Awards than a state function. But then many of our public events seem ever more like something on TV - fitting punishment, I guess, for a nation addicted to the tube.

As you might expect from that snipe about TV, I'm out of it when it comes to celebrities and popular culture, so I didn't have a clue that Aspen is the *de facto* capital of the rich and famous (silly us, we thought it was Los Angeles!). I was just relieved to get away from dreary wintry D.C., looking forward to being in the high west of our gorgeous land. My plane flew over the eastern flank of the Rockies and into Aspen at night, so I was quite astonished to awake in a high valley bowl surrounded by stunning, really huge, craggy mountains. The sun rose in a delicious pink glow - alpenglow they tell me - and when the rays breeched the eastern ring of mountains, the tops of their western brothers shone gold.

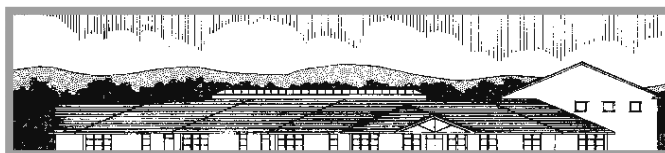
The rich celebrity part snuck up on me. On the way to a dinner, I noticed a shop window all lit up and featuring fur jackets that were more like exquisite pastries in a fancy bakery than something to keep you warm. The menu was astonishingly diverse for what I thought was the middle of nowhere (this is Little Nell talking), but the prices seemed New York-ish. Then the babes came into the room and Little Nell wised up. One mother with her family was jazzed up in enough jewelry to pay all Heath's expenses for a year, complete with rhinestoned jeans and sexy cutouts, a pink fur cowboy hat, and matching froufrou jacket. To my eyes, she looked more like a hooker than somebody's mother. Her husband had a manicure I noticed, his nails polished shiny. This is the honest truth - could I make this up?? There were many more like that pair, and the local

magazine featured movie stars and millionaires on their "who's up to what" page. The least expensive house is a couple million. Teachers, cops, and firemen can't afford to live in town.

These thoughts stick with me from my travels: My country makes me both sad and angry lately. I'd be ashamed to have that glittery woman for my mother. What's Aspen's mud season like, compared to here? Our eastern mountains are vastly older, more subtle, greatly worn down to nubs, but just as astoundingly beautiful. I'm not impressed with clan-serving, powerful people or the flashy rich

~ Kathy Stein

Heath Elementary School News



By Susan Todd

- **Winter Enrichment** - The whole school is very much looking forward to skating at the Cattle Barn at the Heath Fairgrounds. We are continually grateful to Bob DeLisle for envisioning and creating the skating rink.
- **PTP Activities** - Our PTP has been even more active this year, planning wonderful after school programs and holding very popular monthly movie nights or matinees. Thank you to Robin Booth and Trish Archambault.
- **Tutoring Help** - In a few weeks we will be implementing our MCAS tutoring program. If any community members would like to volunteer one hour a week in the afternoon to help, please call the school at 337-5307.
- **MCAS In-service** - At our January in-service Heath staff members worked in teams to present data on how our students have been performing on each of the spring of 2004 MCAS tests. They studied the item analyses and the individual test questions to give a profile of our students' strengths and weaknesses and to offer a plan for improvement.
- **AmeriCorps/SCA Members** - Our new AmeriCorps members began their internship in our school on Tuesday, January 4. Chelsey Miller and Mariel Traiman have many goals for their service in Heath, including the teaching of "environmental" music, the creation of a school songbook, tutoring students, and providing after school programs in astronomy and drama. They plan to offer a second Clark Johnson Memorial Astronomy Night in February.
- **WITS Program** - University of Massachusetts MFA student, Juliette Lee, is returning to Heath this term to work with individual classes on their writing skills.
- **EIC Study Group** - A group of Heath teachers is meeting this year to develop a template to help new staff prepare lessons that integrate the components of the EIC approach. Ted Watt of the Hitchcock Center and Kare Marshall will be facilitating this discussion.



Wild Ramblings

The Surprise

By Bill Lattrell

Stepping out of the backdoor, the very cold air caught Adam off guard. The cold wind stung his face as he hurried to put gloves on his hands. Adam did not like to wear hats, but on this day he had no choice. He pulled his wool stocking cap over his ears so that they would not get frost bit on this early January morning. Ten below with a twenty-mile an hour wind would be the primary obstacle of the day. His mother warned Adam about the weather, but he ignored her warnings and decided to proceed with this day's adventure despite the weather.

Adam planned on crossing the 40-acre hardwood forest to the north of the house and spending some time in the fields of a nearby farmer. He knew of one field of corn that still was not cut, and he hoped to spy on some wildlife as it entered and exited the field for the easily accessible food supply. After a morning of exploring he would visit his grandmother's house and share lunch with her. He had not told his grandmother of his plans, but she always seemed to know he was coming without him telling her. Just once he wished he could arrive unannounced and surprise her. She always told him that the Abenaki people knew of events before they happened because they listened to the voices inside their heads and let their dreams speak to them.

This winter had not brought much snow thus far, but it had been very cold. The few inches of snow that were on the ground were light and moving about with each gust of wind. As Adam entered the forest, the low angle of the sun was on his left-hand side. The wind was in his face and blowing his scent away from the direction of his travel. This would help his approach and aid him to be unnoticed by wildlife. The frozen leaves under the snow crunched loudly with each step. It occurred to Adam that walking on a field of potato chips would make less noise. He hoped the strong wind would cover the noise of his careful movements.

Adam moved from the shadow of one tree to another. When he paused he would stop only behind the cover of a large tree trunk. He knew that he could navigate the forest unnoticed if he stayed focused on his task.

As he came to the edge of the woods he stopped under the cover of a hemlock tree. The cornfield lay ahead some 300 yards. He would have to cross three open pastures, each separated by a stone wall, in order to reach his destination. He could accomplish these field crossings undetected by entering a frozen streambed and crawling along the bottom on his hands and knees. The high banks along the stream would conceal his entry as he moved from the east.

Adam slid down the bank of the stream and started crawling towards his destination. He found both coyote and fox tracks along the frozen streambed, evidence that they shared his strategy in approaching the cornfield. The cover of the high banks lessened the winds noticeably. Adam could hear the stream moving beneath the ice. He stayed near the edge being unsure how thick the ice was along the stream on this day.

The stream flowed right by the north end of the cornfield. Staying within the channel he might be able to observe deer and squirrels in pursuit of corn forage. He might also see predators such as coyote, fox, and fisher in pursuit of prey. Then again, he might see nothing at all. Adam had learned long ago that the reward was the adventure, and not necessarily in the sighting of wildlife.

Adam stationed himself towards the top of the bank near a deer run. The tracks were plentiful in this area along a nearby hedgerow near the cornfield. While waiting he couldn't help but notice the fluid motion of the corn blowing in the wind. Brown with age, the stout corn stalks all moved in one motion with each gust of wind.

His grandmother often spoke with reverence of the importance that corn played to the Abenaki people. In the early days, the Abenakis were an agrarian society that grew native corn as an important staple. The food was easily stored and utilized in the harsh New England winters. From corn they made flour and also stored the dried kernels and used them in broths and stews. So important was corn that they had legends as to its origin. Adam had heard the legend of the strange beginning of corn many times.

Long ago at the time of the first Abenaki people, there was a man who lived alone far away from all other people. This man did not know of fire so he had no way to cook. He lived on berries, roots, bark, and nuts. After many years of this existence, he realized he was very lonely and must find a companion.

Like all Abenaki people in search of important things, he went on a quest to find a companion. He did not eat for many days and waited for a dream to guide him. One day he had a vision. A beautiful woman with golden hair stood before him. She would not let him approach her. He sang and chanted to tell her of his loneliness. He did this for many weeks, and one day she finally replied, "Do exactly what I tell you and I will stay with you forever." He was most anxious to have her as a companion, and so he agreed to do exactly what she told him to do.

She told him to gather small wood tinder and make a small pile from it. Then she told him to get two dry sticks and remove the bark from them. She told him to rub the sticks together very quickly over the dry tinder. He did and a spark flew from the sticks and started the tinder on fire. The fire quickly spread and burned down a large section of the woods where the man lived. The man thought he had done something terrible.

(*"The Surprise"* continued on page 5)

(*"The Surprise"* continued from page 4)

The woman with the yellow hair then rolled through the burned area and proclaimed that wherever she rolled a plant that looked like grass would grow and that plants would grow yellow hair between the leaves from which would grow a hard cob.

And then the woman disappeared. The man was very disappointed. But soon the grass appeared and the yellow hair grew between the leaves, and the seed grew on the cob just as she had told him it would do. The seed could be eaten and some saved to replant for the next year.

And then the man realized that now he knew how to make fire and could use the fire to cook his food and stay warm in the cold, and that he had the yellow silk to remind him of the woman with golden hair. And that, in this way, she would be with him forever

After about an hour or so of waiting, Adam was too cold to stay still much longer. It would be another day when the adventure would be the reward. He thought of lunch and headed to his grandmother's house, about a half a mile to the east through the hardwood forest. Adam hoped that this would be the day that he could surprise her with a visit.

Although the brisk walk through the woods warmed his frozen feet, it increased his hunger. When he saw the smoke coming from his grandmother's chimney he broke into a dead run for her house. The run was fueled by hunger and anticipation.

Adam burst through the door. The warm house smelled of fresh-cooked food. His grandmother sat at the kitchen table smiling while she drank her tea. "Hello, Adam, I've been expecting you!" she said as she moved toward him to give him a hug. After that warm hug from his grandmother, Adam looked incredulously at the kitchen table. The table was set for two with a meal of freshly baked corn bread and a kettle of corn chowder.

We would like to do a series of Special Heath Haunts. Please let us know of your favorite and write about it or we will come and interview you.

Cranberry Bog

On the hill above my house in a small hollow in between another hill is a small bog. I call it the cranberry bog for on a floating mat of sphagnum moss, wild cranberries grow. Every October I go up to the bog wearing shorts and a tee shirt and, barefoot, wade out to the moss bed and pick the now red berries, enough berries for the holiday season. If the day is warm and the water not too cold, I pick a few more.

It seems to me that the cranberry sauce made from these berries has a better flavor than the supermarket ones. It is as if some of the pungent bog smell is in the berries – just enough to make their taste interesting.

Often I walk up to the bog at other times of the year. There is a trail up to it used by snowmobiles and skiers in the winter. I never see anyone else there, although I know my neighbors, the Armstrongs, sometime go there, and others know of the bog. Most of it is on the Brown's land. I have never received permission to pick the berries from them, but I feel sure that they would not mind if I did.

The whole area is interesting. On one side of the bog is a

beech forest, on another, one of hemlock, and on the remaining two is a mixed one of ash, pine, and maple. In spring many wildflowers grow there, trillium, violets, goldenseal, hobblebush, wild geranium, and, of course, hardtack which seems to grow further into the bog every year. There used to be many pink lady's slippers about, but mostly they have vanished. Have they vanished from acid rain, deer eating them, or not enough sunlight from the growing trees? I don't know. I miss seeing them.

Interesting plants grow on the moss bed itself. Sun dews grow on the edges in places. The sticky stuff on their leaves trap insects and the plants absorb them as the insects decay. Also cotton grass, which is mostly on the tundra up north, grows there. And, of course, the cranberry plants with their waxy green leaves and white blossoms.

Right there or nearby I have seen many animals. The usual deer and bear but also a moose. A few years ago, I often saw a fisher cat but not lately. Squirrels are all over as are chipmunks, skunk, and coyotes. Once in awhile something ventures out on the bog and goes through the moss bed down into the muck below. One can see the struggle to get out by the disruption in the moss bed. It takes a long time for the mosses and cranberries to grow back, but they do.

This small bog is a wonderful place to me that I have enjoyed and valued for many years. I hope it lasts many more years.

~ Don Dekker



One of Marvin "Butch" Taylor's Scotch Highlanders on Sumner Stetson Road.

Photo by: Grace Phillips

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Rewriting Camper/Trailers Bylaw

By request, the Planning Board has been working many months now on a bylaw rewrite regarding camper/trailers in town. We have been working very closely with the Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association, the Board of Health, the Assessors, the Building Inspector, the Town Counsel, and Selectboard. We've been conducting research and reviewing neighboring town bylaws, as well.

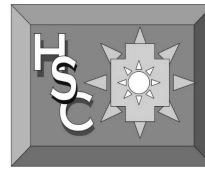
While many may think of this as a situation that concerns Mohawk Estates given the preponderance of camper/trailers in that area, it actually affects the entire town. The bylaws govern everyone in town regardless of which district you live in. The public hearing is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 7, at 6:30 p.m. at the Heath School to discuss the details and offer the public the opportunity to voice their opinions and suggestions. Some of the changes we are discussing include the following:

1. Camper/trailers must maintain mobility.
2. They must have valid registration plates.
3. An occupancy permit is required from the Board of Health.
4. They must meet appropriate setbacks as set forth in bylaw.
5. Property owners are allowed one camper/trailer stored or used on the land, but this will not be made retroactive to include existing camper/trailers. In the case of existing camper/trailers, only one can be replaced. The bylaw also allows for "visiting" camper/trailers for up to two weeks per calendar year.
6. In District A (most of Heath), temporary occupancy is limited to two weeks per calendar year; District B (Mohawk Estates) for no more than 30 consecutive days up to 150 days a year as long as water and disposal services are provided; and in District C (Town Center), camper/trailers are not allowed. (Note: the only change here from the current bylaw is the District A regulation.)
7. Emergency use in all districts is allowed for one year; longer with BOH approval.
8. Protective structures and decks are allowed with issuance of building permits.
9. Camper/trailers stored within protective structures must maintain immediate mobility.
10. Unregistered camper/trailers stored outside for more than two years will be considered abandoned and must be disposed of.
11. Commercial storage containers, on trailers or not, are not allowed in any district.
12. Violations are subject to non-criminal ticketing system.

While this is still an ongoing process, it is our objective to bring this to Annual Town Meeting in early May for a vote. It would be helpful to us to have your feedback or attendance at the hearing in order to write a bylaw that reflects the input of many. Being educated ahead of the town meeting will also help to move along the discussion and vote.

For more detailed information or if you wish to offer comments or suggestions, please call Deborah Phillips at 337-8513 or via e-mail at phillips@crocker.com. Positive feedback is equally welcome and encouraged.

~Deborah Phillips, Chair



Rules For The Heath Community Hall/Senior Center

GENERAL RULE FOR THE BUILDING

The building cannot be used for town government or committee use.

RULES FOR THE DOWNSTAIRS DINING HALL

The downstairs dining hall and kitchen is for Heath senior use only except for the bathrooms and elevator.

The non-seniors of Heath and the general public can be invited to the downstairs for senior-sponsored events approved by the town Selectboard. All money collected from such events is to be deposited in a fund for senior use only.

RULES FOR THE UPSTAIRS COMMUNITY HALL

The upstairs hall can be used by the seniors at any time for events just for the seniors or for senior-sponsored events open to the public that are approved by the Selectboard. All money collected from these events for the use of the hall must be put in a fund for senior use only. (The tables in the upstairs hall can be rented to others by the seniors. The collected rent money must be placed in a fund for senior use only but money collected from the use of the table may be kept by the renter.)

The non-seniors of Heath and the general public can use the upstairs hall and the downstairs bathrooms and the elevator for events approved by the Selectboard the same number of hours that the hall is used by the seniors. In order for the town to get the money for the grant to renovate the building the Selectboard had to agree to a use-ratio of 49% use by the seniors and 51% use by the public for the upstairs hall. This means that the public cannot use the upstairs unless the seniors have used it for enough hours to allow the public to hold the events they want. Money collected from these public events can be kept by the sponsors of that event.



**Labour to keep alive in your breast
that little spark of celestial fire, -
conscience.**

*~ Rule from the copybook of George Washington
when a schoolboy*

Selectboard's Report

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

Winter Meeting Schedule - The Board has resumed its customary meeting schedule of every Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in Sawyer Hall.

Community Hall - The Senior Center is up and running in the newly renovated Community Hall. Ray Pettengill continues as the Senior Center Coordinator. The twice-a-month Senior Luncheon program has resumed, and other program activities are being discussed.

Three-Town Landfill - The Selectboards of the towns of Heath, Charlemont, and Hawley have agreed to hire SEA Associates of Cambridge, MA, and Rocky Hill, CT, to provide engineering services for the design of the former Three-Town Landfill capping and closing operations. The cost of the engineering services is being paid for as a donation to the towns from Yankee Atomic.

New Town Accountant - Tracey Baronas has been hired as treasurer to replace Dale Kowacki who has announced his resignation. Dale will be taking a position with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) working with the county retirement program. We are grateful for the assistance that Dale has provided to the Town over the past few years in straightening out our finances and helping us adopt sound accounting practices. Tracey currently works as Town Accountant for Colrain and with a little help from Dale will make a seamless transition into the position here.

Other Appointments - Eileen Tougas has been appointed as assistant tax collector and Linda Marcotte as a temporary tax collector.

Job Classification - The Board is continuing the task of evaluating each job position in an attempt to classify the job based on responsibilities and required skill levels. The goal is to have equivalent positions compensated at similar levels based on a scale competitive with other area towns' compensation rates. We are indebted to David Howland for his help in developing the system for evaluating and classifying jobs. We hope to finish this project early this year.

Budget Hearings and Employee Reviews - All town departments or positions with budgets will be scheduled to present requests for the FY06 budget year. Town Coordinator Joy Fynmore will be contacting department heads to schedule a time slot to meet with the Board. The Board is also conducting annual employee reviews and is working on warrant articles for the next Annual Town Meeting, May 7, 2005.

Town Highways - The Board has reviewed a couple of resident concerns about the condition of the roads in town during the past storms. We reviewed the procedures and routes with the Highway Superintendent. The following are some of the points of discussion.

- The Town has *approximately* 50 miles of road, 25 miles of paved, and 25 miles of dirt. For plowing purposes this is 100 miles of plowing once around. During storms, the Highway Department begins work anywhere from 3:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. depending on conditions.

- The routes are set to accommodate the primary travel in and out of town and incorporate the school bus schedules.
- Each storm demands slightly different strategy in terms of sanding and plowing. Sometimes sanding takes place first, sometimes after the roads are plowed, and sometimes while plowing.
- Dirt roads provide additional challenges as they are colder and, especially during rainstorms, the sand is quickly covered over with another layer of ice
- It takes about six hours for each truck to complete its route.
- The Highway Department is not responsible for pulling cars out of banks or otherwise assisting when someone is stuck. There is a towing service in Charlemont for this purpose. Town trucks need to keep moving in order to cover the balance of the town's roads.
- The Town's Safety Policy restricts employees to a maximum of 16 hours of work in a 24-hour period.
- We have hired a substitute driver and have authorized the over-expenditure of the winter hire account. Even with these backups the roads may become impassable for a period of time during an intense storm.

Residents are asked to drive with caution and with consideration for changing road conditions in the winter and their fellow drivers.. The Board asks that all calls concerning road conditions be made to the Highway Department (337-4462), not to the home of the Highway Superintendent. Please feel free to contact the Selectboard with your concerns.

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.

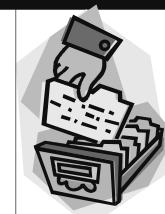
The Selectboard would like to thank publicly all the Heath volunteer Firefighters and those from neighboring towns who responded to the fire emergency at the home of Tom and Robyn Carlson on Route 8A on Tuesday, January 11, and again on Wednesday, the 12th, when the fire unfortunately re-ignited. Fourteen fire departments responded to this difficult blaze. Several townspeople supplied food and drink to the firefighters. We are confident that the usual "Heath Welcome" from residents will continue providing support and encouragement to the Carlsons as they begin the process of recovering from this huge loss.

~ Heath Selectboard
Thomas Lively, Chair
Brian De Vriese
Sheila Litchfield



Library Lines

New System



By Charlene Churchill

At the beginning of January our library started a new method of handling patron information. Each registered patron has been assigned a random number. Now when materials are checked out of the library a member of the staff stamps the due date on the item and on the material's card and writes the patron number on the card so we can track who has borrowed the item. Children, sixteen years old and under, will have their items recorded under one of their parents' numbers.

We have started this system for two major reasons. The most important one is that Massachusetts state law, as well as the laws of most other states, require that what library patrons borrow stays private and our new system will put us in compliance with this. The second reason is that, try as we may, we find that some signatures on the cards are impossible to read. This is not a problem when materials are returned on time, but if something is not returned and we have to send an overdue notice out and can't read the signature, it is.

We hope we can all adjust to the new system quickly. It is no fun and very impersonal to be relegated to being a number but it hopefully will help our library in other ways. We appreciate everyone's patience as we change to this new system. If there are any additional questions about it please ask me at the library.

New Books at the library:

By Order of the President by W. E. Griffin, *Chronicles* by Bob Dylan, *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare* by Steven Greenblatt, *His Excellency George Washington* by Joseph Ellis, *London Bridges* by James Patterson, *Villages* by John Updike, and *Whiteout* by Ken Follett.

Planning and Design Grant Update

We will be just submitting our Construction Grant Application to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) as this issue is published. The application represents many hours of work by our architect, David King, his design team, the Library Trustees, and myself. The applications received will be read and scored by review panels, recommendations made to the MBLC, and grant awards made in July. If we do not receive an award in July we may be placed on a waiting list, with the possibility of an award within the next two years.

We are presently basing our design and application on using a portion of the land on Bray Road that is owned by the Town as the site of the new library. We have had the upper portion of the property surveyed and have done some soil tests to determine suitability of the site.

While we have tried to locate a useable site in the center of town we have not been able to find a location that would pass even an unofficial perc test or provide the amount of space needed for the building and the required amount of parking.

We will be displaying the preliminary design for the building at the library. Look for it and please give us your thoughts and suggestions.

Spruce Gum

Has anyone reading the *Heath Herald* ever had spruce gum? How many know the procedure of getting a bit of spruce gum ready to be chewed?

In today's "culture," a stick of gum is just as easy to get as a candy bar or an ice cream cone. Getting a wad of spruce gum to perform in your mouth, however, is a bit of a time-consuming task.

As a kid growing up in Heath, it was just a natural thing while walking in the woods on the way to get the cows, or coming back from fishing, or from a time of swimming, to pass through the woods in the pines and spruces, and twist off a growth of amber colored, hardened pitch from a broken lower limb of a spruce tree. Sometimes the crystal of spruce pitch would be as large as a dollar.

At this point began the tricky process of holding the bit of spruce pitch in your mouth without chewing it. If you were patient and had a good supply of saliva in your mouth, after a few minutes the crystal would dissolve and very carefully and deliberately you would roll the mass slowly around in your mouth, testing it to see if it were gelatinous enough to chew. If you were too hasty, it would all dissolve and the only thing then to do was to spit it out and start over.

With a bit of experience we could nearly always have a good wad of gum in chewing condition by the time we got the cows home to milk. It could be chewed as long as you wanted to and the flavor never left because it never really had a pleasant taste... just something to do as a kid. Back then we never heard of the word "**BORED.**"

The next time you have a craving for a stick of gum, ponder the organic alternative to Wrigley's or Beechnut.

~ Douglas Stetson



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"This publication is supported in part by a grant from the Heath Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency."

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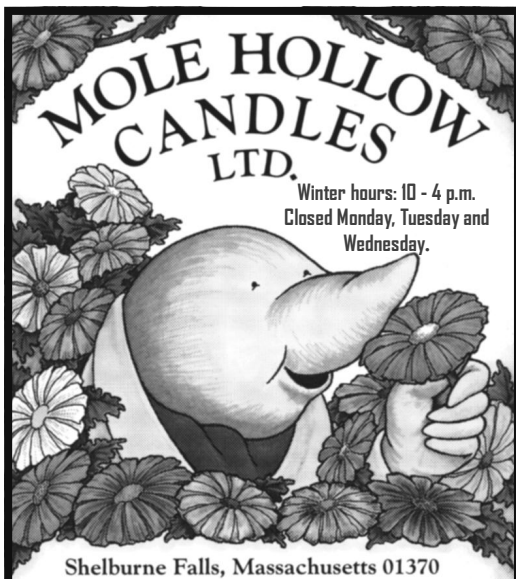
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Green Thoughts

Seed Catalogs

By Pat Leuchtman

(Editors Note: As of this issue, Pat Leuchtman, gardening columnist for the *Greenfield Recorder*, and the librarian in Buckland., will take over *Green Thoughts* from Elsa Bakalar. Welcome, Pat. Thanks, as ever, Elsa!)

My shelves are full of books on gardening, books on growing vegetables in wide rows and in raised and square foot beds. and books on herbs, annuals, and perennials. Many of these books have wonderful, descriptive photographs and illustrations to help me figure out what the heck I should, or could, be doing.

But in the early spring I turn to the seed catalogs for advice. I also tend to keep one or two catalogs with my tool basket so they are available for ready reference.

When I sit with my catalogs to order seeds the first piece of information I look for is whether the variety I am considering is disease-resistant. I think one of the reasons for more and more interest in old-fashioned varieties is due to people's unease with the idea of some of the high tech genetic engineering that is going on. However, we have to remember that the value of many hybrids (and I am not talking about genetically engineered plants) is that they have been bred to resist specific diseases, making the gardener surer of success.

For example, when I look at tomato varieties, of which there are many, I look for the code that tells which hybrids are resistant to verticillium wilt, fusarium wilt, nematodes, and tobacco mosaic virus. Many hybrids are resistant to several of these problems and will be marked VFNT.

Tomatoes are also listed as either determinate or indeterminate. Indeterminate varieties will keep on producing vines and setting fruit throughout the season, and fruit will be at all different stages. Determinate varieties will make little growth once fruit is set, and all the fruit will ripen at the same time.

When making choices about a vegetable like tomatoes that include so many varieties, I take into consideration how long it takes to mature and might choose a couple of different varieties to give me a longer harvest season.

Another piece of good information is about germination times especially valuable for impatient gardeners who have trouble keeping from digging up the seeds to see if there is something wrong because they haven't sprouted yet.

I have the new *Cook's Garden* catalog in front of me as I write. It gives a wide variety of information about the plants and seeds it offers. For instance, it notes that Festival strawberries are "day neutral" which means there will be a heavy crop in June, but the plants will continue bearing until frost. This catalog also provides information

about planting and harvesting crops such as arugula that may not be familiar to a gardener. Information is given about planting times and warnings about things like not working with bean plants when they are wet because of the danger of spreading disease from plant to plant when you are working with them. Carrots are described by season, those that should be eaten right away after harvest, and those that are good keepers.

One of the important pieces of information you will get from your catalog is whether your seeds are open-pollinated varieties, which means the seeds from these plants will be replicas of their parents. Hybrids do not come true from seeds. Most catalogs will now identify each variety as a hybrid or F1, or as an heirloom or open-pollinated variety.

Many hybrids are developed to make it easier for agribusiness farms to ship their produce long distances without doing it obvious damage. The classic example of this kind of hybridization is the tomato that is sold in the supermarket all year long – round and hard and distinctly lacking in flavor. They are often labeled with euphemisms like "slicing tomato," I suppose to distract you from the lack of taste.

Hybridization to suit commercial growers, not the home gardener, has also led to a great popularity in heirloom vegetables. Vegetables that were grown a hundred years ago can be notable for their flavor, or for other desirable characteristics like being a good storage variety. And who can resist names like Dragon Tongue beans, Deer Tongue lettuce, or Painted Mountain corn? Happily, some of these valuable heirlooms are becoming more and more available.

I generally end up planting hybrids and open-pollinated vegetables. No matter which, I think all seeds are amazing. Even after all these years, I have never gotten over the thrill and amazement that I feel when I see those first tender shoots. A true miracle.

PTP News

The Heath Elementary Parent-Teacher Partnership will be organizing the Second Town-Wide Yard Sale. The date will be announced after our February meeting, but plan on it being sometime in May.

Townpeople and organizations will be able to "purchase" a space to set up and sell their treasures or they can donate items for the school's space. Proceeds from rental spaces will go toward school enrichment programs. All individuals and organizations will keep their profits.

Despite weather conditions, we had a good turnout two years ago. So start clearing out those attics!

Further information should be available by the end of February.

~ Robin Jenkins, PTP co-chair

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Taylor Brook Road
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Rays of Interest

Life in the 1500s

By Raymond Pettengill

The next time you are washing your hands and complaining because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be back in the 1500s in England.

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor, hence, the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married. Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of being first to bathe in the nice clean water, then all the sons, then the women and finally the children with the babies being last of all. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs, (thick straw-piled high), with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and dogs and other small animals lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs." There was nothing to stop things from falling through the hay into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread "thresh" (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until when they opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway to prevent this and was called a threshold.

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold, pease porridge in the pot nine days old." Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could "bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

Those with money had plates made of pewter that had lead in them. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing death from lead poisoning. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous. Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the mid-

dle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust."

Lead cups were used to drink ale and whisky, which would sometimes knock the imbibers out for days and they would be taken for dead and prepared for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake."

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When re-opening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins was found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer."

Whoever said that history was boring !!!

(Author unknown)

Indian Head Snowmobile Club, Inc.

The Indian Head Snowmobile Club, Inc. has purchased two Kubota RTV900s for trail grooming. The Club applied for a competitive grant through the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) in the summer of 2003, and was awarded a grant for approximately \$40,000.00 in the spring of 2004. The money is made available through the Federal Highway Recreational Trails Program and is administered by DCR. 20% of the funds were the responsibility of the Club and could be either cash or in-kind services. As part of the match, over 240 man-hours were spent by club members cutting and chipping brush in Cook State Forest throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

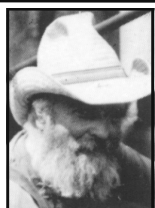
The new machinery was purchased through Bacon's Equipment of Williamsburg in November and delivered on December 31, 2004. It is only five feet wide and will fit on our existing trails. A newly designed track system has been installed specifically for snow operations. This is the first time this equipment is being used for this application so we are anxious to see how it will perform. Initial testing was favorable.

It will be used primarily to maintain the trails in the Cook State Forest and the connecting trail to the Savoy State Forest. Due to the steepness of some of our trails we do not expect this equipment to be able to cover them all. The Club will still maintain its fleet of smaller snowmobiles to use in the hard-to-get-to places.

Club members have been longing for a piece of equipment that would provide safe operation and protection for the operator. This new machinery includes an enclosed "heated" cab, room for two, and an excellent lighting system. It also has a small dump body that will be useful for carrying supplies and tools. Trail grooming is frequently accomplished at night, so having reliable and safe equipment is important. Snowmobilers, skiers, snowshoers, and winter hikers who are members of the IHSC will all benefit from this new equipment.

Want to go for a ride? Have questions? Contact President Mike Smead 337-5389 or Tom Lively 337-4061. Club membership forms are available at Peter's Store.

~ Tom Lively



The Way It Is In The Country

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

Ode to One of Heath's Workhorses

By Carroll Stowe

Shortly before starting to pen this tribute to a town truck, this particular rig went by our place plowing and sanding. This truck David Clark has driven since it was nearly new. I drove this unit to help Jack Cable out years back when 8A was being prepared for paving. It is hard work driving a truck not set up for a demanding job but this unit was well engineered. David has been a good caretaker for it and it still does its work well but is about to be replaced.

This truck has served the townspeople well. To force it to stay longer would cost more and more for maintenance. The wages this truck has helped the folks of Heath to earn who travel out of town to a job would stagger the thought process.

Trucks have been a large element of my working life, and it is very simple to build an affection for one of these public servants. A new truck will be in town soon and will have to be appointed with various special effects to help it and its driver to work easier. The new truck will have an all-season body that will eliminate a day, spring and fall, to change from sander to dump body and back again.

These long-serving units develop a very strong personality, and all drivers feel this particular effect. All drivers can depend on their traveling home away from home to do all asked of them and more.

I have been retired from a highway department job for some time, and I still miss the driving of a good working, heavy-duty municipal unit. I still enjoy plowing snow even after 40 winters. It's difficult to describe the thrill of a beautiful sunrise over the point of a snowplow. Only the fraternity of plow truck operators can express this feeling.

I hope all who read this tribute to a town truck will try to understand your daily trip to a job is easier because of the faithfulness of the drivers and their well-serving steeds. I refer to the crew as our Guardian Angels.

Winter Weather Preparedness Suggestions

Without knowing (until at least April) what kind of weather we are going to have, here are some winter weather suggestions from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) to be prepared for whatever comes.

Items to Keep Around the House in Case of Emergency

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Portable radio or weather radio with extra batteries
- First aid supplies
- Essential prescription medicines
- Non-perishable food
- Non-electric can opener
- Drinkable water (one gallon per person per day)
- Baby supplies (if applicable)
- Extra blankets and/or sleeping bags
- Fire extinguisher

Family Emergency Communication Plan

Develop a "Family Communication Plan" in case family members are separated from each other during a storm. Have a relative or a friend serve as the family contact person. In the event of a **big disaster**, have an out-of-state relative or friend serve as the contact person. In some cases, after a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone knows the name, phone number, and address of the contact person.

Winter Emergency Car Kit

- Flashlight with extra batteries (remember when the flashlight is cold it may not shine as brightly)
- First aid kit
- Necessary medications
- Pocket knife
- Blankets
- Extra clothes (rain gear, mittens, socks, hat)
- High calorie non-perishable snack foods (nut or dried fruit bars)
- Container of drinkable water
- Shovel
- Container of sand for generating traction
- Tire chains or traction mats
- Basic tool kit
- Tow rope
- Jumper cables
- Brightly colored cloth to be used as a flag

Make sure that you have an ice scraper/snow brush in your vehicle and enough windshield washer fluid. Try to keep your gas tank at least one half full.

~ Timothy Lively

Heath Emergency Management Director

Finance Committee Report**SUPERINTENDENT: "MOHAWK NEEDS MORE MONEY NEXT YEAR"**

These words from Superintendent Alan Genovese headlined the article in the *Greenfield Recorder* on December 11, 2004, about an additional \$948,143 needed in FY06 to pay for the same services budgeted in FY05. In budget terms this is called a Level Services approach in contrast to Level Funded, which indicates no increase in funding. Level Services presupposes no layoffs, no changes needed to meet conditions although, if conditions did change, money could be reallocated accordingly. Level Funded means that increased costs of a fixed nature and those like health insurance will have to be cut via reduced services and/or layoffs. It should be noted, however, that what was presented to the School Committee was not a complete budget; rather, it was just the expense side thereby leaving unknown the increase or decrease (!) in assessments.

For ten years after the Education Reform Act of 1993 was enacted, there was a partnership of sorts with the State to fund K-12 education. Annual expenditures both locally and at the State level progressively increased. The noble goals of Ed Reform were for cities and towns to attain financial equity in supporting education and adequacy in providing educational programs for students. However, in FY04 there was a seismic shift in State funding that primarily benefited large cities, thereby shattering that sense of mutual responsibility in the support of education costs, at least locally. Though cuts were made, towns in the Mohawk District picked up some of the slack. For the two years of FY04 and FY05 Heath's assessments increased a total of 35% over that of FY03. For FY05, total school costs for Heath represent 65% of the tax levy. These costs include Mohawk's operating and capital costs, Heath School's capital cost, and Franklin Tech School operating cost.

Heath has always supported education, but in so doing it has compromised other needs of the Town. Salaries of our employees are near the bottom when compared with other communities in Franklin County. Administrative needs of our growing community have been put on the back burner. Maintenance and replacement of equipment has been deferred. The time has come to do a better job balancing education costs against Town needs.

If one talks with Mohawk's teachers about their work, it becomes evident that a host of mandated program requirements is a burden on their time, which detracts from their real-time teaching. In addition the scope of these requirements incurs costs that are, in part, not funded, notwithstanding the provisions of Proposition 2 1/2. Schools have become a mechanism to solve many of society's problems. Some \$3 million or about 22% of Mohawk's Operating Budget for FY05 (excluding transportation) is for Special Education (SPED). In addition, there is a Federal Entitlement and Allocation grant, for example, administered by the State, which for Mohawk in FY05 amounts to \$812,135. \$380,310 of this amount is SPED money and another \$300,827 is for Title I, which, in general, is aid for those students who are underperforming. The balance of these funds is for improving teacher quality, enhancing educational technology, safe and drug free

schools and a couple more related to SPED, all part of the "Leave No Child Behind Act." The Federal Government's FY05 budget allocated \$2.7 billion to Massachusetts! This is 43% more than when President Bush took office. Total grant income at Mohawk exceeds \$1 million annually. The expenditure of these huge amounts of tax money on education raises questions. How much is enough? Where will it end? Will education costs become part of the structural deficit problem in Massachusetts or is it already? From meetings with DOE administrators and legislators it appears there is no clear, concise definition of an adequate education, one of the goals of the Ed Reform Act. Yet, there are State requirements for measuring student achievement that then can become the basis for the Department of Education (DOE) to take over a school system, should it fall short of formula driven goals. If the State can be that precise, cannot those testing programs also be a basis for some sort of definitive financial planning and control? Further, the DOE computes something called Required Local Contribution, which is part of the Ed Reform/ Foundation Budget concept, yet the District's Actual Local Contribution is always substantially higher. We need a better understanding of what we are paying for and why.

Declining student enrollment has exacerbated Mohawk's financial situation. It is difficult to adjust costs for fewer students while maintaining educational programs, but starting in FY04 some cost cutting steps had to be taken. There are now fewer teachers, larger classes, and empty schoolrooms. It is never an easy job, but educational institutions are generally not as adaptable or responsive as business organizations. Only recently has long-range planning been undertaken. The number of K-12 age students has not only been going down across the State, but declining enrollment in public schools has been hastened by the costly Charter School program plus those who regularly attend Tech schools, private schools, and/or are homeschooled. Overall, the number of K-12 students at Mohawk has gone down by 20.6% over the last five years; the rate for just the elementary schools is even more disturbing at nearly 27%. This trend adversely affects Chapter 70 allocations from the State and raises serious administrative problems in our rural district, which inherently has greater logistical difficulties in serving families and small children than in one-district communities. And then there is the fact that since the mid 1990s some \$35,000,000 has been invested in new and improved facilities! The superintendent's proposal to hire a consultant to make recommendations in this regard is a positive step. But also, there is a need for a thorough analysis of census and school enrollment trends over the next fifteen years.

(*"Finance Report"* continued on page 19)

Heath Emergency Auxiliary

Anyone interested in creating an organized network of Heath people who respond with food and refreshments for firefighters during emergencies should call Sheila Litchfield at 337-4957 to express your interest. We hope to learn from the experiences of the Heath Ladies Aid and set up a network of people who can make sandwiches and coffee and find people available to serve refreshments for emergency responders. An organizing meeting will be held in February.

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Town Nurse Notes



Menacing Household Molds

By Joanne Fortune, RN

Breathing mold spores is harmful to your health. The most common molds have long and interesting names: Penicillium, Aspergillus, Cladosporium, and Stachybotrys. Found in wet homes, these molds can give you a slew of health problems. Symptoms you might experience are headache, congestion, cough, gastrointestinal distress, eye irritation, rash, dizziness, tremor, depression, and inability to concentrate.

It's called "sick building syndrome" when it's detected in public buildings. If symptoms ease at all when you are away from home and recur when you return, it clues you in to go hunting for wet spots. Mold lives in wallboard, wood, carpeting and ceiling tiles. Colors range from gray-green to yellow, tan, brown, or black, depending on the species.

To clean the area, wear a mask and make sure there is good ventilation. *Don't try this if you have a suppressed immune system or have asthma, allergies, or other respiratory problems.* To keep the spores from flying around, lightly mist all moldy spots. Then, with a solution of one cup of bleach to one gallon of water, gently sponge the area. Allow it to sit for 15 minutes before thoroughly drying the cleaned surface. Throw away the sponge.

Please give me a call if you have extensive mold growing in your house.

To prevent your home from becoming "sick," keep water out. If moisture sits for 24 hours, common molds can become established. Ensure that you have no leaks in the roof or plumbing. If you find an area that's wet, dry it out as rapidly as possible using heaters or fans. (Keep an eye on that heater!)

The ideal indoor relative humidity to inhibit mold growth is between 30-50%. If you've had any flooding, carpeting and furniture should be discarded unless you can dry them thoroughly within 24 hours. Wallboard and insulation that's wet needs to be discarded so that the water/bleach solution can be used to disinfect the wall studs. The floors and other surfaces should also be disinfected and dried as soon as possible.

If you or someone you know would like a visit, please call me at 774-2958. If you'd like to stop by the Community Hall Senior Center, I am there from noon until 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.

Heath Historical Society

2004 was an active year for the Society beginning with a tour by the Heath School fifth grade of the old Town House and the one-room Center Schoolhouse. That resulted in the students painting artifacts that they had observed on panels as part of the Book You Walk Through that was exhibited at the Heath Fair.

At the Fair, we had a record number of people come into the Solomon Temple Barn where we had a video of "Barns" plus lively sales of books, other items, and raffle tickets. As it was the 10th anniversary of its restoration, we had a Rededication of the Barn ceremony during which we thanked all those who had contributed to it. This was followed by our Annual Meeting and Supper in the Exhibit Hall. This past year's projects included re-shingling the schoolhouse roof and repairing the roof rafter on the Old Town House. While this was being done, it was noted that this building soon would need a new roof.

Fort Shirley, the pride of our projects, now boasts a split rail fence on the exact footprint of the old Fort. In addition a sign detailing the Fort and the little Norton girl's grave was installed. The site now is easily accessible because of a gravel walk, and the grounds of the park-like setting are being maintained. More about this and the upcoming summer's "Fort Shirley Day" in future *Heath Herald* issues.

The Board of Directors had a Thank-You Celebration luncheon at the Charlemont Inn on December 7 to show our appreciation of the accomplishments and contributions of retiring directors Dot Gary and Eileen Tougas and to welcome new directors Charlene Churchill and Eric Grinnell.

We are still concerned about fires at the Fairgrounds near the Barn. **Please keep fires at least 100 feet from the Barn.** This structure represents a great deal of hard work and Heath history. It is irreplaceable, so use caution and common sense.

2005 will be another active year for the Society, and everyone is welcome to join to help preserve the history of Heath.

~ Jack Cable, President

Milestones

Bruce C. Wilde of Ashfield died December 1, 2004. Born in Greenfield on September 16, 1945, he was the son of Carlton and Arlene Adams Wilde.

A 1963 graduate of Arms Academy, He served in the US Army and was employed until recently by the Pilant Corporation of South Deerfield for over 30 years.

He is survived by his wife of 36 years, Linda A. Parker Wilde; a daughter, **Tamara L. Miller** of Heath; a brother, Frederick Wilde of Dania Beach, FL; a sister, Jacquelyn Figura of Wales, MA; three grandsons, and nieces and nephews

Donations may be made to the Sanderson Zephyrs Relay for Life team in care of Jacquelyn Clark, 808 Cape Street, Ashfield, MA 01330.



Hannah E. Coye of North Syracuse, NY, died January 14, 2005, after a long, courageous battle with cancer. Born June 2, 1998, she was the daughter of Robert and Deborah Stetson Coye.

She was in the first grade at Nate Perry Elementary School and was a baptized member of the Pitcher Hill Community Church, both of North Syracuse.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by a sister, Sarah, and two brothers, Matthew and Joshua, all at home; her maternal grandparents, **Douglas and Alli Stetson** of Heath; her paternal grandmother, Katherine G. Coye of Syracuse, and several aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Memorial contributions may be made to Pitcher Hill Community Hill Church, 605 Bailey Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212, the Make-a-Wish Foundation, 2 MONY Plaza, Syracuse, NY 13202, or the Jonathan Cancer Fund, 650 James Street, Syracuse, NY 13203.

Earle L. Day, 70, of Heath died on January 26, 2005 at the Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield.

Services were held at the Johnson Funeral Home, Shelburne Falls. Burial followed in Center Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Deerfield Valley Sportsman's Club, P.O. Box 151, Whitingham, VT 05361.

Requiescat in pace



Heath Deed Transfers

Henry C. Brooks Estate of Sullivan, NH; Henry C. Brooks, Jr. of Sullivan, individually and executor, and Linda C. Brown of Virginia, heirs and devisees, John B. Stewart Estate of West Springfield, and Dorothy Tefft of Stamford, NY, to Harry and Katherine Hall of Wallingford, CT, Navaho Lane, Lots 30, 32, 33, and 34, \$5,500.

Felice Ciocca and Angela Ciocca of West Springfield to Rickey Osmond and Kenneth L. Gould, 17 Cheyenne Street. \$2,500.

Joan L. Clark to William Lattrell and Maureen O'Malley, Taylor Brook Road, Lot 1. \$59,000.

Addolorata Fantone of Hampden to Kenneth L. Gould and Rickey Osmond, 19 Cheyenne Street. \$2,500.

John W. Graham III to Kristopher O. Bumes of Westport, 85 Branch Hill Road. \$277,500.

Winfield H. Gregg of Hartford, CT, to Winfield Gregg Trust of Wethersfield, CT, Mohawk Estates, Lots 21 and 4. \$10.00.

Winfield Gregg Trust of Connecticut, A Spencer Gregg, Trustee, to William E. III and Barbara Mary Gross of Holyoke, 3 Arrow Head Drive. \$2,000.

Henry A. and Mildred M. Hevey of Chicopee to Joseph and Charlene Stoyak of Chester, Papoose Lake Drive, Lot 17. \$1.00.

Richard Andrew LaChance to Richard A. and Carey A. LaChance, 9 West Brook Drive. \$1.00.

Patricia A. Lentz to Joanne Giguere, 220 South Road. \$262,500.

Lawrence K. Martin Jr. of Rowley, Nancy A. Martin of Springfield, Kim E. Kiernan of Longmeadow, and Karen Ann Essa of Southampton to Lynn A. McKinnon of West Springfield, Mohawk Estates. \$35,000.

Angelina M. McAllister to Scott N. and Denise M. Von-Rosenvinge, 141 Taylor Brook Road. \$29,900.

Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc to Albert and Lillian Titus, Mohawk Estates, Lots 17 and 18. \$4,000.

Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association Inc. to Nancy Weidler of Wales, Mohawk Estates, Lots 28 to 30. \$8,000.

John J. and Bernadette D.B. Nicholson of Conway to Kathryn A. Dean of Greenfield, 23 Knott Road. \$151,500.

Anne Palmer Plunkett to Anne Palmer Plunkett and Amy L. Metzler-Clough of Charlemont, Jacksonville Stage Road. \$1.00.

Mary E. Robidoux of Chicopee to Betsy J. Taylor of Winchester, NH, Mohawk Estates, Lot 1. \$6,000.

Rene J. and Jeanne C. Robitaille of Chicopee to Amy R. Boyd, Kenneth A. Boyd, Jeffrey H. Patrick, Valerie J. Patrick, Jill K. Senecal, and Kenneth P. Senecal of Chicopee, Mohawk Estates, Lots 9 and 10. \$1.00.

Gary P. and Gloria J. Rose of North Adams to Alan Corey of Greenfield, 301 Dell Road. \$24,900.

Alli I. Thane-Stetson to Alli I. Thane-Stetson Irrevocable Real Estate Trust of Charlemont, Alli I. Thane-Stetson, Trustee, 31 Jacobs Road, 126 acres, and Brunelle Road, 123 acres. \$1.00.

~ Compiled by *Pegge Howland*





Heath Fire - Rescue News

We at the Fire Department would like to wish all of the *Heath Herald's* readers a happy and safe New Year. 2005 should prove to be a busy year in training for the Department. We will be training with our new grant truck, that was delivered in November. This truck gives us the ability both to bring more water to a scene and to rapidly deploy foam, if needed. Our Department now has three trucks, which should meet our town's needs for some years to come and we could not have done it without your help!

Other training (mandated by the federal government) will involve a National Incident Command System (ICS). All members of the Department will be required to take this class. The ICS system will allow for a unified command structure that will serve well in cases of mutual aid and should the "big one" ever occur. More important, we will need to show that all members have this training in order to apply for future grants.

Fire-Rescue Log

- 11/14/04 - 26 Shawnee Drive, Chimney Fire. E-1 and E-2 responded.
- 12/01/04 - 91 South Road., Wires down. E-1 responded.
- 12/07/04 - 23 West Brook Drive, Tree Fell on Dwelling. E-1 and Rescue 1 responded.
- 12/08/04 - South Road near Burrington Road. Report of wires down. Rescue 1 responded.
- 30 Hosmer Road East. Wires Down. Rescue 1 responded.
- 12/21/04 - 48 Sherman Drive, Medical. Rescue 1 responded.
- 12/26/04 - 55 Long Hill Road, Medical. Rescue 1 responded
- 01/01/05 - 33 Moduc St., Medical, Rescue 1 responded.
- 01/02/05 - 85 Branch Hill Rd., Medical. Rescue 1 responded.

Safety Tip

The US Coast Guard estimates that some 7,000 people each year die in drowning incidents, and another 20,000 are injured in water-related emergencies. Half of these occur in water temperatures of less than 70 degrees. So those of our readers who want to indulge in skating or ice fishing on Papoose Lake or on any other body of water should consider the following about "safe" ice. The only true safe ice will be found at the local skating arena. Ice over moving water should never be considered safe. "Safe" ice on lakes depends on currents, natural springs, tree stumps, and daily temperatures, to name a few factors.

In the event that someone should fall through the ice, do the following: Immediately call 911. Don't go out on the ice by yourself. If someone fell through the ice, it is more than likely unsafe for you and then you will need to be rescued. If possible, extend a pole, branch, or ladder to the victim. If none of those are available, consider throwing something that floats, tied to a rope, to the victim.

Lastly, should you be the unfortunate one ending up in the water, try to get into a Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP). Bring your knees to your chest, hold your arms to the sides, clasp your hands, and, if possible, cover your head. If more than one has fallen in try to huddle together. Don't try to swim unless something to rescue you is nearby. Swimming

moves warm blood into your arms and legs and can reduce your chances of surviving by 35 -50%.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Department is always looking for new members. We cannot promise you convenient hours or pleasant working conditions but we can promise that you will be helping your town! We meet the first and third Thursdays of the month at the station. For more information you can always call Chief Mike Smith..

~Jeff Simmons

Town Clerk News

Late winter and spring herald some significant events. March is dog-licensing month. Fees remain the same with the cost of \$6.00 per unsprayed female and \$3.00 for each other dog. The clerk's office will be open during the following hours:

- Monday, March 7 & 21, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 12:30-3:00 p.m.
- Saturday, March 26, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

You may also obtain a license by mailing in the fee, a copy of the rabies certificate, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the clerk's office. A Rabies Clinic will be held at Sawyer Hall on Saturday, March 5, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

It is also time for those who would like to be candidates for local offices to take out nomination papers. Papers must be taken out by **March 16** and returned to the clerk's office with the appropriate number of signatures by **March 18**. Offices with seats coming up for election, length of term, and the official whose term is expiring, are as follows:

- Selectman, 3 yr., Brian DeVriese
- Assessor, 3 yr., Henry Leuchtman
- Moderator, 3 yr., Doug Wilkins
- Finance Committee, 3 yr., David Howland
- Planning Board, 5 yr., Robert Viarengo
- Library Trustee, 3 yr., Jane deLeeuw
- Dog Officer, 1 yr., Angela Graves
- Constable, 1 yr., Charles Kaempfer and Robert Tanner, Jr.

~ Hilma Sumner, Town Clerk

(*"Heath Elementary School News"* continued from page 3)

- **Support for the Tsunami Victims** - Our students have been brainstorming ways to involve the community in raising funds for those devastated by this tragedy. On January 22 students used our movie matinee time to earn money in a variety of ways to give to a charitable organization. We have also used our discussion time to increase our awareness of this region of the world and the geologic causes of tsunamis.
- **Good Neighbors** - We are grateful to all students and families who have contributed so generously to the Good Neighbors' food distribution. Our students volunteer regularly to help sort and organize food contributions.
- **Book You Walk Through** - Our Book You Walk Through project is now on display at the Holyoke Museum.

("Finance Report" continued from page 14)

Lest we appear too critical of the our Legislators, the DOE, the Governor, and the Mohawk District, permit us to note that we, the citizens, are getting what we have allowed our representative form of government to legislate. Our system has become a symbiotic relationship of mutual beneficence. Over the last couple of years the Town of Heath has received a little over \$600,000 in grants to refurbish the Town Hall and Community Hall and pay for a new fire truck. No way could the Town finance those undertakings by itself. The Town did contribute some \$80,000 to the Community Hall project and \$25,000 towards the fire truck. We, the taxpayers, send our dollars to our governments and it is recycled in a myriad of ways. It is a redistribution of wealth system that can and does get out of control! It is up to us to watch the programs and how our money is spent. Not an easy job in this complicated world. The grants we received might be called pork, but there is "lean" pork and "fat" pork. It would seem that the upgrading, actually the "saving," of Heath's facilities and equipment, was in the public's interest and, therefore, was "lean" pork.

As everyone knows by now the tax rate for FY05 is \$18.34 per \$1000 assessed valuation. We would have had a tax rate of over \$25 for FY05 if it were not for the revaluation of property, which increased by 32% and was a cause for concern for many homeowners. However, the increase in value reflects sales trends over the past three years and results in a reduction in our tax rate. Nevertheless, all of us will pay more in property taxes in FY05. The Assessors set the rate, but the Selectboard and Finance Committee had a hand in it. Everyone did their best, we think, to use available funds effectively so as to keep the tax rate as low as reasonably possible.

Financial planning for FY06 is now underway; we will report on its progress accordingly. Your input is welcome.

~ David Howland, Chair
Ned Wolf, Secretary
David Cote
Budge Litchfield
Jeff Simmons

Community Calendar

February 2005

February 03 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall
at 11:45 a.m.

February 10 - Mohawk LEC meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

February 17 & 18 - *Bridge of San Luis Rey*, The Academy at Charlemont, 7:30 p.m. &
February 19 - Matinee at 2:00 p.m.

February 17 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall
at 11:45 a.m.

February 21-25 - February school vacation

March 2005

March 03 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall
at 11:45 a.m.

March 04 - Clark Johnson Memorial Astronomy Night
Heath Elementary School

March 11,12,13 and 19 & 20 - The Suzical Musical –
Mohawk Trail Regional High School

March 14 - 27 - The Academy at Charlemont Winter
Vacation

March 17 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall
at 11:45 a.m.

March 29 - High School Trip to Myrtle Beach
Kick-Off Concert

March 31 - April 3 - High School Trip to Myrtle
Beach. SC

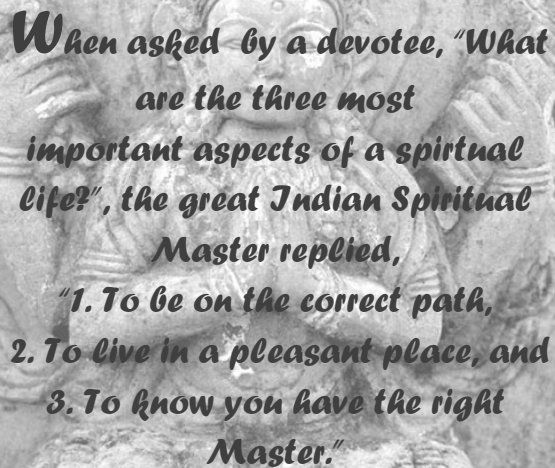


24 West Main Street, Heath, MA 01346 p/f 413 . 337 . 5736



It is said an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence to be ever in view and which should be true and appropriate in all times and all situations. They presented him the words: "And this, too, shall pass away." How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction! ...And yet, let us hope, it is not quite true. Let us hope, rather, that by the best cultivation of the physical world beneath and around us, and the best intellectual and moral world within us, we shall secure an individual, social, and political prosperity and happiness whose course shall be onward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away.

~ Abraham Lincoln, 1859



When asked by a devotee, "What are the three most important aspects of a spiritual life?", the great Indian Spiritual Master replied,

**"1. To be on the correct path,
2. To live in a pleasant place, and
3. To know you have the right Master."**

~from Don Dekker

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