



HEATH HERALD

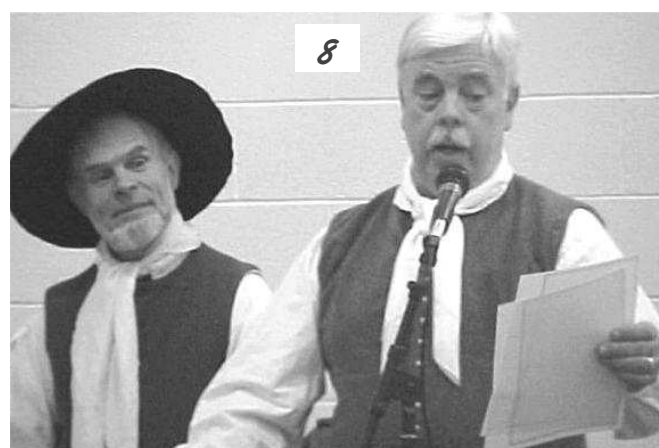
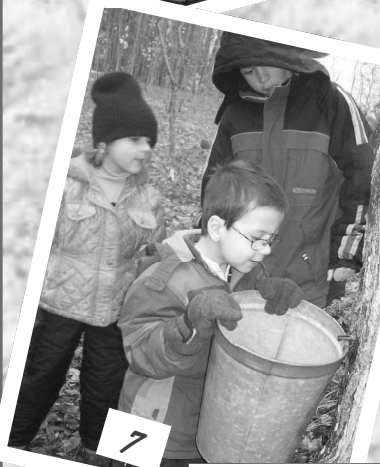
Heath's First Newspaper

\$1.00

Volume 28, Number 1

April/May 2006

HEATH SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



Heath Herald

Design and Layout Editor/Photographer

Copy Editor

Typographer

Business Manager

Advertising & Circulation

Coordinator

Eileen A. Tougas

Jane de Leeuw

Jane de Leeuw

Deborah Phillips

Deborah Phillips

Dianne Cerone

Columnists

Bill Lattrell, Pat Leuchtman, Sheila Litchfield,

Ray Pettengill, Don Purrington,

Susan Todd

Contributors

Trish Archambault, Jack Cable, Suzanne Crawford,

Finance Committee, FHSL,

Heath School Staff & Students,

Val Kaempfer, Henry Leuchtman,

Tim Lively, Dawn Peters, Pam Porter, PTP,

The Selectboard, Doug Stetson, Hilma Sumner,

Eileen Tougas, Bob Viarengo

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 June/July issue is May 10, 2006. All 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 jdeleeu@crocker.com.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE ~ One Year: \$6.25 (payable in advance by check or money order).

ADVERTISING RATES ~ Display ads: \$5.00 per column inch. Contact Deborah Phillips at (413) 337-8513.

CLASSIFIED ADS ~ Free.

Send all correspondence to:

Heath Herald

P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346-0054

SUBSCRIBE TODAY! HEATH HERALD

For only \$6.25 a year, 6 issues of the Heath Herald will be delivered to your home.

Name _____

Address _____

- Keep abreast of local happenings
- Give it as a gift to friends or family
- Support your local paper

The Heath Herald, P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346

Heath School Happenings

On our cover, a series of photographs depicting some of the many enriching experiences the Heath School provides our children:

Photos #1, 3, and 7 show Preschool children learning the tapping of the maple sap before visiting the McCutchen Berkshire Sweet Gold Sugarhouse to observe the sap boiling and condensing into syrup; #2, Three of 14 aspiring young violinists reading music and playing in their first string concert of the year (And nary a screech was heard!). They were accompanied on the piano by strings director, David Tasgal; #4 Welcome to Loralynn Boyd, the new Cafeteria Manager, shown with a tray of her delicious muffins. She says she really loves her job! ; #5 is a scene from a play based on the book, *Tony's Bread, An Italian Folktale* by Tomie De Paola, written, produced, directed, and narrated by Librarian Wanda Musacchio with actors from Mohawk's National Honor Society and the school staff. A yearly event to celebrate *Read Across America*, it is held on Dr. Seuss's Birthday and is based on a different book each year; #6 depicts students clad in reproduction 18th century costumes provided by the Deerfield Teachers' Center's *History to Go*, and in the center, #8, General William Heath, for whom our town is named (Bob Gruen) and Colonel Hugh Maxwell, one of our founders, (Dave Gott) who visited Heath School to give the students a local history lesson.

**Photographs for the cover supplied by: Trish Archambault and Jane de Leeuw, and Suzanne Crawford*

New Library Fund-raising on Hold

Although the Fund-raising Committee and the Trustees of the Heath Free Public Library have been working throughout the winter on a capital campaign to build a new library, it was the consensus of both groups that the timing of opening such a campaign needed to be sensitive to the current turmoil in town over the school district budget and the District's uncertain plans for the consolidation of schools. The Trustees, therefore, have voted to postpone the opening of the capital fund drive. Trustee Chair Deborah Porter voiced concern that running a campaign at this time amid so many unknowns would be a disservice to the town and to the project.



Green Thoughts

Lilacs

By Pat Leuchtman

Of all the flowers that bloom in the spring (trala) lilacs are about my favorites. And I'm not alone. The Arnold Arboretum celebrates their fabulous lilac collection every year with Lilac Sunday in the middle of May. I have attended such a Sunday and can vouch for the hundreds of people who come to admire the lilacs, walking along the pathways - sniffing. It is easy to understand why so many people plant lilacs in the dooryard, where they will pass several times a day and can enjoy that fragrance that is so evocative of spring and home.



Lilacs are extremely hardy and require very little care which is why they often survive by old cellar holes. When we bought our old farmhouse we inherited a stand of the familiar old lilac that does not last very long before the blooms fade and brown. We also got a wonderful old white lilac. The white lilac is particularly vigorous, endlessly sending out new shoots that we have never been able to keep under control no matter how many we have given away.

Some of those white lilacs grow at the eastern end of our house. They are very tall and reach the second story windows. In the spring, in my little office, working at such projects as this article, I open the window and breathe in that fresh spring fragrance. This is heaven.

In the last few years I planted Miss Canada, a pink that blooms when the others have gone by, and Ludwig Spathe which is a wonderful deep purple. This year I am adding Krasavits Moskvyy (Beauty of Moscow) which has pink buds opening to creamy white double flowers.

Lilacs don't need very much. They require sun, at least six hours, and a neutral well-drained soil. When planting a new lilac it is not a bad idea to dig an especially big planting hole to refill with fortified soil. If you fear that your soil is too heavy add a couple of bucketsful of gravel to your planting mix of soil well-enriched with compost. Since we live in New England where the soil is usually acid, also add lime.

A regular routine of pruning will keep a lilac thriving and in good health. The best time to prune is in late winter when the bush

is dormant, or, failing that, after the bloom season is finished.

If you have inherited a full grown and possibly overgrown lilac it will be a job to rejuvenate it. I do try to prune my old lilacs. Lilac wood is very hard. It is also quite fascinating because there is a pale purple heart in the center of every trunk.

Still, the bush will benefit by having a third of the oldest trunks pruned out each year. It is also good to cut back any trunks or branches that seem to be shooting off to an unattractive height or in an unwanted direction. Naturally, you will also prune out any dead or broken branches.

A new bush won't need pruning until it is over six feet tall. Then you can begin a routine of annual pruning. Suckers will appear and you should cut back some, leaving only the best. If the bush still needs a little fattening up, prune after the leaves have begun to appear.

Having said all this, I have to admit that my old lilacs survived many years of total neglect and even now don't get much tender care. I occasionally throw wood ashes on them and even more occasionally scatter some lime, and I do very little pruning. Yet they thrive, giving me immense pleasure and perfuming the spring air in that happy and familiar way.

Lilacs have few health problems. Powdery mildew, that ashy bloom that can appear on lilacs in the summer, is not especially attractive, but it is not hurtful to the plant. I just ignore it, and I am so good at this, that I barely even register the problem.

There is hardly a nursery center or catalog that does not offer a few lilacs. The number of varieties has increased tremendously. There are now lilacs in all shades of lavender and purple, white, pink, blue, and even yellow. There are single flowers and double. Some have the familiar fragrance, some not. Choosing lilacs for the garden is just getting harder and harder.

One of the largest selections of lilacs I have found is the Fox Run Nursery in Brunswick, Maine. Their Web site is www.lilacs.com. It includes descriptions and photographs.

Community Potluck Plus Entertainment

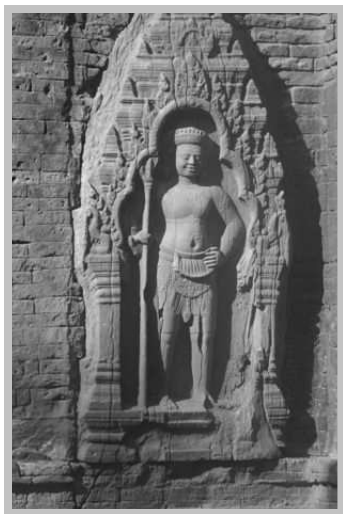
On Saturday, April 29, at 5:00 p.m., the Senior Center is hosting a potluck supper open to the community to be followed upstairs by a musical one-man show by John Root of Northampton. We are able to have him through grant money from the Heath Police Department's Community Grant. We wish to thank Chief Margo Newton for thinking about the Senior Center.

So, please come, bring a dish to share, and enjoy the evening with us. The Senior Center will provide beverages.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

~ Val Kaempfer

Thoughts of a Traveler



It's always the unexpected that burns most deeply into our memory. In Heath, it is awaking on a cold winter morning to lovely ice tracteries on the windows; at other times, glancing up from a mundane task and seeing a barred owl.

In our travels, this also holds. When we went to Southeast Asia with the Grinnells to learn about the Khmer civilization under the guidance of Mike Coe, we knew we would see the skeletons of an ancient civilization. But we had seen Egyptian pyramids, Mayan temples, Greek and Roman ruins, and other historic remnants of once great societies. As it turned out, none had the scope and grandeur of Angkor and the other sites that we visited.

Everyone remembers the Angkor ruins through the lens of the *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and the sunset photos of Angkor Wat are icons - but they only capture a wisp of reality. We clambered over unrestored sites where the buildings had been claimed by the jungle and wandered through palaces and temples that had been preserved. Intricately carved sandstone buildings, bas-reliefs of everyday life, and statues of lovely ladies guarding temple entrances greeted us everywhere. Individual memories blur but the sense of grandeur does not.

We traveled in both Cambodia and Laos. Cambodia is roughly the size and shape of Oklahoma and has a population of 20 million. From the late 1960s to around 1990, over 2 million Khmer were killed by the Communist Khmer Rouge. Laos, a larger country, is sparsely populated. Five million ethnically diverse people live there. Home to the Ho Chi Minh Trail, it has the dubious distinction of having been the most heavily bombed country in history.

We visited villages, towns, and schools in both countries. Where possible, through interpreters, we spoke to those we met. Virtually all are Buddhists. We were told that even the Communist head of Laos is one. These people have lived through horrendous times. They suffered as much or more than the Northern Irish and the Bosnians of recent decades and the Armenians and many other people in earlier eras.

To our amazement, they live quietly and at peace with neighbors who may well have been enemies less than a generation ago. They are rooted in their extended families and their villages. They practice Theravada Buddhism, and the temple is the center of both village and town life. We did not perceive the bitterness and smoldering ethnic/religious anger that pervades so many other places in the world. Our perception is that it is their religion that has supported and strengthened their attitudes of forgiveness and acceptance.

So of all the unexpected experiences that occurred on this trip, this appreciation of the powerful positive effect of this religion - Buddhism - on a variety of people was the most meaningful.

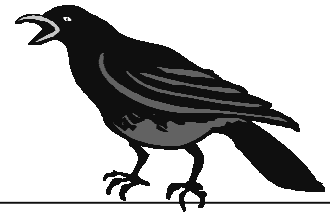
~ Bob Viarengo





Wild Ramblings

Raucous Caucus



By Bill Lattrell

It is an early winter evening and I am hiking along a rocky ridge that looks east. The view of distant valleys and mountains is punctuated with the naked branches of trees barren in winter, but alive nevertheless. A gentle fog is rolling in from the south riding a whisper of a breeze containing warm, moist air. What little snow we have had has melted so that brown and gray dominate the landscape before me. I am left alone with my thoughts.

On an opposing ridge I can hear the call of a crow. Then I hear the call of several crows, and before I know it the entire precipice is screaming with crows cawing. I try to peer through the fog, but the distant ridge reveals no visual evidence of the happenings across the valley. The birds continue to call, a noisy, almost eerie, sound. The increased calling intrudes upon my thoughts. The noise is overbearing and brings my complete attention to the crow congregation.

I suddenly hear an uproar of calling, similar to a large human crowd cheering after a home run is hit at a baseball game. The sounds are moving, coming closer and closer. Soon the crows begin to land on the branches of trees on my side of the valley. First one lands on a branch, then another, and soon dozens, no hundreds, of rowdy crows are perched above my head in the trees. The darkening sky becomes even darker with the black birds shading out available light. There are so many it is difficult to see the silhouette of one individual bird. The noise is deafening.

Silence is generally the sound of the winter woods. This is the extreme opposite. Bands of screaming crows flying in from all directions dim any hopes I had of reflective thought.

The crows are noisy but they do not seem angry. True, larger birds are forcing smaller birds from good sturdy branches, but in a very random way the entire mass of birds seems organized. Their sheer numbers are intimidating. I am reminded of the Alfred Hitchcock movie "The Birds."

Crow roosting is not fully understood by ornithologists. Bands of crows from different territories come together in large groups during the late autumn and winter months. As many as a half of million crows have gathered in these congregations. It is more common to see hundreds or a few thousand in this roosting behavior.

While roosting behavior is not well understood, there seems to be some social value to it. The birds seem to engage in some sort of communication that benefits the flock. It was once thought that the roosting behavior established some sort of regional political hierarchy amongst the larger crow population, but there has been little observed evidence that supports this theory.

We do know that crows have some ability to communicate with vocal sounds. While it doesn't appear to be a language with defined "words," there certainly seems to be meaning behind certain vocal sounds and voice pitches. Warning calls, territorial calls, and "counter singing," where crows from one territory repeat the sounds of crows from another territory, are common.

The American crow is extremely territorial. Extended families form to protect the territory. Older siblings will often feed the newly hatched along side of the parents. This behavior is very rare amongst bird species. Bands of crows are often observed harassing predatory birds such as owls and hawks, driving them out of their territory.

There is much evidence that crows are highly intelligent. The species has outwitted attempts by humans to exterminate them for hundreds of years. Crows seldom fall for the same trick more than once. Despite over 200 years of attempted elimination by humans, crow populations are ever increasing. They seem to get the last laugh.

Crows have an inherent ecological value. As true omnivores they are valuable in that they help to control populations of rodents and insects by consuming thousands of them in a lifetime, they clean up carrion speeding up the decomposition process, they distribute seeds from fruits eaten in the wild, and they provide healthy competition for food supplies, effectively controlling and balancing competing animal species in the forests and fields.

The light in the distance dwindles with the approaching night sky. The crows appear to be settling in, raucous crowing is interrupted by a sudden silence, followed by more crowing. Eventually the roost settles down, and a murmur of cooing can be heard. This soothing sound has almost a lullaby quality to it.

Finally there is silence, save the occasional flapping of wings from a crow trying to secure its position on a branch. It is disconcerting knowing that hundreds of birds are above my head and I cannot see or hear them. I try to quietly exit the area. A few birds hear my footsteps, and the cawing begins anew, but it only lasts for a minute.

It is very dark, and even though my eyes have adjusted to the lack of light I have to carefully pick my way through the dense forest. At one point I stop to get my bearings, and once my legs are no longer moving my brain begins to work. Not ten minutes ago my world was besieged with deafening noise. It is then that I realize that this is a matter of perspective. I imagine that the "noise" to me might have been laughter to them. Perhaps it is a celebration of survival.

And with this I carefully travel home in the night forest with a big smile on my face and with a new appreciation and perspective of the natural world.



Rays of Interest

Work as it Was On the Farm

By Ray Pettengill

This story was written by my father about his life on a farm in Weld, Maine.

It was the first day of January 1919, when I came to live in the town of Weld, a cool crisp evening with the stars shining and the sleigh runners making a sound in the frozen snow that only steel runners can make and the sleigh bells jingling clear and peaceful in the frosty air. Twenty miles isn't very far now in a well-heated car but after the sun goes down and in a horse-drawn sleigh and in a country that seemed like a new world to a nine-year-old boy it can be quite a long cold ride.

For four years my two brothers and I had been living with our grandparents as the result of a divorce between our parents. Our mother had been given the custody of us and she taught school to furnish money for our board as best she could, but, as most anybody knows who has experienced bringing up a family, the brunt of the battle fell on Grand-Ma, first, and then next, dear old Gramp, not our Grandfather at all, only by marriage. But that made no difference at all to always-working, never-complaining, same old Gramp who from morning till night worked in the woods cutting wood in the winter, on the town roads in the spring and fall, and in the hay field in the summer. He always worked out by the day doing the kinds of work I have mentioned, the four years that we lived at his home. Several years before that he had worked in the tannery but that closed down, and he went to work doing odd jobs on a more or less steady basis.

It was on the first day of January that my mother remarried, that's why the long ride and the start of a new life on a farm, that had forty-five or fifty acres of tillage land and two hundred acres of woodland that adjoined it. Of course the farm with its twenty head of cows, three horses, and numerous calves and pigs, was only another step to more to do and not a matter of how to do it, for grandfather had two cows and I already knew how to milk and how much hay and grain a cow should have to keep her in good condition and to keep the milk coming for the morning cereal, and enough to fill the set pans, for cream to churn for butter. And speaking of butter, churning was a chore on a farm that a boy didn't mind starting, but very seldom liked to finish. A few minutes of any boy's time is okay to put in churning, but after about what seems to be an hour, which is only about fifteen minutes, of pumping on that old up-and-down churn handle and the butter doesn't "come," the boy seems to get tired, first here and then there and then wishes he was doing anything but churning.

World War I had just come to a close and the "flu" was still

raging and it was within two months of the time that I entered my new home that the entire household came down with the new disease. That is, all but me, so for two days I took care of the sick folks, the best I knew how. They weren't very hungry but all the food was served in bed, for they were too sick to get up. Cows, ten of them, were giving milk and had to be milked by hand and fed three times a day as well as having grain and water. The milk had to be run through the separator, and then the calves and pigs had to be fed. So things got done, thanks to grandpa for letting me learn to milk when I was seven even if it did used to dry the old cow up to some extent.

Somewhere between chore times those two days we ran out of bread and the nearest store being two miles away I learned how to make a "johnnycake." Of course my mother told me how and before spring of that year I could make a johnnycake that would top any Betty Crocker bread that was ever made. I know because I used to eat it myself.

We now had to walk two miles to school and that took a little getting used to as we lived only a hop and a skip from the school-house when we lived with our grandparents, but after chilling our fingers and ears a few times we soon learned how to take care of ourselves. The winter I was twelve we got skis for Christmas, and each winter it was much easier to go to school on them than it was to wade through snow that was quite often two-feet deep and sometimes drifted up to four.

Five-thirty was our morning departure time from our beds on the north side of the upstairs bedroom and with no fire whatsoever in the house since nine o'clock the night before you don't need to be told that we didn't do much "dilly dallying" around about getting into our clothes. Downstairs we would go and start a fire in both the kitchen and living room stoves, pull on our stockings and boots, and head for the barn to feed the cows and horses, clean out the barn and stable, and then go back to the house, put a couple sticks of wood into the fire, grab a milk pail, strainer, and ten-gallon can and head for the barn again. The milking would take us about half-an-hour and then we would go back to the house and start breakfast, after washing up and changing our clothes for school. Our breakfast almost always consisted of hot cereal and sometimes an egg or two with bread and butter.

Saturdays in the wintertime we would go into the woods to help our foster father haul out wood or help him cut firewood or sometimes birch to be sold to a spool mill in town. Weekends in the spring the woodpile always had to be sawed up (by hand) and split into sticks that would fit the kitchen stove. The big tough ones we would leave for the heater stove. It was during the spring vacation that we would tap a few maple trees so we could have a little maple syrup to eat on ma's hot biscuit. Maple syrup tastes better when you tap the trees, wade through the snow dragging a sled with sap in a can behind you a half mile, then boil it down before you can eat it, than it does if you get it by just saying "please pass the syrup" after father buys it and mother puts it on the table for you.

("On the Farm" continued on page 7)

("On the Farm" continued from page 6)

Later, about the first of May, weekends there would be plowing, planting, and harrowing to do and if you never held a walking plow to "break up" behind a pair of horses that are feeling their oats, you don't know what you have missed. About the time the plow hits a rock that is out of sight without any warning the plow goes easier and the horses go faster and you are sucked up in a vacuum that if you come out of without any broken bones you are lucky. By the time the driver gets the horses stopped and you get onto your feet, the plow is tipped over out of the ground, you have to drag it back ten or fifteen feet and start in where you hit the rock, either to the right or left of it, and hope she doesn't jump out again. Along about four p.m. the horses get a little wire edge worked off but by that time you are so damned tired that it doesn't make much difference anyway. So you unhitch from the plow, take the team to the house, unharness them, put them in their stalls, and then head up into the pasture after the ever-loving cows.

If you are lucky you can hear a bell after walking about twenty minutes or half an hour, that is, if the wind is in the right direction. If it isn't you listen and strain your ears till you can hear cowbells in any and all directions. Finally you find them eating and working away from the barn to the back side of the pasture. You get in front of them, turn them around, and take account of stock to see if they are all headed for home, and you had better not go too far before you find out or you will have a longer walk back if one or two are missing. Cows are all different. Some you can leave behind and they will come to the barn if all the others are driven home but others had soon stay out all night alone.

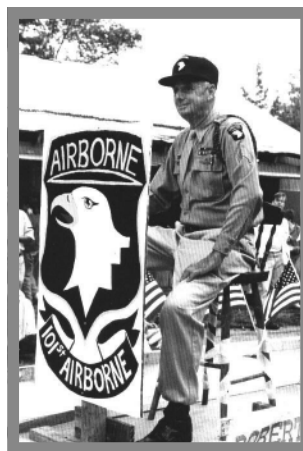
Our pasture, as most pastures of farmers in the little towns in those days, was ninety percent woods so its little wonder that I got lost one night the summer I was nine- years-old, and I guess I would have been lost yet if I hadn't grabbed a cow by the tail, put the brush to her, and told her to git for home. I used to run a little when I was in high school but that was far the fastest half mile I ever made.

When school closed in June we really got down to work. Usually the first two weeks we would peel a little pulp to be sawed in the fall and hauled out of the woods when the snow got deep enough to cover some of the rocks. Of course, the garden had to be weeded and hoed, and in the morning while the dew was on the potatoes, it had to have an application of arsenate of lead to kill the bugs. Then, of course, haying would start the first day of July and we would hay until school would start in September. By haying I mean second crop and oats weather green for fodder or as grain to thresh.

We used to get in a few minutes at night before dark to play pass with a yarn ball or to pick some field strawberries and sell them to get a couple dollars to buy firecrackers with and then the night before the fourth go up on the hill to shoot

them off and watch for sky rockets fired off on Dummer's Beach by kids who didn't have to pick wild strawberries and hull them and sell them for .35 a qt.

About twice during the summer after the evening chores were done we would take our long bamboo poles and go down on what we called Birch Point and catch a pail full of white perch or go to Hills Pond and catch horn pout until we ran out of bait and then come home. 'Twas fun to hear the old grandfather frogs croak and not so much fun to feel the hot-footed minges chewing on you till you seemed to be on fire all over but who could let a few little minges keep them from fishing, surely not a "farmer boy"!



My Hero

My hero is gone - Jake (Robert) Tripp was as tough as they make them. From the humble backwoods of Granville, Jake was exposed to the world by being in the 101st Airborne in World War II. He jumped into Normandy on the night before D-Day, was shot, returned to his unit, then jumped into Holland, got shot again, then was in the Battle of the Bulge. He received two Purple Hearts, the Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Silver and Gold Stars. Anyone who has seen *Saving Private Ryan* or *The Band of Brothers* has seen what Jake went through with thousands of other heroes. I once asked him how many were in his unit at the beginning of the war. He replied, "Over 700." At the end of the war, 17 were left.

We all need to be reminded of the men and women in uniform throughout the years who have made it possible for us to live in freedom

Andy Duris, from whom I purchased the Burnt Hill Blueberry Farm, a veteran of World War I, was to have helped me run the farm but he passed away before I could learn the berry business. Jake stepped in and taught me. We shared the hazards of burning, spraying, and maintaining our farms. We had different buyers and patrons for our crops so we coexisted without being in competition. We shared joys and sorrows for over thirty-six years, and now the end has come. Goodbye "South Forty" - my hero.

PS I was born in Torrington, Connecticut, and Jake was born in Winsted. Five miles separated our birth places.

~ Jack Cable



Why the Assessors Want to More Than Double Their Budget

Last issue, I pontificated *ad nauseum* about values and the levy in Heath. I threatened to address in this issue of the *Herald* why the Assessors want to increase their own budget despite your skyrocketing real estate taxes. Here goes:

I've been an assessor for a decade now. In that time, we have not had a clerk. We have, however, hired a consultant for the triennial (every-three-years) full revaluation required by the State Department of Revenue - I'll discuss this later. As far as Val Kaempfer (our esteemed chair) and I have been able to glean from our recent research, we seem to be the only town in Franklin County (and possibly in the Commonwealth, for that matter) that doesn't have a clerk (or "assistant" or "working assessor"). When my wife was asked by an assessor in Buckland (where Pat works) who the clerk was and she replied that we didn't have one, the lady looked at her with some horror and said "But - who does the *work*?"

Well, we do. This clerical whirl includes the river of motor vehicle excise tax adjustments (these occur whenever a resident changes the registration on their car); recording deed changes (due to sales, deaths, divorces, marriages, and tax takings); handling legal notifications (often with deadlines) such as Chapter 61 forms being mailed, elderly exemption applications, abatement applications, legal exemption forms from charitable corporations; submitting the "recap" to the State Department of Revenue, and, finally, fielding taxpayer, realtor, forester, and appraiser inquiries for copies of our records and maps.

In other towns, a large part of these responsibilities is borne by an assistant of some sort. Assistants, generally, do not perform the official acts of the Board such as identifying parcels, measuring property, deciding classification and value of property, holding hearings when needed, ruling on abatement and exemption applications, "recap" and setting of the tax rate, and deciding other legal matters, but they will help with clerical aspects of these processes.

So, what's an assistant cost? Here's a comparison of the FY06 Heath assessors' budget with those of various other area towns:

Town	Assessors' Budget	Clerk/ Ass't Pay	Clerk/Assistant Hours
Ashfield	\$49,200	\$30,000	Full-time + 10 hr helper
Charlemont	\$34,597	\$15 per hour	20 hours
Colrain	\$33,673	\$15 per hour	20 hours
Hawley	\$11,000	\$14 per hour	8 hours (add'l to town clerk duties)
Heath	\$10,400	\$0	No clerk
Rowe	\$32, 500	\$15 per hour	10 hours

As you can see, Heath's assessor operation has been a bargain. The town closest to Heath's situation might be Hawley, even though it is a smaller town. We're similar in that they have little commercial property (if any) and we have only a few commercial parcels. The overall number of parcels in Hawley, however, is about 300 (large tracts are owned by the state there), compared to Heath's approximately 970 -almost 400 of which are in Mohawk Estates. Mohawk Estates' parcels account for a disproportionately large percentage of clerical effort as they are so inexpensive that they turn over a lot.

To us, bureaucratically speaking, a parcel is a parcel, whether it's 200 acres with a mansion or ¼ acre in Mohawk Estates, with nothing but a fire pit on it. If we have three times the number of parcels that they have in Hawley, we have at least three times the amount of viewing, classifying, recording, inquiring, modifying, complaint-handling, and decision-requiring things to do in Heath.

So, we are asking for \$5,000 additional to our FY 06 budget for an assistant. This breaks down to eight hours per week at \$12 per hour. We would require that whoever fills this position must have gone through Department of Revenue training, hence the astronomical hourly rate. Val has offered to do this work for the town, so we have submitted an article for town meeting about having a board member serve in this capacity. If we are able to do this, we will once again have weekday business hours. Having to use the 2 ½ hours of our weekly board meetings for public inquiries and clerical tasks has never been ideal.

There is precedent for an assessors' assistant in Heath. Before I was on board, the Board briefly had a clerk. It didn't work out and was not continued at that time. We have been discussing this need as long as I have been a member. Now that we have an interim (read "annual") revaluation process - which started in FY06 for us - the deadlines and paperwork for setting a tax rate have gotten just that much more complex. Frankly, I, personally, put a lot of hours in last year and won't be able to do so in the future. An assistant position would provide some stability for this river of paper we produce.

("Assessors' Report" continued on page 9)

(“Assessors’ Report” continued from page 8)

In FY07, we are also asking for \$10,000 additional to our FY06 budget for “reval consulting.” The next “full” reval is FY08. As I said above, historically, we have paid for a consultant (about \$3,000 to \$4,000 each time, since I’ve been on the Board) to assist in this triennial process. The person we have used in the past decade has done a minimal job stewarding the process through the Department of Revenue bureaucratic maze.

As the market has erupted over the past few years, raising our town’s collective value from about \$50 million two years ago to over \$79 million for FY06, the Board feels that we need to have someone take a closer look at our work. In fact, we’re pretty confident that we’ve done a pretty good job of assessing (and have had some unhappy taxpayers wave appraisals from banks in our faces which, quite honestly, have confirmed that), but we have not entered every house in Heath in years (if ever, for some). We feel that the time to pursue a complete reval inspection is now, with the FY08 reval upon us and given market conditions.

To do so, we want to hire a different consultant (the one we have been using is not notoriously great at doing inspections), and have that person, over the coming two fiscal years, inspect all houses in Heath. At an inspection rate of about \$35 per house, this will mean an expenditure of \$10,000 in FY07 and possibly \$10,000 for reval consulting services again in FY08 – the consultant will work with the Department of Revenue in that year actually calculating the reval paperwork – just as our previous consultant did.

The budgets of the other towns above don’t break out their consultant fees. I’d bet, however, that most smaller municipalities with no in-house professional appraisers hire consultants on, at least, a somewhat regular basis.

So, how much does this cost each property owner? If you read the last issue of the *Herald*, you might remember my droning on about the infamous “levy,” the portion of what we “raise and appropriate” at town meeting that must come from local real and personal property taxes. It is this “levy,” which, in Heath, was almost \$1.4 million last year for a town of 800+ souls, that is the problem. Your tax bill is directly based on it. As the levy increases, you can pretty well bet that your real estate taxes will increase (whether, generally, assessed values rise or fall).

So, if the Assessors want another \$5,000 for a clerk and another \$10,000 for reval consulting, how much does that \$15,000 impact your bill? The method to calculate how much this (or anything else, for that matter) impacts your bill is as follows:

Generally: $\text{Levy} / \text{Total Assessed Value} = \text{Rate}$

Fiscal '06: $\$1,399,180 / \$79,363,601 = .01763$ (or \$17.63 per \$1,000)

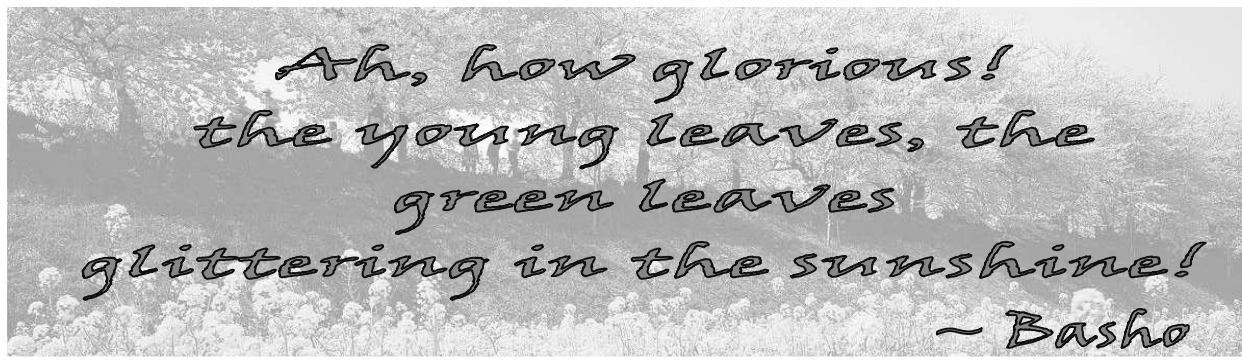
If we increase the levy by \$15,000 because of the Assessors’ Office, assuming (incorrectly) that everything else stays the same in FY07, then the rate would be:

$\$1,414,180 / \$79,363,601 = \$17.82$ per thousand (up 19¢)

If your property is worth \$200,000, then your bill would increase \$38 (the value X 19¢) for this one addition to the budget. Essentially, given the FY06 numbers, every \$100,000 that is added to the levy would add *about* \$1.25 to the rate (about \$250 to the tax bill on a \$200,000 home).

As with all budgetary decisions, it is up to you, the voters of the town. We, as assessors, can suggest expenditures (as can the Selectboard or other town officials), but you make the decision. We’re asking to more than double our budget with this extra \$15,000. Compared to other towns, we’re still a pretty good deal. We feel that we need a clerk and that it is a good time to have an outside audit, if you will, of our assessing work, given the crazy market of the past few years. Nothing, however, comes free. It’s your call.

~ Henry Leuchtman



*Ah, how glorious!
the young leaves, the
green leaves
glittering in the sunshine!*
~ Basho

Letter to the Editor:



If you have not read the record of the Heath Centennial you have missed not only a good account of early Heath, you have also missed a few humorous accounts of our forebears. Below find a page from the *Heath Centennial Book 1785-1885*, (*Historical Address by John H. Thompson, pp. 58-59*) which is available in the Heath Free Public Library. I find it very interesting history with very interesting anecdotes. Let's hope our descendants have as good a sense of our history in the making,

~ Doug Stetson

...a young man should be settled as colleague pastor, and Oct. 31, 1838, Calvin Butler was so settled, and he was dismissed March 17, 1840. Mr. Butler was a graduate of Dartmouth, with a good acquaintance with books, but rather lacking in knowledge of business matters. He was hardly open to the charge made against a former pastor, for the only instance of his "entangling himself with the cares of this life" was in his dealings with his pig. He undertook to keep a pig, and to that end built a fence, apparently under the impression that the pig was an animal given to jumping fences. He built the fence so high that there was no danger of any pig jumping over it, but overlooked the fact that he had left ample space to crawl through at the bottom. Having finished the fence and put the occupant inside, he seemed to suppose that a high fence was sufficient for all its wants, or else he became so absorbed in writing his sermon that he forgot about anything else. At any rate he failed and neglected to give the pig anything to eat. The pig waited sometimes growing more and more indignant at his inhospitable treatment, and then seemed to conclude that it was time to look up another boarding place. When the high fence came under his notice he gave a grunt of satisfaction, and walked through underneath it and strolled across the Common. A neighbor sent word that the pig was taking his departure, and the clergyman rushed out, not stopping for his hat, and gave chase. Overtaking the animal he attempted to drive him back, but without using any of the diplomacy by which the Irishman induced his pig to go the way he wanted him to go by leading the deluded animal into the belief he was going in the opposite direction. With his little eyes twinkling with the obstinacy of his race, and the recollection of short rations, the pig sometimes stood at bay, then dodged by and then bolted between the legs of his owner, while the clergyman, bareheaded, with the perspiration streaming down his face, tried in vain to drive the deserting pig back to the enclosure of the high fence. When the story was told about town there was a general feeling that not much was to be expected of a clergyman so ignorant of pig - and of human nature.

Art Lessons Offered at the Community Hall/Heath Senior Center

Under the auspices of the Heath Senior Center, Heath artist Fred Burrington is instructing an art class in water media at the Heath Community Hall-Senior Center on Tuesdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Anyone 16 years of age and up, is welcome although space is limited. The fee is \$10 per class.

For further information, contact Senior Center Coordinator Eileen Tougas at 337-8558.



Esther Gallup, Grace Crowningshield, and Ruth Johnson pictured with art instructor, Fred Burrington.



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



FREE TASTINGS



FREE TOURS LATE MAY - DECEMBER

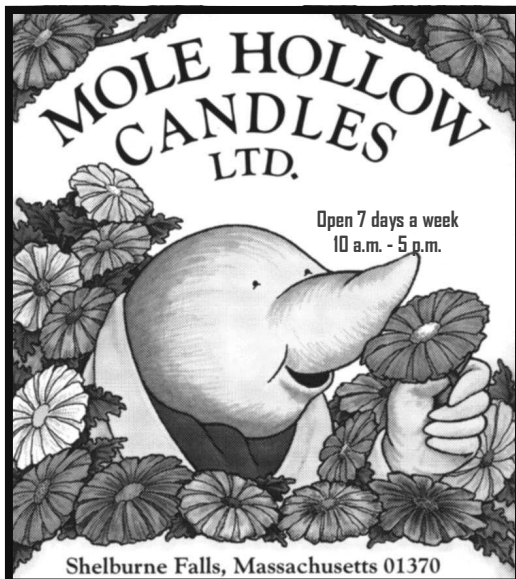


**1000 Mohawk Trail
Shelburne, Massachusetts 01370
Tel. 413-625-6527**

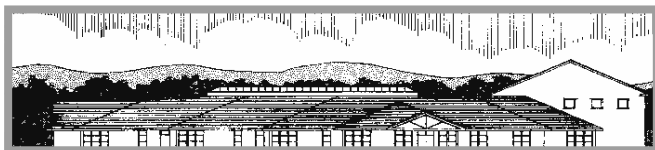


337-5716

Charlemont • 339-4915



413-773-1818 / fax 773-1881

Heath School News

By Susan Todd

General Heath Day at Heath School

On Friday, March 10, General William Heath made his first visit to the Heath School. Having just celebrated a significant birthday in early March (269 years!), General Heath was serenaded with a birthday song by all the Heath children. Accompanying General Heath was Colonel Hugh Maxwell, the man who helped incorporate the town of Heath in 1785 and who named Heath after his revered commanding officer in the Revolutionary War. General Heath served under George Washington.

Bob Gruen and Dave Gott portrayed General Heath and Colonel Maxwell with great verve. They were dressed in reproduction 18th century clothing provided by the Teachers' Center at Old Deerfield specifically for this occasion. Their conversation began by asking the children how they would go about naming a town. This was the perfect question to engage children in imagining what it would be like to go through the process. (They were reminded later that it was not unlike naming their new newspaper, which is going to appear in the next few weeks, under the guidance of Rebekah Boyd-Owens and Tamara Sloan-Anderson.) Bob and Dave did a wonderful job of making crystal clear a very complicated concept and some detailed historical information. We are all very grateful to them for taking the time to make history come alive for our children.

To round out the day, after lunch the History to Go people from the Deerfield Teachers' Center brought 18th century reproduction children's clothing to Heath's Open Space for children to try on. Each child (even the reluctant ones) got to don an outfit and think about how people in Washington's (and Heath's) time used to dress. We have photographs of all the children for the yearbook and for record.

We are indebted to the chapter on General Heath, written by William Wolf for *The Book of Heath*, edited by Sue (Silvester) Samoriski for providing background information. We also acknowledge the support of the Massachusetts Historical Society for sending us a CD of scanned copies of two letters - one written by General Washington to General Heath and one written by Heath to Colonel Maxwell. The school presented copies to Dave Howland for display at the Historical Society. We have copies here in our library for our students to study.

Now we can no longer say that General Heath never "visited" Heath! We hope this day helps children understand the connection our small rural community has to the wider history of our country.

Heath School Parent-Teacher Partnership News

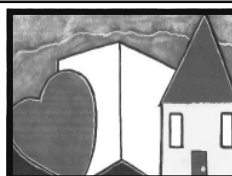
This winter the PTP has supported a range of other school enrichments for our children, including basketball and Drama Club. Drama Club was made especially exciting this year through collaboration with Double Edge Theatre Company of Ashfield. The students gave a rousing performance of the *Ghost of El Cardillo* at the school in early March after a month of committed, intensive rehearsals. They will perform the piece again in April in Ashfield at the Double Edge Theater - a real thrill for all our budding thespians!

The PTP recently concluded a Spring Seed Catalog Fund-raiser in hopes of encouraging all Heath youth to raise produce for entry into the Heath Fair. We are excited to support a new initiative: The Master Gardener's Workshop Series for families and Heath residents featuring our local talent. Look for more information around town soon! We will also sponsor a new after-school gardening enrichment for students, as well as our annual School Grounds Improvement Day.

With spring comes the arrival of baseball and we will, of course, support our youngsters in t-ball and baseball. Come watch the games and enjoy refreshments this year as the PTP will, for the first time, be providing food concessions as a fund-raiser.

Finally, the community is invited to join us on the third Friday of each month for Family Movie Night.

~ Dana Blackburn, Co-chair

**The Friends of the Heath School Library****Continental Breakfast**

The Friends will hold their Annual Continental Breakfast prior to and during the Annual Town Meeting beginning at 8:30 a.m. on May 6.

Our menu will include quiche and deviled eggs as well as a selection of tempting baked goods, coffee, tea, and juice, for your enjoyment.

All proceeds will go, as always, to the Heath School Library.

Come and join us for a good start to this important day!

THE MOHAWK DISTRICT'S FINANCING CONUNDRUM

(A report by the Heath Finance Committee)

A conundrum is often defined as an intricate and difficult problem with only a conjectural answer. Our current problem briefly stated is "how can member towns of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) continue to finance all its schools in the face of declining enrollment and declining support from the State and still maintain quality education programs?" Seems to fit the definition! There is general agreement by town and school officials that the issue has become critical and must be addressed. The following outlines what we perceive as three major problem areas for examination: Regional School Funding Issues, Intra-Regional School Options, and Extra-Regional School Options. This will be followed by a few facts about school budget(s).

REGIONAL SCHOOL FUNDING ISSUES

These issues focus primarily on events of the past three years that have seen State support wane and local taxpayers picking up the slack.

- "The real answer for Mohawk and other western Mass schools losing population is the Foundation Budget to be calculated at the state level accurately, which is not the case currently." This is a quote from the Mass Association of Regional Schools (MARS). The Foundation Budget (FB) estimates the cost of typical school operations and provides the basis for the amount of Chapter 70 Education Aid funds to be distributed to communities. For years there have been complaints about the FB and the fact it does not reflect operating costs of regional schools as compared with city schools.
- Chapter 71 Transportation Aid (busing) funding has not been fully funded as originally promised to regional schools.
- The formula for distributing Chapter 70 monies has been tinkered with ever since it was developed in 1993 and continues to this day. It is an effort to be fair with all 351 cities and towns in the State, a noble objective. However, since FY04, when the State reduced Chapter 70 monies to the MTRSD by \$1.4 million (20%), the State has level-funded, in fact lowered that Aid for FY07, thereby putting great pressure on the local taxpayers to maintain an adequate educational program.
- Special Education (SPED) costs, for example, have risen 45.4% since FY03, from \$2,440,918 to \$3,548,469 in FY06. SPED costs represent about 22% of the total operating budget. Increases in big-ticket items like that cannot be sustained without raising local taxes or increasing State Aid. The MTRSD used \$520,000 of E&D funds (Free Cash type money) in FY04 and \$200,000 in FY05 to help reduce assessments. There was none left for FY06! Even with the help of those funds, school assessments rose 11.8% and 13% respectively for those years.
- Economic growth in western Franklin County has not really recovered from the losses of major employers like Yankee Atomic and Kendall Mills. Their demise is believed to have contributed to declining enrollment. In an effort to adapt to the loss of students and loss of income, grades have been combined, staff laid off, and programs cut, but apparently not enough. It is difficult for educational institutions to adapt to these conditions and still maintain quality operations. We also suggest that local economic growth policy be reviewed to include the restrictive uses of land that do not encourage appropriate economic growth necessary to supporting schools and other local services.
- We don't know at this time whether or not the Legislature can or will help us or other regional schools with our problems. (We are not alone in these matters.) Over the last three years State budgets have been completed by June 30, but our town meetings are in May. This situation suggests that voting on the MTRSD budget should be postponed to June at least, something we have done occasionally in the past. Further, we believe the current Mohawk "blue" budget needs a lot of work both on the expense and income sides. The "yellow" budget represents the closing of the Buckland/Shelburne School, which at this point seems unlikely to happen. In fact parents and taxpayers of Heath have expressed a need to learn much more about what is involved in school closings.
- Lobbying efforts to get the attention of Legislators seems to be underway. Massachusetts compares badly with other states when it comes to sharing education costs; the State's priorities need to be altered to give more weight to public education.
- Such lobbying efforts need to focus on the advantages and needs of regional/rural education, not just the money. Things are different out here!

INTRA-REGIONAL SCHOOL OPTIONS

- The Report of the Contingency Planning Committee was unique in that it attempted to quantify educational, financial, and Regional Agreement consequences of closing schools and the related problems of excess space. However, when its proposed best option was to close the Buckland/Shelburne School and then possibly other schools, the reaction of parents and taxpayers reflected concerns about (1) the disruptive and traumatic impact on families in closing any elementary school, especially the busing of small children long distances (2) the current and (possible) continuing decline in the quality of student education, (3) the effect of large assessment increases on towns' abilities to fund non-education town services and (4) the effect of continuing significant tax increases on citizens with limited resources.

("Finance Committee Report" continued on page 14)

(“Finance Committee Report” continued from page 13)

- As a result of these concerns Superintendent Buoniconti has proposed changing the language of the Regional Agreement at this year’s Annual Meetings so that the School Committee (SC) can move children around within the District as it sees fit, including the closing of schools. Thus, it is hoped/expected this effort at district control will result in more reasonable budgets and better use of education resources. However, comments by parents and taxpayers of Heath at a recent public meeting suggest “making haste slowly” with regards to altering the Agreement now, as was noted by Doug Stetson of the FinCom. Currently any change in the Agreement requires a unanimous vote by all towns thereby giving “Home Rule” a voice in what happens to our schools.
- Serious questions arise as to how mortgages and bonds will be handled and paid for if a school or schools close. Also, what is to happen to closed schools? Those questions have not been answered satisfactorily yet.
- Planning for the future has not been examined in any great detail; all seems to be focused on the immediate financial crisis. Will closing schools address the fundamental problem of out-of-control annual increases in the budget? We need some numbers to discount that possibility.
- Recently a range of closings have been proffered: children of Heath and Colrain go to Buckland, Heath and Colrain combine, 7th and 8th graders go back to their respective elementary schools, make Heath a northern school and Sanderson a southern school and abandon others to Mohawk, consolidate all grades at the Middle/High School, etc., etc. Can towns cooperate that much? Can they clearly perceive reasonable results to any of the options and sacrifice accordingly? And what about unintended consequences of these options? What will be lost in Choice students or parents opting out of the MTRSD altogether?

EXTRA-REGIONAL SCHOOL OPTIONS

- What are the implications of withdrawing Heath’s Elementary School from the District?
- Can the Town of Heath set up its own School Board/Committee for operational purposes?
- What is involved in setting up a Charter School for Heath?
- Would it be feasible for the Town to engage a private school operator to run Heath Elementary?
- What happens to State support for the school mortgage should Heath withdraw?
- Would other towns support a Heath “breakaway” and would the District agree to break its lease on our property?
- How attractive would an independent Heath School be to students from other towns?

Obviously, there are still many, many questions to be answered before a clear vision of the future can be articulated. The FinCom has not taken a position on any of these matters yet including the District’s budget for FY07. As noted much work has to be done, not only on the school budget, but on the Town’s budget as well. We have been meeting with the Selectboard and department heads and will keep you informed. Also, we regret the loss of Doug Stetson from the FinCom. He decided to not run again.

A FEW FACTS

School costs vs. Heath’s Tax Levy FY06: A total of \$895,155 vs. a Levy of \$1,399,180
or 64%. Of that, MTRSD’s share is \$694,168.

Facilities costs FY06: Heath \$99,859; Colrain \$130,843; Ashfield \$119,260;
Buckland/Shelburne \$170,440; Hi/Middle School \$682,040

- Salaries and benefits, SPED and the Central Office/Administration account for about 70% of District budgets. (So-called accountability requirements take a lot of administrative time and effort!)
- Since FY03, the District’s assessments have increased 33.4% from \$5,663,569 to \$7,771,303 in FY06. Chapter 70 represented 54.1% of Net School Spending in FY03; in FY06 it is 40.7%
- School enrollment began to decline after October 2001. By October 2002 it was down from 1711 to 1621. By October 2005 the number was down to 1316. That trend continues, but not so dramatically.
- Heath now has 55 students in the Middle/High School and 47 in K-6 at Heath, but there are actually about 85 at Heath including students from other towns and the pre-school.

~ Heath Finance Committee:
Dave Howland
Ned Wolf
Budge Litchfield
Jeff Simmons
Doug Stetson

Are You Animal-Ready?

With all the recent natural disasters (hurricanes, floods, and fires) everybody is looking at these disasters to see how ready they would be if an emergency happened in their area. We should all have emergency plans ready for ourselves, but what about emergency response plans for our animals, such as special needs they might have or how they would be transported. Would a relative or friend take them in?

The Town of Heath is also updating its "Animals in Need" plan. Please note that emergency shelters for humans have a policy stating "No pets allowed." This is due to people with allergies to pet dander and also because some pets may act differently due to a change in their surroundings.

Accompanying this article is a list provided by Dawn Peters, chair of the Board of Health, that might help you prepare a plan. If you have any questions, please call me at 337-4742 or Dawn at 337-4014, leave a message, if necessary, and we will get in touch with you.

~ Timothy Lively

Emergency Management Director

In the event of a disaster, if you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to evacuate them, too. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, is likely to result in their being injured, lost, or worse.

So prepare now for the day when your pets may have to leave your home.

HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO TAKE YOUR PETS

Because of states' health and safety regulations and other considerations, only service animals who assist people with disabilities will be allowed inside human evacuation shelters. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to find shelter for your animals in the midst of a disaster, so plan ahead.

Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area to check policies on accepting pets and restrictions on number, size, and species. Keep a list of "pet friendly" places, including phone numbers, with other disaster information and supplies. Call ahead for reservations.

Ask friends, relatives, or others inside the affected areas whether they could shelter your animals and be prepared to house them separately, if necessary. Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency. Include 24-hour phone numbers.

ASSEMBLE A PORTABLE PET DISASTER-SUPPLIES KIT

Whether you are away from home for a day or a week, you'll need essential supplies. Keep items in an accessible place and store them in sturdy containers that can be carried easily (duffel bags, covered trash containers, etc) Your pet disaster-supplies kit should include;

- 1) Medications and medical records (stored in a waterproof container) and a first aid kit.
- 2) Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and/or labeled carriers to transport pets safely and ensure that your animals can't escape.

- 3) Current photos of your pets in case they get lost.
- 4) Food (replaced every two months), potable water (plan on your pet consuming one quart per 10 pounds of their body weight per day), bowls, cat litter/pan, can opener, paper towels, and spray disinfectant to clean animal wastes.
- 5) Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to foster or board your pets.
- 6) Pet beds and toys, if easily transportable.

KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Often warnings are issued hours, even days, in advance. At the first hint of disaster, act to protect your pet.

- 1 Call ahead to confirm emergency shelter arrangements for you and your pets.
- 2 Check to be sure your pet disaster-supplies are ready to take at a moment's notice.
- 3 Bring all pets into the house so that you won't have to search for them if you have to leave in a hurry.
- 4 Make sure all dogs and cats are wearing collars and securely-fastened, up-to-date identification. Attach the phone number and address of your temporary shelter, if you know it, or of a friend or relative outside the disaster area. You can buy temporary tags or put adhesive tape on the back of your pet's ID tag, adding information with an indelible pen. You may not be home when the evacuation order comes. Find out if a trusted neighbor would be willing to take your pets and be willing to meet you at a prearranged location. This person should be comfortable with your pets, know where your animals are likely to be, know where your pet disaster supplies kit is kept, and have a key to your home. If you use a pet-sitting service, they may be available to help, but discuss this possibility well in advance.

Planning and preparation will enable you to evacuate with your pets quickly and safely. But bear in mind that animals act differently under stress. Outside your home and in your car, keep dogs securely leashed. Transport cats in cat carriers. Don't leave animals unattended anywhere they can run off. The most trustworthy pets may panic, hide, try to escape, or even bite or scratch.. And when you return home, give your pets time to settle back into their routine. Consult your veterinarian if behavior problems persist.

IF YOUR PET IS LOST

If your pet becomes lost during or after a disaster, remain calm and assess the situation. Pay daily visits to local shelters, animal control facilities, veterinary offices, and kennels. You can also post pictures of your lost pet.

If your pet is in need of rescue, never put yourself or others at risk. Do not attempt to rescue your pet if your life or health or that of others may be placed in danger. Contact your local emergency management authority, veterinarian or animal shelter for assistance.

("Are You Animal-Ready?" continued on page 16)

Selectboard's Report

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

Regular Business - The Board has been meeting with Town departments to discuss budgets for the 2007 fiscal year in anticipation of the Annual Town Meeting on **May 6**. Employee performance reviews are under way. We have had several meetings with members of the Planning Board and Board of Health to review the new camper/trailer bylaw and related BOH regulations, especially the camper/trailer inspection and occupancy permit program. There have also been several meetings with our school committee members to discuss the proposed budgets and changes to the regional agreement.

School Concerns - Several meetings will be taking place in town and in the Mohawk Trail Regional School District to discuss the future of the schools in the region. There has been much discussion about the declining enrollment, escalating town assessments, and the potential need for consolidation of schools. Articles will be placed on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting on May 6, 2006, asking the Town to approve changes to the regional agreement to allow the District to determine where the children may be placed within the district schools. Several proposals are under discussion with many unanswered questions concerning them. Consideration of the proposed budget and changes to the regional agreement at the Annual Town Meeting may have profound and irreversible consequences for the future of our schools. The Board wishes to encourage the participation of all residents in these discussions to insure that voters understand the issues and make informed decisions. The Board, with the help of the School Committee, will do its best to try to make as much information as possible available to the Town. Please contact the Board with your concerns, observations, or ideas

New Transfer Station Attendant - Bud Kaempfer has retired from his positions as transfer attendant and also as constable. A reception was held for him at the Senior Center on March 14 to celebrate his many years of service to the town and to wish him well. The Board wishes to express its appreciation for Bud's good work.

Bob Herman has been hired to manage the transfer station. We welcome him and look forward to working with him in the future.

New Phone System - A new phone system has been installed in Sawyer Hall with individual voice mail for each town department. The new system includes two additional phone lines so several extensions may be in use simultaneously. This system will free up management time and provide a user-friendly process to contact the desired department.

Heath On-line - Take some time to visit the Town's Web site at www.townofheath.org. You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, school information, and much more. The Web site is a work in progress. Thanks to the computer committee for getting the project up and running. You may contact the Board at

BOS@townofheath.org. Send messages to any board or individual via the e-mail address, or visit the Heath Web site.

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

("Are You Animal-Ready?" continued from page 15)

CARING FOR BIRDS IN AN EMERGENCY

Birds should be transported in secure travel cages or carriers. In cold weather, wrap a blanket over the carrier and warm up the car before placing birds inside. During warm weather, carry a plant mister to mist the birds' feathers periodically. Do not put water inside the carrier during transport. Provide a few slices of fresh fruit and vegetables with high water content. Have a photo and leg bands for identification. If the carrier does not have a perch, line it with paper towels and change them frequently. Try to keep the carrier in a quiet area. Do not let the birds out of the cage or carrier.

ABOUT OTHER PETS

Reptiles

Snakes can be transported in a pillowcase but they must be transferred to more secure housing when they reach the evacuation site. If your snakes require frequent feedings, carry food with you. Take a water bowl large enough for soaking as well as a heating pad. When transporting house lizards, follow the same directions as for birds.

Pocket Pets

Small mammals (hamsters, gerbils, etc.) should be transported in secure carriers suitable for maintaining the animals while sheltered. Take bedding materials, food bowls, and water bottles.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call the New England Regional Office of The Humane Society of the United States (802)368-2790, e-mail www.hsusnero@sover.net, or check out the Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association Web site.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Have your emergency contact information in one easily accessible place. By filling in the information below, you will be prepared to reach the key animal disaster resources for your community.

Local Emergency Planning Commission
Department of Public Safety
Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
Local Animal Control Officer
Local Animal Shelter
Veterinarian
Massachusetts Veterinarian
Medical Association
Massachusetts Department of Agriculture
State Veterinarian
The Humane Society
Potential Evacuation Sites

~ Supplied by
Dawn Peters, Chair
Board of Health



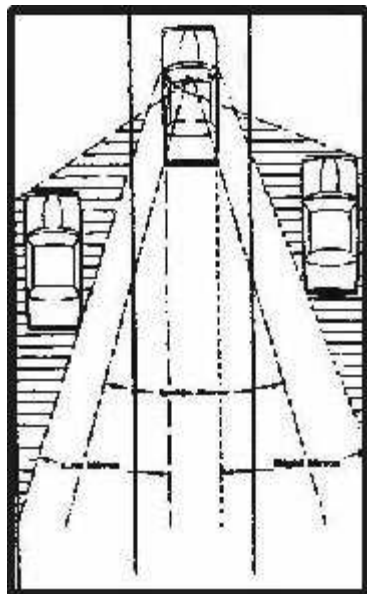
It's Your Health and Safety

Eliminating the Blind Zone Hazard

By Sheila Litchfield, RN, BSN

Certified Occupational Health Nurse

Some of the most serious preventable car accidents occur because of blind spots while driving! In fact, more than 600,000 lane change/merge accidents occur each year, resulting in over 200 deaths. Commonly drivers who cause these car accidents say they did not see the other vehicle.



Blind zone setting

Many of us first learned about blind zones in driver education class, and were taught to look over our shoulders before changing lanes and to adjust our vehicle side mirrors so that the sides of the car are just visible. However, the fact is that this mirror setting still leaves blind zones that make it necessary to take our eyes away from the road ahead to look back before changing lanes. Most of us have come to accept that a blind spot in our rearview field of vision is a fact of driving life. But this doesn't have to be so, says engineer George Platzer, a member of the Society of Automotive Engineers and a consultant who holds several patents on mirror design. He's developed a simple rearview mirror-adjustment system that eliminates blind spots.

"My plan requires no additional equipment or expense and only a slight change in your visual driving habits," says Platzer. His concept is simple. Rotate your mirrors about seven degrees outward to cover the field of view normally missed, i.e., your blind spot. "Most people's side mirrors are aimed back along the flanks of their cars," Platzer says, "but much of the area seen in the outside mirror is already covered by your inside rearview mirror. You might as well point those side mirrors out where they can do some good."

Here is Platzer's process: Sitting in the driver's seat, lean to your head left until your head just touches the side window. With your head at this point, adjust your left side mirror so the edge of your fender is barely visible on the inside edge of the mirror. Now lean your head right to place your head at the car's centerline and make the same adjustment to the right mirror. Your three mirrors will now offer a panoramic view of the area behind and to the sides of your car. Here's how the system works in traffic. The inside mirror is your primary mirror. It shows you everything except the blind zone. The outside mirrors show you only the blind zones. When changing lanes, first look in the inside mirror

to observe traffic to the rear. Then look in the outside mirror to see if there's a car in the blind zone.

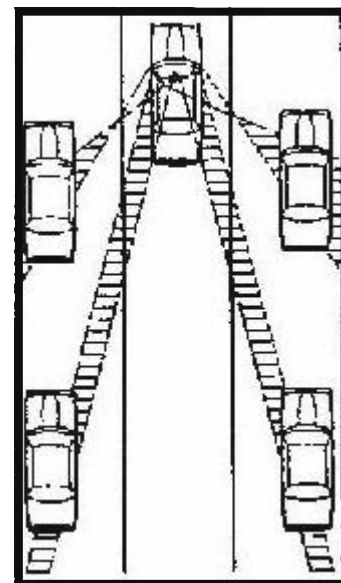
A car passing from behind will first appear in your center rearview mirror. Before it leaves that mirror, it will appear in the side mirror, and as it passes from the side mirror's view, it will appear in your peripheral vision. With your side mirrors in this position, all that's required is a quick glance at the outside mirror to see if a car is there, leaving your head facing the forward view.

A downside to Platzer's method is a loss of visual reference to your own vehicle: the fender edge you were used to seeing is now gone. But you'll soon adapt to the new position, as traffic behind you flows from your center mirror to your side mirrors (or vice versa if you're doing the passing) with nary a break in your visual contact. The end result of Platzer's mirror-adjustment method is almost unbroken visibility behind and to the sides of your car.

While Platzer's method is helpful for everyone, it's especially useful to older drivers whose peripheral vision and reaction times decrease with age. "Readjusting your mirrors eliminates the need to check over your shoulder," says Platzer, "that only takes a second, but at highway speeds you've traveled a hundred feet in that second." Another bonus is a reduction in glare from vehicle headlights following or passing you at night.

Please keep in mind that this is only good for vehicles with three mirrors, and may not be as effective for large trucks, buses, vans, and pickup trucks with campers on them where it may be necessary to see the edge of the rear of the vehicle to do a proper passing procedure.

Note: Go to our Web site at www.townofheath.org to see a PowerPoint presentation about how this works.



Blind zone / glare elimination setting

Support Heath Agriculture



Benson Place

Wonderfully Wild Blueberry Spread



- Made from unsprayed wild blueberries, grown at the Benson Place in Heath. Makes a great holiday gift or a kitchen staple.
- Available at the farm plus at Peter's Store, Avery's Store, Stillwaters Restaurant, Keystone Market, McCusker's Market, the Rte 91 Visitors' Center, Green Fields Market, Foster's Market, and Wild Oats Market in Williamstown.
- Contact us about the spread, this year's crop, or visiting the farm, (413) 337-5340, benplace@gis.net.



Berkshire Sweet Gold Maple Farm Heath, MA

Single-Batch, Single-Crop maple syrups in Italian glass from our family farm. Our small-batch methods produce varied and distinctive maple flavors in every bottle. Come taste something new drawn from maple's long history. Our recipe brochure includes meat, fish, vegetable, and salad dishes. Available at our farm stand on Route 8A, by order, and at fine arts & crafts shows. Farm visits are welcome.

(888) 576-2753 or BerkshireSweetGold.com

BURNT HILL BERRIES

Wild Native Blueberries



Pick Your Own from late July to mid August.
Call hotline for exact dates.

Blueberry Hotline: 413- 337- 4454

Burnt Hill Farm, 118 Flagg Hill Rd., Heath, MA

Freeman Farm

Grass-fed beef for your freezer.

Reserve a beeper in the spring.

Maple syrup, field brush hog mowing,
and hay also available.



**20 Town Farm Road
337-4766**

Heath Agricultural Society News

The hounds of spring are on winter's traces, as they say, and that means, in addition to sugaring and the return of grackles, red-winged blackbirds, and fox sparrows, planning for the Heath Fair is getting serious. Carol Sartz has been lining up wonderful music. Justin Lively has agreed to organize parking, taking over from Budge Litchfield who has done the job for the past umpteen years (and many thanks to Justin and to Budge). Tom Lively will be organizing the mowing. This job will need plenty of volunteers to fill the gap left by the passing of Carroll Stowe. If you have time and equipment and would like to participate call Tom at 337-4061. Camille Freeman will be organizing kids games. Her number is 337-4239. Give her a call if you have ideas or want to be involved.

Once again Carol-Ann Eldridge is in charge of the premium book/newspaper so you may soon be hearing from her. We pay for the publication by soliciting advertisements from businesses and families who send the Fair their greetings and good wishes. If you haven't had a chance to purchase an ad before and would like to, you can contact Carol-Ann by e-mail at CAENH@aol.com.

In May, as soon as the weather gets good and the black-flies are out we will begin our usual weekly work bees on Wednesday nights from 6:00 p.m. until dark. There is a lot to be done in preparation for the summer. We mow and mend fences, pick up trash and paint, plant flower boxes, clean and repair buildings and more. Please consider lending a hand more than once. Watch for posters and newspaper notices. You can call ahead to Pam Porter (337-5525) or just show up with shovels and rakes and implements of destruction. And bug stuff. If you can't make Wednesdays but still want to help out, give us a call and we might be able to arrange a special project.

The next meeting of the Agricultural Society is April 20, 7:00 p.m. at the Heath Elementary School. (Please note, this is a temporary change, from our usual 2nd Thursday of the month because of Holy Week and Maundy Thursday.) We will be considering a policy for use of the fairgrounds, putting finishing touches on the schedule of events, discussing some special projects, and, in general, making preparations for having a good time at the Fair. We would love to see you at the meeting.

~ Pam Porter

This section is free to Heath Farmers, and is made possible by the sales of Carroll Stowe's compilation "The Way it is in the Country." Agricultural producers should submit their information to *The Heath Herald*, P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346.

Heath Business Directory

Bald Mountain Pottery
625-8110

The Benson Place
Blueberries & Applesauce
337-5340

Fred Burrington
Artist
337-4302

D.C. Builders
Branch Hill Road
337-4705

Robert Delisle
Electrician
337-5716

Russell E. Donelson
Design/Construction/Cabinetry
337-4460

Jerry Ferguson
Handyman - Lic. Electrician
337-4317

Earl M. Gleason
Fire Equipment
337-4948

Heath Brook Studio
Glass and Baskets
337-5736

Maple Ledge Goldens
AKC Registered Golden Retrievers
337-4705

John Mooney
Custom Remodeling
337-8344

Wanda Mooney
Realtor
337-8344

Alan Nichols
Furniture Maker
337-6665

Tripp's Blueberries
Taylor Brook Road
337-4964

Paul Turnbull
Janice Boudreau
Commercial/Wedding Photographers
337-4033

Bonnie Wodin
Custom Gardens & Landscapes
337-5529

Support Your Local Businesses

If you would like more information about the Heath Enterprise Council, please call Alicia Tripp at 337-4964

CARLISLE WALLCOVERING
PAPERHANGING & INTERIOR PAINTING
MICHAEL CARLISLE 413-625-9733

FRANKLIN-WARE 30 Conway St.
Shelburne Falls
625-6470
A Division of **RICE**

Richard A. Sumner
Journeyman Electrician
Mass. License #E22622 • Vermont License #J1245
20A Eight A South • Charlemont, MA 01339
(413) 337-4845

A. L. Nichols Furniture
al.nichols.com
169 South Road alan@al-nichols.com
Heath, Massachusetts 01346 413-337-6665

Support Local Agriculture
Free 1 inch advertising space for local farmers.
Send copy to: *The Heath Herald*
P.O. Box 54
Heath, MA 01346
*Supported by a special grant made available
through the Dickinson Fund*

Dave Farrington 38 Years of Experience
Jacksonville, VT
802-368-7456
J.W. AUTO
Auto and Light Truck Repair
Elvis Presley Blvd., Rt. 100 S., 1/2 mile from center
ASE Certified Master Mechanic
Air Conditioning, Service Engine Lights, Auto Transmission

Maple House



The house on the hill with the view of yesteryear

Reward your friends and relatives with a restful night's sleep high in the hills of Rowe. They'll awake to a hearty homegrown breakfast in a 200-year old inn and family farm. See the stars, breathe clear fresh air, relax in the quiet beauty of spectacular views of the Berkshire Hills.

Lodging and Breakfast from \$45. Call for Reservations.

Middletown Hill Road (413) 339-0107 Rowe, MA 01367

A COLLEGE PREPARATORY DAY SCHOOL AT AN
AFFORDABLE TUITION FOR GRADES 7-12 AND POSTGRADUATE

THE ACADEMY AT CHARLEMONT



MOHAWK TRAIL, CHARLEMONT, MA 01339 • 413-339-4912
fax 413-339-4324 • E-Mail academy@charlemont.org

DC BUILDERS

Custom Homes - Remodeling
Licensed - Insured - Free Estimates

David Cote
413-337-4705

Don Cote
413-625-8383

MCCUSKER'S MARKET & DELI

SHELburne FALLS, MASSACHUSETTS

Quality Foods

New in our deli:

See our new vastly
improved cheese department!

625-9411



SMITH HARDWOOD FLOOR COMPANY

Installation, Sanding, Refinishing

Oak, ash, maple, birch, etc.—strip or plank

Free estimates, insured,

337-4305

Credit cards accepted.

Joshua Smith

RUSSELL E. DONELSON

61 Sumner Stetson Road
Heath, MA

Design/Construction/Cabinetry

To New and Existing Buildings

413-337-4460

Licensed/Insured



ROWE CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

Located in the beautiful Berkshires,
Rowe is widely respected as one of the finest small
conference centers in the country. We offer weekend
retreats with renowned leaders including John
Bradshaw, Malidoma & Sobonfu Some, and Alberto
Villoldo this season. For a beautiful free brochure
please contact: Rowe Conference Center
22 Kings Highway Road Rowe, MA 01367
(413) 339-4954

Wanda Mooney, CRS, GRI, SRES

(413) 337-8344 ext 1

(413) 625-6366 ext 13



Wanda
MOONEY

www.wandasellsrealestate.com
wanda@wandasellsrealestate.com



**The Baker
Pharmacy**

Tel: 625-6324

Week Days 8:30AM - 8PM

Saturdays 8:30AM - 5PM

Sundays & Holidays 9AM - 12 Noon

52 Bridge Street

Shelburne Falls



Library Lines

The Times They Are A-Changin'

...As the present now
Will later be past...
For the times they are a-changin'.
-Bob Dylan-



By Don Purrington

Daylight Savings Time began on Sunday, April 2. Everyone's internal clock will be off for the next week or two as we adjust to forcing ourselves asleep an hour earlier in the evening and then dragging out of bed an hour earlier the next morning. People are creatures of habit and change isn't easy for some of us.

The Heath Free Public Library has been through some changes recently. Charlene Churchill, Library Director for four and one-half years, bid a fond farewell to readers of this newspaper in the February/March issue. On Saturday, February 18, Library Trustees hosted a party for Charlene at the library to give her many friends a chance to thank her for a job well done and wish her well in the next phase of her career. Many hugs were exchanged, and laughter and recollections flowed freely. If you missed the party you can still drop by and see some photographs of the event.

I was appointed by the Trustees and Selectboard to replace Charlene as Director. I have worked here as the Library Assistant for four years, and I look forward to continuing to assist patrons with materials and activities to help educate, enrich, or just plain entertain themselves. I invite you to come in and browse, or just to say hello.

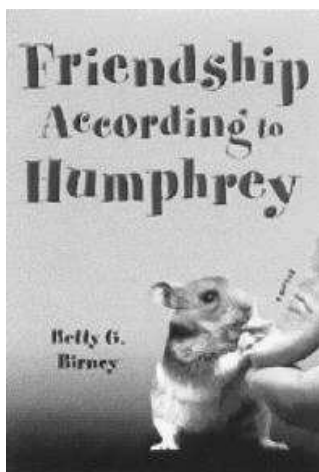
We also mark the end of an era as longtime Substitute Librarian Alli Thane-Stetson recently submitted her resignation. Alli was the Librarian from 1960 to 1961, then again from 1985 to 1996. Since 1996 she has been filling in at the library as needed to cover for absences due to vacations and illnesses. It was always fun to watch people's faces light up as they came into the library and spotted Alli sitting behind the circulation desk. Alli, we thank you for your many years of service and look forward to seeing you often in the library as a patron for many more years.

Preschool story hour has resumed on Friday mornings from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. On March 3 seven children celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday by listening to some of his books and making Cat In The Hat hats. On March 10 we read stories about feeding wild animals in the winter and then made bird feeders by stringing Cheerios on yarn. I think the participants ate more Cheerios than the birds will.

New at the Library: Books on CD: *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett, *The Painted Drum* by Louise Erdrich, *Belle Ruin* by Martha Grimes, and *No Country for Old Men* by Cormac McCarthy.

Adult Fiction Books: *The Thin Place* by Kathryn Davis, *Wild Animus* by Rich Shapero, *Beneath a Marble Sky* by John Shors. Non-fiction Adult Book: *Healthy Aging* by Andrew Weil, M.D.

Go to the New Materials link on the library Web site (<http://www.townofheath.org/library.html>) for more new titles.



Book Author to Visit Heath School

Children's book author Betty G. Birney, creator of that all-time favorite hamster, Humphrey, will be at the Heath Elementary School on Tuesday, May 23, to regale their many fans with the **WHOLE WHOLE WHOLE** story!

Two Humphrey books, *The World According to Humphrey* and *Friend-*

ship According to Humphrey have been published and a third, *Trouble According to Humphrey* (G.P.Putnam's Sons) is on its way in Spring '07.

In addition, Author Betty has recently published *The*

Seven Wonders of Sassafras Springs (Atheneum). All these books are available in the Heath School Library and the Heath Free Public Library as well as at your local bookstores. And in Fall '07, *The Princess and the Peabodys* will be published by HarperCollins.

Betty recently received the prestigious Christopher Award for *Friendship According to Humphrey*, the Louisiana Young Readers' Choice Award for 2006, and the Rhode Island Children's Book Award for 2006 and is on Award lists of several other states.

She has spent the last several months traveling around the country visiting schools to talk with children and teachers, something she says she **LOVES LOVES LOVES** to do!

For more info, games, and activities, check out www.bettygbirney.com.



Milestones

Tanya Christine Davin, MD, of Briarwood, NH, formerly of Heath, died February 1, 2006. Born in Greenfield, in 1972, she was the daughter of **Bruce and Elizabeth Pazmino Davin**, of Heath.

She was valedictorian of her graduating class at Mohawk Regional High School and while there was a student reporter for the *Heath Herald*. She graduated cum laude from Tufts University, and received her medical degree from the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Tanya completed her residency training in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at Bay State Medical Center. At her death, she was working as a hospitalist at Eliot Hospital in Manchester, NH.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by her husband, John Klunk of Bow, NH; her maternal grandparents, **Luis and Eva Pazmino** of Heath, her paternal grandparents, Thomas and Francis Davin of Ellenton, FL; an uncle, Fred Pazmino of Leyden, and her aunts, Susan Ploof of Orange, Marianne Gerry of Aurora, IL, **Carmen Donelson** of Heath, and Martha Ward of Buckland.

Memorial donations may be made to the Pappas Center for Neurooncology, Attn.: Colleen Anderson Yawkey, 9E, Massachusetts General Hospital, 55 Fruit Street, Boston, MA. 02114

Delores Maggio Courtney Hall, a resident of Heath, died February 14, 2006.

Born in Amherst on December 4, 1930, she lived in Springfield, and, in 1990, she moved to Heath.

She was employed at the Anchorage Nursing Home in Shelburne Falls in the activities department for many years.

Her husband of thirty-one plus years, Harry E. Hall, predeceased her. She is survived by three sons, James F. Courtney, Sr. of Springfield, Daniel Hall of Chicopee, and Gary V. Courtney of Hampden; two sisters, Joyce E. Lore of Anaheim, CA, and Marlene D. Censki of South Windsor, CT; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren, and her companion, Robert Avondo, of Monson.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, 31 Capital Drive, West Springfield, MA 01089.

Williamena "Willy" Lattrell, of Surfside, SC, mother of **Bill Lattrell** of Heath, died on February 4, 2006. Born on November 3, 1926, she was the daughter of Luther and Mattie Pearl Kerschner.

Mrs. Lattrell was a volunteer at the Rape Crisis Center of Myrtle Beach where she was named 2004 Volunteer of the Year.

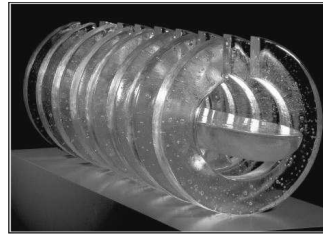
In addition to her son, she is survived by her daughter, Cheryl Makeley of Reston, VA, and four grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Rape Crisis Center of Myrtle Beach, 1272 Pridgen Road, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577.

Requiescat in pace

Kaylin Elizabeth Sumner, daughter of **Eric E. and Mary Nussbaum Sumner**, was born February 4, 2006. She is the granddaughter of Ann Nussbaum of Colrain, Brenda and William Stafford of Shelburne, and **Richard and Hilma Sumner** of Heath, and the great-granddaughter of Erna Herzig of Colrain and Grace Stafford of Greenfield. She joins sister Lilly and brother Austin.

Heath People In The News



Keith Cerone, son of **Jim and Dianne Cerone** of Heath, has had one of his glass sculptures nominated for the 2006 NICHE Award. Keith was one of five finalists in the area of glass sculpture.

NICHE Magazine is the exclusive trade publication for retailers of American crafts. The annual arts competition received more than 1000 entries from which jurors selected up to six finalists in each of 38 categories. The NICHE Award program recognizes outstanding creative achievement of American and Canadian craft artists who produce work for craft galleries and retail shops.



Bud Retires

After nearly seventeen years of dedicated service to the Town of Heath as transfer station attendant and fifteen years serving as constable, Bud Kaempfer has retired.

Prior to moving to Heath in 1988, Bud and his wife Val lived in Monroe, CT, where he was employed by the Monroe Highway Department. Bud retired from this position after 42 years of service. Since moving to Heath, Bud and Val have been very active in town affairs as well as serving on committees and boards for the Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association. Bud still serves on the road committee, and Val is Vice President.

Bud, who will turn eighty years of age in September, is enjoying his retirement, spending much of his time at home with his wife and his puppy Sparky.

Thank you, Bud!

~ Eileen A. Tougas



SPRING FAIR

**Saturday, April 22,
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Heath Community Hall-Senior Center Upstairs
Crafts, Avon products, beautiful theme baskets,
baked goods, natural foods, and more!

Lunch will be available downstairs
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

*Sponsored by the Heath Council on Aging
and the Community Hall Committee*

Clerk Announces Candidates

The following is the slate of candidates that will appear on the ballot at the Town Election on May 5.

Sheila Litchfield, *incumbent, Selectman*, 3-year term
 Richard Gallup, *Assessor*, 3-year term
 Hilma Sumner, *incumbent, Town Clerk*, 3-year term
 Deborah Porter, *incumbent, Library Trustee*, 3-year term
 Edwin Wolf and Budge Litchfield, *incumbents, Finance Committee*, 3-year terms
 Pamela Porter, *School Committee*, 3-year term
 Robert Gruen, *incumbent, School Committee*, 1-year term
 Calvin Carr, *Planning Board*, 5-year term
 Robert Tanner, Jr., *incumbent, Constable*, 1-year term
 Janis Carr, *Finance Committee*, write-in candidate, 3-year term

Besides the offices listed above, there are two. one Constable seat and the office of Dog Officer for which no one is running. Any registered voter may run for any position as a write-in candidate by making his or her intentions known.

On Friday, May 5, polls will be open from noon until 7:00 p.m. in the library in Sawyer Hall.

~ Hilma Sumner

Notification: As of March 1, 2006, the Board of Health will be enforcing the State regulation that requires all occupants of camping trailers to get permits from the Board of Health. Applications for permits and copies of the amended BOH regulation may be obtained at the Town Hall as well as on-line at www.townofheath.org.

Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

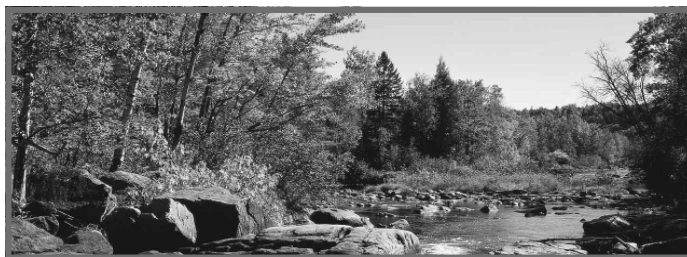
	<u>Rain</u>	<u>Snow</u>
From January 11, 2006	3"	18 ¾"
February	1 ½"	10 ½"
Up to March 10	2/10"	0"

In This Reporting Period:

The highest temperature was on February 16: 55 degrees

The coldest temperature was on January 15 and February 26: 6 degrees below zero

In general, January was fairly mild although the week-end of January 13-15 gave us a little taste of everything with temperatures starting out in the mid to upper forties and dropping to minus 6 mixed in with a lot of rain that changed to sleet and snow, then very strong winds. Most of the country escaped the bulk of the Blizzard of February 12 with only 2-3 inches of fluffy snow being reported and a temperature drop to 2 degrees above zero on the morning of the 13th. We started out the first few days of March with below normal temperatures and windy conditions.



Community Calendar

April 2006

- April 06** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- April 12** - **HAPPY PASSOVER**
- April 13** - PTP meeting, Heath School, 6:30 p.m.
LEC meeting, Heath School, 4:30 p.m.
- April 16** - **HAPPY EASTER**
- April 17-21** - School vacation
- April 20** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- April 21** - Family Movie Night, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- April 22** - Spring Fair, Community Hall upstairs, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - Lunch, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- April 25** - Elementary School Spelling Bee, High School, 5:00 p.m.
- April 29** - Community Potluck and musical program, Community Hall-Senior Center, 5:00 p.m.

May 2006

- May 02** - Kids in Concert, High School, 6:30 p.m.
- May 03** - School early release
- May 04** - PTP meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- May 05** - **TOWN VOTING**, Heath Library, noon to 7:00 p.m.
- May 06** - **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**, Heath Elementary School, 9:00 a.m.
Friends of the Heath School Library Continental Breakfast, 8:30 a.m. -
- May 10** - Alternate MCAS assessment portfolios due.
MTRSD School Committee, Colrain, 7:00 p.m.
- May 18** - LEC meeting, Heath School, 4:30 p.m.
- May 19** - Grounds Day, Heath School
- Family Movie Night, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- May 22-26** - MCAS
- May 23** - Author Betty Birney at Heath School,
- May 25** - Senior Prom
- May 26** - Heath School Memorial Day ceremony, Center Cemetery, 8:30 a.m.
- May 29** - **MEMORIAL DAY**
- May 30 & 31** - High School senior exams

June 2006

- June 01** - High School Senior Awards, 7:00 p.m.
- June 04** - **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION**

Believing as we do in a decent society for all, it behooves us to make our voices heard to preserve this democracy, now so under siege, and to PARTICIPATE! Where better than in our Annual Town Meeting on May 6 at the Heath Elementary School., one of the last bastions of participatory democracy where each voice is heard and considered.

VOTE! May 5 and May 6

(and if you want a shot of hope and a plan for what else you can do, take a look at Frances Moore Lappe's book, *Democracy's Edge*, available in the Heath Free Public Library.)

PLANTS FOR PLEASURE "Your Full Service Florist"

15 Bridge Street
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370
413-625-6066

Carolyn Armstrong & Family



HEATH HERALD

Box 54
Heath, MA 01346-0054

Address Service Requested
Forwarding Service Requested

Bulk Rate
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 11
Charlemont, MA 01339

Jerry Ferguson

"Jack of All Trades"

Licensed Electrician
MA. LIC. 21493E
VT LIC. EL3314

Handyman Service
HIC REG. 142164



413-337-4317

HEATH, MA

Insured-Honest-Reliable
Over 35 Years Experience

We're With You Every Step.

SAVINGS ACCOUNTS
MONEY MARKET ACCOUNTS
INTERNET & TELEPHONE BANKING
MORTGAGES
HOME EQUITY LOANS
BUSINESS LOANS
LIFE INSURANCE
TRUST ADMINISTRATION
INVESTMENT ADVISORY & MANAGEMENT



GREENFIELD SAVINGS BANK Since 1869

GREENFIELD 774-3191 • TURNERS FALLS 863-4316
SOUTH DEERFIELD 665-4011 • SHELburne FALLS 625-9827
www.greenfieldsavings.com



Member FDIC
Member DIF

PETER'S GENERAL STORE

Debbie and Paul Plante, Proprietors
Number Nine Road, Heath
337-5501

- ◆ Fresh Produce
- ◆ Freshly-baked pies
- ◆ Blue Seal products
- ◆ Family Videos
- ◆ Penny Candy
- ◆ Soda, Grinders, Ice Cream
- ◆ Beer, wine, liquor
- ◆ All food essentials



STORE HOURS

Monday – Saturday, 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Sunday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.