



HEATH HERALD

Heath's First Newspaper

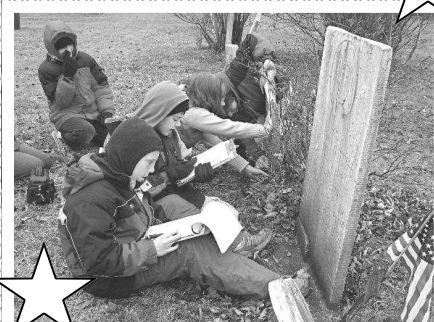
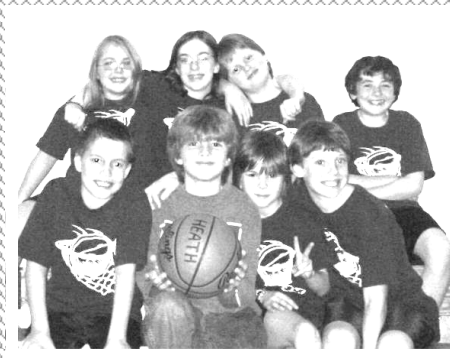
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★ Heath School Happenings ★



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Heath Union Church News

On March 1 a delicious potluck lunch and discussion were enjoyed. The family night on the 15th was make-your-own pizza followed by a movie. The next family night will be on April 26 at which Richard and Esther Gallup will talk on Racing Pigeons. In May Mike and Chrystal Smith will present a travelogue on their trip to Haiti, Mexico, and Jamaica. These events will be held in the Lower Level of the Church, and everyone is welcome. We move back up to the Sanctuary for the Easter season and the warm months.

Our services are:

Palm Sunday, April 5, 10:00 a.m. worship

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunrise Service, April 12, Schoolhouse Road at the Gleasons

Breakfast at the Lower Level of the Church after the service, (Attendees please bring an item to share).

Easter Morning Service, 10:00 a.m.

Adult Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

Bible Study, Thursday, 6:00 p.m.

Pastor's hours, Thursday, 4:00 to 5:45 p.m.

Church Telephone: 337-4019; Pastor: 412-648-9077

~ the Deacons



Celebrate!!

Cinco de Mayo Fiesta

Fun for the whole family!

**Music, dancing, pinata
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on

Sunday, May 3

3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Heath Community Hall

Adults: \$5.00, Children 5-12: \$3.00

Under five, free

All Proceeds to go to refurbish
YOUR Community Hall

Ice Cutting



During the power outage in the infamous ice storm last December many people were concerned for the lack of “indoor” refrigeration. I began thinking about the process the local farmers went through each winter, when I was young, cutting ice.

In the late winter when the ice was at its thickest the farmers would get together to harvest their winter crop—“ice.” Arrangements had been made with the Robbins to use their pond in Heath Center for the cutting and the locals could have whatever they could cut as long as the ice house was first filled at the Robbins estate. Also the Center store, owned by George Peon, now the Gruen’s home, had an ice house that was to be filled as he sold ice along with his other goods.

Originally a long saw was used to cut the ice by hand in blocks that could be hauled out and taken away. My recollection of the process, however, goes back to the time when my Uncle Ted Burrington had fashioned a motor to the saw. I believe it was from his Indian motorcycle.

When the time was right the farmers would converge at the pond to make the harvest. Most of my memory takes place on our own pond as it was larger than many of the fire ponds that the town had built around the area. After the blocks were cut they were lifted out of the water and loaded on a sled drawn by horses. Howard and Ralph Dickinson tell me the Hamiltons had a truck that they used. Care had to be taken loading and driving the sled as the blocks could slide and pinch a leg or arm. Of course the pond had to be free of snow from the top of the ice before cutting. The blocks were from 18-24 inches square and as deep, providing the winter was sufficiently cold.

At the ice house on the farm the blocks were arranged, not quite touching, with space left near the walls of the building. Sometimes sawdust was sprinkled on each layer. When the house was filled a layer of sawdust was spread against the walls and on top of the piles. The door was sealed until warm weather when refrigeration was needed to cool the milk from the dairies as well as to keep the ladies’ iceboxes cool.

As we girls were often out with Dad to help with the daily chores we sometimes had the fun of climbing up into the ice house, brushing off sawdust, and pushing a block out to slide down to someone with more muscles who could drag it to the backdoor, where the sawdust was rinsed off. A block was then put in the milk room water tank to keep the milk cans cool until they

were shipped. Our icebox was a big green affair in the back pantry with a special metal-lined section, zinc I believe, for a block of ice. There was a funnel underneath with a hole in the floor for the leakage as the ice melted.

So you see we did have good “indoor” refrigeration even without any electrical power, but it took a great deal of hard, cold, sometimes hazardous work to provide this luxury.

~ Ruth Johnson

The Old Maple Tree

Oh, what stories it could tell, that big old maple tree that grew on the lawn of the working farm where I grew up. I do not know when it originated but it was a fixture when I was born.

I remember some very good times we had beneath its spreading limbs on the edge of the lawn.

When my sisters and I were youngsters we had a big swing our Dad made of rope and a board attached to sit on. It was a challenge to see how high we could reach. We had many family picnics under the tree, and, as young girls, we often took our rests on a blanket beneath its branches. Sometimes we would lie on our backs near the tree and play the “cloud game.” What different images can you see in the clouds? We saw birds, flowers, and many other shapes. At lunchtime our Mother would bring the meal out under the tree. She might have picked fresh peas from the farm garden and would bring us each a bowl, and a glass of milk, and homemade bread with butter that our Dad had churned. We girls actually tapped the old tree to gather sap so we could make our own syrup, with little success.

That old tree lived through many winter storms, spring rains, hurricanes, and dry spells. The hurricane of 1938 took a huge branch down, and a later storm broke another large part. So because of wear and tear and some rotting this old friend became a danger to the homestead and had to be taken down. Over 300 rings were counted on the stump but, as the center was rotten, no one knows just how old it was.

As I am crowding 86, I am sure there are so many more tales I could tell. Oh, how I wish it were possible to know all the stories that old tree could relate!

~ Ada Landstrom Duffy

Free Wood Chips

The Town's Highway Department has been working with the tree-cutting crews in town to provide a wood chip pile on Bray Rd. The wood chips, which are great for gardens and pathways, are free to any Heath home owner, but not for resale. Just back your car or truck up and take what you need.

***Wild Ramblings*****After the Storm****By Bill Lattrell**

Three months have passed since the remarkable ice storm in December. It is March and there is still about a foot and a half of snow on the ground on the northern side of this forested hill. As I walk around these woods the evidence of damage is still surreal. Trees, snapped off like broken toothpicks, are scattered across the landscape before me. These snags catch the eye. Most trees are broken off about 20 feet above the ground. Where the tree trunk used to separate into branches there is now just a light-colored snaggle tooth. It is irregularly shaped, like a fang in many cases, but devoid of any life. The broken tops still lay on the ground, now sticking up out of the snow like the bow of the Titanic just before she sunk into the gray, watery abyss. I am reminded that underneath the overburden of snow that has accumulated this winter, there are countless branches, treetops, and woody debris that was cascaded to the forest floor during this once in a lifetime event.

Near the base of one hill there are five trees, each toppled over exposing the root-balls that reach ten feet high above the surface of the forest floor. One tree is an eastern hemlock, two are sugar maples, the fourth tree is a red maple, and the fifth tree a hop hornbeam. The eastern hemlock, one of the sugar maples, and the red maple were all mature trees. Each of these trees was between sixteen and twenty inches in diameter and about sixty to seventy feet in height. Lying on their sides these trees have crushed many of the shrubs and saplings that were in their path as they crashed to the ground. Above, there are big openings to the sky, on this day, bright blue with white cotton-like clouds drifting by on eastbound winds. Strong March sunlight finds its way to the ground through the windows in the tree canopy, casting big shadows on the snow where the mammoth root-balls intercept the rays of sun.

I try to look at this without emotion. I try to see the forest for what it is, an independent living organism that is a small part of a much larger living organism called Earth. I try to put a different light on all of these observations. New life will begin where old life has perished. Unique plants and animals may find a niche to fill with the forest's change. A new period of observation and discovery may even begin for this observer of nature with much to learn from this natural weather event and its impacts on the forest. I even try to see the forest as an old friend that has just gone through a tragedy, but will triumph with growth, renewal, and rebirth.

But, despite all of my positive thoughts, I find that I must embrace the great sadness that engulfs my wild spirit. Many of these trees were old friends. Through the years I became familiar with their little idiosyncrasies. One sugar maple tree, now broken in half, had endured a previous storm where less damage was done, and had grown a new crown that was shaped like a large "V" pointing to the sky. Another tree, an American beech, had a huge hole in the trunk where food was stored by squirrels and other animals during the entire 33 years that I have been in these woods. Presently it is split in two. A large leader pulled down by heavy ice forms a bridge between the trunk and the ground. And over there is a tree that I used to sit by. This hemlock had no qualities that separated it from other hemlocks other than the fact that it was located above a trail in the woods utilized by deer, coyote, fox, and occasionally a black bear. Now it is turned over, branches sticking up into the air, its roots exposing a pile of earth that blocks the view. Yes, I have lost some friends. Friends that spoke to me without using a voice. Friends that gave me quiet in a very busy world. Friends that rejuvenated my spirit during times of doubt about my fellow man. And friends that I thought would always be there to comfort me.

I must accept that these dear, dear friends are gone. It is said all good things must come to an end. I will miss these trees, both great and wonderful. I will remember these trees for giving life to a forest that I knew all too well. I will let these trees remain in my mind until the day when it is my turn to return to the earth.

Like all grief, this will come to an end. I will soon remember that death begets life, that saplings grow to trees. And my spirit will soar wildly and freely once again.

Johnson Organ Restoration Update

We are continuing slowly toward our matching-grant goal and do thank everyone who has contributed. We have four to five concerts being scheduled for spring and summer, so stay posted.

Below is a letter that we wish to share with the readers--the memories of a donor when he lived in Heath.

Memo to the Johnson Organ Restoration Committee:

In reading Ned Wolf's account of the storied Johnson Organ, several memories came to mind, so much so that I felt compelled to share a few with the Committee.

My earliest memories of that wonderful instrument go back to the summer of 1940 when I first heard the magnificent sounds that organ could produce.

Most of the youth in the Congregation aspired to take their turn hand-pumping the organ during an actual service, and I was once afforded that honor. At the conclusion of the service (never during) we would carefully place our initials on the back (north) panel of the organ and unless previous restorations have removed them, you will find many more names (initials) than just Ralph Dickinson's or Dick Tanner's. Hand-pumping was not just limited to the young men of the Congregation either. Ours was an equal opportunity church, and several of our female youth contributed both hand-pumping and evidence of their presence.

Dick Tanner's mother, Pearl Tanner, was the organist in those years. These were war years and in 1942 Dick entered the Army Air Corps. Upon his deployment to England to serve with the (Mighty) Eighth Air Force, Mrs. Tanner chose to close the worship service by playing the Army Air Corps March. Nothing like that had ever happened before. The postlude was always a hymn of some sort but that morning the sounds of *Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder* resonated from the Heath Union Church.

Lastly, I can never forget the last time I heard that organ played. It was in January 1978 during the funeral of my late brother-in-law Howard Thompson. The organist played Beethoven's *Hymn to Joy* as wonderfully as I have ever heard that magnificent composition played. That sound that afternoon, coming from that wonderful, old Johnson Organ will remain with me for a lifetime.

My sincere thanks to the Restoration Committee. May your efforts be rewarded by a timely and successful restoration of that historic treasure.

~ Bruce Patterson
Wilmington, NC

PLEASE NOTE

The Good Neighbors Food Pantry will bag food on Wednesday, April 15, beginning at 4:30 p.m. at the Charlemont Federated Church. All are welcome to come help. We now serve over 85 families and appreciate all the assistance we can get. For questions, please call Sheila Litchfield at 337-4957.

Wild Ramblings Goes Electronic

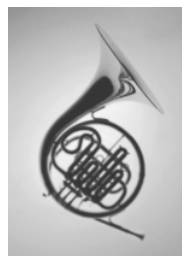
My son Brendan and I have launched a new Web site on the World Wide Web, www.wildramblings.com ! This site has been accepted by NatureBlog Network, which is a site that coordinates and hosts Web sites that are related to nature, ecology, and the outdoors. We were really excited to be accepted by this network because it will, in the long run, give us a lot more exposure to a much larger audience.

Without Brendan's technical skills I could not have done this. I am learning all about the blog and Internet world on a daily basis and must admit that it is absolutely mind-boggling. I am much more comfortable in the forest than I am in front of a computer screen.

www.wildramblings.com contains a collection of my writing, nature photographs, and eventually will include the writing of others as well as an advice blog. At present there are about 30 stories and articles posted, as well as about 80 photos. I have been busy rewriting many of the older stories published in the *Heath Herald*. You will recognize them, but will find many changes. Some of the changes are stylistic, some are content, and some are just new additions that occurred to me while I was rewriting the article.

Please visit www.wildramblings.com on the Internet and feel free to leave comments. I really appreciate all the support that my Heath readers have given me over the years and would appreciate hearing from you online!

~ Bill Lattrell



French Horn Workshop

An Improvisation Workshop for French Horn players will be held in Heath from July 15 to July 19, 2009. John Clark, a Heath resident, is organizing the event. The goal of the workshop is to teach improvisation to traditionally trained horn players.

In addition to teaching sessions during the day at the Heath Elementary School, there will be several performances open to the public. Mini-concerts ("Heath Horns") are scheduled at scenic or historic locations in town.

One of last year's highlights was a concert in Fred Crowningshield's field that included an impromptu release of a neighbor's homing pigeons. Evening concerts will take place on Friday (with the return of last years "stars," the baler and tractor) and on Saturday with world-famous musician, composer, and author, David Amram. Amram was Composer-in-Residence for the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver. If there is enough interest, a concert may be added that will include anyone (especially children!) who would like to bring an instrument and join in.

All profits from the workshop will be donated to the Town of Heath. More information is available at <http://www.hmmusic.com> and a workshop schedule will be posted at the Heath Library in April.

~ John Clark



Remembering Ralph Dickinson

Editors Note: This eulogy was delivered by Todd Sumner at Ralph Dickinson's Funeral.

When I was a child, I thought as a child, and when I was a child I thought the Dickinson brothers were pretty cool. I still do, but for different reasons. The thing that impressed me as a child was the way Ralph would occasionally stand up on his John Deere tractor as he raked hay in the field next to my sandbox. He looked like a Roman gladiator in a chariot race, round and round the hayfield. As a boy, I couldn't figure out who he was to me, how we were related, why he mattered. Fact is, we're cousins back there somewhere, as all the scions of old Heath families are. Not cousins like Walt and Earl or Ruth and Pearl and Ada or Bill Stafford are cousins, mind you. But, kin somehow. I knew he mattered, but not why.

When Ralph was a child, he used to pump the bellows on this mighty fine Johnson organ. How do I know? Because he wrote his initials back there! Scandalous, isn't it? Deacon Ralph Dickinson the graffiti artist. When I first encountered that graffiti as a boy I just couldn't put it together: how could this calm, dignified man in the pew behind me be capable of defacing church property? I'm glad he did though, because one of the great temptations here today is that we make Ralph into a saint. And I think those initials hold a clue about why we're tempted to do that. It's because for much of his life Ralph chose to sit just out of our sight, just around the corner, our view of him blocked by something or someone with a much bigger voice. Ralph's the one measuring the ice, but Howard's the one talking about it on the evening news. Ralph's preference for the protected stance, the oblique angle, the observation post gave him, I think, a privileged way of knowing the church, the town, and the human heart.

When I was a child I thought as a child, but when I became a young man, an adolescent, I encountered Ralph again in the presence of another Ralph, my grandfather. I remember them working on the parsonage, and it would be hard to imagine two more patient craftsmen yoked together in common purpose; Ralph did love this church, and to be able to offer his skill as a woodworker in its service must have pleased him immensely. I've often wondered if, in addition to comparing notes about woodworking, if Ralph Dickinson and Ralph Sumner ever compared notes about what it was like to live with strong women...

When Ralph was a young man, an adolescent, he ran an egg route, pedaling eggs, milk, and vegetables to the summer people in south Heath. And it's here that we catch a glimpse of something important. Ralph called upon the great figures of Heath's pantheon—Justice Frankfurter, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dean Robbins—and he had something they wanted and needed. The professorate has to eat, after all, and here was this modest, appealing, literate, enterprising young man at their doorstep with the makings of an omelet, rich raw milk, radishes, new potatoes, and news of what was going on up the road. God may have rejected Cain's offering gleaned from a farmer's toil, but these members of the nation's elite knew a good thing when they saw one.

When I was a child I thought as a child, but when I became a man I realized that among the things Ralph had to offer was great wisdom. Not just about local history and lore, but also about the great mysteries and more. He and Howard helped me sort out some trouble with my spring years ago, then we all three worked to get Whittemore Spring back online. I used their lower pasture when I had cattle and would occasionally help gather sap or pick up hay. Those kinds of projects were great, but they were especially useful as occasions to observe how Ralph moved through the world. Patient, steady, precise, Ralph seemed so centered and mindful in all that he did around the farm. Whether it was boiling sap or tending his hens, to be in Ralph's orbit was to learn about being present to the task at hand.

When I was a child I thought as a child, and I used to think you had to pay your way through this world with money. I don't know if you've ever tried to do business with Ralph and Howard, but it can be exasperating at first because they'll try not to let you pay for anything. It took me a long time, and it wasn't until I started buying Ralph's eggs at .75/dozen that I really learned the lesson. At first, I resisted the price point and left extra money on the bureau. Ralph kept a notebook there, and I'd write down \$.75 but really leave a couple of dollars for a dozen eggs. That kept my conscience clear until Howard caught me at it one day, years ago. Ever since, I've played by their rules. And it wasn't until I submitted to those rules that I saw that the true medium of exchange was not greenbacks, but grace: the daylight between Ralph's prices and market prices was finally enough for me to see that what he had to offer us and what we all have sought at that kitchen table is priceless. Priceless in the way a sunrise is priceless, the smell of hay drying in the sun, the heft of a wood plane in your hand. The way an egg is a miracle and perfect and enough.

And it's the truth of grace that informs the running joke Howard and I share about Mark Zennick's branding of their farm as the "Gateway Farm." The Land Trust meant the physical significance of Ralph's and Howard's stewardship, the open space, the legacy of farming in Heath, the vistas. But we're not all here today because Howard and Ralph kept the brush down. We're here because we know that the Dickinson Farm IS a gateway, but it's a gateway like a certain wardrobe that leads to another realm entirely. And we

("Remembering Ralph Dickinson" continued on page 7)

("Remembering Ralph Dickinson" continued from page 6)

want very much to get back to Heath's version of Narnia, to a way of life and a pattern of relating and relatedness that they've inhabited, enacted before our eyes, and offered to us. The realm they've tended and guarded is grounded, gritty, greasy, sagging, weedy, bountiful, and blessed. The hens squawk and fight, the silo leans, the cookies are coming out of the oven...

Out of that vitality I imagine Ralph stepping into the woodshed and sorting through the eggs in the wire basket, weighing each one, shining it up with a piece of sandpaper, putting together a dozen eggs as his version of Cain's offering—a farmer's cultivated gift of daily toil, skillful stewardship, mindful pruning, and practiced resurrection. The gifts of a shepherd are the fruits of restlessness, of wandering, of seeking the greenest possible pastures. In this dozen eggs, Ralph lifts up a farmer's fraternal life of faithfulness, integrity, humility, reverence, rootedness, humor, and love. God could do a lot worse than to say "thank you, my son," then give the eggs to some Heath kid to color for Easter.



For all of our lives Ralph has been a permanent fixture on the Dickinson farm. Our mothers were very close sisters, so we girls really grew up with our cousins Ralph, Esther, and Howard. We think of Ralph as always busy about the place with his poultry business or in the vegetable garden, strawberry, and raspberry patches, as well as at many other farm tasks.

He might have appeared to be a very quiet person in any group but soon one realized he was well-read, up on current affairs, and had a marvelous memory of past events and a subtle sense of humor.

He was a real country gentleman dedicated to his family, his Church, and the Heath Community

~ The Landstrom Sisters



"The Dickinsons" conjures up for me a barrel of Heath concepts that are important to my own core self-concept. From Yankee conservatism to unbounded neighborly generosity, from humility to great personal strength, from judicious rumoring to news protection, from almanac sayings to scientific observation, from caring for family and community to concern in global issues, there are no bad apples in this barrel to find.

I will remember Ralph Dickinson as the "fact checker." He had an incredible recollection of people, events, dates, and statements. More often than not in the Dickinson community kitchen, when asked for a name or a relationship (usually by Howard), Ralph would respond respectfully and cautiously with a question containing the correct answer: "Wasn't it . . ." Or, his answer would start with "I think it might have been . . ." or "I guess it was . . ."

Ralph's humor was dry and often hilarious. He carried it to the end. On a visit with Howard when Ralph was in the Intensive Care Unit a few days before he died, I tried to kid him by asking if the nurses were beating up on him. After a long consideration, he replied, "No, I guess they are treating me pretty well." Then with an impish glint in his hazel eyes, he looked me full in my bearded face and said, "They give a really good shave."

If I wanted to be a part of good cider-making, I wouldn't mind being in the same barrel with the Dickinsons.

~ Art Schwenger



When Ruth Johnson asked me to write a brief reminiscence of Ralph, many memories came to mind. One of my favorites is really one my Father often recalled. Perhaps it is appropriate, given the multi-generational relationships common to Heath families. The Dickinsons lived across the street from us and Ralph and Howard often helped Mother and Father with various jobs. One day Father and Ralph were working on a project down in the field and our daughter Sarah, then about five or six, was tagging along. Perhaps because he wasn't there, something was said about Howard and his girl friend. Sarah, always curious, asked Ralph who his girl friend was. Ralph replied that he did not have a girl friend. Sarah pondered this, and seemingly concerned grabbed Ralph's hand. Looking up at him, she announced "That's all right, Ralph, I'll be your girl friend." Ralph didn't laugh, although Father said he thought he saw a twinkle in his eye. Instead, he solemnly said, "Thank you, Sarah." How like Ralph to be gentle and treat a little girl's offer as seriously as it was given. He had a wonderful sense of humor, but, ever thoughtful, he also had the discretion to know when to use it.

~ Lisa Dyer Merrill



Ralph's Chickens

It was very sad when Howard fell off his roof but a good point for me was I got to feed their chickens. One gloomy cloudy day, I, my Mom, and my Dad went up and gave Howard and Ralph some cookies. As we walked into the TV room, Ralph sat in his chair. Once he caught a glance of us he smiled with his nice warm smile. We got talking and Ralph and Howard asked if I and my Dad would like to feed the chickens. Without a pause I said yes in an excited voice. All I remember was seeing Ralph giggle at me saying yes. The first day my Gramma helped me with the chickens. We walked into the old dusty barn. I opened a door. I walked into a ton of squawking chickens all around me. I didn't want to work, I just wanted to play. They were so fun. Whenever I went "shush" they would be quiet and stick their heads up, then they would go back to their squawking. It was so much fun getting the eggs. Whenever I walked into the house, Ralph would ask "How many eggs did you get?" So Ralph, I will miss you and your chickens will miss you.

~ Tucker Jenkins

("Remembering Ralph Dickinson" continued on page 22)



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

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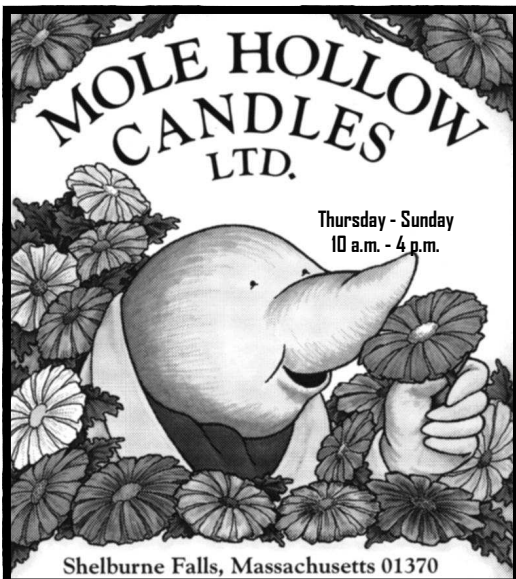
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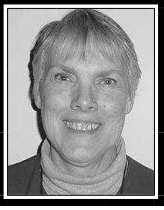
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Green Thoughts

Food Security



By Pat Leuchtman

Recently I've been talking to people about food security. I am not yet so pessimistic that I think our local access to good food is imperiled. Here in western Massachusetts we have many local farmers producing vegetables, fruit, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt and even meat. Many of us have our own gardens as well.

When I thought about food security I thought things might get a little tense during the winter if we depended solely on our own area. I had imagined a diet limited to cabbage and potatoes. However, the February Winterfare farmers market in Greenfield showed me that I did not have enough faith in our local farmers.

I certainly should have calculated in all the other root vegetables that have been stored in root cellars for hundreds of years: beets, carrots, turnips, rutabagas, winter squash of many types, and such less familiar roots as celeriac, daikon and watermelon radishes.

What I never imagined was the amount of fresh greens that some farms are now growing in unheated greenhouses. Some salad and Asian greens tolerate a lot of cold, but they do require a certain amount of sunlight every day, which is why, even in a successfully operated unheated greenhouse, plant growth slows. Still in February there were beautiful greens for sale.

I had forgotten that there are still some dairy farms in our area. They sell milk and have gotten in the 'added value' business by making cheeses and yogurt.

I was surprised by the number of farms selling meat, not only beef, but veal, pork, and lamb. Some farms even sell frozen meat pies that can be popped in the oven for a quick and hearty meal.

Generations before us have found that pickles and relishes can liven up a winter diet if the root cellar empties out at a faster rate than anticipated. Certainly there were any number of pickles and sauerkraut on sale at Winterfare.

Honey, too, for the sweets course. Clarkdale Orchard was on hand selling apples and cider. I have stored apples for months myself. They don't stay in as good condition as Clarkdale's apples, but even a slightly withered apple isn't spoiled; it makes perfectly good eating.

The Winterfare market was a reminder that if necessary we Heathans could produce the makings of a good diet right here in town. This could be done in several ways. Many of us already have gardens and produce a portion of our own food. This means canning or freezing some of the produce during the growing season. I feel very lucky that freezers exist because I prefer many vegetables frozen rather than canned.

Because we have gotten so used to frozen or canned food, we forget that root cellars were once an important element of food storage. There are many ways to provide this kind of storage even in a modern house with a heated basement, although it does take thought and some work.

Dried beans take less thought and less work but provide

important nutritional benefits.

Not everyone has, is able, or wishes to have a garden. There could be a community garden, or there could be vegetable farms that would not only provide food but jobs. Canning could be done cooperatively on a large-ish scale in the school kitchen.

Backyard chicken flocks have become quite trendy recently. My own flock includes chickens for meat as well as eggs.

In the past we have raised pigs for pork. Neither the chickens nor the pigs require very much in the way of housing, and the meat animals have a short happy life. We slaughter our chickens at eight weeks, and the pigs were slaughtered at about five months. It is easy to see why poultry and pigs have been staples of the peasant diet. They don't need to be fed through the winter.

Another element of food security is being able to maintain access to seeds. We can return to the old ways of saving our own seed from open-pollinated vegetables. Many seed catalogs label these varieties.

Some foods don't have to be planted every year. These are the perennial crops like asparagus, rhubarb, sunchokes, horseradish, many herbs, berries, and nuts. I have been so happy to note that blueberries and raspberries are nutritional powerhouses.

In fact there are even perennial greens like skirret and good King Henry. They might be worth trying just for the names and a feeling of community with medieval gardeners.

In truth, I do not foresee a nutritional doomsday any time soon. I do think raising the issue of food security points out the advantages we have as a region and as a town to be food self-sufficient without too much pain. We not only have land, we have expertise, and a willingness to share both.

On that note I want acknowledge those who do not have food security, and to mention a new area-wide project, Plant a Row for the Hungry. Think about adding an extra row in your garden to donate to a local food pantry like the Center for Self Reliance whose director is Dino Schnelle, and remember that any time you have 'extra' produce, food pantries will be grateful for any amount, no matter how small.

Announcing...

"Seed Money" Farmers Market
coming this summer on Saturdays to Heath Center!

Support your local farms

- *Locally grown fresh produce*
- *Cut flowers*
- *Unprocessed honey*
- *Maple syrup*
- *Farm fresh eggs*
- *Bedding plants*
- *Baked goods*
- *Confectioneries*
- *Jams & jellies*

Seeking interested vendors now

E-mail or call to register.

The DPH and Food Protection requirements will be sent to vendors.

Plan now to add a few extra rows to your garden.

Sheila Litchfield, 337-4957 / sheila@thedell.us

Support Heath Agriculture



Benson Place

*Wonderfully Wild
Blueberry Spread*



- Made from our own sustainably grown low bush blueberries and organic cranberries. Lightly sweetened with honey.
- Available at the farm, Peter's Store, Avery's Store, the Big Indian Shop, Shelburne Falls Market, McCusker's Market, Rte 91 Visitors' Center, Green Fields Market, and other area stores (see website for those locations).
- Contact us about the spread, this year's fresh blueberry harvest, walking this beautiful land, or to see how you can assist in the community effort to preserve the farm.
- Box 89, 182 Flagg Hill Road, Heath, MA 01346
(413) 337-5340, www.bensonplace.org or 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

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

Wild Native Blueberries Burnt Hill Farm



Pre-picked 10 lb & 20 lb boxes
Available late July to mid-August
Call to order

Blueberry Hotline: 413-337-4454

118 Flagg Hill Rd, Heath, MA



Raw Milk For Sale Hager Bros. Farm

Farm Fresh High Quality Available by
order at 413 624-3200 or hagersmp@mtdata.com.

*Order by Sunday p.m. for Monday pickup or Thursday
p.m. for Friday pickup at:*

11 Merrifield Lane
Colrain, MA 01340

Also available, a full line of maple products and Cabot
cheese at farm prices.

Tripp's Blueberries 64 Taylor Brook Road Heath, MA

Sweet, Wild, Lowbush
picked, cleaned freezer ready
10 lb or 20 lb boxes



Call to reserve
413-337-4964



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 AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWS

Heath Fair News- It's spring! The long winter is finally past. Time to start planning for summer and getting serious about the Fair.

Pulling Together - The 92nd Annual Heath Fair is scheduled for **August 21,22, and 23**. The theme this year is *Pulling Together*. It's chosen in celebration of what Heath does well in the face of challenges.

Coming Soon - Here's a peek preview of this year's Fair Attractions. The Antique Tractor Parade and Pull will be back by popular demand on Friday night. Also on Friday we'll be having a Goat Show. Sheila Litchfield is working on organizing this event. The Friday night music will include a lineup of homegrown young musicians. Stay tuned for further announcements.

The Heath Fair Music lineup also includes The Nields, Kate Clark and the Green River Band, and Girl Howdy, on Saturday. Sunday we are looking forward to the return of the very popular Rani Arbo and daisy mayhem and Heath's own Karen Brooks. We are grateful for the support of Heath Fair Music by several local cultural councils. We have been notified we will be getting small grants from the Buckland, Colrain, Charlemont/ Hawley, Rowe, and Shelburne Cultural Councils and a larger one from our own Heath Cultural Council. Many thanks to all of them.

Speakers Tent - Aside from having a really good time, among the purposes of the Heath Agricultural Society as stated in our charter are "the attainment and diffusion of scientific and practical knowledge in the cultivation of the soil, the raising of its various useful products as comprehended in the departments of agriculture, horticulture, pomology and for encouragement to the mechanics, fine arts and domestic manufacture." (Pomology is the cultivation of fruit.) Toward this end we are looking to expand on the offerings at our Speakers Tent. Please contact Pam Porter (337-5525) if you know of speakers who would be able and willing to address local developments or offer how-to talks in any of these areas.

Premium Book Ads - This year we have decided not to solicit ads for the premium book. The amount of paper the book uses and the costs and complexity of producing it have become unsustainable. We will be printing a slimmed down book of information, rules, and entry forms. This material will also be available on our Web site: www.heathfair.org

Supporting the Fair - If you've had an ad in the premium book in the past and would like to continue to support the Fair, you still can make a general contribution or help sponsor specific Fair Attractions, (e.g., Fireworks, Truck Pulls, Wagon Rides, Speakers). Send your donation to the Heath Agricultural Society, c/o Jan Carr, Box 10, Heath 01346. We will be acknowledging contributions on signboards at the events. For many years our premiums have been underwritten by the Community Foundation through the Dickinson Fund and by the Wells Trust. We are grateful to both of these funds for their generous and longtime support of the Fair.

Work Bees - Watch for news of work bees beginning Wednesday evenings in May when the snow is finally gone and the frost is out of the ground. The ice storm has left us plenty of cleanup. If you are available to help with mowing this year contact Dave Freeman at 337-4766. It's all voluntary but we do reimburse mowers for the cost of gasoline.

Rentals - The same telephone number, 337-4766, will put you in touch with Christine O'Brien who is in charge of scheduling rental of the Fairgrounds for private events. Prices are reasonable and there is plenty of indoor and outdoor space. The grounds are available from late May through October. Winter storage rental ends in May. Please plan on picking up vehicles and equipment by May 1.

Getting Involved - As you know, the Heath Fair is entirely run by volunteers. If you are looking for a way to participate, here are some of the people to contact:

Pam Porter, Attractions, Speakers, and General Information

Gloria Fisher, Publicity

David Freeman and Christine O'Brien, Fairgrounds Maintenance and Rental

Carol Sartz, Heath Fair Music and Music Underwriting

Bradley and Shirley Tombs, Agricultural Exhibits

Sheila Litchfield, Goat Show

Devon Clark, Tractor and Truck Pulls

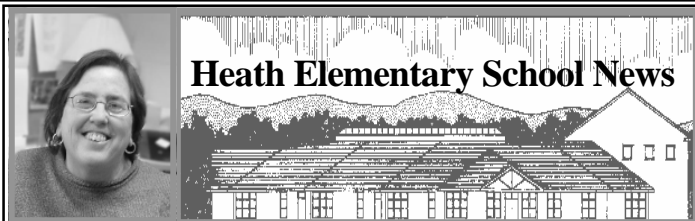
Robin Jenkins and Val Lively, Exhibit Hall

Deb Porter, Eric and Mary Sumner, and Donna and Robert Tanner, Food Booths

Kyle and Nathan Clark, Horse and Ox Draws

Michael and Camille Freeman, Kids Games

~ Pam Porter and Gloria Fisher, Copresidents



Heath Elementary School News

By Anne Marie Mislak

THANK YOU to all who made our Winter Enrichment so successful. It was very windy up until 9:00 a.m. and then after 12:00 but not at all during our outside time! The students were able to cross-country ski, snowshoe, and slide very successfully. Building forts was not as successful although some of the students used an existing fort and built a city that included Chris's Carpentry, Matthew's Marvelous Police Station, and Diamond's Dentistry. I observed there was some operating going on on poor Mr. Pumpkin who had many teeth to be removed! You never know what creative juices will flow in any situation!

Students were free to move from activity to activity and also enjoy some hot cider and popcorn when they wanted a snack. At 10:30 students were able to come inside to warm up and our Student Conservation Association members, Brianna and Patrick, had some games outside for another activity. Not many students came in to warm up! Students joined in the games as a new activity. At 11:30 we all came in for lunch. There were many red cheeks but many smiles. I am so glad we were able to take some joy from this long winter!

The first round of MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) began on Monday, March 30, and will continue through Friday, April 10.

Second Steps Program

The Second Steps Program is used as part of the school's Social Curriculum. It is a program that helps schools and families encourage children to get along with others. The program teaches children to think about others' feelings, to solve problems cooperatively, and to manage their anger in a positive way. Each unit addresses one of these teachings listed above: Empathy, Impulse Control, and Anger Management. Empathy means identifying and understanding others' feelings in order to be a more caring person. Impulse Control helps students manage emotions by learning to slow down and think through options when faced with difficult situations or problems. The third unit helps students recognize, understand, and manage anger in safe and constructive ways because anger and also conflict are normal parts of our life.

In all parts of our school life we try to create a culture that supports respect and care. The Second Steps Program is one of the tools we use to accomplish this. We also use pieces of many other Social Curricula such as Responsive Classroom. Second Steps is a research-based program with the majority of the research showing that school and the family are the two most important social and emotional learning environments for children. Thus, it is critical that we as educators take advantage of the opportunities in the school setting to teach positive social and emotional skills.

The classroom components include teaching cards that are a

kick-off for discussion as part of morning meeting or class meeting time or when a specific issue arises in a particular classroom. There is also a Family Overview Video, which can be signed out for your viewing. It is 28 minutes in length, with more time spent if you stop the video and have family discussion time.

Parent-Teacher Partnership (PTP) News

The PTP would like to invite all Heathans and their friends and family to a night of music and dance on Saturday, April 4, at 7:00 p.m. at the Heath School with the renowned **Wholesale Klezmer Band** – featuring our beloved Strings Program teacher David Tasgall. This event is free, donations accepted for the School's Strings Program. Refreshments will be served. So, plan to dance off those pancakes – which you will have consumed in large number at the 6th Grade Pancake Breakfast that morning – and enjoy a night of Yiddish folk music and culture. See you there!

Townfolk have often asked how they might support the work of the PTP. Here are a few very easy ways to do so in the course of your week:

Box Tops for Education – General Mills sponsors a program whereby schools receive 10¢ for every label or "coupon" clipped off one of their products. These small cardboard coupons are easily torn from packaging. Save them up and drop them at School or at Town Hall in the foyer/hallway in the collection bucket. You'd be surprised how many products carry this label.

Campbell's Soup Labels – Campbell's supports our P.E. programming with a similar program for sports equipment. Again, labels can be dropped off at School or at Town Hall in the labeled collection bucket.

Amazon – Whenever you shop at Amazon use our school code and the School will receive credits towards purchases of needed texts and supplies (available on school Web site www.heath.mtrsd.k12.ma.us).

Magazines – www.magfundraising.com/HeathElementarySchool. Shop at this online magazine store for any of your magazine subscriptions at 85% savings to you. The PTP receives 40%.

These small gestures really add up and allow us to purchase needed equipment and support our enrichment programming. Many, many thanks for your support!

~Dana Blackburn, Chair
Community-School Relations

Preschool Preregistration

The Heath Preschool is beginning its preregistration for the 2009-2010 school year. All children who are three or four years old by August 31 are eligible to attend. Please contact Suzanne Crawford at the Heath School (337-5307) or at home (339-4265) for more information or to receive a preregistration form.

Our Heath School Students and Staff are Good Neighbors!



photo by Lorena Loubksy-Lonergan

This article was written by Miss Gary and her first and second grade students.

What is Good Neighbors? Haley explained, "It is about giving food to other people." Charles added, "It helps our community." "People who do not have food will get food," said Isis. Sovahn concluded, "We are helping by giving people food."

We performed many math activities while collecting for Good Neighbors. One example is our students made a life-sized bar graph in our school's Open Space. We picked up a food item from our donated food and then stood next to the correct category to make a bar of students holding the same kind of food. Bryan shared, "We sorted the food into categories such as meat. I carried eight big pouches of tuna fish." Pasta, fruit, and vegetables were other categories. Logan reminded us, "There was cereal, too." He also shared, "We borrowed Mrs. McNay's scale and weighed the food in boxes. There were nineteen boxes in all."

Our school was given a challenge by Veronica Smead who has been helping the Good Neighbor's program for more than twenty years. She asked the school to help donate food. Macalister shared, "At All School, we all held hands. The teachers drew with chalk and taped around the perimeter of our circle." Timothy explained, "We did that because we wanted to see how many families we could feed." "We wanted everyone to provide the food," he added. Adam stated, "The word perimeter was used to help the students strengthen their vocabulary."

There were seventy families in our community in September needing food donations. Now that number has grown to eighty-four. This huge increase caused us to need a challenge in order to inspire everyone to help by bringing in food. Ryan shared, "The heaviest full box weighed 79 pounds." Katelyn explained, "Jennifer wrote all of the weights of the boxes neatly on a piece of paper." Jennifer added, "We learned how to use a calculator, and we learned that $\frac{1}{2}$ is .50." Taylor further explained, "We worked with buddies to figure out how much all the food weighed." James stated, "It was hard at first using the calculators and I felt good in the end because I was finished and the numbers were the

same as everyone else's."

Gwyneth said, "We shared about our math work and Good Neighbors at All School. The students in the school were asked to estimate how much the donated food weighed in all." Sovahn shared, "I liked adding up all the boxes' weight because you didn't know how much it was going to be in all." Alouette stated, "When I saw the food in the Open Space as a perimeter, I thought the total weight would be less than it was." Nathaniel shared, "I thought the total weight would be more than it was because it was a lot of food, and the number should have been a lot bigger."

Catherine shared, "Our new challenge is for April 15. We will have to think up a new fun and inspiring way to remind everyone to donate food." Maxwell asked, "I wonder if someone reading this article can guess how many pounds of food we collected in our food challenge for Good Neighbors?"

The answer is 426 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of food were donated by our Heath School community.

Jorie MacLeod's Middles Class: 3-4

The Middles class has been having a busy 2009. We have been studying the Solar System, using nonfiction books, videos, posters, and games. We also are reading sky myths from many cultures. We've learned a bit about space flights and gravity by trying some physics in some hands-on explorations of **Toys in Space**. Our read-aloud this month was science fiction, about a space traveler who fell to earth. We also graphed the daylight hours throughout 2009. Take a look at our bulletin board when you're at the school.

We've been working on problem-solving using money in Math. Now, we have begun to look at what we already know about Multiplication and Division, and we've begun to apply that knowledge to problems using these operations. Both of the grade levels follow the same path throughout the year in Math, with different grades and groups exploring the concept at a different level. In this way, some lessons can be with the whole class, some in smaller groups. This involves complicated planning, but works well in the multiage setting.

The 3-4 class had about 300 salmon eggs delivered on February 5, from the Hatchery in Palmer. Dan Marchant, the hatchery manager, brought them up and spoke with the students about the salmon's trip down from the West Branch of the North River, where we release them in May, to the Deerfield River (in a few years), to the Connecticut River, to the Atlantic Ocean. Then most go up to Labrador or Greenland, where they stay from 3-5 years before trying to return upstream to spawn. (Ask a Middles student about how many might have a chance to return!) We study many aspects of the Atlantic Salmon each year. This year one focus is on the legends many Native tribes told about the salmon and other fish. Another focus is on the history of Massachusetts that affected the salmon.

Please take a look at our salmon and ask a Middles student if you have questions. Be on the lookout for an informational bulletin board above the tank.

Heath Preschool News

The preschoolers have been enjoying our snowy winter weather over the past few months and are now looking towards spring. Snow is the greatest medium for outdoor play: making snow angels and snowmen, sledding, following and examining animal tracks and people tracks, trying out snowshoes and cross-country skis, making snow houses and forts, climbing on mountains of snow and walking in deep, deep snow, and even shoveling are much fun for young children. And, of course, the wonderful thing about preschool is that children are learning and developing their skills while having fun. We have enjoyed learning about animal tracks, trying out walking like foxes and rabbits. We've made animal track pictures and stories using rubber stamps and have used some special textured plastic cards for making rubbings that show animals and their tracks. Recently, the kindergarten has been making some animal track mysteries for us to enjoy – much to our delight!

Now we are looking for signs of spring, both indoors and outdoors. We started two window boxes in mid-February, one with peas and one with beans, and are watching our indoor garden grow. We started a few seeds in a clear cup to allow us to watch the roots developing as they are in the window boxes. The peas are about 8" high so far and growing fast up the netting on the window. We are also watching and measuring the growth of our amaryllis bulb that we planted in January. Learning about seeds, bulbs, roots, and plant growth also ties in with looking at tree buds outside and learning about tapping maple trees and making maple syrup, the sweetest rite of spring.

We do a lot of "writing" in our classroom, often in the form of dictating stories to go along with drawings and photos. Each child has a journal that we use periodically for drawings and stories, and we often make books about activities with photos and stories. Recently we began a new book that is in our block area with drawings, photos, and stories of our block structures. It has been fun to see the range of structures that it has inspired the children to make and record.

We are learning about some of the parts inside our bodies – bones, organs, and more. We have a pretend doctor's office in our dramatic play area. While the children have fun role-playing being doctors and patients, they are extending their vocabulary, practicing etiquette for telephone calls and in person, practicing math with appointment times and charges, as well as doing some miraculous healing. Pretty soon, Mr. Bones, our school's life-size plastic skeleton, will visit our classroom so we can see how all our bones fit together and move. If you haven't ever had the pleasure of doing the Hokey Pokey with a skeleton, do come by for a visit!

~ Suzanne Crawford

Preschool Gift Basket Raffle

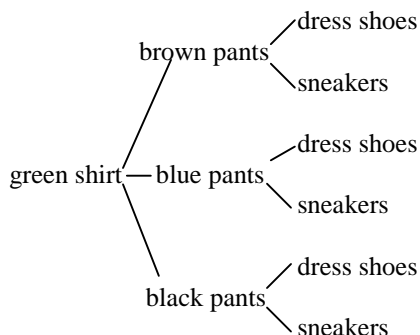
The Heath Preschool has two more gorgeous baskets to raffle. The "Pamper Yourself Head to Toe Basket" has a gift certificate for a haircut from Hair by Hana and a gift certificate for a spa foot treatment by Susan Clark, plus other goodies to make yourself or a

loved one feel good all over. The "Maple Basket" has sweet inspirations for breakfast and beyond, with maple syrup (of course!), a maple cookbook, and items to help you put them to good use. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00, and are available through the Preschool and the Heath School office. Please call 337-5307 to request some. The drawing will be held on Wednesday, May 6 – just in time for Mother's Day! Thanks so much for your support.

~ Suzanne Crawford

How Many Ways? Show Your Mathematical Thinking

If you were asked to show a tree diagram, what is the first thing that comes to mind? Is it a tree that you might see from your window? The visual image of the branches of a bare tree may be where the term comes from. This is a mathematical strategy that students are asked to use to show all the possible combinations in a given situation. Let's consider the number of possibilities you'd have if you were to choose from three shirts, three pair of pants, and two pair of shoes. What different outfits could you make from a green, a red, and a purple shirt, worn with brown, blue, or black pants, and dress shoes or sneakers? You can find the number of possible outfits by multiplying the number of each item, so $3 \times 3 \times 2 = 18$ possible outfits, but this doesn't tell us what the outfits look like. A tree diagram shows this information. Let's see what it would look like.



You can see there are six outfits possible when the green shirt is worn. Tree diagrams for the red shirt and the purple shirt will show that each will also have six possible outfits for the total of eighteen possible outfits from three shirts, three pair of pants, and two pair of shoes. We now know what those outfits would look like as well as how many combinations are possible.

Now try this with your family. How many different sandwiches are possible if you have four types of bread, whole wheat, rye, multigrain, or white; three protein fillings, hummus, ham, or turkey; three vegetable toppings, lettuce, tomatoes, or onions, and the choice of mustard, ketchup, or mayonnaise? What would each of these combinations be? Create tree diagrams to show what each sandwich would include. Maybe you'd better have a snack before you start working. Good luck.

~ Marilyn O'Brien
Title 1

News from the Kindergarten

One of the things I love about our school is that in winter it is always light and roomy and thus very hard to get cabin fever in. It is also surrounded by a beautiful woodland, which offers great places to snowshoe. We have gone out several times in search of tracks and have not been disappointed. Despite the cold feet, and having to get used to walking with these big things on your feet single file (so as not to mess up the tracks) we were able to identify fox, deer, rabbit and turkey tracks. Our trek was just the beginning of studying of the animals that live in Heath.



Since walking in the woods, our good friend and school naturalist, Ted Watt has come and brought us some stuffed animals to look at close-up. We began work in our new science journals by drawing a raccoon and a ruffed grouse. The children were able to study the markings of each of these and then discuss how the color of the animal helps to camouflage it in the forest.



Kindergarten Photos by Deb Porter



Learning about the world around us is an important aspect of our kindergarten program. As the weather changes, look for us to be out and about. Of course we will have visits to the Maitland forest to study the vernal pool and to Sheila Litchfield's barn to see new baby goats. If anyone has other ideas of places in Heath we shouldn't miss this spring, we are always open to suggestion.

~ Deb Porter




Peter Pan Rehearsal

Photos by Lorena Loubsky-Lonergan

Finance Committee

The Heath Finance Committee has done a lot more listening than talking over the last couple of months, and as a result we don't have much to report. We've been participating with the Selectboard in budget hearings involving the various town departments.

The Town of Heath is caught in a squeeze between diminishing revenue (State aid has been drastically cut) and a large one-time increase in the Town's assessment for the Mohawk Trail Regional School District. The State has recalculated Heath's ability to pay based on a spike in aggregate personal income from roughly \$9 million in 2005 to roughly \$19 million in 2006.

This increase would affect Heath only the next fiscal year, we are told. If the amount of the increase is not reduced through special appeal to the State, Heath will face an increase of about 18% in our schools assessment, a significantly greater increase than that for any other town in the District. It's difficult to say at this point how this sharp rise will affect the town tax rate.

The budget hearings themselves have been illuminating. Town department heads are considering cutbacks where they can; the Town may need to operate on a truly bare-bones budget in the 2010 fiscal year (which begins July 1, 2009). We've been impressed both with the proactive response of town department heads to the Town's fiscal problems, and with the care and thoroughness with which our Selectboard has analyzed and responded to departmental budget plans.

*~Don Freeman, Chair
Jan Carr
Dave Gott
Jeff Simmons
Ned Wolf*

Spring Bulky Waste Collection

The Franklin County Solid Waste District is holding a "Clean Sweep" bulky waste collection on Saturday, May 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The drop-off site for Heath residents is the Buckland Recreation Facility on Rt. 112 South.

District residents may bring a wide range of items that are typically difficult to get rid of such as tires, appliances, scrap metal, furniture, mattresses, carpeting, construction debris, computers, televisions, propane gas tanks, and other large items. Materials will be recycled whenever possible.

Residents do not need to preregister for the collection. However, there are charges for disposal. Disposal fees, cash only, will be collected during check-in at each site. A complete list of prices for the most common items is available at local town halls, town transfer stations, the District office at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield, and online at: www.franklincountywastedistrict.org. Businesses may participate. For more information call the District Office at 413-772-2438, or e-mail info@franklincountywastedistrict.org. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD). The District is an equal opportunity provider.

Heath School Local Education Council

The Education Reform Act of 1993 calls for the formation of school councils in each school in Massachusetts. The name Local Education Council (LEC) is the name that has evolved in the Mohawk District. The LEC is reorganized each year in September as the first meeting must occur no later than 40 days after the first day of school. The LEC meets monthly after that with meetings scheduled right after school on a day that works for all members.

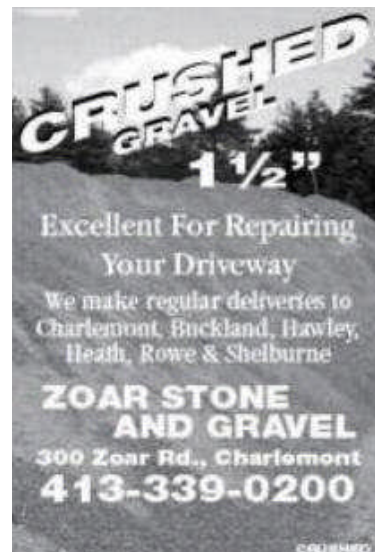
The school principal serves as cochair, three parents of students attending Heath School (elected by parents), two staff members (elected by staff) and two community members who are neither staff nor parents (appointed) make up the LEC. **RIGHT NOW WE ARE IN NEED OF ONE MORE COMMUNITY MEMBER!** If you have an interest please do not hesitate to contact the school. The members right now are:

Deb Porter and Jorie MacLeod – Staff members
Rebekah Boyd Owens – Parent and Cochair
Dana Blackburn and Lorena Loubsky-Lonergan – Parent members
Ned Wolf – Community member
Anne Marie Mislak – Principal and Cochair

The role of the LEC is to serve as an advisory group to the principal in the following areas with input from each stakeholder in the school:

- *Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local district and statewide standards.
- *Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
- *Reviewing the school's annual operating budget
- *Formulating the School Improvement Plan

Each year the LEC creates the School Improvement Plan which is a legal document filed with the State, but more importantly serves as our guide for the year. Everything we discuss refers back to our plan and new ideas and discussions become part of the new plan for the next school year. The SIP gives us a foundation.



Heath Business Directory

Bald Mountain Pottery
625-8110

The Benson Place
Wild Blueberries & Blueberry Spread
337-5340

Fred Burrington
Artist
337-4302

Dave Cote Builders
Branch Hill Road
337-4705

Robert Delisle
Electrician
337-5716

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

Jerry Ferguson
Home Improvement
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

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

LIVELY CARETAKING

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Town Nurse News

Hypertension



By Claire Rabbitt, RN

I decided to do this article on hypertension because I have been seeing a lot of elevated blood pressures in our community. We should be concerned about high blood pressure because it increases the risk of stroke, heart disease, and kidney disease. These risks are even greater if you have diabetes, high cholesterol, or smoke, and the older we get the greater the risks, according to the American Heart Association and the National Institutes of Health.

Your blood pressure is the measurement of the force of your blood flow against your artery walls, as your heart contracts and relaxes. The upper number called systolic is the force during contraction, and the lower number called diastolic is the force during relaxation of the heart. When blood pressure is elevated, the heart must work harder to pump the blood. The extra pressure in your arteries over time can cause rough areas that may trap cholesterol circulating in the blood, causing fatty plaque buildup.

CLASSIFICATION OF BLOOD PRESSURE FOR ADULTS 18 YEARS & OLDER (in mm/Hg)

Category	Systolic	Diastolic
Normal Blood Pressure	Less than 120	less than 80
"Pre" High Blood Pressure	120-139	80-89
Moderate High Blood Pressure (<i>Stage 1</i>)	140-159	90-99
Severe High Blood Pressure (<i>Stage 2</i>)	160 or more	100 or more

According to the American Heart Association there are multiple dietary factors that can help to lower blood pressure, which include reducing salt intake, weight loss, and moderation of alcohol consumption. In a study of three diets the most effective in lowering blood pressure, called the DASH (**D**ietary **A**pproaches to **S**top **H**ypertension) diet, included high intake of fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy products, whole grains, poultry, fish, and nuts, and it was reduced in sodium, fats, red meat, sweets, and sugar-containing beverages. Studies have shown that vegetarians have lower blood pressures than non-vegetarians, including a study of strict vegetarians, living in Massachusetts, who had some of the lowest blood pressures in industrialized nations. The article said the lower blood pressures could also be related to reduced weight, increased potassium intake (from fruits and vegetables), and physically active lifestyles.

The DASH diet is much like that recommended for preventing and controlling heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, as well as lowering blood pressure. Certainly, if you have high blood pressure, you should see your health care provider. If you have "pre" high blood pressure you may be able to lower it with diet. If you are on medication you should continue with it unless your doctor discontinues it.

DR. TANJA C. DAVIN MOHAWK MEDICAL SCHOLARSHIP

To be awarded to student(s) who meet the following criteria:

- ♦ He or she must be a graduate of Mohawk Trail Regional High School. He or she must have completed one full year as a student in good standing in an accredited United States medical school.

A candidate for this scholarship award shall submit proof of completion in good standing of one year of medical school to the director of the Student Services department at Mohawk Trail Regional High School. Upon approval a check will be written to the candidate.

Dr. Davin, daughter of Bruce and Elizabeth Pazmino Davin of Heath, graduated as valedictorian of the class of 1989 at Mohawk Trail Regional High School. While at Mohawk she was president of the National Honor Society, a member of the band, and peer educator. She graduated cum laude from Tufts University and

received her medical degree from the University of Massachusetts Medical School. She completed her residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at Bay State Medical Center in Springfield, MA. Dr. Davin worked as a hospitalist for both the Concord, NH hospital and the Elliot Hospital in Manchester, NH. She died in 2006.

This scholarship will provide funds for students who have successfully completed their first year in a medical program. The funds could provide the necessary incentive for a student to complete the very demanding requirements of a medical program.

The amount of the scholarship to be determined by available funds in the account at the time of application.

Donations may be sent to The Mary Lyon Foundation
P.O. Box 184
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Please note Dr. Davin scholarship on the check. Contact Dr. Susan Samoriski, Executive Director, Mary Lyon Foundation at 413-625-2555 or at the above address for more information.

Selectboard's Report

Meeting Schedule

The Board meets every Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in Sawyer Hall unless posted otherwise.

Ice Storm Emergency Borrowing

The Town has received permission to borrow up to \$200,000 from the State Department of Revenue, Local Services Division. The money will be used to cover the expenses incurred in cleaning up after the December ice storm. An initial damage assessment of \$199,000 was submitted to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). The Town is anticipating reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and MEMA to pay back the majority of the borrowing. FEMA reimburses 75% of the approved amount while MEMA contributes another 12.5%.

FY2010 Budget

The Board has been holding budget hearings for town departments to aid in putting together the FY 2010 budget which will be considered at the next Annual Town Meeting. Most of the department budgets have been submitted and reviewed by the Selectboard and Finance Committee. The Board and the Finance Committee will be working together to assemble the overall budget including a review of employee salaries and cost of living adjustments.

Mohawk School Assessment

The Board has been in discussions with officials from the State Department of Revenue, the Department of Education, and our Senator and Representative to see if there is any help available to the town for the steep jump in our assessment from Mohawk. The \$126,000 increase over the previous year represents an increase of 18%, the highest rate for any town in the state. The reason for the increase is related to an increase in the personal income of the Town going from about \$9 million in 2005 to \$19 million in 2006. The State's formula for a town's minimum contribution to education costs includes an income factor which was terribly skewed by this sudden rise in a period of one year.

A meeting of the Board with Senator Downing and Representative Bosley was held on Monday, March 23, to discuss potential legislative remedies to this problem.

Town Committees and Boards Meeting

The Selectboard invited members of all the Town's committees and boards to meet on March 23 at the Heath Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for each group to share what they have been working on and to discuss with others what problems and successes they have experienced. The Selectboard had an opportunity to provide an overview of the coming year's budget and discuss any concerns with the larger group.

Trench Permit Applications

The Town of Heath has adopted a trench safety bylaw as required by the State. All excavators must obtain a permit prior to the creation of a trench made for a construction-related purpose on public or private land. Details of the state regulations may be viewed on the Department of Public Safety Web site

www.mass.gov/dps. The permit fee is \$10 and a trench permit may be obtained at the town offices during business hours.

Heath Online

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. 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

TOWN OFFICES TO BE FILLED IN ANNUAL ELECTION MAY 8, 2009

- ◆ Elections will be held on Friday, May 8, from noon until 7:00 p.m. at the Heath Library.
- ◆ Town Meeting is on Saturday, May 9, 9:00 a.m. at the Heath School preceded by a Special Town Meeting at 8:30 a.m.

<u>Incumbents</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term Length</u>
Sheila Litchfield	Selectman	3 years
Hilma Sumner	Town Clerk	3 years
Richard Gallup	Assessor	3 years
Edwin Wolf	Finance Committee	3 years
David Gott	Finance Committee	3 years
Janis Carr	Finance Committee	3 years
Vacant	Planning Board	5 years
Vacant	School Committee	3 years
Deborah Porter	Library Trustee	3 years
Robert Tanner, Jr.	Constable	1 year
Jeffrey Simmons	Constable	1 year
Robert Tanner, Jr.	Dog Officer	1 year



*Friends of the
Heath School Library*

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST
before and during the
Annual Town Meeting**

**on Saturday, May 9, at 8:30 a.m.
at the Heath School**

**On offer: quiche, deviled eggs, beverages,
and a selection of breakfast breads,
generously provided by some of
Heath's best cooks!**

**As always, all donations will go
to benefit the Heath School Library.**

Library Lines**A Fresh Look at the Library****By Donald Purington**

Spring is often a time for a fresh look at our homes. Cleaning, tidying-up, and rearranging are ways to welcome the transition from the colder, darker winter days to a bright and warm spring. Here at the library we have been fortunate to receive some help. Circuit Riders (library professionals) from the "Together We Thrive" grant-funded program administered by the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System are helping us in three areas. Adam Williams is designing a new Web site. Look for it soon at www.heathlibrary.org. Owen Shuman will meet with me and the Trustees in April to discuss space planning: how do we make the best use of our available space in Sawyer Hall, including how to meet accessibility requirements. Maggie Spiegel and Robin Shtulman have assisted in light weeding of the collection, an ongoing process needed to make room for new books and other material, which keeps our library current while retaining books of local importance and some classic works. Visit the library soon and see our work in progress!

A Few of the New Items at the Library:

Adult Fiction Books: *Execution Dock* by Anne Perry, *Whisper to the Blood* by Dana Stabenow, *Missing* by Tim Gautreaux, *After You've Gone* by Jeffrey Lent, *Tourist* by Olen Steinhauer, *Women* by T. Coraghessen Boyle, and *Among the Mad* by Jacqueline Winspear.

Adult Nonfiction Books: *Internet Simplified* by Paul McFedries, *Outside the Not So Big House: Creating the Landscape of the Home* by Julie Moir Messervy and Sarah Susanka, *Greenhouses & Garden Sheds: Inspiration, Information, and Step-By-Step Projects* by Pat Price, and *Solar Water Heating: A Comprehensive Guide to Solar Water and Space Heating Systems* by Bob Ramlow

Books on CD: *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows.

Young Adult Books: *3 Willows: The Sisterhood Grows* by Ann Brashares, and *Fetch* by Laura Whitcomb.

Children's Books: *Emmaline and the Bunny* by Katherine Hannigan.

DVDs: *Changeling*, *Secret Life of Bees*, and *Slumdog Millionaire* (winner of Best Picture and in other Oscar categories).

Music CDs: *At Folsom Prison* by Johnny Cash, *Blonde on Blonde* by Bob Dylan, and *Burnin'* by Bob Marley.

Note: Preschool Story Hour Schedule – Please call the library for a revised schedule at 337-4934, extension 7.

THE FRIENDS OF THE HEATH FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annual Memorial Day Weekend Bake Sale

Saturday, May 23, 2009

9:30 a.m. to Noon

Sawyer Hall Front Porch

**COME AND SUPPORT YOUR LIBRARY AND TREAT YOURSELF TO THE BEST
BAKED GOODS IN TOWN!**

*If you bake for the sale, please deliver
Saturday morning.*

Milestones

Ralph H. Dickinson, one of Heath's most venerable personages, died on March 17, 2009. Born in Heath on April 6, 1917, he was the son of Horatio F. and Belle S. Gleason Dickinson.

Ralph and his brother Howard owned and operated the Dickinson Dairy Farm for many years. Ralph also produced maple sugar each spring and assisted Howard in operating a small sawmill on the farm. He enjoyed woodworking using the lumber produced by their mill.

Ralph measured and recorded the rain and snowfall amounts in the town of Heath for the National Weather Service and for the *Heath Herald* for many years.

He was a member of the Heath Union Church, serving as a Deacon, and also of the Heath Historical Society.

Survivors include his brother **Howard of Heath**; his first cousins, **Ruth Landstrom Johnson, Earl Gleason, and Walt Gleason**, all of **Heath**; Ada Landstrom Duffy of Londonderry, NH, Pearl Landstrom Churchill, Bill Stafford, and Nancy Peck, all of Shelburne, and June White of Pennsylvania, and many friends.

His sister Esther died in 1995.

A funeral service was held on March 21 at the Heath Union Church with the Pastor Phill Grant and the Reverend Allen Comstock of Charlemont officiating. The eulogy was given by Todd Sumner, headmaster of The Academy at Charlemont and a close family friend. Interment was in Heath's South Cemetery, followed by a reception at the Church, catered by the Heath Ladies Aid.

Memorial donations may be made either to the Johnson Organ Restoration Fund, P.O. Box 87, Heath, MA 01346, or to the charity of one's choice..

Mary B. Ladd Smith of Heath died on February 6, 2009, at home. Born in Corrina, Maine, on January 31, 1929, she was the daughter of Chester and Sybil Aiken Ladd.

Mary and her late husband Ernest (Pat) Smith, active members of the Heath Agricultural Society for several years, ran the oxen and horse draws and participated with their own oxen at the annual Heath Fair. She was a member of and past secretary of the VFW Post 8503 Ladies Auxiliary of Shelburne Falls.

Survivors include her daughter, Tina L. Shippee, of Buckland; her son, **Roy B. Smith, of Heath**; a brother, Chester Ladd, of Northfield; her sister-in-law, Betty Goodell, of Colrain, and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her daughter, May B. Churchill, died on May 31, 2008.

A graveside service will be held this spring in the North Heath Cemetery.

Memorial; donations may be made to Hospice of Franklin County, 329 Conway Street, Greenfield, MA 01301.

Requiescat in pace

("Remembering Ralph Dickinson" continued from page 7)

Haying with Ralph

One hot summer day Howard was baling up the hay and Ruth, Russ, Ralph, and I were picking up the bales. I was hustling along - my thinking being that I was younger and should pick up more of the bales. Ralph, however, decided differently

and started to race me to the bales. At that point I laughed and told him that if he wanted that bale that much it was all his, that it was way too hot to be running in the hay field! An afternoon in good company I will always remember.

~ Kathy Sprague



Ralph was quiet. In the division of labor Ralph and Howard evolved (I did not know Esther, having moved to Heath a little too late), Howard did most of the talking. Sometimes it seemed that Ralph wasn't paying a great deal of attention to the talking going on around him, but whenever someone needed Ralph's expertise or memory on a subject, he was right there with an answer and sometimes with a surprising witticism. His ability to be quiet—not holding back, just calmly still—marked him as someone unusually centered. To me, as for many people, the Dickinsons have been iconic of a rooted, poised, humane way of being. Ralph was a part of his place as much as the gnarled apple trees along the road.

~ Michael Wilmeth

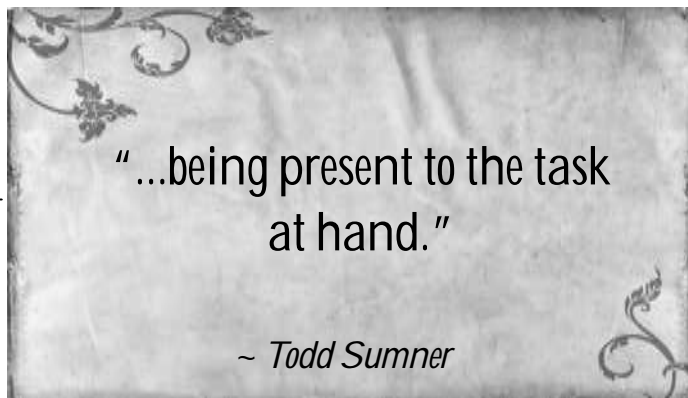


Helping Hands

People think it strange that I am leery around cows as I grew up in the country, farm land all around me, come from a family of farmers, and even had a calf named after me who happened to be born on my birthday! But I suppose it could be worse. When I was younger, I spent many hours at the Dickinson's, and a big treat was to go out to the barn with Howard and Ralph to see the calves and the bull. But one late afternoon I happened to be in the barn and in the wrong place when the cows were called into the barn. As cows will do, they headed toward the open barn door and in toward their stalls to get ready to be milked. I being about six or seven at the time, froze near the stalls as the cows came stamping in.

Almost 40 years later, I can still see all those large creatures coming my way, then suddenly feeling strong large hands grab me from behind, under my arms, and swoop me up on the grain sacks. I can't remember how long it took me to come down off those grain sacks, but I'm sure it took a lot of persuading by Ralph and Howard. I had always marveled at the size of Ralph's hands, and I am sure glad that Ralph and those hands acted as quickly as they did!

~ Robin Jenkins



~ Todd Sumner

Letters to the Editor**Thank You**

To the super *Heath Herald* staff. I thank you so much for the honor of being a Valentine in the last issue. I am in awe of being included in such a prestigious group. The adorable bouquet brought a breath of spring to my table.



Bless you.
Ruthie Johnson

I would like to thank Eileen Tougas, Beverly Thane Cable, Olga Peters, Pam Porter, Ruth Corey, Alli Thane-Stetson, and Teresa Peters for the kind words said about Grace Crowningshield in the last *Heath Herald*. Grace had a rough four months in the nursing home. I am glad she is home as I know you all are. You all mean a lot to her, and, yes, she loves the Heath Fair. For many years she and I set up our flea market together there. She is my oldest sister and very special to me.

Mary Brown
Dover, Vermont

Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

	<u>Rain</u>	<u>Snow</u>
From January 11, 2009	0"	19¼ "
February	0"	16"
To March 10	½ "	5 ½ "

In this reporting period:

The remaining half of the winter (since the last issue of the *Herald*) has been colder than average, which provided for about an average snowfall accumulation of about 41 inches. Thankfully, the arrival of the "March Lion," which hit the other end of the State, only gave us about 3" of fluffy snow.

~ Timothy Lively

Community Calendar**April 2009**

- April 02** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
District Grades 5 and 6 Spelling Bee, MTRHS PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- April 04** - Annual Pancake Breakfast, Heath School, 7:30 – 10:00 a.m.
Wholesale Klezmer Band, Heath School, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- April 06-10** - Heath School 6th Grade to Nature's Classroom
- April 07** - LEC Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
MCAS for Grades 4,7, & 10
- April 09** - **HAPPY PASSOVER**
- April 12** - **HAPPY EASTER**
- April 14** - Special Town Meeting, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- April 16** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- April 20-24** - **Schools' Spring Break**

May 2009

- May 03** - Cinco de Maya Fiesta, Community Hall, 3:00-6:00 p.m.
- May 07** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
Kids in Concert, MTRHS, 6:30 p.m.
- May 08** - **TOWN VOTING, HEATH LIBRARY, NOON TO 7:00 P.M.**
- May 09** - **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, HEATH SCHOOL, 9:00 A.M. PRECEDED BY A SPECIAL TOWN MEETING AT 8:30 A.M. Friends of the Heath School Library Breakfast, 8:30 –**
- May 10** - **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY**
- May 11-28** - Math and Science MCAS
- May 14** - LEC Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- May 17** - Kindergarten Registration, Heath School
- May 21** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- May 23** - Friends of the Heath Library Bake Sale, Sawyer Hall Porch, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon
MTRHS Senior Prom
- May 25** - **MEMORIAL DAY - NO SCHOOL**

June 2009

- June 04** - Senior Awards Night, MTRHS
- June 07** - **MTRHS GRADUATION**



*The spring is fresh and fearless
and every leaf is new.
The world is brimmed with moonlight,
the lilacs brimmed with dew.*

*Here in the moving shadows
I catch my breath and sing...
My heart is fresh and fearless
and over-brimmed with spring.*

*Sara Teasdale
American Poet
(1884- 1933)*

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