



# HEATH HERALD

## Heath's First Newspaper

\$1.50

Volume 31, Number 5

December 2009/ January 2010

*Happy Holidays*



## Heath Herald

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**THE HERALD DEADLINE FOR THE February/March, 2010 issue is Jan. 10, 2010. 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 [jdeleu@crocker.com](mailto:jdeleu@crocker.com).**

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### Heath Union Church News

Our Family Nights have been well attended and enjoyed. Please note the announcements on the Church Bulletin Board so all can attend. A Potluck dinner was held on November 1; the next one will be on January 3.

The Johnson Organ Committee reports that a contract is in hand for the restoration. We continue to raise funds for floor repair and for the maintenance fund.

During the vacation of Pastor Grant we enjoyed having Carolyn Bellany of Greenfield and Aaron Clouser of Colrain lead us in worship.

The Mission Committee organized a shoebox collection for needy children of the world for which we collected 13 boxes.

Our Thanksgiving Eve service was on November 25.

The Advent season started on November 29. Our Christmas service schedule is as follows:

Christmas Sunday, December 20, at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight service, December 24, at 7:00 p.m.

We are gathering a choir for both of these dates so if anyone would like to join us to sing the Christmas songs please call Tracey at 337-4008 or Ruth 337-4367.

Adult Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

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

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

Church Telephone: 337-4019, Pastor: 413-648-9077

Deacons: Richard Gallup, 337-5367

Tracey Brooks, 337-4008

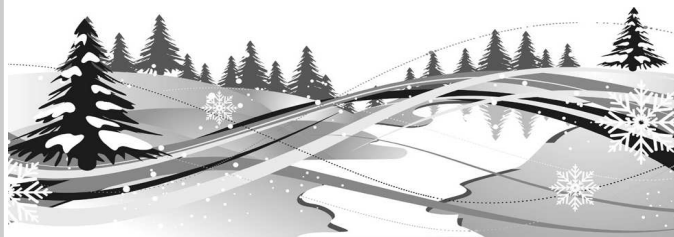
Ruth Johnson, 337-4367

Walt Gleason, 337-4479

~ The Deacons

*Winter is the time for comfort,  
for good food and warmth,  
for the touch of a friendly hand,  
and for a talk beside the fire; it is  
the time for home.*

*Dame Edith Sitwell  
English Author 1887-1964*





## A Winter's Tale or All's Well That Ends Well With Help From Neighbors and Friends

It all happened fast. John and I were enjoying a sunny winter day snowshoeing down in the woods below our house. We were on one of our

favorite treks heading to the West Branch Brook, certain that the stream would be at its winter best with swirls of water rushing around overhangs of icicles and granite. The day was sunny and the surface of the snow had a hard crust of ice over the top of it. So hard that in fact we were not even making tracks as we crunched along the top of the crust. We had just decided to head down over a steep embankment to avoid having to cross a small stream that due to the warmer temperatures was swollen beyond our leg reach. Walking along the brook on this alternate route, we were happily extolling the features of the landscape that we had hiked so many times and that had never failed to surprise and delight us. At the top of the knoll, we mentally mapped out our descent before heading down at an angle. It was just at the moment when we were digging into the ice to secure our footing that the rivet that held the ice cleat onto my snowshoe snapped, sending me down the hill backwards and into a small tree at the bottom. As I said, it all happened very fast, the nylon material of my coat made a perfect sled on top of the icy surface. I had just enough time to twist my head around before crashing into the tree.

We both knew instantly that my arm was broken and that John would have to leave me on my own to go get help. After wrapping me up as best he could in his own jacket, he headed off running for home. I lay there trying to keep my mind from dwelling on my predicament and thought about the fact that just an hour before, I had been at the library, extolling the joys of snowshoeing. "It's so safe," I proclaimed, "and you can get to places where no ski or snowmobile can go." Now I was lying in one of those spots wondering how I would get out and trying very hard to ignore the cold that was creeping in along my backside.

I also thought of the day before, when Robin Jenkins and I had taken a group of children on a glorious snowshoeing trek into the woods by the school. We had all had a grand time, enjoying the winter beauty of the woods and the fun of sliding down small easy slopes on top of the ice. As I lay waiting for help, the fun and safety of that outing stood in direct contrast to my present situation.

Never had I been so glad to hear the crunching sound of foot upon ice as John returned with blankets, a sleeping mat, and the promise of help. At that point, of course, I had no idea of the incredible help that was on the way; I was just relieved to get as much of my body as I could manage up off the cold snow. After bundling me up as best as he could, John headed back up the hill to make sure no one got off track in finding us. Luckily, my brother-in-law, Brian DeVriese, one of the few people who would know how to find us, was waiting to lead people in. Since the hill hid us

from view, however, John didn't want to take any chances.

For the second time that day I heard the almost musical sound of crunching feet and then the quiet voice of Tim Lively reassuring me that he was there to take command. I have known Tim my entire adult life, first when he was a child enrolled in a summer program I was teaching, and then as a colleague at the Heath Elementary School. So many times in the past 12 years, Tim and I have worked alongside of each other and I have the utmost respect for the generosity and dedication with which he does his job. I knew Tim was an EMT but this was the first time I witnessed it first hand. With Tim was Sheila Litchfield, another longtime friend, helping to get the things Tim needed and keeping a careful watch over me as I shivered in the cold. This was not the first time Sheila had come to the aid of our family. As a nurse, she was on hand when our tiny premature son came home from the hospital, and with us again, helping make my Mother's final days as comfortable as possible.

Sheila quietly let me know of all the neighbors that had assembled to help get me safely out of the wood; her husband Budge, Ken Gilbert, Brian DeVriese, Steve Bigelow, and Doug Wilkins. They all went to work, attending to different aspects of the problem, Brian and Budge communicating with the ambulance, Ken and John securing the route out, Sheila making sure I was not getting too cold, and Tim putting a splint on my arm and getting me ready for transport. It was a finely orchestrated event, with everyone playing their part but at the same time paying close attention to Tim, their conductor. It was evident by the way they all worked together that this was a well-rehearsed ensemble.

Once I had been placed in a transport basket and a route out of the woods was secured, everyone on hand gathered to carry me out. I was anticipating this next hurdle with dread. The pain in my arm was overwhelming, and I knew we had to cross a very sketchy bridge. Then I looked up, saw that I was surrounded by a group of gentle giants, neighbors that anyone could trust, and I relaxed. Quietly, Tim first told me exactly what the plan was. Then he told the others, checking to make sure everyone understood and was ready. On the count of three, we were on our way and I couldn't have asked for a more secure ride. Tim was at my left keeping a careful watch over me. There was a constant reassuring banter going on back and forth between the carriers, joking with each other and me while at the same time proceeding with incredible care over the dreaded bridge and up to meet my husband John who was coming in with Doug Annear and a rescue sled from Berkshire East. Once in the sled, it was an easy trip to the ambulance where some interim medical care awaited.

We had made the first leg of the journey without mishap, and, though there was more to go, I was so grateful to all who had brought me this far. When they loaded me into the ambulance, I was also greatly relieved that Tim climbed right in beside me to accompany me all the way to the hospital. Like the trip out of the woods, the ambulance ride was uneventful. When we arrived, and Tim finally handed me off to the emergency room personnel, I was overwhelmed with gratitude for all that Tim and the other emergency volunteers had done. From the moment he had found me in the woods to the moment he placed me in the hands of the hospital personnel, he had not left my side. Yet he directed the whole

("A Winter's Tale" continued on page 5)

*Wild Ramblings*

## One Year Later



By Bill Lattrell

Photo by Bob Viarengo

Trekking through the woods is difficult this year. The ground is littered with whole trees with their rootballs bulging up into the air creating earth walls comprised of dirt, roots, and rocks. There are also treetops with a plethora of branches that create webbed obstructions that must be climbed through or walked around, and multitudes of branches ready to tangle your feet and send you to the ground without notice. It takes twice as long to go anywhere. For the longest time I thought of this as a nuisance, hardly worth the time to travel short distances. As usual persistence pays off. I have learned to see things differently now. I have found new routes through old territories. New Adventures will be realized as I explore new areas. There are few direct routes these days. I wander in anything but a straight line in order to find the most efficient track that will get me from place to place.

Old tree friends, lying on the ground, are already starting to change form. Leaving their mark over the next few decades, they will provide ample character for this forest that they once looked over. Rodents will nest under their large trunks. Beetles and various other insects will invade the spaces between the bark and the wood. Some will even bore into the wood and leave tunnels where moisture will invade the cellulose; fungi and other ancient plant life will soon follow. Perhaps a deer will use an uplifted rootball for cover from fierce northwest winds. Perhaps chipmunks will bury this year's acorn crop under the bark of a tree that used to reach for the sky but now is on its side. Perhaps a fox will explore every nook and cranny of this grounded structure in pursuit of prey.

These trees will slowly decompose over the next thirty or forty years placing carbon and other nutrients back into the soil at a rate that can be utilized by new growth. They will remain useful even after their tragic passing, maintaining the cycle of life as nature has intended.

As I pass slowly through this mysterious forest I come upon a huge trunk of a giant eastern hemlock. Generally the hemlocks did well in the ice storm. These trees have evolved to shed ice and snow. Everything from the shape of each individual needle covered with a slippery waxy substance to the tapering branches from top to bottom make this species well equipped to survive the harshest conditions winter can muster. This particular tree was on its last legs before the great ice storm. A long magnificent life was brought to a quick finish in the waning years of its existence.

I first sat under this enormous conifer in 1975. I was struck by its humungous trunk that was perhaps 45 inches in diameter. It sat overlooking a large bowl in the landscape that was carved out by centuries of erosion. I used to sit at the base of the tree, sometimes for hours at a time, and try to imagine what this tree had endured over the two to three hundred years it inhabited this spot. The tree was not particularly tall, in fact it was oddly shaped. It was rather stout for the large diameter of the trunk and was perhaps 50-feet-tall whereas I would have expected it to be 80 to 100 feet under normal circumstances. Although I spent hours and hours thinking about how its odd shape came about I never was able to understand its unusual shape. The best theory I had was that it had been left standing and every other tree had been removed when land clearing for sheep pasture was prevalent more than 100 years ago. It no longer had to compete with other trees to gather sunlight for energy and so it put its resources into growing out instead of up. When the hundreds of acres of pasture were abandoned early in the twentieth century the forest grew up around this giant tree. It took up so much space with its great girth that ample sunlight was able to reach its branches. Competition for sunlight was no longer part of the equation for the survival of this tree.

In the last decade or so the tree was showing real signs of advanced aging. Branches began to break off in large numbers. Large cracks could be seen running up and down its enormous trunk. Insects invaded the tree. Pileated woodpeckers made large excavations on the trunk, predominately on the southern side. By evidence of the claw marks black bears tore huge sections of the rotted wood away, presumably in search of grubs or some other nutritious meal.

I used to look away from the great amount of damage to this great tree. A sense of sadness would pass over me as I viewed its decline. I knew the bitter end was near. Perhaps it had another ten or twenty years left before it perished. I hoped I would not witness its passing.

But that was not to be. The massive weight of the accumulated ice last December 11 was too much for the weary old trunk to handle. It snapped off about ten feet above ground leaving a pointed trunk that aims into the sky. The main body of the tree toppled over the steep bank, crushing several full grown trees as it fell to earth. The hole in the forest canopy created by this missing monolith is staggering. Sunlight rains into the gap once shaded by thick hemlock boughs. Small hemlock saplings have already responded to this newfound source of energy that reaches the forest floor. Competition will begin again. Someday one of these innocuous looking

( "Wild Ramblings" continued on page 5)



(“Wild Ramblings” continued from page 4)

saplings may dominate this part of the landscape. Perhaps in three hundred years someone will sit here marveling at the landscape that falls away to the north and wonder how this great tree that they sit next to came to be.

Not too far to the northwest there is another, larger bowl in the landscape that is also evidence of thousands of years of erosion. This bowl is perhaps two hundred yards long, one hundred and fifty yards wide, and is 50 to 60 feet deep with steep forest slopes. Large trees now grow in the steep banks. Their large root systems anchor wet, dense soils stabilizing the slopes from immediate erosion. The ice storm toppled some of these trees. In many cases the entire tree was uprooted. Sizeable scars on the ground were created where these large root masses formerly held the soil in place.

In the spring I looked closely at these disturbed areas. I was afraid they would be the beginning of new erosive forces that would expand this great bowl that cuts into the landscape. I imagined soil eroding back up the slope taking vegetation with it as groundwater and rainwater moved soils down slope. I thought of elaborate plans to stabilize the scarred areas. The most practical seemed to cut the tree away from the rootball and push it over to cover the earth that was exposed when the tree was uprooted. I soon realized that the heavy equipment that would be necessary to accomplish this would do more damage than leaving everything be.

Nearly a year later I took another close look at this precarious situation. Much to my surprise the disturbed earth was 100% vegetated. It looked like someone had spread seed. Grass and other herbaceous plants grew happily on these locations, and once again the sun easily penetrated to the earth's surface now devoid of branches and leaves overhead.

I lie down on this fresh bed of grass and herbs. The smell of freshly disturbed earth still permeates the air. I look at the blue skies filled with billowing white clouds above. I still cannot comprehend what happened last December when this small piece of the earth's landscape was ravaged by heavy ice. This unprecedented event is beyond my powers of evaluation. I just want the earth to heal. I know that change always takes time and can bring new discoveries and knowledge to the careful observer. I look forward to these.

I stop thinking for a moment and feel the warmth of the sun on my face. Imagine that. I am receiving warmth from a star 93 million miles away. I bask here in a new clearing in the forest created by an ice storm one year ago where I can sit and collect this solar radiation. This thought and the sunlight from a star far, far away warms me completely to the cellular level. My spirit seems, for the moment, renewed. What could be better? Isn't life grand?

*If you want to read more Wild Ramblings articles and stories visit [www.wildramblings.com](http://www.wildramblings.com) on the World Wide Web. There are nearly 100 stories published on my Web site at this point. I try to add at least one new story weekly. Join the 12,000 people who have enjoyed the stories on the Web site. There is even a feature that you can click on that automatically notifies you each time a new post is added.*

(“A Winter's Tale” continued from page 3)

rescue, making decisions in concert with all the others. Afterward, when I spoke in awe to Sheila of how impressed I was of the whole rescue, she simply said, “That's what we're all trained to do.”

It is an awesome thing to be willing to put in the hours that such training takes so that in the event of disaster you are ready to drop whatever you are doing to come to the aid of a neighbor. I am certain that the compassion and competence with which my rescue was orchestrated was no different than any others they had performed. These volunteers were ready to help and with no more reward than understanding just how critical such a service is to a small hilltown such as ours.

~ Deb Porter

## The Serenity Prayer Author

In *The New York Times* of November 28, Laurie Goodstein writes in her article entitled “Serenity Prayer Skeptic Now Credits Niebuhr” that Fred R. Shapiro, a Yale University librarian and once a doubter that Niebuhr was the prayer's author, is now convinced by new evidence that he did indeed write it and will therefore retain him as such in the next edition of *The Yale Book of Quotations*.

A Duke University researcher came across a 1937 Christian student newsletter which cites Niebuhr as the author of the Serenity Prayer. Good enough for Mr. Shapiro.

Even during Niebuhr's lifetime, his authorship was questioned, and the many responses to Ms Goodstein's article continue the controversy claiming this prayer has been around for a long, long time. The Niebuhr family has maintained that he wrote it in 1943 but, alas, the article does not say where he was at the time.



## To Don Dekker on His 75<sup>TH</sup> Birthday

This is the story of Don,  
Who lives in Heath, here anon.  
He's a fixture in town  
And he's been around.  
Of him we are extremely fond.

Don's cabin sits back in the woods.  
His garden delivers the goods.  
His lupine flower  
In the June hour.  
He nurtures them, as he should.

Don's stories are never a bore:  
Columbia, India, Peace Corps.  
If he sits at your table  
He is quite able  
To entertain you galore.

Committees? He's served on so many.  
To the town he's been a great bene.  
Con Com, Assessors,  
Library, Seniors,  
We hope we haven't missed any.

Don likes to go gathering fruit.  
In Fall he comes home with the loot.  
He stands on a log  
All wet with the sog,  
Going halfway up the bog to boot.

He's gentle and kind all the while.  
He's always sporting a smile,  
But pick up the phone  
And you'll talk alone,  
Because Don you just cannot dial.

We met Don one day in October,  
And he doesn't look a day older.  
"You're ageless," we say,  
How do you stay this way?  
Youth and he walk shoulder to shoulder.

Don's intelligent well read and fun.  
He finishes what he's begun.  
You're seventy-five.  
We're glad you're alive.  
And now our story's done.

Jayne Dane  
November 2009



*The guest of honor*



*Photographs by Art Schwenger*

## Travels Through Franklin County

As the end of the summer was fast approaching (although we were still waiting for the start of summer) we felt we had done nothing special. My sister talked of her trip through the Panama Canal and her planned trip to the Mediterranean; my brother of his planned trip down the coast of South America around the Cape, up to Chile, and flying home, and a friend told us of her adventures to the Baltic Sea. We love to hear all of their stories and see their pictures - but - jokingly we said we would like to visit all the towns in Massachusetts. The answer we received was, "Why not start with the towns in Franklin County?" So there we were.

Thursdays were our only free days so we knew it would be a while before we visited all 26 towns in Franklin County. We decided to start with the towns closest to North Adams, and to find one thing of interest to us in each town. The first Thursday, a cool, cloudy day, we went to Rowe and Monroe. As we drove into Rowe, we felt we were entering a park, the roads and the sides of the roads beautifully maintained. The center of Rowe was interesting and impressive, from the beautiful common with ducks on the pond, the red telephone booth, stately Town Hall, and of special interest to my husband (who was on the Veterans Monument Committee for our town) the memorial to their veterans. We went by the local grammar school. We had been told that close to half their enrollment was school choice students. We visited the town park and swimming area - what a wonderful spot for a hot summer day. we went to the Yankee Atomic Electric Power Station which had closed operations in 1992 but were surprised to find at least a dozen vehicles indicating there were still workers at the facility. We went by Bear Swamp where in the 70s our neighbor was an iron worker. We never realized what a long commute he had every day. I think what surprised us most was the terrain - I didn't know there were such hills in Franklin County! On to Monroe.

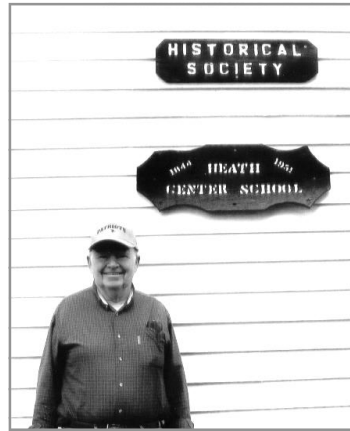
It was immediately evident that Monroe did not have the financial resources of Rowe. But this did not mean we did not find something of interest. In the Town Hall is a display dedicated to the Ramage family (founders in 1887 of the James Ramage Paper Company) and especially to Lawson P. Ramage, hometown boy and World War II hero, who was the first living submariner to be given the Congressional Medal of Honor. When the USS Ramage (Named after Lawson) was commissioned, 46 residents (nearly half the town) rented a bus to go to Boston for the commissioning. It must have been quite a time for them. Just a side note - Monroe elected the first selectwoman in Franklin County in 1932. I guess they were ahead of the times. And so ended our first day of traveling the roads of Franklin County

The next Thursday, another cool, cloudy day, we headed out for Leyden and Colrain. Leyden - years ago we had gone there when our children were in Little League and my husband was a coach - but I don't remember going to the town center. It was wonderful - everything compact and neat. I especially loved their library, a small building right on the side of the road. Unfortunately it was not open. My first job after high school was in a library and I have loved libraries ever since. (A plug - libraries are always the best deal in town). We will

go back to Leyden when the library is open. We were surprised at the number of small businesses in the town as listed in a Small Business brochure.

Off we went then to Colrain, a town with which we were not completely unfamiliar as my husband's brother lived there for several years. We had a very good lunch at Pine Hill and found that the current owners had bought my brother-in-law's home and loved it. With their permission we took pictures of the house and garden. My brother-in-law and his wife will be happy to know that the new owners love the house as much as they did. We visited the Smith covered bridge, a restored 112-year-old, 100-foot bridge. Close to the bridge is a giant oak - something to research. We drove by the old Kendall Mills and were glad to see that part of it is still being used by new companies. Colrain is justifiably proud that they had the first school to fly the American flag. Having just finished reading *Trinity* by Leon Uris in which Lord Colraine played a leading role, I was interested to find that Colrain's original settlers were from Ireland and Scotland, and it is believed that the town was named in honor of the Irish peer, Lord Colraine, the same who appeared in the book. Every town seemed to have something to spark our interest.

Thursday, September 24, an absolutely beautiful fall day, found



*Calvin Fellows standing in front of the Center Schoolhouse.*

us on our way to Heath. The only thing we knew about Heath was that they had blueberries., but we found that the town had so much more. We had a picnic lunch on the steps of the Historical Society's Center Schoolhouse with its beautiful shade tree, and then strolled around the town. We stopped at the Heath Union Church where the Ladies Aid was meeting. The ladies graciously took time from their meeting to talk with us about their group and what they do for the town. Wouldn't our towns be all the poorer without community

groups that always find ways to make our lives better. When we told the ladies that we were planning to visit every town in Franklin County, we were asked if we would write about our travels for the *Heath Herald* and we replied we would attempt it. We were amazed that Heath was able to raise \$100,000 to meet the \$50,000 challenge grant to restore the church's Johnson Organ, the oldest Johnson Organ in continuous use. We neglected to ask where someone with the expertise could be found to restore the organ. We will have to keep our eyes open in hopes of reading when a concert on the restored organ is held. We went to Sawyer Hall, to the post office, library, and town offices. Imagine our surprise when we discovered that librarian Donald Purington was a relative of a sister-in-law. We could see the family resemblance. We drove to the elementary school in its beautiful setting, got a cup

*(Travels Through Franklin County" continued on page 11)*





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

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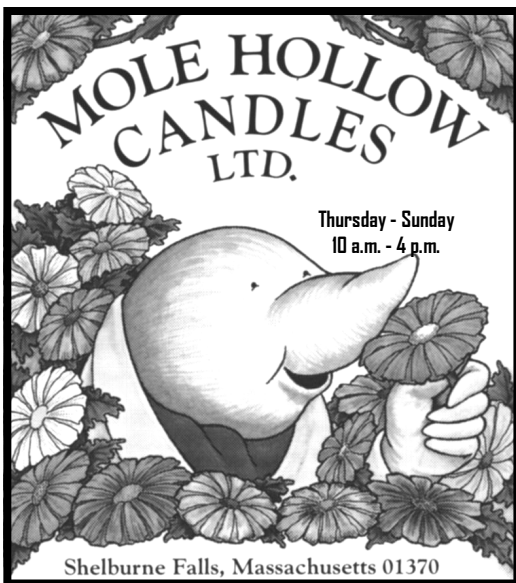
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Green Thoughts

## Useful and Enjoyable Books



By Pat Leuchtman

Reading season is upon us; so is the gift-giving season. My answer to both seasons is many different kinds of books. As a gardener I am always looking for information, but not only the how-to-dig-a-hole information. Gardens have many paths, botany, history, literature and myth. I have traveled all of those paths over time. I'd like to share some of the books I have found useful and enjoyable. Some are old favorites and some are in the process of becoming favorites.

Since I began as a vegetable gardener I must start with two books I turn to every spring. One is the *Rodale Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening* and one is John Jeavons' *How To Grow More Vegetables than you ever thought possible on less land than you can imagine*. Both of these useful, easy to use books, one fat and encyclopedic as advertised, and one slimmer, have new brightly illustrated editions since I bought mine. Both remain helpful.

Over the years I added flowers to my repertoire. Last summer I received an excellent book that answers every question I ever had about perennials by Nancy Ondra. *The Perennial Care Manual: A Plant by Plant Guide: What to Do and When to Do It* answered the first question I had about dividing epimediums. I had been afraid of killing my clump of *Epimedium rubrum*, but Ondra said dividing them in early spring or early fall, in the usual manner, would work fine. Can I explain why I was so unsure in this particular case? No. Did I get my epimediums divided this fall now that I had the go ahead? Alas, no again. But come spring. . .

Nan Ondra has written other useful books, including *The Perennial Gardener's Design Primer*. She is readable, and the books have excellent indices. This has been my go-to book when I've got perennial questions.

My husband is greatly in favor of one of my newest projects – eliminating lawn. Ground covers are the answer, but after reading *Covering Ground: Unexpected Ideas for Landscaping with Colorful, Low-Maintenance Ground Covers* by Barbara Ellis my grasp of the range of useful and attractive ground covers has expanded a hundredfold, which is about the number of ground covers described in this beautifully illustrated book. I may not have gotten my epimediums (which can be used as a ground cover) divided, but I have started planting *Waldsteinia*, otherwise known as barren strawberry.

I bought my plants at Nasami Farm in Whately. This nursery propagates native plants and is run by the New England Wildflower Society. As you might imagine, the foliage and little yellow flowers are strawberry-like, but do not produce fruit. It is a good spreader and tolerates sun and some shade.

I also decided the bank at the eastern end of our house is

perfect for large moundy roses like *Pink Grootendorst*, and some farm roses I was given by the Purington family at Woodslawn Farm in Colrain. Henry hates mowing banks.

If one has a garden, one will have weeds. Can one gain control over the weeds by knowing their names? Possibly. By being able to identify weeds, and learning whether they are annual or perennial, one will have a better idea of ways to control them. I found *Weeds of the Northeast* by Richard Uva, Joseph Neal, and Joseph DiTomaso unexpectedly fascinating and easy to read. The book is arranged by types of weeds, with instructions about how to identify the types I might find in my garden.

The book is well illustrated with a page of clear photographs showing each weed at every stage of growth from seedling to seed, facing a page of text with excellent information, including how it propagates itself. I am reminded, again, that I should have been alert and weeded out the *Muhlenbergia frondosa*, or wirestem muhly, before it went to seed in the herb bed. This is a perennial which you all might have and recognize if I called it knot-root-grass, a good description of the roots.

As the owner of The Rose Walk, I obviously love roses. I have many books about growing roses, naming roses, exhibiting roses, and loving roses. Therefore it is no surprise that one of my favorite books is *Roses: A Celebration, Thirty-three Eminent Gardeners on Their Favorite Rose*, edited by Wayne Winterrowd who has a notable garden in Readsboro.

Winterrowd and Joe Eck of North Hill Farm each have something to say about roses but so do other familiar gardeners including Michael Pollan, Tovah Martin, Dan Hinckley, Jamaica Kincaid, and Allen Lacy. I am delighted by the fact that the first rose favorite in the book is *Great Maiden's Blush*. The great British rosarian Peter Beales says this was the only rose his grandfather grew, then nameless, but when Beales began his nursery business he took a cutting of "Grand dad's rose" and finally identified it properly. It remains popular with Beale's customers – and with me. If my favorite, *Passionate Nymph's Thigh*, is not the *Great Maiden's Blush*, it is the *Small Maiden's Blush*, mostly differing in height.

One more favorite. If you are a happy gardener, I think you must have a good sense of humor. The garden contains so many trials and aggravations that if you cannot laugh you will not garden long. Many years ago I bought a worn book with funny illustrations at a book sale. The Czech author, Karel Capek, has captured every frustration, from not being able to get out in the garden when you want to, to getting tangled up in the hoses. The lively line drawings are by Capek's brother Josef. Every experience in every month of the year will be familiar. My copy was published in 1931, but it has since been reprinted in paperback.

In these books, and many others, I've found learning, loving, and laughing. That makes for happiness in every season.

Visit me at [www.commonweeder.com](http://www.commonweeder.com).





By Anne Marie Mislak

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE HEATH SCHOOL?

There is so much that I thought I would give you a snapshot of some of them. Academics are the focus but when you educate the whole child, there is so much more!

At Parent/Teacher Conferences a draft of the new report card was distributed to all parents as well as to teachers. The Report Card Committee has been working on this project for three years: constructing, gathering input from teachers, and then revising/editing each version. Training will take place during grade level meetings as well as in individual schools for implementation in January.

All classroom teachers in the district will have attended the Inservice Day on October 30. The day's events had a math focus with a presentation to all about being a successful math teacher. Then all staff were able to preview math texts by talking and hearing from representatives of the companies. Now at grade levels meetings held in November and December, teachers have a chance to preview themselves, as samples will be available. A template was developed for teachers to record their findings. A decision on the purchase will be made at the end of this school year.

The After School Soccer program had a very successful fall! There was a Heath/Rowe team at all grade levels. For grades 5 and 6 practices rotated between the two schools. Games were played at this level between other elementary schools in the district. There was also another group, which has expanded to grades 1-4, that met on a weekly basis for skills development and then a "game." Each group had around 20 students. A THANK-YOU to David DiLorenzo and Carin Burnes who coached the teams as well as to their many assistants!

The Uppers (Grades 5 and 6) met their Book Buddies for the first time in mid- October and began a weekly routine. Once a week the groups can be found in the Open Space reading to each other. Half of the Uppers are reading with the Prime Red (Grade 1 - 2 class), and the other half is reading with the Middle North (Grade 3) class. This is not only an opportunity to practice oral language skills, but it also promotes positive social interactions between the various grade levels. It is quite a sight to see two first graders listening in awe to an Upper read a favorite picture book!

The Pen Pal program between Virginia Gary's Prime Red (First/Second grade) class in Heath and Helen Hayden's Second Grade class in Colrain has begun. Pen pals have been chosen, letters are being exchanged, and activities are being planned for the two schools. This is a yearly program. As an aside, pen pals from last year are still writing letters to one another. Mrs. Mislak is the official courier of all the correspondence!

Last year a suggestion was raised from our Suggestion/Concern/Worry box that is always in the Open Space. Two fifth grade boys were asking why they could not listen to music on bus rides. We set up a meeting with Robin Pease who then took their concern to the Transportation Subcommittee. The adults all heard their concern and are now discussing a change to the policy. The boys have a thank- you written below:

Dear School Bus Community,

Thank you very much for considering our concern for electronics on the bus. Considering that both of us have a 45-minute bus ride it can be very dull and it is nice to have some entertainment. We hope you accept our concern.

Sincerely,  
Samuel Rode  
Colton Yezerski

The school garden has been maintained by a group of parents, students, and now the entire school. We have harvested potatoes and beets that have been served at lunchtime. The Prime Reds (Grades 1 and 2) harvested some carrots that were turned into some carrot cake cupcakes shared within the school. Some grants have been received from the Mary Lyon Education Fund and the Bridge of Flowers Road Race Funds to construct a shed to house tools closer to the garden. We are two-thirds of the way to achieve our goal of \$700. The garden was also featured in the *Greenfield Recorder* a few weeks ago!

#### News from the Heath PTP

Rows of glowing jack o' lanterns, carved at one of the PTP's



after school enrichments, greeted party goers as they arrived at the Halloween Witches' Ball on October 30. Families enjoyed music and dancing in the gym, as well as crafts, games, storytelling, and a movie. Each of the almost 50 children who attended proudly received an award for their costume (various sorts of witches and brides were in abundance this year). Thanks to all for a fun and successful Halloween party!

This fall there's been an exciting new addition to enrichments. Children have been exploring the North Woods at school with Emily Gopen, Co-chair of Enrichments on the PTP. The three sessions included creating shelters out of natural materials, playing games, and learning new songs about honoring our earth. We look forward to having another outdoor enrichment that focuses on outdoor winter survival. Indoors, children will be making candles and

("News from the Heath PTP" continued on page 11)

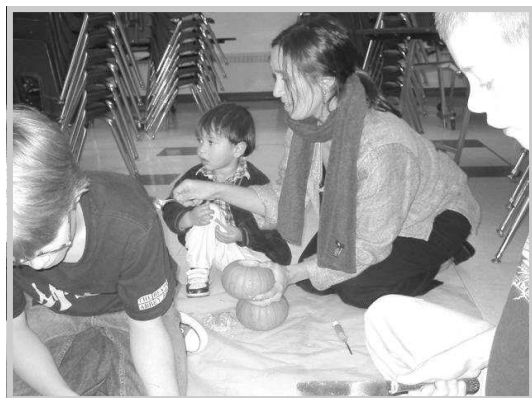
("News from the Heath PTP" continued from page 10)

gifts for the holiday season with Carin Burnes, our other Co-chair of Enrichments. Friday, December 18, Camille Freeman, Chair of Special Events, is planning a holiday movie showing in the cafe at 3:30.

Volunteers from the community are always welcome- there is a list of fall chores, such as staining the Loren Gowdy bridge. Please call Kathy at the school if you think you can help, 337-5307. Be sure to look for the Fedco seed catalogs in the Heath Library in early January. In recent years, this fund-raiser has been very beneficial. The PTP is considering creating a "Local Heroes" Gift & Service Catalog as a fund-raiser, similar to Ashfield's. Anyone interested in participating can contact Lorena Loubsky, [lloubskylonergeran@netzero.com](mailto:lloubskylonergeran@netzero.com) or Lyra Johnson, [lyrajohnson@yahoo.com](mailto:lyrajohnson@yahoo.com).

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, December 3, at 3:30 at the Cherry Table. Delicious refreshments are provided by Loralyn Boyd, our fantastic cafe manager.

~ Lyra Johnson



Photographs by Lorena Loubsky

## School Committee Thoughts

For the past 2 ½ years it has been my pleasure to represent the town of Heath on the Mohawk District School Committee. As someone who is passionate about education, I spend each day in my classroom in awe of the wisdom of my students and their own passion and curiosity for the lives in the world around them. I often spend my evenings immersed in thoughts of the world of my students, but at least twice a month I have peeked behind the curtain of the public education system to observe the inner workings.

I must admit, before stepping behind that curtain I had not given much thought to what the school committee did. It was a mystery, which I only bemoaned when I realized the budget they set did not have room for me. Although the budget is of concern every year and we appreciate the attention it gets, I have learned that it is the stories behind the numbers that make us who we are. When Jane asked me to write this for the *Herald* I wasn't sure what I had to say, but I have discovered

that it is this: to continue to be curious, to continue to learn, to continue to ask questions, all imperative to the continued success of Heath, Mohawk, and the world.

Our next school committee meeting will take place at Mohawk on December 9 at 7:00 p.m. Come step behind the curtain with me.

~ Emily Cross

## Local Education Council (LEC) News:

Our meeting this month was full of constructive dialogue and further review of our School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals. Topics we touched on were "teaching recess," encouraging new games on the playground; tallying & sharing results of last year's school-community survey; exploring ways of connecting with Heath's rich cultural, natural, and historical community, and integrating meeting school curriculum plans with fulfilling community needs. We also spoke briefly concerning the current budget status and enrollment for next year. Prior month minutes are available via e-mail or on our Web site courtesy of Ned Wolf, our LEC community member. We are still seeking an additional Heath resident to join us in that capacity. Camille Freeman has kindly offered to provide childcare for the LEC meetings.

Topics for the December meeting include: our school/district wellness plan, MCAS and other testing, budget, enrollment, SIP, and preparations for a new principal next year. All are welcome to attend or to offer input. Please let us know in advance should you wish an item to be placed on the agenda as meetings are full with topics, many and varied. Our cafeteria manager Loralyn provides delicious treats, tea, and coffee to keep us going. We look forward to seeing you there! Next meeting is on Thursday, December 10, at 3:30 p.m. Deb Porter and Jorie McLeod are our staff representatives. Lorena Loubsky, Dana Blackburn, and Tamara Sloan Anderson are parent representatives, and Ned Wolf is our community representative.

~ Lorena Loubsky

("Travels Through Franklin County" continued from page 7)

of coffee at Peter's General Store, passed by the Heath Fairgrounds (another reason to make a return trip to Heath), drove to the Dell neighborhood where in Heath's early days there were several mills, and stopped by the Stone Cottage where Reinhold Niebuhr wrote *The Serenity Prayer*. All in all, a full day.

What struck us about these five towns we've visited: their beauty and the rugged country; the wonderful people, especially in town halls, who took a great deal of time to talk with us, answer our questions, and direct us to spots of interest; the kindness of the people when we lost our way and asked directions, but most of all their feeling of pride and community spirit. It makes us feel optimistic about our country and reminds us that wherever you are, there is always something of interest.

~ Frederika and Calvin Fellows  
Warwick, Massachusetts



## Blues News from The Benson Place

Thanks to those who attended our October 25 event at the Community Hall, where we explained our dreams for the future of this farm. Your feedback was great and helped us sharpen our message for another such event held in Amherst on November 15. Some of you have generously made contributions to the project's capital campaign, so thanks for that also. Town boards have supported an application to place an APR (Agriculture Preservation Restriction) on our farmland, and I recommend to anyone Jan Carr's map of all the preserved parcels in town. It is great having conversations with residents and continuing to learn the proud history of blueberry and other farming activities here in town. Below are letters from two families that appreciate the farm.

"The Benson Place has been a great place for the people of the area. We are not only blessed with delicious blueberries, but with summer work as well. The young people all share the love of being there together and socializing with each other. David always treats them nicely and fairly. Over the years a lot of them have become close friends and hang out outside of the workplace. We are all so glad to hear that David will be sticking around a little longer. Heath would not be the same without the Benson Place. It provides work for many people. We so hope that many, many more people get to enjoy the benefit of this special piece of land and the harvest of sustainably grown and yummy blueberries.

Thank you so much,  
~ Moni Posl, Elana Posl-Lumbis,  
and Leah Posl-Lumbis"

"Bill and I support preservation of the Benson Place and its special place in the life of the town. The Benson Place has a special place in our own hearts. Each fall we freeze your delicious blueberries. They melt in our mouths all winter as pies and muffins to remind us of the warm days and blue skies of the Heath summer we love.

We also appreciate your making trails available for walks. One late summer walk I took will last in my memory for the rest of my life. As I walked out of sight of the house, and crows wheeled overhead, I felt transported back 100 years in time and experienced the same beauty someone from that time would have enjoyed on the same walk. The spell lasted until I stepped back into the 21st Century, picked up my blueberries, and headed for home."

~ Jean Gran

**The Valley Land Fund in Amherst has just given us a \$3,000 challenge grant. If you would be willing to help meet this challenge, we would be grateful. Tax deductible contributions can be made to: The Friends of the Benson Place and mailed to Land for Good, 29 Center Street, Keene, NH. 03431.**

~ Dave Gott

## Winter Solstice

**Solstice** = Standing-still-sun - December 21, 2009 - 12:47 p.m.

Winter solstice when, because of the earth's tilt, our hemisphere leans farthest from the sun, and the daylight is the shortest. No one is really sure how long ago humans recognized the Winter Solstice and began heralding it as a turning point – the day that marks the return of the sun.

### Welcome light!

Many world cultures perform solstice ceremonies. At their root, the ancient fear that the failing light would never return unless humans intervened with anxious vigil or antic celebration. An astounding array of ancient cultures built some of their greatest architecture – tombs, temples, and sacred observatories – so that they aligned with the solstices and equinoxes. England's *Stonehenge* marks both solstices. Not so familiar is *Newgrange*, a megalithic structure in Ireland. This huge circular stone structure is estimated to be 5,000 years old, older by centuries than *Stonehenge*, than the pyramids in Egypt. It was built to receive a shaft of sunlight deep into its central chamber at dawn on winter solstice.

Hundreds of megalithic structures throughout Europe are oriented to the equinoxes and solstices.

In North America one of the most famous sites is the *Sun Dagger* of Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, which was built a thousand years ago by the Chacoans, ancestors of the Pueblo people.

Many medieval Catholic churches were built also as solar observatories. The church needed astronomy to predict the date of Easter so observatories were built into many European cathedrals and churches. Typically, a small hole in the roof admitted a beam of sunlight which traced a path, the meridian line, along the floor.

Winter solstice celebrations are observed widely around the world, among others in Iran, in Pakistan, and in China. Native Americans had winter solstice rites witnessed by the sun images on rock paintings of the Chumash, who occupied coastal California for thousands of years before the arrival of the Europeans.

And Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, tied to both the lunar and solar calendars, begins three days before the new moon closest to the Winter Solstice.

Winter Solstice was overlaid with Christmas, and as the observance of Christmas spread, along the way some of the deep connections of our celebrations to a fundamental seasonal, hemispheric event were lost. Many holding different beliefs can hold a common celebration of the return of the light.

**AWAY MELANCHOLY OF COLD AND SHORT DAYS!  
REJOICE AND CELEBRATE  
THE RETURN OF THE LIGHT!**

Compiled by  
~ Jane de Leeuw

# 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, next 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](http://www.bensonplace.org) or [benplace@gis.net](mailto:benplace@gis.net)

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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 Fair News

The 2009 Fair -The rain that cancelled the fireworks Saturday evening did nothing to dampen the spirit of hearty fairgoers this year. Fortunately, the many friends of the Heath Fair do not let a few raindrops (or a downpour) prevent them from enjoying all the attractions the Fair has to offer. The revival of the Speaker's Tent has proven to be quite popular. As a cost-saving measure, we decided not to print ads in the premium book this year, but offered those who customarily advertise the option of being listed as a sponsor. Amazingly, this method brought in more money than the ads have for the past few years. Quite a testimony to the loyalty of our faithful supporters!

Elections - At the November 18 annual meeting of the Heath Agricultural Society the following officers were elected:

President, Pam Porter

First Vice-President, Shirley Tombs

Second Vice-President, Bradley Tombs

Co-Treasurers, Jan Carr and Julie Sidon

Secretary, Christine O'Brien.

Young Blood – The past couple years we have been fortunate to have an infusion of “young blood” in our meetings. These folks come with energy to invigorate traditional fair offerings and initiative to generate new activities. Devon Clark's enthusiasm has revived the Truck Pull and organized the Antique Tractor pull. Heidi Griswold's resourcefulness has invigorated the midway with new vendors and attractions like the rock climbing wall. This year the able team of Robin Jenkins and Valerie Lively supervised the Exhibit Hall. And, of course, for the past couple years Camille Freeman has led a group of young parents setting up the awesome Children's Area. Although we welcome all who are willing to take part, we are especially looking for more individuals from the “younger” generation to help organize the Fair and continue to make it vibrant. We meet at 7:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month for an hour to an hour and a half. In winter we meet at the Heath School, and in warmer weather we meet at the Fairgrounds.

Fireworks??? – One of the issues under discussion at our next meeting will be the question of whether or not to continue offering fireworks, an expensive item (\$3,500). Some feel this is an essential feature of the Fair. Others feel we could find a replacement event that would be less expensive. You can call one of the folks listed below to register your opinion, or come to our next meeting.

The Fair 2010 – Yup, we have already started planning, and need all the help we can get. Carol Sartz is already scoping out musical options, and Heidi Griswold is looking for new features on the midway. We are in conversation with the Franklin County 4-H to explore the possibility of integrating their annual event into our Fair. We are still searching for a theme, and welcome all suggestions. We also need ideas for activities appealing to the “tweens.” Working as a team is always more fun than working alone, so come join the fun.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 20, at the Heath School at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, call Christine O'Brien at 337-4766 or Pam Porter at 337-5525.

*~ Christine O'Brien*



## What Drives You?



Well, in simple terms you could say your car. I was asked recently to write an article on winter driving in Heath and how to be safe in doing so. People ask me all the time what I recommend or what to do when faced with driving in the winter. My first response is, don't do it! If at all possible stay off the roads when they are slippery. OK, so we all have to go to work, the doctor's, or some other place. I agree, sometimes we simply need to go somewhere when roads are less than ideal. Before you venture out ask yourself is the place I need to go this afternoon worth dying for this morning?

So my next biggest tip is **studded snow tires!** So you own a four-wheel drive or you have been living in Heath all your life and you know how to drive on snow and ice, well so do I. I was born and raised here (well actually in a hospital in Greenfield) and I still put studded snow tires on all my personal vehicles. My lovely wife, Crystal, a pediatric RN at Baystate Hospital in Springfield, drives a four-wheel drive SUV and so do I, and we both have studded snows.

The next biggest thing I could suggest is slow down and leave early, allowing yourself extra time. (I sound like my father) Plan for the unexpected. If you have no time allowed for slippery roads you might be late. Sure, you'll be OK and you won't have an accident but what about the other guy or girl? You might also let someone know where you are going or have a system in place to call home when you arrive at your destination. It is conceivable that you could slide off the road and not be noticed and have to use the muffler to cook up a few squirrels for dinner. Or worse, they use it to cook you.

How about those drivers who fail to clean off the old windshield before they leave home? I admit that I too have done this in my younger driving days but not anymore. Good visibility is important. Besides, cleaning off your car gives it time to warm up so when you get in your breath will not fog up the windows. The safety list goes on and on, getting new wipers, making sure your heater is working properly, etc. I know we have all heard it before, but it was worth repeating.

Picture a driver going on a journey. He or she has left Heath and entered the "snow plow zone." What should you do when you come up behind a snowplow? I know, I'll pass it! Because he is going so slow I don't want to be stuck behind it. Well, you can but I wouldn't recommend it. We

might not see you. We make sudden turns and stops, and we may back up without warning. If you are going to pass one of us be sure to wait until we signal you to do so. I also would suggest that you not follow us too closely. It is fine to keep us in sight in front of you, however, when you are following one of us up Burrington Hill keep in mind plows sometimes do not make it and come to a sudden stop or even start sliding backwards. Now there is nothing more exciting then having a snowplow pass you when he is in reverse! It ranks right up there with watching the Red Sox win the series.

Snowplowing is an entirely different sport (and article) but I'd like to touch on it. The Selectboard and I sat down two years ago and came up with a snowplowing policy. In it are some suggested guidelines that we, the plow operators of Heath, follow. It covers things like when we will go into operations during a given storm and how we will combat said storm. In general terms we will pretreat the blacktop roads in advance of a impending storm when the confidence is high that the storm will materialize. Plowing starts when we have reached two inches of snow, unless the total accumulation is less than two inches and then we plow whatever comes. Snowplows cannot plow the road off perfectly clean. No matter what you have been told or think, we can only get so much off the road. Usually we leave less than a half an inch. But because of the shape of some roads, for example where there are wheel ruts, the plows can and do leave more. We do our best to ensure that we keep the roads as clean as possible.

Also included in the policy is the amount of time a driver can be on duty. After so many hours of being awake or driving you can actually be as or more dangerous than a drunk driver. For this reason we have limits and we employ relief drivers so that the full-timers can get a chance to rest.

Driving in the winter presents certain limitations and we can accept them or try to fight them. It is my hope that this article helps in a small way. If we all do just one thing to make us safer, each time we get behind the wheel in the winter it could make the difference between a safe journey and squirrels for supper.

~ Michael Smith  
Highway Superintendent



**Weis Acres****Dad's Projects I**

It's been three years now since Dad passed on. I find lately that I have been able to think back on things and even laugh at the episodes we had with our

Dad and his "little projects" he was always starting up. They usually ended in disaster! My Mother was famous for shaking her head and saying "RAYMOND!!! You're going to either kill yourself or one of the kids someday!!!" He would just laugh and say "Stop ya fussin', it'll be alright."

I guess I'll start my little mini series at the beginning of going down memory lane when my three brothers and I were "Dad's Projects."

When we were all under the age of twelve, we lived in a small close-knit community made up of two streets with two to three houses lined up on either side all containing one to four children. Everyone knew everyone....just like Heath!!! Needless to say, it was a great place to grow up. We had a lake, boat ramp, swimming wharf to jump off, sandy beach, park, school grounds close enough to walk to ( so no school bus to contend with) and a penny candy store that we passed by on the way to the dentist when Mom made an appointment for us (which she made us walk to often). But we got even...we walked into that store AFTER the dentist!! Sorry, I digress.

All the neighborhood kids were allowed to play after school as long as we were in "hearing distance." Now explain that to kids when they are running and shouting all over the place! Dad solved that problem with the parents by coming up with an individual sound system for each family to have to call their kids home when wanted. The Donahues had a bell that sounded three ding, ding, dings; the Kerchakians had a deep fog horn; the Hamils, a whistle, the Ryans banged on a tin can, and we had our Dad. He would just bellow out our names, in birth order, and if we weren't home in five minutes....let the extra chores begin!!!

Of course we had chores everyday, and our homework and with four kids there was always a project that needed to get done for school. Dad was great for that I have to say! Being an engineer and an electrician had its benefits! My first memory of Mom yelling in that special tone of voice "RAYMOND!!!" was after he helped me make a volcano for a science project. I was so proud of this huge mountain we made with plaster of paris, cardboard, and some wiring Dad rigged up onto a switch for me to push at school show time. Let's just say, it took the janitor several days to clean up the mess off the ceiling in our classroom!! Mom's yelling commenced when the school called.

Another early memory project was that Mom wanted us to have swimming lessons with the lifeguard at the beach. She was always afraid of one of us drowning in the lake. Dad decided that with four kids, he could save some money and teach us himself. Mom started the head shaking thing and dad said to " stop ya fussin, they'll be fine" and headed out with us to the lake. Now understand this. We loved and trusted our Dad. He always knew everything and was a good swimmer, so we had no fears. All our life we knew he was strict, firm on all rules, and respected for it. When he said

do something we did it, no questions asked. I vaguely remember this time of my life as Dad liked the telling of this story. I think I blocked it due to trauma. Dad, my hero, told all four of us to jump in off the wharf and just paddle in to shore. The first one there didn't have to do chores for a week! Needless to say, my three brothers made it to shore. I went under several times and Dad had to save me, laughing, saying I was fine. He said I screamed all the way home and Mom heard me coming. Mom's yelling commenced, and I got swimming lessons at the beach with the lifeguard. Dad still thought I'd get the hang of it his way, after all, that was how his father taught him and his father afore that! Hhhhhmmmmmm.....makes you wonder if all the old ways were the best. I, (I wonder why...said with sarcasm) happen to be a firm believer that some are and some aren't.

**Dad's Projects II**

My Dad loved to have a project to work on. He was always trying to figure things out, how they worked and could he do it with a shorter version of what the books said on the given subject. Perfect example of this was the mushroom project.

Dad loved mushrooms. As usual, he was always trying to save money, and when Mom said they were costly he decided he would see how to 'pick your own' to eat. After all, we had a whole forest surrounding us! So off he went, trudging through the woods. He'd be gone for hours with Mom wondering if he fell in a ditch or drowned in the brook or if a bear ate him, ( she was always worrying). Anyways, Dad came home with a bag full of what I personally call fungus, and proudly displayed them to Mom with a huge grin. She promptly asked him what did he think he was going to do with them?! He was NOT going to eat them was he?! Why yes he was. He told Mom he read that if you place them on black construction paper overnight with a glass over each one, you can tell if they were poisonous by the markings they leave on the paper! Needless to say, Dad had black construction paper spread throughout the house that night with every available glass in the house, including Mom's good wine glasses that Dad snatched off the hutch with a wink thrown at us. He knew Mom would have a fit over that!( this is a man who would wake us up late at night to watch television with him if there was a good oldie on) He was a brave man. He was lucky Mom never found that out till we were much older!! (I always wondered why he was surprised to find out that we used to sneak out of the house to have some fun. I believe we came by it honestly).

The next morning, Mom got up to see the mess, couldn't even cook our breakfast, and proceeded to yell "RAYMOND! You're going to kill yourself if you eat these things! Get them out of my kitchen!" Dad calmly smiled, saying for her to stop her fussin' it'll be fine and started filling the kitchen sink with all the glasses he used for Mom to clean. She just shook her head and went to the laundry room for a while. Dad looked under each and every mushroom, tossed some out and saved others, thoroughly viewing the markings. After cleaning his choices he was so proud of his very own batch that he fried some up for his breakfast, sat down and ate them all up with some eggs. Gave us a lecture on how important

("Weis Acres" continued on page 20)

## 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

**Tom Lively**

Phone 413-337-4061  
Cell 413-325-1065

Email: Lively1@crocker.com

Carpentry - Repairs, Remodeling,  
Mowing, Snow Removal, Painting



PO Box 55 Heath MA 01346

413-625-6623

## HAIR BY HANA

102 Bridge Street - Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

### 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*

**Dave Farrington**  
Jacksonville, VT  
802-368-7456

38 Years of Experience

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**Auto and Light Truck Repair**  
*Elvis Presley Blvd., Rt. 100 S., 1/2 mile from center*

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## 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.

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tel: 413.339.4912 - www.charlemont.org

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Free estimates—insured Joshua Smith



## DAVE COTE BUILDERS

Custom Homes - Remodeling  
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David Cote  
413-337-4705

### Franklin Community Cooperative

Serving Your Community with *at the Bridge of Flowers!*  
Deliciously Healthy Foods  
with two co-op stores...

#### Green Fields Market

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M-F 8-8, Sat 9-6, Sun 10-5

(413) 773-9567



**McCusker's Market**  
3 State St., Shelburne Falls  
Open Daily 7-7 (413) 625-9411

### RUSSELL E. DONELSON

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Heath, MA

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To New and Existing Buildings

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Licensed/Insured

### Richard A. Sumner

Journeyman Electrician  
Mass. License #E22622

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(413) 339-8357



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make new friends, have fun, be a part of  
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Saturdays 8:30AM - 5PM

Holidays 9AM - 12 Noon

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Shelburne Falls

Town Nurse News**Fall Risk**

By Claire Rabbitt, RN

A couple of years ago I was reading about fall risk, and was surprised to think that I was in the age group, over 55, at increased risk for falls. Then I slipped and fell on ice on my way to the barn that winter, but fortunately wasn't hurt. It taught me to be more cautious.

In recent weeks, several Heath residents have suffered falls resulting in severe injuries including fractures. According to the Home Safety Council, 60 percent of falls occur at home, due to slippery or wet surfaces, poor lighting, loose or slippery foot wear, and clutter on the floor. However, a recent article in *Nursing Magazine* states, "More than 21,000 older adults are treated in EDs each year for injuries from falls associated with their dogs and cats, according to a CDC report."

Some ideas for fall prevention are as follows:

- ◆ Exercise to increase strength and flexibility and improve balance.
- ◆ Install grab bars in your bathroom. It is unsafe to use towel bars for this.
- ◆ Remove throw rugs and runners or apply double faced adhesive carpet tape to the backs to prevent slipping.
- ◆ Make sure stairways are well lit and have handrails extending the full length on both sides.
- ◆ Thin, non-slip soled shoes are best.
- ◆ Review your medications with your pharmacist to see if you take anything that might affect your balance.
- ◆ Discourage pets from lying next to beds or in front of chairs.
- ◆ Consider dog obedience training, so your dog will walk calmly on leash and not jump on visitors.
- ◆ In winter avoid walking outside until walkways are shoveled and sanded.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season.

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& SALE**

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HEATH CENTER  
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413-337-5736**



**DECEMBER 12 & 13  
10 AM- 4 PM  
DECEMBER 19 & 20  
10AM-4PM**



**GLASSBLOWING  
DEMONSTRATIONS  
ALL FOUR DAYS  
\*OPEN YEAR-ROUND BY  
APPOINTMENT**



## Selectboard's Report

### Fall/Winter Meeting Schedule

The Board will meet every other Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in Sawyer Hall unless posted otherwise. The Board will resume weekly meetings on January 5, 2010.

### Community Hall

Restrictions on the use of the Community Hall required by the grant for renovations for the Senior Center have expired. As of November 5 of this year the building may be used for any purpose deemed appropriate by the Hall Committee and the Selectboard. Funding for the renovations was provided through a grant from the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority for the Senior Center with a stipulation that the building be used exclusively for Senior Center sponsored activities for a period of five years.

The Board with the Hall Committee and Senior Center Director, have adopted a revised building use policy. The policy and application form are available at the Town Hall for anyone wishing to reserve the building for activities.

### Salt Shed and Fire Station Repairs

Repairs to the salt shed roof trusses have been completed by On the House Builders of Shelburne Falls. A new metal roof is being installed on the Fire Station to match the highway garage roof that was replaced a few years ago. Funding for the repairs was appropriated by previous Annual Town Meetings and supplemented with funds from the Solid Waste District from the sale of recycled materials from the Transfer Station.

### All Boards Meeting

The annual All Boards and Committees Meeting will take place on February 9, 2010, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Mohawk Park. Agenda items include training on updating the Town's Web site, conflict of interest training as mandated by the new Ethics Regulations, and budget planning. All board, committee, and commission members are encouraged to attend.

### Board/Committee Vacancies

The Board of Health needs another member, as does the Cultural Council. If you would like to be considered for one of these volunteer positions, please contact Town Coordinator Gloria Fisher.

### Heath Online

Take some time to visit the Town's Web site at [www.townofheath.org](http://www.townofheath.org). You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, school information, and much more. You may contact the Board at [BOS@townofheath.org](mailto: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



Volunteer Fireman Ken Gilbert at Heath Elementary School.

*Photograph by Lorena Loubsky*

("Weis Acres" continued from page 16)

it was to do our homework and study hard as it would always come in handy in life. We all nodded our heads at this sage advice from our wise parent and went to school.

We later learned Dad didn't make it to work that day. Those mushrooms didn't kill him but he sure wished they had!!

~ Le-Ellen Pettengill Weis

# VOTE

## SPECIAL STATE PRIMARY

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

and

## SPECIAL STATE ELECTION

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

To choose the successor  
to the late Senator Ted Kennedy

## HEATH SENIOR CENTER

7:00 A.M. TO 8:00 P.M.





### Library Lines

## Holiday Raffle



By Donald Purington

The annual Library Holiday Raffle has started; winners will be drawn Saturday, December 19. Items are on display and tickets may be bought at the library.

1. 92nd Annual (2009) Heath Fair T-shirt, size Adult Large. Donated by the Heath Agricultural Society.
2. Heath Fair Tote Bag. Donated by the Heath Agricultural Society.
3. Jar of Homemade Fudge Sauce. Made by Deb Porter
4. Home-baked Apple Pie. Baked by Jan Carr.
5. Feetie-Pajamas with Dinosaurs, glow in the dark, size children's XL (14/16)
6. *The Michaels Book of Arts and Crafts: Scrapbooking, Beading, Rubber Stamping, Polymer Clay & Much More.*
7. Water Bottle, orange with panda logo. Donated by Don Dekker
8. Hand-knitted Cabled Neck Warmer. Made by Kate Bailey.

### A Few of the New Items at the Library:

**Adult Fiction Books:** *U is for Undertow* by Sue Grafton, *I, Alex Cross* by James Patterson, *Family Album* by Penelope Lively, *Christmas Sweater* by Glenn Beck, and *Fleet Street Murders* by Charles Finch.

**Adult Nonfiction Books:** *Talking About Detective Fiction* by P. D. James, *Packing Inferno: The Unmaking of a Marine* by Tyler E. Boudreau, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815* by Gordon S. Wood, *Slavery in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts* by Robert H. Romer, and *The Little Book of Safe Money: How to Conquer Killer Markets, Con Artists, and Yourself* by Jason Zweig.

**Audiobooks on CD:** *The Lacuna* by Barbara Kingsolver, and *The Iliad* by Homer.

**Young Adult Fiction Books:** *Daughters of the Sea* by Kathryn Lasky, *Struts and Frets* by Jon Skovron, and *The Day of the Pelican* by Katherine Paterson.

**Children's Books:** *All In a Day* by Cynthia Rylant, *My Uncle Emily* by Jane Yolen, *A Year Full of Poems* edited by Michael Harrison, and *I'm Getting a Checkup* by Marilyn Singer.

**DVDs:** *Julie and Julia*, *Food Inc.*, and *Up*.

## The Last Bookmobile



Photograph by Don Purington

On Tuesday, December 3, a faithful band of library devotees gathered for what would be the last time to chose books, DVDs, Audiobooks, and CDs from WMRLS' (Western Massachusetts Regional Library System) Bookmobile to augment our library's collection.

We received on October 23, the sad word that as of December 31 of this year, the long-valued Bookmobile would be no more. This decision did not come as a complete surprise. For several years we have seen ominous signs of this possibility. For instance, the time between visits had been steadily lengthened. In addition, the book categories had been whittled down.

This dire decision has been finally taken due to a number of reasons, chief among which, of course, the state of the State's finances, a decade of resulting budget problems, a lack of drivers and technical staff, and the possibility of merger of library systems.

The bookmobile program, started back in the days of President Franklin Roosevelt's WPA in the 1940s, brought the library to rural areas, many of whose residents had no other access to books. For the Western Massachusetts small communities including Heath, the Bookmobile has proved an invaluable resource and will be sorely missed by our patrons. We are very grateful to WMRLS for keeping it alive for this long.

## Milestones

**Frederick W. Rice** of Ashfield died on November 17, 2009. Born in Plainfield on January 7, 1927, he was the son of Earnest and Bessie Thatcher Rice.

He attended Sanderson Academy before being drafted by the US Army to serve in World War II. Prior to retirement, he was employed by Lamson & Goodnow Manufacturing Co. of Buckland.

His wife, the former Ruth E. Field, died in 2003. He is survived by his daughter, **Cindy Clark of Heath**; two brothers, Milton E. Rice of Ashfield and Wesley M. Rice of Buckland; four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to Mass. Ox Teamsters Assoc., c/o Daphne Clark, Sec., 69 East Hawley Road, Hawley, MA 01339.

**Richard Gilman Woodward** of Salem and a summer resident of Heath died on September 20, 2009. Born on January 21, 1923, in Southville, he was the son of the late Albert Sewell and Alice Lee Morrill Woodward.

He graduated from Peters High School in Southborough with the class of 1940. His graduation from Tufts College with the Class of 1944 was delayed until 1947 after service in World War II as a lieutenant in the US Navy from 1942 to 1945. He received a master's degree in Education from Boston University in 1956.

A specialist in curriculum development during most of his professional career, he held the position of assistant superintendent of schools in Cambridge where he served as a strong advocate for the children of that community. He was co-author of *Team Teaching in Action*, published by Houghton Mifflin.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Pauline Groetz Woodward; his four sons, John G. Woodward, Mark G. Woodward, Matthew A. Woodward, and James A. Woodward; his daughter, Faith M. Stilphen, and five grandchildren.

A celebration of his life was held at the Stockbridge Funeral Home in Exeter, New Hampshire, on Wednesday, September 23. Burial followed in the Exeter Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to the American Parkinson's Disease Association, 135 Parkinson Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10305.

*Requiescat in pace*

**Mason James Cerone**, son of James and Lauren Cerone of Bellingham, was born on November 1, 2009. He is the grandson of **Jim and Dianne Cerone of Heath**, and Brian and Sandy Gatley of Grafton, MA.

**Benjamin Cerone and Elizabeth Lemelin** announce their engagement. Elizabeth is the daughter of **Paul and Alice Lemelin** and Ben, the son of **Jim and Dianne Cerone, all of Heath**. An early 2010 fall wedding is planned.

## Heath People in the News

### On The Mend

**Ruth Corey** is recuperating at the Buckley Health Care Center, Greenfield, following a fall last month.

**Terry Pettengill** is now at home following a stay at Buckley.

**Val Kaempfer** will be celebrating her 80th birthday on December 13. Happy Birthday, Val!

### Welcome Back! to Triad Officer Peter Weis

You were sorely missed! Heath Elders appreciate your interest and look forward to your visits.

## The Heath Historical Society

The **Heath Historical Society** is planning the launching of the revised edition of Ed Calver's *Heath Massachusetts A History and Guide Book* first published by the Heath Historical Society in 1979. The reception will be held on Sunday, December 6, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Community Hall. Don Freeman, Editor, will be on hand to give a brief review of the revision process which included adding a complete table of contents and some improved renderings of Calver's drawings. This edition is spiral-bound with a handsome cover. It will be available for purchase at \$30.00 a copy. Other Society books will be on sale as well. Light refreshments will be served.

~ Lois Stetson Buchiane



Friends of the  
Heath School  
Library

## 8th Annual Book Fair

Photographs by  
Lorena Loubsky





*Friends of the  
Heath School Library*

Thanks from the Friends of the Heath School Library to all who supported our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Book Fair at the Heath School on December 18.

It takes a lot of volunteer hours and community support to make a successful fair!

### Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

	<u>Rain</u>	<u>Snow</u>
From September 11, 2009	1"	
October	6 ½"	Dusting
To November 10	0 "	½"

#### In this reporting period:

People reported the first light to moderate level of frost on September 20. Depending on locations, we had a dusting and up to a ¼" of snow on October 16 and 18, and again on November 4 and 6. The autumn colors this year were on the tame side.

~ Tim Lively



## Community Calendar

### December 2009

- December 03** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- December 04** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade Spaghetti Supper, Heath School
- December 05** - N.E. Brass Band & Select Chorus Concert  
Memorial Hall, SF, 2:00 p.m.
- December 06** - H. H. S. reception, Community Hall, 3:00-5:00 p.m.
- December 08** - **Special State Election, Senior Center, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
- December 10** - LEC Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.,
- December 11** - **HAPPY HANUKAH!**
- December 17** - All School Read and Hat Day, Heath School, 2:30 p.m.  
Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m. Xmas Party
- December 18** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
Family Movie Night, Heath School
- December 21** - Heath School Students at Good Neighbors
- December 23** - Early Release, Heath School, 12:00, No Lunch
- December 24** - **Winter Holiday Begins**
- December 25** - **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**
- December 31** - **NEW YEAR'S EVE**

### January 2010 !

- January 01** - **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
- January 04** - **Back to School**
- January 07** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- January 08** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- January 14** - LEC Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- January 15** - Family Movie Night, Heath School
- January 18** - **MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY**  
- No School
- January 19** - **Special State Election, Senior Center, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**
- January 19,**  
**20, 21** - Mohawk early release for exams
- January 20** - Heath Agricultural Society meeting, Heath School, 7:00 p.m.
- January 21** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- January 22** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
Mohawk Second Semester begins



*New Year's Eve  
Play a thin tune  
on a paper horn.  
Old is dying  
New is born*

*Scatter confetti  
over the floor  
Sweep an old year  
out the door*

*Blow up a wish  
in a bright balloon  
Whisper dream  
to a midnight moon*

*Play a loud tune  
on a paper horn  
Old is dying  
New is born.*

*~ Myra Cohn Livingston, Poet*

## HEATH HERALD

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- ◆ Family Videos
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- ◆ Beer, wine, liquor
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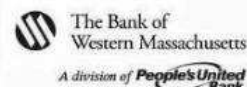


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Sunday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

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