



# HEATH HERALD

## Heath's First Newspaper

\$1.50

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## To Our Special Valentines



*We  
Give  
Thanks*



### A Valentine's Day Appreciation of Pegge Howland

I admire Pegge for the work she has done for Heath in the Historical Society. She has followed her distinguished service as president with years of caring for our treasures as curator. The first curator to use computer software, she has meticulously cataloged thousands of postcards, photos, books, scrapbooks, pieces of clothing, and farm tools so that these and future acquisitions will be accessible. Moreover, her attention to organization and detail extends to updating the Society's bylaws, revising and reprinting publications, and with the Board's help to maintaining the Old Town House, the Center Schoolhouse, and the Solomon Temple Barn. She is currently working with the Board on a project to fix the roof of the Old Town House.

Pegge's contributions are more than those of a competent curator. I appreciate her shared enthusiasm for understanding Heath's past. As part of a joint project with the Heath School, she has hosted visits to the Center Schoolhouse by fifth and sixth graders. At the Fair she and Dave have spent many hours welcoming visitors to the Solomon Temple Barn. Pegge's narration of the video showing the 1994 reassembly of that barn on the Fairgrounds is fascinating.



~ Ned Wolf

Pegge Howland was one of the founding members of the Heath Herald in 1979. She had many good ideas for the articles to be written that made the *Heath Herald* such a success all those years. I left the paper in 1994 after working with Pegge for fifteen years, but she continued her good works for more years than I can count now.

Be happy and healthy, Pegge. Happy Valentine's Day !!!

~ Terry Pettengill

(Pegge Howland Valentines continued on page 2)

### Howard Dickinson and Heath: What's Not to Love?

It's hard to think of one and not the other:  
Front porch and kitchen conversation,  
Neighborly gestures and community pride,  
Caring concern and perceptive eye,  
Common sense and homespun understandings,  
Small notable histories, famous and unheralded,  
Strong, respectful, tolerant  
Know-how hands, self-effacing humor, valued opinion,  
Haying, husbandry, farm and family,  
News-sharing and tale-telling,  
Garden, field, and woods,  
Character, stories, and weather extremes,  
Sawn hemlock and fresh brown eggs.  
Howard Dickinson and Heath,  
They know our past and who we are.



~ Art Schwenger

Howard is a good friend and distant relative. A Heath native who has always lived in the same house that he was born in. Howard loves to visit and has a great sense of humor and always has a good story to tell.

He spent many years taking care of his sister Esther and then his brother Ralph. He is a good cook, too. Did you know that there is a "Cookie Jar" on the kitchen table and if you visit Howard you might get asked to put your hand in the "Cookie Jar" that is always kept full. Howard is known for his good cookies.

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO A GOOD FRIEND!!!!**

~ Ken & Dot Stetson

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### Heath Union Church News

Despite the weather our Christmas services were well attended and enjoyed. With Easter only a few weeks away we are planning our usual services- Palm Sunday, March 28, Maundy Thursday, April 1, a sunrise service and regular Easter service, April 4. If anyone would like to join us in a choir please contact Ruth Johnson or Tracey Brooks.

Those braving Heath's weather on January 3 enjoyed a potluck dinner after morning worship. The next meal will be on March 7. The topic for the January 31<sup>st</sup> Family Night was Bio-diesel and Spaghetti with guest speaker Doug Mason. You can keep track of all forthcoming events on the outdoor board of the Church.

Sunday morning worship will be held in the Lower Level until Palm Sunday.

Pastor Grant can be reached at the Church on Thursdays, 4:00-6:00 p.m. or at his home. He welcomes your calls and is willing to make visitations.

Adult Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

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

Pastor's hours: Thursday, 4:00-6:00 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

(Pegge Howland Valentines continued from page 1)

### Memories of Pegge and the *Heath Herald*

My very happy associations with Pegge and Dave Howland over the years were many and varied, but centered mostly around the Historical Society and the *Heath Herald*, parties excluded. The *Heath Herald* meetings were often held at Newland and Caroline Smith's home on Hosmer Road, and occasionally at Pegge's house or my place. Pegge was one of the original stalwart founders of the newspaper. She maintained the institutional memory for the *Heath Herald*, and always knew the answer to queries about the history of the paper. When someone asked who had drawn the original herald for the paper, Pegge replied in an instant that it had been Harriet Read. We always knew where to turn for advice and answers.

The decade plus working with Pegge on the *Heath Herald* sailed by very quickly. Pegge was the chief layout person and in charge of organizing the entire paper, no easy task in the days of cut and paste. At that time handwritten text alongside floppy disks were deposited at all hours of the day and night in the milk-can holder outside my kitchen door. After I edited, Arlene Ashby typed the final copy before it was delivered to Pegge at Myrifiel. There Pegge transformed pages and pages

(Pegge Howland Valentines continued on page 3)

(Pegge Howland Valentines continued from page 2)

of plain text into flowing columns of beautiful prose. Her enormous dining room table served its purpose well as each page was carefully crafted. Pegge placed most of the advertisements toward the bottom of the pages, and content that spilled over to another page was situated in such a manner as to allow the reader to find it easily. The all important columnists' articles usually remained intact on one page. The few coveted photographs, cherished black and white icons of a bygone era, adorned the pages as often as we could entice people to submit them. Pegge labored over each and every one of them to ensure proper positioning and captioning.

Being a highly organized person, Pegge attended to these details with all the skills of an expert. Only when everything was completely laid out and the dining room table was full did she call me to come and inspect the final layout. Most of the time the only decisions to be made were what to delete so that the newspaper had its full contingent of even numbered pages, but occasionally there were slight changes that we both agreed should be made. Then Dave dutifully drove the newspaper to Adams where Eugene Michalenko at Adams Specialty & Printing Company whipped up the final version of the news, travels, gossip, opinions, and adventures of us Heathans.

The first item of business for every meeting was the same ~ what would grace the front cover? The Christmas issue tended to have a photo of newly fallen snow on a quaint barn scene with listing fence posts and icicled brook in the background or an artist's decorated wreath, something festive and wintery, often with a seasonal splurge of color in the heading. Pegge made great suggestions, and her ideas proved popular with readers who often commented that "the issue looked wonderful" or some other such congratulatory thing.

Pegge occasionally wrote articles and contributed material above and beyond her official capacity as Layout Editor. Some of her best articles included stories about the other places on earth named Heath (yes, there were many) in celebration of our Bicentennial year, and there was a long awaited article about her famous majolica collection which received great praise. She updated our Milestones column and just about everything else, interjecting the right balance of humor, grace, and levity into every issue. It was a major labor of love and Pegge, we love *you*! Thanks for all those years of dedication. Happy Valentine's Day.

~ Sue Silvester Samoriski  
Former Editor of the *Heath Herald*

Pegge and I were two of the seven who dreamed up and began the *Heath Herald*.

The first volume was on April 1979. we had good times at our meetings in various kitchens. Then every two months we spent a Sunday afternoon "cutting and pasting" the paper together. Dave would then take it to North Adams to be printed.

Thank you, Pegge, for contributing so much to the paper for so many years. There was no computer for us then!

Happy Valentine's Day!

~ Alli Thane-Stetson

To the sweetheart of the Heath Historical Society – Pegge Howland . The preservation of the history of Heath - its archival material, the preservation and restoration of the Society's buildings, including the restoration of the Solomon Temple Barn, and the promotion of the membership are due largely to your dedication , expertise, and attention to detail. You are our Valentine!

~ Jack Cable

## A Valentine to Pegge Howland

Queen Margaret the Good Hearted dwells in the yellow house where all is just so.

"Put things in their place" is her standard we know.

A librarian, trained and skilled, is she,  
To arrange, classify, systematize suits her to a T.

She catalogues, indexes, files, curates,  
And in enterprises historical Pegge participates.

One of the "ladies who lunch" in red hats with style,  
And that's not all to tell by a mile.

Much more is she, good neighbor and friend,  
Her interests are many, there's almost no end.

We've tried to be poetic but it is not our forte.

Anyway Pegge, Happy Valentine's Day.

~ Del Viarengo

We first met Pegge in 2002, when we purchased Myrfield from the Howlands, and have appreciated her love for the house in which she spent many happy years. We've since had ample occasion to see the many contributions Pegge makes to the quality of life in Heath. Both of us have served with Pegge on the Historical Commission (Margaret as chair); Pegge's keen sense of Heath's rich historical resources and her archival expertise have contributed significantly to the work of the Commission, as well as to that of the Heath Historical Society. When there's a job to be done, Pegge always steps up, and the results of her work have benefited the Town in many ways.

Happy Valentine's Day, Pegge, this year and many more.

~ Don and Margaret Freeman

Many years ago, Pegge graciously allowed me to work with her in the GCC-housed Archibald MacLeish Collection of which she was the curator. From Pegge I learned some rudimentary steps in archival cataloguing. I wrote a paper on all this, submitted it to my professor at Simmons College, and received an A! Thank you, Pegge, for you guidance and generosity.

~ Beverly Thane Cable



Wild Ramblings**Speak to Me**

By Bill Lattrell

With colorful snowshoes strapped to my feet I try to maneuver through the forest covered in white snow on this January day in the new year 2010. Moving about is difficult in sections of this quiet forest because there are still hundreds of trees lying about the ground as the result of the great ice storm of 13 months ago. The snow is not deep enough to completely bury the debris on the floor of these great woods and stepping over the treetops is not easily accomplished with the 30- inch snowshoes that are necessary to support my large frame. My main strategy in navigating these woods is to walk around most of the tree sections that have made the forest floor their final resting place thereby avoiding the clumsy process of hoisting my snowshoes over branches extended from fallen trees and tops. As I look back at my tracks it looks like some sort of disoriented maze flying in the face of the old adage “the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.”

The purpose of my jaunt today is very specific. I am on a mission to “commune with nature,” as they say. Lately I have been on a pursuit to understand communications in the world of plants. Given I live in the midst of a large mixed deciduous/conifer forest I thought I might begin in my own backyard where there are thousands of acres of accessible plant communities.

I find it fitting that we use the term “plant communities” when describing a system of plants that share the same environment. These plants have interdependent relationships with not only the other plants that live within the community but with all of the other creatures and non-living entities that share that environment as well. These are a true community, organisms that have mutualistic relationships for the sole purpose of survival. As is the case with human communities, these various ecosystems (or communities as some might say) intersect with other ecosystems and the dominant subset of human communities. At this level there is also a mutual codependency that assures that each ecosystem survives. The relationship between ecosystems gets larger and larger until we assemble, in my belief system, one living organism that I will refer to here as Gaia, also known as the planet earth.

I am considering all of this while standing in 8 - degree temperatures and a fifteen-mile-per-hour breeze; perhaps heady, rambling thoughts for such conditions. I look about the forest that surrounds me and I am struck by how much information the forest leaves behind that enables me to understand its history and condition. Along a decrepit stone wall to my left there is a row of large, well-branched, sugar maples. I know from their position and shape that they are the result of a forest thinning years ago where other trees were eliminated and the maples were left behind for the gathering of sap and maple sugar production. The large, open branching tells me that these now massive trees were at one time growing in a large open space, likely a pasture used by sheep or cows.

On the hillside in front of me there are dozens of tall, straight trees. There are many different species and most are about 70 to 80 years old. This is pretty clear evidence that this area was a fallow pasture. The trees grew close together creating tall trunks with few branches. Competition eliminated the weaker and smaller trees. The spacing between the mature trees is not equidistant signifying to me that this area has not undergone any forest management practices up to this point in time. If I were to cut into one of the fallen trees buried underneath the snow at my feet I could examine the tree rings. Not only could I discern the age of the tree but I might also be able to tell what kind of growing season the tree had each year by the width of the growth rings.

On the other side of this hill where the slope faces southeast the nearly vertical terrain holds wide ledges where huge oaks dominate the landscape. These trees are hundreds of years old and were not easily reached by those who might want to chop them down for firewood or logs. The very steep, rocky terrain allowed a piece of ecological history to remain free of human influence, giving the observer a glimpse of a forest several hundred years old. The mere site of these giant trees flourishing on bedrock ledges brings chills that reverberate through each individual cell of my body all the way down to my soul.

And although these artifacts of the forest that reveal a part of its history may not be obvious to those who have not learned the art of landscape interpretation they contain information locked into this terrain that may remain as buried as a relic in an ancient ruin or a lost book covered with dust in the bowels of an old library.

I notice that I am standing next to a mature red oak tree. It is unusually old; no doubt it has survived hundreds of years. It stands alone in this section of the woods with large overhanging branches that spread far out into the landscape. The cover that these branches provide has prevented other trees from growing in the immediate area. The thick bark is deeply furrowed like the lines in an old man's face which somehow imparts a feeling of wisdom to this observer. Yet the tree is solid and strong. It is not yet near the end of its life. It has a story to tell and I would love to hear the mysteries held within the essence of this tree.

Red oaks have an interesting behavior. When they produce peak crops of acorns all of the red oaks in the same region will produce peak crops during the same year. This allows the acorn production to exceed the rate at which they can be consumed by animals in the forest which makes it much more likely that the acorns will successfully germinate into oak seedlings that

(“Speak to Me” continued on page 5)

("Speak to Me" continued from page 4)

hopefully will grow into the next generation of oaks. But how do all of the red oaks in a certain area know when to produce peak crops of acorns? One theory is that the trees emit pheromones or volatile chemical compounds that signal all of the trees within a certain proximity that this is the year to produce a peak crop of acorns. This process is not fully understood yet, but it is a perfect example of how trees communicate; a pretty sophisticated communication system, I might add. I am also aware that when an elm is attacked by the elm leaf beetle the tree emits a volatile chemical compound that invites an elm leaf beetle parasite to come to dinner to consume the little herbivore before it does irreparable damage. Plant roots, mycorrhizal bacteria, and fungi share a communication system that seems to be operated through neuron-like fibers that each of these entities shares. This communication system allows this nearly perfect symbiotic relationship to harmonize their activities to benefit each individual in the relationship.

As I consider all of this my mind turns to an old memory. A fellow by the name of Cleve Baxter, a renowned expert in polygraphs during the 1960s, attached a lie detector to a plant in his office. Not only did the plant have a measurable response to watering and threats but it also responded to the thought of threats. For those paying attention the way we perceive plants was forever changed. In *The Secret Life of Plants* Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird explored the sentient life of the plant world. Through this book readers learned that not only do plants respond to external stimulus but to the *thoughts* of animals, as well. The fact that plants may be able to effectively understand human intentions is nearly unfathomable. By many this notion is considered bizarre. But why? If plants can send messages via volatile chemicals then perhaps we unknowingly send messages to plants; perhaps with similar chemical compounds. It is certainly not outside of our imagination to understand that this is, at least, a remote possibility.

This idea leads to me thinking, as I have often before, about how humans seem to prioritize animals over plants. It is easy to understand how a species prefers its own kind; it is likely that self-survival of a species is built into its genetic code. It is also understandable that we identify strongly with other mammals and perhaps anything that is alive, mobile, and has a face. And while I suppose it is completely normal to have a preference for other animals it also seems irrational to me. Plants seem to have some sort of visceral connection to the planet that we just don't quite understand. Perhaps it is that lack of understanding that allows us to think that we are very, very different. In my own judgment animals have more in common with plants than we have differences. We are both alive, and, more importantly, we are both just a part of a much bigger living organism known as the planet earth.

A strong gust of wind blows snow off of the frozen landscape into my face. This brings my thoughts closer to the here and now. As I lean on this large red oak I look up to the long, thick branches that reach out toward the sun. The tree is dormant now, but still quite alive. I listen to the tree. I try to absorb its energy by placing the palm of my hand on the deep grooves of the rough bark. There is no evident transition of wisdom, thought, or energy detected by me from this keeper of secrets but there is a vision in my mind that hints of a content red oak that has witnessed more than I can ever dream of. I long for this

old tree to speak to me. I long to interact with this lord of the forest. I would like nothing more than to exchange information at a cellular level with this wonderful living member of the Gaia community. Perhaps if I keep paying attention to all the various clues, and absorb messages by means of some semblance of extrasensory perception I will benefit from the wisdom and experience of this tree's long, long life. I can only keep trying and hope that someday, at some level, I will be successful.

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

(Howard Dickinson Valentines continued from page 1)



**How is this for a Valentine, Howard? What a "handsome" group!** Me, Ralph, Howard, Bill Wolf, and brother Ken. Have a Happy Valentine's Day full of memories.

~ Doug Stetson

Howard has done service to the Town as a volunteer fireman, worker for the Heath Fair by marking the parking lanes and parking cars, and as a guiding member of the Dickinson Family Fund that yearly assists the Heath Agricultural Society, the Heath Union Church, and the Heath Historical Society. He has been always available for many one-time jobs such as putting up a new flagpole on the Town Common.

He has been a good neighbor and friend by taking care of properties for summer people and weekenders and always available to fix lawn mowers and other machinery. He and Brother Ralph have over the years built many things for many folks, and whenever a helping hand has been needed, Howard has been ready, willing, and able.

But most of all, Howard has been a welcoming friendly fixture of the Town. He stops whatever he is doing to listen and talk to all who stop by, sit at the kitchen table, and sample one of his chocolate chip cookies. No matter who you are or what you do, Howard can be counted on to welcome you warmly. Perhaps the best service of all to the Town.

~ Don Dekker

(Howard Dickinsons Valentines continued on page 6)

(Howard Dickinson Valentines continued from page 5)

Howard was one of the first people I met in Heath. One day when I was working in front of my house he stopped to introduce himself and his dog, Lucky. It turned out I would be glad to know him almost immediately, when, like an idiot, I got my two-wheel drive pickup stuck in the woods trying to get some firewood out. Howard promptly came over with his venerable John Deere, got me unstuck, and didn't even make fun of me. Ever since, he's made me grateful to live just up the road from him and to be able to stop by for conversation and cookies. It's true he can be difficult to deal with—trying to pay him a reasonable price for eggs, hay, or lumber is an exercise in futility, since he insists on turning any commercial transaction into an act of generosity on his part—but Howard's intractable stubbornness in this area is balanced by his gentle wit, good humor, and impeccable neighborliness. Even in the face of adversity, whether it's a broken neck and the subsequent necessity of months in an uncomfortable brace or the loss of his brother, Ralph, Howard's steady healthy-mindedness, sociability, and ability to see the humor in a situation scarcely waver.

It wasn't until I saw some of Howard's excellent photographs, taken with his medium-format Hasselblad, that I really understood that while on one level he inhabits the role of the old Yankee farmer with complete naturalness, he is also very self-aware about it, and conscious of the special aesthetic of his life and surroundings. It's a pleasure to hear his stories about, say, being one of the die-hard rotary phone users in a touch-tone world, and appreciate how he figures as both narrator and character, and realizes it.

It must be acknowledged that Howard is getting soft in his old age. When he bought his most recently acquired chain saw he chose a model with a pressure release to make pulling the starter cord a little easier, a luxury that seems particularly indulgent since he only cuts, splits, and stacks half-a-dozen cords of wood a year, plus the odd tree for lumber. I drove past his house one recent morning just forty-five minutes or so before dawn, and the darkened windows gave away that he was still lazing in bed. I guess decades of being up early to milk has earned him the right to a little sloth. But it's a comfort to know that the next time I want some mechanical advice or a local history lesson, or need to be rescued from some foolish fix I've gotten myself into, Howard will still be ready to help. I just hope he realizes he owes me big-time for making me accept his generosity over the past dozen years and will let me repay a few of his favors sometime.

~ Michael Wilmeth

The door is always open, the front porch available for sitting, and the famous cookie jar for taking some cookies while visiting with the gentlest gentleman in western Massachusetts. Howard is everybody's Valentine. "Hey, Howard, don't forget to feed the chickens!"

Happy Valentine's!

~ Jack Cable



His chocolate chip cookies are everyone's favorite treat.  
He makes them all one size, soft and sweet.

His chickens fill the baskets with eggs they lay.  
A dozen will be under your arm when you're on your way.

His sugaring buckets now hang from our maples  
collecting sap, bringing sweet syrup to our breakfast table.

His wisdom and knowledge of Heath folks galore  
Makes it hard for anyone to leave his front door.

~ Robin, Tom, & Tucker Jenkins



Life without you Howard—not that we can remember. You were a brother we three girls never had. Most activities in our youth were shared by you, and we all enjoyed your companionship and great humor. Never too many dull moments! Not only were you our youthful cohort but often helped Dad on the farm and aided Ralph fixing something in Mom's house. We know everyone in town knows of your ability to "fix" things (snow blowers, lawn mowers, chainsaws, etc.)

When you won an airplane (Ruth's number was next), sold it and invested in cameras and darkroom equipment you became the photographer for our weddings and took great pictures of our children. You have the artist's eye for maximizing the subject portrayed on the other side of the lens. You continue to be our source of town history as well as current events and we will stop in to catch up on the news whenever we can.

Howard, you are an appreciated cousin, loyal friend, and certainly, as always, remain our special Valentine.

~ Ada, Pearl, and Ruth  
Those Landstrom Girls





## News from the Heath Historical Commission

Our next meeting will be held Friday, March 5, at the Heath Community Hall from 6:00-9:00 p.m. starting with a potluck dinner. Come and celebrate the promise of spring with your neighbors, and learn what the Commission is planning for further conserving and cherishing our special town. We welcome suggestions and volunteers for the three areas we have identified: heritage landscapes, oral histories, and historic structures.

### *Heritage Landscapes:* **Heath's history is intimately connected with its land.**

The citizens of Heath have been inextricably attached to the landscape. Heath has unique heritage landscapes due to its rugged nature. Originally identified as part of the Boston Township settlements in its western frontier, Heath has an unusual history in its use of the natural terrain that contributes to the fabric of our cultural and historical identities.

The purpose of identifying heritage landscapes is to promote a fuller understanding of the culture and history of our town. Heritage Landscapes may include historical sites (Fort Shirley, The Civilian Conservation Corps camps in HO Cook State Forest, for example), cultural sites (the Heath Fairgrounds and past fairground sites), agricultural (sheep, dairy, and blueberry farms that have contributed to our culture and history), and archaeological sites (pre-European). Other sites may include natural landscapes that have contributed to Heath's history and culture (such as Whittemore Spring).

One challenge for the Commission is to identify and locate the sites of past working establishments, such as the sawmills, woodworking shops, gristmills, tanneries, and the palm hat factory that once flourished in Heath, but which may now only be marked by landscape features.

We would like to work with the community to identify, record, and prioritize the areas that might be considered heritage landscapes. Together with landowners, we hope to approach our history from a slightly different angle that will help all to understand our background and accomplishments as they relate to our historical and cultural past. Landowners with knowledge of such heritage landscapes on their property are invited to share their knowledge with the Commission.

### *Oral Histories:* **Heath's history resides in the memory of its people.**

Reminiscences of life in Heath are an important part of the record of our special town. At our 2008 celebration of the Heath Historic District's inclusion in the National Register, Heathans enjoyed hearing Lois Buchiane, Howard Dickinson, Ruth Johnson, and Doug Stetson share their memories of growing up in Heath. What it was like going to school, farming Heath's rugged terrain, giving and receiving neighborly help, watching and hunting wildlife, fishing, picking berries (both blue, red, and black), engaging in sports such as skiing and sledding, and confronting and taking advantage

of the richness and rigors of the seasons, are all part of the fabric of Heath's memory.

The Commission hopes to work with the Historical Society and all interested Heathans to create a digital record of such stories in order to preserve them for future generations, and to use them to supplement Ed Calver's history of Heath. What was it like to be a summer denizen and join in the activities of year-round residents? What was it like for year-round residents welcoming the summer residents in their midst? We invite all of you to share your stories and to participate in setting up interviews with your neighbors. We will have a sign-up sheet available at our March 5 meeting.

### *Historic Structures:* **Heath's history is located in its buildings.**

Along with our landscapes and memories, our buildings also serve as a living memorial to the life of our town. The 2006 Historical Properties Survey Plan contains a record of all properties and other buildings in Heath over fifty years old. These include our homes, our farms, our schools, our churches, our town buildings. For most of these listings, more details are needed, such as architectural design and changes over time, records of who built and owned and cared for these buildings throughout their long history, and stories of families who have lived and worshipped and worked in them.

The Commission needs help in filling out the details for the large number of structures involved. The Registry of Deeds in Greenfield provides a friendly and supportive environment for researching Heath title deed records. The earliest records are of special interest because they tend to include details of the owners' wills relating to the property. One such deed, for example, specifies that the property's inheritors should provide board and lodging for a young relative until she reaches the age of eighteen. Such concern for ensuring the well-being of dependents and other interesting details from these early documents open another fascinating window on what it was and is like to live in our town. Commission members plan to offer workshops to residents who would like to work on the needed information for their own properties.

Obviously, there is a lot of work that needs to be done to realize our goals. At our March meeting, we plan to describe what we have done so far on these projects and explain how you can help. You may contact any of the Commissioners listed below for areas that interest you. And please put Friday, March 5, on your calendar and plan to join us for our welcome to spring potluck celebration!

~ Margaret Freeman, Chair (Historic Structures)  
Janis Carr (Oral Histories)  
Carol-Anne Eldridge (Heritage Landscapes)  
Eric Grinnell (Historic Structures)  
Bill Lattrell (Heritage Landscapes)  
Nina Marshall (Oral Histories)



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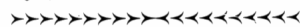
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*Green Thoughts***Our Foodshed**

By Pat Leuchtman

In the latest issue of *Organic Gardening* magazine Gordon Hayward quotes Walter P. Hedden using the term ‘food shed’ in 1929. Hedden, then chief of the Bureau of Commerce of the Port of New York Authority, is the author of *How Great Cities are Fed*. From that position he was able to speak knowledgeably about the food distribution system. One of his chapters was entitled “*Watersheds, Milksheds and Foodsheds*,” three issues that remain vital to all of us today even though only the word *watershed* is commonly used and understood.

Recently I have been one of many people talking about the 100-mile diet which is connected to the interest in local food because it is fresher, and uses less fossil fuel to arrive on our plates. To a large extent it is the energy saving that has driven the interest in the 100-mile diet. In 1929 it was the threat of a major rail strike that prompted Hedden to write his book. Shemariah Blum-Evitts who received a master’s degree in Regional Planning from UMass in 2009, referred back to Hedden’s work in her own thesis: “*Designing a Foodshed Assessment Model: Guidance for Local and Regional Planners in Understanding Local Farm Capacity in Comparison to Local Food Needs*.”

Shemariah Blum-Evitts has some interesting statistics in her thesis. Her study is limited to the Pioneer Valley, defined as the three counties, Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin. She says that this region, with a population of just under 700,000, could provide 29% of all food eaten at home. Broken down by category, the Pioneer Valley could supply 150% of our need for vegetables, 78% of dairy, and 31% of fruit. The local production of grains, meat, poultry, and eggs is minimal compared to the demand. She does make the point that she is only looking at commercial production, and while there is value in community and backyard garden production that is not being counted in her study.

Planners looking at how to increase local food security would need to identify a goal. Should the region build on its strengths, or find ways to expand the kinds of food that would be available. According to her study, 100,000 acres of available farmland are not in production. She does recognize that even if all this land were put into production, it could only provide *all* the food for our population if we all ate a vegan diet.

Shemariah is working for the Immigrant Refugee Agricultural Initiative, a program of Lutheran Social Services, to help immigrants grow their own food, and sell some for income in the Springfield area. Logon to [www.immag.org](http://www.immag.org) for more information. This program was inspired in part by Nuestras Raices “a grass-roots organization that promotes economic, human, and community development in Holyoke, Massachusetts through projects relating to food, agriculture, and the environment.” Logon to [www.Nuestras-Raices.org](http://www.Nuestras-Raices.org).

Of course, it takes more than farmland to increase production. It takes more farmers and it takes a greater infrastructure such as slaughterhouses and food processing capabilities and a distribution system.

Considering the necessities some local towns have felt to institute ‘right to farm laws,’ it should also be said that it takes the need for us all to appreciate all the elements necessary to preserve the rural landscape we are all so devoted to.

In mid-January I had the opportunity to talk with Phil Korman, the director of CISA, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture. CISA, a nonprofit, has been operating for 16 years. It is possibly most visible in its LOCAL HERO project which was launched in 1999. It has helped farmers by helping to build a market for local food and giving local foods more cachet. CISA has also helped local farms make connections with institutional buyers like local schools and colleges and the Baystate Franklin Medical Center. UMass currently buys 23% of all the food served on campus from local farmers.

CISA knows that successful farmers need more than farming skill; they need training in business, finance, and marketing, which they provide through workshops. They also have a new initiative, Women in Agriculture, recognizing that more women are heading up farms.

There was considerable controversy last year when there was talk about building a slaughterhouse in Shelburne. The location was problematic and the project was abandoned, but a slaughterhouse is needed for farmers, and even families who want to raise a few animals, or chickens, for home consumption.

There are less controversial types of food processing operations that are being considered. Bart’s Ice Cream uses local blueberries and peaches in their ice cream, but they would welcome a milk processing plant that would use local milk.

I remember a meeting I attended when we first moved to Heath that included a brainstorming session about how to support agriculture and help the town economy. One of the ideas was a cheese-making operation that would allow the dairy farms then operating to add value and make more money. It didn’t happen, of course, but similar ideas are now being worked on.

Another project that CISA is involved with is commercial freezing equipment that would make it possible for farmers to grow more and freeze some of the crop for sale out of season.

Two hundred local farms are now members of CISA. It is now possible for each of us to support CISA and local farms by becoming a member. For more information about CISA and how to become a member logon to their Web site [www.buylocalfood.org](http://www.buylocalfood.org). If you are interested in reading Shemariah Blum-Evitts’ thesis, it is online. The easiest way to get it is by Googling her name.

When we were preparing to move from NYC to Heath, my mother, in some exasperation, once said, “You are just like your grandfather.” What could that mean? I was amazed and confounded. I later realized that as she watched us prepare to move to the country where we planned to grow a garden and raise chickens she was thinking back to the farm on the shores of Lake Champlain that my grandfather and newly married uncle bought in 1939.

(“Green Thoughts” continued on page 10)



## School Committee News

At our latest School Committee meeting, among a variety of Action Items including approving trips to an Environmental Education Center in Vermont and a trip to Mexico, the Mohawk District voted to continue to be a School of Choice for the 2010-2011 school year. As we got closer and closer to our vote I could feel butterflies beginning to dance in my stomach. I had a coach once who told me that it was fine to have butterflies as long as I could get them to fly in formation. I focused my energy on picturing a V of monarch butterflies swooshing from side to side. You may be wondering why the butterflies even existed. It is because the notion of Choice makes me uncomfortable, and I knew that as the vote approached I would not support it and I knew that everyone else would.

I understand the philosophy behind Choice. Not all schools are the same, nor should they be, just as not all students are the same. Students should have the opportunity to be educated in a way that supports and challenges them appropriately. Thus, by giving families a choice they are able to best match a school to their child. Wonderful, I love that families, who are invested in their children's education, are taking the time to explore different options, seriously considering the pros and cons of different school communities. However, at the same time I find it to be a fairly exclusive process. It is only the families who are willing to put in the time to research schools, fill out paperwork, and have a means to transport their children to and from the new school who can use Choice. In the meantime, as students choose out of school, a sense of community can be lost. If there was something that could be improved at a school the very people who might otherwise be invested in creating an improvement are leaving. Strong educational community members put their energies towards another school and the one they have left is depleted, often left floundering as their budget is affected and an unfavorable reputation begins to wind into the minds of many. So no matter the reason for "choicing-out" there is a negative effect that sends a message. Even as I write this, arguments spout off in my head, What about the child whose education is being sacrificed as change is sought from within? Why not let them go to a school that already fits them? And so my mind turns into a muddling mess and I am left with butterflies flapping all over the place as I hear the Chair of the School Committee say, "All those in favor say aye...all those against...abstentions." And I weakly speak up and say I abstain because I cannot support something I don't think works and yet I have no solutions to give if I were to say nay.

Perhaps as you have read this you've realized you have a different opinion than I, or at least a less muddled one. My term as your School Committee representative expires this

spring. I do not plan to run as I feel there are better qualified people in our community. I encourage someone out there to wear the School Committee hat that I have tried to wear as best I could for the past three years. There is a lot of important work that goes on that effects our entire community regardless of whether or not you have a child in the school system. I will continue to do the best I can until then...

Respectfully,  
~ Emily Cross

## Heath Elementary School Parent Teacher Partnership (PTP) News

January 22nd was a clear, beautifully warm day, perfect for the Winter Field Day at Heath Elementary. Students, teachers, and parents cross-country skied, built snow forts, and went sliding all afternoon. Thank you, parent volunteers!

As always, we'd like to invite community members to visit the school to share local history stories or their knowledge on subjects like poetry, natural sciences, and gardening. Feel free to call the school-337-5307. The PTP is also looking for local artisans, farmers, authors, etc. who would be interested in being a part of a fund-raiser catalog that would jointly support local artists/businesses and the School. Please contact Lorena at [lloubskylonergan@netzero.com](mailto:lloubskylonergan@netzero.com) or Lyra at [lyrajohnson@yahoo.com](mailto:lyrajohnson@yahoo.com) for more information.

Students continue to work with Good Neighbors, bringing in non-perishable food items from home and bagging them in Charlemont. All were amazed at a recent all-school Wushu demonstration (Chinese martial arts). Emily Gopen and Sonny Crawford led another North Woods enrichment-this one included making a campfire with only wet wood and one match. Heroic cape-making with Carin Burnes will be our next exciting enrichment. We all look forward with much anticipation to the Drama Club's performance of *The Witches of Oz*. We'll follow the yellow brick road on March 12 and 13.

~ Lyra Johnson  
School-Community Relations

("Green Thoughts" continued from page 9)

My grandfather, who had emigrated from a Swedish farm when he was about 18, was worried about the threat of impending war. He wanted to be able to feed his family, no matter how bad things got. The Vermont farm was his food security which happily was never put to the test.

We hope our food security is never put to the test, but it is good to know that we have so much capability in our region, and even in our own town. To see the realities of our local farm production, even in winter, join me at the Greenfield Winterfare Farmers Market at Greenfield High School on Saturday, February 6, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For more information: [www.winterfare.org](http://www.winterfare.org).

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

## I Picked a Yellow Rose in Heath

It was a day like any other day as I worked my way through the usual crowd of students heading to their next class at Fitchburg State College in the year 1953.

Suddenly I noticed two attractive girls coming from the opposite direction. One of the young ladies I knew from a previous class but the other, who was as stunning as a beautiful yellow rose, did more than just catch my eye. The encounter with the two was brief but I did manage to get the name of the unknown beauty as well as her address.

On the following Friday, I called her and asked her if she would care to go out that night. She refused me. I found out later that she didn't care for the idea that I could presume that she would go out on a date at the proverbial drop of a hat. It took several phone calls to finally get an "OK." I was thrilled that she agreed to an encounter.



*Pauline Peters*

I arrived before a large and beautiful home and couldn't help but think what a lucky guy I was. She was both beautiful and rich. I was to find out that evening that she just boarded at this home while attending college and, in exchange, my dream girl was a part-time maid and nanny. Pauline (oops, I let her first name slip out) thought that I was much older and a veteran. Premature baldness must have led her to that conclusion.

Our dating went on for some time and for some unknown and unremembered reason, we slowly went back to doing our own thing, she, dating others, and I still "playing the field."

When vacation time came around, a buddy and I decided to go on a fishing trip near the Canadian line. Limited in finances and not having any luck catching the elusive "muskie," we decided to return home. We stayed the evening near Lake George and after having a couple of drinks at some nightclub, that had a full-size airplane hanging from the ceiling, my thoughts turned to Pauline. I remembered that she came from a small Massachusetts town called Heath which was just slightly off our route home, but the decision to visit this town that had about four to five hundred people and six to seven hundred cows, was to come about the following day.

In a small town called Charlemont, we hung a left and slowly drove the winding and scenic road northward toward Vermont. As we rounded a bend in Route 8A, we turned left on Number 9 Road. There was a sign on this corner that read "Peters General Store," and on the bottom it read "Open 24 hrs. a day." It was a short drive that brought us to the Peters Store and, to two city slickers, this was the epitome of "country."

I introduced myself to Mrs. Peters, a woman with whom I immediately felt a relationship, and, as I watched her wonderfully interacting with customers, I knew that if Pauline was ever to become an image of her mother, it would be only one more positive attribute to add to her already long list of niceties.

Mr. Peters was another story altogether. I could tell from his demeanor that he wasn't about to engage in much conversation until I told him that we were on our way home from a fishing trip. That is all he needed to loosen up and he invited my friend and me into the grain room to show us a bucket full of newly caught trout from Branch Brook. All of this new seems like a dream as it happened well over a half century ago.



*Mr. and Mrs. Peters*

I couldn't wait to get back home to see my yellow rose, so I drove to her place of employment. We arrived quite late only to see her come out of the building and enter a car with a handsome young man. His name is withheld as he still is, from what I understand, somewhere in the Berkshires. Seeing this gave me the sinking feeling that I had lost her forever.

There is a lot more to tell in this story but all I will say is that the outcome, although somewhat rocky, finally worked out for the best, and we became engaged. With Pauline still attending Fitchburg State, I entered the Armed Forces two days after Thanksgiving. On May 15, 1954, we were married, and I have two strong remembrances of the service, how beautiful Pauline looked coming down the aisle and how the altar boys were wearing sneakers? Oh, well!!

Fifty-five years have passed since our marriage. Both Mr. and Mrs. Peters have passed on as well as others in the Peters family, a family that I had come to love and enjoy. Mr. and Mrs. Peters were a rich part of some of Heath's earlier history. During the Depression, they gave credit for food from their store to many needy folks in town, when, at times, they had little. Many folks repaid their indebtedness, and those who could not, their debts were forgiven. Those living today in Heath, who enjoy what this area has to offer, should never forget that it was people like the Peters who gave so much integrity to the future of this wonderful small town.

One of my favorite poems by Robert Frost is *The Road Not Taken*. I personally took the one "less traveled by" and it led to Pauline M. Peters, my beautiful yellow rose of Heath.

~ L. R. Stevenson  
Winchendon, Massachusetts



## Heath Fire Department History Early Fire Protection ~ 1930-1948 Part I

One of the first items was the telephone-alerting system. I never asked anyone when it started but I know it was in place during the late thirties. The operator at the Central Office in Heath was able to tie all the lines together and ring a signal – three long rings followed by two short rings, repeated three times and then give a message as to the location of the fire. This notified everyone in town who had a telephone.

There are not a lot of records pertaining to fire-fighting in the 1930-40 era, but the 1930 Town Report lists two expenditures: one to the Charlemont Fire Department for fighting a fire and another for \$144.00 for fire extinguishers. These were to be kept at various homes in town and be taken to the fire scene. In 1933 another \$200.00 was spent for fire extinguishers. The 1935 Town Report shows Homer Tanner being paid \$5.00 as Forest Fire Warden and George Peon (Peon Store) was paid \$13.37 for supplies for the common, fire department, and road machine. A June 21, 1935 excerpt from my Aunt Pearl Gleason's diary states, "Had a letter from Edith. Told about fires at schoolhouse."

The Annual Town Meeting of 1938, Article 4, asks the Town to appropriate a sum of money in conjunction with State money, if available, to purchase a fire pump. It was voted to borrow \$350.00 and raise from taxation another \$350.00. The following year the loan was paid off after the Town purchased a Fitzhenry Guptil portable pump for \$698.80.

The 1940 Town Meeting raised \$115.00 for the fire department of which \$109.00 was expended to American LaFrance Foamite but nothing is noted what the items were.

A severe thunderstorm struck and set fire to the Bellor barn (Grace Crowningshield) and, at the same time, another bolt set fire to the Cook barn (Eric Grinnell). The Charlemont Fire Department responded to the Bellor barn fire, but no apparatus was available for the Cook barn. Both barns were destroyed.

In 1941, \$115.00 was raised for the fire department of which \$109.25 was spent. April 20 of that year saw several fire personnel respond to a forest fire on Christian Hill in Colrain, and on August 13 of that year, a fire destroyed a barn and part of the house at the Maurice Thompson farm (Kenneth Stetsons). Again Charlemont Fire Department responded to the fire. Apparently these fires stirred some agitation for Heath to have an organized Fire Department. (Prior to this, volunteer helpers arrived on the scene.)

Following are three excerpts from Pearl Gleason's 1941 Diary:

- 1 - November 16 – Charlemont Fire Department demonstrated in P.M
- 2 - November 29 - Supper at Hall for firemen
- 3 - November 30 - Men went to see fire truck.

Basically, before 1942, all the townspeople were notified and those with fire extinguishers brought them to the fires. Ted Burrington, Paul's father, once stated that every house in Heath Center had been saved by those extinguishers. The portable pump and hose purchased in 1937 might have been picked up and taken to a fire in someone's truck.

The 1942 Town Meeting voted to form a fire department and to raise \$200.00 for a budget. Homer Tanner was appointed Chief.

The following is from my memory as a 9-or 10-year-old. A 1935 international truck from the Highway Department equipped with a 500-gallon water tank, the Fitzhenry portable pump, and a hose reel with several 100-foot lengths of 1 1/8" forestry hose. This truck made a few fire runs, but was not very reliable, and, by the end of World War II, I remember seeing it parked in the horse sheds between the church and Peon's store with several flat tires.

During the years 1943 through 1945, the Town budgeted \$100.00 a year for the Fire Department. Very little of this money was spent except in 1944 when \$11.36 was added to the \$100 to pay for repairs to the truck. (I believe this was to repair the truck after the Gurney House fire on Underwood Hill Road.) The 1942 Town Meeting had raised \$500.00 for Forest Fire Patrol of which \$6.30 had been spent. From 1943 through 1963, this amount was not longer raised; \$50.00 was. The only time any money was spent from this account was \$48.75 for labor in 1947.

The Department's budget was raised to \$150.00 in 1946. Apparently an article was added after the 1947 Town Report was printed. Penciled in my report is Article 14 that a fire truck committee be appointed.

In January 1948 the house and barn in Heath Center belonging to Albert Patterson was destroyed by fire. A few weeks later, Homer Tanner moved to Charlemont and resigned as fire chief. Andreas Royer was appointed and served for a short time.

~ Earl Gleason  
Heath Fire Chief  
1975-1996

### Letter to the Editors



My mother said she read the last *Heath Herald* sent her from cover to cover and chuckled over several items she found funny. So I decided to send her the latest edition, which Don and I have just finished reading. She will be 102 on December 10 (also Emily Dickinson's birthday!), and is sorry that Myrfield is the one home of ours she will not be able to visit. So I'm glad to give her this opportunity to read about our community and how we live our lives here in the hill towns of West County.

Which is to tell you as we come to the close of another year, how much we appreciate the *Heath Herald* and the work that all of you put into it. The *Herald* connects us to our neighbors, our news, and the stories that make Heath so special. We look forward to its arrival and devour it when it comes.

So thank you all for your outstanding work on drawing our community ever closer with the *Heath Herald*.

With all best wishes for the celebration of another year.

~ Margaret Freeman..

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- Box 89, 182 Flagg Hill Road, Heath, MA 01346  
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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 Heath Agricultural Society met on Wednesday January 20, at the Heath School. Rachel Porter has agreed to help with an image for this year's Fair. We discussed possibilities for a theme and are still open to suggestions.

The question of whether or not to have fireworks continues to be raised. We like them. Lots of people like them. But they are expensive, leave behind some pollution, and disturb livestock and wildlife. We would love to hear your thoughts about the questions of fireworks or no fireworks and what we might do as an alternative that would be as exciting and fun. E-mail your ideas to [pam\\_porter@verizon.net](mailto:pam_porter@verizon.net).

Heidi Griswold has already begun contacting vendors and hopes to attract some new ones this year. People loved the climbing wall and so we are negotiating for having it two days rather than only one day. We are looking for young local talent for Friday night's music. Carol Sartz is the music organizer.

We are outgrowing our poultry barn—a nice problem to have! Discussion is underway about how to afford and manage an expansion.

Conrad Halberg and Shirley Tombs have begun work on the premium book and are asking all department heads to contact them with additions and corrections to the rules of competition by March first.

We have lined up speakers to give presentations on invasive species of plants and ways farmers are changing the way they farm in order to remain both sustainable and viable. There is room for more presentations so if you have proposals for speakers let us hear your ideas.

Several towns have responded to our Local Cultural Council Grant proposals. Our thanks to Heath, Rowe, Charlemont, Hawley, Shelburne, and Buckland.

Just about the time you start getting seed catalogues in the mail, the seeds for next year's Fair begin to germinate and take root. We are looking for new ideas and energy to tend and grow them for the 93<sup>rd</sup> annual Heath Fair. We would love to hear from you and or see you at our next meeting. It's at the Heath School, February 20, 7:00 p.m.

~ Pam Porter, President



*Photographed by Jane de Leeuw*



## Open Burning in Massachusetts

By the time this article reaches you the open burning season for Massachusetts will be well under way. Open burning starts each year on January 15 and runs until May 1. This article will answer the some of the most asked questions regarding burning, who, what, where, why, when, and how?

### Who can burn?

Answer: Any person 18 years of age or older can burn.

### What can I burn?

Answer: Brush, cane, driftwood, and forestry debris from other than commercial or industrial land clearing operations, materials normally associated with the pursuit of agriculture such as fruit tree prunings, dead raspberry stalks, blueberry patches for pruning purposes, and infected beehives for disease control, trees and brush resulting from agricultural land clearing and fungus-infected elm wood, if no other acceptable means of disposal is available.

It is illegal to burn the following items. brush, trees, cane and driftwood from commercial and/or industrial land clearing operations, grass, hay, leaves and stumps, and tires, and construction material and debris.

### Where can I burn?

Answer: At least seventy-five feet from any building. Try to pick a safe spot. For example, if there is snow on the ground then most places are fine. However, once the snow melts any place where there is dead brown grass is not a good place to burn. If at all possible take some preventative measures like raking the area near where you want to burn, in order to remove dead grass and leaves to help control fire spread. If possible have a garden hose available and/or other tools like a shovel or garden rake or a pump sprayer of water. Remember to test it before you start the fire. If you notice the fire is getting away from you, call the Fire Department immediately. Delays in fire department notification can have disastrous results.

### Why should I burn?

Answer: Actually this is a bit of a trick question and answer. In fact, it may not be safe for everyone to burn. You must consider your surroundings and necessities first. There are some benefits to burning. It can reduce the fuel load around your house lessening the wildfire danger. It can also allow for a great family event. If you can keep your fire small enough, bring out a few folding chairs, marshmallows and hot dogs. Invite over the kids and grandkids and spend a day or part of a day relaxing around a nice fire.

### When can I burn?

Answer: As stated above, the dates for open burning are January 15 until May 1. You may not start a fire until 10:00 a.m. and it must be out at 4:00 p.m. This doesn't mean you add the last armful of brush at 4:00; it means the fire should be out.

### How do I get a permit?

Answer: There are two ways that you should obtain a permit for the open burning season. You can now get one online. Go to [www.fcburnpermits.com](http://www.fcburnpermits.com) and follow the on-screen instruction. If permits are available for the day that you want to burn, when you click on the link on that page you will be brought to an online application.

If you do not have Internet access then you can call 413-625-8200 and the dispatch center will issue a permit to you.

If you need an agricultural permit you must call the Fire Chief at 413-337-4462, Monday through Friday, in order to obtain one. Agricultural permits are issued on a case by case basis. It is possible that an agricultural permit may be issued when all other permits are denied due to weather conditions; however, this is rare.

### Can I burn in a barrel?

Answer: **NO!!!** It is illegal to burn anything in a barrel.

If you have any questions about open burning, please feel free to call me at the above number.

~ Michael Smith  
Heath Fire Chief

## LOCAL DRAMA NEWS

### The Academy at Charlemont

#### *As You Like It*

February 11 & 12 at 7:00 p.m.

February 13 at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

### Mohawk Trail Regional High School All School Musical

#### *West Side Story*

February 26 & 27 at 8:00 p.m.

February 28 at 2:30 p.m.

### Heath School Drama Club

#### *The Witches of Oz*

March 12 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

March 13 at 6:30 p.m.



### Library Lines

## New Items at the Library



By Donald Purington

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

**Adult Fiction Books:** *The Unnamed* by Joshua Ferris, *The Red Door* by Charles Todd, *Remarkable Creatures* by Tracy Chevalier, *The Disappeared* by M. R. Hall, *Doors Open* by Ian Rankin, *Noah's Compass* by Anne Tyler, and *The Family Man* by Elinor Lipman.

**Adult Nonfiction Books:** *A Snippet From the Greatest Generation : A Memoir* by David F. Howland, *Heath, Massachusetts: A History and Guidebook* by Edward Calver; 3rd edition with expanded index edited by Donald C. Freeman, *Committed: A Skeptic Makes Peace With Marriage* by Elizabeth Gilbert, and *Making the Most of Your Money Now (revised 2009)* by Jane Bryant Quinn.

**Audio Books on CD:** *The Whiskey Rebels* by David Liss

**Young Adult Fiction Books:** *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood* by David Benedictus

**Young Adult Nonfiction Books:** *The Really Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson.

**Children's Books:** *D is for Drinking Gourd: an African American Alphabet* by Nancy Sanders, *Tails* by Matthew Van Fleet, and *The Story of Snow: The Science of Winter's Wonder* by Mark Cassino

**DVDs** *Ghost Town*, *Maiden Heist*, and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

**"There is no substitute for books in the life of a child."**

Mary Ellen Chase  
(1887-1973)

American scholar, educator, and author of more than 30 books many of which centered on her birthplace, the State of Maine. She taught at Smith College from 1926 to 1955.



## Heath's Sustainability Coffee House

The Coffee House, the idea of which is to provide a flexible, social setting shaped by participants' interests and concerns, was the brain child of Brooks McCutchen and Janis Steele with Leighton and Martha McCutchen, Doug Mason and Nina Marshall. It was held on January 23 at the Community Hall.

The goal of this first meeting was to collect ideas and interests of community members and to launch it with a scientific exploration of oceans and the basic chemical connection between life on land and at sea. The film, *A Sea Change*, was shown.

For future meetings, interest was expressed in six areas: Energy, Agriculture, Gardens and Greenhouses, Biodiversity and the Ecosystem, Consumption and Carbon Storage, and Sustainable Culture.

February and March meetings are being planned. Watch your e-mail for dates and times. If you are not already on the

list, contact Brooks and Janis at [bsgfarm@peoplepc.com](mailto:bsgfarm@peoplepc.com) or call at 337-8301. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. The only price for admission is a mug for your beverage of choice.

## Heath Business Directory

**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

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Cell 413-325-1065

Email: Lively1@crocker.com

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413-625-6623

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### Support Local Agriculture

Free 1 inch advertising space for local farmers.

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P.O. Box 54  
Heath, MA 01346

*Supported by a special grant made available  
through the Dickinson Fund*

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

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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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(413) 339-8357



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Shelburne Falls

**Town Nurse News**

## February is American Heart Month



By Claire Rabbitt, RN

Although most of us know at least one person suffering from cancer and many who have died, according to the American Heart Association, "Heart disease is still the number 1 killer, in this country, and is largely preventable." I find this is much easier said than done in a society that encourages fast foods and sedentary lifestyles. I will frequently see a report on the evening news about a health issue involving obesity or the epidemic of type 2 diabetes leading to heart disease and early death. Then a commercial for pizza or subs oozing with melted cheese is shown. The temptations to eat too much of the wrong foods is constant. One of the many advantages to living in Heath is that we are far enough away from fast-food places to keep us from succumbing to easily gratifying temptations from them.

I have done a little research for information on heart-healthy living online. At [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org) or by calling 1 800 242 8721, or [goredforwomen.org](http://goredforwomen.org) you can find information on diet and how to develop your own "personal action plan." *My Start* is a "free tool" to help you make positive lifestyle changes through physical activity and better eating."

"*Start* is the American Heart Association's national movement that calls on all Americans to create a culture of physical activity and health through walking." There are free videos on how to start a walking routine and finding a partner to walk with, and other tips. 30 minutes a day improves heart health and it can be done in 10-minute intervals. There are also recipes and tips for grocery shopping and eating out. I recently found a new easy recipe for tuna and whole grain pasta in the *Recorder*. Call me if you would like a copy.

There is a whole lot more on the above Web site, including free pamphlets. I would be happy to help if anyone has a question on diet or supplements or other health issues. I am in my office Tuesdays, from 12- 1:15 p.m. and Thursdays, from 11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m., or by appointment. I can be reached at 337-8309.



## Finance Committee Report

The Heath Finance Committee is in something of a calm before what may be the storm of trying to meet the Town's financial needs in a time of severe fiscal constraints. Budget hearings begin soon and we will make every effort to avoid increases in Town expenditures as we meet with department heads to plan the upcoming year.

The new town tax rate of \$16.98 for Fiscal 2010 was something of a surprise. For the May 2009 Annual Town Meeting we had estimated a rate of \$16.85 based on the total Town valuation at that time. Because total valuations dropped by about \$4 million, however, the tax rate rose about 5%.

That was the bad news; the good news is that the State Department of Revenue certified our free cash at about \$107,000. We were concerned at having to dip so deeply into free cash in the Town budget that we recommended last May, but this result means

that the Town has some reserves in place for the coming year. In addition, the fact that Governor Patrick rescinded the cut in school transportation funding means that the Town won't have to come up with extra funds to fill that gap.

Apart from that, we have been discussing the establishment of a capital-planning program that would call for the Town to build into each year's budget the amounts needed for major capital expenditures like highway and fire equipment. This may be difficult at a time of decreasing State aid, but we hope at least to have some policy guidelines in place before too long.

We've also considered questions involved in recycling. It appears that the bottle-recycling facility at the Transfer Station is underused, and we are curious why more townspeople don't recycle bottles and cans, too many of which wind up along the road-sides of the town's highways and not with our recycling system, which provides added revenue to the Town. We would like townspeople to get in touch with us with any suggestions or improving the recycling program now in place.

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

## Selectboard's Report

### Fall/Winter Meeting Schedule

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

### Transfer Station

Cleon Peters has stepped in to operate the Transfer Station in Bob's Herman's absence. We are very grateful to Cleon for his willingness to fill in for Bob.

### Energy Audit

The Board has signed an agreement with Siemens to do an energy audit of the Town's facilities as a prerequisite to a contract for providing energy conservation improvements. The audit will document current levels of consumption and recommend improvements that could be made. Some of the areas being investigated are insulation, heating systems, and lighting. The Town will submit a warrant article at the Annual Town Meeting in May for a contract with Siemens to implement their recommendations. The contract would be paid for from savings in energy usage and would not affect the Town budget.

### FY11 Budget

January is the month when work begins on preparing the budget for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. Town departments and committees are being asked to prepare a budget for the next fiscal year and submit it for review. State aid to cities and towns is uncertain this year with the recession and decline in tax revenues. The Board has recommended restraint in discretionary expenditures. Meetings with the Finance Committee will begin soon to prepare the FY11 budget.

The Board has also begun conducting annual employee reviews.

### Repairs/Renovations

The Town Salt Shed has undergone structural repairs to the roof trusses, and the Fire Station received a new metal roof. The work was completed by On the House Builders of Shelburne Falls.

### All Boards and Committees Meeting

The annual meeting of town boards and committees is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., February 9, at the Community Hall. This is a chance to catch up on what is going on in Town and share concerns or ideas. Beverages and desserts will be served.

### 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. A new Web page is being developed and will be launched as soon as it is ready.

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

## Elected Officials/Terms Expiring 2010

Thomas S. Lively, Board of Selectmen  
 Valerie Kaempfer, Board of Assessors  
 Jeff Simmons, Finance Committee  
 Robert Viarengo, Planning Board  
 Emily Cross, School Committee  
 Jan Carr, Library Trustee  
 Bob Tanner Jr., Dog Officer  
 Jeff Simmons, Constable  
 Bob Tanner Jr., Constable

### Town of Heath IMPORTANT DATES

February 15, 2010	FY '10 Budgets Due
February 16, 2010	Start Budget Review Hearings
March 01, 2010	Annual Reports Due
March 17, 2010	Last Day to Obtain Nomination Papers from Town Clerk
March 19, 2010	Last Day to File Nomination Papers with Town Clerk
April 5, 2010	Articles Due for ATM Warrant
April 16, 2010	Last Day to Register to Vote for Annual Election and Annual Town Meeting
April 26, 2010	Last Day to Register to Vote for Special Town Meeting on May 9
April 30, 2010	Posting for ATM
May 07, 2010	Elections
May 08, 2010	Annual Town Meeting
June 30, 2010	Last Day to Expend Money from FY '10 Funds
July 15, 2010	Last Day to Submit FY '10



Weis Acres**Dad's Project III**

In the early years when we lived by a lake, we had all seasons that Dad took full advantage of fishing.

He loved to fish. Of course it was a source of food for us, and anyone else in the community that would take fish from him when he went over the amount of fish that was allowed. He would tell Mom it was a service he provided for the neighbors and frankly she was glad about having less stinky fish smell in her kitchen! (Though she could cook up a great batch of smelts! She was always sensitive with the smells). Well anyway, moving on.... Dad fished throughout the year, even ice fishing. I remember ice fishing with Dad and freezing my tush off with the boys, running on the ice to check the holes and waiting for the red flags to fling up indicating a catch! We couldn't afford an ice shack to stay warm in and Dad always said, "Someday we'll have one. In the meantime, run home and ask Mom for some hot chocolate." I would volunteer for that job....Mom would always rub my hands and feet warm before I had to head out again! The boys never knew...fade out.....(I always wanted to write a play).

Years later, living in Heath, Dad had continued his fishing throughout the years and also providing the neighbors with fish he had caught, sometimes leaving a red rose with a fish on a back doorstep, just because. (Actually he had the roses to bring home to Mom to appease her for being gone on another fishing trip for days but by the time he got home from dropping off fish to all the women in town he had only a couple of roses left for Mom).

Wintertime again. Dad traded with someone for an ice shack. I believe it was an old canoe he had for trade. Did I forget to mention that he was great at swapping things with people. He could make a deal with the best of them. Well, he finally got his shack. He was going to ice fish in warm luxury this time; he'd never freeze his tush off again!! Mom just shook her head and said be careful when he said he was setting it up on Sadoga Lake.

The story goes that Dad went up there to set up his shack and spent a couple of hours in the freezing cold to put said shack together. Rubbing his hands together when done, wearing a big grin on his face as he proudly stepped back to look and admire this project of his. Long story made short....Dad stepped back into an old fishing hole barely frozen over and promptly snapped his ankle in three places. The poor man stuck there on the ice freezing his tush off for an hour before someone noticed said body lying there!! You should have heard Mom after THAT phone call!! Need I tell you, Mom forbade Dad ever fishing alone again? Poor Dad never did get to use that ice shack either.

By the way...I have an ice shack for trade if anyone's interested....just kidding!

~ Le-Ellen Pettengill Weis

**United States Census 2010**

The U.S. Census Bureau is hiring for the 2010 Census. These temporary part-time positions offer good pay, flexible hours up to 40 hours a week, and the chance to work near home. Call toll free 1-866-861-2010 for more information regarding testing sites and times in our community. You can also call Linda Comstock, local recruiter, at 339-4463 for more information.

*The U.S. Census Bureau is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

**Heath People in the News**

**Timothy Lively** of Heath and **Eileen McVay Lucas**, formally of Long Island, New York, announce their engagement. Tim and Eileen met while Eileen was Rowe Camp and Conference Center's first "Artist in Residence." Tim is employed in the Mohawk Regional School District and is an EMT for the town of Heath.

A 2010 wedding is planned.

**Milestones**

**Elsa Holtom Bakalar**, formerly of Ashfield and Heath, died on January 29, 2010. Born in London in 1918, Elsa came to New York after World War II. There she met Mike Bakalar. They married in 1954, and bought a cottage in Heath in 1958 where they spent summers until Mike's death in 2000.

Elsa was famous for her gardens, her lectures, her garden workshops, and her book

*A Garden of One's Own* published in 1994. For many years, Elsa was the *Green Thoughts* columnist for the *Heath Herald*.

A memorial gathering is planned for the spring. Memorial contributions can be made to Friends of the Heath Free Public Library c/o Jane deLeeuw, P.O. Box 116, Heath, MA 01346.

As we went to press the sad news of **Bob Hermans** death reached us. Our sympathies go out to Eileen and the family.

We will all miss his smiling face and helping hand at the Transfer Station. He was the best of men.

A full obituary and tribute will be published in the April/May issue of the *Herald*.

*The Editors*



(*"Milestones"* continued on page 22)

("Milestones" continued from page 21)

**Erma A. Reynolds Brown of Heath** died on December 31, 2009. Born in Whitingham, VT, on August 18, 1935, she was the daughter of Robert and Ila Bills Reynolds.

She was a graduate of Williamstown High School and was employed by the Anchorage Nursing Home in Shelburne for 17 years and at the Sprague Electric Company in North Adams for five years.

Survivors include her husband of 38 years, **Wendell Brown of Heath**; a son, Donald Crowningshield of Londonderry, VT; three daughters, Donna M. Rathburn of West Wardsboro, VT, Darlene L. Crowningshield of Marlboro, VT, and Noreen A. Morocho of Jamaica, VT; a brother, Leon Reynolds of Brattleboro, VT; a sister, Sandy Frye of New Ashford; 12 grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren. Her son Scott Reynolds predeceased her.

Funeral services were held at the Smith-Kelleher Funeral Home in Shelburne Falls on January 5.

Memorial gifts may be made to the American Cancer Society of Western Massachusetts, 59 Bobala Road, Holyoke, MA 01040.

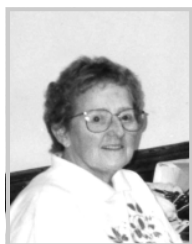


Photo by  
Helen Mackie

**Catherine Ann Burrington Cromack** of Erving and Shelburne died on December 22, 2009. Born in in Heath, she was the daughter of Fredrick and Hannah Landstrom Burrington.

She graduated from Arms Academy in Shelburne Falls in 1945, and, in 1951, received a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from North Adams State Teachers College. She taught first grade in Athol for two years.

Following their marriage, she and her husband of 57 years Bruce Cromack of Shelburne lived briefly in Colrain before moving to Heath. She was very involved in the Town of Heath serving as a member of the School Committee and as a poll worker and in the Heath Union Church as a deacon and superintendent of the Sunday School. A talented crafts person, she was a cornerstone of the Heath Ladies Aid in which group she remained active after moving to Erving in 1995.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by her five children, Cynthia Smith and Debra Washer, both of Shelburne, Weston Cromack of Hinsdale, NH, Lisa Davenport of Shelburne, and Brenda Gallagher of Turners Falls; twelve grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren; her brother Paul Burrington of Charlemont; a sister Erma Lowd of Vinalhaven, ME, and her first cousins, **Ruth Sumner Corey, Richard Sumner, and Ruth Landstrom Johnson, all of Heath**, Dorothy Sumner Harding of West Townsend, Ada Landstrom Duffy of Londonderry, NH, and Pearl Landstrom Churchill of Shelburne.

A celebration of life was held on December 29, 2009, at the Heath Union Church with burial in Heath's South Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Johnson Organ Restoration Fund, in care of Ruth Johnson, Town Farm Road, Heath, MA 01346 or to Hospice of Franklin County, 329 Conway Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA 01301.

**Dorothy Hanni Hulbert** of Brooklyn, NY, and Heath, died on December 4, 2009, at home. Born on December 21, 1928, in Sidney, NY, she was the daughter of Swiss immigrant parents.

After graduation from college, she taught in Sidney and in Boston before moving to Brooklyn where years later she resumed teaching at St. Ann's School and at the Packer Collegiate Institute.

She is survived by her husband of 55 years, Richard Hulbert, and by her four children, Jonathan Ann, Laura, and Mary, and seven grandchildren.

A memorial service was held on January 9, 2010, in Brooklyn. In the spring, her ashes will be interred in Heath's South Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225, for the benefit of the Children's Education Program.

### *Requiescat in pace*

Born on December 29, 2009, **Haedyn Baylee Law**, daughter of Alec and Chelsea Law of Navarre, FL; granddaughter of Fred and Heather Law of Navarre, and great-granddaughter of **Ruth Johnson of Heath** and Robert Law of South Carolina.

### **In Memoriam Dorothy Hanni Hulbert (1928-2009)**

After teaching for three years, Dorothy met and married me, to my great happiness, and we settled in Brooklyn in 1955.

In the summer of 1957 when we had two very young children, my Aunt Winifred Hulbert asked if we would like to spend some time that August in her house in Heath. This was the home, now 12 Avery Brook Road, that she had just bought from Laura Perkins, the widow of the Reverend Worcester Perkins. As you can imagine, it took about four nanoseconds to come up with a Yes and that was the beginning of more than five decades of association with Heath. Our four children and their friends filled our early decades in Heath. Now it is the turn of their children, our grandchildren, to come to know it and love it.

Our long summer stay in Heath was Dorothy's idea, and she much enjoyed all aspects of it: a place she had come to love over 50 years, the natural setting, the stream of visiting children, grandchildren, and friends, time to complete knitting projects for the Heath Fair (three blue ribbons), and a sense of being a part of nature.

She had always had a strong sense that a life must have a beginning and an end, and after 80 years of age, she had no feeling that she was being untimely cut off.

~ Richard Hulbert

## THE HEATH LADIES AID

Please join us at our Ladies Aid Cookbook Buffet and treat yourself to a wide selection of dishes from our cookbook on

**SATURDAY. MARCH 20, AT 5:30 P.M.**

### IN THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE HEATH CHURCH.

Tickets – Adults \$8.00; Children under 10-\$4.00 - may be purchased from Ladies Aid members

*We think that restarting the old Heath tradition of community suppers from time to time is a  
GOOD IDEA!*

Ruth Corey  
Esther Gallup, Co-chairs  
Carolyn Booth  
Jane deLeeuw

Ruth Johnson  
Teresa Peters  
Alli Thane-Stetson  
Le-Ellen Weis

## Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches)

(Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

	<u>Rain</u>	<u>Snow</u>
From November 11, 2009	2"	Dusting
December	1"	24"
To January 10, 2010	0"	6"

### In this reporting period:

The bulk of this reporting period was on the very cold side, with temperatures hovering a few degrees either side of zero on many mornings. Except for a moderate storm on December 9, which dumped around a foot of snow, snow has been on the light side.

~ Tim Lively

## Community Calendar

### February 2010

- February 04** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- February 05** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- February 09** - Heath School, Valentine Enrichment
- February 10** - MTRHS Science Fair
- February 11** - Schools' Early Release Days -HS & Middle, 11:45 a.m. and Heath School, 12:45 p.m.  
LEC Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- February 11,12,** - The Academy at Charlemont Production of *As You Like It*, 7:00 p.m..  
**13** - 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.
- February 12** - Ham and Bean Dinner, Heath School, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- February 14** - **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!**
- February 15** - **PRESIDENTS' DAY**
- February 15-19** - **SCHOOLS' WINTER VACATION**
- February 18** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- February 19** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- February 23** - Chinese New Year Celebration Enrichment, Heath School.
- February 26, 27** - MTRHS All School Musical, *West Side Story*, 8:00 p.m.
- 28** - Matinee, 2:30 p.m. .

### March 2010

- March 01** - Schools' Early Release Days, HS & Middle, 11:45 a.m. and Heath School, 12:45 p.m.
- March 04** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.  
PTP Meeting, Heath School, 3:30 p.m.
- March 05** - Preschool Story Hour, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
Heath Historical Commission, Potluck and Meeting, Community Hall, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- March 07** - College Fair, BIG E, Noon to 4:00 p.m..
- March 12 & 13** - Heath School Drama Club, *Witches of OZ*
- March 14** - **Daylight Saving Time Begins**
- March 15** - MTRHS College Information Night for Juniors, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
- March 16** - MTRHS 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Night, 6:30 p.m.,
- March 18** - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m.
- March 18 & 19** - Heath School Early Release Day, 12:30 p.m.  
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- March 19** - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- March 20** - **WELCOME SPRING !**  
Ladies Aid Cookbook Buffet, Heath Church Lower Level, 5:30 p.m.
- March 23-25** -MTRHS MCAS



*"The ultimate measure of  
a person is not where they  
stand in moments of comfort  
and convenience, but where they  
stand at times of challenge and  
controversy.*

*~ Martin Luther King Jr.*

## HEATH HERALD

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- ◆ Family Videos
- ◆ Penny Candy
- ◆ Soda, Grinders, Ice Cream
- ◆ Beer, wine, liquor
- ◆ All food essentials



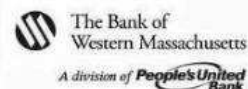
### STORE HOURS

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Sunday, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

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