

# HEATH HERALD Heath's First Newspaper

\$1.50

Volume 35, Number 1

April/May 2013

# It's Time...

Dear Readers,

This is to inform our loyal readers, contributors, and supporters that, we, the present members of the *Herald* staff, will be ending our tenure on the paper with the June/July 2013 issue.

We have been at this for many moons and feel it right that should the paper continue it should reap the benefits of other energetic and enthusiastic minds and voices and perhaps be in a new 21<sup>st</sup> century format.

So ~ we leave it to any of you who are so inclined to give the *Herald* new life or we will bid adieu regretfully to what has been a labor of love and what Dave Howland once called " an historical record of the Town."

We thank all of our faithful supporters here and afar for continuing to appreciate our efforts.

We wish you all good health and pleasure in living.

## **Heath Herald**

Design and Layout Editor/Photo	<i>grapher</i> Eileen A. Tougas
Copy Editor	Jane de Leeuw
Typographer	Jane de Leeuw
<b>Business Manager</b>	Jan Carr
Advertising & Circulation	Jan Carr
Coordinator	Dianne Cerone
Technical Advisor	Henry Leuchtman
Columnists	Bill Lattrell, Pat Leuchtman
	Donald Purington, Claire Rabbitt

**Contributors** 

Elsa Bakalar, Clarissa Baker, Sandra Baker, Dianne Cerone, Franklin Co. Solid Waste Dist., Don Freeman, Friends, Heath Library, Friends, Heath School Library, Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Heath Firefighters Assn., HHS, Heath School Staff & Students, Heath Union Church, Ruth Johnson, Justin Lively, Tim Lively, Lorena Loubsky, PTP, Ray Pettengill, Selectboard, Kathy Sprague, Carroll Stowe, Hilma Sumner, Nancy Thane

The Heath Herald is a nonprofit newspaper staffed by volunteers and published six times a year. Donations are tax deductible and are greatly appreciated.

THE HERALD DEADLINE FOR THE June/July 2013 issue is May 10, 2013. All articles are the property of the Heath Herald unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped Call (413) 337-8594 or E-mail Jane at envelope. jdeleeu@crocker.com.

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## Heath Union Church News

By the time this issue is published we will have celebrated the Easter Season. We are now worshiping in the Sanctuary with joyful music from our reinstalled organ. Please come admire and enjoy hearing our splendidly restored organ. You will be in awe of its beauty and fullness of tone. Scot Huntington has excelled in all aspects of the restoration. He is indeed a master craftsman. Look for further announcements of our rededication and concert series.

On April 27 there will be a Chicken and Biscuit supper at the Church at 6:00 p.m.. Call Richard Gallup for reservations. We are raising funds for repairing and painting the steeple. Our Lower Level, as well as the Sanctuary can be reserved for community purposes. Contact Esther Gallup. Our next Potluck dinner following the worship service will be held on May 1. All are welcome. Pastor Phill continues to conduct Adult Bible study at 9:00 a.m. Sundays and anyone is welcome to attend. Also if parents wish to have their children experience Christian education, please contact him or any of the Deacons and arrangements can be made.

Our faithful member, Dot Sessions, is now living at Buckley Healthcare Center and loves to have visitors. We all miss her presence on Sunday mornings ...

Adult Sunday School	9:00 a.m.		
Sunday Worship	10:00 a.m.		
Bible Study and Prayers	Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.		
	at Buckley		
Pastor's Hours	Thursdays, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.		
Church phone: 337-5367: Pastor Phill: (413) 648- 9077			
_			

Deacons	
Richard Gallup	337-5367
Ruth Johnson	337-4367
Walt Gleason	337-4379
Mike Smith	337-4429
Alli Thane-Stetson	337-4852

~ The Deacons





# HEATH HERALD THE FIRST TEN YEARS

## 1979-1989 Highlights

## Founders and Staff: Pegge Howland, Caroline Smith, Alli Thane, Mike Bakalar, Harriet Read, John Read, Terry Pettengill

1979 - 6-8 pages - \$2.50 for subscription, .25 per copy

Regular reports from Planning Board, Heath Fair, Firemen and Police, Grange, Heath Historical Society, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Finance Committee, Assessors, Selectmen, Church, Library

> Little Fair in the Oak Trees 1962-Fair Moves to Fairgrounds, now from one day to three.

## Heath Herald Paid Circulation

Vol. 1 - # 1 - April '79 - 27 Vol. 1 - # 2 - June '79 - 232 Vol. 1 - # 3 - August '79 - 381

Heath Grange Deactivated

Milestones Begins

#### Taxpayers Turn Out in Heath

A whopping 30% increase in taxes this year has finally stirred the people in Heath to action. It was one of the best attended special town meetings ever held in Heath. An estimated 50-60 persons turned out despite torrential rains and ankle-deep mud.

## 1980-10 pages

## **Finance Committee Report**

The Heath Finance Committee is very concerned over the increase in the new Mohawk School Budget and its impact on our tax rate for next year.

Schools to Set Minimum Standards

## **HEATH PRECIPITATION**

February - 15 inches snow March - 20.5 Snowfall October '79 – March '80= 43 ½ inches Below the average of c. 92 inches (1971-72 = 132 inches)

Heath People in the News Begins

## **OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY**

We ask for your continued support as we go into Vol. 2, our second year. More reaction from our readers, pro or con, would help.

## ENERGY UPDATE

On Monday, April 7, town officials and concerned citizens met with representatives of US Windpower, a private company, to discuss the possibility of erecting 100 medium sized (60' tall) wind generators in Heath. The electricity would be fed in the regional grid and would represent about 5 times the amount of power used in Heath. This would be the first and largest Wind Farm in the world

Hot and Cold Winds Blow at Wind Farm Hearing

ByWays and Stone Walls by Carroll Stowe

*Town Meeting 1980 Well Attended* Election results – 121 or 43% registered voters turned out.

HEATH EVANGELICAL CHURCH The building was erected by the Congregationalists in 1833 when Heath flourished with a population of 1199.

## THE MOHAWK ESTATES DEVELOPMENT

In 1967, ...a man bought 350 acres in the eastern part of town...

He divided this land into 750 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acre lots, put in roads, built a dam on the brook, and dredged the pond.

In 1969, Zoning By Laws were voted in. Lot owners formed the Mohawk Estates Property Owners Association. 423 landowners.

The Town has gained a significant amount in its tax base.

Heath Food Coop Forms

First in a series on older houses in Heath

Founding Mothers of Heath

## 1981 -

## ERIC GRINNELL TO HEAD

**NEW ACADEMY** The Academy at Charlemont has been founded as a private co-educational secondary school.

Windmills in N.H. but not in Heath

## Town Elections brought out a record 156 voters

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued on page 5)

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued from page 4)

## **Crumbling Community Hall**

**Recollections of Heath Schools** (Articles in the Recorder 6/68)

In 1804, there were 6 school districts plus Branch School in 1805

It is interesting to note that this town with a population of 300 today once boasted 1200 inhabitants with nine school districts. However, people began migrating westward and one after the other of these school houses were abandoned.

## **165 YEARS OF THE HEATH POST OFFICE**

On October 11, 1816, Sylvanus Maxwell was appointed first Postmaster of Heath, Mass. In the past 165 years there have been 21 Postmasters.

And the post office, located in many places, was finally located in the Town Hall.

## *Westward - Ho the Wagons* First wagon train

#### 1982 -

## THIS IS YOUR LIBRARY

Heath has a library that any small town would be proud to own.

Heath Free Public Library was opened for public use July 17, 1894, located in the home of the first librarian. In 1897 a two story wooden building was erected to serve as a library and other town uses.

Bicentennial Plans Underway – 1785-1985

## **Beginning Our Fourth Year**

*Maple Sugaring – Heath Style* 

Nuclear Alert – "A Learning Experience"

Proposition 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Impact

Flower Gardening in Heath

What Everyone is "dying" to know about our 6 cemeteries And was afraid to ask

A Hydro Plant in Dell

## **Town Meeting 1982**

Nearly 100 citizens attended the Annual Town Meeting on May 3 at Community Hall. There were 22 articles on the Warrant but the one that generated the most interest was the resolution to ask the President of the US to propose to the USSR a halt to the nuclear arms race and to use the funds saved for civilian purposes.

The article carried but not unanimously.

Justice Frankfurter Centennial Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter who spent several summers in one of Bishop Charles Gilbert's houses in Dell, would have been 100 years old this year... Reinhold Niebuhr was a contemporary of the Justice and was a summer neighbor here in Heath for many years.

> **Burnt Hill Blueberries** August is Blueberry month in Heath

Robert Tripp (25 years) and Jack Cable (1966) both operate successful businesses in blueberries on the extensive acreage on Burnt Hill.

Community Hall "Better and Safer"

## 1983 -12 pages

## Historic Organ in Heath Church

Heath Art Colony Grows

Products in a Cord of Wood

Road Signs for Heath

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO? The theme of this year's report of the Finance Committee in the Annual Report.

Acid Rain, Nuclear-Free Zone

Council on Aging Passes

West County Family Physician Practice Opens

1984

New Tree Farms in Heath

Town Computer Operational

## Water for Christmas

Since late summer many families in Heath have experienced some water shortage. In some instances wells and springs ran completely dry and water was painstakingly hauled from other locations for livestock as well human consumption. Although the problem is by no means completely alleviated recent precipitation seems to have revived many dry wells.

Dairy Farming Then and Now

A Town Nurse for Heath

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued on page 6)

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued from page 5)

The Revaluation is Finally Completed

1985–12-14 pages, \$3.50 for subscription, .35 per copy

Historic Sights to Be Marked

Bicentennial Garden Party to Be Held

## REFLECTIONS ON THE BICENTENNIAL

Ninety-seven Years and Still Sugaring

## HEAT IN HEATH

During the administration of former President Carter he promised that 20% of the nation's energy would come from solar energy by the turn of the century. Today, some six years later and with millions of dollars in federal and state subsidies and tax credits, there are only six households in Heath that have taken advantage of this form of energy.

*General Heath – An Enigma* 

International Heath Recognition Day

Heath, Mass. Bicentennial Ski Race

Good Neighbors Group

Fort Shirley

## The Book of Heath – Bicentennial Essays

Circuit Rider's Report

60 years of Ladies Aid

## 1986-14-16 pages

Voters Defeat 2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Override

Heath: Microcosm of the National Budget Struggle

"...the taxpaying citizens of Heath exercised their right to control their fiscal destiny."

Bright Minds in the Country Towns 40 Years Ago (from the Greenfield Gazette & Courier)

At the close of the Civil War Heath was a town nearly twice the population of today although it had been steadily falling off since

1830. The foreign element had not arrived and a large proportion of the farms were occupied by the same families that had been in possession for three generations.

Old Town House Restoration

Friends of the Library Revived

New Heath Land Development – Number Nine Road

1987

## HEATH FAIR IN QUESTION

The problem – a lack of people and interest in the Fair until Fair time. In these busy times it's hard to compete with the more modern forms of entertainment but please do not let it be cancelled due to a lack of interest in its  $70^{th}$  year.

For a Public Preschool

Heath's Flood Damage – April 1987 – (Photo essay)

## **Population Explosion in Heath –**

Up almost 20%, 201 households Then – up 26% to 484 people

If Heath continues to grow at this rate, it will exceed the earlier peak of 1199 (reached in 1830) by the year 2020.

Wanted: Heath Fire Department is looking for public spirited people

The Family Farm, An Endangered Species

Strategic Planning Grant Awarded for Growth Management Planning

## 1988-18 pages

## Saving Our Farms and Forests Economic Report on Heath

There are 22 small businesses in Heath as well as other incipient ones. However, most of them do not significantly help the tax base.

There is little hope for any manufacturing operation in Heath which might employ a large number of townspeople.

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued on page 7)

("Heath Herald The First Ten Years" continued from page 6)

## THE HERALD'S 10th YEAR

Number Nine Road Update Holy Trinity group owns 9 houses, increasing the population by 41 persons, including 22 under 18.

> HEATH HERALD MAY DISSOLVE IN APRIL 1989 Orginal staff retires; new staff needed

> > October/November – *Heath Herald May Continue* Volunteers have appeared.

Solid Waste Transfer Station

## 1989 Herald Staff in Transition Remembering With Gratitude



## My Life By Carroll Stowe

R

I saw the light of day at the Franklin County Public Hospital on August 29, 1931, born to some great parents. Mr. & Mrs. Edward Stowe were those people. Where we lived was in the west part of Colrain or Adamsville Road. I had two older brothers and did not like being the baby of our family. The fifth of October 1937 I was no longer the baby of the Stowe family.

My oldest brother Edward Jr. is now deceased. My brother Howard lives in Michigan and my little brother Richard, also biggest brother, is a resident of the vast state of Vermont. It was a terrible blow to lose my eldest brother. As I grew older at our farm I always felt it was the greatest place to be.

Our place produced apples and we milked a small herd of home-raised cows, and our operation was rather selfsufficient. The dairy feed ration was all that had to be purchased. Several teams of good work horses powered that farm when I was a young lad. The work horses were the best part of the operation in my mind. All those good teams got all too little credit for everything they produced.

The cows were home-raised and did very well. Hay was cut and put in loose with pitch fork power. Several acres of silage corn filled one large for the time silo. All these jobs were most interesting for me.

I can recall the first old brindle cow that I learned to milk. Not long after I had mastered milking by hand I had the sad realization that she was to be butchered. But that's life on the farm.

I went to the little one-room Adamsville School about two miles from the farm and we walked or later rode on bikes. I even was able to ride a sled some of the way. It was a real treat to ride home with dad and the team on the big double sled. I well recall walking home the afternoon of the 1938 flood. The devastation was hard to fathom. My education was a very difficult part of my life. Nothing about school was easy for me. In this day I'm sure I would be identified as having a learning disability. I attended three schools in Colrain and then Arms Academy in Shelburne Falls. After school I started helping my folks on the farm. I didn't want to have to go into the service so the folks had me deferred from serving and it was frustrating to have to be evaluated every six months.

I always felt I was serving well to helping produce food. Our operation did some custom work with our machinery and a large truck hauling all kinds of freight. I enjoyed trucking. Saw lots of other areas. The years passed and our ages and times changed. My folks aged and things didn't help further our continued operation. Marriage and one child dictated a larger income. I married in 1959 on December 12 and our daughter came to us in September 27, 1965. My wife Peggy drove a school bus for many years in all kinds of weather. Our daughter Lisa Diane works and lives in Connecticut during the week. She tries to be home weekends.

## "Women, Roses and Fish" A True Fish Story! By Raymond Pettengill



At the mouth of the Merrimack River, which flows past Newburyport, MA, and Plum Island, there are two jetties that extend out into the Atlantic Ocean. The turbulence and undertow in the river between these jetties caused by the tides, river flow, and the wind, can be disastrous to small craft. This is also one of the best striper and blue fishing spots on the Eastern seaboard.

While fishing in this area, alone and from my 18-foot BlueFin (definitely a small craft), dragging a big "Blue Atom" lure with three treble hooks attached to a 30-pound test line, I snagged onto what I thought must be a rock. After reversing the engine to follow up on the line it started peeling off the reel again so I knew it was no rock. I turned the boat and followed to gain some line.

With the tide, river current, and the wind on his side, the fish started to drag me perilously close to the rocks of the south jetty. I had to set the drag on the reel up to snub up the fish while reversing the engine to hold my position. Fortunately the rod was short

("Rays of Interest" continued on page 8)

#### ("Rays of Interest" continued from page 7)

and stiff with little bend so it was possible to fight the fish and stay off the rocks. I have no idea how long this contest lasted but finally got him close enough so I could see it was a big bluefish with all three of the treble hooks attached to him. Blues have a vicious set of teeth so I made sure he was out of commission by clumping him soundly on the head two or three times with a hard wood club. He weighed a little over 28 pounds and filled a large cooler that had some ice in it.

By now it was getting late in the day so I started home. Before getting to route 495 I spotted a truck parked on the roadside with a sign which read, "Roses for sale." As the time would be later getting home than I had led my dear wife to think, I figured perhaps it would be a good idea to get her a dozen roses to smooth the way for me a little. It had been a hot day and the roses were a bit wilted so I got them for \$4.00 and had to put them in the cooler with the fish to keep them as fresh as could be on the way home.

At the time of this episode, a rather refined lady who lived in Heath had told me she liked bluefish and would like some if I got one. I swung up into her driveway and showed her the fish. She took one look and said, 'That's way too big for me to take care of." I gave her one of the roses, which she thanked me for, and drove to another place where a woman lived who I knew loved fish. After knocking on the door and getting no answer I placed the fish on her flat rock doorstep and placed a rose on it. As it turned out she and her husband were doing chores in a barn down the road from the house. Her husband called out, "Who's that up there?" When I told him it was me he asked me to come on down. When I told his wife that I had left a fish on her doorstep she went up to the house to take care of it before the cat got it. After I visited with her husband for a bit she came back and gave me a big hug and a thank-you for the rose. When I finally got home and handed the ten roses that were left to my wife she took one sniff and yelled, "fish" and threw them in the sink.

Sometimes men do not understand women!

## **Green Thoughts**

#### By Elsa Bakalar



Last time, writing in September and exhorting us all to have faith in the regenerative power of gardens, I ended with "...and out of a drift of fallen leaves appears a miraculous blue anemone coronaria." That one bloom was followed by others in various parts of the garden where, in May, I had tucked in (and forgot) the dry little corms. Enduring through sharp frosts and

killing freeze, these purple-blue flowers popped up all through October and well into November. Certain that each would be the last, I nevertheless had to trek up to Heath "just in case." I found more, cut them on stems no longer than four or five inches and enjoyed them in our winter house for a week or more. When they died the purple petals curled down from black cones, looking like nothing as much as gaudy tiny umbrellas blown inside out in a high wind.

Well, I had to look back through last spring's seed and plant orders to be sure of having more next year. They were Anemone coronaria "Mr.Fokker." (The Germanic name is necessary if you want to be sure of flowers that are single and blue.) And so it goes. As I write this, on a foggy, drizzly day in late November, my mind jumps ahead to a vision of blue a year from now. That's what gardens do for you.

I had not seen those flowers growing in gardens anywhere but I could vividly remember from my English childhood bunches of them in florists' windows in late winter - and quite expensive they were, too, and then – less expensive- on the flower carts so common on London street corners. People bought flowers to give to friends on almost any occasion. I blush to admit that the bunches of anemones I gave were sometimes missing one bloom, blue and single, extracted for my own pleasure. Back in those days I had no interest whatsoever in gardening and it seems remarkable to me now that I wasn't even curious where they came from or how they were grown. And to think that so many, many years later, they should grow in a Heath garden.

Everyone is familiar with the autumn ceremony of planting bulbs - meaning, usually, crocuses, tulips and the like, for the joy they give in spring. But there are bulbs that can provide another extravaganza, this one in August, September, and beyond. Love them or hate them (no middle ground here), we take gladiolus and dahlias for granted. You have only to look at the Franklin County Fair -every shape, every color, every size, and each one the apple of its owner's eye. There are variations on the gladiolus scene that do wonders for the late garden. One of these, commonly called Abyssinian gladiolus - neither a true gladiolus nor from Abyssinia is usually sold as Acidanthera. In August, it stops garden visitors in their tracks, first by announcing itself with heavy tropical scent, and then by the beauty of the maroon-splashed white flowers and buds like swan's beaks all along the 18-24-inch stem.

There's more. The so-called summer hyacinth. Galtonia candicans is another beauty, with clusters of pendulous white bells atop a 3-4 foot stem. Tall, admittedly, but strong and not in need of any support. The list goes on. There's Mexican Shellflower (great for containers) and, if you have room, giant Cannas, so beloved by the Victorians and now enjoying a come-back.

To grow these summer bloomers just reverse the timetable for spring-blooming bulbs. You plant them in late spring and enjoy them in the summer. The procedure in the fall is the same as for the more famous gladiolus and dahlias. Lift and dry the corms (or tubers) and store them over winter in a cool place. Our northeast winters are too much for these tender beauties.

So thank goodness for gardens, among the last places where we can indulge our personal preferences. Which of the remembered beauties might we grow in combination with modern hybrids, and how will they fit in with today's houses and landscapes? We can welcome the new without shouldering out the old-fashioned favorites. We can preserve the best of yesterday while availing ourselves of the best of today and tomorrow. Remember, we create our own Edens.



## **Green Thoughts**



We grow flowers for three practical and numerous spiritual reasons: we grow them to look at in the garden, to cut and adorn the house, and to give away. Richardson Wright.

This year I forced a few pink tulips that served as living bouquets during the last gray days of winter. I have enjoyed them very much and realized, once again, that I do not often create bouquets for the house. This is partly because we have a cat who is always knocking bouquets over. Still they are safe and pretty on a bedside table which means I tend to create small bouquets, if at all.

I confess I do not feel confident in making a real arrangement. Combining flowers interestingly and prettily in a vase is not one of my strong suits. I like having a vase of flowers on the table, and I can certainly jam together a bunch of lilacs or a big bouquet of ruffly peonies. I can even contrive a small bowl of the various roses from the Rose Walk.

There is certainly nothing wrong with a single flower bouquet. A blue and white pitcher of cosmos in shades of pink, red, and white is charming, a tall glass vase with a couple of stalks of rich blue delphinium or a white Casa Blanca lily is striking, and a tiny vase of violets is delightful.

I no longer have large flower gardens, except for the roses, of course, but I do have a number of flowers tucked in here and there that work well in arrangements. Some are perennials that have a limited or intermittent season like *Miss Langaard*, the white wedding phlox, Siberian iris in white and purple, *Joan Elliot*, a rich purple campanula, coral bells, *Connecticut Yankee* delphinium, and dazzling gazanias. Some have a longer season: chartreuse lady's mantle with its airy yellow blossoms and round scalloped leaves, bee balm in red and pink, and yarrow in white, pink, gold or red. I can also raid the herb garden for the foliage of purple basil and sage and the blossoms of oregano and chives.

One year I planted an assortment of dahlias, intended for the house, as much as for the garden. Dahlias are wonderful for the cutting garden because they come in so many forms and colors, Most of them won't bloom until midsummer but they will keep blooming well into fall. The more the blossoms are cut the more flowers they will produce. You can dig the tubers up in the fall and store them, but you can also treat them as annuals. A single five-dollar tuber will give you dozens of flowers for bouquets.

Last year I added a few rows of annual flowers in a small cutting garden, flowers chosen with bouquets in mind. A cutting garden is not intended to be lovely in itself because it is planted to give the flowers plenty of room to grow and will give you flowers that you can cut without denuding your ornamental garden. Also, annuals keep blooming all season long, especially if you keep cutting them and preventing them from going to seed.

I love easy-to-grow zinnias and they come in a whole paint box of colors with blossoms large and small, neat and shaggy. Nowadays there are a number of sunflower varieties that are cheerful and dramatic in an arrangement. Not all of them of them are yellow. There are sunflower seed mixes, with varieties that bloom from nearly white to yellow, red, and burgundy. Several of these varieties grow between two-to-six-feet tall, with flowers that are no more than eight inches across. Cosmos, white or shades of pink, are a wonderful flower for arrangements, whether you need an airy spray or a single stem tucked in.

In my reading I have come across useful rules for flower arranging. They make sense and help with choosing flowers for the cutting garden.

- Six or seven varieties of flowers make a good arrangement.
- Flowers with straight stems like snapdragons, daffodils, phlox, sunflowers, and delphiniums can provide a good background structure. Don't be afraid of using tree or shrub branches for their blossoms, foliage, texture, or berries. Cosmos, china asters, gooseneck veronica, salvia, and daisies are more curvy and graceful.
- Fillers like baby's breath or cloud larkspur, lady's mantle, and nasturtiums can be very useful, as can a few stems of ornamental grasses.
- Many annuals like marigolds and zinnias can be seeded directly in the garden and will be in bloom in seven weeks or so. Larkspur and sweet peas should be seeded directly where they are to grow early in the spring while the weather is cool.

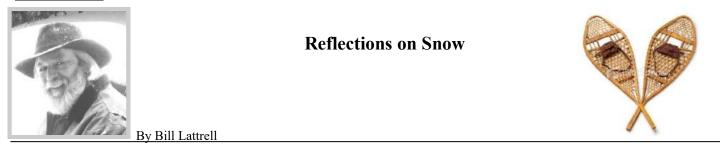
If starting seeds does not appeal, garden centers will be full of flats of annuals, ready for planting in May. I have found many unfamiliar names at the garden center, but because I have been working with the Bridge of Flowers for the past few years I know there are always interesting new plants, plants that will keep your ornamental garden in bloom. They will also provide many bouquets for your house and to give as a token of affection when visiting a friend.

## Bridge of Flowers Plant Sale

The Bridge of Flowers will hold its Annual Plant Sale on Saturday, May 18, 2013, from 9:00 a.m. until noon at the Trinity Church Baptist Lot on Main Street in Shelburne Falls. Perennials from the Bridge itself, as well as from the best gardens in the area will be on sale at good prices. In addition there will be a generous assortment of annuals and geraniums, a selection of rare woodland flowers from Hillside Nursery, tools from OESCO in Conway, and garden-related items from many other vendors. Books, beads, and bagatelles. This year there will be an assortment of handsome, but gently used, pots for sale. All profits go to support the Bridge of Flowers. For more information log on to www.bridgeofflowers mass.org

## Volume 35, Number 1

#### Wild Ramblings



With two feet of snow still on the ground and temperatures in the mid-forties the snow beneath these snowshoes is heavy, wet, and sticky. The dense snow holds my large body aloft and as I move along my snowshoe impressions are shallow. These days there are about 12 hours of daylight. The days will continue to get longer for the next three months eventually resulting in winter's demise.

In the last month we've had our fair share of snow: deep light snow, medium-weight snow, and snow so heavy and wet that it reminded one of freshly mixed cement. So wet that when plowing it into a bank you could see the exact imprint of the plow blade in the snowbank. We've had reasonably seasonable temperatures with daytime readings staying just below the freezing mark until recently. And so the snow has frozen, settled, and generally turned into the stuff that glaciers are made of although at a much smaller scale.

On this day I am marking a small, clear cut on our land. Most of the trees within this boundary will be removed save some large oaks that provide much needed mast to wildlife. In fact, the purpose of this cut will be to enhance wildlife use. This area presently holds mostly smaller trees. The idea is to provide wildlife with a variety of forage within the larger forest. This area will be kept cleared of trees. Hopefully grasses, herbaceous plants like goldenrod and asters, blackberries, and small shrubs that can be browsed will emerge on their own. I will likely plant a few apple and fruit trees here as well.

The rural area that surrounds me was once filled with fields. Miles and miles of open countryside cleared by pioneers hoping to successfully farm the land a couple of hundred years ago. As profitable agriculture waned the fields turned into brush lots and over a longer period of time the brush lots became forests. This region, once 80% open country, is now about 85% forest, most of which is relatively even-aged and about 100 to 120 years old.

These deep forests contain intrinsic wildlife value but are becoming increasingly the habitat for a fewer number of animal species. Small clearings, this one is only about an acre in size, help to provide better forest diversity. The openings allow field plants and

shrub species to grow. These are valuable forage plants for many wildlife species. Both browsing and grazing animals can take advantage of these wildlife clearings as well as a host of insects, songbirds, and game birds.

Before humans managed fires old forests had ample clearings. Wildfire is quite effective at creating new habitat. And while people see forest fires as bad, in fact, in the grand scheme of things fires can be very beneficial to both wildlife and plant communities.

This particular clearing, it will be the second on our land (the other is several acres in size), is on a shallow hillside. Climbing up and down the hill on this beautiful March day is just about as good as it gets. I take in deep breaths filling my lungs to the brim with pure, fresh air as I walk on top of frozen snow in my snowshoes. My hound, James Fenimore Cooper, tags along. He's a huge bloodhound weighing in at about 130 pounds. His massive paws, about five inches across, seem to be natural snowshoes and, for the most part, he stays on top. Every once in a while he breaks through the crusty snow. The deep snow is 30 inches in some shaded areas. Cooper digs out a hole in front of him, the snow is above his back, and he creates a small ramp on which he can climb out. It is simply amazing what dogs know how to do without any instruction. Or perhaps Cooper wonders why there is so much humans don't know how to do without instruction.

I take a moment and can't help but notice that the sky is the color of a robin's egg for the considerable distance that I can see. A few large billowy clouds float along the

northern horizon. The vast forest that surrounds me, and I can see a large part of it, from this vantage point, is quiet and still. There is much to be said about this time of year when the days turn warmer, there is still a deep snow cover, and the forest remains dormant. It won't be long before the spring melt creates streamlets through these woods, the buds on the trees swell and break, and a light green hue that we all know and love will cover the landscape.

Cooper stays close. He smells something under the snow and digs into the snow furiously and with determination. The snow flies as he excavates the deep winter cover and he cries. His yelping turns into a few barks which in turn changes into loud bellows. This is called "sounding" in the world of hounds. And it is music to the ears of any 'houndsman.' I have to admit that sounding usually takes place when hounds are seeking their treasure. A lost child, a bear in a tree, or a fox on the run. Cooper is chasing, perhaps, a mouse in the snow. Certainly a somewhat less noble chase but a chase nonetheless. Forward progress takes place very slowly as he digs through the crusty snow as

("Reflections on Snow" continued on page 15)





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## Berkshire Sweet Gold Maple Farm Heath, MA

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

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Call to reserve 413-337-4964

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

# Heath Fair News

As spring clumsily finds its footing and the snow recedes, the Heath Agricultural Society is beginning to set its sight more clearly upon the Heath Fair: Only five more months... It is during these months that we begin receiving reservations for the Fairgrounds for the spring, summer, and fall seasons; we begin to solidify the Heath Fair's Entertainment schedule; we consider what improvements can be made to the grounds and other venues such as our Web site, and, during the spring, we are in the midst of our fund-raising.

As many of you may well know, in order to make the Heath Fair possible, the Heath Agricultural Society depends upon donations and grants to supplement what money is earned at the Gate during the Fair. We rely upon the Premium Book Donations, Cultural Council Grants, Dickinson Family Fund for Historic Heath (established to support the agricultural nature of the Fair), and a grant from the Wells Trust to support the participation of Children and Youth in Agriculture. Additionally, several business and individual underwriters support the Music, the Nationally Sanctioned Goat Show, and the Truck Pull. Without the generous support offered by these sources, the Heath Agricultural Society would not be able to afford to distribute Premium Awards for the exhibition of fine craft, and other fine displays of agricultural practice. If you wish to donate to the Fair, or you know someone who may be interested in doing so, then please write to the Heath Agricultural Society at PO Box 10, Heath. You may also e-mail me, Justin Lively, at info@heathfair.org.

We are immeasurably grateful for all of the support that is given to us - be it through volunteerism or by donation of money. Thank you to all who make the Fair possible.

With summer around the corner I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of a few matters:

- 1. Workbees will begin at the Fairgrounds in May. If you are interested in helping in any way please email me at: <u>info@heathfair.org</u>. Please also keep a lookout for the Workbee sign which, when out next to the road, indicates that workbees have begun...
- 2. If you are interested in booking a reservation for the use of the Fairgrounds for a wedding, a reunion, or other events, then please contact me at our e-mail address.
- 3. The June Draw approaches. Don't forget to include it in your calendars: The weekend of the 29th of June.
- 4. Our Web site will begin receiving updates for upcoming events and news regarding the Heath Fair. Please visit it at your leisure to keep track of Workbee dates, meetings, etc.
- 5. Finally, the Heath Agricultural Society wishes to invite new members. Please consider attending a meeting: The first Wednesday of every month at the Community Hall at 6:30 p.m..

Thank you one and all for your support of the Heath Agricultural Society! Enjoy the spring!

~ Justin Lively, President



## **Parent Teacher Partnership News**

#### Basketball

Heath School students have just finished up a great season of basketball. After a year of not having a team, we were fortunate enough to have two parents step forward this year to coach. A special thanks to Mark Bird and Mike Schnorr! The kids are looking forward to next year's season already!

#### **Movie Nights**

Student Council and PTP are taking turns holding afternoon or evening movie screenings each month! We just had a great turnout in March for *Brave*, which then morphed from the Scottish highlands to a pickup game of basketball in the gym while we waited for parents. Stay tuned for other showings - we are hoping to run an evening of Hayao Miyazaki film(s) such as *Howl's Moving Castle*. World class anime!

#### **Community Nature Series**

Ted Watt, local naturalist extraordinaire, will be offering a monthly series open to students and the whole community. The first will be: Night of the Salamanders focusing on their amazing life cycle and spring migration! This time we will be learning about their life stories rather than watching their migration - but the evening will give you all the knowledge you'll need to go out and witness their annual spring evening traverse. Maybe the stars and rains and temperatures will align and it will actually be The Big Night, but otherwise, if time allows, we'll go explore one of the vernal pools near the school. Keep an eye out at the Library, School, or Town Hall for a poster announcing the different upcoming events in the series. Night of the Salamanders will be April 19 or 20. The next program will take place the Saturday of May 4: Bluebirds for Heath. This event will take place at the Draxler's on South Road in Heath and we'll have sign up forms in town for folks who'd like to attend as we will be building birdhouses and need to know in advance about materials. In June, we'll head over to the local Heron Rookery & Swamp Walk. We are truly excited to be offering these wonderful programs and thank Ted for the incredible donation of his time, passion, and expertise! Stay tuned for more details. We also hope to have a wondrous Full Moon Hike with Andrew and Meredith at the Benson Farm soon.

#### THE SNOWMAIDEN ~

On April 22, **No Strings Marionettes** will be performing *The Snow Maiden*, an old wondrous Russian folktale about winter, for school, homeschool, and community members. Feel free to visit the No-Strings Marionettes Web site for more information on their theatre, puppets, and the story.

#### FEDCO Seeds ~

The school has a group account set up at FEDCO. If you didn't get your seed orders in yet, drop a note to Lorena at <u>mailto;wildlor@gmail.com</u>. The school has placed one order,

but FEDCO continues to accept orders right through the growing season. We have some extra catalogs we'll drop off at Town Hall, or, peruse their fantastic catalog online at: <u>http://www.fedcoseeds.com</u>.

#### **Community Partnerships** ~

Community members and groups interested in partnering with the school on local projects involving social, cultural, historical, or natural environment, we'd love to hear from you. Please send an e-mail to: Kate Bailey <u>mailto:etakbailey@gmail.com</u>, or Sue Draxler <u>mailto:skdrax@yahoo.com</u> with your ideas, thoughts, and/or skills you'd like to share.

We've many other enchanting ideas and events in the wings. Stay tuned. Your input and engagement are always appreciated. You are also welcome to attend any PTP or LEC meeting or simply come join us for breakfast, lunch, our weekly Friday all-school, or another event. Just check in with Kathy 337-5307, or call in advance if you'd like to stay for a meal. For the most up-to-date schedule of meetings and events, call the office, or go to our school Web site where our weekly newsletter is posted:

http://www.mohawkschools.org/heath.php

~ *Lorena Loubsky* Heath School Parent Teacher Partnership

Save the Date! for the Friends of the Heath School Library Breakfast at the Annual Town Meeting

On Saturday, May 11, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

## at the Heath Elementary School

Delectable Morning Treats, Quiche, Coffee, Tea, Juice

All donations benefit the Heath School Library

We are currently looking for help baking for this event. If you would like to bring a dish, please contact Lyra Johnson-Fuller at: <u>lyrajohnson@ yahoo.com</u>

# Local Education Council Update (and member editorial)

The past couple of meetings have largely focused on the upcoming budget for Fall 2013. Another layer of cuts has been proposed across the District in these financially challenging times. The School Committee has been working tirelessly to promote solutions that meet town needs, yet this year's budget proposal results in further loss of services for all our students. Each school stands to lose two paraprofessionals - people integral to the fabric of our school and community. Every town department in our nine towns has faced similar cuts resulting in losses to needed services whether it be our road crews, our fire departments, or other important functions.

As an LEC, our role is to speak up for what the cuts to education mean. Two LEC representatives have been attending recent school committee meetings to share those concerns, about the specific ramification of cuts in Heath and also for Heath students at Mohawk. The level of student engagement of our youth from Heath and around the District at recent meetings is remarkable! Likewise, we would like to recognize the District's exceptional theatre production of *The Hobbit* and the exciting changes in the music program there.

In Heath, however, cutting paraprofessionals will result in a loss of much needed classroom support as well as library services and hours. Heath's classrooms are all multi-age, resulting in an academic and developmental spread more equivalent to four grades. Each classroom has had a paraprofessional working closely with teaching staff. Their roles are hard to quantify on paper because they do everything from helping to foster positive classroom communication, to teaching math, wiping runny noses, to facilitating reading programs. Principal Glazier and the staff are making every effort to continue to meet the needs of our kids through creative scheduling. Teachers and paraprofessionals along with the entire building staff, will be holding more roles.

Speaking as an individual member, and not for the group as a whole, having been in the Heath school as a parent for ten years, I have seen us weather many losses and face challenges as a school and broader community. I feel it is important, though, to say that there is only so much that can be whittled away without there being a tangible cost to our kids - and to meeting their concomitant social and academic needs.

Diseconomies of scale are inherent and unique to rural schools - cutting the same numbers at one building does not always equal the same loss of service at another, though both are detrimental. I continually have listened in district meetings where cost-per-pupil is used as a measure of fairness and equity. It is not, however, representative of sound educational decisionmaking. Considerations about percentages of children with special needs (whether physical, emotional, or academic) and the recognition that no matter the size of a school, they all need clean bathrooms, clean kitchens, and quality food, Band-aids on skinned knees, and a person to pick up the phone, must be considered. And, the people that do all these things, all do so much more than their job descriptions entail. Students, like snowflakes, which continue to abound despite spring's arrival, are unique, and teaching everyone the same way at the same level doesn't equate to the same understanding of the material being taught. Teachers cannot single-handedly be in two places at once, let alone accommodate that diversity of need singlehandedly - they rely on their paraprofessional staff extensively. This does not bring into the conversation the non-academic aspects of a teacher's or paraprofessional's work. A school's job is not simply to provide instruction in mandated subjects. It is to provide a community of learners a safe physical and emotional place in which to thrive and to learn to love learning, to be given the tools needed to support engaged and inquiring minds, and to support a diversity of learning styles. In reducing the staffing further, we undermine our ability to hold those myriad roles well and risk not doing them well. Even the most well educated or intentioned person requires a team to fulfill the legal and societal mandate of schooling our kids. As an LEC member, I applaud the efforts made to do more with less. As a parent, I hope we can continue asking that budgets be built based on filling the multifaceted needs of our children.

> ~ *Lorena Loubsky* Heath School LEC Member and Parent

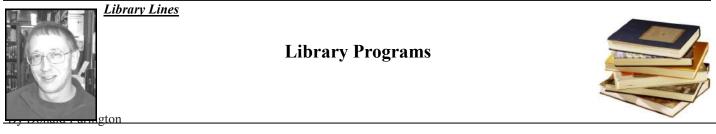
("Reflections on Snow" continued from page 10)

fast as he can. Cooper finally stops and I wander over to the massive excavation to see what's going on. A miniature trail, that of a vole, can be seen through the leaves at the bottom of the channel Cooper has dug in the snow. The trail stops at a small hole where the rodent sought refuge. The frozen ground is nearly impenetrable. Cooper, evidently, has missed his prize. And the funniest part? Cooper wouldn't have killed the vole. Nope. He would have tried to make friends. I once witnessed him cornering a field mouse in our home. He cornered the mouse, laid down in front of it, and tried to lick it. The mouse bit him right on the nose. Cooper cried but didn't seek revenge. He stood up and let it go wondering why the mouse would not be his buddy! While the mouse ran across the room our female bloodhound Adia grabbed it with her mouth, chewed it up, and swallowed it. Cooper cried some more at the loss of a potential friend.

After about an hour of delineating the perimeter of the wildlife clearing and marking the trees that are to remain, I turn and walk to the northeast. I'm taking the long way home on this wonderful day. Cooper tags along, his long bloodhound ears flapping and flying about, as he runs ahead and we move downhill. It is just too nice of a day to go straight home.

There is still just a little bit of winter left and we both want to enjoy it.





By the time you read this our *March Mudness Scrabble Nights* (four Wednesday evenings in March) will have ended. We hope to offer it again next year and look forward to more Scrabblers coming out to play. Events coming up later this spring include a Short Poems writing workshop and an evening of Storytelling. Details will be posted at the Library and on our Web site.

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

See all the new items added to our collection in the previous two weeks on the Library Web site (<u>http://www-heathlibrary.org/</u>look for the <u>New Titles</u> link on the left side of the homepage.)

Adult Fiction Books: The Storyteller by Jody Picoult, Leaving Everything Most Loved by Jacqueline Winspear, Benediction by Kent Haruf, The Magnificent Desolation by Thomas O'Malley, Mary Coin by Marissa Silver, Guilt by Jonathan Kellerman, The Boyfriend by Thomas Perry

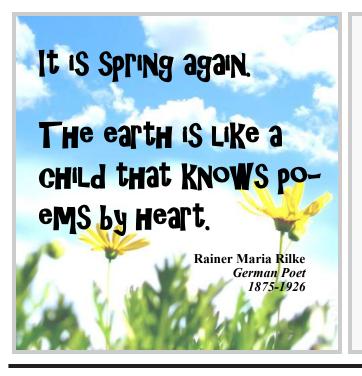
Adult Nonfiction Books: Buying the Farm: Peace and War on a Sixties Commune (the story of the Montague Farm) by Tom Fels, Wave by Sonali Deraniyagala, Salt Sugar Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us by Michael Moss, Thomas Jefferson: the Art of Power by Jon Meacham, Stand Up and Garden by Mary Moss-Sprague, Pukka's Promise: The Quest for Longer-Lived Dogs by Ted Kerasote

Young/Teen Readers' Books: The Cats of Tanglewood Forest by Charles de Lint, Hold Fast by Blue Balliett, The Odd Squad: Bully Bait by Michael Fry, The Sweet Revenge of Celia Door by Karen Finneyfrock

Children's Picture Books/Board Books: One Gorilla: A Counting Book by Anthony Browne, And Then It's Spring by Julie Fogliano, Farm by Elisha Cooper, Imagine by Bart Vivian

DVDs: Lincoln, Life of Pi, Above Suspicion (seasons 1 & 2), Beasts of the Southern Wild, Sessions, The Hobbitt: An Unexpected Journey

Audiobooks on CD: In the Tall Grass by Stephen King, I, Rhoda by Valerie Harper, Custer by Larry McMurtry, The Merchant of Dreams by Anne Lyle



## The Friends of the Heath Free Public Library

## ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND BAKE SALE

Saturday, May 25, 2013 10:00 a.m. to noon Sawyer Hall Front Porch

Come and support your library. Have a cup of coffee with us, and treat yourself to the best baked goods in town.

*If you bake for the sale, please deliver Saturday morning before 10:00 a.m.* 

## Volume 35, Number 1

Heath Business DirectoryThe Benson PlaceHome Improvement33Wild Blueberries & Blueberry SpreadLic. ElectricianWand337-5340337-4317RFred BurringtonEarl M. Gleason33ArtistFire Equipment337-4948339-0030337-4948Tripp'sRobert DelislePaul TurnbullTaylor I333333

Electrician 337-5716

Russell E. Donelson Design/Construction/Cabinetry 337-4460 Paul Turnbull Janice Boudreau Commercial/Wedding Photographers 337-4033

Bonnie Wodin Custom Gardens & Landscapes 337-5529 John Mooney Custom Remodeling

Jerry Ferguson

337-8344 **Wanda Mooney** Realtor 337-8344

**Tripp's Blueberries** Taylor Brook Road 337-4964

Heath Brook Studio Glass and Baskets 337-5736

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



Support Local Agriculture

Free 1 inch advertising space for local farmers.

Send copy to: *The Heath Herald* P.O. Box 54 Heath, MA 01346

Supported by a special grant made available through the Dickinson Fund

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**Tom Lively** 

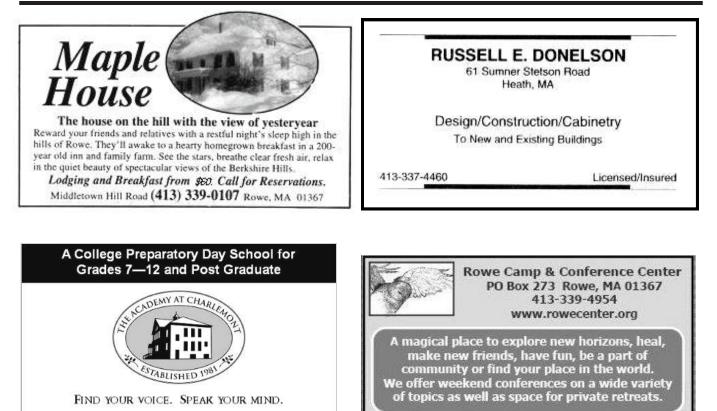
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April/May 2013

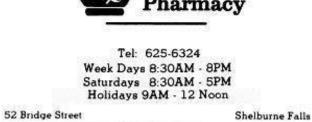


1359 Mohawk Trail Charlemont, MA 01339 413.339.4912 www.charlemont.org

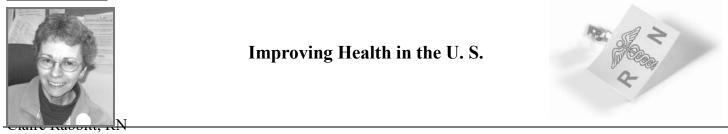




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### Town Nurse News

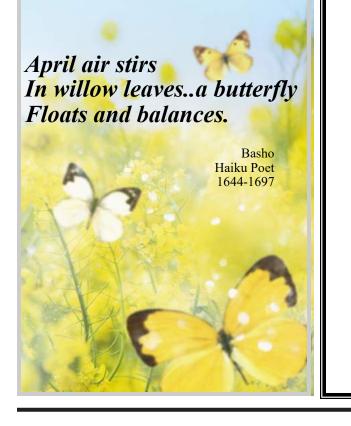


In the March issue of the *AARP Bulletin* a short article gives the results of a recent study of mortality in 17 industrialized nations. It found that American men ranked last in life expectancy, at 75.6 years, and American women ranked 16th, at 80.7 years, although the U. S. spends twice as much on health care as other countries. The NIH researched U.S. deaths from drugs, alcohol, obesity, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, infant mortality, injuries, homicides, and AIDS. They found "a pervasive pattern of shorter lives and poor health" across all socioeconomic lines. Compared to other countries Americans eat more, use seat belts less, have higher rates of drug abuse, and are more prone to gun violence, but on the positive side drink and smoke less. It also stated there is a lack of access to primary care physicians.

Suggestions for improvement include eating healthier, exercising, driving safely, and continuing to decrease smoking. Recently the food pyramid has been replaced with "my plate", which helps to define portions better. Half your plate should contain vegetables and fruit, 1/4 with grains, and 1/4 with meat, and include low fat dairy on the side. Fruit juice should not be considered as part of the fruit portion, as the calories are absorbed so quickly and do not give you a feeling of fullness. Meat portions should be about the size of a pack of cards. Recently recommendations for amounts of fruits and vegetables in the diet have increased and lessened for grains. Along with diet, we need to be more active. We are getting to the season where we can be outside more for walking and other sports activities. I have recently learned about a form of exercise, called Pilates, which can even be done by people with rheumatoid arthritis.

Encouraging good health habits in the younger generation is especially important so that early development of chronic diseases can be prevented. We should make it known to our elected officials that we want continue to address the causes of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, as well as violent behaviors in our society and support those programs already in use. It is key to take responsibility for our own health and work with our health care providers to be as healthy as we can be with what we have been given by Mother Nature.

My office hours continue to be Tuesdays, 12:15-1:15 p.m., and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.. Call for an appointment if you need to see me at another time or require a home visit. 337-8309



Heath Firefighters Association Pancake Breakfast Fund-raiser 2013

Heath Community Hall

Saturday April 20, 2013 7:30-10:30 A.M.

Pancakes, made to order by the HFD crew local maple syrup homemade fruit toppings local sausage patties Coffee Roasters coffee or juice

> Cost: \$8.00 adults \$5.00 (12 and under) \$27.00 per family of 5 or more

## **Selectboard's Report**

## **Meeting Schedule**

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

## Animal Control Officer and Animal Inspector

Bob Tanner has resigned from his positions as Dog Officer and Animal Inspector. The Selectboard wishes him well and appreciates his many years of service to the Town. A recent dog bite incident required immediate action by the Town. In response to the emergency, Tom Lively volunteered to act as Temporary Animal Control Officer until his term as selectman expires this spring. Margo Newton has agreed to be appointed Animal Inspector.

In following up with the dog bite incident it became apparent that state laws regarding the duties and responsibilities of the Animal Control Officer have changed since the Heath Dog Bylaw was adopted. The Selectboard is in the process of reviewing the existing Town regulations in consultation with Town Counsel for possible revisions and updates.

## FY14 Budget Hearings

The Board and the Finance Committee continue to work on the budget for the upcoming Annual Town Meeting in May. Budget requests from Town departments are being reviewed at joint meetings. Most recently the wages and stipends for employees and officials have been examined and compared to the annual Wage and Salary Survey published by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

## **Town Financial Audit**

A financial audit of the Town has been completed and a draft report issued. The Board is reviewing the findings and recommendations of the report and will submit comments to the auditor before the final draft is issued. The audit was required because the Town received federal funds in excess of \$600,000 for repairs necessitated by Tropical Storm Irene. The audit will be available for review at the Town office when the final draft is received.

## **Municipal Complex Building Committee**

The Selectboard appointed the Municipal Complex Building Committee to continue work on the planning for a future building to replace the aging and inadequate fire station and highway garage. The facility may also house other functions such as police and emergency management functions. The first order of business is to draft a request for proposal for designer services to hire a consultant who will aid the committee in studying and planning for a new facility.

The Committee members are Bob Bourke, Ken Gilbert, Jeff Simmons, Mike Smith, Bob Viarengo, and Brian De Vriese. The first meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, but had to be postponed due to a snowstorm and was rescheduled for March 26.

## **Charlemont Ambulance**

The Town of Heath has executed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Charlemont for ambulance service. The MOU was recommended by Town Counsel because of Town funds being paid to another town. The document formally identifies parties to the agreement, their responsibilities to each other, the process for amendment of the terms and termi-

#### nation of the agreement.

## **Town Facilities Study Committee**

The Selectboard appointed the Town facilities Study Committee to scope out the guidelines for a request for proposal for a feasibility study on effective use of space in existing Town Buildings. This feasibility study will be coordinated with the one that will study a Municipal Complex.

The Committee members are Deb Porter, Margo Newton, Karen Brooks, and Sheila Litchfield.

## **Heath Online**

Take some time to visit the Town's Web site at <u>www.townofheath.org</u>. You'll find Selectboard meeting minutes, school information, and much more. You may contact the Board at <u>BOS@townofheath.org</u>. Send messages to any board or individual via the e-mail address, or visit the Heath Web site. The new Web page is up and running. Please have a look and let us know what you think.

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

#### CANDIDATES FOR TOWN OFICES ANNUAL ELECTION APRIL 30, 2013

OFFICE LENGTH	CANDIDIATE	TERM
Selectman	Bill Lattrell	3 year
Assessor	Margo Newton	3 year
Finance Com.	Jeffrey Simmons	3 year
Library Trustee	Janis Carr	3 year
Planning Board	Douglas Mason	5 year
School Com.	Andrew Draxler	2 year
Constable	Jeffrey Simmons Robert Bourke	1 year 1 year

There is no one running for the 3-year school committee seat. This year there will be a dual election, the local and the State Primary, with 2 separate ballots, to be held at the same time, on April 30, downstairs in the Community Hall in the Senior Center, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. People can vote in either or both elections.

> ~ Hilma Sumner Town Clerk

## HEATH FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is coming to grips with a budget for Fiscal 2014 to recommend to voters at the Annual Town Meeting (ATM) in May. While we may still face expenditures that aren't now on the horizon, it appears at this point (mid-March) that the tax levy, the amount we have to ask voters to raise and appropriate, may be significantly lower for the coming year.

The Town's obligations have diminished substantially. We have paid off the mortgage on the Heath Elementary School, a reduction of about \$50,000. Because Heath will have only two students at Franklin County Technical School, our FCTS assessment will drop by about \$56,000. The latest number we have for our assessment to support the Mohawk Trail Regional School District is lower than last year's by \$10,764, but the reduction may be somewhat less, depending on how current school budgetary controversies are resolved.

The Town's revenues will increase somewhat. Our total assessed valuation has risen from \$87,644,392 to \$88,758,780, an increase of \$1,114,388, or 1.3%. Although the final state budget is months away, the Governor's proposed budget calls for an increase in unrestricted local aid to Heath of \$11,600.

The question that will dominate our discussion as the budget process goes forward is how to balance the goal of reducing the property tax rate, after some tough years, against the need to build up our reserves, which are somewhat low. The present balance in our Stabilization account is \$113,662, an amount that is 14% below the average balance of the prior four years at this point in the budget cycle. On the other hand, our certified Free Cash balance is \$164,718, some 27% higher than the average balance of the prior four years at the same time. Part of this higher balance is attributable to FEMA reimbursements for the damage the Town suffered in the 2008 ice storm, and so is a one-shot infusion of cash.

We will be discussing with the Selectboard possible budgetary recommendations that reduce the tax rate while increasing our Stabilization balance. For the last five years or so we have been using \$50,000 of our Free Cash balance every year to buy down the tax rate. That is not a sound financial practice over the long term, and this year might be a good one to break that habit. We would also like to see the bulk of the Town's reserve in Stabilization rather than Free Cash. Free Cash is really not a reserve, but an accounting device. At the end of every fiscal year, our Free Cash balance disappears into the state's valuation and tax rate certification exercise, a murky process at best. But Stabilization money stays on the Town's books and under the voters' control from year to year, requiring a two-thirds vote to spend it.

None of this is certain – and none of us are spending our theoretical tax savings yet. We worry that the onetime nature of some of these favorable changes might reduce taxes in the near term only to see the rate balloon thereafter because of increases in school assessments and other capital needs such as major building maintenance or upgrade projects. We would like to be able to recommend a budget and a tax rate that have some prospects of becoming a stable norm over the next few years.

Heath Finance Committee Don Freeman, Chair Ned Wolf, Secretary Gloria Fisher, Kathryn Inman, Jeff Simmons

## **Spring Bulky Waste Collection**

The Franklin County Solid Waste District is holding a "Clean Sweep" bulky waste collection on Saturday, May 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The drop-off site is: the Buckland Recreation Facility on Rt. 112 South.

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

Residents do not need to preregister for the collection. However, there are charges for disposal. Disposal fees, cash only, will be collected from residents during check-in at each site. Businesses may participate. A complete list of prices for the most common items is available at participating town halls, town transfer stations, the District office at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield, and online at:

www.franklin countywastedistrict.org/cleansweep.html

MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).

The District is an equal opportunity provider.



**Claire B. Vanasse Hatch** of Greenfield, formerly of Heath, died on March 16, 2013. Born in Northampton on July 23, 1930, she was the daughter of Joseph and Celina Greenwood Vanasse.

She attended Northampton schools and had worked as a Home Health Aide for many years. As a resident of Heath she was active in Community Hall craft fairs.

She is survived by her sons: Dean of Granby, Joseph of Agawam, and Mark of Greenfield; seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Claire was predeceased by her husband Richard; her son David, and her daughter Beverly.

A spring burial will take place in April at Center Cemetery in Heath.

Memorial donations may be made to the National Kidney Foundation Serving New England, 85 Astor Ave., Suite 2, Norwood, MA 02062-5040.

**Catherine M. Feyhl Terrill** of Turners Falls died on January 20, 2013. Born in Greenfield on March 21, 1945, she was the daughter of Frederick and Agnes Dobias Feyhl.

She was a graduate of Greenfield High School, Class of 1963. A resident of Colrain for 39 years, she lived in New York before moving to Turners Falls.

She is survived by her husband Donald Terrill of Colrain; four daughters, **Jennifer Williams of Heath**, Diane and Samantha Terrill, both of Colrain, and Sarah Young of New York; a stepdaughter Betty Fisher of Pennsylvania; ten grandchildren; two great-grandchildren, and five step-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Franklin County, 329 Conway Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA 01301.

## **Requiescat in pace**



Photo by Clarissa Baker



## Upcoming Events

#### MAY:

Open House at the Center Schoolhouse and Museum immediately following the Town Meeting, **Saturday**, **May 11**, **2013** (approximately noon until 2:00 p.m.). We will celebrate May with a Maypole dance at the Center Schoolhouse at 1:00 p.m.. Children and adults are welcome to join the fun!

#### JUNE:

"Dining with History; celebrating our Forefathers" Father's Day, **Sunday June 16, 2013**, in the Town Center (indoors or out, weather depending) from 5:00 until 7:30 p.m.

\**Note:* we need your help to make this ongoing series a success. Look in your attics for old letters, scrapbooks, journals, and other memorabilia to share on loan.

Contact Nancy Thane, 337-5580, for details. Right now we are especially interested in stories about fathers and family activities in the summertime in Heath.

## 116 Years and Still Sugaring in Heath



Photo by Sandra Tougas Baker



Heath

ical So-

Is spring coming? he said. What is it like? It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain shining on the sun.

> Frances Hodgson Burnett from *The Secret Garden* Children's Author 1849-1924

Histor-

ciety

## **Community Calendar**

## **APRIL 2013**

April 01-02 - Math MCAS, Mohawk April 01-05 - Scholastic Book Fair, Mohawk April 04 -Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m. Talent Show, Mohawk Auditorium, Middle School, 8:30-10:00 a.m.; 12:45 -2:15 p.m. for High School Campfire Reading Night and Book Swap, Heath School, 6:30-7:30 p.m. April 10 & 11 - Early Release Days, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Heath School Kids in Concert Rehearsal April 12 - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. April 15 - 19 - SCHOOL VACATION April 18 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m. April 20 - Heath Firefighters Pancake Breakfast, Community Hall, 7:30-10:30 a.m. April 22 - No Strings Marionette Puppet Show, Snow Maiden, Heath School, 1:30 p.m. April 24 - Early Release, Heath School, 12:30 p.m. April 26 - Preschool Story Hour, Heath Library, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Heath All School Field Trip to Springfield Museum April 27 - Chicken and Biscuit Supper, Heath Church, 6:00 p.m. **April 30 - TOWN AND STATE PRIMARY ELECTIONS, SENIOR CENTER, 7:00 A.M.** TO 8:00 P.M.

## May 2013

May 01 - Kids in Concert Performance, Heath School, 6:30 p.m. May 02 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m. May 03 - 2013-14 - K Registration, A.M.; 2013-14 Pre-K Registration, P.M. No Regular K Classes May 04 -Ted Watt Program, Bluebirds in Heath,

Draxler Farm, South Road.

May 06 - Athletic Association Meeting, Mohawk, 6:30 p.m. May 10 - Senior Prom, Mohawk May 11 - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING, HEATH SCHOOL, 9:00 A.M. FHSL ATM Breakfast, 8: 00 a.m. -HHS Open House, Center Schoolhouse, following ATM until 2:00 p.m.; Maypole Dance, 1:30 p.m. May 14 - Music Association Meeting, Mohawk, 5:00 p.m May 16 - Senior Luncheon, Community Hall-Senior Center, 11:45 a.m. May 20-24 - Heath School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade to Nature's Classroom May 23 - Heath School Grade 3-4 to Amherst for a Day with Ted Watt at Hitchcock Center May 24 - Last day of class for seniors, Mohawk May 25 - Friends of Heath Library Memorial Day Weekend Bake Sale, Sawver Hall Porch, 10:00 a.m. to Noon May 27 - Memorial Day, No School May 28 - 29 Senior Exam, Mohawk May 29 - Early Release, Heath School, 12:30 p.m. May 30 - Senior Awards Night, Mohawk Grade 5 District Colonial Fair, All Day at Wilder Farm, Buckland

## June 2013

June 2 - HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

## Heath's Monthly Precipitation (inches) (Observed by Heath School Staff and Students)

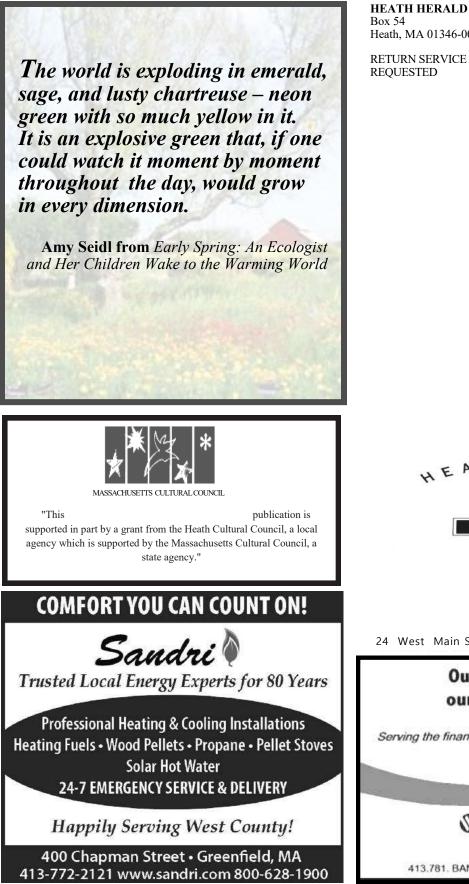
F I 11 2012	<u>Rain</u>	Snow
From January 11, 2013	1.3"	8"
February	0"	33"
To March 10	0"	7"

## In this reporting period:

January cold spell 23-24-25-26-27 sub zero temps anywhere from 2 below to 12 below depending on where you lived. Along with wind chills. January was comparatively normal winter wise compared to winters in years past. The last week of January warmed up with a bit of everything sleet, ice, rain and a dusting of snow. February was a month with snowstorms like NEMO and ROCKY and a couple of smaller ones. March, not to be left out, started with SATURN, which thankfully was not too big of a storm.

 $\sim$  Timothy Lively

## Volume 35, Number 1



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