



HEATH HERALD

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“I paddled across the beaver pond on Swamp Road in an inner tube twice during midsummer 2016 to capture the beautiful Great Blue Herons at two stages of development. It’s hard to describe the sensation while sitting 20 feet directly below a nest. They’re likely on their way back right now hell bent for their nests in Heath.”

— Henry Josephson

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The *Heath Herald* proudly features a reproduction of the original *Heath Herald* logo design by Harriet Read for the *Heath Herald*’s first edition in April 1979.

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January 5 for inclusion in February/March issue

March 5 for inclusion in April/May issue

May 5 for inclusion in June/July issue

July 5 for inclusion in August/September issue

September 5 for inclusion in October/November issue

November 5 for inclusion in December/January issue

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Sitting Across the Table from Howard Dickinson

An Interview by Suzanne Hannay, Part II

The welcoming “Yeass . . .” is always the same when I arrive at Howard Dickinson’s kitchen door. I enter and find the pellet stove churning out heat and the tea kettle warming on the stove.

SH: *What was your first Fair like?*

HD: First Fair . . . I wasn’t very old . . . How young? Well, I don’t know . . . mother and father were up quite a bit. I was born in December (1923) and so I imagine the next August was my first fair—but I don’t remember. Later . . . Ralph and Esther and I would walk in through the woods and get in for free and that was pretty good [he laughs] . . . found out afterwards that father had paid our way [he chuckles]. It was all of 50 cents then.



Photo courtesy of E. Sumner

There were always speakers . . . agricultural speakers and ministers.

Dances? There always were square and round dances. One was in Sawyer Hall and one in the old Methodist Church [Heath Community Hall].

SH: Did you dance?

HD: No. Two left feet . . . and one left hand. Not Fred Astaire. I watched sometimes. I sold ice cream instead.

SH: *Who was the prettiest girl at the fair?* I ask, hoping for a real scoop.

HD: I don’t know—we never had a beauty queen.

SH: *What got the Heath Fair to move up the hill in 1962?*

HD: In 1961, the Livelys had their reunion and then . . . this heck of a storm. Both tents blew down. The land next to ‘Faraway’ [the current fair grounds] was cleared by Carol Malone and she sold it to the town. They took apart what was the old exhibit hall in the South Road field. Olin Hicks sawed out all the pieces and I went up there and he was humming and whistling as happy as could be and then everyone arrived to put it all together. And that was the food booth. I helped sell ice cream, hot dogs, hamburgers, and soda in the first permanent struc-

ture to move to the new fair grounds. Later they built a stage for the speakers.

SH: *So how did the Heath Fair really become the annual event that it is now?*

HD: The White Sisters started the first Fair. Flora and somebody else . . . May. It was a town effort—you went and just did it. Someone would say, ‘Well, you want to clean up the fair grounds on such-and-such-a-day’ and Mederic Lively and his sons would hitch up their scythes and just go at it. I remember. It was the whole town.

SH: *Was there a Heath Agricultural Society?*

HD: Homer Tanner was the secretary . . . I don’t know . . . I imagine they did have the Ag Society . . . It was one of the things you did every fall . . . first, it was the Wednesday before Labor Day . . . because the stores in Shelburne Falls were closed. And then they changed it over to the weekend. We’d go a day before and clear it all up and get the tents up and then go back—in a day after or two days—to clean. It would be Saturday. The Fair was a day and a night at first . . . then the State said it had to be three days and it had to be opened to everybody. THEY [the state] were going to purchase premiums but I guess THEY forgot about that . . . [he chuckles.] THEY told us what we had to do and all . . . like in the Food Booth with all the steel pipes and everything . . . for the food.



Photo courtesy of E. Sumner

SH: *What made the Heath Fair particularly special for you?*

HD: We always looked forward to the Fair. It was like a Home Day. See a lot of people . . . come and visit. We didn’t have transportation back in those days . . . we didn’t go anywhere. People came to see us, to see their relations, too. People came from the Farley Flats over by Wendell. They used to come by to see me on the way to the Fair.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

[He runs by a tangled nest of the family tree and finally comes up with the name.] Barbara Stewart! She would always come by . . . but she upped and died last summer . . . so she didn't stop to see me.

SH: *How rude of her*, I say facetiously.

HD: I know and I'm still here. I don't know why. [He laughs.]

SH: *What was your job at the Fair—other than selling ice cream?*

HD: Sold tickets . . . and then . . . up at the new fair grounds for the last 100 years I parked cars . . . [he laughs] . . . and then I quit. When Ralph Sumner got up to not quite 80 and he said 'I'm going to quit.' I did it with Budge [Litchfield] for several years after that . . . I think he quit now . . .

SH: *In 2017, you will still play an important part in the Heath Fair, right?*

HD: I think it's too commercial. Better when it was a Home Day. When I got older, I liked to see older people. I didn't like the rides. I go up and judge and then I come back. That's the best part for me. I let Jack [Cable] and Ruth [Johnson] do the judging. We were supposed to do the entire Fair but we figured the blue building [exhibition hall] was enough except when they did the Mural—we gave that the prize and once for a wagon outside.

SH: *This historic year—the Hundredth Heath Fair—are you going to park cars or sell tickets at the gate? What if I get you in for free?*

HD: Nooo.

SH: *Thanks, Howard, for your time and your interest.*

HD: [He chuckles as he walks us to the door]. Well, you'll get the bill . . .



—Suzanne Hannay

ALERT:

The Heath Herald Needs You

The Heath Herald needs new staff members by this summer, or the paper will not be able to continue in its current form! As happened four years ago, when the previous *Herald* staff announced that they were resigning after years of dedicated service, we have a need again for new blood.

The programs and procedures we use aren't difficult to learn, and each position could be shared among more than the number of people who currently fill these roles.

We promise that we have a lot of fun and don't consider it work, unless you think of it as a labor of love. It is just so satisfying to share the news of our Heath community with better than 200 subscribers and readers .

We have a Google Group account and use Gmail for all information processing and communication. It's easy to learn and use. Here are the positions that are available, with brief job descriptions to help you decide where you would best fit in:

Administrative Computer Tech:

- receives and processes all Gmail submissions
- re-formats submissions, puts them into newspaper columns, and places them in our shared folder
- updates and maintains the *Heath Herald* website

Layout Designer:

- completes the layout of the paper in MS Publisher by putting all the pieces together, considering the subject and size to determine best placement

Graphics Designer:

- procures and adds graphics and images to complement text, adjusting layout as needed
- creates the ads and communicates with advertisers about ad changes and updates
- designs cover, coordinating with the theme of the paper

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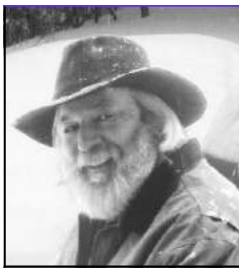
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For more information, contact Nancy Thane, Managing Editor, nancythane@yahoo.com, 413-337-5580.





Wild Ramblings

—Bill Lattrell

Heron the Ice: In Search of a New Nesting Legacy

Long before Kerrie and Jansen McNay, the present stewards and owners of this beaver pond, gave it the name Blackbird Kerr, this wetland was inhabited by beavers. The origins of this large wetland, at the top of the watershed for Davenport Brook, can be traced back about 12,000 years, after the retreat of the last remnants of the Laurentide Ice Sheet.

The heavy ice sheet had changed the topography, rearranging and compacting the soil, and allowing groundwater discharge from the hill to the west to collect in the relatively flat area left behind. Geomorphic features have a way of dictating natural history. This area was destined to be exactly what it is: a beaver pond. When not in active use it becomes a beaver wetland meadow.

No doubt the area served as beaver habitat for centuries. Long before European settlers ever ventured to these parts, our indigenous people were taking advantage of the incredible habitat created by beavers. These ponds often have large areas of emergent marsh around their perimeter where cattails, bulrush, and sedges can grow. The native people knew cattails were good for food, excellent for basket making, and needed for a variety of other daily uses. These complete ecosystems had beaver-made dams that created good fishing ponds, stilled sediments, and kept downstream water clean. Otters, muskrat, herons, geese, ducks, and a variety of other birds all found home in the beaver pond. They were, in essence, a gold mine of needed natural resources.

The newest explorers and settlers of the area, of European ancestry, introduced a new concept of resource use. The idea of living alongside and within the ecological boundaries of resources was replaced with resource overuse and depletion. Resources were viewed as commodities that were there for human consumption. When the resource was depleted those utilizing the resource either

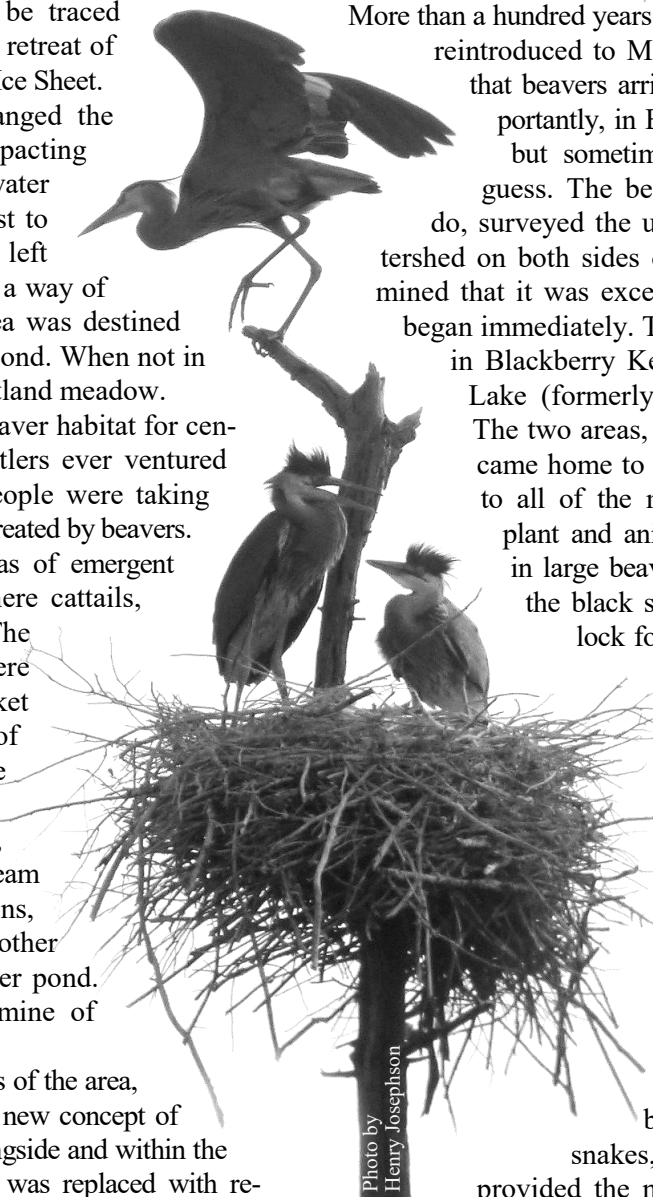
moved on or found different means of supporting their needs, often by exploiting another resource. Such was the fate of the American beaver. Its pelt was so revered that the colonies' earliest economy was based on beaver trapping. Not too far away, the beaver pelt trading capital of the northeast was founded along the Connecticut River in a little town known as Springfield.

Springfield was ideally situated because it was near prime beaver trapping territory and along a major river where barge loads of beaver pelts could be transported to world markets. The result was that the beavers in New England were extirpated. Beaver ponds became beaver meadows. As the beaver meadows dried up trees grew in the higher, less waterlogged, areas. Wetland forests reestablished themselves over long periods of time.

More than a hundred years later, in 1932, beavers were reintroduced to Massachusetts. The exact date that beavers arrived in Heath, and more importantly, in Blackbird Kerr, is not known but sometime in the 1930s is a good guess. The beavers, no doubt as beavers do, surveyed the upper Davenport Brook watershed on both sides of Swamp Road and determined that it was excellent habitat. Dam building began immediately. The beavers resided not only in Blackberry Kerr but also where Papoose Lake (formerly Davenport Pond) is now. The two areas, totaling about 70 acres, became home to at least a dozen beavers, and to all of the many glorious species, both plant and animal, that live harmoniously in large beaver habitats. The flooding of the black spruce, balsam fir, and hemlock forest resulted in the death of many trees. They lost their foliage and eventually most of their branches.

But this loss was the gain for the Great Blue Heron. In the early 1970s a significant heron rookery was established that included about eight mated pairs who built their 5-6 foot diameter nests in remnant trees, surrounded by water. The nearby smorgasbord of frogs, trout, perch, snakes, salamanders, and insects provided the necessary forage habitat for these great birds. The deep water around the dead trees prevented predators from reaching the heron chicks.

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Life was grand for the herons for a while. But nature has a habit of not being static. In the 1990s the aging trees in the deep water began to topple. Last year only two nests remained, one is in a tall tree with a rotten bottom that will fall over soon, and the other is a makeshift nest only about five feet above the water which is not in the high rent district for Great Blue Herons. In one or two more years it is likely that these remaining nests will be lost.

Heron can build ground nests in deep marsh. They tend not to do this as mortality of their fledglings is high due to predation from otter, raccoon, and other predators. Blackberry Kerr remains heron ground nest free.

I've studied this beaver pond for more than 40 years. I've spent countless hours there spying on wildlife made up of beavers, otter, Great Blue Heron, black snakes, and the occasional moose. It is certainly one of the richest wildlife habitats in the Town of Heath. It is, indeed, a gold mine of a natural resource.

Concerned about the loss of the heron-nesting habitat, I hatched a plan, really an experiment, with the McNays, to see if we could reestablish a larger heron rookery at Blackbird Kerr. This year we started by building simple artificial branches in a couple of the remaining trees. One is about 15 feet off the top of the water in an old branchless, 15-inch diameter oak tree snag that is surrounded by acres of water. The bottom of the tree is remarkably solid. It should stand for quite some time. In February Jansen McNay, Ramon Sanchez from Rowe, and I ventured out on the ice with a ladder, a deer stand tree climber, six two-by-fours, a portable drill, and some hardware. We established some artificial branches on the snag that hopefully are suitable for nesting. I've seen herons build nests on just nubs of branches and so we can be sure that these are not only sturdy enough but have wide open spaces, allowing the adult herons to easily access the nesting site for both building the nest and rearing the chicks. Once the huge heron nests are established the artificial branches will be only minimally visible.

We established a second nesting site on a smaller, much narrower snag to the northeast. This one is more visible from the road, which may be a deterrent to future nest use primarily because herons enjoy their privacy. The good news is that previously I've witnessed nests that were in close proximity to the public that were successfully established and utilized. This second nest is about eight feet off the top of the water. This is a little low but certainly more elevated than the lower existing nest on the west side of the beaver pond that is only five feet above the high-water mark.

We are hopeful that the herons will utilize these artificial nesting sites. It really is unknown if they will deem them to be suitable. Time will tell.

Next year we plan on establishing large, 20-foot high tripods for heron rookery habitat. This will require a permit from the Heath Conservation Commission as we will be establishing the tripods in the actual wetland. These likely have a greater chance of success. We plan on building one or two to see if they are successful in attracting heron nesting activity. If these new structures do attract nesting herons, more could be added.

Our attempt to do something for the heron-nesting population is founded in our reverence for nature. We have done well to begin our efforts at home. Perhaps the McNays will someday find themselves among larger numbers of Great Blue Herons. Perhaps their son will have the opportunity to experience more of these wonderful creatures at close range.

It is this connection with our planet that keeps all of us interested in protecting the natural world.

Fleeting Memories of the Heath Fair

My earliest memory of the Fair is in 1948 when my brother Lawrie and I were part of a float supporting Harry Truman for President. The fair grounds were then on the South Road. I wonder if my parents took me to the 1938 fair as I was born in May of that year. After my parents moved to Hanover, New Hampshire in 1991, Martha and I would join them in the short trip down to Heath for the Fair. We would arrive on a Saturday late morning in time for the lunch which was followed by the parade. Highlights of that day would be the horse pulling, Heath library book sale, and the Historical Society exhibit as well as seeing good friends of my parents. More than once we would walk around the Oxbow which brought back many memories for me. My grandfather, Newland F. Smith, who bought the Tanner place on Hosmer Road (east side of the Oxbow), gave the address at the Heath Fair, most likely in the 1930s.

—Newland Smith, 3rd (Landie)



Photo courtesy of E. Gleason

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Green Thoughts

—Pat Leuchtman

White Garden

A few years ago I attended my cousin's summer wedding held in a beautiful white garden designed by Robin Kramer, the owner, with her husband, of the house where the wedding took place. A summer wedding could ask no more beautiful setting than a white garden such as this.

White gardens seem to have a place all their own in garden literature. I suppose one reason is that there are so many flowers, shrubs, vines, and trees that bloom in shades of white that limiting oneself to a white palette is easy to do, while still incorporating a wide variety of plants.

The wedding garden had steep slopes and dramatic huge boulders. Stone stairs led from the upper part of the garden down to a sheltered patio behind the house. The slope was terraced and planted with rows of white Annabelle hydrangeas. At that time of the year the white Annabelles had a slightly greenish cast and were definitely the stars of the landscape.

One of the advantages of white flowers in the garden is that they seem to glow as evening falls. There are many white flowers that bloom over a long season, and many of them are gorgeous in mass plantings. Think of a band of white tulips or daffodils, or a ribbon of white alliums running through a still-green spring garden. White peonies make a romantic showing in mid-June.

Not all of us would want to devote our whole garden to white flowers. Vita Sackville-West, the famous British gardener and friend of Virginia Woolf, described her own white garden as essentially a large bed. It was partially enclosed by high hedges and clearly delineated.

In a January 1950 column Sackville-West wrote for *The Observer* she described her plan for what she described as a grey, green and white garden. She hoped for success in this experiment but said, "One's best ideas seldom play up in practice to one's expectations, especially in gardening, where everything looks so well on paper and in the catalogues, but fails so lamentably in fulfillment after you have tucked your plans into the soil. Still, one hopes."

In her book *Theme Gardens*, gardener and author Barbara Damrosch describes a Moon Garden. I cannot

find my copy, but as I recall she suggested a crescent moon-shaped bed that included a moonflower vine. This beautiful vine is similar to the morning glory in form and in habit, except that it blooms at night.

I can think of many flowers that have white forms: delphiniums, astilbe, Japanese anemones, veronica, garden phlox, shasta daisies, dahlias, obedient plant (*physostogeia*), and white cosmos. *Boltonia*, which blooms late in the fall, has small blossoms, but it is a large bushy plant with hundreds of those blossoms so it would make a mysterious effect at night. And of course, there are always white roses.

I think Damrosch was aware that white gardens, or moon-shaped beds of white flowers come into their own at dusk, as the darkness falls. In the gloaming and by moonlight, white flowers can shimmer and glow romantically in the summer night.

Neither my cousin's friend with the white garden, Vita Sackville-West, nor Barbara Damrosch mention the ease of planning a single-color garden, but for someone who might be timid about combining colors, the idea of an elegant white garden might have great appeal. Then the white garden might be a stepping stone to a two-color garden—blue and white, or pink/red and white. Or we can forget about worrying altogether how to use every color of every flower we love, and remember that our own local wise and witty

gardener, the late Elsa Bakalar, said that all nature's colors go together. And to prove it she planted a wild bed with flowers in every shade of red.

I have a few white flowers in my new garden: white *echinacea*, white foam flower, white astilbe, white boneset, and white *Sanguisorba canadensis*. They have all been chosen because they will not just glow in the gloaming, they will provide nectar and pollen for all the pollinators during the sunny days. I think all the flowers in our gardens should serve at least two purposes, don't you?



Photos by C. Luis Schultz

Fellow Heathans,

As spring begins to challenge winter—and winter fights back—the Heath Agricultural Society turns its fullest attention to our upcoming Centennial Celebration: 100 years of Fair in Heath! 100 years of celebrating and memorializing our agricultural heritage.



It wasn't until 1969 that a group of Heathans gathered to see Heath Fair given the support of an incorporated organization: the Heath Agricultural Society (HAS). The names involved in the incorporation of the HAS are old Heath names: Crowningshield, Shepherd, Gleason, Dickinson, Pazmino, Thompson, and Royer.

It was in its incorporation that the HAS defined its purposes, but there is no mention of the Heath Fair in the original draft of the bylaws. It was years later, in an amendment, that the preservation of the Heath Fair was included as a primary purpose of the HAS. Though the Fair was not explicitly mentioned, the language describing the "purposes of the corporation," can be used to remind us of the importance of the Fair. Here are some of lines from the original bylaws:

“. . . the attainment and **diffusion** of scientific and **practical knowledge** in the cultivation of soil and the raising of its various useful productions as comprehended in the departments of agriculture . . .”

“. . . for encouragement to the introduction and raising of improved breeds of stock . . . and domestic manufacture.”

The words typed in bold face remind me that the Heath Fair is an opportunity for the community to gather, to share, learn, support, and celebrate agriculture. Much of the work of the HAS in its organization of the annual Fair and in its vision of other endeavors, seeks to create environments wherein agriculturalists are recognized, rewarded, supported, and celebrated for their fine work; wherein the public may be exposed to, and learn about the work involved in cultivating a relationship with the land; wherein local farmers may meet one another, again, to commiserate about the year's challenges and share in the year's lessons; wherein the public may share in and engage with farmers and their animals, and thus cultivate a language of respect and appreciation for this work and for the community of which they are a part—a community that relies upon and benefits from the work of our local farmers. The Heath Fair is a venue for these, and other, deeply valuable interactions. The HAS is an organization that cares to maintain and evolve the experience of the Fair.

Currently there are approximately 30 members in the HAS. And supporting those members is a community of

volunteers whose ongoing interest in supporting the HAS is breathtaking. However, a pressing fact remains: The HAS needs new active members.

It is interesting to note that when the HAS was incorporated the membership was open to all:

“Any person residing in Heath, either permanently or during the summer only, shall be considered a member of this Society.”

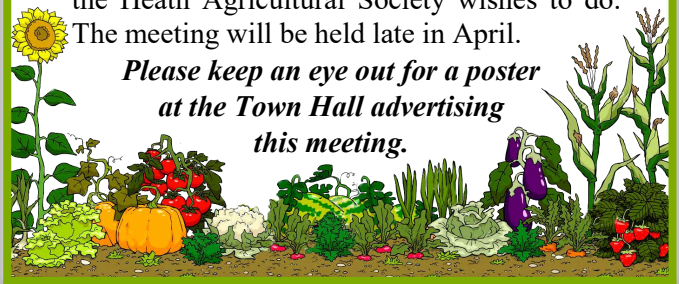
What a beautiful sentiment! The sentiment assumes that if you live in Heath then you value it—and if you value Heath then you may influence its celebration

In this profoundly busy and turbulent political and cultural climate, we are all stretched thin. Many of us invest time volunteering for several other organizations and must balance those investments with family, friends, work, and self. There is simply too much to do. I know this for my part and I struggle with balancing these things. And whenever I suggest that you consider becoming a member of the HAS, the impracticality of support weighs upon my mind.

The HAS needs new membership to continue supporting the Fair, and we also want new membership to help us to evolve our organization so that it may become capable of holding other educational events, and more actively support our local farmers. We have so many ideas. Come hear about them and consider how you might become involved.

In the spirit of our original bylaws, and in the interest of including the Heath community, I'd like to invite you to a public meeting of the HAS. We will go over a list of ideas for the 100th and see about finding organizers for those ideas. Additionally, in the interest of the meeting attendees, we can discuss some of the ideas for widening the scope of the work that the Heath Agricultural Society wishes to do. The meeting will be held late in April.

*Please keep an eye out for a poster
at the Town Hall advertising
this meeting.*



Keep August 18 to 20 in your calendar for the Heath Fair and spread the word. We are working to include several new ideas to commemorate this year's Fair. In the meantime, consider your future involvement in the HAS and pay attention for flyers and updates for our 100th Anniversary. Thank you.

—Justin Lively, President



LIBRARY LINES

—Donald Purington

Art Show—Four artists from the Community Hall art class have their works on display in the library through the end of May. A reception was held on March 18 to meet the artists and view their paintings. Thank you to the artists for sharing their work: Don Dekker, Lynn Perry, Juliet Seaver, and Nancy Thane. Thank you to Eileen McVay Lively for framing the paintings and hanging them in the library.



Tick Talk—Warmer spring weather means more time outdoors and more exposure to ticks. The Nahant Public Library, with a grant from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, has put together a collection of resources about prevention and treatment of tick-related diseases. The Heath Library will receive a copy of the *Stop Lyme Handbook* which will have lists of books and online resources. Stop by the library in April to look at the handbook and enter our free raffle for a set of TickEase tweezers for easier removal of ticks from people and pets.

Story Hour—Please join us for songs, stories, crafts, socializing, and a snack! For ages birth to five, older siblings welcome. Sponsored by the Friends of the Heath Library. See calendar on page 23 for dates and time.

A Few of the New Items at the Library:

Use the *New Titles* link on the Library website to see all the new items added to our collection in the previous two weeks.

Fiction Books for Adults: *In this Grave Hour* by Jacqueline Winspear, *Earthly Remains* by Donna Leon, *Song of the Lion* by Anne Hillerman

Non-fiction Books for Adults: *Flora White: in the Vanguard of Gender Equity* (Flora White was a well known New England educator who was born in Heath, and returned here to live in her later years with her sister Mary.) *The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit* by Michael Finkel

Books for Young/Teen Readers: *Return to the Secret Garden* by Holly Webb

Children's Picture Books/Boardbooks: *On Bird Hill* by Jane Yolan, *Plant the Tiny Seed* by Christie Matheson

Second Heath Arts Exhibition

Planning is underway for the second Heath Arts Exhibition for Labor Day Week 2017. The exhibition will take over the Heath Community Hall for the week of September 1 through 9 with an opening reception on Sunday, September 3.

Encouraged by the impressive response from 25 Heath residents last year, Henry Hallman again received grant money for the exhibition. Hallman, with the assistance of Eileen Lively and Suzanne Hannay, encourages artists who participated last year as well as those who would like to add their names to the list of contributing artists, to make their interest known as soon as possible to allow for space planning. Artists are encouraged to submit one to four works of original art—art new to this exhibit. Paintings in a variety of mediums, as well as glass, furniture, sculpture, pottery, felting, and photography head the list of potential artifacts for exhibit.

You don't have to have something on display in the Metropolitan and you don't have to be a professional—but if you do or if you are, that shouldn't keep you from contributing to this Heath event. If you love art and have created something that delights you, you are encouraged to contact the committee directly:

Harry Hallman: hwhallman@hotmail.com,
Suzanne Hannay: shannay614@gmail.com,
and Eileen Lively at 413-337-4742.

Labor Day Weekend and the days following, come discover what Heath has to offer the world of art.

—Suzanne Hannay

SING-ALONG/CONCERT

With Karen Brooks
and Melissa Ortquist

**4 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 8,
at the Heath Union Church**



Town Nurse

—Claire Rabbitt, RN

Foot Health

Now that it is spring and we anticipate more outside activities, including longer walks, hiking, and participating in running events, it's a good time to think about keeping our feet healthy and flexible. Unless you've had a foot problem your feet may not be the first thing you think about in maintaining good health. You may be surprised to learn that each of your feet has about 26 bones, 33 joints, and more than 100 muscles, tendons, and ligaments, all functioning together without our giving it much thought, unless we've had a problem. Like everything else in our bodies, time and wear and tear take a toll and parts wear out causing various problems.

The November 2016 Mayo Clinic *Health Letter Special Report* has some good recommendations for maintaining healthy feet:

Start with looking at your feet and notice changes such as reddened, dry, or cracked areas. Applying small amounts of unscented lotion after bathing is good, but avoid getting any between the toes. If you have itching, reddened, flaky areas between the toes, indicating fungal infection, there are over the counter creams and powders that may resolve this situation. Always dry between the toes after bathing. Applying a foot powder is a good idea. The Heath foot care nurse taught me to apply original Listerine to my toenails after bathing to prevent or alleviate toenail fungus problems. I stand on a towel and apply lotion to heels and legs, then comb and dry my hair. By then my toenails are dry and I apply foot powder before putting on clean socks.

Trim toenails regularly. This is easiest after bathing as it softens the nails. Cutting straight across with nail clippers then smoothing the corners with an emery board is recommended. If you have difficulty trimming your nails, you can make an appointment for the foot clinic at the Community Hall on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

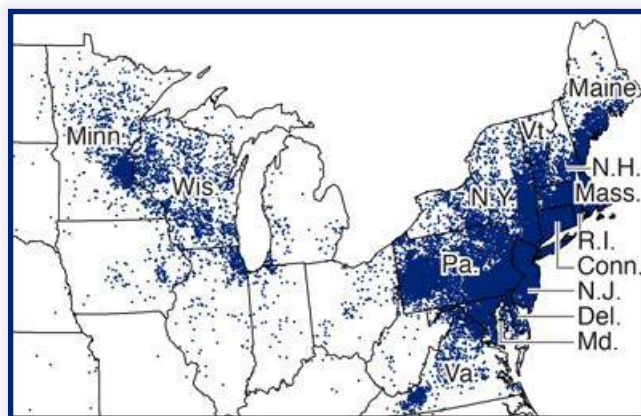
Protect your feet with footwear suited to the activity, such as closed-toe shoes or boots for lawn mowing and other outside work, sturdy sandals or flip flops at the pool, athletic shoes for sports and when traveling. We frequently see news reports of incidents where passengers have needed to quickly exit an airplane, so wearing flip flops for air travel is not a good idea.

Strengthen your feet and ankles with exercises such as heel and toe raises and ankle circles.

Avoid standing or sitting in one position for long periods which may cause swelling. Elevate your feet and legs above the level of your heart to reduce swelling.

Purchase shoes that fit you and fit the activity. Shoes with high heels and pointy toes can lead to pain, stress fractures, toenail deformities, bunions, hammer toes, and knee and low back pain.

Keep your feet healthy and get out and enjoy our beautiful New England weather!



Forbidding Forecast for Lyme Disease in the Northeast

by Michaelleen Ducleff and Jane Greenhalgh

Reproduced by permission from NPR

Brought to you by the Heath Board of Health

Last summer Felicia Keesing returned from a long trip and found that her home in upstate New York had been subjected to an invasion. "There was evidence of mice everywhere. They had completely taken over," says Keesing, an ecologist at Bard College.

It was a plague of mice. And it had landed right in Keesing's kitchen. "Not only were there mouse droppings on our countertops, but we also found dead mice on the kitchen floor," says Keesing's husband, Rick Ostfeld, an ecologist at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, N.Y.

The Hudson River Valley experienced a mouse plague during the summer of 2016. The critters were everywhere. For most people, it was just a nuisance. But for Keesing and Ostfeld, the mouse plague signaled something foreboding. "We're anticipating 2017 to be a particularly risky year for Lyme," Ostfeld says.

Keesing and Ostfeld, who have studied Lyme for more than 20 years, have come up with an early warning system for the disease. They can predict how many cases there will be a year in advance by looking at one key measurement: Count the mice the year before. The number of critters scampering around the forest in the summer correlates to the Lyme cases the following summer, they've reported.

The explanation is simple: Mice are highly efficient transmitters of Lyme. They infect up to 95 percent of ticks that feed on them. Mice are responsible for infecting the majority of ticks carrying Lyme in the Northeast. And ticks love mice. "An individual mouse might have 50, 60, even 100 ticks covering its ears and face," Ostfeld says.

So that mouse plague last year means there is going to be a Lyme plague this year. "Yep. I'm sorry to say that's the scenario we're expecting," Ostfeld says. He's not exactly sure which parts of the Northeast will be at highest risk. But wherever Lyme exists, people should be vigilant, says epidemiologist Kiersten Kugeler at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Whether it's a bad season or not, there's still going to be a lot of human cases of tick-borne diseases," she says. "What's important for people to know is that the ticks are spreading to new areas—and tick-borne diseases are coming with them."

Back in the early '80s, the disease wasn't that big a problem. Cases were confined to two small regions: western Wisconsin and the area from Connecticut to New Jersey. Since then, Lyme cases have shot up in number and spread in all directions . . . Now Lyme is present in more than 260 counties, the CDC reported in 2015. The disease shows up in Maine, swoops down the East Coast into Washington, D.C., and southern Virginia. Then it hops to the Midwest into northern Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota. There are also small pockets of Lyme on the West Coast.

Since the early '90s, reported cases of Lyme disease have tripled, to about 30,000 cases each year. The CDC thinks the actual number is 10 times higher." We think the true burden of Lyme disease in the U.S. is about 300,000 cases," Kugeler says. "Lyme disease is quite a big public health problem."

The reasons for this Lyme explosion are many, Ostfeld says. Climate change is part of it. The surge in deer—which feed ticks and spread them around—has also been a factor. But Ostfeld has found another reason, something that happened more than 200 years ago. Today the Hudson River Valley in upstate New York is gorgeous. The hills are covered with oak forests, and the valleys are patchworks of hayfields and farms.

But Ostfeld says the area didn't always look like this. When the Europeans came here hundreds of years ago, they clear-cut nearly all of the forests to plant crops and raise livestock. "They also cut down trees for commercial use" Ostfeld says, "to make masts for ships, and for firewood." Since then a lot of the forest has come back—but it's not the same forest as before, he says. Today it's all broken up into little pieces, with roads, farms and housing developments.

For mice, this has been great news.

"They tend to thrive in these degraded, fragmented landscapes," Ostfeld says, because their predators need big forests to survive. Without as many foxes, hawks and owls to eat them, mice crank out babies. And we end up with forests packed with mice—mice that are chronically infected with Lyme and covered with ticks.



So all these little patches of forest dotting the Northeast have basically turned into Lyme factories, spilling over with infected ticks. Then people come along and do the darndest thing, Keesing says: They build their dream homes right next door. "So we see that humans are putting themselves in these areas where they're most at risk," she says.

And that means people, in some areas, may be putting themselves at risk for Lyme every single day without even knowing it, says the CDC's Kiersten Kugeler. "In the Northeast, most people catch Lyme around their homes," she says. "People out gardening. People playing in their backyard. Mowing the lawn."

So what can you do to keep from getting infected? Add a tick check to your daily routine, Kugeler says. When you're in the shower check your body for tiny ticks, especially the places they like to hide. "That's the scalp, behind the ears, the armpits and in the groin area," she says.

If you do find a tick, get it off as quickly as possible. The longer an infected tick stays on your skin, the greater the chance it will pass the Lyme bacteria on to you. Generally, it takes about 24 hours for the tick to infect a person after it starts biting.

Then be on the lookout for Lyme symptoms—like a red rash or a fever. If anything crops up, go see a doctor immediately. Don't wait: The earlier you get treated, the better chance you'll have for a full recovery.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
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NPR news report titled "*Forbidding Forecast For Lyme Disease In The Northeast*" by Michaeleen Doucleff and Jane Greenhalgh originally published on npr.org on March 6, 2017, and is used with the permission of NPR.

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Paws for a Cause:

Heath UMASS Student, Rachel Purington, Trains Service Dog on Campus

Cali sits in the lobby of the Integrated Sciences Building wearing her red vest. Through the expanse of floor-to-ceiling windows she tracks an overstuffed garbage barrel as it is rolled away from the building. Cali is not pleased. She becomes visibly unsettled, pacing back and forth.

She barks.

With everyone in the lobby looking at Cali, a yellow Labrador retriever puppy, Rachel Purington, [Heath Librarian Don Purington's daughter] a Commonwealth Honors College senior fostering the aspiring service dog, interrupts our conversation to take the dog outside.

"Sometimes you just have no idea what's going to set them off," Rachel explains after she and Cali return. "You have to go right up to what's bothering them, touch it, let them smell it—show them it's nothing to be afraid of."



This technique, called "name and explain," is one of many that service dog fosterers like Purington use while training the dogs they take care of on campus. At UMass, Service Dog Training is a 3-credit course offered in partnership with Diggity Dogs Service Dogs, a business that owns and trains service dogs for people across the country. She herself is a BDIC [Bachelor's Degree with Individual Concentration] student focusing on animal behavior and rehabilitation.

Rachel and other student fosterers attend training in Shelburne Falls for three hours a week as part of the course. They are typically assigned a task each week to focus on and videotape themselves training the dogs as a way to study behavior and make adjustments.

Currently, Rachel is working on Cali's fear of hair dryers and teaching the dog to pick up dropped items without being commanded to do so. All of the training happens right on campus where Cali lives alongside Rachel in a double room in the Honors Residential Community.

Rachel explained that in Massachusetts, service dogs in training have the same rights as full-fledged service dogs, including the same housing rights as their guardians. This is different from therapy and emotional support dogs which are not always allowed in public spaces and have modified housing rights.

"Having them on campus is great for them because they're exposed to so many things," Rachel said. "There are plenty of opportunities to name and explain." She added that people on campus are becoming more familiar with proper etiquette in terms of interacting with service dogs. They are learning to allow them to work distraction free. "When the vest is on she is working, and the vest is usually on," Rachel said about Cali, whose red vest, typical of any service dog, also denotes that she is still in training.

What advice does Rachel have for other students who want to foster? "Know how much work it is," she said.

Rachel said she has learned a lot about herself in taking on Cali. "You learn how much you can take," she explained. "Part of your brain is always focusing on this other living being that you're responsible for. It's about patience and persistence."

It will be very difficult to say goodbye to Cali when she eventually graduates from the program, Rachel says. She is looking for ways to incorporate service dog training into her life after graduation in May. About Cali's future, she said, "I know she's going to go on and really help someone. I know she's going to be happy working and doing a good job."



Written by Marie MacCune

<https://www.honors.umass.edu/braggingwrites/paws-cause-chc-student-trains-service-dog-campus>

This article was edited and abridged by the *Heath Herald* with permission of *Bragging Writes*, a publication of the Commonwealth Honors College at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Nature Note

TIMBERDOODLES

With each spring day, I hear new songs of birds that have returned and are readying for the breeding season—phoebes, wrens, thrushes, orioles—but there is one bird that I particularly look forward to hearing. It is an unusual sound more than a song and is only heard from around an hour before to an hour after sunset and sunrise. The sounds are produced as part of the courtship display of the male American woodcock, nicknamed the timberdoodle.

The display takes place in an open field and starts with the bird making a nasal sound described as “peent” or “zeep.” He repeats it every 10-20 seconds and makes a slight turn in position before repeating it so that he is broadcasting out in every direction. After several minutes of this, he takes to the air and circles upwards, starting with wide circles and narrowing until he gets up several hundred feet and then starts his descent. On the upward flight, he makes a loud twittering sound that is produced by his wings. On the descent, he zig-zags back to earth, gaining speed as he drops, while making his flight song which is a loud chirping. Just before he gets to the ground, his song stops and he slips silently back to his starting place where he repeats the whole process.



Woodcocks spend most of their time on the ground—they nest on the ground and they feed by probing into the earth with their long bills for things like worms—and their short squat form doesn’t indicate that they would be very aerodynamic. But every spring they take to the air in this most amazing aerial display. Listen for woodcocks in hayfields and pastures around town. If you find such a field, you can witness the display by positioning yourself on the eastern edge of the field about an hour before sunset. Facing west, you will be able to see the woodcock silhouetted in the sunset as he flies. Enjoy the show!

—Susan Draxler



Happy Retirement, MARGO

Cal used to work with someone who went to high school with Margo. We learned from Howie that Margo was cute and funny and a cheerleader, who was voted “most likely to end up behind bars.” Well, that she did, but on the other side of them, as Chief Newton. She is still cute and funny to this day—though she traded in her pompoms for handcuffs!

—Jan Carr

I didn’t realize for a little while back then, that the police officer (Margo) who had responded to a few calls with us, was the same person who was at Tech school when I was a student there. Happy Retirement.

—Tim Lively

Margo, when one door closes, another surely opens. And I’m so thrilled to see you embarking on your new adventures. At the same time, glad to have you remain in the town office wearing your many hats as Board of Health Clerk, Council on Aging Chair, Community Hall Chair, Sr. Meal Coordinator, and Post Office substitute. You have been, and continue to be, a great asset to the Town of Heath. Your

knowledge of the town, your history, and your skills are invaluable—and your sense of humor is essential. I wish you all the best!

—Kara Leistyna, Town Coordinator

To Margo: Thank you for the years of service and I hope I can fill your shoes in the role of Police Chief for the Town of Heath.

—Melinda Herzig, Heath Police Chief



It was shortly after the shooting and protests in Ferguson, MO. I was picking up my mail at the Town Hall when I overheard an exchange I would wager is rarely heard in any other police station in America. Margo was in her office at her desk chatting with a youngish man who leaned comfortably against the door jam. “Well,” I heard him say, as he prepared to push off. “I gotta go. I love you, Chief.” “I love you, too,” came the reply.

—Pam Porter



Climate Impact: Maple Myth Made Reality

Several locals will be appearing in an upcoming episode of *National Geographic's* climate change series "Years of Living Dangerously." "No Laughing Matter" focuses on the impact of climate change on agriculture in the Northeast. In interviews conducted in several small towns throughout western Massachusetts and southern Vermont, *Nat Geo* explores the first few scientifically documented cases of maple trees being damaged—in some cases destroyed—by increased pressure on their internal vascular systems. Climatologists and arborists believe this is due to abnormally volatile movement of sap rising in the system; they also believe that this change in normal rise speed, the increased internal pressure it creates, and its negative impact on the tree's normal vascular function is caused by the increasing incidence and severity of temperature swings throughout the region.

In February of 2016, low temperature records were shattered as overnight temperatures plummeted across Massachusetts, including readings of -9 degrees in Boston and -16 degrees in Worcester. Just a year later, in February of 2017, the state saw record high temperatures, including 73 degrees and 69 degrees respectively, in these same towns. These temperature swings still do not represent the magnitude of the current record temperature variation (a 110-degree temperature swing over seven days, from -31 degrees on February 10, 2011 to 79 degrees on February 17 of that year in Nowata, OK.) But Dr. Candice Zucker, a scientist at the Climate System Research Center at the University of Massachusetts who was also interviewed for this episode, believes that in our region we are seeing similar increases in temperature range swings and compressions of the time over which they occur, and warns that her research shows this will be a continuing trend.

Although anecdotal accounts of maple trees "exploding" because of fast-rising sap have largely been discounted in the past as tall tales told by "old-timers" to naïve or inexperienced audiences, Dr. Zucker notes that this new documentation of actual occurrences of the phenomenon shows, once again, the value of folk wisdom and information handed down in such stories.

These yarns may actually be ancestral memories from the Medieval Warming Period (MWP), a time of similar warming weather and increased nighttime/daytime temperature swings in the Northeastern region. To illustrate the magnitude of such changes, Zucker points out that this was the same historical time period during which, around 985 A.D., Vikings were able to establish their first settlements in Iceland and Greenland.

One story from our region's historical record is being recognized as potentially documenting such occurrences in North America's past. Among the Algonquin people living during the MWP, the story of how native peoples came to use maple sap as a food source recounts a time when "The sap was as thick and sweet as honey. All you had to do was to break the end off of a branch and the syrup would flow out." According to this legend, Gluskabe, son of the great Mother Earth, came to a village that was in disrepair, with overgrown fields and cold camp fires. Then Gluskabe saw a stand of beautiful maple trees, where "all the people were lying on their backs under the trees with the end of a branch broken off and dripping maple syrup into their mouths." The maple syrup had fattened them up so much and made them so lazy that they could barely move. Gluskabe reported this to the Creator, and it was decided that man needed a lesson to understand the Creator's ways. Gluskabe was instructed to "fill the maple trees with water. He added more and more water, until the sap was no longer so plentiful, thick and sweet."



Climatologists studying the environmental record of our region believe this myth was created by native peoples as an explanation for the rapid change from the fast-flowing sap under similar high pressure conditions during the MWP, to the lower output and limited seasonal availability we have come to know as this period of higher temperatures and great temperature variability came to an end around 1,000 A.D.

Locally, this may be one circumstance where climate change may also have a beneficial effect. Balancing the loss of some trees is the lengthening sugaring season and the increased production of the remaining trees. In addition, a new niche market is forming for the sap from "exploded" trees that do survive to continue producing maple sap. Local producers, as well as gourmet online outlets such as BLiS Gourmet and Williams Sonoma, are selling such product at premium prices to meet the demand of urban buyers who believe it contains antioxidant properties not found in regular maple syrup.

Although happy to take advantage of this new specialty market, locals who know maple production say there is no proof this claim is true. "Well, that is some crazy rumor," says longtime resident Howard Dickinson, smiling. "Gotta wonder how such a crazy idea got started."

The "No Laughing Matter" episode, featuring interviews with members of the Sumner family, Janis Steele, and local award-winning mapler Mike Girard, airs on Monday

(Continued on page 21)

The Way We Love to Eat The Elusive Maple Cream Pie



Growing up in the Midwest as I did, pie occupied only a marginal place at our dessert table. Apple and pumpkin, and maybe mincemeat were always part of Thanksgiving and the occasional lemon meringue graced our table as a treat. It wasn't until moving to New England that I began to appreciate just how versatile and delectable a good pie was. I remember one community supper where the dessert table was laden with all kinds of pies; blackberry, blueberry, chocolate, lemon meringue, apple, strawberry-rhubarb. The pies came from farm kitchens throughout Heath and were the signature pie of women who were experts in the art of pie making. I don't know what the main dish was that night, but the pies were memorable.

The library has a new book called *New England Pie, History Under a Crust* by Robert S. Cox, published by American Palate, A Division of History Press. It is a delightful history of the pies we so happily consume, with some old-time recipes that were obviously written with the implicit understanding that everyone would know the basics of pie-making so recipes could be written in the briefest, simplest way possible.

Of the nature of New England pies, Cox writes that they “. . . represent a complex history of adaptations to ingredients and culture that forms and reforms generation by generation.” He then goes on to describe the evolution and stories behind pie making in the rich and endlessly varied culture of New England by highlighting about a dozen old recipes that, as he puts it, “are embedded in the ebb and flow of the seasons, the arrival and departure of ingredients and the comings and goings of people and ideas.” Whether one plans to make a pie or just enjoy a slice, this book is a wonderful read.

The entry for March is about maple syrup and the elusive maple cream pie.

Historically, Cox links the rise in popularity of maple syrup in general to the fight against slavery. Since much of the sugar produced in the early America came from slave labor, anti-slavery advocates in New England began to promote maple sugar as an alternative to buying sugar from the West Indies. The maple cream pie has all but disappeared from the current maple landscape and is described as “elusive as a unicorn.”

The book has several old recipes for maple cream pie and I tried a few with varying results. The one below is my favorite.

Maple Cream Pie (*Wheel Cook Book*, 1913) as written in *New England Pie, History Under a Crust*, p 41.

Two cups scalded milk, one cup brown sugar or maple sugar, one-third cup flour, pinch of salt, two eggs. Mix sugar, flour and salt, to this add heated milk; cook until smooth, then add yolks of eggs well beaten: cook for a few minutes until it thickens, then cook for about a half an hour. Make a meringue of the whites of the eggs and cover the top and brown.

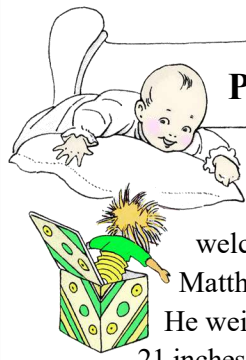
—from Mrs. Darling

Since there was no mention of a crust, I used a standard crust recipe. On my first attempt, I put the filling in an unbaked pie shell and the crust turned out soggy. On the next try, I pre-baked the crust at 450 degrees for 10 minutes, with better results. To make the filling, I followed the directions as written, but since it gave no temperature for baking the pie, I used the standard for custard pie of 325 degrees.

For the meringue, I beat the eggs until foamy, added a quarter teaspoon of cream of tartar, and slowly added 1 tablespoon of maple sugar as I was beating the mixture into soft peaks. After spreading the meringue onto the already-baked pie, I browned it for another 15 or 20.

The resulting pie got measured reviews. Surprisingly it was not overly sweet which was a plus for my Number Nine Road tasters. All agreed that the meringue took away from the overall flavor, although that could have been due to my alterations. Some suggested a nut crust would be a great addition, but my ultimate pie critic, Tom Lively, gave the pie, sans meringue, a thumbs-up and cut another piece.

—Deb Porter



People in the News

Angela and Joey
Sonntag of Heath
welcomed a son, Thaddeus
Matthew, born on January 29.
He weighed 8.6 lbs. and measured
21 inches long. He joins siblings Judea,
Xavier, Solomon, Marius, Lourdes, and Chiara

Selectboard Report

Special Town Meeting

A Special Town Meeting was held at 7 p.m., Tuesday March 7 at the Community Hall. The warrant consisted of transfers from accounts with surpluses to those which are anticipated to experience shortfalls. Highway Machine Maintenance/Supplies, Legal Fees, and the Compactor Replacement Project are the main accounts having need of additional funds.

Broadband in Heath

WiredWest and MBI have both received responses to RFP's they sent out for bids to build broadband in the underserved towns. Heath Broadband Committee is meeting with the companies whose proposals include service to Heath. We continue to believe a regional solution will offer us the best service with the least liability. Residents with Verizon DSL continue to report decreasing internet access speeds and homes sold without an agreement to continue DSL are not provided the service. We believe that having good broadband service throughout town is essential to residents and a critical factor in maintaining property values.

Annual Town Meeting

The Selectboard and the Finance Committee have been working on the budget for FY18 in anticipation of the Annual Town Meeting on May 6. Budget requests including capital purchases are under review. Drafts of warrant articles other than those to be offered by the Selectboard were due March 7.

Heath Elementary School

In January 2016 the Select Board appointed the Heath Education Initiative Task Force to explore what Heath might do to address challenges related to the costs of education and declining enrollment. The objectives outlined for the task force are to identify and evaluate options for educating Heath preschool through 6th-grade students against Heath-specific goals; and to report findings and recommendations to the Heath Select Board, Heath residents, and MTRSD School Committee at strategic times. On February 21 the Task Force recommended that we send our Elementary students to Hawlemont and the Select Board approved that recommendation. The decision was made with the belief that aligning with Hawley and Charlemont will give Heath the best opportunities for building a positive long-term regional school district relationship. Residents will vote at Annual Town Meeting on a change to the Mohawk Regional Agreement that will allow Heath to send students to Hawlemont.

An informational meeting on this subject was held on March 7 following the Special Town Meeting.

Transfer Station Changes

The attendant's shed at the Transfer Station was accidentally damaged when the compactor hauler attempted

to deliver and install an empty replacement container. The damage to the wooden structure was considerable. It was temporarily stabilized and will be replaced entirely when the Transfer Station is renovated. Renovations to the Transfer Station that include a new compactor, grade changes, and new attendant shed are being revised. A Requests for Bids will be going out as soon. The project will be completed this summer. Funds for this project were appropriated at a previous Annual Town Meeting.

Recycling

The Select Board has been notified by the Franklin Regional Solid Waste Management District that Heath's recycling rates have decreased. We would like to remind residents that at Annual Town Meeting in 1998, a bylaw mandating recycling was passed by 2/3 majority. The bylaw requires separating glass/cans, and paper/cardboard from other waste. Everyone who purchased a permit last year received a notice regarding recycling.

Pay As You Throw (PAYT)

The cost of waste disposal continues to increase and we've been informed that the landfill where Heath waste is trucked to will close soon. In anticipation of the eventual loss of a place to send our waste, to help manage waste transportation costs, and to encourage an increase in recycling, Heath will implement PAYT as of July 1, 2017.

An informational meeting on this subject will be held May 16 at the Community Hall. The Selectboard is currently reviewing all the Transfer Station rules. In lieu of purchasing special trash bags, we are considering the use of a special sticker for your trash bags. We are also looking at a significant reduction in the cost of a Transfer Station vehicle sticker, and considering that a set number of stickers would be given when a vehicle sticker is purchased, and other options. We found it interesting to learn that between 25 and 40% of trash waste is food waste—a fact that points to one area where a household that composts food waste can significantly reduce the number of trash bags generated. An advantage to PAYT is that it creates equity among residents: those who generate more waste will need to buy more stickers while seasonal residents only use as many stickers as needed for the months they are in town.

Levy Limit and Levy Ceiling

One taxation issue that has concerned the Town's leadership is the fact that our "levy limit" has bumped into our "levy ceiling." These phrases are accounting constructs that are part of Proposition 2½, the law that limits the amounts by which a locality can raise the amount it asks taxpayers to pay in property taxes annually. The news that the two limits now coincide has led to worries by some townspeople that the Town is "broke," unable to raise the taxes necessary to run the Town. That is not so, because our tax levy is below our levy ceiling.

During the public service of the present membership of the Selectboard and the Finance Committee, Heath has never come close to taxing at either limit due to conservative budget planning. The levy limit, however, continues to rise because it is dynamic: rising by 2.5% annually, plus certified new growth and debt and capital exclusions (which require special voter action) over the previous year's levy limit. But the levy limit continues to rise, independently of each year's actual tax levy.

The levy ceiling, by contrast, is relatively static. That ceiling is 2.5% of the Total Assessed Value (TAV) of all Town properties, plus debt and capital outlay exclusions. The only way the levy ceiling can rise is by increases in TAV, which for us means new construction. In a time of static TAV—Heath's valuation has not increased substantially in eight years—the levy ceiling will remain fixed, and it is inevitable that the levy limit will bump into the levy ceiling.

That is the bad news. The relatively good news is that Heath has always been careful with its spending. For the current fiscal year, our tax levy is \$371,072 below the now-identical levy limit and levy ceiling. If we needed to increase our tax burden by that amount, we could. To do so, however, would raise our rate and would be a burden on taxpayers. In addition, the Town now has stabilization funds totaling \$376,287.54. So the Town is far from being "broke." But if fixed costs and expenditures increase and no substantial new construction happens in town to increase the TAV we could reach our levy limit and levy ceiling in 4-5 years' time. This is what the BOS and Finance Committee are evaluating carefully.

For those interested, the Department of Revenue makes available online a publication entitled

"Levy Limits: A Primer on Proposition 2 1/2", <http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/publ/misc/levylimits.pdf>

—Heath Selectboard

Heath Educational Task Force Update

As you know The Heath Educational Task Force has been to looking into possible solutions to the issue of low enrollment in our school. Following up on the article in the February/March issue of the *Herald*, the Task Force has recommended to the BOS that it pursue a tuition agreement with the towns of Hawley and Charlemont. In our view, given the financial and educational situation of high costs and low enrollment, it is the choice that offers the best option in the long run for both our children and the town.

Charlemont and Hawley are close neighbors. They have an excellent school, with a philosophy similar to that of Heath School and a commitment to community involvement. Through a well-developed and community-supported agricultural program, teachers are able to inte-

grate academics, social learning, and personal responsibility in an active program based on real-life situations.

In addition, both towns see us as an asset to their educational program. The School Committee has assured us that they would welcome working with us towards regionalizing, giving us an equal voice on their Board. We would also be partnered with a district where we are on equal footing economically.

The Task Force is currently working on a District-to-District tuition agreement that would allow us to stay in the Mohawk District while tuitioning our students to Hawlemont. By remaining in the District, we would have a safety net that would help avoid the situation that we were in 20 years ago when Rowe was unwilling to regionalize with us and we had no back-up plan for our children's education.

We are meeting regularly with the Mohawk School Committee to develop three documents to make this happen:

The first is a change to the Regional Agreement to allow us to tuition our children to Hawlemont. This will be voted on at our Annual Town Meeting. It will need to pass in our town meeting as well as in all of the other seven towns to take effect.

The next document is a Memorandum of Agreement between the Mohawk District and the Town of Heath that defines the obligations of each party.

This will include provisions for the school so that we are not saddled with the maintenance cost while we seek ways to re-purpose the building. It will also include the district assuming bussing, special education and tuition costs, our legal fees, and an extra one-time \$20,000 amount to offset the increase in this year's assessment.

The final document is the tuition agreement itself between Mohawk District and Hawlemont District. This document will spell out the terms of agreement with Hawlemont including the tuition rate and the assurance that all Heath students will have a place at the school.

All of these documents are under negotiation. Details are still being worked out and of course everything will then have to be carefully reviewed by our town lawyer and the district's lawyer, Hawlemont's lawyer, and the Department of Education. The plan is to complete the documents in time to be presented at an April informational meeting prior to our Annual Town Meeting.

This is a situation that warrants all of our best thinking and consideration. Please plan to attend the April meeting so that when it is time for the Annual Town Meeting, we are able to weigh all the facts and elements of this complex issue together.

In the meantime it is important that we all help our children have the best year possible by being sensitive about where and how conversations happen around this issue.

—Deb Porter

The School Community



SHIYA

- ★ I know you can jump on the moon.
- ★ When the sun is out it is daytime.

LONDON

- ★ There is gravity on the moon.
- ★ When one side of Earth is light the other side is dark.
- ★ When it is daytime in Heath it is nighttime in China.



ELLISA

- ★ The moon makes shadows.
- ★ The moon revolves around the Earth.



JUPITER

- ★ How are shadows made? The sun makes shadows.
- ★ When the Earth spins it makes me dizzy.

FAITH

- ★ I know meteors hit the Earth.
- ★ When the moon is out it is nighttime.
- ★ I think the tides are controlled by the sun.



FREDDY

- ★ Meteors hit the moon.
- ★ They make craters.

CHARLOTTE

- ★ How do tides work?
- ★ Does the moon change?



JEB

- ★ People have landed on the moon in a rocket ship.

BRAYDEN

- ★ I know the sun is in the universe.
- ★ The sun is the closest star to the Earth.

LUCUS

- ★ There is space junk on the moon and floating in space.
- ★ Earth is made of rock.
- ★ Meteors made craters on the moon.



Mohawk News

After Mohawk’s one-week February break, classes are back at work. Many winter sports ended after having a good winter season. The past weeks at Mohawk have consisted of spring sports sign-ups and the interactive Open House on March 9. The Open House had many projects and classrooms open to explore. There were projects from the elementary schools, high school, and middle school. The elementary schools had projects on water filtration and wind turbines. Each school’s project competed to see whose project worked the best.



The high school and middle school had a few projects on display, as well as posters and a whole hallway of artwork. Some of the classrooms were open and had an activity to do or something to look at. The Open House was a good opportunity for the elementary school students to get more familiar with the school. As spring sports approach, athletes are getting ready for the season to finish off the school year. Teams are hoping for warm weather to dry up fields and make it possible to play outside. Between MCAS and sports, Mohawk will be a busy place for the rest of the year. Lots more to come as Mohawk closes out the 2016-2017 school year.

—Austin Sumner



MATT'S TRUCKING
SCREENED LOAM A SPECIALTY
 Excavating
 Loam - Sand - Fill
MATT LIVELY
337-4331

**Spring "Clean Sweep"
 Bulky Waste Recycling Day**

The 2017 spring "Clean Sweep" Bulky Waste Recycling Day is Saturday, May 6, from 9 a.m. to noon. The three drop-off sites are:

- Buckland Recreation Facility (to be confirmed) at 66 Ashfield Rd. (Rt. 112 South),
- Northfield Highway Garage at 49 Caldwell Rd.,
- Whately Transfer Station at 73 Christian Lane (off Route 5 & 10).

Heath residents may bring tires, appliances, scrap metal, mattresses, construction debris, computers, televisions, propane gas tanks, and other large items. Clean and dry (bagged) textiles and books accepted free for reuse or recycling. Bring bulky rigid plastics (less than 4 ft.) for the special recycling program (\$5 per load for acceptable items).

If you have bulky waste and it's inconvenient to wait for the Clean Sweep, consider bringing it to the Greenfield Transfer Station (off Wisdom Way). There is a \$5 per-day user fee for non-Greenfield residents and a per-item charge on most items. Some restrictions apply.

Contact the FCSWMD for more information.

FCSWMD

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District
 For more information on any programs or events, contact the FCSWMD at: 413-772-2438, info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.
 MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).

Heath Union Evangelical Church

The Rev. James Koyama, Minister
 Dennis Ainsworth, Organist
 Sunday morning worship 10 a.m.



All are welcome

Please join us for Bible Study every Thursday at 6 p.m., held at the home of Dennis Ainsworth, 215 Ed Clark Road, Colrain. Anyone interested in carpooling should meet at the church at 5:30 p.m.

Rev. Koyama is in town on Thursdays, with office hours at the church in the afternoon. You can also contact him on his cell phone anytime: 808-282-6711.

For information call Rev. Koyama or a member of the Board of Deacons:

- Hilma Sumner, Chair ...337-4845
- Ruth Johnson337-4367
- Walter Gleason337-4479

Church phone: 337-4019 to leave a message
 Find us on Facebook @ Heath Union Evangelical Church
 Our building facilities are available for private events.
 Call Esther Gallup for details: 337-5367.

Heath's Monthly Precipitation
 Observed by Heath School Staff and Students


| | Rain | Snow |
|----------|------|------|
| January | 1" | 9" |
| February | 0" | 40" |

January started out with 3 inches of fluffy snow which started on New Year's Eve, followed over the next couple of weeks with a couple days of very cold air, then up to almost 50 degrees on the 12th with a lot of snow melt. The rest of the month was rather mundane and cool. The month of February made up for snow amounts that we did not get last year. Along with a few small storms (3-4" each), two storms gave us a dumping. "Niko" gave us 12" and "Orson" gave us at least 16". February ended on a milder note with temperatures in the very mild 50s and an early start to the sugaring season.

—Tim Lively

Continued from page 16

Don't set your DVR to record this episode quite yet. You probably already guessed this, but....
 Maple trees exploding? Nah!



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Apr 8 **SING-ALONG/CONCERT**
with Karen Brooks & Melissa Ortquist
4 to 6 p.m. at the Heath Union Church
- Apr 14 **PRESCHOOL STORY HOUR**
10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Heath Library
Egg hunt (rain or shine)
- Apr 28 **PRESCHOOL STORY HOUR**
10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Heath Library
- May 2 **VALLEY GIVES**
A 24 hour online giving day to support non-profits. Check for Heath giving opportunities at:
<http://communityfoundation.org/valleygives/>
- May 6 **SPRING BULKY WASTE DAY**
9 to noon. See page 21 for more detail.
- May TBD **PRESCHOOL STORY HOUR**
Check in at the library or on the library website, <http://heathlibrary.org>

ONGOING

- CELEBRATE YOU!**
Monday, 11 a.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
A gentle exercise class done with DVD instruction. All ages and all ability levels welcome. Contact Eileen McVay-Lively at 337-4742 for more information.
- SENIOR OPEN ART**
Monday, 2 to 5 p.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall. Open to all. Contact Eileen McVay-Lively at 337-4742 with questions.
- FOOT CLINIC FOR SENIORS**
Third Tuesday of each month in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
Contact Eileen McVay-Lively at 337-4742 to set up an appointment and/or arrange transportation.
- SENIOR BROWN BAG LUNCH**
First Thursday of each month, dessert & games.
11:45 a.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
- HEALTHY BONES AND BALANCE**
Tuesday, 11 a.m. to noon, and Thursday, 10 to 11 a.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
Helps prevent falls & osteoporosis, for ages 55 and over.
- HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**
Thursday, 11 a.m. to noon in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall
Weight loss through developing a healthier lifestyle.
- SENIOR LUNCHEON**
Third Thursday of each month, 11:45 a.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
A count is required by the Monday before the scheduled meal. Please sign up at the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.
- TAI CHI**
Monday, 10 to 11 a.m. upstairs in the Community Hall.
- YOGA**
Wednesday 6 to 7 p.m. upstairs in the Community Hall, led by Kate Peppard.

Calendar Items

If you would like an item listed, please drop a note in the black box in the town hall vestibule or send an email to TheHeathHerald@gmail.com. Include the event name, date and time, and location.


Heath Online

Take some time to visit the town's website at www.townofheath.org for meeting minutes, school information, and more. You may contact the Selectboard as a whole or an individual via this email address: BOS@townofheath.org

Scheduled activities will not take place on holidays or days with school weather closures/delays.

Reminder from Heath Police Chief

If anyone requires an officer for an urgent need, please contact Dispatch at 911 for emergencies, or for non-emergencies, please call their business number at (413) 625-8200. Thank you, Melinda Herzig



LIVELY CARETAKING

Tom Lively

Phone 413-337-4061
Cell: 413-325-1065
Email: ThomasLively01@gmail.com

Carpentry — Repairs — Remodeling
Mowing — Fields and Lawns — Painting



PO Box 55
Heath, MA 01346



HEATH TOWN OFFICES

1 East Main St, Heath MA 01346
Phone: 413-337-4934 Fax: 413-337-8542
www.townofheath.org

Town Coordinator, Kara Leistyna

bos@townofheath.org
Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with
exceptions posted in Sawyer Hall

Selectboard, bos@townofheath.org

Tuesday 7 p.m., Sawyer Hall
Sheila Litchfield, Chair, 413-337-4957
Brian DeVriese, 413-337-5525
Robyn Provost-Carlson, 413-337-5316

Town Clerk, Hilma Sumner

townclerk@townofheath.org
Tuesday and Thursday 8:30 to 11 a.m.
Monday 3 to 5 p.m. or call for appointment,
413-337-4845

Accountant, Tracey Baronas

accountant@townofheath.org
Monday 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (varies)
413-337-4934, ext. 5

Tax Collector, Elizabeth Nichols

taxcollector@townofheath.org
Monday 4 to 6 p.m.
or call for appointment 413-337-6665
413-337-4934, ext. 2 / Fax: 413-337-8542

Treasurer, Kristi Narktowicz

Monday 2 to 4 p.m. (varies) or
email to knartowicz@gmail.com

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Board of Assessors

Monday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Robyn Provost-Carlson, 413-337-5316
Alice Wozniak, Assistant Assessor, 413-337-4949
Heather Hathwell, 413-339-4359
Heidi Griswold, 413-337-4079

Board of Health, 413-337-4934

Betsy Kovacs, Chair, 413-337-5346
Henry Godek
Susan Gruen
Tucker Jenkins
Armand Clavette, 413-337-4065

Finance Committee

Don Freeman, Chair, 413-337-4854
Ned Wolf, Secretary, 413-337-4476
Jeff Simmons, 413-337-4994
Gloria Fisher, 413-337-6626
Jan Carr, 413-337-5747

Library Board of Trustees

Deborah Porter, Chair, 413-337-4715
Emily Cross, 413-337-4816
Jan Carr, 413-337-5747

Planning Board

Calvin Carr, Chair, calvinccarr@verizon.net
Douglas Mason, Sec, dougmason@hughes.net
Robert Viarengo, viarengo932@crocker.com
Jo Travis, jtravis156@verizon.net
Bill Gran, whgran@gmail.com

Agricultural Commission

Jessica Van Steensburg, 413-339-4904
Doug Mason, 413-339-4756
Nina Marshall, 413-339-4756
Sean Neill, 413-339-4820

Cemetery Commission

Jerry Gilbert, Central Cemetery, 413-337-4355
Claire Rabbitt, North Cemetery, 413-337-8309
Eric Sumner, South Cemetery, 413-337-5330
Matthew Lively, Sexton, 413-337-4331
Hilma Sumner, Burial Agent, 413-337-4845

Conservation Commission

Brian DeVriese, Chair, 413-337-5525
Dennis Peters, 413-337-4014
Ellen Jenkins, 413-337-5353
Bernard "Buck" den Ouden, 413-337-4002
Jessica Van Steensburg, 413-339-4904

Historical Commission

Margaret Freeman, Chair, 413-337-4854

COMMUNITY

Public Library, Don Purington, Director

Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Library Assistant
www.heathlibrary.org, heath.library@gmail.com
Monday 3 to 7 p.m., Wednesday noon to 7 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
413-337-4934, ext. 7

Post Office Manager, Charlene Reynolds

Monday to Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
413-337-4934, ext. 4

School

Heath Elementary School Principal

Jesse Porter-Henry, 413-337-5307

MTRSD School Committee Representatives

Budge Litchfield, 413-337-4957
Kenneth Rocke, 413-337-5753

Franklin County Technical School Representative

Art Schwenger, 413-625-2526

Town Nurse, Claire Rabbitt, RN

Office hours, Senior Center, 413-337-4847
Tuesday 12:15 to 1:15 p.m.
Thursday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Voice mailbox: 413-337-4934, ext. 109
Home phone: 413-337-8309

Senior Center/Community Hall, 413-337-4847

Eileen Lively, Senior Coordinator, 413-337-4742

PUBLIC WORKS AND SAFETY

Animal Control Officer: Ed Grinnell

413-834-2951 or 911 for an emergency

Highway Department, Mike Shattuck,

Transportation Supervisor, 413-337-4462

Police Department, Melinda Herzig, Chief

Office hours: Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m.
413-337-4934, ext. 108

Transfer Station, Ken Erho, Attendant

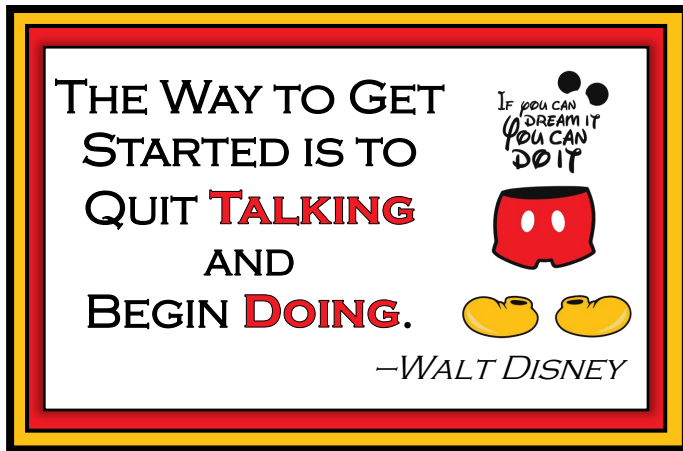
Wednesday, noon to 4 p.m. **all year**

Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. **all year**

Monday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **May 30 to October 31**

Volunteer Fire Department

Ken Gilbert, Chief, 413-337-4461



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