

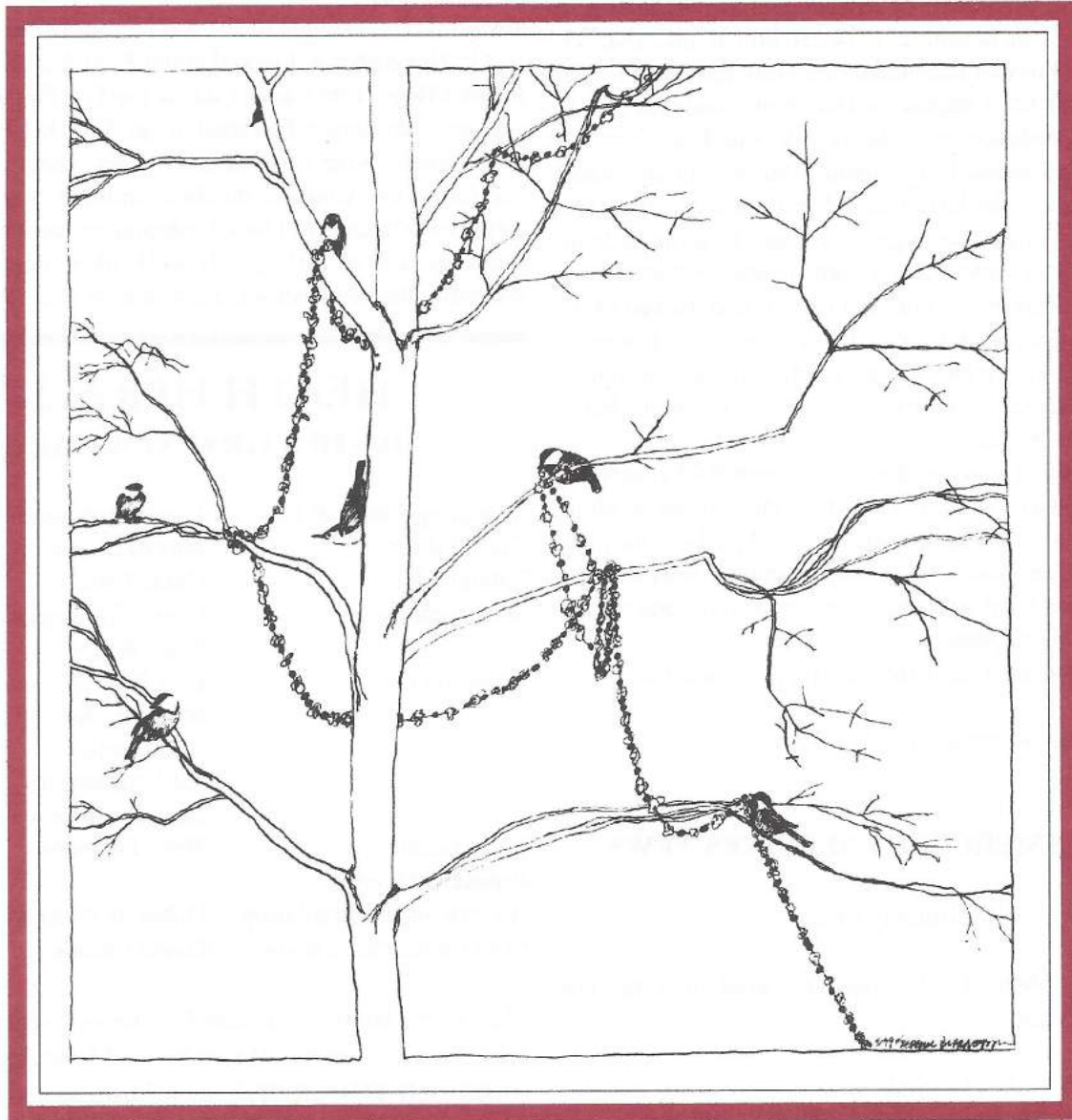
VOLUME 21 NUMBER 5

DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

HEATH HERALD

HEATH'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

75¢



Happy Holidays from the Heath Herald

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Editor's Note...

As we go to press with this issue the first of the winter holidays has begun. This is a season of light, and one honored by people of many differing religions, cultures and ways of living in this world. Threads common throughout them all, when celebrated in their true forms, are that of light in the midst of darkness, a fervent hope for the lightening of days, a strengthening of family and community bonds, and the allowance of a brief suspension of time in which one may suspend his or her regular beliefs and take a few moments away from the profane and delve into the sacred, whatever that may be to each individual.

Chanukah, celebrated by Jewish peoples began at sundown on Dec. 3 and continues to be celebrated until Dec. 11; the Muslim holiday of Ramadan, (the ninth month of the Islamic calendar) 1419 begins on Dec. 9 and ends on Jan. 6, 2000; Winter Solstice, or Yule, is celebrated on Dec. 21; Christmas celebrations have already started, but the actual holiday is Dec. 25; the Kwanzaa celebration is celebrated by many African-Americans beginning Dec. 26 through January 1, 2000; New Year's Day is Jan. 1, this year preceded by a possibly eventful evening of Dec. 31; and the last of the holidays of this season, known as Three Kings' Day, Epiphany or Twelfth Night, is a twelve day celebration ending Jan. 6, 2000. In our diverse country we see these traditions being celebrated side-by-side.

We invite you to read a millennial note from Pat Leuchtman, who has, as always, created a heartfelt piece of prose about Heath as we leave behind this century. And we have the pleasure of introducing our first article written by resident Ann Lovell, who has been studying Christmas traditions around the world for many years.

From all of us at the Heath Herald, Happy Holidays!

-Laurie Wheeler Burrington

HEATH EMERGENCY SERVICES NEWS

by Timothy Lively

The following Medical calls were answered since the last issue of the Herald:

9/26/99 - Hosmer Road - Medical
10/21/99 - Rte. 8A South - Motor Vehicle Collision
10/24/99 - Rte. 8A North - Medical
11/22/99 - Number Nine Road - Medical
11/23/99 - Taylor Brook Road - Motor Vehicle Collision

The EMS and Fire Department wishes everyone a SAFE and Happy Holiday Season.

TOWN NURSE NOTES

by Joanne Fortune

I was amazed at the crowd at the Community Hall on the first day of my influenza clinics. I've given 90 flu shots, 14 pneumonia and four tetanus boosters; and people are still calling to make appointments.

I have a little temporary office in the Community Hall to see people and to store equipment and paperwork. Thank you, Deb Huff, for your efficient and kind help in making this possible. Residents can call me at 337-5716 to make an appointment to see me there if they so choose. And, as always, I am available to see you in your home.

On November 4, I talked about First Aid to Pastor Lucid's Boy's Fire Cadet Club at the Fire Department. The energetic children, who range in age from kindergarten to fourth grade, were very excited to learn about cuts, burns, bee stings, eye wounds, frostbite, choking, and the Heimlich Maneuver. I loved listening to them weave shocking tales of serious cuts and broken bones. There is no doubt, this topic struck a chord with these youngsters.

HEATH HERALD

HEATH'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

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On the Threshold of the Millennium . . .

by Pat Leuchtman

As I write this, Henry and I are celebrating the 20th anniversary of our arrival at the End of the Road. There have been lots of changes over the past 20 years. Children have grown up and moved away. Grandchildren have been born and now visit Granny and the Major.

The house has been repaired and is warmer, one barn burned, one shed built and the Cottage Orne is nearly complete. The garden has taken many shapes, the barn that was is now a sunken garden, the Family Trees grow taller every year and The Rose Walk blooms extravagantly every June. What has not changed is my feeling that Heath is a blessed spot and my gratitude for being able to live here.

As we stand at the threshold of a new millenium I find myself reviewing the blessings of life in Heath, and resolving to act in ways that will preserve this fount of blessings.

In a way, all of Heath has been reviewing and resolving as we have gone through the Visioning Process. At one point there was a public meeting when those assembled described how they came to Heath. It was amazing how many were brought by friends who wanted to share the joy and pleasure they found there; it was wonderful how many felt in their heart that this is where they were meant to be. One friend told me she thought we had all come to Heath to work out our mutual destinies, and I think she may be right.

During the Visioning process we've been looking at what we like about Heath, what we want to keep and what we might be able to improve. In a sense we have been making a set of New Year's Resolutions writ large - Millennial Resolutions for our town.

The first blessing is the landscape, meadows, blueberry fields, sugar bush, woods and streams, all uphill from everywhere. We have the sense that we live in glorious isolation; the air is fresh, the land is fragrant and fertile, and yet we are not isolated at all.

In this modern world the media connects us to cities, the

(continued next column)

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concerns of our state and country, and even other countries. I would nothave it any other way. In fact, many of us can live in our rural splendor because Boston and New York are so near, because phones, modems, satellites and cars allow us to do business with the greater world and earn our livings from our studies, studios and shops.

Second, we are connected to an ideal of rural life. The Heath School is certainly tangible evidence of our commitment to that rural ideal. There are not many schools being built these days for less than 150 students. When Henry was interviewed by Heath students at the end of the Heath School's first year he said that the Heath School was going forward into the past. He meant that Heath was returning to a past when Heath children went to school in their own small school and had a very particular and strong sense of community.

The Heath Fair is another instance of our appreciation of rural life, rural skills, rural responsibilities and rural pleasures. It is remarkable when you consider how many Heathans participate in the Fair every year preparing the Fairgrounds, planning, organizing, staffing, preparing exhibits and finally enjoying the fruits of the community's labor.

The greatest blessing for me is my Heath neighbors - by which I mean the town officers and board and committee members, the volunteer fire department, the Friends of the Library, the road crew, the owners of Peters' Store, everyone who attends the Annual Town Meeting with me, the postmistress, the transfer station master, and the Heath Union Church congregation as well as The Gourmet Club, the Book Club and my Knott Road neighbors because they all make Heath the congenial, cooperative and comfortable town that it is.

The number of cows has declined, but the town population has doubled since we moved here 20 years ago. I do not know all my Heath neighbors by name, but I wave as we pass on the road and I know that if I get in trouble on the road I can count on those neighbors to stop and offer aid, as I would stop to help them.

Change will come to Heath, as it always has. Only death stops change and it is a measure of Heath's strength and vitality that it hasembraced change. Change can pinch sometimes, or even be painful for a while, but we Heathans seem to know that it is necessary. After all, Reinhold Niebuhr, arguably the greatest theologian of the 20th century was inspired by Heath to pray:

"God give us grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,

Courage to change the things which should be changed
And the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other."

-Amen!



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 then 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 curved down from black cones, looking like nothing so much as gaudy, tiny umbrellas blown inside out in a high wind.

Well, of course, 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 that 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 to know 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 exhibits 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 swans' beaks all along the 18-to 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 late summer. The procedure in the fall is the same as for the more familiar 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.

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HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

by Michael Smith

As I write this I am watching snow flurries blow around and can't help but think of what is to come. Winter will soon be upon us and the Highway Department is ready for the challenge.

Often I am asked what, if any, recommendations I could make about travel in the winter. My best advice is to have good snow tires; and studded snows are even better than all-season tires. Also, if you must travel in inclement weather, allow for extra time so that you may drive slowly. I might also offer a word of caution. When driving in the winter if you encounter a plow vehicle in Heath or any town, please, please, please, slow down and pull to the right. I do not recommend passing any plow vehicle, unless motioned to do so. Passing a plow is very dangerous because we have limited visibility due to all the snow we are pushing.

Some of the more recent road work has been to improve drainage along Route 8A. On West Branch road a 180-foot long section of "sub-drain" was done at the intersection of A.L. Stetson Road. Hopefully this will remedy a long-standing water problem, as I am sure anyone who travels that road will appreciate this winter.

Speaking of road work, this past summer we had about \$169,000 dollars of Chapter 90 money to spend on our roads. With that we were able to pave over five miles of roadway this year. However, next year does not look so good. Governor Celluci has cut the Western Mass. Chapter 90 money by two thirds. So instead of the usual \$170,000 or so next summer we only have about \$50,000 as things are right now. This could change but the Governor is trying to redirect any further funds as well.

I would ask any of the readers who have a chance, to please contact your Representatives and Senators and even the Governor's Office and ask them to please return the Chapter 90 funding to its normal level.

Richard C. Bishop

Elder Law Attorney

Massachusetts, Florida, Arizona

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CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER

On Saturday, December 18, there will be a Christmas Dinner Theater. Eli Merryman, innkeeper, invites one and all to come join in the festivities at the "Bethlehem Inn." A gala evening of dining, music and entertainment will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Heath Community Hall.

The evening's menu includes Honey Mustard Chicken Breast, Baked Potato, Candied Butternut Squash, Green Beans Almondine and Cracked Wheat Rolls. The dinner will be topped off with Cranberry Crunch Ala Mode for dessert and beverages. The night's festivities will occur upstairs in the Hall which will be transformed into the dining hall of a 2000-year-old Jewish Inn.

The cast of the evening is comprised of members from the church youth group who have been rehearsing for over two months in order to polish their lines. The fund raising committee is busy making costumes, building props and searching for live animals which, hopefully, will be in attendance that evening. Because of the approximate two hour length of the program attendance is suggested for those ten years of age and older. The cost of tickets is \$15.00 each. Seating is limited and advance purchase is recommended. For information about obtaining tickets, call 337-4845.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the Building Restoration Fund of the Heath Union Church. The church has entered into the second phase of its renovation plans. The well has been drilled and has produced plenty of water. Funds and permits are in hand to have a septic holding tank installed. The next money, part of which will be from this dinner theater, will be used for installing indoor pipes and modern, handicapped accessible bathrooms.

If you are looking for something new and different this holiday season, reserve your seats and come out on December 18. Be with the Merryman family as they discover the



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WORLD WIDE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

by Ann Lovell

Every Christmas there are many articles written about Christmas traditions, lore, and customs and the Heath Library has a good selection on the subject. The subject is vast. Here I have set aside most of the religious aspects of Christmas, which whole books are written about, including our beloved St. Nicholas, to very briefly touch upon our unique American Christmas and a few unfamiliar customs from other countries - in case any adventuresome souls would like to add a new and enjoyable tradition to their holiday festivities.

The distinctive feature of the American Christmas Season is its international qualities. No other country incorporates as much diversity during the Holiday Season as America. Most of our carols come from other countries; our Christmas tree comes from the Far East via Germany. The Dutch who settled in New York City, known then as New Amsterdam, provided our legend of Santa Claus or St. Nicholas. Santa's sleigh mysteriously flies by the Laplanders' reindeer. From France & Belgium we acquire the custom of carefully hanging our stockings and England gave us many customs including our verbal Christmas greetings, the Christmas card, wonderful holly decorations & mince pies. Ireland contributed the single Christmas candle in each window as a religious decoration and the early Druids of Ireland along with Norse tales gave us our affection for mistletoe and eventually the mistletoe kissing-ball. The Scandinavian countries contributed the Yule-tide season; a variation of Heweol - tid, the

turning time, as the sun seemed to be taking time to turn over in the lands of long winter nights and short winter days. The magnificent poinsettia is from Mexico and recently in parts of New England the farolitos & luminaries from New Mexico have lined the streets of small towns. For a number of years the paper sacks containing sand and a candle have lined the streets of Shelburne Falls on the first Friday after Thanksgiving to create a festival of light and beautifully usher in the Christmas Season. I've also seen them in a town in New Hampshire on Christmas Eve. What are exclusively All American contributions during the holiday season are the savory, plump Christmas turkey and our sweet squash and tasty pumpkin pies.


Christmas traditions are fluid and always developing. No holiday has changed so much from century to century and still survived to be continuously celebrated. These changes, which vary from country to country, including our own, is why Christmas traditions and Christmas lore are difficult to pin point in origin. Articles written about traditions, customs and lore may sound contradictory in nature simply because they evolve over time, vary in form from country to country, and even vary within a country.

First-footing is an excellent example of changing traditions. In Scotland the tradition of first-footing is known as Hogmanny and done on New Year's Day with certain customs, while in England first-footing is done on Christmas Day and has some of the same Scottish traditions and some of its own.

What is first-footing? The "first-footer" is the first person to enter the house on Christmas or New Year's Day. It has to be done properly so that the household is blessed with good luck and good fortune for the year to come. A first-footer would have to be a dark-haired male in good health. A redheaded male or a woman would be considered bad luck and ill fortune would befall the family during the following year. He arrives carrying a sprig of a fir tree or holly and salt & bread can be given to him as he enters the front door and exits the back door.

In America my experiences with first-footers has been less strict in the rules. The first-footer could be either male or female and came with a simple token gift for prosperity to the home. Best Wishes were said and a personal

(continued on page 7)



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blessing for a bountiful year to come was recited. Humor is allowed in America as long as the blessings and token gift for prosperity and good luck are given. Christian blessings are also appropriate.

There is a unique Italian custom on Twelfth Night, (Jan. 5) having its foundation in the legend of La Befana. The story varies but in essence the three wise men stopped at her house to get directions as they followed the star in the East. The three wise men asked La Befana to help them find the Christ Child but she was too busy sweeping her floor. As soon as she was finished she chose a small gift for the Christ Child and set out to look for the babe but had no luck. So every Twelfth Night she wanders through Italy, flying on her broom stick, going from house to house, lifting the bed covers looking longingly in the faces of the sleeping children for the Christ Child. In her disappointment she goes sadly away but leaves a little gift in memory of the Holy Babe.

In France the Twelve Days of Christmas are still celebrated from the 26th of December to the 6th of January, Three Kings Day or Epiphany. A cake is baked and two beans (or coins) are baked in cake. The two people receiving the beans are king & queen for the evening. In Paris many people go out to restaurants to celebrate this occasion and have a Three Kings cake there. Some manipulating can be done so a certain couple is placed together, sometimes for merriment and sometimes for matchmaking.

A mediaeval Christmas custom was the Wassail bowl. Wassail comes from the words Wass-heil and maybe rendered into modern English as "What hail!" or "Here's to you." The Wassail bowl was frequently ornamented with branches of greenery to form a canopy or arbor over it. Inside was a mixture of hot ale, sugar, nutmeg or ginger or the more expensive rich wine, spiced and sweetened. Apples floated on top. Some writers called the apples lamb's wool, others, the whole punch, lamb's wool or old man's beard.

I wish you all a peaceful and joyous Christmas and a wonderful New Year, with many joyous blessings in the year 2000!

(ed. note: To our dismay it was necessary to edit out some of Ann's article, but an intact copy is with the holiday display at the public library.)

TEMPORARY CENSUS JOBS IN HEATH

The time has come around again for the U.S. decennial census. To ensure the correct congressional apportionment in the House of Representatives, the U.S. Census Bureau must take as accurate a population count as possible. This enormous task has been broken down to county and town level.

At this time, the U.S. Bureau of the Census has temporary job openings for people to work locally. Most jobs will require going door to door and would require a time commitment of 20-40 hours per week. The field work will run mid/late winter to early spring for 6-10 weeks. The pay is scheduled at \$10.75 / hr., with a mileage reimbursement of .31 cents per mile.

Applicants must pass a basic skills test, which takes approximately 45 minutes to complete. Those hired will attend a paid 3-day training. If interested please call 413-236-5803 to find a testing site near you. At this time there is a test scheduled in Heath on Dec.17 at the Community Hall at 1 p.m. There is a poster with brochures located in the foyer of Sawyer Hall.

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SELECTMEN'S REPORT

by Heath Board of Selectmen

Thomas Lively, Brian De Vriese and Charles Mackie

The Board of Selectmen has resumed its regular schedule of meeting every Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m.

NEW FACES!

Chuck Mackie was elected to the Board of Selectmen at the Special Election held on November 30, 1999 to fill the remainder of Hilma Sumner's term. He was sworn in at the meeting of the Board of Selectmen that evening. His contribution to the work of the Board will be invaluable in view of his knowledge and experience with town and regional government.

Hilma Sumner has been appointed Town Clerk until the next Annual Town Meeting. We look forward to working with her in the coming year.

Tim Robinson of Charlemont has been offered the position of Town Accountant. He has been meeting with June Day to become familiar with the specifics of the job. Tim is a youth counselor with the Franklin Community Action Corp and was an accountant in Amherst prior to moving to the West County area. We welcome him to Heath and look forward to crunching numbers with him soon.

NEW COMMITTEE!

An outgrowth of the Heath Space Task Force, headed up by Paul Turnbull, was the formation of a permanent Town Buildings and Facilities Management Committee. The selectmen voted to form the committee as recommended by the Space Task Force final report. Future meetings will be held with the group to finalize their responsibilities with regard to the planning, maintenance and repair of Town buildings and facilities. Paul Turnbull, Jim Cerone, and Richards Steinbock were appointed to the committee as its charter members. There are still two appointments available to this committee. If you have an interest in this area, please contact one of your selectmen or one of the committee members.

NEW VENUE!

The Board of Selectmen has been meeting in the basement of the Community Hall. The move was necessary to comply with State laws for accessibility. Other benefits of the move are alleviating the overcrowded condition in Sawyer Hall and providing a quieter environment for public discussions.

JOINT MEETINGS WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Board of Selectmen has been holding joint meetings with the Finance Committee to work out the current fiscal year's budget and to plan for the FY2001 budget. The "cherry sheets" have arrived indicating the amounts of money

coming to the Town from the State this year. A special Town Meeting will need to be called to approve the budget when the "pothole money" has been allocated to the Town. This process has been delayed by the late passage of the budget by the State Legislature.

FRTA Bus to Heath

A list of potential riders and a request for bus service in Heath has been submitted to the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA). We extend our thanks to Sandy Clavette for her work with the Council on Aging on this and hope to be able to announce the beginning and details of the service soon.

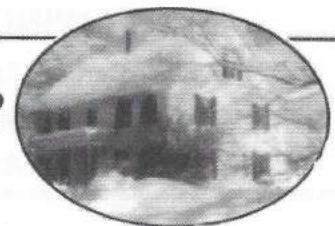
FRCOG

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments was invited to the November 30th Selectmen's meeting to make a presentation on the services that they provide to the member towns. Officials from the neighboring towns were invited to attend. Among the consulting services offered are, masterplanning, zoning studies, traffic and pavement studies, health information, civil engineering, surveying, data collection, environmental consulting, resource development, economic development, and cooperative purchasing of goods and services. We thank the FRCOG for coming up the hill in the evening to educate us on their extensive and valuable services and hope we will be working with them in the near future.

HEATH ON LINE

The Town now has an email address heath@crocker.com and a domain name www.townofheath.org. Send messages to any board or individual via the e-mail address as the domain is still being set up at this time. Next project, a Home page.

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The house on the hill with the view of yesteryear

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ASSESSORS' COLUMN

by Henry Leuchtman

As usually happens, things have been hopping in the Assessors' Office this fall. We annually go through quite a process to get the information to Betty Nichols, the tax collector, so she can get the tax bills out. This year has been no exception.

You might recall that the town voted to level-fund the budget at last May's town meeting despite the substantial (\$200,000+) increase in Heath's Mohawk Regional School District assessment. The town did this while planning to appeal to the Department of Education for relief — the so-called "pothole" money — intended to "fill the potholes" left from the education reform law's incredibly complicated formula for state aid for education to towns.

The process of getting those funds is never lightning fast, but this year it has been even slower than usual. Amazingly, the state still (as of when I am writing this in mid-November) doesn't have a budget for the fiscal year that started back on July 1st! Once the budget is finally agreed upon, and signed by the governor, only then can we apply for these "pothole" funds. It occurred to the folks in town government that we may not see that money for quite a while. Legally, we could not do our annual "recap" process (leading to setting a tax rate) with a budget we knew not to be balanced. The prospect of not being able to send tax bills until well into the winter (or spring!) of 2000 was not a cheerful one.

You, as a taxpayer, might disagree, but if the town has to borrow a lot of money to keep the roads plowed and pay for all of the services we use because it doesn't have the usual real and personal property tax revenues to call upon, it ends up costing us all.

So, a number of weeks ago, we proposed to the selectmen that the town approach the Department of Revenue for permission to send "preliminary" tax bills. The selectmen agreed and we were off on a new (for this particular board) adventure. The assessors' attempt at this, however, was unsuccessful. According to Joe Boudreau, our "man at the D.O.R.", the "pro-forma" recap and subsequent "preliminary" tax billing process could only be undertaken in a reval year and only be requested because the valuations of the property in town were being held up in that process. We could not, according to Joe, request permission to do this just because our budget was not balanced.

At this point, Dave Howland came to the rescue and contacted some of the higher-ups in the D.O.R. and, with some effort, actually got us permission to go ahead with the pro-

cess. It seems only fair, since the delay here is really due to our not getting word from the Department of Education on this pothole assistance. So the first half bills for FY2000 were scheduled to go out in early December, a bit before your reading this. When you got that bill, it simply reflected one-half of the tax liability you had last year. Now this is all well and good, but we feel that you should be aware of some possible future rudeness.

The assessed value for most properties hasn't changed much (FY2000 is not a reval year), but for some it has: if you've built a new building or added something of value to your property (as of January 1, 1999). Also, if the Department of Education doesn't come through with much assistance, we all will face a much higher tax rate.

The problem comes because we sent these first half bills based on last year's valuations and tax rate and they did NOT reflect any value or possible tax rate changes.

Think of it this way: Let's say that last year you had a tax liability of \$800. That means that the "estimated" bill you received in December 1999 was for \$400.

Let's say you added an addition, and the tax rate goes up quite a bit (because the D.O.E. decides not to bail us out). As a result, when we do the "real" recap before mailing the second half bills (in the spring of 2000), we might calculate that you have a "real" liability of, say, \$1,000.

Since you paid only \$400 in the fall, you'll then have to pay \$600 in the spring to cover balance of the "real" tax liability of \$1,000! This is just an example, and we have no idea of what the tax rate will finally be until we hear about the pothole funds, but we just wanted to warn you to keep that Y2K mattress stuffed.

If, however, your value has not changed and we can hold the rate down, the 2nd bill won't be very much more than the first. As soon as we are able to set the tax rate, we will get the word out. I cannot imagine that this will happen before the new year. Let's all wish the Finance Committee luck with all of this! Well, that's it. Happy New Millennium from the assessors!

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Hilltown Tastes

by Terry Pettengill

Here is a traditional fare for Christmas Eve that many French Canadian people, including my grandmother, baked.

French Canadian Pork Pie (Loutiere)

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1 lb. ground pork
- 1 med. onion (diced)
- 1 c. mashed potato or 2 c. grated raw potato.
- 1-1/2 tsp. salt or to taste
- 1 to 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper

Brown the meats in a skillet until redness is gone. Drain off most of the fat. Add the onion and spices. Cook until soft, then add potatoes and mix well. Add hot water, if needed, to the right consistency. Bake in a double pie crust at 425 deg. for 10 minutes and 350 deg. for 30 minutes or until browned. Slit top crust as in any fruit pie to vent the steam.

A very nice side dish for the Holiday table was added to the Heath Cook Book by Helen Nichols, a long-time resident of Heath.

CRANBERRY SIDE DISH

- 1 can whole cranberry sauce
- 1 pkg. Knox gelatin
- 1/2 c. crushed walnuts
- 1 sm. pkg. cherry jello
- 2 tbsp. grated orange rind
- 1 can crushed pineapple

Drain juice from pineapple. Add water until both equal one cup. Dissolve jello and gelatin in a little cold water. Bring pineapple and liquid to a boil. Add jello mixture, cranberries, orange rind, and walnuts. Mix well and pour into mold.

Refrigerate over night.

Here's a treat given to me by Alli Thane-Stetson. She uses it for anytime a treat or snack is needed, be it Holiday or otherwise. She also informs me it makes a great Hostess Gift.

CARAMEL CORN

- 1 c. of popped popcorn or 3 bags of micro-popcorn
- ° c. peanuts (optional)
- ° c. brown sugar
- ° c. cup white sugar
- ° c. butter (or margarine)
- ° c. corn syrup
- ° c. baking soda
- ° tsp. salt

Place popped corn and nuts in a brown paper bag. Combine syrup, sugar, butter, and salt in a 2 qt. glass bowl. Microwave 2 to 4 minutes on High. Stir after each minute, until mixture boils. Microwave 2 minutes more, then remove. Stir in baking soda. Pour over corn in bag and shake. Place bag in microwave for 1° minutes. Remove bag and shake well.

Another traditional Holiday treat seems to be a recipe many have, but each is a little different.

PEANUT BRITTLE

- 1 c. light corn syrup
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1 c. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 ° c. raw peanuts (red skinned ones best)
- 1 tsp. baking soda

Mix first 4 ingredients and cook over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Add raw peanuts, increase heat to high and stir constantly until peanuts become lightly browned. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda. Spread thinly on greased cookie sheet. Cool and break into pieces.

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PARKS & RECREATION

by Eileen Tougas

The newly appointed Parks & Recreation Committee had its first organizational meeting on December 6th. At this meeting Eileen Tougas was voted as chair; Margo Newton, secretary; Val Kaempfer, treasurer; and Rollo Kinsman, coordinator.

It is our understanding that a survey sent out by the Planning Board indicated that many expressed numerous types of recreational activities they would like to have available in town. Among the most popular on the "wish list" were; the annual cross country ski race, a town swimming area and a family picnic area.

We feel our primary duty is to facilitate activities by making them available through your active participation. If you are interested in spearheading a club or special interest group activity please contact either Eileen Tougas at 337-8558 or Val Kaempfer at 337-5728 and/or attend our next meeting on Jan. 10th at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Hall. We look forward to sharing your ideas so that we can better serve you.

Wishing you all a merry and joyous Christmas and health, happiness and success in the new millennium!

Wanted: Looking for Heath ski enthusiasts who are interested in forming or joining a ski club in Heath.

This club would be responsible for and insure the continuance of the annual cross country ski race as well as other skiing activities as desired by ski club members.

Please contact: Eileen Tougas at 337-8558 or Val Kaempfer at 337-5728

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*"If it's old, works well and has a purpose in life,
don't change it".*

by Carroll Stowe

WORKING WEAR APPAREL

As a very young fellow I was always interested in older folks work wear. There were two items of work cloths that held my interest for a long time and would today if available to the buying public. These clothes were called Brown's Beech jackets and vests. These two long wearing pieces of apparel were worn by a lot of my older friends, and I always looked forward to being able to own and wear this type of outer wear. For the most part, the closures were metal snaps. I think in later years the jacket could be bought with a zipper.

There was a well known contractor in our area who always seemed to afford himself a new Beech Jacket each year. I wouldn't have felt that he could possibly have worn one out each year. I saw my father at a barn fire. He was working from a ladder and the fire fighters accidentally turned the nozzle on him. He was wearing his Beech Jacket and it never wet through.

This wear apparel was created from a combination of new and reused wool. Its construction was such that one could work at any task and not feel restricted in any movement. I can recall my dad plowing a cornfield in the late fall and wishing that I were on that sulky plow doing what dad was able to and wearing a handsome Beech Jacket. I never did plow with a good team wearing a Beech Jacket.

I often got a great feeling when having gotten a sled load of logs on and bound down and picked up the tools and slipped into my Beech Jacket, climbed up on the load of logs and picked up the lines to a good working team of horses.

Having the pleasure of a good working team out in front of me and the thrill of the electricity coming to my fingers through the lines was my favorite pleasure and the Beech clothing was next. The color of this apparel is difficult to describe but for the most part was black background with a white thread pinstripe through the material. One fabric had a rather blue tinge to it. I feel that it is most unfortunate that this good quality clothing is no longer available. Good wearing apparel for long wearing people.



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RAYS OF INTEREST

by R.C. Pettengill

I was told that at one time there was a Vermont law which allowed people to stake out a lot of land that would be theirs to keep if they developed it and stayed there for a certain length of time.

I was also told about a certain Vermont farmer who had a large hay field. One day early in the spring this field sprouted a big tent held down by guy ropes. After it had been there for a few days one of the neighboring farmers asked this farmer if he was not afraid he would lose his field because of this squatters rights law. The farmer with the field told his neighbor he would take care of it when the time came.

By the end of June the grass in the field was ready to be mowed so the farmer hooked up his big Case Diesel tractor to a mowing machine with a seven-foot cutter blade and lined it up with the tent. When he got to the tent he lifted the cutter blade just enough to clear the stakes and snipped off all the guy ropes on that side of the tent. He then proceeded to mow that swath to the end of the field. He turned his tractor and lined it up with the tent again and started his new swath. By the time he got to where the tent had been pitched the only sign of it was a flap hanging out of a car trunk rapidly disappearing out of his field.

I am not going to worry about this farmer having any trouble with anything the year 2000 can hand out to him.

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DEED TRANSFERS

Donald G. and Janie L. Churchill, to Gregory R. and Nicole B. Yezierski, 51B Taylor Brook Road, \$120,000.

Eric W. and Esther L. Danielson of Canton Center, CT, to Eric W. Danielson, Adamsville Road, 188 acres, two parcels, \$1.

Anna B. Hutchinson Estate, Georgiana Kennedy of Brooklyn, NY, individually and executor, to Georgiana and James T. Kennedy of Brooklyn, NY, Stone Hill Road, about 22 acres, land also in Rowe, less than \$100.

Dorothy G. Sessions of Heath to Norman R. Sessions of Charlemont and Janet Sessions Mello of Apache Junction, AZ., Jacksonville State Road, 161 acres, land also in Charlemont. No consideration.

Raymond F. and Sharon L. Rice of Shelburne Falls to Kenneth J. and Sandra J. Gilbert, Avery Brook Road, two parcels, \$1.

Ruth M. Corey to Dawn M. and D. Scott Holden, 110 Burrington Road, \$100,000.

Jeannine R. Patrick of Chicopee to Lloyd and Annette Robinson of Chicopee, 18 Shawnee Drive, \$9,000.

Brian P. Patrick of Chicopee to Lloyd and Annette Robinson of Chicopee, Shawnee Drive, Lot 47 of Unit 3, "Mohawk Estates," \$1,200.

Kemsie and Theresa Barns of Chicopee to Douglas J. and Dolores D. and Dennis R. Brooksbank of Chicopee, Shawnee Drive, Lots 52 and 53 of Unit 3, "Mohawk Estates,," \$4,000.

Frank C. Brower Jr. to Sharon O. Brower, Rowe Road, two parcels, \$1.

Flora N. Sampson and Margarita Sampson Ockendon of Fort Pierce, FL. to Flora N. Sampson Funding Trust, Flora N. Sampson, trustee, 319 Avery Brook Road, land also in Charlemont, \$1.

Roy H. Sampson of New York City to Flora N. Sampson Funding Trust, Flora N. Sampson, trustee, Avery Brook Road, 30 acres, land also in Charlemont, \$1.

Charles H. Martens of Montclair, NJ and Christine L. Martens of New York, NY to Charles H. Martens as life tenant, Charles Andreas Martens and Eric John Martens of Montclair, NJ and NY, Oxbow Road, 10 acres, \$1.

Frank C. Brower, Jr. to Sharon O. Brower, Rowe Road, two tracts. No consideration.

June I. Guild Day to David S. Gott and Edward B. Watt, Flagg Hill Road, 38.10 acres, \$230,000.

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Nancy Burrington
Evergreen Information
337-4425

Cable's Burnt Hill
Blueberries
337-4454

James Cerone
Builder
337-4210

Coursey Design
Interior architecture, design
& decoration - 337-4751

D.C. Builders
Branch Hill Road
337-4705

Robert Delisle
Electrician
337-5716

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

Girard-Peters
SUGAR HOUSE
337-5501

Earl M. Gleason
Fire Equipment
337-4948

Heath Brook Studio
Glass and baskets
337-5736

L & S Enterprises
Leisure Furniture Manufacturer
337-5505

Patricia Lentz
Indigo Glassworks
337-5375

Maple Ledge Farm
Maple Syrup Year Round
337-4705

John Mooney
Custom Remodeling
337-8344

Wanda Mooney
Realtor
337-8344

Alan Nichols
Furniture Maker
337-6665

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337-8704

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337-4746

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337-0211

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337-8369

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337-4759

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337-4964

Paul Turnbull
Janice Boudreau
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337-4033

Bonnie Wodin
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337-5529

Support Your Local Businesses

If you would like more information about how to become a member of the Heath Enterprise Council,
please call Alicia Tripp at 337-4964

VIEW FROM BURNT HILL

by Jack Cable

As fall approached, we had our annual Carroll Stowe Wagon Train event. On September 26th, the autumn colors, clear weather, magnificent views, hot drinks, and Beverly's blueberry muffins made for an enjoyable time. Seeing these good people traversing the roads on the farm certainly is a memorable sight! Wagons, sulkies, buggies, horseback riders, and, best of all, the horses are all certainly related to a quieter and more peaceful time. The event is a good lesson in slowing down instead of the fast-paced life we seem to be in today. We can only hope and pray that this kind of event will stay with us through the next century. The types of people like Carroll Stowe, Eva, the Dickinsons, Smiths, Livelys, Gleasons, Burringtons, Crowningshields, Churchill's, and others, we can only hope that such fabric and values remain.

Gazing out the window, I see a vapor trail as a jet plane streaks overhead. As its path crosses the standing stone site, I think of three thousand years of evolution between the two objects. Minds and hands made both out of the earth's holdings. As we soon begin a new century, I wonder what minds and hands will nurture next.

Because I was injured at work in September, I had to rely on others to help with fall farm chores. Rick Hamilton, Carl "Scoop" Ayers, Ed Johnson and Ed Klaus (of Leyden) moved machinery and mowed and cut the necessary brush for next spring's burn. I thank them, our blueberry harvest crew and all who patronized our farm this year.

Roland Duris of Jacksonville, FL, son of Andrew and Pearl Duris recently paid us a visit. I purchased the farm from Andy. Pearl is currently in rest home. She is 91 years old!

An excellent display now at the Heath Public Library shows the work of Colgate Gilbert's NEARA (New England Antiquities Research Assn.) group researching the Burnt Hill Historical Site. The display chronicles the history of our farm from its earliest known inhabitants to the present. When this group presently organized as Burnt Hill Research Committee finishes their study, Burnt Hill will probably be the most documented historical property in Heath.

May the holiday season be full of joy and love. And may the new year and new century be good to us all.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year..

HEATH CHURCH NEWS

by Pastor Colin Lucid

Who is the Christ child that we celebrate?

Luke 1:35 says And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." This verse of scripture points to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ above all men. He was called the Son of God. Christmas is the celebration of this unique fact. Our church family invites you to come and celebrate the birthday of our Savior during some of our upcoming events.

Our annual Church Christmas Party is Sunday night, Dec. 12th at 6:00 p.m. It's Pot Luck. Please bring your family and favorite food to share. We will be at the Community Hall. We will also have our Yankee Swap if you would like to join in.

Our "Bethlehem Dinner Theater" is Saturday night Dec. 18th, 7:00 p.m. You won't want to miss this event. We are going all out. For reservations and details please call the parsonage 337-5755 or Hilma 337-4845.

Dec. 24th at 7:00 p.m. is our Christmas Candlelight Service and annual Birthday Cake for Jesus. This service will be held at Heath Church. Please bring your family and join us in celebrating. All are welcome to join us.

SUNDAY: 10:00 a.m. - Worship Service; 10:00 a.m. - Children's Church and Nursery; 3:30 p.m. - Youth Group meets at Heath School., with all teens 7th - 12th grade invited. Please wear sneakers and bring a favorite snack.

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study and prayer time at the parsonage.

THURSDAY

3:30 - 5:30 p.m. Boy's Fire Cadet Club at the Fire House
Grades K-8th are invited. .50 dues.

FRIDAY

3:30 - 5:30 p.m. Girl's Friendship Club meets at Diane Crowningshield's home.
Grades 3rd - 8th grade are invited. .50 dues.

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MILESTONES

by Edith Royer

.....
Alli Thane of Heath and Douglas Stetson of Kirkville, NY were married on October 19 at the Community Wesleyan Church of Kirkville, NY They are making their home at 31 Jacobs Rd. in Heath.

Born Oct. 20, a daughter **Alicia Marie** to **Jaime (Hyytinen)** and **Nicholas Johnston** of Charlemont, grand daughter of **Donna and James Hyytinen** of Heath and Gail and John Johnston of Colrain. Great grand daughter of Jean Giard of Colrain and Mary Zeiner of Greenfield.

Born Sept. 27, a son **Matthew Austin** to **Tracey E. and Danny Brooks** of Heath. Grandson of Linda Bird of Greenfield, Jack Kirkconnell of Cranston, RI and Nancy Dimich of Shelburne Falls. The Great grandson of Edward and Lucy Balkus of Lowell.

Mr. and Mrs. Chauncey Cable of Cape Cod, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20. Their five children and many grandchildren honored them with a party at the Barley Neck Inn in E. Orleans. **Jack and Beverly Cable** of Heath and Rick and Debbie Hamilton of Colrain attended.

Valerie and Charles "Bud" Kaempfer of 1 Deer Run Path were honored by friends and family at a surprise 50th Anniversary celebration held at the Heath Community Hall on November 14. The Kaempfer s were married in Brewster, NY on November 12, 1949. The couple renewed their marriage vows in a ceremony performed by Pastor Colin Lucid of the Union Federated Church in Heath. Among the large gathering of guests were the couple's five children and their families. Carl and Lisa of Maryland, Mark and Michelle of Easthampton, Frank and Lydia, Fred and Deanna of CT, and Fay and Claude Sirois of New Brunswick, Canada. Ten of the couple's eleven grandchildren were present. Music for the event was provided by DJ Tom Ford of Chicopee.

.....
Eugene Sessions, 58 of Greenfield, died Oct. 16. He was born in Heath, the son of Richard and Ellen (Hillman) Sessions. He leaves his wife Barbara Wood Sessions of Greenfield, a son L. Warren Sessions of Shelburne Falls, three brothers, Richard, Allen and Robert all of Heath, and three sisters, Luella Bigelow of Heath, Grace Vollenger of Florence and Sarah Bernard of Jacksonville, VT. A graveside service was held in the North Heath cemetery.

Gerald R. Allaire, 74 of Heath died Sept. 26, 1999. He was born in Montreal, Canada, May 13, 1925, the son of Alred and Mary Allaire. He attended schools there. Mr. Allaire was a World War II veteran, serving in the 967th Field Artillery Unit in the European Theater. He received 4 campaign ribbons for combat duty. Mr. Allaire moved to Heath in 1987. He leaves his wife, the former Pauline Bousquet; three sons, David, of Satellite Beach, FL, Brian of Becket and Raymond of Melbourne, FL; a daughter Denise Maynard of Springfield; a brother; three sisters; 16 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Burial was in Arms Cemetery.

HAPPENINGS

Jane Yolen and Ann Turner will be signing their newest books at Boswell's Books in Shelburne Falls on Dec. 11 from 11 a.m.- 1 p.m. Call 625-9463 for more information.

Greenfield Savings Bank is collecting new homemade or store-bought mittens to be given to the Warm the Children, a non-profit group that makes winter clothing available to need children in Franklin County. The various bank branches will be collecting the mittens through New Year's Eve.

An Open House and Art Sale featuring the art work of Frederick Burrington will be held on Sat. Dec. 18 from 10a.m.- 4 p.m. by Frederick and Laurie Burrington. For information please call 413-337-4302.

Heath Brook Studio will hold its 15th annual open studio and sale on December 11-12, 1999 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. There will be glassblowing demonstrations on Saturday and Sunday. For information call Bob or Jayne Dane at Heath Center, 413-337-5736. 10% of all proceeds will be donated to The Heath Land Preservation Fund.

Y2K AND HEATH

by Richards Steinbock

Heath is prepared for any Y2K related problems. Bob Tanner and I have been attending regular Emergency Management meetings and are as sure as we can be that, statewide and town wide, systems are compliant and contingency plans are in place.

We are, however, only human. After having been assured all year that 911 has built-in redundancy, we witnessed countywide phone and 911 failure last month when a fiber optic cable was severed. The system did react immediately with backup. All fire stations in the county were manned, radio contact was normal and local station phone numbers were disseminated over radio stations and through word of mouth.

If 911 should fail due to Y2K - highly unlikely- the Heath Fire station will be manned. The phone number there is 337-4461 or town garage 337-4462. Both ring in the fire station. Write these numbers down and put them by your phones.

Y2K problems, if any, will be minor, isolated, and of short duration. The biggest threat comes from people panicking before the event. You do not need to clean out the grocery store, clear your bank account, or fill your house with gasoline. Normal preparations for a winter storm will suffice - enough food, water, cash, medicine, heat on hand for one or two days of being snowbound without power. Refer to the emergency checklist you all received last summer for items you should have on hand.

This should be no big deal. Let's all enjoy the New Year and look forward to a new millennium of lower taxes, smoother roads and a chicken in every pot.

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HEATH SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP NEWS

by Mary Beth O'Dea

The partnership would like to thank Lorin Gowdy and the Heath Police Department for helping to make the Halloween Party such a huge success. The primaries and middles enjoyed all kinds of activities at the school while the uppers and teens had the opportunity to experience the Haunted Hayride in Colrain. Both events seem to run smoothly thanks to all of those who helped. Your time and dedication is truly appreciated!

There are a number of events, with a BMX Stunt Bike Assembly just occurred and an upcoming Refrigerator Raffle. If you're feeling lucky, try your chances at winning a brand new 26 cubic ft. Frigidaire side-by-side refrigerator (\$1,400)! All proceeds will be used to provide Scholarships for the Heath After-School Programs. Ace Appliance has generously donated this item and will include a 90-day warranty and free delivery within their territory (Western MA., Southern VT., and Northern CT.) The refrigerator is currently on display in the entrance area of Heath School. Tickets are \$5.00 and are available at Heath School, Heath Post Office, Peter's Store, Avery's in Charlemont and the Shelburne Falls Post Office. Checks should be made payable to Heath Elementary School. Drawing will be held on Friday December 17, 1999 during the All-School Meeting. Good Luck and thank-you for your support! Any questions please call Mary Beth O'Dea @ 337-8683.

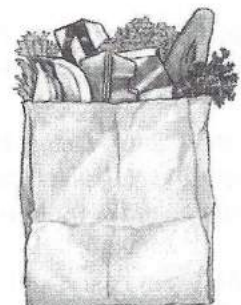
Did you know that the Art Bank of Shelburne offers scholarships supported by local cultural councils? Give the Art Bank a call at 625-6235!

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