



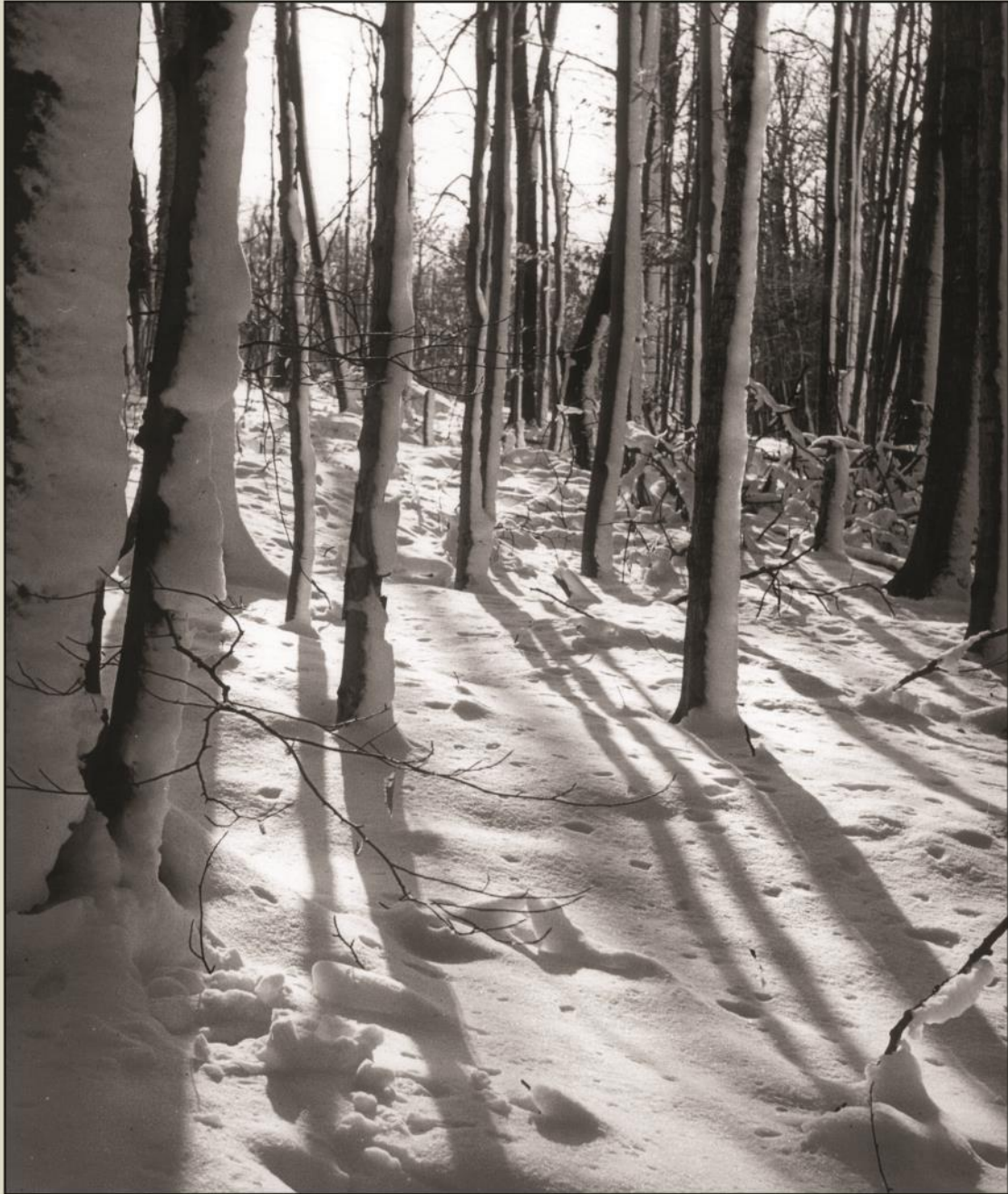
HEATH HERALD

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On the Cover:

Black-and-white photograph of woodland in winter, by Howard Dickinson. This image was awarded the blue ribbon at the 1981 Heath Fair.

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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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If you have questions regarding payment, please contact Danette Reynolds, contact information above.

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There are three ways to submit your letters to the editor, articles, and/or subscription forms:

- Send to our email address:
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- Send to our PO Box:
The *Heath Herald*, PO Box 54, Heath, MA 01346
- Drop off at our Town Hall box:
Local residents can drop a letter or subscription form into the black box on the wall to the left of the post office boxes in the vestibule (no postage needed).

Submission Deadlines

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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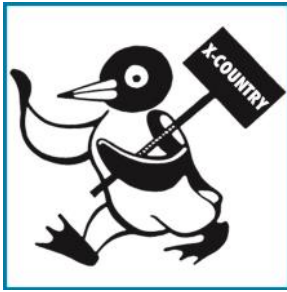
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Remembering the Heath Ski Race



Heath trivia question: *What single winter event in the past 50 years drew the most people away from their warm fires and out into the cold?*

If you were in Heath in 1985 for the Heath Bicentennial, you probably know that the answer

is the Bicentennial Cross-country Ski Race. The race was so successful that it became an annual event for the next ten years, weather permitting.

The following excerpt is reprinted from the April/May 1985 issue of the Heath Herald.

On February 10, the Heath Bicentennial celebration



started with a bang, literally. Bill Thane of Brunelle Road and Jeff Novy of Wilmington, VT, dressed in uniforms of the Seth Warner Regiment of

the Green Mountains, fired a cannon, a replica of the "three pounder" used in the Revolutionary War. Eighty-nine cross-country skiers started a grueling 15-kilometer race which took them from Heath Center high up to the blueberry field of Burnt Hill, across toward Fort Shirley, and back by the fairgrounds. Organized by Steve Marcotte of Flagg Road, the race was highly successful and, as Steve said, "We couldn't have chosen a more perfect day, weather-wise." Enthusiastic groups cheered skiers along the route and later enjoyed the hot soup and baked goods served at the Community Hall by members of the Heath Play Group and Drop-in Center.

—Alli Thane

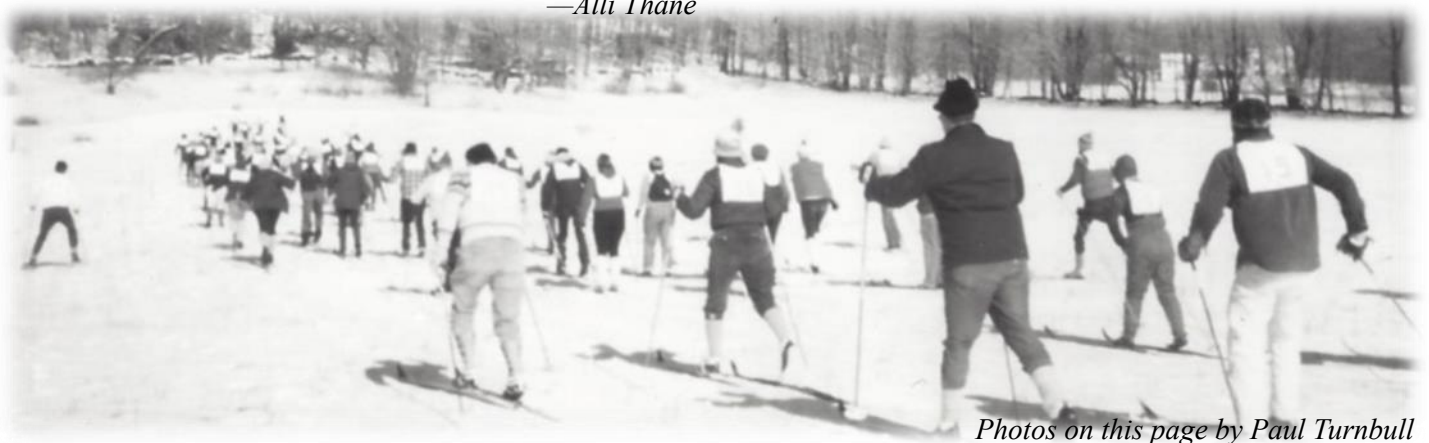
The following excerpt is reprinted from the April/May 1986 issue of the Heath Herald.

Much thoughtful and imaginative planning together with the combined efforts and cooperation of a wide range of townspeople had given sufficient advance assurance that the Second Annual Cross-country Ski Race, scheduled for Sunday February 9, would be a resounding success. And assurance was made doubly sure when the weatherman decided to play his part by providing ideal conditions—dazzling sunshine, seasonably cool temperatures, and crisp crackling snow. No fewer than 116 skiers of all ages presented at the starting line, and for a time the town center took on the aspect of a Swiss Alpine ski resort at the height of the season.

It should be recorded that a husband and wife from Pelham, MA, David and Trina Hosmer, came in first and second respectively with times substantially lower than the winning time in last year's Inaugural Race. Mrs. Hosmer, a member of the U. S. Olympic Squad a few years back, declared that the course had been extremely challenging as well as wonderfully scenic. She and her husband vowed to return next year. Most fittingly, the first Heath skier to finish was Steve Marcotte who, with his volunteer helpers, had undertaken the task of preparing and grooming the 15-kilometer trail.

It should also be recorded that a self-appointed panel of judges voted unanimously to award the Laid-Back prize (Ordinary Street Clothes Category) to Dennis Avery of Charlemont, who impressed fellow competitors and spectators alike with the consummate ease and flowing grace with which he sailed along the trail—in both directions—looking for all the world like he had just stepped out of his study after a bout with Henry James for a spot of restorative exercise.

—Alastair Maitland
(Continued on next page)



Photos on this page by Paul Turnbull

Remembering the Heath Ski Race (Continued from previous page)

In subsequent years the race continued to draw crowds of avid skiers and spectators. By all accounts, each year had its challenges and successes. One year the race was almost cancelled on account of no snow and another when threatened by too much snow. All speak of the beauty of the scenery along with the challenge of the course.

On race day, the Center of town was always a bustle of energy with many volunteers registering the racers, setting up check-points, and getting folks to where they needed to be. Carroll Stowe gave sleigh rides to those not skiing and great food was served in the Community Hall.

Lynn Perry of South Road remembers a time when she and Martha McCutchen skied the race. "We had such a good time, really one of the best experiences of my life. We skied without a care in the world, talking and enjoying the scenery. We even stopped for a picnic half way through. It wasn't until we neared the end that we realized we had taken so long that the ski patrol was out looking for us. I guess we forgot it was a race!" At the other end of the spectrum, John Henry remembers one race when, as he was gliding along, he was knocked to the ground by a dog who bit him in the derriere.



This didn't stop him from finishing the race but explained why, upon crossing the finish line, he immediately "dropped trou" to check the large bruise on his backside.



Vince O'Connell of Plainfield crossed the finish line first in his Speedo bathing suit.

Mention the race and everyone speaks of the time when the weather turned unseasonably warm and the winning racer, Vince O'Connell of Plainfield, came



Kids take their mark at the Heath Ski Race.

across the finish line wearing his Speedo bathing suit!

No one I spoke to remembers exactly when the last race was held. In the end the unpredictable weather and the challenge of maintaining the trail proved to be beyond even the most dedicated crew of volunteers. For anyone who participated though, the Heath Ski Race is a treasured memory of community life at its best, regardless of the weather.

—Deb Porter

With the help of Steve Marcotte, the guy that got it all started.



*Après-ski in Heath's Community Hall
(L to R): Leighton McCutchen, John Henry,
Art Schwenger and Steve Marcotte.*

Thank You, Fire Chief Ken Gilbert!



The Selectboard wishes to update the community on the recent retirement of our Fire Chief, Kenneth Gilbert. In November, Chief Gilbert announced to the Board that he was planning to retire as of December 31, 2017. In December, the Selectboard ac-

cepted the Chief's resignation, with sadness and with much thanks and appreciation for the services provided to the town for the last two-and-a-half years as the Chief and for the last twelve-plus years as an active member of the Heath Fire Department.

Chief Gilbert joined the Heath Fire Department in 2005 and spent years as an active volunteer member of the department, answering to call after call, both in Heath and in many of the surrounding communities. Chief Gilbert was well liked by others in these departments and, due to his willingness to serve and his passion for the fire department, he moved up through the ranks. In September 2015, Deputy Chief Gilbert accepted the position of Fire Chief for the Town of Heath.

Chief Gilbert took on the position with a positive attitude and spirit, and a great deal of energy and enthusiasm. He would spend several hours over many days of the week at his position for the town. The Chief responded to and ran numerous medical and fire calls; he performed the actions of the Fire Prevention Officer by participating in fire and life safety inspections and ensuring the town's compliance with applicable fire codes and ordinances; he provided training and guidance to the town's fire department members; and he was an active member and former President of the Heath Fire Fighter's Association.

Chief Gilbert has agreed to stay involved with the department for a period of time to help with the transition of our new interim fire chief, Nick Anzuoni, who also serves as the Fire Chief for the Town of Colrain. In recent years, neighboring town fire departments have been working together at group trainings and other department-related activities. Chief Gilbert worked to help facilitate these multiple town trainings, which will now be able to continue under Interim Chief Anzuoni.

Again, we wish to thank Retired Chief Kenneth Gilbert for his dedicated service to the Town of Heath.

We have greatly appreciated all that he has accomplished for our town and our surrounding neighbors. We will miss you as our Chief but know that you will be around as our Retired Chief and friend to help when able. Best Wishes and Thank You!

—Selectboard



Snowfall totals as of 4:00 a.m. EST Monday

| City | Snowfall amount (inches) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kennebunk, Maine | 12.8 |
| Waterbury, Vermont | 11.5 |
| Amsterdam, New York | 10.0 |
| Fitchburg, Massachusetts | 9.4 |
| Heath, Massachusetts | 9.0 |

"The most serious charge which can be brought against New England is not Puritanism but February."

—Joseph Wood Krutch

Heath Fire Department Notice

Approved street number signs can be ordered by signing up at the Heath Post Office. The cost is \$10. You will be notified when the sign comes in. Be aware that, due to 911 requirements, some addresses in town are changing.



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Town Nurse

—Claire Rabbitt, RN

Pneumonia Vaccine



Do you need a pneumonia vaccine? Most people are familiar with the 23-valent (PPSV23, Pneumovax 23) vaccine that doctors have recommended for people over 65, and those with certain health conditions, to protect

against bacterial pneumonia. There is another vaccine that has more recently been added to protect against more types of bacterial pneumonia (PCV13, Prevnar 13). Adults over 65, children under 2, people with certain medical conditions, and cigarette smokers are at highest risk for pneumonia complications that can be fatal.

One dose of PCV13 is recommended for adults 65 years or older who have not previously received PCV 13, and 19 years or older with certain medical conditions and have not previously received it.

One dose of PPSV23 is recommended for adults 65 years or older, regardless of previous history of vaccination with pneumococcal vaccines. Once a dose of PPSV23 is received at age 65 or older, no additional dose should be administered. For people who received PPSV23 before age 65, there are protocols for another dose after age 65.

A clinic for administration of pneumonia vaccine for people over age 65 who are in need of either of these vaccines is being considered for some time in March or April to be held in Rowe.

For more information or questions regarding this contact me. Office phone is 413-337-4934, ext. 109.

Memories of Skating

“Glide and Lift”



One of my favorite winter sports is ice skating. I have always been fascinated by the feats of athleticism and grace that can be performed wearing two thin razor sharp blades on the bottom of one's feet! Gliding across smooth ice makes me feel like a kid again. I get

the same exhilarating feeling sledding down a hill of fresh powder or riding a frothy wave at the beach. I delight in being an active participant surrounded by the beauty of nature. The mirror-like sheen on the ice, the crisp sting of the air, and the diamond- and jewel-toned sparkles of snow all add to this joy.

I started skating with my family and best friend Sarah when I was six years old on the flooded cranberry bogs near Cape Cod. I remember the black skates, hand-me-downs from my brother, and the green wool coat I used to wear. When I was ten we moved to a house that had a pond in the woods behind us. In the winter, all the neighborhood kids gathered there after school and on the weekends. I remember lively games of crack the whip and figure eight tag. The boys played hockey on one end while the girls practiced spins and made up routines inspired by our favorite Olympic skaters. Unbeknownst to me at that time, Bob was one of those hockey players and would one day become my husband!

When we purchased our house in 1982 we were thrilled to discover that we could reach Wolf's pond [Ledges Road] through the woods behind us. We've had such good times skating there. When the pond freezes I like to call my friend Janice: "Hello Peggy? It's Dorothy! The ice is great! When can you skate?!"

One afternoon while skating Ned Wolf gave us a big wave from his field. We watched him head to his house and then down the hill pushing a wheelbarrow. With a boyish twinkle in his eye he pulled out the most worn, sorry looking pair of hockey skates we had ever seen! Alas, he gave them the old college try but it was not to be as they were dull as doorknobs.

One year on January 1, we hiked with friends to the pond to find it covered with a thin coating of snow. With our boots, we stamped "2011" across the middle and then proceeded to skate circles around our declaration of the New Year.



Six-year-old Jayne Dane (left) on the ice with her best friend Sarah

My favorite memory of skating at Wolf's was a year when the annual Heath Cross-country Ski Race had to be cancelled due to a lack of snow. We held a potluck supper in the Community Hall to cheer each other up. There was a beautiful full moon and over the course of the meal a group of us decided that it would be fun to head over to the pond to skate. And what fun it was! When we arrived, a bonfire had been started, people were skating, and the Porter-Henry boys were sledding on the side of the hill. I was pleasantly surprised to see both John Henry and Art Schwenger deftly traversing the pond wearing figure skates! Surely you have seen Currier and Ives pictures of similar scenes.

I'm currently thrilled to be sharing my enthusiasm and joy of skating with two young friends, Joseph and Sofia Mason, aged eight. Watching

Joe's intrepid determination as he works to gain control over his hockey skates, and the joy on Sofia's face as I teach her to "glide and lift," circling around the rink while holding her small hand in mine, are memories we will enjoy building on.

I look forward to skating on Wolf's pond again. Upon leaving, I will look back to see that the result of my physical expression has left a scattered kind of calligraphy across the ice—my thank-you letter to Mother Nature.

—Jayne Dane

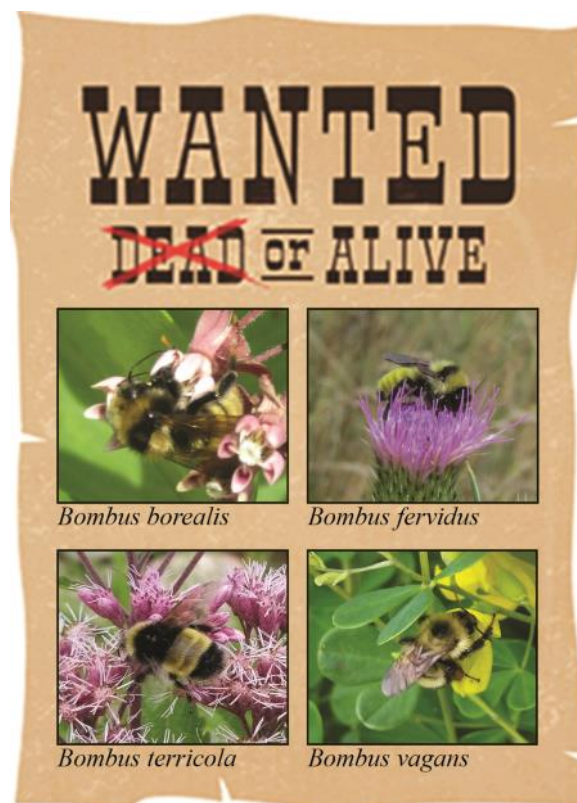
Conserving Heath's Bumbling Little Treasures

Although it may be hard to imagine during this time of frigid temperatures and snowstorms, Heath is an ideal place for bumblebees to live. Bumblebees are the predominantly black and yellow fuzzy bees that you see buzzing around gardens, fields, and meadows in search of floral nectar and pollen, which is their only food source. Like their close domesticated cousin the honeybee, bumblebees live in groups or colonies consisting of a queen and large numbers of workers that perform tasks such as housekeeping, feeding the young, and collecting and storing floral resources to keep the colony buzzing from early spring to late fall. However, unlike the honeybee, bumblebees are comprised of multiple species that, together with hundreds to thousands of other native bee species, play a tremendously important ecological role as pollinators of our native wildflowers. It is also through these pollination efforts that much of our native wildlife is supplied with critical plant-based food (fruit, seeds), shelter, and nest sites needed for survival. This is why the decline of wild bees is a major conservation concern worldwide. The weight of maintaining healthy ecosystems, and the tremendous biodiversity that goes along with it, rests on their tiny little shoulders.

Unfortunately, bumblebees have rapidly declined in abundance, diversity, and geographic range in eastern North America over recent years. We currently do not know what is driving these declines, but habitat loss and modification, disease, pesticide use, and climate change have all been proposed as significant contributing factors. Compounding the issue is the fact that while some bumblebee species are close to extinction, other species are thriving and more abundant than ever. There is a common misconception that seeing a large number of bumblebees in an area means that it is bee- or pollinator-friendly and thus ecologically sound. It absolutely does not. Each species has a unique functional role to play in the ecosystem and so losing a species results in the permanent loss of this function. In many areas of Massachusetts, you will find thousands of individuals from one bumblebee species (*Bombus impatiens*) where historically wildflower communities received the pollination services of several species.

To speed up the process of figuring out the causes and consequences of reduced bumblebee diversity in the state, I initiated the Bee-cology Project in 2016. The Project is a grassroots, scientifically driven effort that

uses trained citizen scientists to crowdsource the collection of ecological data on different bumblebee species. In this way, we can rapidly identify and mitigate key environmental stressors threatening bumblebee diversity. To facilitate the data collection process by our growing team of Bee-cologists, we have developed user-friendly Android and iPhone applications to record bumblebee/plant interactions at the species level in the field and then digitally transfer the recorded information to our central public database.



My trip to Heath in the summer of 2017 was a pilgrimage of sorts. I had been scouring digital museum archives for bumblebee specimens collected in Massachusetts, in particular looking for specimens of *Bombus affinis* and *Bombus terricola*, the former recently listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Searching historical records of these and many other bumblebee species in the insect collection of the Yale Peabody Museum, and mapping locations of all specimens, showed that Franklin and Hampshire counties have greater bumblebee diversity than any other counties in the state. And most of this data was collected by longtime Heathans Sophie and Michael Coe in the mid-1980s. Sophie led the project, which involved the collection of many types of insects, and the bumblebee collection provided extremely important historical data o

on bumblebee abundance and diversity in the area.

Led by my “bee-sense,” honed over almost 30 years of bumblebee research, finding a survey location in Heath seemed certain to be our best hope of finding possibly the last populations of either species in the state. The Crowningshield property on West Branch Road in Heath, close to the Coe’s survey site and currently managed by the Franklin Land Trust, became our study site. We conducted weekly surveys there this past summer, and also extensively surveyed sites in Plainfield and Ashfield over the same time period. Excitement at Crowningshield’s started around late June when we found several workers of *Bombus terricola* and another ultra-rare bumblebee species in Massachusetts, *Bombus borealis*. The hunt for *Bombus affinis* will continue this coming spring.



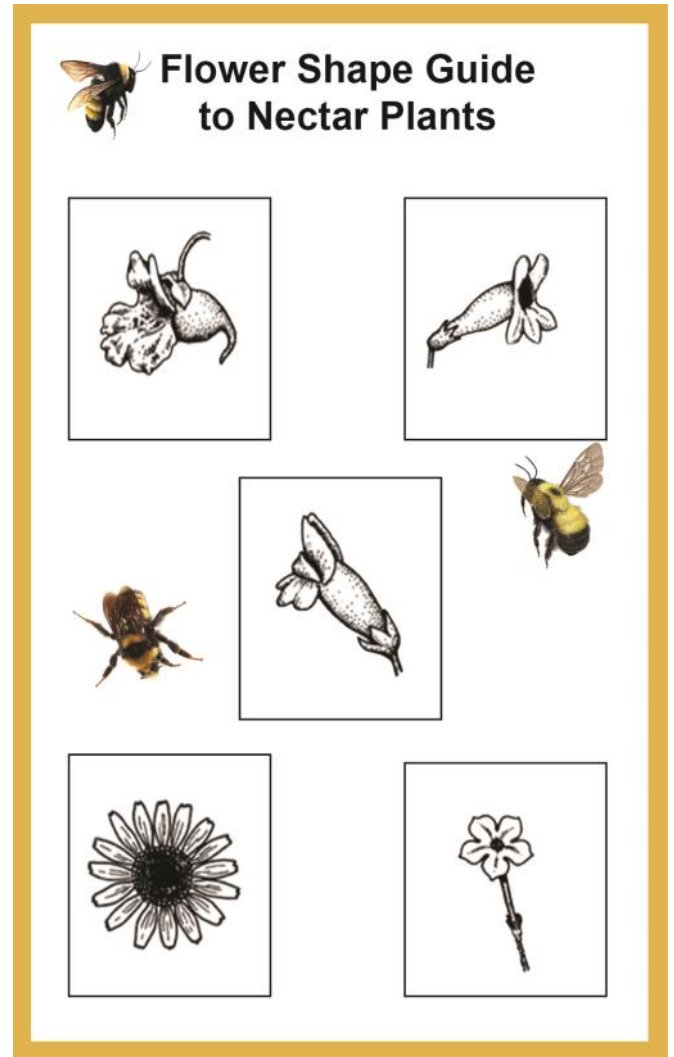
Painted lady and bumblebee

The good news for Heathans, and the inspiration for this article, is that although we found evidence for bumblebee decline, we did not observe the significant species losses that domi-

nate urban and natural areas in the rest of the state. We hope to conduct surveys from other areas of Heath as well as Franklin and Hampshire counties in the summer of 2018. But we need to recruit more Bee-cologists for the job. You can participate in the project in many ways, including conducting field surveys, allowing access to areas containing an abundance of wildflowers through the year, or giving donations to help keep the project buzzing. More information will come in the next issue of the *Heath Herald*. Together, we will figure out the unique ecological characteristics of Heath in preserving its bumbling little treasures.

—Dr. Robert J. Gegear

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Director of the New England Bee-cology Project
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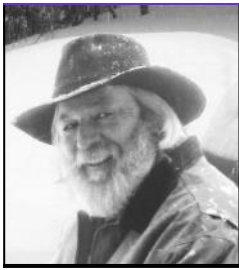


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Wild Ramblings

—Bill Lattrell

From Beringia to North America: A Walk Through Deep Snows



That winter the snows were deep. In those deep woods foot travel would be extremely difficult without snowshoes. On that day I chose to wear my traditional snowshoes constructed from white ash and leather webbing. These are also known as modified “bear

paws.” This particular set is quite large and has an expanded surface area. A large human of 250-plus pounds needs a big snowshoe to stay on the surface of 24-inch deep powder snow. More modern snowshoes are complete with options designed to make snowshoeing easier. For instance, they have ratcheting bindings that are much easier to use, especially in cold weather. They also have built-in crampons that bite into the top icy layers of the snow and keep one from sliding in a reverse direction on hills in icy conditions. They also do not have webbing but space age plastic platforms that do not allow any of the snow to sift through, as would the leather webbing platforms that my traditional snowshoes have. But on that day, in those conditions—deep powder and no icy snow surface—my 30-year-old snowshoes were exactly what I needed. I use balance to dig the tips of the snowshoes into the deep snow when climbing hills. The webbing allows snow to filter through in significant amounts that gives the tip of the snowshoes some counter balance. And going downhill I can slide, much like a very slow ski, as long as I keep my weight on the back of the snowshoes. This is something that would be impossible with the crampons attached to the more technical up-to-date snowshoes.

The snows in this section of woods had no pre-packed trails and were too deep for my hounds to easily navigate, so I ventured out alone. I hoped to come across a varying hare and kept an eye out for tracks. Few other mammals can negotiate this depth of snow. The varying

hare is also known as the snowshoe hare because of its large feet and its ability to stay on top of or near the surface of the snow. They are prime food for many predators. In these deep snows they are slightly less apt to be preyed upon because of the difficulty of travel for large predators like bobcats, fox, and coyote. However, large raptors like the great horned owl would be happy to dine on one of these delectable forestland residents.

I arrived at a high ridge and, to the east, the sky was blue, blue, blue with tall, white, billowing clouds. The snow-covered wooded landscape in front of me seemed to go on forever. From this vantage I could only see one house on the north side of my viewscape. With each breath I produced a trail of white vapor signifying that the zero degree temperatures were not imaginary. I was alone as I often like to be when in the wild. This is what it means to be free, in my estimation.

I sat on a log and took off my daypack. I extracted a small thermos and poured a hot cup of coffee. My snowshoes remained on my feet, and as I admired their age-old construction I reflected upon their history.



“Beaver Tail” snowshoes. Photo: Getty Images

Long before there were any humans known to inhabit North America, towards the end of the last glacier period, nomadic people from eastern Asia happened upon Beringia, also known when covered by the ocean as the Bering Straits. Previously the Pacific Ocean had separated Asia from the furthest western area of North America in what now is known as Alaska. During the glaciers the waters had receded and formed a land bridge connecting the two continents although it remained covered by deep ice for thousands of years. This land bridge, Beringia, was larger than Alberta and British Columbia combined. Thousands of years before, glaciers had formed from constant ocean-effect snow. Cold winds over the warmer water produced so much snow that they reduced the sea level in the region, and the mounting and packing snow formed glaciers up to two miles high!

(Continued on page 20)



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News from the Heath Agricultural Society

The Heath Agricultural Society (HAS) elected a new slate of officers at its annual meeting in November of 2017. Those chosen to lead the HAS and the Heath Fair into its future were Jessica Van Steensburg, President; Justin Lively, Vice President; Tom Lively, Treasurer; Kate Peppard, Secretary; and Conrad Halberg, Bob Bourke, and Jan Carr, members at large.

The Heath Fair has a long history, one that continues to capture the hearts of young and old alike. We remain true to our agricultural roots that, along with so many other qualities, bring people back up the hills, year after year, in the middle of August. I don't intend to change that, in fact I endeavor to honor it. As president, I will listen and I will do, I will respond to member and community needs, and I will work hard to build an organization that fosters volunteerism. Volunteers are the foundation of the Heath Agricultural Society. We must foster a culture of inclusivity and appreciation for the volunteers that make the work of the HAS possible.

I had the pleasure of sitting next to Bob Viarengo before the HAS annual meeting began. He asked me a simple question, "Why did I choose to run for president?" Believe me, I had considered why and in fact I had been considering "why" for going on a year, but I had made my decision. Theodore Roosevelt said, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." For me it was that simple. Becoming a member of HAS offered me a sense of community, built tradition, and created lasting friendships. It matters to me that the Heath Fair has a future. It is time for me to give back.

At the recent convention of the Massachusetts Agricultural Fair Association (MAFA), I had many firsts. I joined long-time HAS members Conrad Halberg (former President of HAS), Kathy Halberg, and Bradley Tombs for a day rich with networking and learning. We were there to discover how we could make the Heath Fair even better. The four of us attended workshops and enjoyed each other's company. We also took home a lot of awards at the end of the evening: third place in advertising specialties; second place in website; and first place in radio advertising, newspaper advertising, brochure, and

poster categories. Heath also took home the Judges Choice award (the only one in the state) for its Heath Fair poster. Special thanks to Larry Sampson, Heath resident and HAS member, who designed the poster.

In addition to winning awards, we listened to speak-



*Heath took home the
MAFA Judges Choice
award for the 2017
Heath Fair poster.*

ers share knowledge and perspective. Christopher Grant, a featured speaker, offered an inspiring message, one I will carry into my Presidency. The youngest member of his agricultural society at age 27, he asked us a version of the same question Bob asked me, "Why do you do what you do?" When it comes to volunteerism, there comes a time when we all have to answer this question. What drives us to show up? So now I ask you, the readers, why do you do what you do? I

encourage us all to contemplate that question and to discover why we volunteer, why we lead, why we get involved. Towards the end of his talk, Christopher encouraged us to define "our little part of our little fair." I invite you to join the Heath Agricultural Society, to volunteer with us and define your little part of your little fair. Share your passion and bring a friend to share theirs.

If you are interested in joining or learning more about the HAS, plan on attending our March 8 meeting in Heath's Community Hall. The meeting is 6:30 to 8 p.m., and open to the public. In future issues of the *Herald*, I hope to feature other member voices as they answer the question of why they do what they do. I hope to see you soon. Eat well and be well.

—Jessica Van Steensburg
President of the Heath Agricultural Society
wecanfarminheath@gmail.com
413-339-4820

On Sugar Houses

The following article is reprinted from the April/May 1988 issue of the Heath Herald.



By the time you read this [note this is from April/May issue], the sugar houses of this area will have stopped spewing out steam and their famous nectar called maple syrup.

All sugar houses have a special character of their own and each is unique.

I have always enjoyed being inside a sugar house as it was at work. There are sounds within its walls that are not heard anywhere else at any other time of year. The crackling roar of a hot wood fire and the rolling bubbling sound as the fire forces the steam from the increasing sweetness. The slam as the arch doors are shut from a new load of wood. The sap as it comes from the storage tanks makes a pleasant gurgle as it is controlled by the float arrangement. The float system regulates the amount of sap allowed into the pan as steam is taken out.

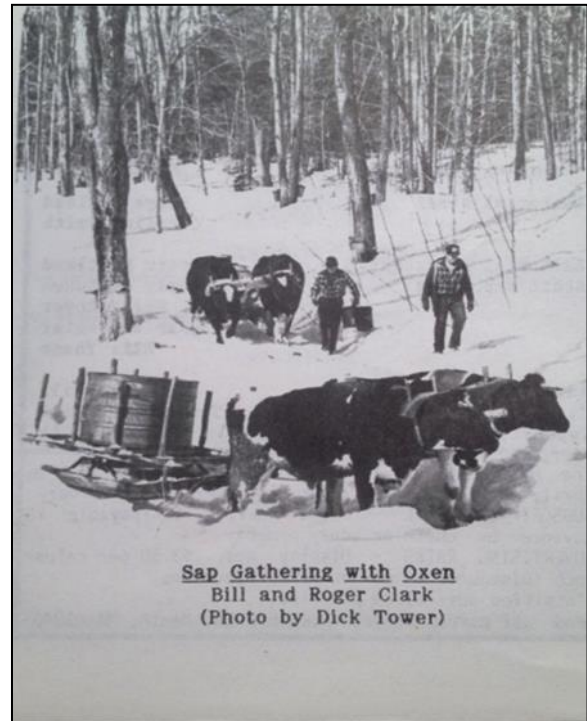
Those who inhabit sugar houses are artists at their trade. These men and women have to orchestrate the evaporator's intake of sap along with the continuous feeding of the fire and, as the sweetness nears the syrup stage, they must be ready to draw off and make sure that all operations go very smoothly, and keep from burning the pan for a momentary shortage of liquid. These actions are all part of the sugar-makers' talent. All different, all related, and all part of a spring ritual that has been going on for centuries in various parts of this country.

Syrup of the maple variety and of good quality tastes very much the same from one sugar house to the other, but I will always feel that sap hauled to the sugar house with a team of horses or yoke of cattle makes a better-tasting product. A team of horses or a yoke of oxen standing outside a sugar house lends a bit more character to the entire operation.

To be sure, all sap could not be hauled by horses or oxen because some sap might travel 25 miles before it's boiled. We see sap making its way from the tree to storage by way of plastic sap line. This is a much easier way of sugaring but, to me, not as picturesque as sap going to the sugar house by animal power.

I would have to confess that a favorite sugar house of

my recollection was that of the late Oscar and Howard Thompson. They were assisted with the operation by the late Harry Terrill. These people helped to create a maple syrup memory that will last my lifetime.



Sap Gathering with Oxen
Bill and Roger Clark
(Photo by Dick Tower)

"A team of horses or yoke of oxen standing outside a sugar house lends a bit more character to the entire operation."



Sugar houses of this area are all unique, all very different, and all create a product that has no equal.

These are my feelings about a spring rite, about a seasonally used building just plastered with a tremendous country charm that will last as long as there are pancakes, flapjacks, or waffles.

—Carroll B. Stowe

Maple Sugaring in Heath

Heritage and Present Day



Carroll Stowe was a family friend and important guide when we arrived in Heath from the city in the early 1970s with the idea to develop a hobby farm. Carroll showed us how to bring back old seized Farmall tractors, loose hay-lifters, dump rakes, mowers, hay crimpers, cordwood belt saws, haymow trolly forks, and other rusted

antiquity. I was eager to work on farms and learn how to hunt. At that time there were plenty of farms where one could get some experience. I was lucky to work for Eva Pazmino on their draft-horse powered dairy. We did backyard boiling of maple sap on our property and I got to help a bit with Fred Lively's sugaring. For a couple years I took a seasonal job as Elmer Sherman's helper on his sugaring camp. He used a crawler and sledge to haul his sap tank and we slugged sap up and down the slopes in the snow. Elmer was particular about his boiling: sap depth was shallow in a clean evaporator, wood heat was carefully spread evenly so no hot spots developed, finished syrup went right into a felt filter and then directly into a jug or jar—there was no mixing or blending of changing tastes if he could help it. His syrups were amazing, light ambers with tastes of vanilla and white chocolate that were popular with folks who wanted a fine and delicate household sweetener.

Over the years a lot of cool science has been done on maple harvesting and it has improved how we farmers can work with these magnificent trees. For example, we now know that maples, like other plants, are about 50 percent water, from their massive root-ball to branch tips. On a mature tree that can mean three to eight tons of sap! We can now use tiny tapholes with check-valve spiles and, with the help of old dairy vacuum pumps, take a small harvest portion, maybe 20 gallons or around 160 pounds of that mighty reservoir of sap.

Other interesting facts about maple syrup are how the flavors come about. The cold sap straight from the tree is what makes the light amber colors and tastes. Amazingly, the rest of the colors we love come from two additional steps that happen outside the trees: 1) from microbes in the forest air, like yeast, which get in the sap to cause a ferment in the buckets, lines, and tanks, and 2) from the ways the harvester handles his boiling,

processing, and canning activities. It's an incredible complex of forest processes and human interactions that makes this ancient crop unlike any other on our planet.

What we have learned from Carroll, Fred, Elmer, the Peters, Tom, and other maple harvesters continues to shape our farming today. Those lessons and old foodways are built-in like beams and framing.

These days it seems like changes are everywhere, with some coming on faster and faster. We're grateful to work with such a rugged and adaptive plant as the sugar maple and to be active in a forest full of returning wild things. Heath today is heavily forested and, like everywhere, the woods are changing. State foresters teach how excessive drought or rain events and frequent strong wind storms give advantages to bugs and pathogens—some local, others from away—which reproduce quickly to impact forests and fields. In our forest we observe maples as one of the more robust species adapting to such challenges such as the massive ice storm of 2008. When maples take a hit, they seal the wound and throw out new branches. When timely, they self-thin their numbers to make bigger canopies while youngsters pop up vigorously as their elders pass on. All in all, we're passionate to do what we can to pitch in and take care of them alongside the greater forest of life that we share Heath with, seeking a heritage of harvesting and stewardship, the old cycling with the new.

Food for thought: The biologist and naturalist Rutherford Platt commented: “As I ponder sap rising in the trees, I descry something profoundly interesting. Here is a replay of the forces which created life in the sea.” *The Great American Forest*, 1965.

—Brooks McCutchen
Berkshire Sweet Gold Maple Farm



Berkshire Sweet Gold in the making

Good Old-fashioned Sled Riding



Of all the winter sports available to us up in these hills, there is none that is as readily or economically available to everyone as good old-fashioned sled riding. With the advent of the ubiquitous plastic boat sled, winter fun is practically available right outside our doors.

Although the sleds have changed, the sport is age old. Tom Lively remembers fondly both the sleds and the rides he had as a boy.

Tom grew up on the farm across the road from the old Peters' Store on Number Nine Road, where Matt and Rita Lively currently live. Back then Number Nine Road was still a dirt road and was not sanded. The dip and curve in the road just beyond the store on the south side was far more dramatic and made for a perfect sled run. Tom and his brothers would start at the top of their driveway hitting the road at a good speed. They continued on down to the bottom of the hill and with luck went half way up the other side. In a recent conversation, he spoke of the different kinds of sleds he and his brothers used. Tom remembers an old sled called a double-rip. A



Tom Lively reminisces on his jump-jack sled.

basically a seat with a ski-type runner underneath, a flexible flyer, and an old car hood for the more adventurous times. He even remembers using cardboard. "You'd be surprised at how fast you can go on a hard packed frozen surface with just a piece of cardboard!"

—Tom Lively, as told to Deb Porter

"You'd be surprised at how fast you can go on a hard packed frozen surface with just a piece of cardboard!"



Vintage double-rip sled. Photographs by John Henry

double-rip sled is essentially an old-fashioned bobsled that has two runners on the front and back of a long wooded plank. The person on the front would steer using a rope to turn it. According to Tom, although this person controlled the ride, it was always really fast. The walk back up was not quite as fast, but he remembers one time when Elmer Sherman came along just as they were heading back up the hill. He told them to hitch up to his back bumper to get towed up the road.

Tom and his brothers also had a jump-jack, which is



Competitors head up the hill to begin racing at last year's Berkshire East Cardboard Classic.

Photo: Matt Burkhart, The Recorder

Learn-to-Ski Programs Build Life Skills and Foster a Life-Long Love of Skiing



My husband Rich Hamilton and I, both Mohawk Trail Regional High School alumni, grew up in families that didn't ski due to the cost and lack of interest in, and history with, the sport. The local Learn-to-Ski programs at Buckland Shelburne Elementary

and Rowe schools, along with the generosity of Berkshire East, allowed Rich and me the opportunity to learn to ski and fall in love with a sport that has significantly enriched both our lives.

Rich worked off his \$99 youth season's pass working for Berkshire East clearing trays and doing dishes during his high school years, and worked in the Berkshire East Ski Rental Shop while at UMASS—putting a few dollars in his pocket and enabling him to ski for free. In his 20s and early 30s Rich ran ski shops in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and in Park City, Utah, and taught dozens of young men and women how to make a living in the business. One of Rich's former assistant managers is now manager of Cole Sport's flagship store in Park City.

I went on to teach skiing at Mount Snow during college, funding my ability to keep skiing while in school. I moved to Utah shortly afterward, seeking adventure and a "real" job. Though I didn't work in the ski industry after my time at Mount Snow, being good at skiing was always pivotal in my life and was of great value socially and in business—and a whole lot of fun too!

The school-sponsored Learn-to-Ski programs in our hilltown community give children the opportunity to get good at a sport that they might not otherwise be exposed to. Learn-to-Ski builds confidence, and if it doesn't become one's profession, it often becomes a big part of who you are and how you live, as it did for Rich and me. We often reflect upon the fact that we, along with many generations of local kids, were not likely to have learned to ski if not for the programs at our local grammar schools. Many thanks go out to the schools for keeping these programs going over the years, and to Berkshire East for making them affordable and possible!

—Nicole den Ouden

Nicole grew up in Heath and now lives in Rowe, MA. Her husband Rich Hamilton volunteers for the Rowe School ski program that their children Weston and Naomi eagerly participate in!



Library Lines

—Donald Purington



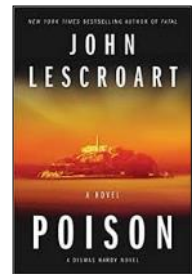
Preschool Story Hour schedule for mid-winter: February 2 and 16, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the library. Story Hour, sponsored by the Friends of the Library, is for ages birth to five, older siblings welcome! Please check the library website for more Story Hour dates coming in March and beyond.

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: *Death of an Honest Man* by M. C. Beaton, *Poison* by John Lescroart, *The Bomb Maker* by Thomas Perry, *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

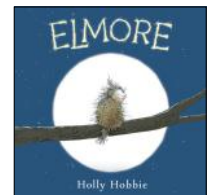
Non-fiction Books for Adults: *The World of Laura Ingalls Wilder* by Marta McDowell, *Feed the Resistance: Recipes and Ideas for Getting Involved* by Julia Turshen, *Apples* by Roger Yepson



Audio Books on CD: *In the Midst of Winter* by Isabelle Allende, *Future Home of the Living God* by Louise Erdrich

Books for Young/Teen Readers: *Just Like Jackie* by Lindsay Stoddard, *Elmet* by Fiona Mozley, *Minecraft: the Island* by Max Brooks

Children's Picture Books/ Boardbooks: *Elmore* by Holly Hobbie, *Sarabella's Thinking Cap* by Judy Schachner



DVDs: *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Goodbye Christopher Robin*, *The Crown*: Season 1, *Janet King*: Series 3

Regional Climate Change

What does climate change mean for Heath? As important as this question is for those of us who live here, projections for a small region or a single community are beyond current science models, so to understand what climate change could mean for Heath it is necessary to look at climate change impacts more broadly.

Over the next two or three decades the average summer temperature in the Northeast could increase three degrees Fahrenheit, and by the last decades of the century to over 13 degrees. This may not sound like much, but it is more than the temperature difference between the last glacial period, with a mile of ice overhead, and today.

Heath, at an elevation of 1,680 feet, is high above sea-level rise or storm-surge impact concerns. But elevation will not protect us from many of the same climate change impacts as nearby coastal areas. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), by later this century Massachusetts could have a climate equivalent to that of South Carolina today.

Summer heat waves and longer periods of drought will become more frequent. Heavier downpours when it does rain will produce more flooding. The number of days per year over 90 degrees in Boston will go from averaging under ten during the period 1961 to 1990, to over 60 toward the end of the century.

Winters will be shorter with warmer temperatures bringing earlier snowmelt. The cold blasts of Arctic air, as experienced at the end of 2017, do not belie these facts, but instead are actually the result of the Arctic Ocean warming at over twice the rate of the global average. This warming disrupts the polar jet-stream, allowing cold Arctic air to plunge deep into the mid-west, northeast, and southeast. Even with its rapid warming, the Arctic is still very cold in winter when Earth's axis tilts the North Pole away from the sun, and as the Arctic continues to warm, these excursions of cold air will probably continue.

According to UCS, records from the mid-twentieth century through 2000 show that the number of snow-covered days across the Northeast has decreased significantly. Less precipitation has fallen as snow and warmer temperatures have melted the snow more quickly. At the same time, the snow on the ground has become wetter and heavier on average. Winter precipitation in the future is likely to increase; however this is unlikely to mean more white winters but rather more winter rain.

The amount of possible precipitation depends on atmospheric temperature, with four percent more moisture in the atmosphere for every one degree Fahrenheit increase in temperature. The type of precipitation, however, depends on the surface temperature at the time. The heaviest snowfalls occur with surface temperatures between 28 and 32 degrees, the amount of snowfall at 32 degrees at least double that at 14 degrees. With increasing temperatures by late this century northern Berkshire County and northwestern Franklin County, including Heath, could be the only areas of Massachusetts to see any winter snow at all.

This decrease or total lack of snow will of course impact skiing, snowmobiling, and other traditional winter sports in the Northeast, as well as jobs associated with snow plowing and other winter maintenance. But many other industries will be impacted as well. Forests will transition from maple, beech, and birch to oak and hickory, eventually ending the maple syrup industry.

Heat waves and drought, as Massachusetts recently experienced, will affect agricultural production and impact private and public wells and reservoirs. Heat stress on dairy cows and other livestock will reduce production and birth rates.

According to the EPA, warmer temperatures are also increasing outbreaks of forest pests and pathogens. Growing deer populations have been degrading forest understories, while invasive plants like kudzu have been expanding their range and contributing to a loss of biodiversity, function, and resilience in some ecosystems. Temperature changes also influence the timing of important ecological events, causing birds to migrate sooner and plants to bloom and leaf earlier. These changes can cause ecosystems to fragment.

We all know by now that these changes are primarily caused by our high carbon emissions, and due to carbon's long-term atmospheric persistence, even rapid emissions reduction now will not prevent major climate change to come, but the sooner we act, the better our chances of avoiding the worst outcomes.

—Bill Gran
Adjunct Instructor, Retired
Greenfield Community College



The Way We Love to Eat

Hot Cocoa

Hot cocoa is always a great treat after being outside sledding or skiing. We enjoy making this hot cocoa mix as you can add it to regular milk or to any milk product (soy, almond, etc.).

- 1½ cups turbinado sugar
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 2 cups unsweetened cocoa powder

Combine sugar and salt in a blender and blend until it is powdered. Then add cocoa powder and pulse to combine. Store the mix in an airtight container, like a quart canning jar. To make hot chocolate add one heaping tablespoon of mix to a mug of warm milk and stir until blended. You can add more or less cocoa mix depending on how chocolaty you like it.

—Mary and Kaylin Sumner



And lest we forget Valentine's Day, a chocolate treat saved from our Christmas cookie recipes files is totally appropriate as a treat for the loves of your life.

Chocolate Truffle Cookies

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, divided
- 4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- ⅓ cup butter, cubed
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons baking cocoa
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Confectioners' sugar

In a microwave, melt 1 cup chocolate chips, unsweetened chocolate, and butter; stir until smooth. Cool 10 minutes. In a large bowl, beat sugar and eggs 2 minutes. Beat in chocolate mixture and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt; gradually beat into chocolate mixture. Stir in remaining chocolate chips. Refrigerate, covered, at least 3 hours or until firm enough to handle.

Preheat oven to 350°. With lightly floured hands, shape dough into 1-inch balls; place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly puffed and set. Cool on pans 3 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Yield: about 4 dozen.

Originally published as Chocolate Truffle Cookies in *Taste of Home*, December/January 1998, page 29.

—Sue Lively



Wild Ramblings (Continued from page 11)

As the climate warmed and the Laurentide ice sheet retreated north, the land bridge was exposed. Nomadic people crossed the newly exposed land bridge from east to west. Although some of Beringia was grass covered, there were still huge areas of snow and ice. These nomadic people used basically long, wide boards covered with sealskin that were attached to their feet to navigate these treacherous areas. Lessening the bearing weight of a human by spreading their body weight over a larger area proved to be a successful method of travel. In effect, these were not only the first skis but also the first snowshoes.

These people came over in distinct and sometimes unrelated groups over several thousand years. They spread out in different directions primarily following the edge of the receding ice sheet and were quick to realize that traveling in deep snow was both necessary and difficult. The first snowshoes were likely fashioned with branches of different types of trees and rolled caribou hide leather strands fashioned into webbing. Eventually these first Americans learned to use stronger wood strips from the main stem of a tree or large shrub. They found that certain woody stem species were strong and easy to bend. The prevalent willow found in northern climates was likely the first to be used. Later, ash, where it could be found, was the target wood for snowshoes. Leather strips from moose, caribou, elk, and deer hide became the materials of choice for the platform made out of webbing. And as different groups, some related and some not related, formed into tribes across the northern latitudes and higher terrain, different styles of snowshoes were created.



The Ojibway (aka Chippewa) eventually fashioned the still present “Beaver Tail” snowshoes. These were made from a single-piece narrow ash frame that was bent with steam or hot water so that the front was round (and turned up) and the back was a double band of wood fastened together to create a tail. The tail provided counter balance and reduced fatigue by

being lighter and providing a slight kick when stepping forward. They were better in deep snows where thick woods were not present. The Wyandot (also known as Huron) perfected the deep snow woodland snowshoe by

creating what is known as the “Bearpaw.” This nearly oval snowshoe is wide and only moderately long. It is constructed out of one single piece of ash with leather webbing. The back of the snowshoe completes the oval where the two ends of the ash have only a very short connection. The Cree often used two separate long and narrow pieces of wood creating a point in the front and a tail in the back. The toe of the snowshoe was bent in an upward direction to aid in traveling through deep snow and heavily wooded areas. These snowshoes were long. It is important to note that in all of these snowshoes the leather webbing was intricate and beautifully woven. The patterns, some having an artistic quality, represented the web of life, something North American indigenous



people knew about long before Europeans. After Europeans arrived in North America, it did not take European fur trappers

long to catch on to this primary method of foot travel in snow-laden lands. The snowshoe was taken back to Europe and introduced in the early to mid-1600s where the design with new configurations traveled east into Asia, completing a human evolutionary circle of technology over thousands of years.

These traditional snowshoes were the foundation for modern snowshoes constructed with aircraft aluminum frames, or space-age plastic frames and modern deckings made out of super plastic sheet materials capable of performing in wide temperature ranges without too much damage. As mentioned earlier, the bindings are much easier to use than the old leather strap bindings, although I will say I have had some fracture rendering them useless. Sometimes emergency repairs will suffice when they fail. I learned the hard way to always carry some extra nylon straps in my pocket. Navigating deep snows over long distances with only one working snowshoe is way beyond irritating.

As I sat on my high ridge, it occurred to me how much snowshoeing had changed over the years. It had a resurgence of popularity in the 1970s leading to modern innovative designs. There is no doubt that the modern snowshoe is more convenient. The one thing that really changed over the years is where people travel on snowshoes.

By far and away most modern snowshoe enthusiasts hike on packed snow terrain. Snowmobile trails are popular. There are also commercial areas that have miles of packed trail. The fact is, you could walk on most of these packed snow trails in normal winter boots. Still this is an adventure for many and anything that gets people outside, especially in the winter, is a good idea. For me, I choose to walk off the beaten path. Yes, it requires skill and balance in deep snows. And yes, it is infinitely more difficult and physically challenging. My preference leads me to where others do not go. I can be alone with the forest and the creatures that inhabit it. For me this is what it is all about.

But on that beautiful day, thinking about the history of snowshoes created a wondrous moment. I was here because of the evolution of a technical device. From Nomadic tribes from Asia to our indigenous people of North America to the modern material of our present age, the snowshoe has been perfected for winter travel. I could not help but conclude that this is a miraculous journey!



Varying hare. Photo: Getty Images

The sun lowered in the western sky and I started the trek home. While descending the mountain back towards our homestead, I came across a varying hare. Camouflaged by his white fur, he was only visible because he moved as I approached. He easily navigated the terrain on top of the snow on his huge paws. We had something in common. We both were adorned with snowshoes and both were free to enjoy the beauty of this deep-forested terrain.

And that, my friends, is a superb and wild winter experience.



—Bill Lattrell

Snowmobiling—A Family Affair



To me the winter is all fun when you're riding on a snowmobile. For decades, our family has enjoyed traveling over all of the local trails together. We have spent many happy hours out in the snowy woods of Heath, Rowe, and beyond.

Snowmobiling is always an adventure. We have gone on 1200-mile rides in Canada when the temperatures were 40 below, and on other rides when we ended up slogging through water because the weather had turned so warm. Even with the inevitable breakdowns or mishaps, it is all good!

One jaunt we always enjoy is to go from our house on Long Hill Road over to the Lively's property on Underhill Road. We make a campfire, cook hotdogs and s'mores, and just enjoy being out in the beautiful winter weather together.

When the kids were little they just rode with us; but as soon as they were big enough, they were on their own sleds experiencing the joy of it all in their own right. Now the grandchildren are even learning to ride.

As I say, "It's all fun when you're out riding."

—Mike Smead

Indianhead Snowmobile Club



Mike Smead out on a winter jaunt with his daughter-in-law Julie and older grandchildren, Charlotte and Landon.

Selectboard Report

Winter Meeting Schedule

The Board meets every other Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Sawyer Hall unless posted otherwise.

Heath School Building Transition Team (SBTT)

The Heath School Building Transition Team has held several meetings to explore ideas for the repurposing of the school building. The committee typically meets at the school one Wednesday evening per month. Ideas from town residents are always welcome and may be forwarded by email to bos@townofheath.org.

Broadband Update

The field walk-out, pole survey, and mapping are complete; we are awaiting the digitized pole survey data to review and verify. Aerial License Agreements with Verizon New England, Inc., and National Grid have been submitted.

Gift of Land

The town has recently received a significant gift of land from Don Conlon, a summer resident and long time friend of Heath. The parcel is the ten acres across Colrain Stage Road from the fairgrounds and is the balance of the parcel from which the town purchased land for the future public safety building. The donated property has a conservation restriction which means it must remain in its natural state, undeveloped with permitted uses limited to forestry and low impact recreation. The site for the public safety building is separate and not affected by the conservation restriction. The historic rural character of the Heath Center Historical District will be enhanced by having this land preserved for future generations. The Selectboard greatly appreciates Don's generosity here and in many other "behind the scenes" instances.

Heath Green Communities

The Selectboard and Energy Advisory Committee have been working on achieving the status of Green Community, making the town eligible for a \$100K-plus grant to be used for energy improvements in the town. One of the requirements is that at the Annual Town Meeting we adopt the Stretch Energy Code. A description from the state Department of Energy is as follows:

Massachusetts gives communities two options for their building energy code—a Base Energy Code or an optional Stretch Energy Code. Towns can choose to adopt the Stretch Energy Code by Town Meeting vote and it can be rescinded by Town Meeting vote. Becoming a Green Community requires that the Town Meeting

adopt the Stretch Code.

On January 1, 2017, both the Base Energy Code and the Stretch Energy Code were updated. The difference between the two is now much smaller than in the past. Basically, new residential construction in a Stretch Code town needs to follow the Performance Path of the Base code rather than the Prescriptive Path.

The updated Stretch Code applies to all new commercial buildings over 100,000 square feet and new commercial buildings over 40,000 square feet if they are specific high energy users such as supermarkets, laboratory buildings, and refrigerated warehouses. It is worth noting that all additions, renovations, and repairs to residential buildings are explicitly exempted from the updated Stretch Code. Also, smaller new commercial buildings as well as additions, renovations, and repairs of commercial buildings are exempt.

A key feature of the Stretch Energy Code is that it is performance-based. It requires new homes to meet a HERS (Home Energy Rating System) index rating target, rather than requiring the installation of specific levels of energy efficiency for each building element (e.g., windows, wall insulation, roof insulation, furnace, etc.). The HERS rating is a measure based on a home's total expected energy use and overall efficiency. It is calculated by a certified HERS rater using accredited software, which uses information on the design of the energy systems in a home to calculate the annual energy needs of the home and give it a rating score.

One benefit of using HERS ratings for compliance with the Stretch Energy Code is that builders do not have to install specific energy efficiency measures; rather they have the flexibility to choose which energy efficiency measures to install, and how to design the home in order to meet the HERS rating target. It is also a way to ensure that homes are well built. As part of the HERS rating, the HERS rater tests the home for air leakage and inspects insulation installation, which helps ensure that the home performs as designed.

Basically, the HERS rating requires that the Performance Path of the standard building code be followed in Stretch Code municipalities for new homes and for large new commercial buildings. Under the Stretch Energy Code, the additional cost will be primarily for the services of the HERS rater and more efficient heating systems. This is generally in the \$1,600-\$3,000 range for residences with a \$1,300-\$1,700 incentive available through the Mass Save Residential New Construction Program that mostly offsets the cost. There are also

typically annual energy bill savings that more than tip the balance to give homeowners a net savings every year.

Once adopted at Heath Annual Town Meeting on May 12, 2018, the Stretch Energy Code would take effect on July 1, 2018.

Currently 216 communities, representing more than half of the state's population, have adopted the Stretch Energy Code. Nearby communities that have adopted it include Rowe, Hawley, Buckland, Shelburne, and Greenfield. Charlemont and Colrain are in the process of considering adoption. Most builders in the area are likely familiar with the Stretch Energy Code. Many say that the trade-off feature of the Stretch Code makes it easier to build to than the standard building code.

The Board will host a public hearing on the proposed Stretch Code bylaw sometime before the Annual Town Meeting in May.

—Selectboard

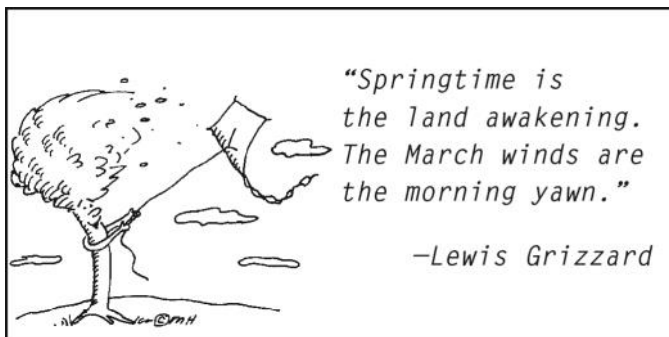


Heath Online

Stay connected with what's happening in Heath.
Visit www.townofheath.org

Town Directory • Meeting Minutes • Community News
 Upcoming Events • Emergency Announcements • and more

To contact the Selectboard, email bos@townofheath.org



Nature Note: Is it spring yet?

Though Groundhog Day on February 2 is only the halfway point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox, it gets us thinking that spring might be just around the corner. Groundhogs aren't fooled by their namesake holiday and don't actually come out of hibernation until March, although males may venture out in late February to spend time with females in their burrows as a lead-up to mating season. Groundhogs are one of the animals that are true hibernators. They enter a state of deep sleep with a drastically lowered heart rate and a body temperature that dips to just above that of their underground burrow—about 38 degrees.

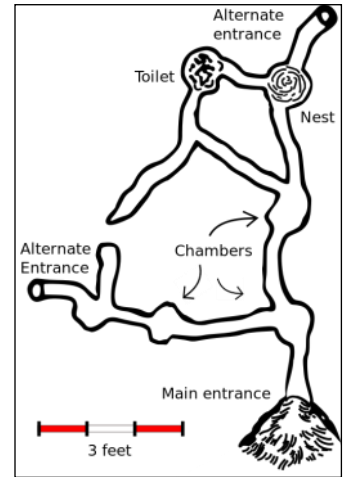


Diagram of burrow

Other mammals that are thought of as hibernators, such as bears, have reduced respiration and metabolism but their body temperature drops only about 10 degrees. They are in a light sleep and easily awakened. This is considered to be torpor or lethargy. They might come out of their burrows or dens on a warm winter day. Some, like chipmunks, cache food in their burrows to snack on periodically while bears eat nothing, just subsisting on their fat reserves. Amazingly female bears will give birth during this period of torpor.

Mammals have a wide range of strategies to deal with the cold and lack of food in winter. On the frigid cold day that I am writing this article, the idea of sleeping until spring is very enticing.

—Susan Draxler



Groundhog in springtime. Photo by Will Draxler

Planning a Bumblebee-friendly Garden

Native Plants for Bumblebees and Other Native Bees—Wetland/Grassland

This list includes nectar- and pollen-producing plants needed by bumblebees. Note that good nectar sources for the most threatened, the long-tongued bumblebees, are those plants with open or closed tubular flowers, especially with a spike. Both kinds need to be maintained from May through October. As you plan for your 2018 gardens, consider including some of these sources to keep the bumblebee population humming in Heath.

Pollen sources:

Boneset
Carolina rose
Meadowsweet
Raspberry—wild
St. John's Wort
Virginia rose
Willow



Nectar sources:

Asters (many species)
Bee balm
Bladder-pod lobelia
Blue flag iris
Bottle gentian
Buttonbush
Bush clover
Bush honeysuckle (Diervilla)
Monkeyflower
Mountain laurel
Native Goldenrod (many species)
Native Milkweed
Native Thistle
Obedient plant (non-native)
Old-field toadflax
Orange jewelweed
Pickerelweed
Rhododendron (native)
Round-leaved violet
Spiked lobelia
Spreading dogbane
White turtlehead
Wild yellow indigo



—Dr. Robert J. Gegear



Community Café Now Open Saturdays

Add a little more excitement to your Saturday morning Heath Library and Post Office visit. Stop by the Community Café, located at the Senior Center, for fast internet, musical performances, conversation, and complimentary coffee, tea, or apple cider.

On February 3, come enjoy the music of Jason Graves from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Café opened its doors on January 27 to the music of John Clark and Dennis Avery, the Uncles of the Pioneers.

The Selectboard has provided a new, more powerful router for your downloading, uploading, surfing, or telecommuting needs.

Coffee is from Deans Beans, donuts and cider are from Pine Hill Orchards.

Any donations will be gratefully accepted. Café questions? Ask Pat at 337-4078.

A special thank you to the Selectboard for its sponsorship!



Save the Dates—April 6 & 7 *The Peanut Chronicles*

Hilltown Drama Club, formerly Heath School Drama Club, proudly presents this school year's indoor traveling spectacle, *The Peanut Chronicles*.

Location: Heath Elementary School

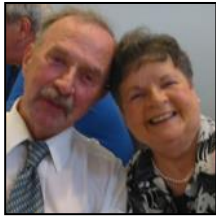
Dates and times:

Friday, April 6: matinee (TBD) and 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 7: 6:30 p.m.

This performance is an original adaptation of Charles Schulz characters. If you have enjoyed Heath School performances in the past, you won't be disappointed!

Obituaries



Alan H. Booth

Alan H. Booth, son of Robert N. Booth and Evelyn Creed, passed on November 29, 2017. Alan grew up in Heath and Charlemont but also in Medford, MA where he graduated from Medford High School. He was a long-time friend of Carroll Stowe and Howard Dickinson.

During the Korean War, Alan left home at 17 to join the Naval Reserve in Quincy, MA, and then the Air Force. During his service he met a woman at Andrews Air Force Base whom he loved for more than sixty years. He was a skinny, insecure kid—she was a dancer in the USO. She didn't care for him at first, but they married and for the rest of his life he carried a small black-and white-photo of her sitting on a trunk after the performance the evening they met.

Alan leaves behind his loving wife Carolyn, his sons Jamie of Osterville, MA, and Jeffrey of Hanover, MA, and his grandchildren Jessica, Jody, Joelle, and Joshua.

Alicia Tripp

Alicia A. (Armata) Tripp, 88, of Taylor Brook Road, died Saturday, January 6, 2018 at the Charlene Manor Extended Care Facility in Greenfield.

Alicia was born in Chicopee, MA, daughter of John and Mary (Stepczyk) Armata. Her parents were first generation immigrants from Poland, and she had a passion for studying and celebrating her Polish heritage.

She was married to Robert Tripp in 1954 and together they owned and operated the Tripp Blueberry Farm in Heath.

Alicia loved her home and spent hours upon hours tending to her gardens that surrounded her home. She enjoyed knitting, reading, sewing, taking bus trips, and traveling near and far. As her grandchildren grew, she found great joy in watching them play sports or participate in various functions. She was a proud grandmother.

Alicia leaves behind her loving family—daughter Roberta Tripp Baker and her husband William of Heath, daughter Melanie Tripp Leighton and her husband Robert of Northfield, grandchildren Madison Baker, Nick Baker, and Cole Leighton, sisters Virginia Bauch of Chicopee and Chee Honner of Florida, nephew Henry Godek and his wife Jo Travis of Heath as well as many other nieces and nephews.



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

Church building facilities are available for private events. Call Victoria Burrington for details: 337-4425.

Church News

We, the members of the congregation rejoice in the activities of the past year. Our Sunday services are uplifting, with Rev. Koyama's sermons and splendid renditions by the choir.

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight service was well attended. All were inspired by the anthem by our organist, Dennis, and his accompaniment for Claudia singing *O Holy Night*. The Circle of Light candles were lit from the Peace Light, flown from The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Israel. The flame is purported to have been continuously burning for as long as 1000 years.

We held a soup-and-bread fund raiser for the needy of Puerto Rico and have sent \$1,000. Thanks to all who contributed.

Rev. Koyama will be on leave until February 15. You can reach Hilma Sumner, Ruth Johnson or Walt Gleason if there is a need.

—Ruth Johnson

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- Feb 2 **PRESCHOOL STORY HOUR**
10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Heath Library
- Feb 3 **COMMUNITY CAFÉ**
9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Senior
10 Center, downstairs in the
17 Community Hall. Free coffee, tea,
apple cider and donuts. Internet access.
- Feb 16 **PRESCHOOL STORY HOUR**
10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Heath Library
- Mar 31 **RABIES CLINIC**
10 a.m. to noon at Rowe Fire Station
Other animal vaccinations and dog licenses
available
- Apr 6 **THE PEANUT CHRONICLES**
Hilltown Drama Club Performance
Morning (TBD) and 6:30 p.m. at the Heath
school building
- Apr 7 **THE PEANUT CHRONICLES**
Hilltown Drama Club Performance
6:30 p.m. at the Heath school building
- Apr 8 **FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREMENT
CELEBRATION**
For Ken Gilbert and Steve Bigelow
2 to 4 p.m. at the Community Hall
Potluck—appetizers and desserts

**ONGOING****CRAFTY LADIES**

First and third Thursdays from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall. Come join fellow sewers, knitters, and crafters and work on your own projects while enjoying each other's company. A \$1.00 donation is encouraged to defray the cost of using the building. Contact Susan Gruen at 337-4235 for more information.

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.

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 and osteoporosis, for ages 55 and over.

SENIOR BROWN BAG LUNCH

First Thursday of each month, dessert & games.
11:45 a.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall.

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 or call Margo Newton at 339-8580.

SENIOR OPEN ART

Monday, 1 to 4 p.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Community Hall. Open to all. Contact Eileen McVay-Lively at 337-4742 with questions.
Note: Open Art will be suspended for February.

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.

If you would like an event included on the Community Calendar, please drop a note in the black box located in the Town Hall vestibule, or send an email to theheathherald@gmail.com. Please include the event title, date, time and location.

**Reduce Trash by Composting**

"Earth Machine" compost bins (\$45) and "Sure-Close" compost pails (\$5) are available at the Solid Waste District office in Greenfield. Call 413-772-2438 or visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org for more information.

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

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 3:30 to 5 p.m. or call for appointment
413-337-4845

Accountant, Tracey Baronas

accountant@townofheath.org
Monday 9 a.m. to 2:30 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 Nartowicz

Monday 3:30 p.m. (varies)
knartowicz@gmail.com

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Board of Assessors

Wednesday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Alice Wozniak, Assistant Assessor
Robyn Provost-Carlson, 413-337-5316
Heather Hathwell, 413-339-4359

Board of Health, 413-337-4934

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

Finance Committee,

Ned Wolf, Secretary, 413-337-4476
Jeff Simmons, 413-337-4994
Gloria Fisher, 413-337-6626
Jan Carr
Kathy Inman

Library Board of Trustees

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

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, 413-339-4820
Doug Mason, 413-339-4756
Nina Marshall, 413-339-4756
Sean Neill, 413-339-4820
Haynes Turkle

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
Bernard "Buck" den Ouden, 413-337-4002
Jessica Van Steensburg, 413-339-4820

Historical Commission, Heather Hathwell

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

MTRSD School Committee Representative

Budge Litchfield, 413-337-4957

Franklin County Technical School Representative

Art Schwenger, 413-625-2526

Hawlemont Elementary School

Samantha Rutz, Principal, 413-339-8316

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.
Voicemail: 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, Melinda Herzig

413-337-4934, x 108, or Shelburne Control at 413-625-8200 to have paged. All emergencies, dial 911.

Highway Department, Mike Shattuck, Highway

Superintendent, 413-337-4462; cell, 413-406-4516

Police Department, Melinda Herzig, Chief

Office hours: Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m. 413-337-4934,
ext. 108, or call Shelburne Control at 413-625-8200
to have paged. All emergencies, dial 911

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. Memorial Day through
October 31

Volunteer Fire Department

Nick Anzuoni, Interim Fire Chief, 413-337-4461, or
911 for an emergency

*"I wonder if the sap is stirring yet,
If wintry birds are dreaming of a mate,
If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the sun
And crocus fires are kindling one by one:
Sing robin, sing:
I still am sore in doubt concerning Spring."*
—Christina Rossetti



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You can help keep *Heath Herald* distribution costs down by enrolling in our Reserved Pick-up Program. We will notify you as soon as a new issue is available. Then, all you need to do is stop by Sawyer Hall and pick up your personally labeled copy in the box across from the library.



Enroll today! Simply send an email to: theheathherald@gmail.com or drop us a note at P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346.

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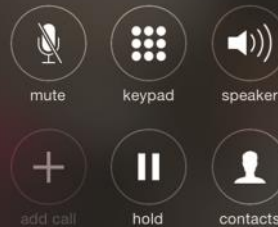
**Viarengo Family
Janice & Murray Newman
Susan Samoriski**

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for the *Heath Herald*.**

Simply send your check for \$25 made payable to the *Heath Herald*, P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346. Note "Color Sponsor" on the check.

911

Emergency Call — calling...



**Reminder from
Heath Chief of Police,
Melinda Herzig.**

In case of emergency, contact Dispatch at 911. For non-emergencies, please call the business number: 413-625-8200.

Thank you.



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Which option do you prefer? Mailed _____ PDF _____ Reserved for me at the Town Hall _____

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