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FOOD, PAGE D1



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SPORTS, PAGE B1

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Seeds of empowerment

Women's GARDEN project aims to grow vegetables, independence

By RICHIE DAVIS
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — The vegetable plants now growing around NELCWIT's offices are more than just vegetables.

This week's raised-bed plantings in front of New England Learning Center for Women in Transition's headquarters is the culmination of a set of courses that women from

NELCWIT and the Turners Falls Women's Center have been taking as part of a grant program with Greenfield Community College's Sustainable Agriculture and Green Energy Education (SAGE) Center.

But the planting goes deeper, say organizers of the three-year project, intended to empower women from abusive relationships and challenging economic situations.

The Franklin County Women's

GARDEN Project — an acronym for Growing Agricultural Resilience and Developing Economic Networks — is funded with a three-year, \$60,000 grant from the Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts.

It's meant to address needs faced by women trying to transition out of abusive, sometimes violent, relationships and difficult economic situations.

See GARDEN Page A6



Recorder/Paul Franz

Deb Habib of the Seeds of Solidarity Farm in Orange and Greenfield Community College Student Jennifer Prue plant a vegetable garden in front of the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition.

PLAY TIME



Mae Sobieski, 2, of Greenfield, jumps into the arms of family friend Erin Cowles of Northampton as the two play in a dandelion-dotted field in Greenfield on Tuesday.

Recorder/
Paul Franz

Downtown Greenfield building to be razed

Taxpayer money set for crumbling former nail salon structure

By ANITA FRITZ
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — The town is going to have to spend its own money to raze a crumbling building on Main Street.

Housing Court ordered the building at 188 Main St. be razed after the town took the owner to court because Greenfield Building Commissioner and Inspector Mark Snow gave Terry Thuong Ho of Springfield two choices early this year: repair the building or take it down.

Snow said he sent Thuong Ho a certified letter saying the building at 188 Main St., former occupied by Lucky Nails, which is now at 130 Main St., either be made safe or razed because it is crumbling at the back next to the railroad tracks, is a fire hazard and is unsafe and unsanitary.

Greenfield Finance Director Marjorie Lane Kelly said the town will go out to bid on the project next month. She said demolition will most likely happen in early summer.

Kelly said it will cost the town \$125,000 to raze the building, and she said Greenfield will then put a lien on the property and seek reimbursement from the owner.

According to town assessor's records, the property, including the building, is assessed at \$58,900.

"The building has to come down, so we don't have much of a choice," she said.

See BUILDING Page A2

Demolition will most likely happen in early summer.

Recent raids net 229 bags of heroin in Turners Falls

By CHRIS CURTIS
Recorder Staff

TURNERS FALLS — The Northwestern District Anti-Crime Task Force knocked down doors and arrested five Thursday at a Fifth Street apartment building. One woman faces drug dealing charges. Of the remaining four, three were arrested on outstanding warrants and the third on a charge of being present where heroin is kept.

Police found more than 20 syringes, most used and uncapped, in one apartment

and in another 109 bags of suspected heroin and a bag of suspected crack cocaine. In a Facebook post Wednesday, Montague Police Chief Charles

"Chip" Dodge III listed the 15 Fifth St. raids with a task force raid March 27 at 62 Fifth St., where, he wrote, police found approximately 120 bags of heroin and \$10,000 cash.

The Task Force and Montague police executed search warrants on apartments 6

NYC seizure of 150 lbs. of heroin will affect supply to Massachusetts. See Page A2.

and 10 of 15 Fifth St. simultaneously at 8:54 p.m. Thursday, according to police reports included in court records.

In Apartment 6 police found resident April M. Thibault, 30, and two others who were not charged. Thibault pleaded innocent the following day in Greenfield District Court to charges of possession to distribute heroin and crack cocaine. Police found 109 bags of suspected heroin, 10 stamped with the brand "AT&T" in her bra, as well as a bag of suspected crack, according to

See RAIDS Page A2

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Theme parks turning aging coasters into new thrill rides

By JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press

Bigger, faster and more extreme are what count when it comes to roller coasters.

So what's an amusement park to do with aging coasters when those record-breaking crowd-pleasers from years ago are being overshadowed by today's scream machines?

A coaster makeover, of course.

A handful of roller coasters are reopening this year after undergoing extensive rehabs now that innovations in the design of coaster tracks and trains are allowing theme parks to revive older rides saddled with shorter lines and soaring maintenance costs. Plus, it's cheaper than building a coaster from the ground up.

See COASTERS Page A6

Six Flags New England among parks that have transformed classic wooden coasters by adding steel track that allows them to twist and flip upside down like never before.



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FlorenceBank.com

Coasters

From Page A1

Six Flags theme parks in New England and Southern California have transformed classic wooden coasters at each park by adding steel track that allows them to twist and flip upside down like never before.

Cedar Point amusement park along Lake Erie in Ohio freshened up its 20-year-old stand-up, steel coaster by switching to floorless-style trains.

"We felt there was a real opportunity to reinvent this coaster. It feels faster, it feels smoother, it's a completely different experience," said Jason McClure, the park's general manager.

Until the last few years, there weren't a lot of options for completely overhauling outdated roller coasters, especially those with wood tracks that had become too rough to ride as they aged.

That changed when Rocky Mountain Construction, a company that got its start repairing worn wood coaster tracks, came out with a way

to put steel rails on wooden coaster structures.

"We're basically remodeling the entire coaster," said Amy Garcia, a spokeswoman for the company in Hayden, Idaho.

Its first major overhaul came in 2011 at Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington with the Texas Giant, a ride that once ranked among the best among coaster enthusiasts before age caught up with it.

The \$10 million renovation — about half the cost of building a new coaster — immediately won back fans.

Rocky Mountain Construction has since refurbished four other coasters, including two opening this coming weekend.

Wicked Cyclone at Six Flags New England in Agawam, is transforming from a traditional wooden coaster formerly known as Cyclone into a steel hybrid that's faster, steeper and twists riders through three inversions.

Colossus — the world's tallest and fastest roller coaster when it opened in 1978 at Six Flags Magic Mountain near

Los Angeles — is getting the same treatment, becoming Twisted Colossus.

The original coaster is one of the more recognizable rides around, featured in more than a dozen TV shows and movies, including "National Lampoon's Vacation." But its appeal dwindled as it was dwarfed by the park's bigger and "badder" steel coasters.

The new steel-hybrid version has over-banked turns and inversions, including one billed as a "Top Gun Stall" where the coaster train slows



This photo provided by Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio, shows the theme park's new Rougarou roller coaster. The floorless coaster has a werewolf theme. It's one of a number of new attractions at theme parks around the country this summer.

AP photo

■ Wicked Cyclone at Six Flags New England in Agawam is transforming from a traditional wooden coaster formerly known as Cyclone into a steel hybrid that's faster, steeper and twists riders through three inversions.

down while upside down.

"This brings it into the next generation and makes it relevant for years to come," said Magic Mountain President Bonnie Rabjohn. "It really brings it back in vogue."

Robb Alvey, who has been on over 1,400 coasters around the world and operates ThemeParkReview.com, said the roller coasters that have been turned into new rides were already nearing the end of their life cycle.

"They're also rides with great history that most people would rather see

a new life put into them rather than taking them down," he said.

Those within the theme park industry expect to see more recycling of roller coasters.

"It gives a park something new to market and talk about in a much cheaper way," said Dennis Spiegel, a theme-park consultant and president of International Theme Park Services Inc. in Cincinnati. "If you can rehabilitate an existing coaster and give a new experience, then you're ahead of the cost game."

GARDEN: Healing aspect of working with soil

From Page A1

uations, said Abrahm Dresdale, who coordinates GCC's Food and Farm Systems program. In addition to providing good nutrition for themselves and their children, the program — which will move its focus next year to Turners Falls and then to Orange — also aims to help women learn independence through cooperative activity.

"There's a healing aspect to working with the soil and of being self-reliant," said Dresdale.

Working with Montague Catholic Social Ministries, NELCWIT, Seeds of Solidarity Education Center in Orange, GCC is teaching three groups of about a dozen women four courses from its Food and Farm Systems program: organic gardening, food preservation and storage, permaculture and creating farm and food cooperatives.

"In the food and preservation course, the women got to try different recipes and adapt them at home, with taste testing," Dresdale said. "Everyone's very invested and excited about their personal adaptation. It's something that brings the community together. They're working in teams and knowing they're going to be growing these strawberries and can or freeze or dehydrate them to have nutritional food around the year. That's very empowering."

The first group of women, who finished planning, building and planting four raised-bed gardens in Greenfield this week before moving on to their third and final course, are learning skills and building camaraderie as they work together on building their boxed gardens.

"We learned how to build the raised beds, and then we filled them and did the planting," said Janet Diani, one of the participants from the Turners Falls Women's Center.

"Working together, we were learning how to do it; people were helping other people fig-



Recorder/Paul Franz

Deb Habib of the Seeds of Solidarity Farm in Orange and Greenfield Community College student Katherine Truesdell and others plant a vegetable garden in front of the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition.

ure stuff out, and there was a lot of laughter, a lot of feeling like, 'We could do this ourselves at home, and do this for other people,'" Diani said. "That was really important for all of us, building a community. Especially doing all four classes together, we're experiencing all of it together, knowing each other and feeling safe and growing and asking questions. That really gave us a sense of independence."

The women, taught by Deb Habib of Seeds of Solidarity and aided by GCC food and

farm system students serving as interns, planted an herb garden as well as vegetables, plus blueberries, strawberries and Juneberries to share with other women who come to NELCWIT in the future, said Dresdale. Some may also be offered to the public as well.

Plans for next year also call for planting some fruit trees as well in Unity Park as "public produce" for Turners Falls, she said. A similar set of courses is planned for Orange, where NELCWIT has a satellite office.

In NELCWIT's front yard, where one of the three boxes was purposely planted 2 feet high so it can also be used by women with physical limitations, "we decided who would come, in rotation, to water it, and then talked about how to teach some of the women who come into NELCWIT to be able to use it," said Diani, labeling each of the plants in English

and Spanish explaining what each plant is, how to care for it and harvest it. "Those of us took this course this year will continue to help mentor other women."

Ilana Gerjvoy, NELCWIT's director of advocacy and crisis services, said, "All of the women here at NELCWIT have gone through a lot in their lives or are still going through a lot ... They really love the chance to offer something to the community, and they're creating something that will be available to the whole community. Doing something in cooperation as a team feels really good. They're taking a leadership role, asking me what would be most useful for the community, and as people who are receiving services, it's really meaningful to be able to provide something, to be able to set up something the whole community can benefit from. It feels very gratifying."

Working together on projects not related to their trauma, Gerjvoy said, "is so important for people who have gone through difficult things, to see they're not alone. That's my sense. I really loved watching the women communicating with each other. They clearly felt safe sharing ideas: some thought the best way of doing things was this, or that ... and they were hearing each other out, coming up with consensus. Especially coming from a situation with very abusive dynamics, it's powerful to feel what it means when everyone has a voice. They have a shared experience that can be done in a cooperative way — instead of 'Do it my way, because I said so.'"

On the Web: www.nelcwit.org
www.mcscommunity.org

Montague tree policy to see more discussion

By CHRIS CURTIS
Recorder Staff

TURNERS FALLS — Disagreement over whether the trees recently felled on Montague Street were public and therefore protected was not resolved, but the Montague Board of Selectmen decided Tuesday night to develop a tree bylaw for the next town meeting and in the meantime asked the tree warden to notify the town for a hearing when trees are to be cut within the right of way.

The felling of seven maples on that street came up last week during a selectmen's meeting, prompting Tuesday's discussion with Tree Warden Mark Stevens and Eversource arborist Jamie Beuchesne. Stevens and Beuchesne said the trees, in fact 11, weren't public trees and didn't need a public hearing. Beuchesne said he obtained permission from each property owner before cutting the trees, and will replace them. Stevens said the trees were dying, and disputed that the view that they were public shade trees under an agreement with an old tree warden. "Some say they are, some say they aren't. Nobody can prove to me the town planted them. They're behind the right-of-way," Stevens said.

Beuchesne said he is not aware of any other towns in the state claiming ownership of trees they plant on private property for the life of the tree, with the maintenance responsibility that entails. Highway Superintendent Thomas Bergeron said he doesn't have the personnel

and Stevens doesn't have the budget to maintain all possibly town-owned trees.

New Selectman Richard Kuklewicz, who proposed the motion, said it seemed to him the intent was that trees planted by the wardens were public trees. Kuklewicz said going forward he'd rather consider all trees in the right-of-way as public. "I think we should err on the side of public information," he said.

"I see in the future recognizing the fact that we should have talked to more people about this," Beuchesne said, but told selectmen their motion would open up a can of worms in terms of their liability for trees.

Montague Street resident Phil Harrington said the tree felled on his land was worthless, a pencil with feathers due to trimming, and argued against hearings. "I don't understand where the town comes and tells me what I can do on my land," Harrington said.

Stevens' policy for replacing the trees he cuts was also discussed. Stevens said he plants a tree for every tree cut, provided his budget isn't completely spent on tree removal in a harsh winter. Stevens said he can't plant trees in the old tree's roots and doesn't necessarily replace trees in the downtown planter boxes for lack of space. Kuklewicz suggested the town might consider a policy that replacements be planted within a set vicinity of the old tree. Resident David Detmold suggested the town split the tree removal and planting budget to protect the planting function.

Death notices

Full-text paid obituaries can be found on Page A2. Because of differing deadlines, notices sometimes appear a day or so before the obituary.

Jeanne C. Munsinger

GREENFIELD — Jeanne C. (Currey) Munsinger, 93, of Greenfield, died peacefully Saturday (5-16-15).

Services will be private. Arrangements are under the direction of Walker Funeral Home, 14 High St.

Murley Services

GILL — Graveside services for Thomas J. Murley, 92, Oak St., in the Riverside section of Gill who died Jan. 5 at home will be Saturday at 11:30

a.m. at Central Cemetery in Erving.

Arrangements are under the direction of Kostanski Funeral Home

Sympathy messages available at:

www.kostanskifuneralhome.com

Ellis C. Sturtevant

GREENFIELD — Ellis C. Sturtevant, 90, died on Tuesday (5-19-15) at the Charlene Manor Extended Care Facility.

Arrangements, under the direction of Walker Funeral Home, were incomplete at

press time.

Zabko Services

TURNERS FALLS — Graveside services for Clara S. (Dzeima) Zabko, 92, of High Street, who died Nov. 22, 2014 at Charlene Manor Extended Care Facility in Greenfield will be held Saturday at 10 a.m. at Highland Cemetery in Millers Falls.

Arrangements are under the direction of Kostanski Funeral Home.

Sympathy messages available at:

www.kostanskifuneralhome.com

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