

# AIDS



Myths,  
facts, fears

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Groton...district hockey  
team scoots into playoffs  
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Shirley Fire Chief Alpee Levesque  
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# William Street undergoes psychiatric evaluation

by Marcia Perkins  
Montachusett Region

AYER-According to Ayer District Court Assistant Clerk Wendy Wilton, Army Specialist 4 William Street Jr. has been sent to Bridgewater State Hospital for 30 days psychiatric evaluation.

Street was arraigned on a first degree murder charge in Ayer on Monday, February 9, for the death of his 16 month old step-daughter Jaqueline DelRosario. After his arraignment Street was sent to Cambridge jail where he spent Monday night. Officials at

the jail petitioned Ayer District Court on Tuesday, February 10, to commit Street for psychiatric evaluation for his activities at the jail on Monday evening. Officials at Cambridge Jail would not elaborate on the nature of Street's activities.

"Whenever  
public spirit  
prevails  
liberty is secure."

- Noah Webster

# The Public Spirit

Ayer,  
Massachusetts

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## Selectmen sign up Housing Rehab firm

by Charles Gordon

AYER-On February 13th selectmen signed a one-month contract to bring to the town the services of a housing rehabilitation consultant firm so that the housing rehab loan and grant phase of Ayer's Small Cities Program grant can continue to move forward while a more permanent housing rehab specialist can be found.

Meeting in a special session last Friday with no regular meeting of the Board planned for the holiday February 16th, Chairman of Selectmen Irene Miller and Selectman Stephen Slarsky signed an agreement with Rusty Rodes of Community Opportunities Group so that help in details of housing rehab can be provided through to March 13th by the firm.

In other business, acting on a formal request from Donna Laggis, chairman of the Ayer Ambulance Service, the Board appointed Teri Sears as the town's delegate to the annual meeting of the Central Mass. Emergency Medical Systems Corporation. With an eye to "increase our visibility on the state level and therefore gain some additional benefits," Laggis stated in her written request to the Board, the appointment will allow Sears to vote for a slate of officers on the Board of Directors of CMEMSC. The town has had "no representation in this capacity" in the past, she wrote.



Little Brandon Johnson...of Charles Street in Fitchburg demonstrating the joys of winter and childhood.

RAY O'SULLIVAN PHOTO

## Car hit by train in Shirley



## KILLER CROSSING *almost* CLAIMS ANOTHER

by Marcia Perkins  
Montachusett Region

SHIRLEY-Living in Shirley by the railroad tracks you may see several cars at any given time of day traversing around and through closed railroad crossing gates, ignoring the red flashing lights and even the whistle of an oncoming train. This was the case on Friday, February 13, when Paul I. Vaillancourt decided to follow suit. Vaillancourt, 39, of Oak Ridge Road in Lunenburg was lucky.

AMTRACK number 433 commuter train, Boston to Gardner, struck Vaillancourt's 1975 Chevy Impala demolishing the car but

no one was hurt or, more importantly, killed. The train had stopped at Benjamin Road to let off passengers before striking the car at Center Road at 2:30 p.m.

Failure to stop at a railroad crossing involves a \$50 fine. Officer Gregory Massak, the first to arrive at the scene, wrote a citation and says "If I could have written him up for anything else I would have." Shirley Police are not encouraged to pursue anyone engaging in this dangerous practice unless on the correct side of the tracks. It's just too dangerous for an officer to do so just to issue a citation. Vaillancourt should frame the ticket as a reminder of his lucky day-lucky that he was still alive to be cited.

## Voters approve funds for Transfer Station-West Main Street

by Charles Gordon  
Nashoba Region

AYER-In the minutes before a quorum of townspeople could be assembled a move to postpone business of the February 10th special town meeting until the day of the annual town meeting almost held sway. Town officials argued about the emergency nature of three of the four articles on the warrant and more residents arrived with the result that all present sat down and in an hour and a half passed all the articles.

Chairman of Selectmen Irene Miller first had to speak out against the notion that "with a little more foresight" the Board could have avoided having to call "so many town meetings." She told the people, "We've acted in good faith" in arriving at the need for such a meeting to act on important business.

An entire evening in a January special town meeting had had to be devoted to major zoning bylaw amendments key to an update of the town's master plan. That meeting had resulted in approval of a map that included one piece



Ayer DPW representatives...Larry Caldwell, left and Donald Davan as they appeared before the board of selectmen to receive the board's thanks, on behalf of the entire snowplowing crew, for keeping roads open during a snowy January.

of zoning change that Planning Board Chairman Peter Johnston said had been "inadvertently omitted" from the special articles addressed at that January meeting. Thus, in order to make

the articles passed jibe with the map as both articles and map are now in the hands of the state's attorney general, townspeople on February 10th were being asked to approve a change of zone

designation from industrial to general residence for an area bounded by Forrest Street, Bligh Street and Tannery Street. Johnston said the change, passed

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## Guercio seeking re-election

by Marcia Perkins  
Montachusett Region

SHIRLEY-Selectman Chip Guercio of Shirley will be seeking re-election at the Annual Town Meeting in May. Guercio was elected to a one year unexpired term last May when Emily DeLaite retired for health reasons. Terms are normally three years.

The most exciting events since his term began include the initiation of the feasibility study/building committee to design the new highway/public safety building says Guercio, and "We have negotiated with the state regarding the expansion of MCI Shirley and what that will mean to the town. Included in the expansion of the prison will also be the beginning, hopefully, of the end of our rubbish disposal problem." The state proposes to build a trash to energy plant at the MCI. The Shirley landfill is almost at capacity and it is undecided as yet whether or not it will be used as a transfer station in the future.

Selectmen were also able to begin a wage and salary study which has been ongoing since May of various services in local



towns and what the duties and salaries should be for positions. Selectmen have signed a contract with Nashoba Cable Company bringing cable TV into the town, although Guercio points out that this was begun before he was elected.

"We're currently in the selection process for a new full time police chief" states the selectman, and supported the proposal in May to put on two full time firefighters which have since

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# Voters Approve Funds for Transfer

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unanimously on the 10th, would serve to control industrial growth and to "keep down further industrial use of those roads" in a residential neighborhood.

As a result of a 40 affirmative to 9 negative vote at this special town meeting the town treasurer has permission to borrow up to \$620,000 to pay for construction costs for a new solid waste transfer station to be situated at the filled-to-capacity sanitary landfill on Groton Harvard Road. Now selectmen can have Town Engineer William Redfield and design engineering firm SEA solicit bids with the hope of having the transfer station on line by September.

Miller, Selectman Charles Pappas and Redfield stated that unless the town shows some progress on getting the transfer sta-

tion built the state DEQE would close the landfill in September and then the town would be forced to pay much higher costs for transporting the trash to Refuse Fuels Associates (the firm contracted with already to haul trash out of town in compactor trailers) than it would with a transfer station ready.

Redfield explained the history leading from the 1985 annual town meeting appropriation of \$285,000 for transfer station construction to the estimation by SEA designers just a few weeks ago of what it might cost to build the station. Actually \$95,000 in the original appropriation had been set aside for the first year of the station's operation. Most of the rest had been used for the unexpected cost of having design plans drawn up.

Redfield also explained how his study committee had come up with alternatives to solve the town's solid waste disposal needs with the present landfill nearing capacity and how townspeople in their town meeting votes and town selectmen in their review of the study committee's research and recommendations had narrowed the alternatives to this one solution. At this point it was simply "too late" to consider voting down the construction of the station so that another alternative could be pursued.

With the Board of Health yet to announce a decision on whether to allow commercial refuse haulers to use the transfer station and a sense on the part of some that all dumping regulations might not be perfectly clear to residents in general, at the

meeting the 10th a few citizens urged that a vote on the appropriation of money for the project should be put off until these regulations were made clear. Here Miller responded that for this it was "time for the people to go to Board of health meetings" to get such matters squared away. Selectmen had done what they were required by law to do and, as Redfield added, "we need to get the money now." Those who brought up this issue were concerned that no one from the Board of Health was present the 10th to answer their questions.

## West Main

As their first act of voting the 10th residents approved appropriation of \$151,762 under the 1987 tax cap to place with state funds to cover the \$423,000 low bid to reconstruct drainage, roadway

and sidewalks on West Main Street to Mechanic Street. Miller explained why the extra money beyond Ayer's Small Cities Program grant had been found to be necessary for the project, Pappas hinted at the warning of the state Executive Office of Communities and Development about the loss of the entire Small Cities grant unless progress were made, Redfield gave details of the drainage and depth of reconstruction on the roadway, and Downtown Business Association President Ed Kelley spoke on how merchants and property owners had had their input included in the planning.

Speaking as a West Main Street property owner, Town Counsel Robert Gardner said he had of course not been eligible for any Small Cities loan or grant money for his new construction project there. Carl Blackwell of Fitchburg had reconstructed the

Ryan's Roast property with no local or state government funds. Gardner pointed out that "the whole project" for West Main Street "serves to stimulate that kind of progress."

Gardner said, "I support this second phase of the Main Street project." It is "another step to revitalize the town in general." He added, "All these types of things will make our community better."

Voters also accepted for the town \$28,437 in state Equal Educational Opportunity grant money to be used for School Department "direct service expenditures" as approved by the School Committee. School Superintendent Neville Markham told townspeople that as soon as the department had learned an exact figure, he had asked selectmen to place this article on the January special town meeting warrant for consideration. As the money had to be spent by June 30th, putting off a decision on this acceptance until the May annual town meeting would make the timing for spending "awfully tight."

# Watch Your Step!



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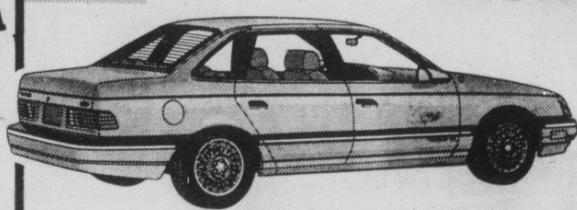
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## Guercio

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been appointed. Guercio adds "One of the things that has kept us busy since August 1st is the lock-up situation." The Ayer lock-up has been unavailable since that time and selectmen have needed to approve several temporary solutions to the problem while searching for a long-term solution.

Guercio says he hasn't heard enough of the details of the federal "snow money" distribution process yet to decide if receipt of the federal funds will preclude the need for a special town meeting to deal with the situation, but that will be discussed at this week's meeting.

Being a selectman does not affect the running of the "Bull Run," Guercio's restaurant, dramatically he claims, since

"Most of the town business that I'm involved in, selectmen's meetings or meetings pertaining to business of the selectmen, are all basically week night occurrences. The majority of my hours of business at the Bull Run are basically day hours with a heavy emphasis on week-ends." Guercio's schedule is flexible and he claims he is lucky that his business is located in Shirley and only a five minute ride from the municipal building and visa-versa.

Guercio has 4 children, three sons and a daughter, ages 16 months to 8 years. He is married to Dolores Folkins of Shirley. Guercio's sister, Allison, has served in the Peace Corps in Africa and recently gave a lecture on the subject to students at the Lura A. White School in Shirley.

## Red Cross representative believes in what she does

by Katy McGillen

Val Noland is a small person with a very large job. She is the Nashoba Field Representative for the Leominster Chapter of the Red Cross. Noland serves the communities of Ayer, Groton, Harvard, Littleton, and Shirley. Her office is located in the Red Cross Building on Fort Devens, and she wants to let people know she is there.

Noland offers Fort Devens and the surrounding areas many services. She coordinates CPR and First Aid classes as well as the instructor classes. All are open to the public.

Usually two CPR and two First Aid classes are offered monthly, but if required, Noland will coordinate additional classes to work around unusual circumstances or to accommodate large groups. Scheduling is no problem either, says Noland, "I'll bend over backwards" she says to work around time tables, including using night and weekend classes.

Also included in the field representative's duties is service to the military family. This is primarily for families with a spouse overseas. In case of emergency, Noland locates and passes the message to the overseas spouse, or as in a recent case, she will locate the spouse after long periods of no communication to ensure that all is well.

Although Noland has only been

a field rep since Dec. 1, she has vast amounts of experience in the Red Cross volunteer business. She started as a Candy Stripper in Philadelphia when she was 18, and volunteered on and off for the next 20 years.

Among other credentials, she is a certified Washington Emergency Medical Technician, Rape Relief Advocate, and Multi-Media First Aid Instructor. Noland's background and enthusiasm has prepared her to take on virtually any task the public gives her.

Noland and her husband of 10 years, eloped when they were both stationed in Heidelberg, West Germany after only a four-month courtship. Soon after, Noland left the military. Her husband is a driver with the 104th Transportation Company at Fort Devens.

Their last assignment was at Fort Lewis, Wash. which they enjoyed except for the rainy season. "Your toes start to web and you quack periodically," she said.

But the Noland's favorite area is New England, and they hope to eventually purchase a house in New Hampshire.

"I really believe in what I'm doing," says Noland. Any military or civilian in Ayer or the surrounding areas with questions are urged to call Noland at 772-3384. She is not only an authority on Red Cross affairs and offerings, but she is interesting and fun to talk with.

## Nashoba appoints director

AYER-Regina Burzynski has joined The Nashoba Community Hospital as director of quality assurance and utilization review. In this capacity she is responsible for monitoring the use of hospital resources and ensuring optimum patient care and satisfaction.

"Nashoba Hospital has made quality patient care a top priori-

ty, and I am delighted to be part of that commitment," Burzynski said.

Formerly the assistant vice president of utilization management at Leominster Hospital, Burzynski received a BS in Nursing from Indiana University and a MBA from Western New England College.