

Sleep deprived?

Many people are choosing to work more and sleep less, but it comes at a cost.

YOUR HEALTH, PAGE D1

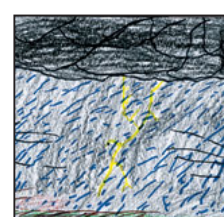


Building plans

Mohawk district applies to 'green' program for school repair money.

LOCAL NEWS, PAGE C1

WEATHER



75/61

SHOWERS

Xanthia Meuse
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PAGE A7

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SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

Glass artist heats up

New artist takes Shelburne Falls studio, specializes in jellyfish, other sea life

By DIANE BRONCACCIO
Recorder Staff

SHELburne FALLS — A new glass artist, with a penchant for sea life, has taken up his torch in the former glass-blowers studio near the Glacial Potholes.

Glass artist Jeremy Sinkus is moving from the Leverett Crafts and Arts studio to the empty glass-works shop next door to the Young & Constantin Gallery. He will be doing business there as "Holder of the Stone" glass arts studio, offering bystanders a glimpse of a different kind of glass art than they've seen made there in the past.

Instead of large bowls and vases made through a furnace-based "glass-blowing" technique, Sinkus works with high-powered torches and molten glass at temperatures of 3,000 degrees to 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit. This is a technique traditionally known as "lampwork." It's a type of glass framework that Sinkus will also be teaching at his new studio to bead-makers, beginners and to intermediate-level glasswork students.

Sinkus, 35, is preparing for an October "grand opening," but his luminescent glass jellyfish, sea anemones, and miniature flowers seemingly frozen in glass teardrops are already available for sale at the Young & Constantin Gallery next door.

Sinkus grew up in Worcester, and spent much time with his father, whom he describes as both a fisherman and an artist. Before he took up glass art, Sinkus said he was a musician who also enjoyed making pen-and-ink drawings. For many years, he collected minerals, rocks, bones and fossils before he started replicating them in glass.

"I've written about underworld art," he remarked. "Most of my artwork comes from (what's) underground or underwater. It's all under-the-surface art. I'm venturing into flowers, because of being close to the Bridge of Flowers," he



Recorder/Paul Franz

Jeremy Sinkus works on a glass piece in his workshop in Shelburne Falls.

added.

Sinkus started working with glass about eight years ago. In Sterling, Sinkus said he began "pulling cane" with Will D'Errico, a glassmaker who eventually joined Kathy Young and the late Chris Constantin at their North River Glass studio in Shelburne Falls.

As Sinkus was just starting out, he found that working with a torch was more portable, and more affordable for him than glass-making techniques that require a full oven.

"This is all borosilicate glass —

it's like CorningWare or Pyrex," he explained. "In theory, you could drink hot coffee in these wine glasses," he said, pointing out two ocean-blue goblets with miniature jelly fish embedded in the glass stems. "But it takes twice as much heat to make them."

Although new to Shelburne Falls, Sinkus' recreated sea life has been sold nationally. He said he sells a lot of his work in Hawaii and "wherever there's water." About five years ago, Sinkus took up scuba diving, which has given him more underwater inspirations.

"I make most of my living from the jellyfish," he said. Sinkus said he developed his own technique for making them.

"It took me years to figure out how to make a realistic one," he said.

The dangling, delicate jellyfish tentacles are made from molten glass mounted on rods that are as fine as toothpicks; then the noodle-like strands are pulled and stretched.

Although self-taught on jellyfish,

See GLASS ARTIST Page A6

Old law may help bring high-speed to hilltowns

By DIANE BRONCACCIO
Recorder Staff

In the 1890s, when most hilltowns had no electricity, private utility companies argued that wiring the sparsely populated rural towns was unprofitable.

That's when local groups came together to use a state law that let towns form a "municipal lighting plant," to bring service to even the most remote regions. (This was in the days when "lighting" was the only perceived use for electricity.)

Today, a coalition of western Massachusetts towns called "Wired West" hopes to dust off that legislation and use it for a telecommunications cooperative that will bring broadband network services "to the last mile" of 47 hilltowns throughout western Massachusetts.

"This legislation has been dusted off twice before — in the 1950s, to establish community television, and in the 1990s for telecommunication services," says Monica Webb, a spokeswoman for Wired West, and a member of its steering committee.

Because the precedent for using the old rural-electrification statute for

See INTERNET Page A6

White House wants easier way to tap Internet

By LOLITA C. BALDOR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration is pushing to make it easier for the government to tap into internet and e-mail communications. But the plan has already drawn condemnation from privacy groups and communications firms may be wary of its costs and scope.

Frustrated by sophisticated and often encrypted phone and e-mail technologies, U.S. officials say that law enforcement needs to improve its ability to eavesdrop on conversations involving terrorism, crimes or other public safety issues.

Critics worry the changes are an unnecessary invasion of privacy and would only make citizens and businesses more vulnerable to identity theft and espionage.

The new regulations that would be sent to Congress next year would affect American and foreign companies that provide communications services inside the U.S. It would require service providers to make the plain text of encrypted conversa-

See WIRE TAP Page A6

INDEX

Classified advertising	D3-D4
Comics	C4
Death Notices, Obituaries	A6, A2
Editorial page	A4
Local news	C1, C2
Nation/World news	B4, C5, D2
Puzzles	D2
Sports	B1-B3
Talk of the Towns	C6
Your Health	D1

Apostles untouched by fire at Holbek group

Recorder Staff

ORANGE — Although fire ravaged his factory building Saturday, Thor Holbek said Monday that his apostles are fine.

"They did not get damaged. It was unbelievable luck. There is no doubt that God was looking after the work," said Holbek, who makes museum displays, cell tower "trees" and created the "money tree" at the Big Y shopping plaza in Greenfield.

Among his current projects, Holbek said, are three 7-foot apostles that will disguise cell phone repeaters at St. Paul's Church in Providence, R.I. They survived the fire unscathed.

In Saturday's fire, he said, "The main office and part of the manufacturing area were not damaged." He said that the company will need additional space to be 100 percent back in

business. "We are working with the town of Orange and private owners to find mill space."

According to Orange Fire Capt. James Young, it is not likely that Holbek's company will be using its factory at Chase Court anytime soon.

"The whole building was involved. It pretty much burned the whole roof," he said.

According to Young, investigators have yet to determine a cause for the fire, but the matter is being looked into by the state fire marshal's office.

Although there were around 80 firefighters on the scene Saturday afternoon, only one firefighter from Orange was injured.

"He was struck in the mouth by an ax or a pry bar. He lost a couple of teeth, which is minor compared to what can happen in a fire," Young said.

According to the fire captain, no



Recorder/Peter MacDonald

Mark Anderson and Thor Holbek with three apostle figures that survived the building fire in their workspace in Orange.

one was working in the building at the time.

"It was called in around 3:09 p.m. as smoke was coming from the building," he said.

Holbek said he expects his business to be fully operational later this week. He added the cause of the fire

See FIRE Page A5



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Wire tap: Trying to catch up with communication innovations

From Page A1

tions — over the phone, computer or e-mail — readily available to law enforcement, according to federal officials and analysts.

The mandate would likely require companies to add backdoors or other changes to the systems that would allow a wiretap to capture an unscrambled version of a conversation.

Those affected by the changes would include online

services and networking sites such as Facebook and Skype, as well as phone systems that deliver encrypted e-mail such as BlackBerry.

“The way we communicate has changed dramatically since 1994, but telecommunications law has not kept up. This gap between reality and the law has created a significant national security and public safety problem,” said Valerie E. Caproni, the FBI’s General Counsel.

She said the changes

would not expand law enforcement authority and would involve legally authorized intercepts on calls or e-mails sent by terrorists or other criminals. The changes would allow companies to respond quickly to wiretap requests from local, state and federal authorities.

The New York Times first reported Monday about White House plans to submit the new bill next year.

Law enforcement is already able to monitor regu-

lar telephone conversations.

“In the old days, the technology was simple to wiretap,” said cybersecurity expert James Lewis, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “As technologies have gotten better and faster and bigger, it’s harder and harder for law enforcement to intercept communications.”

Lewis said law enforcement officials have long been pushing for the expanded access. He said the technology is available to make the changes and allow authorities to tap into conversations encrypted by communications companies as they move from one person to another.

Communications companies, he said, may have concerns about the costs of modifying their systems or software to allow the intercepts. The government may have to provide some funding aid.

Companies may also balk if the government tries to tell them how to alter their systems.

But Lewis said many companies are already providing similar capabilities to law enforcement in other countries in Europe and the Middle East.

Wiretapping is vital for law enforcement agencies,

said Lewis, because “it provides crucial evidence that wins a lot of their convictions. As technology changes, as the Internet changes, they have to keep up or they’ll lose an important tool in their arsenal.”

Civil rights and privacy groups were quick to condemn the plan, warning that the administration faces an uphill battle.

“This is a shortsighted and ill-conceived power grab by some in the administration,” said Marc Rotenberg, executive director of the Washington-based Electronic Privacy Information Center. “The balance has swung radically toward enhanced law enforcement powers. For them to argue that it’s still not enough is just unbelievable. It’s breathtaking in its hubris.”

He said that over the past 15 years — particularly since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks — the standards for warrants have been lowered. And he said law enforcement has many new technologies, ranging from biometric tracking to DNA databases, to enhance its information gathering.

Christopher Calabrese, legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties

Union, said that mandating that all communications software be accessible to the government is a “huge privacy invasion.”

“Under the guise of a technical fix, the government looks to be taking one more step toward conducting easy dragnet collection of Americans’ most private communications,” said Calabrese. “This proposal will create even more security risks by mandating that our communications have a ‘backdoor’ for government use and will make our online interactions even more vulnerable.”

One senior law enforcement official said it is premature to conclude that the changes would erode computer security or enable identity theft. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss ongoing deliberations, said it would depend on how communications companies enact the requirements, if approved.

The official added that while law enforcement agencies have many tools to battle crime, there often is no substitute for capturing an actual conversation between two terrorists or criminals.

Internet: Using utility model

From Page A1

telecommunications has been set, Wired West will be asking its member communities to adopt this enabling legislation at town meetings, so that towns lacking broadband service will be able to form an inter-municipal collaborative that will bring high-quality fiber optics to all areas in western Massachusetts.

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.

Roger Brown

ROWE — Roger Brown, 74, died Monday (9-28-10) at home.

Arrangements, under the direction of Johnson Funeral Home of Shelburne Falls, were incomplete at press time.

Ian E. Burgin

ASHFIELD — A memorial service for Ian Edgar Burgin, 24, of Ashfield, who died Aug. 20 in an automobile accident, will be held Saturday at 2 p.m. in Curtis House, 14 South St.

Contributions in his memory are suggested to the Ian Burgin Memorial Fund, Florence Savings Bank, 1 Main St., Williamsburg, MA 01096-9404.

Ivan R. Graffius

GREENFIELD — Ivan R. Graffius, 82, of 42B Thayer Road, died Sunday (9-26-10) at Baystate Franklin Medical Center.

Calling hours will be Thursday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. from the McCarthy Funeral Homes, 36 Bank Row, and people are invited to join the Graffius family, who will gather in fellowship hall of the Second Congregational Church. A dismissal from the fellowship hall will take place at 10:30 with family/guests convening at the funeral home for the life celebrations services, preceded by an “Evergreen service” provided by the Harmony Masonic Lodge of Turners Falls at 10:45.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to: Order of the Eastern Star, Turners Falls Chapter No. 181, in care of Gertrude Woodard, PM-treasurer, 62 Crocker Ave., Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Guest book and condolence message available at:

www.mccarthyfunerahomes.com

Alice Aplington Harper

GREENFIELD — Alice Aplington Harper, 97, of Greenfield, died Friday (9-24-10) at home.

Services will be Sunday at 1:30 p.m. at the Second Congregational Church Burial will be at Green River Cemetery.

Memorial donations are suggested to the Second Congregational Church, 16 Court Square, Greenfield, Massachusetts, 01301.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Walker Funeral Home, 14 High St.

Marion L. Olsen

BERNARDSTON — Marion L. (Burrows) Olsen, 92, of River Street, died Saturday (9-25-10) at Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield.

Calling hours will be Wednesday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Kostanski Funeral Home, 110 Federal St., Greenfield.

Services will be held Thursday at 11 a.m. in the United Church of Bernardston, 58 Church St. A calling hour at the church will be Thursday from 10 a.m. until the time of the service. Burial will follow in Center Cemetery.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the United Church of Bernardston, 58 Church St., P.O. Box 503, Bernardston, MA 01337.

Sympathy message avail-

If Wired West were to request new special legislation to form municipal broadband service, she said, the process might not only take longer — it might not be approved. “Also, legislators don’t like to introduce bills for something that is already in place,” she said. “We are incredibly fortunate that this legislation already exists.”

According to Webb, town representatives and legal advisers to Wired West reviewed a dozen approaches to achieving its goal of full broadband access — but decided using the old law would be the quickest way to set up the administrative structure for a financially independent, municipal cooperative for high-speed broadband.

The 12-year-old advocacy group, Western Massachusetts Connect, is working with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute to oversee the building of the “middle mile” network through town centers, schools, libraries and major town centers. That network is to be built with \$71.6 million in state funds.

Wired West aims to build out from the “middle mile.” If it becomes a public cooperative, it will be able to borrow in the bond market to pay for the fiber-optic infrastructure. Once that infrastructure is in place, service providers, such as Crocker Communications or Verizon, will be able to use the infrastructure to provide services to customers.

“In the current model, each telecommunications provider must build its own infrastructure,” said Webb. “That’s like requiring both FedEx and UPS to each build their own roads — that only they can travel on.” Because any provider would be able to use Wired West’s network, the hope is that the greater competition would mean better prices for the households and small businesses in the hilltowns that need high-speed internet.

Besides telephone, Web and television service, the fiber-optic technology to be installed will make it possible for hilltown residents to get “telehealth” diagnostic services, high-definition TV and video-conferencing abilities — services beyond the capabilities of DSL and fixed bandwidth, says Webb.

Wired West grew out of local town broadband committees, and was created after 47 towns this past spring voted to form an inter-municipal group that would provide full broadband service to the area. Each town has at least one representative to Wired West. The Franklin County towns that joined are: Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, New

Salem, Northfield, Rowe, Shelburne, Shutesbury, Warwick and Wendell.

The organization has used grants from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to pay for a project consultant and legal expert.

The Hilltown Community Development Corp. in Chester is Wired West’s sponsor and fiduciary — an arrangement that will allow the group to raise tax-deductible donations.

“All the costs thus far have been borne by individual members of the steering committee,” Webb explained. “We’re just starting that fundraising process.”

One group that won’t be tapped for funds are the town governments. “One of the reasons we choose this ‘municipal light plant’ law is, we realize that individual towns are not in a position to put up capital for this network,” she said. “We planned this with an understanding we would not be placing any undue financial burden on the towns.”

For the towns to form a municipal collaborative, each town is required to have two town meeting votes of approval.

Last week, David Kulp, chairman of the Ashfield Telecommunications Committee, presented a request to post a warrant article on an October special town meeting in Ashfield, so that the town might meet the two town-meeting vote requirement by next spring’s annual town meeting. The Selectboard has asked to see the warrant article before it votes on placing it on an October warrant.

Webb says Wired West is drafting a warrant article, and that members want to hold both informational hearings and meet with selectmen in each town. To get enough support to join the public broadband cooperative will require two, two-thirds majority votes, taken by ballot at special or annual town meetings that are between two months to 13 months apart.

“We want people to understand we’re not interested in providing electricity,” she said. “We’re now finalizing the wording, so that towns and citizens aren’t concerned that they’re somehow getting into the electric service business.”

As for the old-time municipal lighting plants, most of those got bought up by private companies as they proved to be profitable, Webb remarked. “Today, no one can imagine living in rural areas without electricity.”



Recorder/Paul Franz

A jellyfish crafted by glass artist Jeremy Sinkus, who has recently moved into the space previously occupied by a glass blower’s studio next to the Young & Constantin Gallery near the Glacial Potholes in Shelburne Falls.

Glass artist: New life in old studio

From Page A1

Sinkus said he has studied with glass artist Sally Prash of Montague and Italian flame-worker Emillio Santini.

Sinkus works with a special torch that provides extra controls for the ratio of oxygen to propane used in heating the glass. He said the mix of oxygen determines how hot the flame is. “I can create an extremely hot flame with this — of up to 4,000 or 5,000 degrees with the torch.” In contrast, he said, a glass furnace heats the glass to about

2,500 degrees.

Sinkus said he’d always liked the glass studio in Shelburne Falls, and he likes the idea of having a studio where more local people will see his work.

Studio owner Kathy Young is excited to have found such a talented glassmaker for the studio, which has been vacant since early this spring.

“He’s going to be a superstar in his field,” said Young, who has also been a glassmaker. “He’s young, but his work is amazing. I think he’s a

really good match for this space.”

Sinkus said he is awaiting a shipment of torches and other tools needed to hold glasswork classes, which he hopes to offer starting in November. He said he can work with about six students per class, and will offer a few different classes, which will meet once a week in the evening.

To get more information about prospective classes, go to his website:

www.holderofthestone.com

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The wrong extension was printed in a mini ad that ran on Friday, September 24

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