

## Selectboard

<http://www.southhadley.org>

FY 2008 was a year of changes for the South Hadley Selectboard. In October our Town Administrator left for another position. In January a sitting chair was replaced mid – year. In April a two term member of the Selectboard was not reelected. In addition the Director of Golf left for another position, the Interim Director of Golf returned to school and the Cable Studio Manager resigned to start his own business.

Three major issues kept us very busy: the ambulance, golf clubhouse and search for new Town Administrator. Interim Town Administrator, Barry Del Castillo, helped to guide us through these issues.

In October the Board voted to begin working toward divesting our interest in running the ambulance by July 2010. This was not an easy decision, nor was it one made lightly. The Board spent many hours weighing the pros and cons. The Ambulance Committee consisting of the Ambulance Director, both Fire Chiefs and Chief of Police outlined the professional side. The Selectboard and Prudential Committees settled the financial aspects. Throughout all the debate and decisions the professionals kept a top notch service running smoothly.

The bid for construction of the clubhouse at Ledges was awarded to RAC for \$542,550 in November. We were awarded \$218,000 through an Urban Self Help grant toward clubhouse construction. The clubhouse was completed on time and within budget. Ledges Community Days were held May 30 & 31 to celebrate the new clubhouse.

The search for a Town Administrator was a true challenge. We thank Barry Del Castillo and the search committee for their many hours. When time came to interview the finalists, two of the three withdrew. We were not satisfied with the candidate we did interview and therefore did not offer a contract. The Chair and Vice Chair contacted Michael Szlosek, one of the finalists, asking him to reconsider. We were very satisfied with his interview and a contract was agreed to in late June.

During the year the Selectboard met with the Council on Aging, Golf Commission, Planning Board, Recreation Commission and School Committee to jointly interview residents to fill vacancies. We thank those who answered the call to serve.

We were the only community in Massachusetts to receive two Urban Self Help Grants. In addition to the clubhouse we received \$500,000 toward major renovations to the Beachgrounds Park. The December Special Town Meeting approved an additional \$236,316 as the town's match. This is an excellent opportunity to renovate an

outdated, well used park which will be the cornerstone to the revitalization of the falls.

The falls area was approved by the state as an Economic Target Area. We worked with Intellicoat on a Tax Incentive Program. This will be brought to Town Meeting in the future.

We are anxiously awaiting the development of Riverside Park along the river and canal in the falls. This is to be built and maintained by Holyoke Gas and Electric as part of the dam licensing.

After what seemed like years of hearings and negotiations a Fifth Amendment to the contract for our landfill was signed with Waste Systems International to build cell 2B at our landfill. Many thanks to DPW Superintendent, Jim Reidy for bringing this to a conclusion.

A Technology Committee consisting of representatives from all departments as well as the Districts was appointed in July and reported back in January. Many changes and additions, including Virtual Town Hall were recommended. Virtual Town Hall is developing a web site to replace one severely out of date. Many of the recommendations of this committee were included in the FY 09 budget.

With and around all these major projects the Board continued to meet with town boards and commissions; develop budgets and capital plans; award one day beer and wine licenses; approve various licenses, transfers and appointments; award contracts and declare hazardous trees so they may be removed.

The Town Common project was finally finished and parking concerns hopefully resolved. The Combined Sewer Overflow project in the falls was completed. A Historic District Committee of seven with one alternate was appointed. The Connecticut River Scenic Byway was declared as a National Scenic Byway, the first in Massachusetts.

The old state pool was finally demolished and seeded for future use. A committee undertook updating the skate park at BATTERY Brook Park. The Friends of BATTERY Brook Park continue to work toward park improvements. We look forward to the new spray park to be built here.

We thank our State Representative John Scibak and State Senator Stan Rosenberg for helping obtain state grants and funding for the Beachgrounds Park, BATTERY Brook Park and Ledges Golf Club.

To the many residents who have volunteered for committees and boards and our dedicated town employees Who make "South Hadley a Great Place to Live" we say thank you. These individuals bring many different and

varied thought processes to our government. We welcome and encourage more residents to participate.

The Board said goodbye to Town Administrator Patricia Vinchesi and Selectboard member Rick Constant. We thank them for their years of service.

Nothing during FY 08 would have been possible without the leadership of our Interim Town Administrator Barry Del Castillo. We thank him for his guidance, commitment, wisdom and foresight in helping the Town through a challenging period. In his short stint with the Town he had the ability to solve many issues the Town struggled with for many years. It was South Hadley's fortune to have had the talents of such a wise and talented gentleman. We wish him well in his third retirement. We are very much looking forward to many years working with Michael Szlosek. Lastly, we welcome Robert Judge as our newest member of the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Ishler  
John Hine  
Carlene Hamlin

Selectboard Chairs for FY 2008

## Police Department

Emergency dispatching was the focal point of enhancements to the quality and level of service offered to residents this year. The 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) received a \$300,000 State funded equipment upgrade with enhanced technology providing GPS tracking and recording of all emergency phone calls. The Departments aging phone system was replaced with an automated attendant system that provides callers with direct administrative contact and voice messaging to officers. Along with the enhanced (E-911) training, dispatchers became certified in Advanced Fire Dispatch and Emergency Medical Dispatch. Dispatchers are now providing fire dispatching services for Fire District #2 in accordance with an agreement between the Town and District #2. Burning Permit notifications were also received by dispatchers under new procedures implemented by the Town Fire Warden.

Training continues to be a high priority for the department. Grant funds supplemented budgeted training funds to provide more than 2000 hours of both refresher and specialized training to officers. Specialized courses included; Sexual Assault Investigation, Kids, Cops and Street Drugs, DNA Collection, Advanced Finger Printing, Fake ID and Fraud Documents, Gangs, Cybercrime, and Background Investigations. All Officers received the yearly 24 hours of in service training provided by the Criminal Justice Training Council, Departmental Defensive Tactics and Firearms Training and qualification,

and the Active Shooter Training administered by the Massachusetts State Police Tactical Unit at the Mosier Elementary School.

Federal and State grants allowed the department to continue its various Community Policing initiatives and secure a remote video surveillance system and a monocular night vision security kit from the Department of Homeland Security. An anonymous donation to the TRIAD program provided funds for replacing the RUOK computer responsible for generating daily welfare check telephone calls to residents.

On behalf of the department I extend thanks to the volunteer Special Police led by Robert Whelihan Sr. Not only did they provide welcome assistance at the July Fireworks and Memorial Day Parade, their weekly cruiser patrols insure Town property is secure and protected. Sincere thanks to the residents, town officials, and town employees who have given their support and assistance to me and officers of the Department throughout the year.

## Activity Report

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
Calls Received	22,564	25,478	24,661
Arrests (Total)	352	332	285
Arrests (OUI)	73	46	49
Motor Vehicle Crashes	347	305	301
Motor Vehicle Violations	2,023	1,552	1,464
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	22	11
Incident Reports	1,025	1,003	940
Disturbance Reports	374	344	447
Domestic Violence	71	43	80
Fraud	27	57	50
Larcenies	229	240	194
B & E Dwelling	48	92	116

Respectfully submitted,

David LaBrie  
Chief of Police

## Ambulance Service

We submit herewith the report of the Ambulance Department(s) from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. Our ambulance services (Town of South Hadley, Fire District No.1, and Fire District No.2) answered a combined total of 1,871 calls:

	<u>2007</u>		<u>2008</u>
July	140	January	155
August	121	February	162
September	129	March	190
October	164	April	163
November	136	May	167
December	175	June	169

TOTAL EMS / AMBULANCE CALLS: **1,871**

The ALS (Advanced Life Support/Ambulance) committee continues to meet as we did in the previous year. The committee consists of Chief of Police David LaBrie, Fire Chief William Judd, Fire Chief David Keefe and Kenneth McKenna the Ambulance Director for the Town of South Hadley. We would like to recognize each committee member for their many hours of support and willingness to work together to ensure quality Emergency Medical Services under the direction of the Ambulance Director. We would like the town's people to know that it is through this committee, and the willingness of each member to ensure excellent communication to their respective oversight boards, and the many EMTs, paramedics and dispatchers in the system that allows the police and the two fire departments to make our system function in a complicated local governmental environment.

We would like to thank American Medical Response and Pathways ALS ambulance services along with the Town of Granby Fire Department, as our backup and intercept ALS service. We also need to recognize Mount Holyoke College for their support and more specifically the Mount Holyoke College Public Safety Department, whose public safety officers and dispatchers serve as communicators and first responders in our EMS system in South Hadley. This year the college Public Safety Department invested money into upgrading their communications system to include the capability to communicate with the town police and district fire departments directly. They have also purchased a radio system accessory that will help to facilitate interdepartmental radio communications between South Hadley public safety departments during a large incident if needed. The college Public Safety and Health Services departments are partners in our EMS system, and have pledged their support into the future.

This year a special thanks needs to be extended to our Town of South Hadley, Public Safety Dispatchers for their excellent service. During this year they received additional training in the area of Emergency Medical Dispatch certification which is critical in keeping our system here in South Hadley up to date with national standards. Working in a busy dispatch center answering phones and dispatching police, fire, and EMS resources has become a demanding and very specialized profession. The ALS committee members would like to recognize our dispatchers for working towards that goal in support of our system. As we further develop our system over the next few years the dispatchers will provide us with the necessary foundation to build out our emergency response capabilities.

Finally the committee would like to thank the EMTs, Paramedics, Police Officers, Firefighters, and Dispatchers for making our system work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Respectfully submitted,  
South Hadley Ambulance Committee

## Emergency Management Agency

On July 1, 2007 the Town hired Mr. Forrest D. Price, Jr. as Assistant Emergency Management Director. His duties include the development and maintenance of emergency response plans and representing the Town and the EMD at local, regional, and state meetings concerning emergency management policies and preparedness. Mr. Price brings a wealth of experience in emergency response planning and organization from his previous employment with both the United States Air Force and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency.

In January 2008 the Police Department and the Town Fire Districts received \$5,216.38 in reimbursements for Incident Command System training from the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Committee. This was under a Department of Homeland Security grant designed to help communities to send their first responders for this required training by paying the backfill and overtime costs associated with attending these courses.

The South Hadley Police Department, upon investigation of a collection of chemical at 23 Dartmouth Street, discovered a large quantity of various chemicals. The nature and amount of chemicals present resulted in an evacuation of the immediate area due to the potential for an explosion. Over the next two days, Fire Chief William Judd and Fire District No. 1 led a multi-agency effort to categorize, remove, and dispose of these chemicals. Emergency responders from the Department of Fire Services District #4 Regional Hazmat team, Holyoke and Amherst Fire Departments, Massachusetts State Police Explosives Unit, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms participated in this response. Many of the dangerous chemicals were disposed of by controlled explosions in an area adjacent to the South Hadley landfill. Fire District No. 2 played a vital role in this effort by providing fire and EMS response to the Town to backfill Fire District No. 1.

The Town also completed its first Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in January 2008. This plan is designed to allow Town and District Departments to continue to provide essential services to the Town and to the citizens of South Hadley under a wide variety of emergency situations.

Respectfully Submitted

David LaBrie, Director  
Forrest D. Price Jr., Asst. Director

## Tree Warden

2007-2008 has been a busy year with numerous calls and emails. I have responded to 246 emails from the Department of Public Works (DPW), South Hadley Electric Light Department (SHELD), Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Selectboard, and residents and commercial/ industry about planning issues and tree related questions and problems. Through a contract with Northern Tree, we have removed many dead or hazardous trees as well as dead wood removal and raising up tree limbs over the road. Assistance has also been provided to the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. I have also provided support to the Planning Board on various developments including ongoing work with Mountain Brook. I have also assisted in Jacob's Edge Condominium planning. I would like to thank Linda Young, George Hahn, John Broderick, Richard Harris, Patricia Vinchesi, Richard Hunter, the Selectboard, Mr. Wayne Doerpholz and the South Hadley Electric Light Department, and the Northern Tree crew for their assistance.

I am still in the process of pursuing the title of Tree City. In the near future, I will be searching for members to help form a proposed Shade Tree Committee to assist in planning and providing input into the care of South Hadley's shade trees. A major part is will be the completion of a Shade Tree Bylaw and Shade Tree Management Plan. I am reviewing plans from other cities and towns across the United States and am also in the process of drafting the Shade Tree Bylaws.

We have fulfilled a step by providing an Arbor Day program at the Michael Smith Middle School arboretum. The program included students from Michael E. Smith Middle School. I was assisted in program planning by George Hahn and Linda Young. An American Chestnut was planted in honor of the Boy Scouts of America.

I have been working on South Hadley's Street Tree Inventory through a three-year grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. It is online and has been made available to town departments and officials. So far, 12 streets (out of 340) and the Town Common trees are listed. I am in the process of adding additional streets as I inventory them.

I apologize to the citizens of South Hadley for delays in answering all calls. I hope they understand that I am only part-time. In the future, I will have a Tree Page on the towns Virtual Town Hall website where questions, concerns, and tree complaints can be posted. My full time position is teaching Landscaping at a vocational/technical high school. As with all teachers in Massachusetts, I spend much of my time in lesson planning as well as aligning our curriculum with the Massachusetts Educational Frameworks.

I can be contacted by calling the DPW office or by email at [southhadleytree@aol.com](mailto:southhadleytree@aol.com).

Respectfully submitted,

Michael E. Lamontagne  
Tree Warden

## Forestry Committee

The Committee held two meetings during the Fiscal Year 2008. Judd Forest Reservation is in good condition. Broken glass does appear from time to time and is picked up. Any invasive exotic plants found are immediately removed. All bounds are in good condition. The Department of Public Works will provide signs for "Judd Trail", reinstall the "To Trails and Judd Reservation" sign, and provide a small sign for the remains of the old CCC Cabin, "Please Respect the Remainder of This Old CCC Cabin", since it has suffered some vandalism. Skinner State Park will provide keys for the lock on the gate on the old road to the Reservation [probably Amherst Street in Granby] to the Committee and the Conservation Administrator.

The Reservation is used by Boy Scouts. The University of Massachusetts Salamander Study is continuing and will probably continue for the foreseeable future. There is one study pond within the Reservation.

The draft "Town Policy on Control of Invasive Exotic Plants" had been sent by the Interim Town Administrator to applicable Town Agencies for comments, all of which have not yet been received. The map work has not yet been done. By next year we hope to have a more positive report concerning these two issues.

Respectfully submitted,

David Rundle, Chair  
Lyndon Bagg, Member  
Michael Lamontagne, Member

## Animal Control Department

My report of the Animal Control Department from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008 is as follows:

Calls Received	824
Dogs Found Unrestrained	72
Dogs Claimed	66
Dogs Adopted	3
Dogs Hit By Vehicles	3
Dogs Euthanized	3
Cat Complaints	54
Other Small Animal Complaints	261

Animal Control is on call 24-hours a day for any animal problems. Small animals account for a least 50% of the complaints taken. This year two cats were found with the rabies virus for the first time in several years.

I wish to thank the following for their help.

Members of the Police Department  
South Hadley Veterinary Clinic / staff  
Memorial Drive Animal Clinic / Dr. Cutting  
The Homeless Cat Project / Linda Gaunt

Respectfully submitted

Robert Dufault  
Animal Control Officer

Robert Whelihan  
Assistant Animal Control  
Officer

## Sealer of Weights and Measures

The Sealer of Weights and Measures inspected, tested and sealed 63 scales of various capacities, 106 fuel dispensing devises and tested all School Department scales as well as the Board of Health Scales. Fees collected totaled \$2,865.00.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas J. Kelleher  
Sealer of Weights and Measures

## Historical Commission

In July of 2007, the South Hadley Historical Commission (SHHC) began the work called for after a successful application for a "Survey and Planning Grant" award. The grant was funded partly by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and partly by the Town.

The SHHC awarded the contract to perform the work to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC). Among other steps, the work included an October meeting in Boston with the MHC attended by Ms. Bonnie Parsons of the PVPC and the SHHC's Survey and Planning Grant Coordinator. The PVPC organized assessor's maps for use in the survey work. South Hadley inventory forms already on file at the MHC in Boston and in the PVPC files were reviewed to determine their applicability to the new work. Initial research and a reconnaissance survey were accomplished when the SHHC indentified the two areas that it wished to include in the survey, a potential Woodbridge Street Local Historic District including parts of Woodbridge and Silver Streets and a potential Canal Village Local Historic District including parts of North Main, High, Canal, Maple, Elm, Taylor, Bardwell, Carew, Lathrop, and Gaylord Streets, and Crescent Lane.

Ms. Parsons began the work to add the approximately eighty (80) properties to the South Hadley Historical Commission's cultural resources inventory, which will also contribute to the base of information needed by the town if it wishes to create a demolition delay bylaw. The properties selected for the survey included approximately 25 in the Woodbridge Street area and 55 in South Hadley Falls area, chosen to include some of the most endangered, some of the most typical, some of the stylistically outstanding, and some of the most historically significant, while also achieving a geographic spread in the Falls. Primarily mid- to late 19<sup>th</sup> century wood frame houses and their outbuildings were surveyed, as well as several institutional buildings.

The research sources included the map, historical photographs, and other resources at the South Hadley Historical Society, the local library's historical collection, town directories from 1892-1943, documents from UMASS, and federal census records . Ms. Parson's research included not only architectural history but also the work life and social characteristics of the residents who lived in these houses. The history of the properties, photographs, bibliography, and maps were entered into the digital version of the inventory forms required by MHC as part of the grant award.

The bibliography includes maps of South Hadley from 1794, 1830, 1860, the 1873 Beers atlas of Hampshire County, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of 1884-1953, and historical works by Sophie Eastman, Josiah Gilbert Holland, Sylvester Judd, and others.

In order to consider the creation of one or two local historic districts that would be based upon the study, the Selectboard appointed a Historic District Study Committee in January of 2008. The Committee met with MHC and then began its own meetings to consider how the research of PVPC could be used to develop a proposal for one or two local historic districts. By June 30, Ms. Parsons had produced a large and impressive draft research report. The report was then to be presented in its final form in August to the South Hadley Historical Commission, for the use of the Commission, the Historical District Study Committee, and others who can benefit from the interesting contents.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Larrow, Co-Chair	Joanne Marcotte
Josephine Wojnarowski, Co-Chair	Robert Sklarz
Susan Canedy	Ken Williamson
David Daly	

## Old Firehouse Museum

The Trustees of the Old Firehouse Museum submit their 32<sup>nd</sup> annual report for Fiscal Year 2008.

The Old Firehouse Museum, located at 4 North Main Street, South Hadley, is open from May through September on Sundays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and also on Wednesdays during July and August.

In addition to the regular visiting hours, the Museum had excellent attendance during the Canal Village Potpourri in April.

The display theme for 2007 was "CANAL VILLAGE". Everything displayed had to do with the canal lift, river boats and canal life in the "FALLS" from the late 1700's to the mid 1800's.

This year's theme is "COLLECTED TREASURES" which is a potpourri of collections owned by the members of the Historical Society. On display is African Art, Brewery item from the past, old dolls, banks and much more.

The monies received last year from the Massachusetts Travel and Tourism grant was used to install new bay doors, designed to look like the original doors that were installed when the Firehouse was first built. The grant was also used to install a monitored smoke, fire and intrusion alarm and also to purchase dehumidifiers for the building. We were also able to install a new roof over the room that housed the Children's Museum.

This spring, the Trustees removed all the artifacts from the first floor then washed, primed and painted all the walls. A painting contractor was then hired to prep the floor and install an epoxy base paint.

Because of the lack of "visitors" in the Children's Museum, the South Hadley Historical Society voted to petition the Trustees to move all the artifacts that pertain to the Canal and river into the vacated Children's Museum and rename the room The Canal and River Room. The Trustees will be acting on that request at their next scheduled meeting.

The Trustees appreciate the support from the Town of South Hadley in keeping the Old Firehouse Museum a valuable Town asset. We also extend our thanks to the South Hadley Historical Society, the South Hadley Historical Commission, the Canal Park Committee and the many volunteers and friends who make it possible to keep the museum open and free to the public.

The Trustees would also like to recognize Stephen Moose for his many years of dedicated service to the Museum. We also welcome our newly appointed trustee, Brian Duncan who is no stranger to the museum. He has served in various capacities as a member of the Historical Society.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Lacasse, Chair  
Robert Blaney  
Todd Calkins  
Brian Duncan  
Wayne Gass

Brenda Griffin  
Bonnie Randall  
Richard Stefanowicz  
Josephine Wojnarowski

## Cultural Council

The South Hadley Cultural Council submits the following report for FY 2008.

Requests amounted to \$19,640. Unfortunately, because of limited funds, we were only able to allocate \$7,657. Thirteen applications were fully or partially funded as follows:

- Black Cat Theater - \$1,200 for children's productions
- Black Cat Theater - \$1,000 for the fall production
- Elton Braithwaite - \$1,000 for an introduction to woodcarving
- Friends of the South Hadley Public Library - \$210 for Earth Rhythms songs for the environment with Roger Tincknell
- Mosier Elementary School - \$618 for a Springfield Symphony concert
- Mosier Elementary School - \$650 for a UMass performance of Birth of the Monkey King
- Mosier Elementary School - \$200 for a Berkshire Music Academy performance
- Mosier Elementary School - \$591 for a Theaterworks performance of Seussical
- Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival - \$250 towards a film series at Mount Holyoke College
- South Hadley Chorale - \$750 for a children's chorus performance
- South Hadley Chorale - \$600 for a chorale concert
- South Hadley Public Library - \$400 for pictures of the past
- South Hadley Public Library - \$188 for a bytes-to-books program.

This was the fifth year of drastic reductions in our allocation. The council once again waived the administrative funds in order to provide more grants. We continue to advocate for increased funding to provide the community with a variety of cultural activities and events.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Clancy, Chair  
Carlotta Michel, Vice Chair  
Kathleen Holt, Secretary  
Sue Rusiecki, Treasurer

Michael Davis  
Ruth Kosiorek  
Victoria Wildman

## DPW Administration

The South Hadley Department of Public Works is responsible for the following infrastructure:

- Approximately 95 Miles of Road (Plowing, Sanding, Sweeping, Line Painting, Patching, Signage)
- About 20 Miles of Drainage Pipe (Cleaning Catch Basins, Clearing Blockages, Repairing Structures)
- About 80 Miles of Sewer Main (Responding to Back-Ups, Root Control, Flushing, Main Repairs)
- A 4.2 Million Gallon per Day Wastewater Treatment Plant and 5 Pump Stations
- A 26 Acre Landfill (Contractor Operated), Compost Area, and Recycling Center
- Eleven Parks and Various Other Town-Owned Property (Mowing, Snow Removal, etc.)
- Thirty DPW Vehicles, Seven Trailers, and Various Equipment (Repairs, Maintenance)
- Town Tree Maintenance Under the Direction of the South Hadley Tree Warden

The DPW is also are responsible for several capital projects. Here is an update on most of them.

Town Common Project. Over the past year, the DPW has continued working with the Massachusetts Highway Department (Mass Highway) on this project and it is now substantially complete.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade. The upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant is about 99% complete. The remaining work includes the rebuilding of Pump #1 at the Main Street Pump Station and the installation of the SCADA system. The SCADA system is a computer application that allows plant operators to remotely monitor plant equipment.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Flow Diversion Project. This project is also 99% complete. The only remaining work is the final paving of Abbey Street, which will be done this fall.

Route 47 Bridge Project. Mass Highway is replacing the Route 47 Bridge at Hadley Street. The bridge was recently closed and traffic is now detoured along Pearl Street and Woodbridge Street. Project completion is tentatively scheduled for December of 2008.

Road Paving Program. The 2008 Road Paving Program includes the following streets:

Silver Street (from the Silver Street Bypass to the Granby Town Line); Lake Avenue; Lakeview Avenue; Linden Street; Lyman Street (from Newton Street to Brainerd Street); Vivianni Street.

The program also includes sidewalk replacement at Silver Street and Lyman Street. The contract for all of the road work has been awarded to Palmer Paving Corporation. They plan on starting this work soon.

Infiltration and Inflow (I & I) Mitigation Project. Inflow and Infiltration are sources of clean water (groundwater and stormwater) that find their way into the sewage collection system. It is important for the Town to remove I & I because it reduces the effectiveness of the wastewater treatment plant, decreases the capacity of the collection system, and increases operational costs. At the 2008 Town Meeting, the Town authorized the spending of \$300,000 for I & I mitigation. Over the next year, we will start this project by concentrating on the disconnection of several catch basins that are currently tied into the sewage collection system.

I would like to thank the Selectboard, Town Administrator, and the residents of South Hadley for the privilege of being South Hadley's DPW Superintendent. I also want to thank all of the Town and District Departments for their cooperation and help. Finally, I want to thank the employees at the DPW for their continued efforts and dedication to their jobs.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Reidy  
DPW Superintendent

## Engineering

The Engineering Division provided technical services in the following areas during the past year: sanitary engineering and storm water management; design and management of highways, roads and bridges; solid waste management; water pollution control; land use planning and environmental protection; technical support for the Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Building Inspector; and construction project management, survey, construction supervision, and inspection for all Public Works infrastructure maintenance and construction projects.

### SOME OF THE MAJOR PROJECTS ADDRESSED IN FY08:

1. Continued construction supervision on the Waste water Treatment Plant and Pump Stations Upgrade Project;
2. Continued construction supervision of the Combined Sewer Overflow Diversion Project;
3. Completed design/bid and constructed sewer improvement and separation projects on Silver Street sewer;

4. Completed construction supervision/support on The Ledges Clubhouse;
5. Oversight of the sanitary landfill operations contract, construction expansion, and planning of future solid waste management facilities.
6. Continued to oversee construction progress on the Town Common Project roadway and streetscape improvements.
7. Scheduling and construction management for infrastructure and roadway improvements under Chapter 90 to various town roads.
8. Construction inspection of subdivisions and various other approved site plans;
9. Site Plan/Sub-Division review including Jacob's Edge Development, Big Y plaza expansion, Cree's Landing, Houle warehouse expansion, Canson Inc. expansion, and Ethan Circle.
10. Worked with Town Planner on new Stormwater Bylaw, comprehensive review and modification to Subdivision Regulations.
11. Continued to work with Town Planner on survey and status of unaccepted streets in Town.
12. Completed drainage design and various roadway improvement plans including Hadley Street, Hillside Avenue, Linden Drive, Morgan Street, and Silver Street.

Respectfully submitted,

Yem Lip, P.E.  
Town Engineer

## Highway Division

The Highway Division oversees, maintains, and repairs the Town's road and bridge network in the interest of providing safe travel conditions for residents. In addition, any infrastructure excavation, site grading, earth moving, hauling, tree work, snow and ice maintenance and removal, sign and road markings maintenance, and vehicle maintenance is assumed under this division.

The Town's "Chapter 90" State Aid funding program for road maintenance was down slightly from previous years, but the department was able to pave and reconstruct over 12 streets this past season. This work was coordinated with improvements to infrastructure made by Water Districts 1 and 2, and Bay State Gas Company, prior to road paving. Limited localized sidewalk and curbing improvements, including sectional patches and driveway aprons were

undertaken by DPW crews, using nearly 150 tons of asphalt.

In addition to the contracted projects that were performed this past year, the Highway Division staff completed numerous in-house projects and tasks. These projects include: Town Common Project aesthetic work (block walls, tree removal and stump grinding), drainage work on Woodbridge St./Chileab Rd., Ledges Golf Course Clubhouse demolition and site work (water, sewer, propane, sod installation, drainage), WWTP upgrades and work at various pump stations, main plant and siphons, sewer manhole installations on Brockway, Hillcrest Ave., Lakeview Ave., sidewalk removal and improvements in the Forest Dr./McDowell St. area, Cordes Court prep work and paving, Charon Terrace drainage improvements, Alvord Street drainage culvert replacements, catch basin and manhole structure repairs/rebuilds at various locations; tree maintenance and emergency response. The Sign Department continued the systematic Town-wide replacement of all street signs and upgrades/maintenance of all traffic and directional signs. The traffic marking crew has continued line painting of all school parking lot markings, playgrounds, crosswalks, stop lines, and handicapped/parking spaces, as well as main road parking markings. The DPW completed the annual Town-wide sweeping program of all Town roads and parking lots during late June. Roadside mowing and brush cutting is scheduled and performed throughout the year, and is becoming more of a challenge as we realize the effects of not having a tree maintenance department on a daily basis.

All DPW vehicle maintenance and repairs are performed at the Highway division garage. This task involves many pieces of different equipment, from lawn mowers to heavy duty bucket loaders and plow trucks. As the fleet becomes older, repairs and maintenance become more involved, especially on the vehicles used during the winter season. The crew takes pride in repairs and upgrades throughout the year. The department purchased a new 2008 10-wheel dump/sander/plow this year, which residents will reap the benefits of for years to come.

The Highway division is also involved with the following projects: firework set-up and clean-up, voting booth set-up/take down, special event assistance with traffic control, gravel road maintenance and building repairs and furniture/equipment moving.

The recent winter season was near normal compared with last winter, as the department responded to 21 snow/ice events to provide safe, clear roadways. The increased responsibilities associated with the Town acceptance of the Rt. 116 project and associated roadways and sidewalks, resulted in a seamless transition.

The Highway Division would like to thank the South Hadley Electric Light Department, Water Districts #1 & #2, Fire Districts #1 & #2, The South Hadley Housing

Authority and the South Hadley Police Department for their cooperation and assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

John Broderick  
DPW Highway Superintendent

## Solid Waste Division

The Solid Waste Division oversees curbside collection of trash and recyclables, the Town owned landfill (managed by Interstate Waste Services), and management of the Compost Area and Recycling Center. Allied Waste Services is contracted by the Town to provide curbside pickup; DPW staff manages the Compost Area and Recycling Center.

The Recycling Center, located between the landfill and the DPW offices at 10 Industrial Drive, has made a number of improvements over the past year. The Gate Attendant's shed was moved to the entrance in order to help ensure that only residents from South Hadley make use of the Recycling Center. In addition, the old Paint Shed was converted into a new Swap Shop and Education Center. Although Swap tables were set up in the past, items were only kept on hand for one day, after which time the Town would have to pay disposal costs on those items. The new permanent Swap Shop houses the Book Swap as well as other items brought in by residents including furniture, children's toys, kitchen ware, working electronics, knick knacks and other household items. Residents may leave items on the tables outside the shed, which volunteers then organize within the Shop, and business is brisk! Any overflow items are given to Goodwill, along with the used clothing collected in the Goodwill drop box next to the Attendant's shed. The old Book Shed now houses the Paint Swap program, which runs seasonally from May to November. The mattress program has also been expanded from a seasonal program to a year-round program.

The Recycling Center continues to collect and either recycle or properly dispose of: products containing mercury, mattresses and recliners, tires, propane tanks, white goods, used motor oil and antifreeze, and of course paper and mixed containers. In FY08 the Center recycled the following amounts:

- Antifreeze – 160 gallons
- Motor Oil – 2,250 gallons
- Electronics – 38 tons
- CFC Removal items:
- Refrigerators – 171
- Dehumidifiers – 33
- Air Conditioners - 114
- Propane Tanks – 211
- Tires – 435

### Mercury Products:

- Fluorescent lamps – 15,230 linear feet
- Compact Fluorescents – 93
- U-Tube lamps – 246
- HID lamps – 447
- Halogen lamps – 28
- Ballasts – 324 lbs.
- Batteries – 2,438 lbs.

Income to the landfill enterprise fund includes monies received for materials from the curbside collection and Recycling Center Drop-off; in FY 08 the Town recycled 1,108.81 tons of paper and 366.25 tons of bottles and cans, which brought in an income of \$61,480.51. The scrap metal pile at the Center also brought in an income of \$23,610.84.

Education efforts have increased this past year, and will continue to increase in future years. In October, a composting video was produced in conjunction with the Community Cable Station, TV 15. This video explains the layout and composting procedures followed by the Town, and is played on Channel 15 as well as in the Swap Shop/Education Center. The Center has a display showing how curbside materials are recycled at the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility, or MRF. Also on display is a worm composting bin, complete with information on how to build and operate a worm bin. This bin holds special red worms which feed on kitchen scraps, and are very useful for composting indoors, especially in the winter months when outdoor composting slows. In January a new column was created in the Town Reminder called 'The Bin' to help explain solid waste and recycling programs in South Hadley.

Also in FY08, the DPW applied for and received from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection new outdoor recycling containers to help boost recycling efforts at our local parks.

The food waste composting program at the South Hadley High School continues to expand. This year efforts were made to help secure funding to keep the program afloat, and improvements continue to be made to the program, for instance this year the cafeteria converted to bulk condiments instead of serving individual packets, in order to further reduce trash.

Finally, the yard waste compost site continues to serve the Town by composting the materials brought in by residents, and making the finished compost available for use in gardens and lawns in South Hadley.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronique Blanchard  
Solid Waste Coordinator

## **Parks/Playground Division**

The Parks Division, based primarily in the big white barn next to the High School fields on 28 Lincoln Street, provides mowing, landscaping, grounds keeping, athletic field marking, and management of a variety of the Town's properties. The Parks Division also manages Buttery Brook Park. Buttery Brook Park provides two picnic pavilions, picnic tables, a zoo, bandstand, basketball facilities, tennis courts, and playground facilities.

Properties under Parks jurisdiction include a variety of parkland, woodland, athletic fields, playgrounds, schools, public works facilities, and Town-owned public buildings. These properties include: Town Hall, the Police Station, Beachgrounds Park, the Town Commons, the Old Fire House Museum (Fred Smith Park), Canal Park, the Plains School, the High School, the Mosier School, the Smith Middle School, Ferry Field, Buttery Brook Park, Emerson Park, Marion Street Park, North Street Park, Lecca Park, the South Hadley Library, and the Senior Center.

The Department lost two employees by resignation. The two new appointments to the Parks Department are Leo Deschenes, who started in the fall of '07 and Mike Orozco, who started in the spring '08. Since starting, they have worked primarily at Buttery Brook Park in an effort to upgrade the facility. The park received a lot of new paint, trees were trimmed, and the general maintenance has been done at a higher level than in some past years. The park is on track for resurgence. A group of interested residents formed a skate park committee. Their hard work and commitment reopened the skate park. The old tot lot was removed and replaced with a volleyball court and construction has started on a new playground. Pavilion rentals are holding steady. Buttery Brook Park continued to have many great activities and events this past year. The Friday night cruise nights are very popular. The Bluegrass Festival returned once again but, unfortunately, rain spoiled what would have been a great day. Big Rig Day was once again a wonderful day for all the children and adults attending. The Black Cat Children's Theatre performed throughout the month of July and August with wonderful reviews. The Sunday night concert series was another summer success for the park that brought in various artists of most musical tastes. Many children and adults again enjoyed Santa's Land. Donations by patrons helped fund this very popular annual event. The Friends of Buttery Brook Park have done an outstanding job working with all groups organizing their efforts. The Friends provided funding for the new playground equipment. They are also working along with the Recreation Department on future activities and attractions for the park including new tennis courts and a 'Spray Park' pending grants from the state. The Friends of Buttery Brook Park have proven to be the backbone for continued existence of the park for the Town residents.

The DPW, Parks Division, continues aggressive turf management operations and maintenance of Town fields. The five step fertilizer program along with more frequent and timely aerating, overseeding and watering practices of the fields have proven to be very productive in providing better playing areas for the Town's sports programs. The Parks Division utilizes an Integrated Pest Management Plan to comply with legislation relating to the application of pesticides on school athletic facilities and grounds. The purpose of the IPM plan, which is mandated by the Commonwealth, is to minimize environmental impacts and risk to adults and children at play on the fields and in schools.

The Division continued to incorporate high quality infield mix into four fields during the fall at both high school fields and Beachgrounds #2 and #3. This provided better playing surfaces on the dirt portions of the fields.

We wish to thank the staff, the many athletic groups, Town officials and residents for their efforts and support over the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

William J Simard  
Parks Supervisor

## **Water Pollution Control Division**

The Water Pollution Control (WPC) Facility, located on James Street in Chicopee, is an activated sludge secondary wastewater treatment plant designed to treat 4.2 million gallons of wastewater per day. The original plant, built in 1959/1960, was a primary treatment facility only. The plant was upgraded to secondary treatment in 1979/1980, with sludge dewatering improvements made in 1991. The treatment works also consists of five pumping stations strategically located around Town, which assist in transferring the sewage to the treatment plant. The plant also serves small portions of the City of Chicopee and the Town of Granby.

The WPC Facility operated effectively during the past fiscal year. The staffing reorganization that took place in September of 2006 has worked out well, despite the plant being short two people for the first half of the fiscal year. Two new people began in January of 2008, and the plant is now fully staffed. The plant treated an average of 2.85 million gallons of wastewater per day, processed 2,764.3 wet tons of sludge, and disposed of 572.5 dry tons of sludge at the South Hadley Landfill.

The WPC Facility is just finishing up a six million dollar upgrade to the treatment plant and two of the pumping stations. The upgrade included the replacement of original, obsolete equipment and piping, and refurbishing of tanks. Key equipment in each process phase that was outdated and/or in need of repair was replaced or refurbished.

A state of the art interactive monitoring system (SCADA) for the plant and stations was also installed. The upgrade, in conjunction with a flow diversion project completed in the fall of 2007, also allowed the Town to close the remaining three combined sewer overflows.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Labonte, WWTP  
Compliance Manager

Mike Cijka, WWTP  
Operations Manager

## Personnel Board

In Fiscal Year 2008, the Personnel Board worked together with the Selectboard, Interim Town Administrator, and Personnel/Chief Procurement Officer to assure that personnel evaluations are being done correctly and in a timely manner. The process is running very smoothly right now and there is much improvement since we first started the evaluation process. Department Heads appear to be more comfortable with the process and are doing a great job.

If need be, three members of the Personnel Board serve on the Personnel Review Board to review any evaluations the Personnel Officer feels should be reviewed and address any appeals from employees who are not satisfied with their review. In Fiscal Year 2008 there were no evaluations brought to the Board for review and there were no appeals brought to the Board.

The Board classified one new position and re-classified one other position in Fiscal Year 2008.

The Board started the process of updating the Personnel Policy Manual in Fiscal Year 2008 and hopes to have the updated manual ready to be presented at the Fall Town Meeting.

The Personnel Board continues to encourage members of the Employee Advisory Committee to attend their meetings by including them on the agenda each month. Those representing the non-union employees are Margaret Clancy, Ann Guenette, Lynn Roberts and Joe Wholley. There were no concerns or criticisms from the EAC for Fiscal Year 2008.

Fiscal Year 2008 was a better year for the Personnel Board in that we now have a full board with five members and one associate member. The new member we welcomed to the Personnel Board was Michael Kennedy and the new associate member we welcomed was Jenna Rahilly. They join returning members Alison O'Donald, Ann Eaton, Kris Gagne and Paula Auclair. Michael and Jenna came to the Board with many years of experience in Human Resources. We have been able to accomplish so much more as a Board with members attending all meetings and dedicating time outside the meetings reviewing materials.

The Board members work very well together.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Auclair Chair

Kris Gagne

Alison O'Donald, Vice-Chair

Michael Kennedy

Ann Eaton

Jenna Rahilly, Associate Member

## Council on Aging

In July of 2007, M. Connie Laplante and Irene Bernstein were welcomed to the Board and in November Theresa Roy joined the group. In the spring of 2008, for the first time in history, no vacancies existed due to the transition to eleven members. The meeting time was changed to 4 p.m.

During Fiscal Year 2008 services were provided to more than 3,000 individuals. Two hundred and ten new names were added to the newsletter mailing list. Because of the difficult economic times there was an increase in the requests for assistance and the need for services. The number of recorded telephone calls jumped significantly to approximately 14,000 calls, a 40% increase.

The Nutrition Program continues to be one of the core services of the Senior Center. In July 2007, an event celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the program.

### Home Delivered Meals

The Hot Meals on Wheels Program provided 15,160 meals to 178 clients.

### Congregate Meals

A total of 9,429 congregate meals were served to 580 individuals throughout the year.

Due to the rapidly increasing costs associated with operating a food service program, even with the majority of the funding provided by a WestMass ElderCare Nutrition Title III-C Federal Grant, it is the community support that enables the continuation of this program.

### Transportation

3,725 units of service were provided for 105 individuals. Also, 700 units of service were provided for approximately 20 students. Due to a worn-out van and a lack of substitute drivers, after twelve years of collaboration, the transportation program working with the school department has come to end.

### Health Equipment Loan for all residents

203 units of service for 101 individuals. With authorizations for medical equipment decreasing, residents appreciate the free use of wheel chairs, commodes, walkers and the variety of other medical equipment.

### Notary for all residents

The request for a Notary Public continues to grow and with a 10% increase in the number of consumers utilizing the service.

### AARP Free Tax Assistance

237 units of service were provided by the AARP Tax Aides and 42 units by the Social Service Coordinator for 262 individuals compared to 152 units in FY07. This increase was due to the Economic Stimulus Rebate.

### Fitness and Exercise

A new fitness program has been offered called Osteoporosis Exercise. Joan Richter is the instructor of this new free session and received her training through an RSVP grant. Many people take part in this program as well as the other fitness opportunities. The number of participants grew by 20% in the last year.

### Community Education

Senior Net provided 1,280 units of computer education.

### Health Screening

Health screening services provided 378 units of service to 178 individuals.

### OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE:

#### Fuel Assistance

253 households (5 new furnaces partially subsidized, 20 repaired and 41 cleaned).

#### Salvation Army Good Neighbor Fuel Assistance

27 applicants received \$7,150

#### Joe for Oil

37 referrals. Emergencies, break-downs or out of fuel situations were handled by the Greenfield Assistance office (main office) this year and those under 60 who had no issues with mobility or transportation were also referred to the Greenfield office.

#### Electric Company "Lights On" credits of \$50.00

139 families received assistance, 10 families under 60, a 50% increase from last year.

#### Prescription Advantage

71 individuals were served compared to 61 last year. Medicare Part D: 27 applicants and 17 referrals to other agencies.

#### General referrals to other agencies, etc.

224.

For another year, over 300 bags of groceries were shared with 6 "Adopted Seniors." Almost 100 bags of food inappropriate for the adopted seniors were shared with 4 non-senior households. Volunteers called almost 2,248 senior residents to wish them a "Happy Birthday." Approximately 40 individuals took part in the various

support groups. Over 1,300 items of clothing were received for peek and poke and 1,100 taken home by people using service. The remaining articles were donated to Good Will. There is a "free table" located in the lower hallway for people to bring in unwanted items, in good condition, for someone else to use. Current-release hard-cover books and puzzles are currently being accepted. Health equipment, in excellent condition, will be accepted if storage room is available. Approximately 120 people 90 and over were invited to the 90+ birthday celebration. The oldest in attendance was 97.

### Christmas Baskets

94 households (216 individuals) received a holiday bundle; 70 senior households, 12 within the community and 12 referrals from the school department. The First Congregational Church continued to surpass their record for the cookie sale and donated \$1,358.50 to the program. As Elinor White quoted in her report to the Board, "this program would be impossible to provide without donations of tons of food, fundraising, volunteers, staff support and great organization. The recipients are so appreciative."

Six new knitters joined the group of fourteen and presented 440 hats, mittens and scarves to 412 children at the Plains School. The enthusiastic knitters made 90 "preemies" blankets and 285 hats for the Bay State Neo-Natal Center. In addition, the quilting class made 11 single bed quilts for the Salvation Army "Wrapped in Love" project.

South Hadley TRIAD, produced "Emergency Preparedness for Seniors" booklets that were distributed to all senior households. In addition, house numbers were placed at homes and 100 cell phones shared for emergency calls courtesy of TRIAD volunteers.

It is always sad to hear the news of a death. This year James Perreault and Lois MacGregor, former members of the Board, passed away; Peter Sorbi and Rene Casavant, who were minibus drivers and faithful volunteers Francis Collins, Estelle Moynihan and Wilfred Cote passed on. Sincere sympathy is extended to their families.

Volunteers remain the backbone of our department. It is disappointing to lose faithful ones and so with regret we accepted the resignations of Ralph Paquette who drove the Saturday church route after several years of commitment and Louise Hunter, the STAR Programmer after single-handedly managing the statistical program for 3 years. Barbara Jean White stepped down after twelve years of serving on the WestMass ElderCare Advisory Council. Sincere appreciation is extended for all of the hours of service donated to assist the Council. At the Retired Senior Volunteer Program Annual Volunteer Appreciation event, Dorothy Hurley was awarded the President's Lifetime Service Award and 45 other faithful volunteers received the Gold President's Service Award. Phyllis Lacoste received the Distinguished and Dedicated Service Award in honor of Older Americans Month from the State

for her diligence in helping to make South Hadley a "Heart-Safe" community. The South Hadley Knights of Columbus Council 1721 delivered over 70 hot turkey dinners to the homebound on Thanksgiving Day. The Veterans Group was well represented at the Massachusetts COA annual conference in the fall when a seminar was presented by Elinor White, Ted Belsky, Ann Root, Larry Batley and Tom Adams. The group spoke of the WWII Oral History Project and the collaboration of the COA and the Historical Society in presenting memorabilia at the old Fire House.

Unfortunately, staffing continued to experience some transition this year. Goodbyes were said to Deborah Thumith, Activity/Volunteer Coordinator and Debra Melhorn, Hot Meals on Wheels Driver. Best wishes are extended to both of them as their lives move in new directions. Some substitutes filled in for the Activity/Volunteer Coordinator position as the Council waited for Town Meeting in the hopes of reinstatement to the 30-hour per week, benefited position. Thanks to Elaine Ryan, Alice Pont and Judy Underwood for helping the Council through the interim period. Francis Cyr joined the staff as a Hot Meals on Wheels Driver. In April Muriel Hunter was welcomed as the Office Senior Aide. Special thanks are extended to Shirley Martin for volunteering 15-20 hours a week for several months while this slot was vacant. Debra Sullivan decided to leave her position as the Foot Nurse and Sharon Beaulieu has assumed that role.

Accomplishments include: revision of volunteer job descriptions, the addition of monthly entertainment by Berkshire Hills Music Academy at lunch, a visit by Michael Festa, Secretary of Elder Affairs, a new phones system with voice mail to insure confidentiality (through the generous bequests of Margaret McDonnell and Kay Eschenberg and some town funds), two new phone lines into the fire alarm box to resolve the lightning strike issue, a new Title III grant through WestMass ElderCare to provide a Companion/Escort Service for medical transportation, and the award of a Certificate in Aging and Mental Health from Boston University Institute for Geriatric Social Work to the Director.

Financial support was provided by the Town of South Hadley, the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, WestMass ElderCare and the generous support of the local businesses and the community. Sincere thanks to the Select Board, the Appropriations Committee and Town Meeting members for supporting the additional 10 ½ hours for the Activity/Volunteer's position; the new 19 ½ hour afternoon senior clerk position; the window replacement and the engineering study of the senior center.

The South Hadley Council on Aging hopes to deliver efficient and courteous service to the public. The Council on Aging Board, the staff and the Director thank the businesses and members of the Community for their continuing, faithful support.

**COA STAFF:**

Joanne K. Trybus, Director  
 Ann M. Guenette, Assistant Director  
 Elinor S. White, Social Service Coordinator  
 Deb Thumith, Activity/Volunteer Coordinator (through November 2007)  
 Sister Judith Rosenthal, Senior Clerk  
 Billy Poe, Food Service Coordinator  
 Wayne Walton, Assistant Cook  
 Liz Methot, Hot Meals on Wheels Coordinator  
 Nancy Blodgett, Hot Meals on Wheels Driver  
 Francis Cyr, Hot Meals on Wheels Driver  
 George Perreault, Hot Meals on Wheels Driver  
 Bob Methot, Custodian  
 Richard Carrignan, Minibus Driver  
 Fran Wagner, Minibus Driver  
 Dan Gladu, Minibus Driver  
 Muriel Hunter, Springfield Partners for Community Action sponsored Senior Aide

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Guilbault, Chairperson	Susan Myers
Melide Normand, Vice Chairperson	Dr. Francis Nelen
Shirley Martin, Secretary	Theresa Roy
Sara Bach	Judith Strzempko
Irene Bernstein	Eileen Tonelli
M Connie Laplante	

**Housing Authority**

The South Hadley Housing Authority is pleased to submit the agency's FY08 Annual Report. This report provides the opportunity for staff to keep the town residents informed about the housing authority management, maintenance and fiscal operations.

The Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) awarded the housing authority three Capital Improvement Grants in FY08. DHCD awarded funds for Lathrop Village roofing replacement, \$197,246, Abbey Lane/Street Family and Special Needs apartments, siding and roofing replacement \$329,996 and \$36,360 for the Special Needs Apartment, bathroom renovation project.

The designer selection process for the Capital Improvement Projects is complete. DHCD selected Reinhardt Associates, Agawam MA, to complete specifications for the Lathrop Village, family and special needs apartment projects. South Hadley Housing Authority and the A/E will oversee roof replacement on five building at Lathrop Village. Roofing and siding replacement is planned for all of the family and special need buildings. We plan to complete design specifications, award the construction contract and finish the two projects in FY09.

Bradley Architects Inc., Pittsfield, MA, architectural firm was selected by DHCD to prepare specification for a bathroom renovation and handicap upgrade project. Bradley Architects Inc. and South Hadley Housing Authority will oversee bidding and renovation work. The bathroom renovation / upgrade project at the 11 Abbey Lane, special needs apartment is scheduled for completion in 2008.

A milestone was achieved in South Hadley with the completion of Hubert Place Apartments in May 2008. The completion and opening of Hubert Place provides an additional 44 units of affordable housing. Hubert Place provides a significant housing opportunity for town and area residents who are 62 years of age or older. It is affordable housing for seniors who qualify with very-low or extremely low incomes. On-site supportive services are available. The on-site supportive services will help our seniors' age in place and reduce premature nursing home placements. The housing authority is pleased to have worked with WestMass Elder Care Inc., the project lead agency, and many others, helping to make this project a reality.

The South Hadley Housing Authority is responsible for the administration of 136 units of mixed population housing, 96 units at Lathrop Village and 40 units at Newton Manor. The Housing Authority also administers 12 units of family housing apartments on Abbey Street/Abbey Lane, and two four-bedrooms, special needs apartments on Abbey Lane. The Housing Authority is also the Management Agent for Hubert Place Apartments.

The South Hadley Housing Authority, under contractual agreement between the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Riverboat Village apartments, has administrative responsibilities for nine project-based apartments. The nine families residing at Riverboat Village receive rent subsidies as participants in the MA Rental Voucher Program.

The Housing Authority's Management Agent, federally funded, annual operating budget for Hubert Place, \$343,000.000. DHCD is the housing authority funding and regulatory agency, for the State – Aided public housing developments and programs. DHCD approved the following FY 2008 operating budgets, Lathrop Village, Abbey Street/Abbey Lane family apartments, \$601,923, Mass Rental Voucher Program, \$31,269 and Special Needs apartments, \$33,508.

Five full-time and one part-time staff members are responsible for the daily operations of the South Hadley Housing Authority. The Housing Commissioners are Donna Asselin, Chair, Donna Robideau, Vice-Chair, Meg Clancy, Treasurer, Mary Dufault, Assistant Treasurer, and Constance Clancy, Member.

This year, as in past years, the staff and Commissioners would like to thank and express our appreciation to the Town departments, Town Selectmen and all of their staff for supporting, providing technical assistance and services to the housing authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Willie J. Thomas, Executive Director  
Heidi M. Heisler, Executive Assistant  
Craig Osborne, Maintenance Supervisor  
David Ludwig, Maintenance Mechanic  
Margaret Miller, Resident Manager  
Dennis Stebbins, Maintenance Person

## Board of Assessors

Fiscal 2008 was a pivotal year surrounding technology for the Board of Assessors as well as the town. Near the end of fiscal 2007 all of the real estate data was converted from Vision 4 to Vision 6. This created not only data changes but also valuation differences that needed to be researched. Also, Munis 6.1 had been loaded onto our computer desktops for testing before conversion. The first few months of fiscal 2008 therefore consisted of a lot of software testing and data reconciliation. Within the first three months of the year these tasks were accomplished. The valuation differences were reconciled within Vision and testing was finalized with Munis so the town moved forward with converting the financial data to Munis 6.2.

Another aspect of the data conversion with the Vision software was to update the business personal property accounts. Prior to version 6 there was no differentiating between exempt accounts and taxable ones. Therefore, the Assessors office had previously created an Access database referred to as the Master Business Listing. This listing was a consolidation of information available in the Assessor's, Collector's and Clerk's offices on any and all businesses within the community whether taxable or not. However, with the upgrade to version 6 of Vision Appraisal software, this Access database no longer needed to be kept. When the new version of Vision was installed, it was realized that this software now provides for both active (taxable) and inactive (exempt) accounts to be entered into the system and labeled as such. All businesses were entered into this software. Currently there are a total of 422 business personal property accounts of which only 203 are active and receive tax bills. Reports can be run individually for taxable, exempt or as a whole.

The next step for the Assessor's office was to research a new way to bill the Boat Excise Tax. Currently, the data for over five hundred bills needed to be manually entered into a General Billing Program within Munis. This was not only cumbersome for our office to enter and generate the bills on which a form had to be created in Word, but

also proved burdensome for the Collector to add any fees and interest. It was also difficult for the Town Accountant to balance to each month. Therefore, through the IT Director the Associate Assessor received a quote from Munis for their Boat Excise Program. As this was a reasonable quote, it was determined to move forward with the purchase of this software. The software was installed on November 15, training was conducted on December 4 and the fiscal 2008 Boat Excise Bills were issued on February 8, 2008. This software is much more user friendly and has been a worth while purchase.

In late July the Associate Assessor received a memo from the Selectboard's office stating that she was made a member of the Technology Committee. This committee held their initial meeting and appointed her to three subcommittees as follows: The Customer Service Subcommittee, which later merged with the Website Subcommittee, The GIS/Integrated Permitting Subcommittee, and the Munis Subcommittee. All of the committees were to meet every other week and report their findings back to the Selectboard in early January for determinations on requests for funding for the upcoming budget season. Through the efforts of these committees, \$60,000 was appropriated for fiscal 2009 to start the process of rectifying the Assessor's parcel maps with the digitized Assessor's maps within the Town Planner's GIS database. This has been a priority of the Assessors and Planning Departments for many years. We are pleased to see the support of the town as a whole with these projects. Also, \$5,000 was appropriated for continued training of employees on the Munis system. Lastly, a new website is being launched in the early part of fiscal 2009. The Board of Assessors is proud to be a part of this project in working towards improving services to the public as well as providing a forum for public education relative to local government.

As this year revolved a lot around technology that doesn't mean that there weren't many things happening on the assessing side of things. One example was that for the first time in approximately fifteen years, the Assessors prevailed on a residential appeal at the Appellate Tax Board. The case was heard in November and the Assessor's received notification shortly thereafter that the assessed valuation was upheld.

Also, at issue was a residence owned by the Falls Congregational Church on Granby Road that has been used as a rectory. It came to the office's attention that the premises would be vacant as of the exemption qualification date. Therefore, the Associate Assessor removed the exempt status for fiscal 2008. The church contacted the office and the correspondence began. After all was said and done, it was determined that the premises in question was indeed fully taxable. Due to this determination a new policy has been instilled for fiscal 2009 which consists of corresponding with the different religious organizations and determining the use of their

residential property holdings as of the qualification date each year. Due to this change, in addition to the property on Granby Road, two other exempt properties have been returned to the tax roll.

The work involved in the Board of Assessors is of a complex nature and could not be accomplished without the staff within the department. To them we say thank you. Also, the cooperation and assistance of all the department heads, supervisors and their staff are sincerely appreciated.

In closing, the Board of Assessors is once again pleased to represent the Town of South Hadley as an elected board and self-governing body, and we will do our best to treat all taxpayers fairly and equitably during our tenure.

Respectfully submitted,

Hazel R. Snopek, Chair  
Francis M. Conti, Clerk  
David E. Hutchinson, Member

**OFFICE STAFF:**

Melissa L. Couture, Associate Assessor  
Irene Greenia, Assistant to the Associate Assessor  
Maureen Cronin, Senior Clerk

## **Veteran Services Department**

The Veterans Services Department provided financial and medical assistance to eighteen South Hadley residents during the period of July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. The department expended a total of \$56,534.00 in the areas of budget & fuel assistance, medical insurance, and burial benefits.

Reimbursement of veteran's benefits from the Commonwealth amounting to \$42,400.00 is anticipated. The Department assisted twenty five South Hadley residents in receiving annuity benefits from the Commonwealth amounting to \$50,000.00

Eighteen South Hadley residents were assisted with Department of Veterans Affairs claims during the period of July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008. As a result of these claims, \$96,000.00 was received in annual benefits, and \$23,650.00 was received in retro-active benefits for a total of \$119,650.00

Five veterans were assisted in securing a cemetery plot in the Veterans Cemetery in Agawam. The office was also instrumental in coordinating Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Veterans' Day programs.

Respectfully submitted,

John A. O'Connor  
Director of Veteran's Services

## South Hadley Public Library

<http://www.shadleylib.org>

WANTED: South Hadley residents interested in free movies, books, music, and computer access; may also enjoy no-cost entertainment and educational programs for various ages and interests; discount passes to local attractions included; qualified professional assistance available when needed. Interested parties may apply for or bring their free library card to the South Hadley Public Library at 27 Bardwell Street for these and other programs, materials, and services.

Sound like a great deal? It is – and almost 9,000 residents already have a library card, an increase of almost 7% from the previous year. The South Hadley Public Library is open six days per week, including three evenings. New materials arrive almost daily and the library automatically receives copies of most bestselling books and DVDs. Similar to the popular online site “Netflix”, residents can login to the library catalog from home and create a list of items to request for borrowing. The library will then contact you when it is your turn! While logged in, patrons can also renew items and view current check-outs. Coming in FY09, patrons will also be able to pay library fines online with a credit card. If you haven’t already taken advantage of this service, please ask for a short demonstration from our library staff.

The number of items in the library collection totaled 46,330 items at the end of FY08, a reduction of 4% in the past year. The decrease in total items is due to three main factors: the “weeding” of older materials that were no longer popular, the phasing out of older media formats, and the overextended capacity of the library building. It is an unfortunate part of our collection development that the library must continuously remove older items from the collection to make room for new arrivals. The current library was renovated with an addition in 1974 and has been “full” for almost two decades. The staff has worked with new furnishings and arrangements to maximize the amount of collection storage and comfortable public seating but there are limits to each. We are currently working on a state-assisted Planning & Design project to examine all our options for the future.

Even in this sometimes cramped environment, circulation of library materials rose almost 9% to 169,832 total transactions. Just over half of our circulation (54%) was from books, followed in popularity by movies (34%) and audio materials (12%). The use of our inter-library loan (ILL) service, powered by our C/WMARS library network and delivered daily by the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System, also showed a marked increase. The number of ILL materials received from other libraries on behalf of our patrons rose 9% to 15,117 while the number of materials provided to other communities rose 15% to 19,442.

The busy year included many public programs. Over 310 children registered for the “Catch the Beat at Your Library” summer reading program to have fun reading and earn great prizes. In keeping with the music theme, the Springfield Symphony Orchestra brought their “musical petting zoo” that allowed children to learn about and try various instruments. Other popular youth programs included a monarch butterfly release, computer gaming tournaments, monthly book discussions, writers’ workshop, chess club, seasonal crafts, weekly storytime, and presenters such as the Boston Museum of Science and musician Roger Tincknell.

Programs for adults were also popular. The library held its first annual International Summer Film Festival with screenings of four critically acclaimed foreign films. Award-winning historian Christian Appy gave a presentation on the Iraq and Vietnam wars, author Mike Tougias gave a slide-show lecture on the Connecticut River to an overflowing audience, WGBY and the library partnered to screen locally-produced programs about the Pioneer Valley, and adult students received a crash course on “The Basics of Selling on eBay”. Ongoing programs include monthly personal finance instruction, regular resume workshops, weekly knitting group, and a monthly book discussion group.



A convenient way to keep track of all the activity going on at the library is by visiting the library’s website <[www.shadleylib.org](http://www.shadleylib.org)> and clicking on the Event Calendar. This calendar is continuously updated to reflect upcoming events. If a program interests you, you can have an Email reminder sent a few days before the event or recommend that program to a friend. Other useful tools at the website include a monthly list of newly added materials, online reference and genealogy databases, updates from the Friends of the Library, a quick link to the library catalog, and timely reference information.

The Friends of the Library contributed funds and volunteers to many library programs. The regular library budget does not include funds for public programs so we

rely heavily on this volunteer group to support our summer reading program and public program presenters and performers. Special thanks go to Friends President Diana Davis and Vice-President Cathy Allen for their time and efforts in fundraising activities and library advocacy.

A grant from the South Hadley Cultural Council allowed the library to preserve two local history items recovered during basement cleaning: a photograph of the former School Street School circa. 1870s and a lithograph of the old Holyoke Dam dated 1872. Both items had serious water damage and staining that received treatment at the Northeast Document Conservation Center. The time and funds devoted to these pictures signal a renewed focus on the library's collection of local history materials.

The annual town election brought two new Library Trustees to our nine-member elected board. Helen Gage and Joyce O'Neil brought fresh ideas and perspective to the group, which thanked outgoing Trustees Christine Curtis and Delores Daly for their service.

Finally, all these activities could not have taken place without the tireless efforts of the library staff: Meg Clancy, Jennifer Comeau, Lorraine Ensor, Liz Frosch-Dratfield, Jeanne Hebert, Elaine LaPorte, Linda Manijak, Desiree Smelcer, Rena Stromgren, and Bob Williford. Their patience and professionalism make our library one of the busiest, most helpful, and friendliest places in town.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Rodio  
Library Director

## **Gaylord Memorial Library**

[www.GaylordLibrary.org](http://www.GaylordLibrary.org)

### New Services

In addition to lending 18,878 books, media periodicals and learning kits, providing answers to reference questions on taxes, computers and homework, delivering items to homebound residents, and offering a variety of educational and enjoyable programs for all ages, this year Gaylord Library's staff and volunteers completed their most ambitious and important project to date. Using Follett Corp.'s Destiny system, consisting of computerized catalog, circulation, and record-keeping functions, the library created computerized records for its entire collection and came online on September 1, 2008 to rave reviews from volunteers, staff and library patrons. This ambitious \$32,000 project was completed with the help of countless financial supporters and volunteers who pulled together, along with the staff, to make our dream a reality. All these folks and our library patrons were all invited to commemorate our exciting leap into the technological age with a Winter Automation Celebration in early December.



Winter Automation Celebration at Gaylord Library



### Local History

Gaylord Library is fortunate to own a substantial Local History Collection consisting of genealogical records, photographs, and historical materials of interest to South Hadley residents and others. With assistance from Mount Holyoke College students, we have been gradually organizing and indexing these materials and storing them in archival quality containers. Indexes to these materials are now available on our website, and we are now able to assist out-of-state researchers with their local history projects.

### Long Range Plan

In December, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners accepted Gaylord Library's Long Range Plan. This document summarized a complex, six-month long planning process consisting of surveys, interviews, focus groups and research designed to assess the wishes and expectations of the community for library service. Along with valuable planning feedback, library staff was gratified to receive many positive comments and expressions of the Library's importance in the educational, social, and cultural lives of our patrons.

### Fundraising Makes a Big Difference

With operating expenses of \$114,000 and a town appropriation of \$12,500, Gaylord Library depended upon fundraising, gifts and grants for the largest part of its budget. Gaylord Library and Friends raised over \$9,000 from the Annual Campaign, \$1,000 from the Used Book Sale, and Gaylord Friends raised \$1,500 at their gala Wine, Cheese and Chocolate Fundraiser. Thank you to all who made these events successful!

### Expanding Learning

A variety of special programs are offered to enhance the library program and provide educational and entertaining experiences for residents. Highlights for adults this year were Reiki Healing with Michelle McCarthy and our Young Performers series with Susan English (vocalist), Jenny and Andy Barry (juggler/unicyclist), and Simone Stemper (bellydancer). We also offer Book Discussions, Knitting, Tea-Time Conversation, Memoir Writing, and "South Hadley Reads..." a town-wide reading program run jointly by South Hadley Public Library, Council on Aging, Odyssey Bookshop and Gaylord Library, with Peoples Bank as our major sponsor. Our selection this year was The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon. Book discussions, speakers and a film drew readers and those interested in learning more about Autism Spectrum Disorders.



Story Time at Gaylord Library

### Building Improvements

Custodian/handyman Dan MacKenzie and assistant Tim Grip skillfully carried out much needed improvements such as exterior and interior painting and patching, a new floor in the rest room, new boiler room steps, and building waterproofing. A ventilation fan was added to the rest room and exterior and interior masonry work was done as well.

### For Our Youngest Patrons

Youth Services Librarian Maryanne Lak Senecal is dedicated to providing excellent library services to the youngest members of our community, their parents, and caregivers. 1,591 people attended 64 programs such as

Family Frolic Friday Story Time, Fantastic Adventures on Thursdays, and programs for Scouts and school groups. This year's Summer Reading Program, "Wild Read @ Your Library", kicked off with a program from Forest Park in Springfield called "Zoo on the Go" sponsored by Gaylord Friends. This program will keep children reading all summer long and improve school performance.



Forest Park Zoo on the Go at Gaylord Library

### In Memory

We thank Joseph Wholley for his service to Gaylord Library during his tenure on the Board of Trustees.

As always, we would like to thank the Town of South Hadley, Western Massachusetts Regional Library System, Mount Holyoke College, our more than 60 dedicated volunteers and generous donors, and our library patrons, for whom we all enjoy providing the best possible library service.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Quigley, Director  
Mary Senecal, Youth Services Librarian

### Board of Trustees:

Charles Viens, President  
Norman Aubrey  
Jeffrey Barna  
Pearl Edwards  
Barbara Erwin  
Marilyn Gass  
Sara Lawrence  
Joseph Marois  
Matthew McDonough  
Joyce Roberts  
Priscilla Ryan  
Bernice Strong

## Wiring Inspector

The time has once again arrived for a report on the work completed by the office of Wiring Inspector for the fiscal year July 2007 to June 2008. There were 333 permit applications issued and a total \$28,150.00 collected in fees.

Alarm Systems	35
New Homes & Condos	22
Additions & Remodeling	88
Above-Ground Pools	7
In-Ground Pools	7
Service Upgrades & Repairs	72
Temporary Services	6
Appliances (A/C, dryers, oil burners, etc.)	48
Commercial Work	47
Yearly, Prepaid (Mount Holyoke College)	1

At this time, I would like to express my appreciation for the assistance and cooperation I have received in the performance of my duties as Wiring Inspector.

Respectfully submitted,

Roy Rivers  
Wiring Inspector

## Board of Appeals

The Board of Appeals met once during the past year for an appeal from a decision by the Building Commissioner. The applicant, after a hearing with the Board, requested a withdrawal without prejudice, which the Board granted with a unanimous vote, as required by their Operating Procedures/Rules and Regulations.

James Bright, an associate member, was appointed as a full member of the Board of Appeals.

Martha Terry attended the May 8 meeting/training of the Massachusetts Federation of Planning and Appeals Boards, Western Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha R. Terry, Chair/Clerk

## Town Clerk

Vital Statistics for the Town of South Hadley  
Calendar Year 2007

## Marriages

Total Number of Marriages 2007	68
Oldest Groom	64
Oldest Bride	65
Youngest Groom	18

Youngest Bride	17
Total Number of Marriages 2006	96

## Deaths

Total Number of Deaths 2007	208
Under one (1) year	0
From 1 to 20 years	0
From 21 to 49 years	9
From 50 to 69 years	24
From 70 to 90 years	142
From 91 to 100 years	33
From 101 to 105 years	0
Total Number of Deaths 2006	227

## Births

Total Number of Births 2007	135
Total Number of Males	70
Total Number of Females	65
Total Number of Births 2006	137

## Other Records FY 2007

Fish & Game Licenses Sold	\$20,607.25
Dog Licenses Sold	\$13,450.50
Vital Records	\$7,756.00
Other	\$2,182.30
Marriage Licenses	\$1,440.00
Population Town Census	14,684
Population (Federal 2000)	17,196
Total Number of Registered Voters	10,871
Registered Active Voters	10,012
Registered Inactive Voters	859

## Conservation Commission

Between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008 the Commission met 24 times to hold Public Hearings and Meetings on proposed projects. We received 15 new Notices of Intent and 19 new Requests for Determination during that time period, and continued review on many more. In addition we issued seven Amendments and six Extensions to Orders of Conditions, 24 Certificates of Compliance, and approved 25 new Building Permits. The Commission also issued three Emergency Certification Orders to the DPW, and one Enforcement Order. All of the wetland applications required plan review, site visits, legal notices, public meetings or hearings, issuance of Orders or Determinations, and monitoring. It has been another busy year. In an effort to develop more open communication with town residents, the Commission established a new feature to their meetings, starting in December 2007. The time period of 7:00 to 7:15 PM of each Conservation Commission meeting will be reserved for any resident wishing to ask a question or register a concern directly with the Commission.

Major project construction continued at Shadowbrook, Mountainbrook, Stonybrook Village, the Eldercare facility on Canal Street, and the new residence hall at Mount Holyoke College. New approved projects include the Mount Holyoke College boathouse and expansion of Kendall Hall, a clubhouse at the Ledges Golf Course, construction of Riverside Park along the Connecticut River in the Falls, pond restoration at Loomis Village, renovation of the Beachgrounds Park, utility maintenance, and repairs and improvements to the municipal sewerage system. There were also many smaller projects for single family home construction and additions, drainage work, vegetation control on banks of dams or in ponds and lakes, docks, and tree trimming and removal.

The Conservation Administrator continues to monitor active projects around town for adherence to their Order of Conditions, attend meetings on town issues, advise the public and the Commission on administrative procedures, and offer conservation department input on various topics such as the landfill expansion, town Self-Help grant applications, and Planning Board filing reviews. This year the Conservation Administrator, on behalf of the Commission, participated in Community Day at the Ledges, the Water Bottle Campaign, the Intervenor Status Committee, the Development Review Team, the GIS/Permitting Committee, and Website Development Committee. She developed the Conservation Commission information for the new Virtual Town Hall website, a new poster board about conservation land, and updated the GIS database for town conservation land.

The Conservation Commission is also continuing to work on the regulations for the town wetlands bylaw, and trail and land management issues on conservation land. The Commission asks for the help of neighbors to report motorized vehicles entering a conservation area to the police, so the people who are ruining the land meant for the benefit of all can be caught. The Commission participated in the evaluation of the Toth property for town use, paid for the wetland delineation, and staked all the wetland boundaries with the help of a few volunteers. The Commission reinstated the agricultural lease with a local farmer to farm several large fields at the Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook Conservation Area. With volunteer help they completed an initial assessment of town conservation land, and have decided to form a volunteer advisory group for conservation land management and policy. They were also involved in projects on other town properties including Buttery Brook Park, Judd Park, and Bicentennial Canal Park.

Arthur Jackson, Commissioner  
Jacob Masenior, Associate Commissioner  
Janice Stone, Conservation Administrator  
Linda Scott, Clerk



Ledges staff assembling bluebird houses at Ledges Community Day held on May 31, 2008.



Remains of stone structure built by Civilian Conservation Corps at Judd Park.

Respectfully submitted,

John Fleming, Chair  
Dennis Swartwout, Vice-chair  
James Canning, Secretary  
W. Bradford Allen, Commissioner



Scenes from the Toth Property, September 2007.



Conservation photos courtesy of Janice Stone.

## Intervenor Status Committee

The Intervenor Status Committee (ISC) was formed by the Board of Selectmen in 1995 to advise the Town on the relicensing of the hydroelectric facilities at the Holyoke Dam. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a new license to the Holyoke Water Power Company (HWP) for the Project in August 1999. Subsequent to issuance of the license, the dam and the license were transferred in 2001 from HWP to Holyoke Gas & Electric (HG&E). As a result of the efforts by the ISC and other Town officials, the license included certain conditions binding on the license holder which affect the Town regarding Channel Marking, the Texon Building redevelopment, creation of a riverfront park, Cove Island, and erosion control.

Development of the Comprehensive Recreation & Land Management Plan (CRLMP) in consultation with numerous parties including the Town of South Hadley was a key condition imposed on the license holder by FERC. Intended to address the dam's impacts on the impoundment area, this plan interconnects many of the other conditions and issues involved with relicensing of the Holyoke Dam.

The past year saw the ISC continue efforts toward implementation of the license, CRLMP, and related project plans. In this vein, the ISC functions more in the capacity as a mechanism for coordinating the various departments and agencies of the Town that have jurisdiction over specific aspects of the licensee's activities.

During the thirteenth year of its functioning, the ISC concentrated on efforts to have Holyoke Gas & Electric comply with requirements of the CRLMP and the license. Three principal aspects of the CRLMP and license conditions occupied the ISC this year: monitoring efforts by a Holyoke developer to redevelop the Texon building and property, development of a system of parks stretching from the Gatehouse above the dam to the Bridge, and management of the impoundment area in the vicinity of the Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook Resource Conservation Area.

- The Holyoke developer has continued to secure lands and buildings in the vicinity of the Texon building which are necessary to proceed with the project. Due to the complexity of the project, no definite decision on the direction the Texon building will take is anticipated within the next 18 months.
- Holyoke Gas & Electric received Conservation Commission approval for the first phase of the Riverside Park project. However, much to the ISC and Selectboard's amazement, they filed an appeal of the Order of Conditions with MassDEP. This appeal is anticipated to delay the project at least a year.
- Within the Holyoke Dam Impoundment Area, Holyoke Gas & Electric has established a Permitting Program. Mount Holyoke College has begun pursuing development of a boathouse and dock north of Brunelle's Marina and adjoining the Bachelor Brook/Stony Brook Resource Conservation Area. Mount Holyoke College is intending to utilize the facility for several community rowing programs. Therefore, the ISC and Selectboard have been working with Mount Holyoke College and Holyoke Gas & Electric to obtain the approvals necessary for this project to go forward. This matter is currently pending before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) which has Federal jurisdiction over the Holyoke Dam license.

The Members of ISC, Selectboard members, and the Town Administrator continue to participate in meetings regarding the license requirements including development of plans for the riverfront park. Efforts have been undertaken to expedite the various approvals required for the riverfront park to be developed.

Respectfully submitted,

John Scibak

Ted Belsky

Marilyn Ishler

Janice Stone

Richard Harris

James Reidy

Michael Szlosek

## Recreation Commission

The Recreation Commission gratefully acknowledges the hundreds of volunteers who assisted us in implementing all of our programs and activities. These people include coaches, officials, board members and those who assisted in various fundraisers. Their time and effort allows us to provide a wide array of activities in meeting the community's recreation needs. Groups such as South Hadley Youth Football, South Hadley Youth Cheerleading, South Hadley Boys Lacrosse and South Hadley Baseball Association were instrumental in their sports operation and enjoyment.

Highlights: The Town of South Hadley was awarded an Urban Self Help grant in October 2007 for renovations of the Beachgrounds Park. Renovations are scheduled to start in October 2008 and will be completed by June 2009. The renovations will include a new splash pad, playground equipment, renovations of the shelter house/restrooms, relocation of the basketball court, creation of a river-view picnic area and other various improvements to the park. The project budget includes \$500,000 from the state grant, \$40,000 in private donations/fundraising and \$196,000 in town contributions.

The Recreation Department has launched its new online registration program for selected activities in January 2008. This program allows people to register for programs from home and allows customers to use credit cards when they register. The Department looks forward to converting most of our registrations to this program in the near future. Other features include the ability to announce programs via email to selected demographics and to provide automatic receipts to customers. The Department also spent a considerable amount of time preparing its new website to be launched in August 2008 in conjunction with the rest of the town's departments.

There were a few new projects and events that took place in FY2008. They include construction of dugouts at the Beachgrounds and Woodlawn baseball fields. This was done with the help of Paul Ciolek and Associated Builders and the Baseball Association. With the help of Brian Couture, there was the addition of a softball jamboree in May which featured all of the youth and high school teams

and players. The State Pool at Buttery Brook Park was demolished to make way for future tennis courts and a new aquatic facility. A special thanks to Linda Young and the Friends of Buttery Brook for all of the improvements that have been made at the Park in the past year. A new Kindergarten – Grade 2 lacrosse program was added and there were over 80 participants in the first year. We also redesigned our adult volleyball program to offer open co-ed play so that individuals could participate. We also created a new Summer Golf program at the Ledges. This program offered youth clinics on Tuesday mornings in July and a week long camp in August. Both of these activities sold out. The Department saw continued growth in most of its programs such as youth sports, adult fitness classes, bus trips and adult sport activities.

Programs and activities: *Youth sports offerings* included: baseball, basketball, softball, tee-ball, field hockey, football, soccer, cheerleading, swimming, team tennis, lacrosse and wrestling. *Summer sports camps* included: baseball, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, golf clinics/camp, tennis lessons and summer creations. *Adult offerings* included: Aquacise, yoga, body sculpt, ballroom dancing (traditional ballroom, West Coast Swing, Hustle), volleyball, basketball, and softball. *Bus trips* took us to Fenway Park, Yankee Stadium, New York City for two holiday shopping trips, Lynn for Horizon's Edge Casino Cruises, Jacob's Field in Cleveland and Camden Yards in Baltimore for Red Sox road trips, Foxboro for the New England Revolution and Tanglewood for James Taylor.

Special Events: The Annual Independence Day Fireworks Celebration was held on July 3, 2007 at the Michael E. Smith Middle School. The Major Corporate Sponsor of the event was Peoples Bank once again and they are committed to be the sole Major Corporate Sponsor for years to come. Generous donations were also received from the following Major Sponsors: South Hadley Lions Club, Metras Insurance, and Easthampton Savings Bank. Our annual Easter Egg Hunt and Hat Parade was held at Buttery Brook and was attended by over 150 kids, it was quite an event. We would like to say thank you to Kim Du Bois for her special role at the event.

In closing, the Recreation Commission extends its fondest appreciation to all the Town departments who had a hand in our successes: Department of Public Works and Parks Dept., Police, Fire Districts 1 & 2, SHELD, Water Departments, School Department and the Selectboard.

Respectfully submitted,

John Broderick, Chair  
Amy Foley, Vice Chair  
Patrick Dawson  
Marc Du Bois  
Jane Gawron  
Ron Michalski  
Allan Tracy

### Recreation Staff:

Andrew Rogers, Director  
Elizabeth Steig, Assistant  
Gert Sugrue, Senior Clerk

## Board of Health

The primary responsibility of the local Board of Health is to respond and act on any situation that may affect the health and safety of the general public. Most of our duties are contained within many statutes, including mandatory licensing and inspection programs.

The Board of Health continues to respond to and educate the public on health issues such as Hepatitis A, Rabies, Lyme disease, West Nile Virus and Salmonella through local press releases, the media and our cable TV Channel 15.

The Board of Health has spent time this past year on the Town's Solid Waste Advisory Committee, updating and enforcing Tobacco Control by-laws; Public Health Director is Chair of the Mount Tom Tobacco Coalition that include the towns/cities of Easthampton, Granby, Hatfield, Holyoke, Northampton, Southampton, and South Hadley, promoting policy initiatives and enforcing laws to reduce Youth Access; Chair of the Municipal Wellness Grant Program; Chair of the Hampshire Emergency Preparedness Coalition; working with a UMASS/MDPH (Mass. Dept. of Public Health) intern to take a look at the "health" of public buildings; applied for a grant to receive a paid (2 year) intern through the (CDC) Center for Disease Control in Atlanta for a project on Disease Surveillance in Western Massachusetts; worked with both Water Districts, Solid Waste Coordinator & Conservation Agent on a plastic water bottle return Program; completed an application from the Surgeon General's Office to start a Medical Reserve Corp for emergencies in South Hadley; written action on approx. 125 complaints that were received; worked with Animal Control Officers to respond to a rabies outbreak; and worked with Water District #2 to implement floor drain regulations in town.

During the period of July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007 issued the following permits:

<u>PERMITS</u>	<u>FEES</u>
Food Service Permits (Retail/Mobile/Catering/Bakery/Milk Permits)	\$19,311.00
Camp/Pool Permits	3,000.00
Health Establishment Permits (B & B/hotels/shelters/dormitories massage/tanning, etc.)	1,325.00
Burial Permits/Funeral Directors	1,180.00
Septic Hauler/Installer/Percolation	5,510.00
Ecology Cans	485.00
Tobacco Permits	<u>1,050.00</u>
<b>PERMIT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$31,861.00</b>

Once again, more residents of all ages received immunizations at our two (2) influenza clinics. Numerous blood pressure and glucose screening clinics were conducted throughout the year. Many visits were also made to home-bound, uninsured and neglected in need for assessment reasons, screenings and referrals.

Our staff is successful in their efforts because of our strong and supportive three-member Board of Health, who prioritize protecting public health above everything.

We acknowledge and appreciate the assistance and cooperation of all Town Boards, Departments and Commissions.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to Dr. Francis Nelen for the 13 years of dedication to the Board of Health and to the Community of South Hadley and for the leadership and support he has provided to this office.

Respectfully submitted,

Francis D. Nelen, DMD, Chairman  
Herman J. Picard, DC, Vice Chair  
Ann M. Canata, RN, BS, Clerk  
Sharon D. Hart, Director  
Ola L. Herbert, Clerk

## Gas and Plumbing Inspector

During the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, the following permits were issued:

<u>PERMITS</u>	<u>FEES</u>
228 Plumbing	12,555.00
<u>254 Gas</u>	<u>8,874.00</u>
<b>482 TOTAL PERMITS</b>	<b>\$21,429.00 TOTAL FEES</b>

Over the past year I have successfully completed State-required Continuing Education. I have attended several seminars and meetings pertaining to installation and safety as they related to the plumbing and gas industry. I have attended workshops and received certification in the newest allowable materials.

Respectfully submitted,

Frederick Marion,  
Plumbing & Gas Inspector

## Canal Park Committee

Our energies this year focus on Bi-centennial Canal Park while the status and final plans for the parks upstream and downstream from the Texon Building are resolved. Whether or not the old Texon Building can be restored will have a major role in how those parks will be developed.

Therefore the committee has concentrated on enhancing the overlook at Canal Street and the adjacent Bicentennial Canal Park. We are delighted to have as our new neighbor, Hubert Place. We believe that the residents of this elderly housing complex will find the park a most attractive asset to their residence.

The construction of Hubert Place does however provide an unexpected challenge to the management of the park. The water that used to be absorbed in by the vegetation in that area now flows through the culvert which opens into the park area making previously existing erosion much more severe. We are working with Mr. Reidy of the town DPW to solve the problem before any major problems take place. The DPW plans to address this problem in the fall.

We believe that Bicentennial Canal Park has never looked better. Nancy Howard and her volunteers have made the area around the overlook sparkle with flowers while opening the view to one of the finest vistas of the Conn. Valley. Bill Bacis and his committee have kept the path leading to the non-motorized dock area in excellent condition. The number of visitors who regularly walk the area are a testament to their labors.

We recommend that those of you who have not visited the Bicentennial Canal Park area recently find the time to see the result for yourself.

And last, we are looking once again for new volunteers to join us at fall cleanup time.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellie Klepacki, Co-Chair  
Ted Belsky, Co-Chair

## **Cable Television and Information Technology Advisory Committee**

This past year saw an increase in programming produced by members of the community, more technological upgrades and a great deal of school related activity. Channel 15's Studio Manager, Tom Adams and Production Associate, Dan Pease, also edited, directed and produced a great deal of new programming for town and school organizations.

Channel 15's website ([web.mac.com/shctv15](http://web.mac.com/shctv15)) continues to be a great resource for residents featuring program schedules (updated weekly) and frequently-asked-questions, forms, photos, videos clips and other information related to South Hadley.

Since the departure of Tom Adams at the end of April, Production Associate, Dan Pease, has assumed the position of Interim Studio Manager.

### **GREATER SOUTH HADLEY COMMUNITY**

Channel 15 has introduced some new monthly programming, brought to us by independent producers outside of South Hadley: Physician's Focus, Capitol Perspective with Senator Edward Kennedy, Labor Talk, and Polka Time with Stas.

The following is a short list of programs produced by several of the key "independent producers" in town (Kathy Gallivan, Bob Johnson, Linda Young, Dale Johnston, Andrew Beaudry and Joe Loftus): Journey of The Soul: Ireland Video Tour, MHC Jazz Festival, South Hadley: Past & Present, Anthony Lake - Model United Nations, Taking Care of Business, and Cliff Winspeare: An Evening of Celebration.

Channel 15 continued to bring residents Selectboard, School Committee, and town meetings; as well as, Charter Commission and Comprehensive Plan Meetings with help from some local volunteers.

There is an ongoing effort to encourage new "independent producers" from within the community to take advantage of the training and equipment that is available through the studio in order to produce their own programming.

### **SCHOOL**

Dan Pease assisted in teaching "Visual Media" students basic video production and editing skills. Over twenty student programs were produced. He also worked with Plains & Middle School teachers to produce several music and theater performances highlighting the many talented children of South Hadley.

He has also assisted students with the production of their video projects and continued as the Advisor to the extra-curricular club "Tiger Times"- the South Hadley High School student-run TV news program. He also continued to serve as a mentor in the High School's "Connections" program by supervising student production assistants in their internship program. Most notable was Addison Boroff, who entered, and won, the Comcast SportsNet Fancaster audition. Addison was selected to introduce the "Heroes Among Us" winner on center court before a Boston Celtic's game.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Zahm, Chair  
Constance Clancy  
William Collins  
Gregory Gauthier

Dale Johnston  
Robert Pueschel  
Dan Pease

## **Building Commissioner**

During the period of July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, the Building Department issued 438 building permits and 55 Certificates of Inspection. A total of \$97,976.12 was turned over to the Town Treasurer for building permit fees with an estimated value of \$21,922,809.00 for improvements. We also issued 271 Tag Sale Permits (\$2,710.00) and 201 Burning Permits (\$2,010.00).

	<u>PERMITS</u>	<u>FEES</u>
Above Ground Pools	10	240.00
Additions	37	22,109.27
Alterations	17	775.00
Carport	1	137.00
Cell Tower	2	250.00
Certificate of Inspection	55	11,743.00
Deck	20	545.00
Demolition	12	300.00
Fence	28	700.00
Garage	10	2,050.00
Gazebo	1	25.00
In-ground Pool	9	525.00
Insulation	1	25.00
New Commercial	3	2,620.00
New Condos	4	2,595.60
New Homes	14	13,085.90
Office Trailer	1	100.00
Porch	4	180.00
Remodel	23	1,070.00
Renovations	44	31,281.55
Repairs	17	737.80
Replacement	1	25.00
Roof	80	3,626.00
Shed	18	486.00
Siding	17	598.00
Signs	5	271.00
Sprinkler System	2	200.00
Stove	15	375.00
Sunroom	3	215.00
Temporary Building	1	45.00
Tent	1	25.00
Windows	<u>37</u>	<u>1,015.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>97,976.12</b>

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Reno  
Building Commissioner

## Planning Board

The Planning Board is pleased to submit its 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Report to the citizens of South Hadley. The Board welcomed the appointment of Ann Griffin to replace Natalie Keng. Additionally, the Board welcomed the addition of Helen Fantini who was appointed to fill the Associate Member post on the Planning Board.

The Planning Board consists of five unpaid, elected members who serve staggered five (5) year terms and one unpaid, appointed Associate Member who serves a three (3) year term. The Board's Mission is to assist the community in efforts to achieve balanced growth, quality development, and preservation of community assets through effective development regulation, assistance in obtaining funding resources for community projects, and long-term planning. Direct staff support in carrying out this mission is provided by Town Planner Richard Harris

and Senior Clerk Doris Leclair with additional assistance and advice provided by DPW Superintendent Jim Reidy, Town Engineer Yem Lip, Building Commissioner Steve Reno, other Town Departments, Boards, and Commissions, and the Fire Districts and their Water Departments.

Maintaining and administering the Town's Zoning By-Laws and Subdivision Regulations is a major responsibility of the Board. The Board makes recommendations to Town Meeting on proposed amendments to the Zoning By-Law and Zoning Map.

Public hearings are conducted by the Board on applications for Special Permits, Site Plan Reviews, subdivision proposals and Zoning By-Law and Subdivision Regulation amendments. In carrying out its responsibilities the Board coordinates and works closely with other Town boards and departments in review of applications for land use and development. This process ensures that a proposed development is consistent with Town regulations and that each developer's performance fulfills the terms agreed upon.

The Planning Board started its efforts in earnest to develop a new Comprehensive Plan by selecting the firm VHB, Inc. to serve as its planning consultant and appointing a 15-member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) to develop the Comprehensive Plan. Immediately after being appointed, members of CPAC began twice a month meetings – one with the consultant to review progress on the plan and another to meet with representatives of the town and community to develop a better knowledge and understanding of the needs and issues. A Community Gathering was held at the High School on March 5<sup>th</sup> attended by over 60 residents and another 60+ residents submitted survey questionnaires to provide their input. The CPAC and consultants are working on the first phase of the plan with the goal of having the plan completed in early 2009. Town Meeting appropriated the third and final installment of \$40,000 for the 3-year \$100,000 project. VHB, Inc. developed and maintains a website for the Comprehensive Plan to keep residents and businesses informed of the planning process and future events: <http://www.vhb.com/southhadley/default.asp>

With the work on the Comprehensive Plan underway, the Planning Board has discouraged efforts to amend the Zoning Bylaw or Zoning Map until the Comprehensive Plan is complete. An additional effort to minimize the extent to which development could occur contrary to the developing plan, the Planning Board proposed an 18-month moratorium on Special Permit applications. However, Town Meeting defeated the proposed moratorium by a nearly 2/3 vote in May 2008. The Board anticipates that major Zoning Bylaw and Map amendments should derive from the Comprehensive Planning process.

Even though the economy has slowed and development is less active, development management activities continued

to play a dominant role in the Board's functions. The Town Planner played an active role in the Development Review Team established by the Town Administrator. This Team, which consists of various Town departments and representatives of SHELDT, the Fire Chiefs, and the Water Superintendents, meets monthly to review proposed developments and issues associated with ongoing developments.

The Planning Board approved and/or endorsed with conditions two (2) Special Permits for a twenty-five (25) unit multifamily development and a drive through service for a bank as part of a 4,000 square foot office building; three (3) Site Plans (including a proposed 31,500 square foot addition to the existing Canson facility, a 2,550 square foot warehouse/garage off East Street, and a 4,000 square foot office building/bank off Willimansett Street – this also include a Special Permit for the bank's drive through service); and thirteen (13) Approval Not Required Plans (to create 7 new building lots and adjust lot lines on other properties). Plans for a Preliminary Subdivision plan to create one (1) new building lot and a 7,440 square foot addition to an industrial facility were pending Planning Board review at the end of the fiscal year.

Fees totaling \$11,333.84 were collected by the Planning Department for applications, inspections, reviews, and copies. Overall, this was a modest increase from the previous year and reflected the typical annual level of revenues. Approximately one-fourth of the fees were paid for Site Plan Review submittals; while installment payments for Major Earth Removal projects accounted for 17% of the fees, Special Permit application fees accounted for slightly less at 15%. A breakdown of the fees for FY 2008 is provided below:

	<u>July 2007-June 2008</u>
Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans	\$ 1,500.00
Preliminary/Definitive/Form H Subdivisions	1,100.00
Special Permits/Waivers	1,725.00
Site/Exempt/Sign Plan Reviews/Waivers	2,883.25
Earth Removal	2,000.00
Notification of Abutters	1,197.30
Inspection Fees	283.50
Miscellaneous Fees	<u>844.79</u>
	\$11,333.84
<b>TOTAL</b>	

An additional \$2,050 was received and deposited, but subsequently refunded in early July 2008 since the applicant withdrew their application prior to the public hearing being advertised and held.

To comply with Federal requirements for Stormwater Management, the Planning Board submitted, and Town Meeting adopted, a new Stormwater Management Bylaw. This amendment to the General Town Bylaw was developed by a working committee consisting of the DPW Superintendent, Town Engineer, Board of Health Director, Conservation Commission Administrator, Town Planner, and Building Commissioner with assistance from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. Under the provisions of this Bylaw, any disturbance of one acre or more of land (as one activity or as a series of sequential events) will require approval of a Stormwater Management Permit by the Planning Board which will work closely with and rely upon the expertise of the other municipal departments. The committee recommended the Planning Board be the permitting entity since most of the development projects covered by this Bylaw are already subject to Planning Board approval under the Subdivision Regulations and/or Zoning Bylaw. Once projects are approved and completed, the DPW will have primary responsibility for implementation.

Working with other boards is also a major function of the Planning Board. The Board and Town Planner worked with other Boards and departments to expand the Geographical Information System's utility to the community. In this regard, the Town Planner chaired the GIS/Permitting subcommittee of the Technology Study Committee created by the Selectboard. One of the recommendations of the subcommittee was development of a new digital base map. Town Meeting appropriated the funding for this effort and the Planning Board is developing an RFQ to solicit proposals for the work. In closing, the Planning Board would like to express its gratitude to the other Boards and Committees in Town for their cooperation and assistance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joan Rosner, Chairman  
 Thomas Callahan, Vice-Chair  
 Ann Griffin, Financial Secretary  
 Mark Cavanaugh, Clerk  
 Ralph Blank, Member  
 Helen Fantini, Associate Member  
 Richard Harris, Town Planner  
 Doris Leclair, Senior Clerk

## Report of the Public Schools

### Personnel

In April JoAnn Jordan and Kathy Mazur were elected to three year terms on the School Committee. Kathy Mazur replaced Julia Miller, who was an active member of the committee for six years. On June 1, Rochelle Calhoun resigned her position on the committee after two years in order to take a new position in Saratoga, New York. Lorraine Liantonio was appointed by the Selectboard and School Committee to fill the remaining year of her term.

Dr. Gus Sayer is completing his fifth year as superintendent.

After 10 years of leadership, Pat Auth retired as Principal of Mosier School. The superintendent appointed Jill Pasquini to replace her, effective July 1, 2008. There were no other changes in administration during 2007-08.

#### Negotiations

The School Committee successfully negotiated new three year contracts with each of the bargaining units that represent school employees: Teachers, Administrators (Department Heads, Directors and Assistant Principals), Clerical Staff, Paraprofessionals, Custodians and Food Service Employees. Each calls for 3% increases each year over the three-year terms of the contracts.

#### Facilities

The Building Committee, appointed in 2007 to develop plans for replacement of or renovations to the town's elementary school buildings, submitted a Statement of Interest to accomplish this goal to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. At the request of MSBA, the committee designated Plains School as its highest priority for replacement or renovation. In December the committee learned that South Hadley was not one of the 80 projects the SBA would give further consideration to in 2007-08. Its application was placed *On Hold*, meaning that it could receive consideration in the next round of submissions for 2008-09. Given the large number of Statements of Interest submitted, and the priority of the State to address projects in most dire need of immediate action, it was not surprising that South Hadley did not succeed in the first round, following the lifting of a moratorium on State support for school building projects that had lasted for several years.

Meanwhile, the Committee continued to take steps to meet the maintenance needs of its schools. Town meeting approved a warrant article to replace the oldest section of roof at Mosier School. This work will take place in July and August of 2008. The town also approved funds that will allow the schools to replace siding on the modular classrooms, to replace the gym lights and to paint the gym ceiling at Mosier School; to install a concrete sidewalk and stairs to the upper field at the high school; and to install an automated pool cover, replace a rooftop air-conditioning and dehumidifier unit and to replace a rooftop computer lab air-conditioning unit at the middle school.

#### Safety, Security and Health

Following up on the previous year's focus on school security, the School Committee approved a policy that requires the entrance to all four school buildings during the day to be through one designated entrance which is controlled by a buzz-in system. The high school also installed security cameras that provide the administration with a view of all corridors and the exterior areas immediately surrounding the building. The system is

intended to serve as a deterrent to vandalism and threats to security. Unlike the previous school year, there were no bomb threats made at the high school in 2007-08.

With appreciation to the Automated External Defibrillator Committee that raised funds for the project in the community, the School Committee approved the installation of AED's in all four schools and Town Hall.

#### Other significant actions

The School Committee approved a new course, *Topics in Biology*. This is a follow up to *Biology*, a course most students now take in their freshman year at the high school. *Topics in Biology* will provide an opportunity for students who fail the MCAS Biology at the end of ninth grade to continue working in this area, as well as provide students with strong interests in biology to pursue those interests.

The superintendent conducted a study of why some students leave South Hadley to attend schools in neighboring towns under the State's School Choice program. The survey of parents of these students revealed that there was a wide range of reasons for exercising this choice, including convenience for day care arrangements, friendships with children who live in other towns, desire for a smaller school environment for their children, inability to enroll in full-day kindergarten (which is no longer an issue for families, but was in the past), poor peer relationships in South Hadley and dissatisfaction with school policies or practices. Overall the School Choice program in South Hadley appears to be successful. It brings in many more students than the 75 who leave South Hadley through School Choice and it produces annual revenue of close to \$800,000 for the schools. The School Committee approved 29 new School Choice slots to replace students who left our schools during 2007-08 and to bring the total enrollment to 146 students.

Respectfully submitted,

William (Roddy) Adams, Chair  
Edward Boisselle, Vice-Chair  
JoAnn Jordan  
Lorraine Liantonio  
Kathy Mazur  
Leah Spring, Student Representative

## **Superintendent of Schools**

#### Student Achievement

In 2007-08 the district continued to take many steps to increase the achievement of students at all grade levels. We have begun to see signs of the success of these initiatives. At the high school level Principal Dan Smith devoted the year to a school-wide project whose purpose was to establish common, rigorous standards for student writing in all subject areas. The middle school implemented a new schedule which included a daily

Academic Enhancement block that permitted teachers to work on the improvement of basic skills with struggling learners and, at the same time to provide greater enrichment opportunities for all students. Coupled with the shift in the previous year to specialist teachers in academic courses in Grades 6-8, these changes are already leading to significant improvement in MCAS Mathematics and English scores. The middle school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics in 2007 and, if it repeats this success in 2008, it will lose its Corrective Action status under *No Child Left Behind*. Mosier School piloted a new Reading program, which in September we will adopt for all Grade 2-4 classrooms. This change, along with the support teachers received from the new position of K-4 Literacy Coordinator, should lead to improvement in Reading and Language Arts test scores at Mosier in 2008. We began use of the DIBELS assessments of children's reading progress as well as a new form of DRA assessments in Grades K-3. Kindergarten classrooms introduced a new program, *Early Reading Intervention*, which provides small-group reinforcement of basic phonemic awareness skills for students at risk of reading failure.

In response to the failure to make AYP for the special education subgroup in Reading and Language Arts at Mosier School, the Superintendent convened a committee of teachers and administrators for the purpose of analyzing data about special education students' reading performance and of recommending new strategies to improve beginning reading achievement. As a result of this committee's work, in January special education staff were directed to increase the time they spend with their reading groups by 25 % and to increase reading goals in the IEP plans of SPED students, so that by third grade, students' performance would reach or approach grade level. Furthermore, we recognized the need to broaden the knowledge and skills that SPED teachers used in reading instruction and to apply a more systematic approach to reading instruction with SPED students. To accomplish these goals, we are providing SPED teachers with intensive training in the Orton-Gillingham reading instruction method. This summer 22 teachers and paraprofessionals are participating in a four day workshop on Orton-Gillingham. The workshop will continue throughout the 2008-09 school year for a total of 40 hours of training.

We established ambitious goals in 2007-08 for the improvement of reading and mathematics achievement scores in our district. While we did not reach all of these goals, we saw some promising gains that indicate we are on the right path. The percentage of children reading at grade level at the end of first grade increased from 66% to 77%, just shy of our 80% goal. We also set an ambitious goal to increase the percentages of students who score Proficient (P) or Advanced (A) on the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics MCAS tests to 10% above Massachusetts averages, and to decrease Failing (F) or

Warning (W) rates to below 5%. South Hadley's results for 2007 were:

	P / A (2007)		F / W (2007)	
<u>High School</u>	SH State		SH State	
ELA	72%	71%	5 %	6 %
Math	69%	69%	8 %	9 %
<u>Middle School</u>				
ELA	71%	65%	5 %	8 %
Math	49%	49%	19 %	22 %
<u>Mosier School</u>				
ELA/Reading	62%	58%	11 %	10 %
Math	40%	48%	17 %	13 %

In 2007 South Hadley's MCAS scores at the Mosier School and Middle School levels showed significant gains in English Language Arts, relative to State averages. Other scores were stable, while State scores increased. Overall we are making progress in both ELA and Mathematics, but not yet enough progress to reach the goal of 10% higher than State averages.

#### College attendance rates

One of the School Committee's goals is to increase the percentage of South Hadley High School graduates who attend 4-year colleges to 70%. To promote this goal we have encouraged more students to consider four year college by paying for PSAT examinations and requiring all sophomores to take these tests. The PSATs are one of the first steps students take in the college placement process.

We have also increased emphasis on having students take Advanced Placement tests. This year high school students took 180 AP tests, an average of about 1 per graduate, which is encouraging. Of these, 66 students received scores of 3 or higher, which will likely earn them college credit for their effort. Scores were high in Calculus, Statistics and U.S. History. Dan Smith is working with staff to strengthen our AP courses in Science, English and Foreign Languages.

However, we are still a long way from achieving the 70% goal. Our four year college acceptance rate hovers just above 50%. Overall, nearly 90% of our students attend either 2- or 4-year colleges after graduation from the high school. While we do not have accurate information on the completion rates for these students, we know that only about one third of South Hadley students who attend Holyoke Community College go on to a four year college. Because of the peak in high school graduates in 2008, this year was one of the most competitive ones for students applying to college. Furthermore, it is evident that the high cost of most four year colleges is an inhibiting factor for many South Hadley families. Still, we need to do a better job of emphasizing to our students and their families

the value of completing four years of college in the emerging twenty-first century world economy.

After-School and Summer School Programs

In 2007-08 the district successfully took over fiscal responsibility for the middle school after-school program, which formerly had been funded by a grant. After a slow transition, enrollment increased throughout the year and the program ended the year operating in the black. The high school and the middle school are initiating summer school programs this month, which will create opportunities for students to complete courses that they did not pass during the school year. Mosier School is also offering a summer reading camp program and we are supporting several summer programs for special needs students at all school levels. Mosier School continued its MCAS prep after-school tutorial program during the year, as well as Orton-Gillingham tutoring for dyslexic students and a new computer-based Supplemental Education Service program that was offered with Hampshire Educational Collaborative sponsorship.

Inclusion

For September 2008 we have created our own in-house high school alternative program, the *Twilight* program. The alternative program will serve students who are at high risk for dropping out of school. The program will run from 10:30 AM – 5:00 PM daily, with its students taking two or three mainstream courses at the beginning of their days.

The district offered its first multicultural education workshop for teachers in 2007. Subsequently, the School Committee adopted Goals for Multicultural Education for the school system. We are offering a four-day workshop for teachers on Anti-Racist Education in summer 2008. The workshops have stimulated the faculty’s interest in bringing multicultural and anti-racist themes into their classrooms. In particular, Pat Duhart, a first-grade teacher, and Martha Guild, a paraprofessional at Plains School, have collaborated in the creation and production of three children’s plays on the lives of Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman and Jackie Robinson. These and two other plays that are in the writing stage are expected to be published in a book in another year.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Gus A. Sayer  
Superintendent of Schools

## Tax Collector

Statement of outstanding balances for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2008.

Description	Outstanding Balances
<b>Real Estate Taxes</b>	
2008	325,170
2007	30,082
2006	12,955
2005	4,843
Prior Years	24,063
<b>Personal Property</b>	
2008	4,662
2007	1,234
2006	1,265
2005	1,141
Prior Years	28,104
<b>Motor Vehicle Excise</b>	
2008	104,440
2007	35,838
2006	17,253
2005	14,937
Prior Years	109,200
<b>Boat Excise All Years</b>	31,030
<b>Rollback Taxes</b>	22,507
<b>Sewer Use Charges</b>	113,485
<b>Curbside Rubbish</b>	36,213

Many changes have taken place in the Collector’s Office in the past several years. New payment options now offered are payment of current bills on-line with a checking or savings account or by credit card, and a direct debit option is available that automatically withdraws payments from an individuals account when a bill is due. A drop-box has been installed behind the police station to make paying bills easier for those who can not come to the Town Hall during office hours. All of these new features have been instituted in an effort to increase collections and to make paying taxes and fees as easy as possible for the resident.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Baldini  
Collector

**Town Treasurer**  
**July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008**

Balance in Treasury	\$19,988,469.06
July 1, 2007	
Receipts	
July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008	
General Fund	\$74,407,684.05
Expenditures	
July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008	\$73,232,717.64

Balance in Treasury	
June 30, 2008	\$21,163,435.47

**Reconciliation of Treasurer’s Cash**  
**June 30, 2008**

Bank North	\$1,613,540.76
Bank of America	\$292,945.98
UBI Trust Fund	\$658,667.59
UBI Enterprise Funds	\$6,366,715.03
UBI General Fund	\$937,885.49
MMDT	\$137,806.19
People’s Bank	\$2,189,695.39
Sovereign Bank	\$2,256,340.43
Bank of Western Mass.	\$844,463.38
Berkshire Bank	\$1,733,892.74
Unibank	\$2,929,390.39
Century Bank	\$100,105.47
Citizen’s Bank	\$93,649.16
Peoples Bank School Scholarship Funds	\$140,136.78
Merrill Lynch	\$844,858.51
Cash on Hand	\$23,342.18
<b>Total Cash and Investments</b>	<b>\$21,163,435.47</b>

**Information Technology**  
**(IT) Department**

The Information Technology department exists to support the Town’s technology needs and to establish a direction for the future. It is crucial for the Town to invest in and keep current with technology. This past year was an exciting one for the IT department. A Technology committee was formed by the Selectboard. The committee was broken down to subcommittees in the areas of Customer Service, Infrastructure and Security, MUNIS, GIS, Staff Training, Interdepartmental Communications, and Website Development. This committee, consisting of staff members throughout the Town, School Department, and Districts was charged with studying our current technology and processes, and making recommendations for the immediate, short, and long term. This committee will be ongoing. Many people worked very hard on this venture and many excellent recommendations have come out of it. We have already made improvements based on the committee’s recommendations. The most visible of these and the one that affects the citizens of South Hadley directly is our new website ([www.southhadley.org](http://www.southhadley.org)). This new, user friendly site makes it possible for residents to do

many tasks online rather than making a trip to Town Hall. There are a number of new features that make it easier to find information on the site. Special sections for residents, businesses, and visitors enable users to go directly to their topics of interest, so information is “one click” off the homepage. Residents can pay current Real Estate, Personal Property, Excise, Sewer, and Curbside Pickup easily online. There are downloadable forms including applications, licenses and permits, and a multitude of documents. There are meeting and events calendars, News and Notices, and Meeting Minutes and Agendas. There is an email subscription section which enables residents to sign up to receive news, announcements, agendas, and minutes. This new website reflects our dedication to providing comprehensive and timely services to our residents, businesses, and visitors. The new site will enable us to continue to expand our services in the months and years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Evans  
Information Technology Director

**Golf Commission**

The Ledges Golf Club has experienced much change over the past year. The most significant change was the completion of the clubhouse in April. This project was completed on budget and on time; actually opening three weeks earlier than projected. An Urban Self help Grant of \$238,000 was awarded to the town as well, further diminishing the cost to the town. All reviews have been very positive from golfers and off-street restaurant patrons, most focusing on the food and the views from the restaurant and covered deck. The town contracted with Little Italy for the Food & Beverage operations with revenue from the lease expected to be between \$5000 and \$10000 above projections. A grand opening weekend netted two cash donations of \$2500 to both the Michael E. Smith education foundation and Jessie’s House, sponsored by the Friends of Ledges.

Revenue continued to increase this past year as it has for the past three. The rates were increased based on market conditions, and the course generated \$100,000 more than projected. The goal for the next two fiscal years is to cover operating expenses, at which time the course can start to break into the debt service. Additionally, the golf course saw an approximate 8% increase in rounds played. Membership also improved almost 20%, most likely directly attributed to the new clubhouse. With the new clubhouse, the staff will also look to increase league numbers and tournament outings over the next couple of years.

There has been change in personnel as well. After three seasons, Director of Golf Paul Ryiz left for opportunities elsewhere. His interim replacement, Bryan Fleury, left in

June. The course will be run by Superintendent Mike Fontaine until a General Manager is hired in late August. Additionally, long-time Golf Commission Chair, Gary Smith, stepped down at the end of the fiscal year. We want to thank all of these gentlemen for their service at the course, and wish them well in the future.

The one thing that has not changed is the course itself. Golf course superintendent Mike Fontaine and his crew at International Golf Maintenance continue to keep the course in fantastic shape. The conditions of the course are constantly praised by golfers. Additionally with Mike's efforts, the course has achieved Audubon status as noted by the bird houses along most fairways, and IGM's efforts of maintaining the course in an environmentally friendly manner.

As the course enters FY '09, the commission is very optimistic. With the new clubhouse and course conditions, revenues should continue to rise with increased play and increased green fees. The commission is excited about the future, and relishes the chance to continue to make the Ledges a positive asset for the Town of South Hadley

Kevin McAllister  
Chairman

Mike Fontaine  
Interim General Manager

## Human Resources Department

The Human Resources department is an essential part of the town and provides support and guidance to department heads/appointing authorities and employees. The Department deals with a wide variety of issues relative to the quality of life in the workplace and seeks to improve the effectiveness of town services by recruiting the best employees.

The Department handled seventeen personnel transactions relating to a myriad of positions. This includes retirements, resignations, promotions, reclassifications, transfers, vacancy postings and advertisements, interviewing, selection, and orientation of new employees. The Town had six new hires in FY08.

The Personnel Officer acts as the professional advisor to the Personnel Board and this year the Board began a review of the Personnel Policy Manual. Revisions of the Policy Manual will be brought to the Fall Town Meeting for approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer L. Wolowicz  
Personnel Officer/Chief Procurement Officer

## Annual Town Election April 7, 2008

Precinct	A	B	C	D	E	Total
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### MODERATOR FOR ONE YEAR

Blanks	98	207	200	115	182	802
Edward J. Ryan, Jr.*	246	459	416	311	412	1844
All Others	0	4	5	1	3	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>2659</b>

### SELECTBOARD FOR THREE YEARS

Blanks	130	190	197	125	175	817
Richard A. Constant	140	365	273	247	318	1343
Carlene C. Hamlin*	196	327	358	197	310	1388
Robert G. Judge*	221	456	411	280	389	1757
All Others	1	2	3	5	2	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>1340</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>5318</b>

### BOARD OF ASSESSORS FOR THREE YEARS

Blanks	103	234	193	144	193	867
David Hutchinson*	241	434	426	282	402	1785
All Others	0	2	2	1	2	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>2659</b>

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR THREE YEARS

Blanks	442	869	800	575	791	3477
JoAnn Jordan*	228	423	409	260	370	1690
Katherine Mazur*	2	16	12	9	7	46
Jeanne Senecal	4	13	7	4	13	41
All Others	12	19	14	6	13	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>1340</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>5318</b>

### BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THREE YEARS

Blanks	105	227	205	136	202	875
Michael Rosner*	239	441	415	290	393	1778
All Others	0	2	1	1	2	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>2659</b>

### MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD FOR THREE YEARS

Blanks	105	221	199	156	196	877
Rita Lawler*	239	448	420	269	399	1775
All Others	0	1	2	2	2	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>2659</b>

### MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD FOR ONE YEAR

Blanks	116	238	223	155	210	942
Jeffrey Labrecque*	227	430	397	271	383	1708
All Others	1	2	1	1	4	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>2659</b>