

# The BallardVale Gazette

Newsletter of the BallardVale Historic District Commission

Volume 5, Number 1

BallardVale, Massachusetts

March 2005

## BUILDING SOLD...LOCAL BUSINESS MOVES OUT

Former mechanic Joe DeCastro looked for a new opportunity for his family and found it when, in 1997, he purchased the laundry business located in the center of BallardVale on Andover Street. He and his wife, Fatima, turned it into the successful family-owned BallardVale Laundry & Dry Cleaning. Daughters Tania and Lisa have run the shop, while son Rick, who also owns Amesbury Cleaners, is the actual dry cleaner. In January, the building that is home to the BallardVale Laundry & Dry Cleaning was sold and rent for the space increased significantly. After several family meetings, the DeCastros decided to close up their storefront and consolidate the business into their Lowell location.

Although the DeCastros will be working out of their storefront at 1275 Pawtucket Boulevard in Lowell as of March 1, they will continue to serve loyal BallardVale customers with free pick-up and delivery service, and will keep their local phone number. The BallardVale Gazette and residents wish them the best of luck.

## ANDOVER PRESERVATION AWARDS

May is designated as a time to celebrate historic preservation in Massachusetts. In recognition of the preservation efforts of local residents and businesses, the Andover Preservation Commission, Andover Historical Society and BallardVale Historic District Commission will host the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony on May 17 at Memorial Hall Library. Awards are given to individuals who have played a significant role in preservation efforts in Andover, as well as noteworthy architectural or landscape preservation projects.



Joe and Fatima  
DeCastro

## PHOTOGRAPHER SEEKS SUBJECTS

Local photographer and BallardVale resident, Dianne DeLucia, is looking for folks who would be willing to have the doors of their homes photographed for her "Doors of BallardVale" project. Dianne makes and sells notecards that depict a variety of subjects, including cats, dogs, horses and nature scenes. In addition, many of her cards feature Andover churches and other landmarks, including scenes from BallardVale. Her work is currently on exhibit at the Andover Historical Society through April 8. Her cards are sold at Sunday's General Store, Ironstone Farm and the Andover Historical Society. View her photos online at [www.little-brown-cat.com](http://www.little-brown-cat.com). If you are interested in participating, please contact Dianne at 978-475-3356 or [ddelucia@comcast.net](mailto:ddelucia@comcast.net).

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## SPRING SOCIAL

The Spring Social and Awards evening will be held on Wednesday, May 11 in the Memorial Hall Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Memorial Hall Library, from 7:00 to 9:00pm. The program will include a presentation by "treasure hunters" John and Keith Norton, who scour BallardVale for buried metal and bits of history (some will remember John and Keith from last year's social when they brought a few of their finds); a talk and exhibit of photographs by local photographer Dianne Delucia; and the awarding of the Ruth Davis Sharpe Preservation Award. Refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, May 11, 2005  
7:00-9:00pm  
Memorial Hall Library

## TREE LIGHTING 2004

Several days before the planned event, longtime BallardVale resident Richard Bowen of Bannister Road is in the holiday mood. He wraps strands of lights and tests extension cords so that all will be perfect for BallardVale's annual tree lighting on the BallardVale Green. This past year was no exception, and Bowen's efforts were enjoyed by the largest turnout to date. Some estimate that fifty to sixty neighbors and residents met on the Green to drink hot chocolate and sing carols around the decorated tree. Thanks to Bowen and all who attend and enjoy the tree lighting for bringing brightness to the BallardVale Green every winter holiday season.



Richard Bowen at the tree lighting

## WE'VE BEEN ASKED...

What do the AVIS signs in BallardVale refer to?

AVIS is an acronym for the Andover Village Improvement Society. Founded in 1894, its goal was, in part, to preserve Andover's beautiful landscapes. The Feb.11, 1901 Report of the Secretary of AVIS notes the realization "that the heritage of natural beauty which we have received must, in part, at least be passed on unimpaired." AVIS continues to be a strong and active organization today, working to preserve open spaces, woodlands and wetlands and to maintain trails for public use. It works closely with the Andover Conservation Commission, and currently has 1000 acres of permanent conservation land open for hiking, birding, cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing.

BallardVale is fortunate to have several AVIS reservations in its backyard to enjoy. The Anne Rawlins Reservation is 26 acres of land surrounded by Bannister Road, Dascomb Road and Andover Street. It features a high ridge that extends its length and is a continuation of Indian Ridge, a glacial esker. It is a beautiful walk any time of year and is accessible from Bannister Road. The Vale Reservation is connected to the Shawsheen River Reservation, as well as Andover Conservation Commission's Poms Pond and Foster's Island nature areas. Several trails are available, and walkers will observe a variety of wildlife and plants, including geese, ducks, herons, muskrats and painted turtles. Parking and entrance to the Vale Reservation is located at the end of Dale Street.

The Burns Reservation is a two-part property. One parcel, approximately an acre and a quarter in size, is located on the corner of Clark Road and Andover Street, just opposite the fire station, and extends along the north side of Clark Brook; the other larger parcel is located further along Clark Brook off Chester Street. The land was originally given to AVIS in 1989 by Christine (Burns) Forsythe, and was named in memory of her parents. An active person and lover of the outdoors, Mrs. Forsythe was a long-time resident of BallardVale and donated the acres to help preserve open spaces in the neighborhood she loved.

Recently, AVIS purchased two more parcels of land from the owners of 18 and 20 Chester Street, increasing the size of the Burns Reservation, and coming nearer to its goal to eventually connect the two parts of the Burns Reservation along Clark Brook.

Barbara Smith, the daughter of Christine Forsythe, was one of the property owners who sold a portion of the back of her lot, building on her mother's legacy and keeping alive AVIS' original goal that our heritage of natural beauty be passed on unimpaired.

AVIS plans a clean-up of the Burns Reservation in May. For more information, contact AVIS at P.O.Box 5097, Andover, MA 01810 or visit their website at [www.avisandover.org](http://www.avisandover.org). To learn more about the history of AVIS, read "AVIS: A History in Conservation" by local author Juliet Mofford, available at the Andover Historical Society or at the Memorial Hall Library. Trail guides and maps are available at the Andover Bookstore, Moor and Mountain, and the Andover Historical Society.

The March 2005 issue of the BallardVale Gazette has been sponsored by:

## BallardVale Laundry and Dry Cleaning

- A family-owned and operated business
- Serving BallardVale since 1997
- Free pick-up and delivery
- 978-474-9976



### CALENDAR

- Mar. 2 (Wednesday)** BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting  
Town Offices – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm
- Apr. 6 (Wednesday)** BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting  
Town Offices – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm
- May 4 (Wednesday)** BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting  
Town Offices – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm
- May 11 (Wednesday)** Spring Social, Memorial Hall Library, 7:00 – 9:00pm
- June 1 (Wednesday)** BallardVale Historic District Commission monthly meeting  
Town Offices – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room – 7:00 pm

## BallardVale Historic District Commission

*Andover Town Offices  
36 Bartlet Street  
Andover, MA 01810*

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*See you at the Spring Social on May 11!*