

October 29, 1990

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WHATELY: Businesses seek to keep Routes 5-10 traffic flowing. Page 3.

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Greenfield, Massachusetts

SINCE 1792

This afternoon, clouds and sun, windy and chilly, 45 to 50. Tonight, fair, cold, 25 to 30. Tuesday, sunny, milder, 55 to 60. Details, Page 7.

Luke Bloomfield, Swift River School

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Businesses see mixed results from tax rollback

Editor's note: As the Nov. 6 election draws closer, the tax rollback referendum, Question 3, looms as the issue of the campaign. Would a tax rollback shrink a bloated state government, as proponents say? Or would it gut the state's education and human services and further cripple its economy, as opponents claim? This is the first in a series of stories that attempt to assess the potential impact of Question 3 locally.

By **CHUCK MEYER**
Recorder Staff

If Question 3 passes, Franklin County's economy would face the same major shake-up that would hit the state as a whole, many local bus-

inesspeople agree, but at least one said that dislocation is necessary to solve Massachusetts' fiscal ills.

While some of the business leaders contacted in an informal survey said the shake-up would be worse here than elsewhere because of the area's dependence on state programs. Most said the effects of the tax rollback referendum would be "disastrous." They cited morale problems it could create in the business community as well as an economic "trickle back" from possible layoffs following cuts in state funding and tighter bank credit resulting from a predicted drop in state and municipal bond ratings if Question 3 is approved.

But Greenfield businessman John Chmielewski said the initiative "is the only method we have of deliv-

Question 3 CLT rollback petition

ering to the Legislature the message that the commonwealth needs strong management in fiscal matters ... I recognize there's a certain amount of grief and pain associated with this, but as people say, 'No pain, no gain.' We've got to get beyond that."

The Board of Directors of the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce has come out against the measure, following the lead of a 23-member chamber task force, which called it "absolutely the wrong medicine" for the state's faltering economy.



CROMACK

CHMIELEWSKI

However, in addition to Chmielewski, a few others questioned whether the effects of the petition, backed by Citizens for Limited Taxation, would be that dire.

Some — even among those whose predictions are gloomy — listed a few positive effects they saw coming from the measure, and several said they had originally backed it, but had recently changed their minds when they saw what the cuts would entail.

Question 3 would roll back income and sales taxes to mid-1988 levels, starting Jan. 1, 1991. The Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, a business-supported group opposed to the measure, says it would wipe out \$1.26 billion in statewide revenues in the current budget year, and \$2.32 billion in fiscal 1992.

"It would have a disastrous effect if it took place," said Richard Cromack, president of the Greenfield Cooperative Bank. He said that

layoffs of workers in the public sector would have a ripple effect throughout the local economy, and that the drop in bond ratings that investors' rating services have forecast if CLT passes would hike the cost of borrowing money.

However, Chmielewski said that if Question 3 is defeated, "I'm afraid we'll go back to business as usual," and the state's economic malaise will be prolonged. "It's a question of the Legislature biting the bullet," he said, "and I don't see any indication of any of them being willing to do that."

Recognizing that publicly backing Question 3 is not a popular position in Franklin County, he said the local

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Buell, Whatley spar on No. 3

By **DAVID WEBSTER**
Recorder Staff

NORTHFIELD — Democratic legislator Carmen D. Buell and Republican challenger Kirk B. Whatley highlighted their differences Sunday by focusing on their opposing views on the Question 3 tax rollback.

Whatley, a Greenfield town councilor who is seeking Buell's 2nd Franklin District seat in the House of Representatives, said passage of Question 3 Nov. 6 will eliminate unnecessary state spending by putting control of tax dollars into the hands of the taxpayers. In the past, state spending has been based on "wild projections" and new faces are needed in the Legislature to discontinue that practice, he said.

Three-term incumbent Buell said Question 3 if passed would undercut state funding in areas such as higher education, housing, human services and environmental preservation. The tax rollback would also eliminate investment of public construction money in projects that are a proven mechanism to "jump start" a lagging economy, she said.

The candidates for the 2nd Frank- See DEBATE Page 8

Dukakis loses whipping boy title to Bulger

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Gov. Michael Dukakis finally may be off the hook as the state's politicians' favorite whipping boy.

Just a few months ago, Democrats and Republicans alike picked the beleaguered governor as the symbol of what's gone wrong with Massachusetts. His failed presidential bid and a deteriorating state economy made it the kiss of death for a candidate to be associated with Dukakis.

But the anti-Dukakis pitch seems to have subsided.

Look on television, listen to radio talk shows or spend some time with a prominent Massachusetts Republican, and you'll find it's Senate President William Bulger's face and name that dominate now.

"Billy Bulger is the engine that drives the most politically corrupt machine in the country," thunders GOP Executive Director Alexander Tennant.

"He, more than any single individ- See STATE Page 13



Brooklyn Muralist Janet Braun-Reinitz, right, gives original mural drawings to Peter Miller, Greenfield Historical Commission chairman, during dedication Sunday. "Snapshots" at left are of the work in progress.

Main Street mural dedicated

By **DAVID WEBSTER**
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — A new piece of Greenfield's history was dedicated Sunday afternoon when about 50 people gathered at Veterans Memorial Mall to salute the Main Street mural.

Painters, proponents and passers-by took part in the 45-minute ceremony that included speeches, songs and a ribbon-cutting. The drizzle and gray sky that blanketed the area most of the day cleared up just before the start of the ceremony, add-

ing a hint of sun to the colorful scene on the wall.

The mural, which depicts eight historic sites in Greenfield, is "a testament to real community artwork," said Rebekka Tippens of the Institute for Cultural Understanding, the Colrain sponsor of the mural. After the public scrutiny and controversy that surrounded the project this summer, the mural has come to represent "a bridge between the newcomers and the old-timers" in the community, Tippens said.

Prior to Tippens' comments, Franklin County Chamber of Com-

merce Executive Director Ann L. Hamilton cut a purple ribbon at the foot of the 98-foot-long mural. Hamilton said the "passion and controversy" displayed by both proponents and opponents of the mural during public forums on the project were evidence that the mural "can't be all that bad."

The mural, designed to depict the town's history, has been controversial since its early days as a proposal to town officials this summer. Some officials tried to block the project, and some residents criticized See MURAL Page 8

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Mural

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the design and location.

The mural's designer, Janet Braun-Reinitz of Brooklyn, N.Y., presented the original design for the mural and all of the working designs to Greenfield Historical Commission Chairman Peter S. Miller, who said he hopes to create an archive of the entire mural project.

Braun-Reinitz also alluded to the controversy surrounding the mural when she encouraged members of the community and public officials to "keep open minds" the next time someone comes along with a "new and novel" idea for enhancing the community.

"I am very glad to see it done and to see these friendly faces," Braun-Reinitz said, standing in front of the mural. "It has been a unique experience."

Miller described the mural as "the only bright thing on Main Street. It adds a little life and spice to Main Street."

Nancy Baker, the artistic director of the \$5,000 project and executor of the mural — who worked with a team of volunteer painters, handed out colorful certificates of appreciation to some of those on hand who had participated in the project either by painting or doing research. About 75 people will receive certificates, she said.

Folk singers Pat and Tax Lamountain entertained the crowd at the mall with some of their selections. Greenfield residents Betty Seibert and Leigh Labrie also led the crowd in singing "Swinging on a Star."
