

farm with access to Sheburne Falls road. With the bridge gone, other than wading or finding a conveniently placed tree to get across the river, the only other access to Natural Roots is via a 20-minute hike over a hilly forest trail on the other side of the farm, Fisher said.

The flooding in 2005 also washed equipment downriver, and the farm lost as much as 30 feet of river bank in some places.

But help was quick in coming  
 "... We had a huge group of people hike in from over the mountain the day after the



**Leora Fisher shows off the two eggs she grabbed from the henhouse at the Natural Roots Farm in Conway.**

Recorder/Peter MacDonald

flood," Fisher said. That day, about 30 volunteers showed up, and in days following,

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# Bernardston seniors build on volunteerism

By DIANE BRONCACCIO  
 Recorder Staff

**BERNARDSTON** — They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but Claudia Richardson of Bernardston believes a three-dimensional object is worth even more — especially when teaching a new language to someone who doesn't speak it.

A volunteer at the Center for New Americans in Greenfield, Richardson is a teacher's aid and a conversational partner for people who are learning to speak

English.

Besides learning the names of objects, new English-speakers need to learn such concepts as "in front of," "behind," or "inside," she said.

That's why the idea of using a dollhouse as a language tool appealed to Richardson: objects could not only be picked up and passed around, for students to identify ... they could also be used to demonstrate relationship concepts.

A miniature house big enough for classroom demonstrations



Recorder/Paul Franz

**Forrest Smead, Ernest Streeter and Rodney Krug, all of Bernardston, assemble the dollhouse they made at the Bernardston Senior Center to help ESL students learn English words for household items. The dollhouse will be headed to the Center for New Americans in Greenfield.**

could have cost a lot of money, See BUILD Page A6

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# Bad drivers may be fuel hog

## Can motorists change their behavior?

By DEEDEE CORRELL  
 Los Angeles Times

**DENVER** — Hundreds of drivers here will serve as guinea pigs in a test that's part sociology experiment, part environmental advocacy and part Drivers Ed 101.

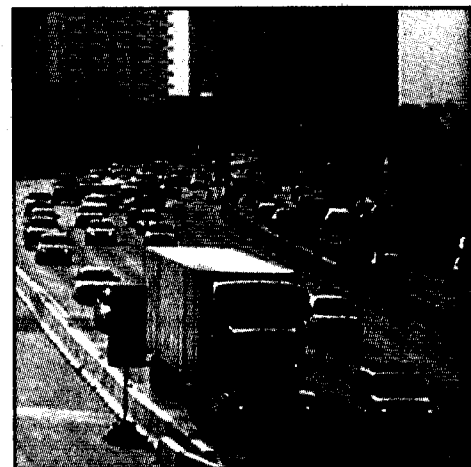
It poses the question: When motorists see how their own aggressive driving burns gasoline, will they stop the tailgating, hard braking and speeding that increase their fuel consumption and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions?

Sponsored by EnCana Oil & Gas Co., the pilot program aims to quantify the relationship between bad driving and gas emissions, as well as to convince drivers to change. Denver is the first test site.

"People will modify their behavior," said Larry Goldenhersh, president and chief executive officer of Eviance, a California-based company that developed the software technology for the program.

"Frankly, the prospect of having this thing in my car has already modified my behavior," he said.

Four hundred people — 200 in the city fleet and 200 vol-



Photo/Denver Regional C

**Hundreds of drivers in Denver will s... pigs in a test that's part sociology ex... environmental advocacy and part Driv...**

unteers — will have accelerometers instal

See GREEN Page A6

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# Build: Bernardston seniors find ways to volunteer

From Page 1

but Richardson found several willing volunteers at the Bernardston Senior Center to build it for nothing.

Carpenters Rodney Krug, Ernest Streeter and Forrest Smead of Bernardston modified a pattern for a child's castle that they found on the Internet, and turned it into a two-story interior, with a separate building addition. The men are planning to paint and tile it, and Richardson is hoping some other seniors, who enjoy making crafts, will make some furnishings.

"It was made out of scrap wood we brought out here," said Streeter. "We didn't pay for anything."

"I love that they left it in four different parts," added Richardson. "It's easy to move. You could use part of it for a dentist's office — you could use it for anything."

Why a dentist's office? Because people learning the language may need to know what to say when they go to the dentist or the doctor.

Or the house itself could be used to help do-it-yourselfers.

"If they want to repair something in their house, for someone who speaks almost no English, it's hard to go to a (store) and know what to ask for," she said.

Richardson, who is retired, has been volunteering about six to eight hours a week at Greenfield's Center for New Americans since last fall.

But she is just one of many Bernardston seniors who volunteer to help others, says Dianne Cornwall, Bernardston's Council on Aging and Senior Center director.

"I am so proud of them and what they are doing," said Cornwall. "We have 66 volunteers at the Bernardston center, who collectively have contributed

at least 11,098 hours of volunteer service."

"We keep hearing words like, 'the silver tsunami,'" she said of the aging of the baby-boom generation.

"Yet, here we are with folks that are taking their skills and their time to help others."

Those volunteers include seniors who are licensed nurses, who have assisted in health surveys, flu clinics, foot clinics and blood-pressure clinics. It includes those who help cook and clean at the center's kitchen, pack meals and deliver them to those who are homebound. It includes senior volunteers who send greeting cards and notes to shut-ins, who make the senior center more attractive, and who entertain.

"We have the ROMEOS, which stands for Retired Older Men who Entertain Others, and they sing." The ROMEOS, which includes a few women these days, not only sing at different events, but they go around with outreach workers and perform for people who are ill and/or homebound.

According to Cornwall, last year the Bernardston Senior Center prepared more than 13,000 meals. Slightly more than 6,000 meals were for the Meals on Wheels Program for Northfield and Bernardston seniors and at least 7,000 were served at the Bernardston congregate meal site.

Near the tidy woodshop downstairs in the senior center, a group of women are quietly sitting at sewing machines. There are plenty of craft tables, and at one, a man sits stitching a rug.

Beyond that, there's an orderly supply room filled with donated fabrics and yarn for projects. The Bernardston seniors have made lap quilts for people living in nursing homes and baby quilts that are donated for newborns.

Recently, they participated in "the Linus Project," by making comfort blankets — blankets like the one Linus in the Peanuts comic strip used to carry around — that firefighters and police can give to children at the scenes of accidents, fires, or at other times of distress.

Paulina "Polly" Streeter said senior center volunteers have also made "cooling bands" that were sent to American soldiers in Afghanistan. They are headbands that can be wetted down, which hold the moisture and help to keep the soldiers cool in the searing heat.

The center's most recent project has been to "adopt" Franklin County, Maine, for Christmas. The county, with a population of about 30,000, is among the poorest counties in New England, said Nancy Pride, who instigated the project. "There's a lot of invisible rural poverty there," she said. "They are the poorest of the poor." To help, the Bernardston Senior Center crafters are making infants' pajamas, polar fleece socks and hats, and other items that will be sent to a thrift store in Maine, where the neediest people will be given coupons they can redeem for their choice of handmade gifts.

As for using the miniature house as a language aid, Center for New Americans Executive Director James Ayres said he's familiar with the project and thinks it's a great idea.

"It's unique for someone to come up with their own idea and put this much into it," he said.

"We're very impressed by that. We agree with her that, to teach English, hands-on tools are very useful. ... We're very lucky to have her."

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# Iraq: Rocket attacks deadly

From Page 1

wounded 14, the official said. "It's a tough day for us," the official said. "These are our colleagues, our friends."

The Green Zone and U.S. military facilities have become frequent targets of rockets and mortar shells that military officials say are fired from Sadr City and other parts of eastern Baghdad.

The latest series of attacks began late last month in response to an Iraqi government military offensive against Shiite militias in Basra, in southern Iraq. A cease-fire negotiated between

ability to secure the future of Iraq," said Maj. Gary Dangerfield, a U.S. military spokesman.

An Iraq law enforcement source, speaking on condition of anonymity because he fears for his safety, said a cell of the insurgent group al-Qaida in Iraq, which has targeted students and scholars in the past, was behind the kidnapping. The source said the group released a statement condemning the study of law, saying students should practice God, not man.

From Page 1  
cles that record every time they slam on their brakes, accelerate or take a corner too quickly.

Such behaviors decrease fuel efficiency by 20 percent, Goldenhersh said. The goal of the program is to reduce emissions from each participating vehicle by 20 percent.

Once the devices are installed, participants can log onto a Web site and track how they're doing. In addition, monitors will be installed on the cars so drivers can get real-time feedback, said David Armitage, chief executive officer.

# Green: Motorists

been lost.

"The slower we stop the car, the less energy we're throwing away," Armitage said.

Losing less energy to start and stops is one reason cars tend to get better mileage in highway driving than in-town driving.

"You can't change what you can't measure," Armitage said. If drivers don't see the connection between their actions and the consequences, he said, "we're not going to make a change."

When he started tracking his own driving, Armitage noticed

