



# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 13 – NO. 45

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

LEVERETT  
SELECTBOARD

## Elementary Regionalization Forum Set For October 21

By TIA FATTARUSO

Kip Fonsh updated the Leverett selectboard Monday night on the status of the school regionalization agreement. Fonsh presented a rough draft of the proposed agreement, and offered a general timeline.

The regional school district has September through December to consider the agreement, during which time Fonsh suggested each participating town might also hold a forum. Leverett's forum is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21.

January and February are slated for revisions, should they be necessary, and Fonsh said he hoped a final copy would be ready for the selectboard by March 1, well before town meeting in the spring, though opposition from the school committee could hinder that goal. A second round of forums could then be held between March and May.

The planning board, working toward changing restrictions in the town's bylaws which are currently preventing a homeowner from installing a small-scale, ground-mounted solar photovoltaic array, received the selectboard's general support.

see LEVERETT page A3

## Brand New Public Property: Montague Annexes the Railroad Salvage “Annex”



*Long overshadowed by its troubled neighbor, this 19th-century storehouse has been taken by the town for back taxes.*

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – If any of the inhabitants of the town of Montague are curious to check out their latest acquisition, a modest but handsome brick storage building dating to the town's industrial heyday, they need only cross the Bailey bridge from Canal Street into the Patch, turn left into the big empty parking lot, and walk through the wide-open gate that once discouraged local children and litigious adults from wandering into the collapsing, asbestos-filled former Griswold Cotton Mill.

Beyond that structure, remembered by some still living as the Railroad Salvage discount store, is its smaller “annex,” at 15 Power Street.

Housing 9,984 square feet between two levels, this squat storehouse building was taken on September 10 under tax title by the Town of Montague from its most recent owner, an entity registered in the state of Delaware as Nice & Easy Properties, LLC.

Nice & Easy, a company associated with James L. Bent, Jr. of New York, purchased the lot containing both buildings five years ago for

\$25,000. In 2012, Mr. Bent divided the lot into two parcels and then sold the larger parcel for \$200, retaining the annex building.

In October 2013, the town initiated tax taking procedures on the entire lot on the basis of what was then \$22,884.76 in unpaid taxes. Under this month's judgment, the town will acquire the annex only.

Town planner Walter Ramsey says the town so far has “no position” as to what it should do with the building – it might put it to auction, he said, or put out a call for proposals.

see ANNEX page A7

## FRTA Proposes \$1.25 Bus Fares Across The Board

By MIKE JACKSON

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Change is coming to the county bus system, the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA), which has announced a proposal to charge a flat \$1.25 for all rides, reconfigure a number of its routes including those through Montague, and introduce a \$30 a month unlimited pass.

At its September 17 meeting, the system's advisory board, which is comprised of representatives from all of its member towns, voted to release the plan for public comment.

As of publication, it is not yet available on FRTA's website or social media presence, and it is unclear by what mechanism public comment is sought. The board, according to Montague's alternate representative, Jeffrey Singleton, aims to vote on the changes on November 12, for implementation sometime in 2016.

The three fixed bus routes that travel east of the Connecticut River would all see changes. Route 22, the Greenfield/Montague route, would get a fare hike from \$1; Route 32, which goes about to the Orange/Athol line, would be reduced from

see FRTA page A3

## Ed Expenses Lead Erving's October STM Agenda

By KATIE NOLAN

Erving's special town meeting on Tuesday, October 6 at 7 p.m. at town hall will consider almost \$196,000 in expenditures, including money for technical and legal assistance to address the proposed Kinder-Morgan Northeast Energy Direct natural gas pipeline. Funding for most of the items is from transfers from existing line items.

The largest proposed expenditure is \$107,230 for secondary education tuition at Gill-Montague Regional School district. This amount is based on the actual number of Erving students enrolled at GMRSD schools. The secondary school education budget that passed at annual town meeting was based on an estimate of the number of students likely to enroll.

The meeting will also be asked to authorize the selectboard to seek special legislation to credit long-time highway department employee Dana Moore with two extra years of “age or service” with the Franklin County Retirement System. The cost to the town for allowing Moore's early retirement would be \$35,000.

The town will be asked to approve \$15,000 for the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management, Policy and Global Management, of UMass-Boston to work with a town committee to recruit qualified applicants for the administrative coordinator position.

The town's administrative coordinator position has been vacant since July, when former coordinator Tom Sharp took an early retirement.

The meeting will consider spending \$13,750 on technical and legal help from Franklin Regional Council

see ERVING page A4

## Remembering Mason Phelps

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

**WENDELL** – Soft-spoken and thoughtful, knowledgeable and devoted to preservation of land and protection of waterways, Mason Phelps is being remembered by his friends and colleagues as a quiet man who, with kindness and determination, achieved a great deal in his lifetime. Phelps died peacefully at home on August 27, 2015.

Beginning in the 1960s, Phelps and his wife Ina worked together for forty years on a grand plan to purchase and protect land in the area around the Whetstone Brook in Wendell. By the winter of 2014, as reported in an article written by David Kotker for the Mount Grace Land Trust newsletter, they had amassed 2700 acres of wildlife into a land trust they created, the

Whetstone Wood Wildlife Sanctuary, now managed by the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

As everyone will tell you, Phelps went to a lot of meetings, served on many boards and committees. In Wendell, Phelps was central to the work done by the conservation commission and the open space committee. Over the years, his presence and his knowledge, and his focus on using title search to determine original ownership and intention of owners, helped the town make decisions on the use of various parcels of town owned land.

Phelps was a longstanding member of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), the Franklin Regional Planning Board, and both its

see PHELPS page A6



*Ina and Mason Phelps, on land they later protected as part of the Whetstone Wood Sanc*

## October 1 Special Town Meeting Preview: OPED Can Be Fun!

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE** – Another special town meeting is upon us, as is usually the case in the fall.

What exactly makes this town meeting “special?” Well, it always happens in the evening, and often contains a large number of so-called “housekeeping” items.

These sometimes involve articles from previous town meetings where the money has not all been spent. For example, Article 17 on this warrant rescinds some of the unused borrowing to pay for the 2013 sewer emergency at the industrial park, and Article 18 proposed to rescind the

unused balance of an appropriation to maintain the old Montague Center School building, which has finally been sold.

Of course, “housekeeping” is in the eye of the beholder. Article 15 rezones a very small parcel of land in Millers Falls from “Public-Semi Public” to “Neighborhood Business.” Not much land is involved here, but on it sits a former church. A developer named Richard Widmer needs the zoning change to transform the church into a residency program for Chinese contemporary artists.

Article 19 proposes that the town change the wording of the town bylaw

see MONTAGUE page A5



PELLAND PHOTO

*Lyn Pelland shared this picture of a young osprey she took last week, on I Street in Turners Falls' Patch neighborhood.*



# The Montague Reporter

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# Turbocharged Disillusionment

This week, Volkswagen was caught red-handed in the kind of old-fashioned evil corporate conspiracy we were all told the new transparent information age was supposed to do away with.

Since 2009, the company has been deliberately installing software in its popular and well-regarded diesel vehicles that detects when a pollution emission test is running and temporarily reduces emissions drastically.

Volkswagen's turbocharged diesel injection (TDI) cars are the industry's gold standard. In 2009, the Jetta TDI Clean Diesel cheated its way to the Green Car of the Year Award from *Green Car Magazine*, and the next year the Audi A3 took the same prize.

Fuel combustion produces nitrogen oxides, which create smog and acid rain. Once scientists managed to convince us this was undesirable, governments placed regulations on auto-makers to limit these pollutants.

Most modern diesel engines have an extra tank for special exhaust fluid that contains urea, basically high-test synthetic pee, that reacts with these gases to create less harmful waste: water, nitrogen and carbon dioxide.

Volkswagen was making non-urea diesels and then faking their way through testing, and also making models that injected the urea solution only during testing – in 11 million cars.

The difference was an order of magnitude, not by degree. The scam was uncovered by an independent group called the International Council on Clean Transportation, which directly tested the cars on the road and found they were belching out up to 35 times the legal limit of the gases.

One way to view the problem is that the private sector seeks simply to make money, and the public sector must selectively constrain that for the common good. Companies find ways to slip around regulations, and sometimes get caught.

In the case of Volkswagen's software, though, an additional underlying problem is that governments guarantee the secrecy of its copyrighted corporate software.

As Alex Davies of *Wired* explains, last winter a group of open-source advocates in the US petitioned for car owners here to have permission to examine the code

that runs our own vehicles. Among the groups opposing this was the Environmental Protection Agency, who worried that it would make it easier for some owners to hack their cars to defeat emissions tests, in order to jack up performance.

There's a sour irony there: a crowdsourced look at the code might very well have exposed the cheat programmed in by the company. Instead, VW was protected in its scheme to pass off fake miracle cars, while consumers were expected to play dumb, trust the process, and congratulate themselves for making such wonderful green spending choices.

Volkswagen CEO Martin Winterkorn, who made \$23 million last year, has stepped down. The company will surely face staggering fines and be required to conduct a massive recall, and its stock has already shed a third of its value.

But real damage has been done. An analysis by the British *Guardian* newspaper estimates that the software fraud may have been responsible for the release of nearly a million tons of the pollutants per year globally – more than that country's power plants, combined.

How many other companies, in how many industries, are essentially self-reporting their way through the regulatory environment with their fingers crossed?

The thought that even the "greenest" brands might deliberately spew acid rain- and asthma-inducing compounds into the atmosphere to make a buck lends itself to a certain cynicism.

The private sector, this scandal seems to remind us, can never really be trusted. And though a lack of regulatory wherewithal was part of the problem – in the US, Europe, and possibly South Korea – simply beefing up the state won't solve it either, as anyone out for fresh air in many of China's cities can confirm.

Whatever historical, economic and legal forces may have allowed this to happen, at its heart was a set of people who made a conscious conspiracy to undermine the efforts our society is making to reduce its impact on the biosphere.

Until this is universally understood as sociopathic, predatory behavior – and not just "cheating" – similar conspiracies will always fester in the system's nooks and crannies.

It is certainly dispiriting.

## CORRECTION

Our photo spread from the Franklin County Fair last week (page A8) incorrectly identified the crafter who took Best in Show for an exceptionally beautiful doily.

Lina Roberge of Montague says she learned the art of crochet from her godmother, and that she is frequently called Linda by mistake.

## GUEST EDITORIAL

By GARRY EARLES

**MONTAGUE** – While the board of selectmen has recently signed off on the renewal of the Comcast contract, there seems to be some confusion about whether or not, since it's a 10-year contract, it needs to be approved by town meeting.

Selectboard chair Mike Nelson, based on my inquiry through the town clerk and executive assistant Wendy Bogusz, is reputed to have stated that town meeting needs to approve the contract. On the other hand, board member Rich Kuklewicz stated to me on September 17 that, according to the cable advisory committee's attorney, town meeting's approval is not required.

Regardless, as a Comcast subscriber, I know little about what the new contract contains, as the particulars have not been relayed to the public. Allow me to provide some insight.

First, the contract with Comcast, as the town's cable provider, addresses solely cable television. It does not concern broadband access to telephone or the internet. Of course, once one has access to cable TV, one can also have those things.

In Comcast lingo, getting wired is referred to as "build-out;" namely, what areas of town are currently without cable access, which would necessitate Comcast to "build out" their infrastructure so that unserved areas of town would then be "wired" for access. As there are several areas of town lacking service, getting Comcast to agree to any additional build-out is a critical negotiation.

## Calling All Poets...

The monthly Poetry Page needs your poems! After an short hiatus, it is returning. Patricia Pruitt is our Poetry Editor.

Please email submissions to [poetry@montaguereporter.org](mailto:poetry@montaguereporter.org). (Due to a technical error, we have only just received several poems mailed to that address this summer.)

Or, mail hard copy to: Montague Reporter, 177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

If you are interested in underwriting the poetry page this year, contact [ads@montaguereporter.org](mailto:ads@montaguereporter.org), or call (413) 772-9959.

Stay tuned for our next Poetry Page in October!

# Earles: More Answers Needed Before Town Approves New Ten-Year Comcast Contract

Another contract provision is about how much money the company will provide in a "capital grant" over the 10-year contract, that would allow Montague Community Television (MCTV) to purchase, for example, cameras and other new technology. As negotiated, that figure is \$125,000.

That amount, however, is not clear, and here's why.

Since the town has been operating without a "renewed" contract for roughly 2 years, it has been operating under the "old" current contract by default. Under that arrangement, no capital grant money is provided.

Comcast, however, continued to charge and retain a certain amount (perhaps \$1 per month) of your monthly bill, as capital grants are "passed through" to consumers (i.e. Comcast subscribers only). Approximately \$37,000 was collected which supposedly will be given back to the town. The question is whether or not that amount will be in addition to, or deducted from, the capital grant of \$125,000.

According to Mr. Kuklewicz, that money, again actually charged to and paid by Comcast subscribers, will be returned to the town and made available to MCTV as warranted by the selectboard, in essence increasing the capital grant amount to \$162,000.

But that \$37,000 is not the town's money. It was inappropriately billed to Comcast subscribers, not all town residents, and as such it should be

subscriber money.

Then there is the issue of your contract and monthly bill. As everyone knows, once the initial "new subscriber" term is complete, cable bills increase, seemingly without warning. One month your bill is \$89 or \$99, and then along comes a bill for \$149.

I'm sure none of you have ever seen a contract that spells out when your contract begins and ends. Neither does any such contract detail exactly what services you have contracted for, at what price, or what those charges will be upon the expiration of your contract date. (Yes, such charges are initially specified, but there is nothing about expiration dates, etc.)

Unbeknownst to most, included in your initial bundled price is a "rental fee" for a modem (for phone or internet), a piece of equipment necessary to receive service. Once that initial "honeymoon" period is over, modems incur a rental charge of around \$7 to \$8 per month.

Consumers are not informed that they can purchase and install their own modems, and thereby avoid that rental fee. Accordingly, when I co-chaired the cable advisory committee (CAC), we made the provision for a Consumer Bill of Rights an important negotiation point.

Let me return to the "build out" issue. Comcast maintains that certain "density rates" – with see **GUEST ED** next page

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# LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

“Walking in This World: The Practical Art of Creativity” is a **free, 12 week workshop for women** at the MCSM Women’s Center, 41 Third Street, Turners Falls. It will be facilitated by Janet Diani on Fridays, from 10 a.m. to noon, starting September 25.

This workshop presents the next step in discovering and recovering the creative self. Using workshop author Julie Cameron’s guide, Diani will lead participants on a journey toward discovering our human potential. Participants will discover valuable new strategies for breaking through difficult creative ground as they learn how to inhabit the world with a sense of wonder.

For more information or to sign up for this workshop, please

**GUEST ED** from previous page

enough potential subscribers within a certain distance – be met in order for them to pay to wire any additional areas.

During my tenure we discovered, by meeting and talking with other towns’ CAC members, that lower density figures can be negotiated – a critical goal, if currently unserved areas of town are ever going to get wired.

Several town locations, such as the Carnegie Library, the safety complex, Unity Park fieldhouse, Discovery Center, and senior center, could benefit from becoming, in cable parlance, “origination locations,” which would enable live broadcast. There are two ways to achieve this. One is to pay Comcast to hardwire those locations into the system; the other is to upgrade to newer mobile technology, which could allow broadcasting from essentially anywhere in town.

These and other significant aspects of the contract, especially the costs to subscribers, need to be understood by town meeting members if a vote is indeed required on its renewal. Such a vote is not on the warrant for October 1’s special town meeting.

I ask that the CAC provide the following:

1. A summary report of the contract specifics. What are we being asked to agree to? I’d also like to know the reasoning and rationale for the particulars.

2. A comparison of what we would get over the next 10 years. What are we getting that we didn’t already have, and why is that good?

3. I’d also like to know what we are NOT getting from Comcast: what did we try to get, but didn’t achieve?

These negotiations have been going on for quite some time. If even I, a former CAC member of several years, am not fully informed, surely others can’t be expected to be.

If a town meeting vote is required on a ten-year contract, let’s be informed. If we aren’t knowledgeable about the contract’s contents, it’s certainly not time to make a deal with Comcast.



*Earles is a town meeting member from Precinct 4, and formerly served as co-chair of the cable advisory comitee.*

call Christine at (413) 863-4804 x. 1003, or email [christine@mcsmmcommunity.org](mailto:christine@mcsmmcommunity.org).

September’s full moon is known in many northern cultures as the Harvest Moon. A **Harvest Moon Ramble** will be held on Sunday, September 27 from 5 to 7:30 p.m.

During a two-mile walk along the scenic Barton Cove peninsula, you will explore the rich history, geology and natural history of this unique place along the Connecticut River. It is also the perfect setting for a sunset walk, and for viewing the full moon rising across the river.

For ages 12 and older, free and open to the public. Dress in layers, and bring a flashlight or headlamp, water and a trail snack to enjoy while the moon rises. Sturdy footwear works best on Barton Cove’s

**FRTA** from page A1

\$1.50; and Route 23, the “Amherst” route with a transfer in Sunderland, would see its \$3-a-ride fare slashed. The three routes’ proposed schedules were designed to ensure hourly service between downtown Turners Falls and Greenfield.

“I basically like this,” Singleton told Montague’s selectboard on Monday night, though he said he felt there were “a couple timing things that don’t work quite right.”

Over the last year, FRTA worked with a group of consultants on a state-mandated “comprehensive service assessment.” The current

**LEVERETT** from pg A1

**Too Young for Waste**

The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District seeks a representative from Leverett, and it was thought that Max Karlin, who works at the transfer station, would be an excellent candidate, though likely too young.

After brief discussion of why “it is no wonder young people are not interested in government, when they are not welcomed to participate,” it was decided that board member Tom Hankinson would approach Max’s father Sam about the position.

Contracts were renewed with the district for household hazardous waste collection and third-party inspections.

**Communicator Breakdown**

The fire panel at town hall, which had not been inspected for a few years, according to town administrator Marjorie McGinnis, failed inspection this year as the communicator was not working. The board elected to buy a new one, at an assumed cost of around \$1,300, with town hall maintenance funds.

McGinnis joked that she and town clerk Lisa Stratford would not get a picnic table any time soon, after all.

**October STM Issues**

Tuesday, October 27 is a potential date for a special town meeting to address, once again, the Kittedge real estate abatement appeal. Since there has been no resolution since the last decision to raise and appropriate \$200,000, it must be

rocky trails. Enter the Barton Cove camping area and follow signs to the walk starting point.

The 75-voice, multi-generational world music choir, **Greenfield Harmony**, led by Mary Cay Brass, is starting their twelfth year of singing diverse, soulful, thrilling world music in the Pioneer Valley.

The fall session will focus on an eclectic blend of village music from Eastern Europe, freedom songs, processionals and spirituals from the African continent, work songs from the Caucasus mountains of Georgia, and a mix of pub carols, Appalachian tunes and exciting gospel music from Montpelier Gospel Choirs’ John Harrison.

This non-audition community choir meets Mondays, from 6:45 to 8:15 p.m. beginning September 28 at the St. James Episcopal Church in Greenfield. The fall session will culminate in an exciting concert on December 20.

All are welcome! Singers are welcome, from middle school age and up. To register, email Mary Cay at [mcbrass@vermontel.net](mailto:mcbrass@vermontel.net), and for more information see [www.mary-caybrass.com](http://www.mary-caybrass.com).

proposal does not address one of the main recommendations of the study, namely that first Saturday, and then Sunday, service be introduced.

Those changes might come if, after reviewing all of its regional authorities’ assessments, the state decides to allocate them more money.

But as its top brass noted at a previous public hearing, FRTA may be at a disadvantage, as it is considered one of the only rural transportation authorities, which would need to be funded by an increase in a different budgetary line item than most systems in the state.

The current set of proposals was

voted on again.

Also possibly of interest for the meeting are possible resolutions for the drinking water in homes downstream from the old landfill, including the possibility of a connection to Amherst’s water supply, though further information and advisement from the water committee is still needed before a solution can be presented.

**Tax Collector**

The board interviewed two candidates for the combined position of treasurer and tax collector, Deb Dunphy and Jason Noschese, both recommended by current tax collector Dee Ann Civello. Dunphy was previously the assistant collector for Northampton, while Noschese had been the treasurer and collector in both Warwick and Ware.

Noschese will be offered the job, subject to a reference check and being able to be bonded. He brings extensive experience with software, including writing the software Civello currently uses, and bonding experience, which the board noted was essential in dealing with the fiber-optic investment.

**Other Matters**

Tree warden William Stratford plans to remove some trees on the west side of town hall.

The board advised that facilities manager John Kuczek can let his water operator’s license go inactive since the contracting company which currently checks the well is adequate.

After a discussion on archiving

Come to, or get lost in, **Mike’s Maze** on Saturday, October 3, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., to support CISA.

This year the maze, located at 23 South Street in Sunderland, is honoring the 150th anniversary of Alice in Wonderland, with a theme of “Alice in Sunderland.”

Enjoy navigating through this local wonderland-in-corn. Activities include a petting zoo, a mini maze for kids, a potato cannon, and live music will be provided by MilkBottle. Also, enjoy tasty food at the Corn Café, including strawberry slushies made from Warner Farm berries.

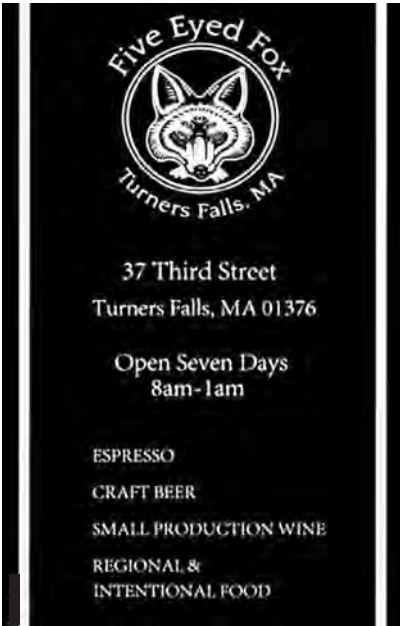
The Maze fee is \$10. If there is heavy rain, this event will be held on Sunday, October 4.

The Friends of the Erving Library will host pumpkin painting at this year’s **Erving Fall Festival** on Saturday, October 3 at the Memorial Field off Route 63 in Erving. Pumpkins and paint supplies will be provided free to participants

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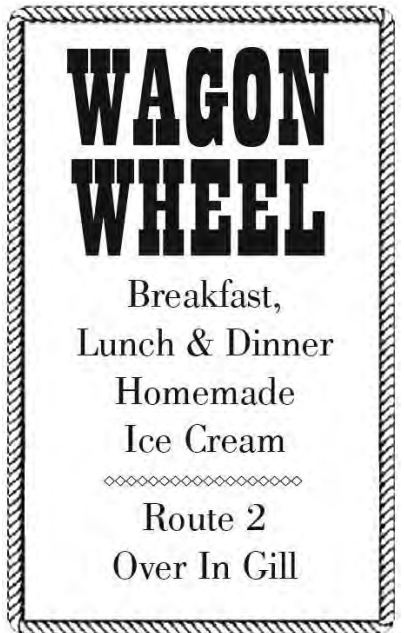
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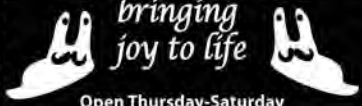


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ERVING from page A1

of Governments regarding the NED pipeline. A portion of the proposed pipeline route would pass through Erving.

Other items on the warrant are:

- \$10,000 for lighting system update at Fire Hall #1;
- \$10,000 for lighting system update at Fire Hall #2; and
- \$5,000 for unexpected repairs to a highway department truck.

In addition to the money articles,

the meeting will also consider establishing a PEG Access Fund to receive revenue from a franchise agreement with a cable operator. As described in the federal Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, the franchiser – the town of Erving – may require a cable company to designate part of the channel capacity to public, educational and government (PEG) use.

All Erving voters are eligible to participate in the meeting.



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Debate Over Senior Center Job Continues

By KATIE NOLAN

At Monday’s selectboard meeting, chair William Bembury told the board that he participated in a one-and-a-half-hour discussion about the senior/community center director job description at the September 8 Council on Aging meeting. The board approved the job description in August, including a requirement that the director must obtain Massachusetts Association of Council on Aging (MCOA) certification within five years.

Bembury reported that the COA members wanted the certification requirement removed from the job description. He said that the COA felt that workshops and continuing education were sufficient for the director’s professional growth. Although the certification requirement has been on the job description for years, the previous director was not MCOA-certified.

According to the MCOA, the requirements for director certification are: work with a mentor; attendance at workshops; and presentation of a portfolio. In order to apply for the certification program, the applicant must meet education and experience requirements: a high school diploma plus 10 years as senior center director; an associates degree plus 5 years; a bachelors degree plus 3 years; or a masters degree plus 2. The MCOA website lists 52 MCOA-certified directors in the state.

Selectboard member Arthur Johnson said he felt it was important for employees to get educated for their position. He said that certification was the standard that Erving needs, that he couldn’t believe the COA would not want the director to be certified, and that he believes Erving has one of the highest-paid directors in the area.

“We’re not singling out any position,” said Bembury, arguing that all department heads should be required to meet some standards. The board agreed that, if the COA wants to eliminate the certification requirement, they should meet with them to make a case for eliminating it, and present an alternative plan addressing the director’s professional growth.

### Bacteria in Water

Water operator and department supervisor Pete Sanders told the board that a sample from the Erving public water system had tested positive for bacteria. Sanders said that the department followed protocol and resampled the water, and it turned up negative.

Sanders speculated that the cause of the positive test result could have been turbidity in the water resulting from work on a fire hydrant during the week the original sample was collected. The water department will

send out letters, as required by the Department of Environmental Protection, to inform all Erving water customers of the positive test result. Sanders reassured the board that the water is okay.

### Daffodil Drive/Azalea Alley

Daniel Hammock imagined future tourists driving along “Daffodil Drive” or “Azalea Alley” if the town installs flowering plants along Route 2 and other roadways. Hammock told the board he had azalea, forsythia and pachysandra plants and daffodil bulbs to donate, but would need the town’s help with planting.

“It would make the town look fantastic,” Hammock said, “like the Blue Ridge Parkway in the Smoky Mountains.”

Johnson said the board should give him the go-ahead, and the board asked him to come back to a future meeting with a more specific plan.

### Landfill Monitoring

Earlier in September, engineering consultant Tighe & Bond, Inc. provided a cost estimate of \$11,600 for post-closure monitoring at the former Maple Avenue landfill. At that time, Bembury suggested that town employees might be able to do some of the sampling at a cheaper rate.

At the September 21 meeting, Sanders recommended the town keep Tighe & Bond on board for this. He noted that the consultant samples monitoring wells and residential water, monitors the river, and checks the landfill cap for structural problems, tasks Sanders called “beyond our scope of capabilities.”

### Accela Software

Municipal clerk Betsy Sicard recommended that the selectboard view a webinar about Accela agenda and meeting minutes software to decide whether it might be useful for the town.

Sicard said she was impressed with the software, which helps prepare agendas and write meeting minutes. The minutes are done by the time the meeting is done, she said.

She said that Accela charges \$500 per month for the service, but that other town boards or committees could use it, as well as the selectboard.

### FY’17 Budget Schedule

After discussion with finance committee members Hammock and Eugene Klepadlo, the board set March 7, 2016 as the deadline for completing the fiscal year 2017 budget, and for closing the 2016 annual town meeting warrant. Preliminary budgets from departments and committees would be due in November.

Bembury said he was expecting a level funded budget for FY’17.

## Help Pick Erving’s Next Administrative Coordinator

The Erving selectboard is encouraging town residents to volunteer for the seven-person administrative coordinator search committee.

The town’s administrative coordinator position has been vacant since July, when former coordinator Tom Sharp took an early retirement. Selectboard chair William Bembury is filling in as a volunteer by working at town hall four hours a day, Monday through Friday, until a new administrative coordinator is hired.

“Four hours a day isn’t cutting it,” Bembury remarked in August. Assistant assessor Jacqueline Boyden said in regard to coverage at town hall, “We’re spread pretty thin.”

The committee will consist of three town residents, one selectboard member, one Personnel Re-

lations Review Board member, and two department heads. It will work with the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management, Policy and Global Management of UMass-Boston to recruit qualified applicants for the administrative coordinator position.

An article on the October 6 special town meeting warrant asks the town for \$15,000 for the Collins Center fee.

Erving citizens interested in serving on this committee should submit a signed letter that includes contact information to the Erving selectboard requesting appointment.

Letters can be sent either by email to [admin@erving-ma.org](mailto:admin@erving-ma.org) or by mail to 12 East Main Street, Erving, MA 01344.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

## Ideas for Parks & Rec

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard held an extra, “off week” meeting on September 16 to meet with Mount Grace Land Trust representative Jay Rasku and discuss possibilities for a \$70,000 Landscape Partnership grant that would go along with a series of conservation restrictions (CR’s) Mount Grace is establishing.

The CR’s will cover several contiguous properties in west Wendell and Montague, and some other separate pieces elsewhere in Wendell. The grant is for creation or improvement of parks or recreation, and is open to towns with fewer than 6,000 residents. (Wendell qualifies, but Montague does not.)

The application is due September 30, so the selectboard scheduled this extra meeting. Recreation committee member Johanna Fitzgerald, open space committee member Ray DiDonato, and former selectboard member Ted Lewis came, as did Mahar athletic director Jim Woodward, who provided answers for the requirements of athletic fields. Selectboard member Jeoffrey Pooser was at a broadband committee meeting down the hall and did not attend.

Wendell had a survey done for a walk and bicycle path between the common and the Wendell Country Store, a project that selectboard chair Christine Heard has wanted for some time, and which was mentioned to Rasku at the September 9 meeting. At this meeting, Rasku

said that the grant administrator did not find that idea exciting.

Other ideas were floated: a soccer field on the town septic leach field, smaller than regulation size, but level, and as Fitzgerald said, often in the shade and cooler than a regulation field; improving and expanding the playground at the library, where there is some town land in back of the basketball court; and a walking trail around the edge of the office building lot, behind and below the community garden, with exercise stations spaced around it.

For a long time Lewis has wanted a ball field in town, but feels it should be close to the town center, and no one knew of any land available for that.

Rasku left the meeting promising to get answers to the questions that were raised, and suggestions of which project is most feasible.

In other news, Lewis agreed to serve as auctioneer for the September 26 auction of surplus town property, but he said he would double his fee. Fire chief Joe Cuneo left a list of surplus fire department items, and the highway department has one cord of wood, but other departments have not provided a list of their surplus items.

Kate Nolan came as member of the kitchen committee and said that when two faucets are used in the new kitchen, the flow slows to nearly a stop. The back door also needs a screen to keep flies out. Board members asked if the kitchen building fund had any money left for that.

## Wendell Town Forest and Wildlife Habitat Hike

Join forester Mike Mauri and stewardship biologist Tom Wansleben for a walk through the Wendell Town Forest parcel off Montague Road on Sunday, October 4 at 3 p.m. Learn about selective thinning to improve the amount of harvestable timber on the parcel.

Also learn about a five acre wildlife habitat area created within the parcel to produce early successional habitat, which is declining in

Massachusetts.

Attendees should meet at the Dirth Road entrance/parking area located in the Wendell State Forest off Montague Road in Wendell.

Hiking boots and long pants are recommended during the hike. Expect some uneven terrain.

Sponsored by the Wendell Open Space Committee. Please RSVP to Wanita Sears at [wsears@wildblue.net](mailto:wsears@wildblue.net).

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

establishing the Finance Committee from “no less than 5” to “no fewer than 3.” This seems like no big deal, but it actually allows a crucial local committee – the budgetary arm of town meeting – to function more consistently by making it easier to achieve a quorum.

The real reason these town meetings are special is that they are not the annual town meeting, which happens once a year – in early May, in Montague. The idea may have been that “specials” would be rare, but they now are usually held at least three times a year. So the annual town meeting, which by the way is usually preceded in the morning by a separate special town meeting, seems more special.

While we are on the general subject of town meetings, it should be noted that they are heavily regulated by state law, since towns in Massachusetts are historically the creation of the state.

The “warrant,” a pleasingly archaic term which refers to warning the inhabitants of the meeting and its contents, must be published several weeks in advance. By the time of the meeting, the warrant articles must be transformed into “motions.”

Montague produces a background information sheet about all articles for town meeting members and other civic-minded residents. All these documents may be found on the town website.

What will be the most hotly debated articles at this town meeting? That is hard to say, because town meeting members can be very passionate about relatively obscure motions that appear early on the agenda when energy levels are high, but rather intolerant of heated debate or excessive complexity two hours in. This is not a criticism of town meeting members, who should be applauded for what they do. It is simply a comment on human nature.

An issue which has been a bit controversial is an appropriation of \$22,000 to fix or pay for a temporary back-up boiler at the Sheffield Elementary School. This sum will be added to a previous appropriation for a total of approximately \$40,000 to solve the boiler problem for a winter or two.

A request for a much larger appropriation

to fund a permanent back-up boiler went down in flames at annual town meeting. The vote was product of concern about the lack of an overall plan for heating at the school and the refusal of the school district’s bond counsel to allow the appropriation to be amended down, as requested by the town’s energy committee.

The current article will probably fly, because (a) the back-up is needed to keep children warm, and (b) the amount is consistent with what the energy committee was looking for back in May.

There are two appropriations dealing with “the pipeline,” a natural gas pipeline proposed to run through the middle of Montague, an idea resoundingly opposed at the annual meeting in May.

**Article 13** proposes that the town appropriate \$20,000 for “legal representation and technical assistance” involving the application of the pipeline developer to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which will decide whether the pipeline may be constructed. These funds would primarily be used to intervene in the federal evaluation of potential environmental impacts. The finance committee has recommended that the appropriation be reduced to \$13,750 based on more recent cost information.

**Article 14** proposes to appropriate another \$10,000 for legal representation on the pipeline before the state Department of Public Utilities. This legal counsel plans to challenge the contract between Berkshire Gas and the pipeline company for capacity on a portion of the proposed project.

The DPU does not make the final decision on the pipeline, but these contracts being approved or disapproved by the state may play a crucial role in the final federal decision, as they are the main criteria used by FERC for determining the “necessity” of a pipeline.

Controversy can be caused by relatively small, often obscure budget requests. For example, the very first article proposes that the amount appropriated by the May annual town meeting for information technology be increased by \$7,000.

The justification is that the backup file server needs to be replaced, which will cost more than the May appropriation for IT.

There is also a need to replace nine workstations.

At the finance committee’s meeting on the warrant, a member asked why these funds had not simply been requested at the May town meeting. The answer was that the former town hall IT administrator had promised to keep the annual appropriation at \$8,200 per year – the explanation that appears on the background information sheet on the town website.

This raised some eyebrows on the Finance Committee, since it suggested that town officials may tend to underestimate future costs at the annual meeting while planning to come back for supplemental funds at a special one.



*Norman Rockwell, “Freedom of Speech” (1943)*

Technical discussions like this, which sometimes arouse a bit of passion, seem to some citizens to represent the pettiness of local politics. But to veterans of the budget wars who sit on local committees, accurate and transparent budget-making practices are central in avoiding bigger problems. Of course personalities and personal agendas are often involved, but the small things do matter.

And some of the obscure technical issues debated by town meeting are not small. For example, the final article authorizes the town to establish something called a Municipal

Light Plant (MLP). Now, this sounds like the town will suddenly be generating electric power, but in fact no one is talking about creating such a generating facility. However it turns out that an MLP is necessary to receive state funding for bringing fiber-optic cable to “under-served” parts of town.

An even more obscure issue, with even bigger implications, is **Article 16**, which would create something called an Other Post Employment Benefits Trust Fund, and appropriate \$250,000 to said fund.

Those who attend frequent state and regional meetings know OPED is huge for towns. For everyone else it is, at best, a geeky irritation. However OPED is about establishing a system which can address the huge underfunded pension funds promised to the baby boom generation. This article is intended to phase in a solution that will neither bankrupt the town nor lead to massive service cuts down the road for the boomers’ children and grandchildren.

So, one of the benefits of being on town meeting is that you get a free lesson in local policy and politics, involving issues that directly affect you.

You may not think you care about how much of the sewer system’s earnings from the previous year are used to reduce this year’s sewer rates (**Article 4**), or whether there is a feasibility study for a new highway garage (**Article 12**), but these things do matter. And it actually feels good to know what an MLP or OPED is.

Finally, this is one place where your vote and opinion on issues really do matter. There are 126 people on Montague’s representative town meeting. A quorum that allows the meeting to do business is 64.

Most of those people are articulate, knowledgeable, curious – and, yes, opinionated. Town meeting really is not far from Norman Rockwell’s famous Saturday Evening Post cover illustration (“Freedom of Speech”), although in contrast to the scene depicted in the painting, there were in fact women at 1943 town meetings.

And I’ll bet the flannel-shirted speaker in that painting was certainly not worried about OPED.



NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Board Rejects Pipeline Survey (Again), Assumes Shea Utilities, Talks Noise

By **JEFF SINGLETON**

The Montague selectboard returned to a number of ongoing policy issues at its September 21 meeting. These included another request by the natural gas pipeline company Kinder Morgan to survey town property, racial sensitivity trainings for town employees, and noise levels for outdoor entertainment in downtown Turners Falls.

The meeting began with a public comment from Aiyana Masla, which progressed into a lengthy discussion of progress in procuring an organization to implement racial sensitivity training for town staff.

Masla said she had investigated a number of programs, and both Amherst and Northampton were starting trainings. She said there was a “huge spectrum” of approaches to the issue. “What should I be honing in on my research?” she asked. She also asked whether cost was a consideration, and if the organization needed to be local.

Audience member Roy Rosenblatt said the town might have to put the service out to bid under state procurement laws. “You need to develop some specifications, even if you only make phone calls [to procure the service],” he said.

Board member Rich Kuklewicz agreed that the town would need to develop a scope of services before

an organization was chosen to implement trainings. Masla agreed to collect information on specific training programs that can be used to create specifications for a bidding process.

During the same public comment period, Rosenblatt requested that the town establish an advisory committee on community development block grants. Town planner Walter Ramsey replied that such a committee did exist, but was not functioning due to several recent resignations.

Rosenblatt was asked if he would like to join the committee. He answered in the affirmative.

**Theater Bills**

Ramsey then approached the board to discuss several important issues, including the upcoming transition at the Shea Theater. The contract with the theater’s current operator will end on December 31, and a new organization, called the Shea Theater Arts Center, will take over on January 31. A new contract is being negotiated by the town’s civic center commission (CCC), according to Ramsey.

Ramsey also said the old organization, Shea Community Theater Inc., has fallen into arrears on its utility bills. The gas, provided by Berkshire Gas, has been shut off, and the same may happen to the electricity from Eversource.

The Shea had several important bookings for the fall and early winter, and the CCC has recommended that the Shea be kept open. The hope is that revenue from those performances would help defray the utility costs.

Ramsey recommended that the town, as the “landlord” of the Shea, assume responsibility for utility costs until the end of the year, but not for amounts past due. The board voted to direct him to work with Berkshire and Eversource to put the accounts in the town’s name as of September 22, the day after the board meeting.

Allen Fowler of the CCC stated that the organization needed new members due to recent resignations. The selectboard directed that resumes be sent to executive assistant Wendy Bogusz.

**Once Again...**

Ramsey also requested that the board respond to Kinder Morgan’s request that Montague allow the company to survey town property for its proposed natural gas pipeline.

He said the company did not specify where this property was located, but he had ascertained that it was Map 35, Lot 27, a wooded parcel on Country Hill, east of Route 63 near Millers Falls.

The selectboard had previously voted to deny Kinder Morgan survey permission on this parcel and, with

little discussion, did so again.

**I Can’t Hear You**

The board discussed effectiveness of the recently modified town noise ordinance, particularly with regard to outdoor music in downtown Turners Falls.

Kuklewicz stated that he has continued to receive complaints about the primary outdoor music venue, and also about other events on Avenue A. He said he did not want to focus on a particular establishment, but rather on whether the general policy was working.

“We need to gather information on a cohesive level,” he said. “Do we feel we need to elicit help from professionals?”

Public health director Gina McNeely, sitting at the front table, said her department had developed “comprehensive” noise regulations in 2005 that “never got passed.” She showed the board a number of very thick file folders from that process.

McNeely also said that “Eighty-five decibels, for a prolonged period, is a lot to be subjected to.”

Ramsey noted that some towns, unlike Montague, offer “outdoor entertainment” licenses.

Kuklewicz, noting that the outdoor entertainment season is almost over, said, “Let’s use this time period to figure something out.” He also said several times that his goal was

to “create a level playing field.”

**Other Business**

Ramsey also requested that the board approve a plan to spend a \$6,400 Recreational Trails Grant to improve access to Dry Hill cemetery.

Some of the funds would be used for kiosks to mark the road on the eastern access to the cemetery. Ramsey said the town would provide a required in-kind match by fixing a culvert on the access road. He also said that a volunteer clean-up day at the cemetery would be organized in the spring.

The selectboard voted to approve the project.

In response to a question from the board, Ramsey stated that the Avenue A streetscape project was moving forward on schedule, and that he was expecting a report from engineers to discuss the recent wash-out at the Millers Falls Road drainage project.

Under the heading of the town administrator’s report, the board voted to endorse all the articles it had previously placed on the town meeting warrant. These articles had also been endorsed by the finance committee the previous Wednesday, but the selectboard did not have a quorum at that joint meeting.

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**PHELPS** from page A1

Executive and Connecticut River Streambank Erosion committees.

Peggy Sloan, director of planning and development at FRCOG, said of Phelps, “For over 20 years Mason assisted with policy development and regional planning in Franklin County. He participated in many planning projects over the years, carefully reviewing and providing thoughtful feedback based on his extensive knowledge of environmental resources, invaluable insight, and his great passion for protecting forests, critical wildlife habitat, and water resources.

“His gentle manner, grammatical precision, and dry wit made him a pleasure to work with, and his contributions to the region will long be remembered.”

Marianne Sundell of Wendell, long time friend and colleague of Phelps, said he went to every meeting where zoning bylaw changes were being considered. Phelps was the founding member of the town’s open space committee, of which Sundell is a longtime member. She says his continued presence, through times of personal hardship, kept the group going where it might have disappeared without his commitment.

Sundell explained that during a time when Phelps’ wife was sick, the committee membership had dropped by so much that only he,

Charles Smith and herself were members and they needed all three present for a quorum. “It speaks to his character that he kept coming,” she said. As his wife passed, he kept holding on rather than let [the committee] go out of existence. Now we have five full members.”

Ina Phelps died in 2013. Even as his own health was failing, Sundell said he kept coming to meetings, in his wheelchair, with his PCA.

Sundell said Phelps was dedicated to “keeping wild things wild.” Over the years, they had “a healthy debate, always civil,” as she describes herself as “more of a field person,” with a preference for land use for farming and logging. Phelps left a wildlife legacy to pass on for others to maintain. As his health was failing, he was determined to share as much information as he could with those who would continue his work. It was the kind of legacy a person leaves to their children, she explained, but as Mason had none, those working with him would be the ones to carry it on.

Mason’s longtime friend Sam Lovejoy spoke lovingly of a man he said was “an ecologist to his core.” He said the one word he would use to describe him was “Mega-heart.” In an interview this week, Lovejoy recalled their work together on the Connecticut River Watershed Council and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments regional

planning board, as well as other things. He said Phelps “loved the Quabbin.” Having lived in Boston, Phelps knew the importance of clean water to the city, as well as the region, and worked tirelessly to protect the area around the reservoir as well as the Connecticut watershed.

Lovejoy said, as many did, that Phelps had a “really quiet voice that kind of drew you in. In a meeting of 40 to 50 people, when Mason spoke, people would lean in to hear him. He could ask a question that was unavoidable, incisive; one you could only answer directly.”

Lovejoy said Mason was also very good at coaxing lawyers to donate their time. In very detailed stories, Lovejoy remembered Mason as being active from the start, helping protect Lake Wyola, and Route 2, when the state thought it would be good to move it by cutting through the forest. Even Jimmy Carter commented when he saw the protest signs, “**Stop Route 2,**” all along the route through Erving when he drove through during his presidential campaign in 1976. Lovejoy said the proposal to divert the highway through Wendell ended with an act of Congress that protects its route from ever being changed.

Jonathan von Ranson of Wendell said, “I admired Mason so much because of his steadfast attention,

day in and day out, for decades, to Wendell and the living planet. He never seemed to miss a meeting in town over any issue that met his rather easy standards of importance – to him, almost everything about Wendell and its relation to the planet was important.

“At some point, in his soft, almost cottony voice, in a few wry words, he’d express a position and his persuasive reasoning. Some seemed to feel that this dedicated protector of wildlife always put the planet and its wild sector first, but anyone who knew him well knew how regularly and generously he and Ina attended to people, helping out financially, giving moral support, standing up for the underdog. He was the hidden backbone of Bear Mountain Preservation Association from the start, for almost 30 years.”

Leigh Youngblood, director of the Mount Grace Land Trust, spoke fondly of her early days starting out in land conservation, which she began in 1994. She said she met Phelps while working on the Bear Mountain project. Mount Grace had a small staff then, and Phelps “was a big help,” she said.

Youngblood said Phelps talked to landowners and conducted title research, developing one parcel at a time for conservation. She described him as a scientist, always curious. He attended lectures at

Harvard Forest. She recalled a gift from the widow of famed botanist, Arthur Cronquist, who donated 66 acres of land to the trust.

Then there was the Seeds of Solidarity Farm. Mass Audubon owns land on both sides of the farm. An agreement, worked out with Phelps’ help, guaranteed a wildlife corridor through the property.

This project, which Youngblood worked on with Phelps, taught her something about him. He insisted on that wildlife corridor, and no compromise was acceptable to him. Soft-spoken, kind, with never a harsh word but determined and uncompromising when it came to protecting wildlife and the land, Phelps had a way of working with others that never took him away from his clear purpose.

Youngblood said that because of the conservation efforts in this region, an entire community had come together around that effort. She said, “The community stretches across the whole state because of the work that Mason and Ina did.”

Mason Phelps was much loved, respected and admired. He will be remembered for his lifetime of work protecting the land and working for the betterment of his community. Youngblood summed up what all expressed: “He was brilliant at being the connection, loved the wilderness.... He will be missed.”



NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# Gill Selectboard Darkened by Press Blackout

By MIKE JACKSON

On Monday, September 21, a perfect storm of scheduling conflicts involving members of the community press from Gill, Leverett, Greenfield and Turners Falls left Gill’s selectboard able, for once, to operate with sheer impunity, free of the usually omnipresent machinery of citizen oversight and accountability.

“No Reporter, no Reformer, no MCTV, no nothing,” board member John Ward marveled after the meeting. “Nobody that was not there could truly know what happened, or what was said at that meeting, without that being filtered through someone else’s perception.”

“We still seemed to survive,” noted town administrative assistant Ray Purington.

According to multiple sources, the most controversial topic of discussion on Monday was a request by the Gill-Montague Regional School District to have Gill pay \$1,046 to upgrade a fire alarm panel at Gill Elementary. After discussion that included Jim Huber, the district’s facilities manager, the board turned the request down on a 1-2 vote, with Ward and Randy Crochier voting against, and chair Greg Snedeker in favor.

“We spent a decent amount of

time talking about the alarm panel request,” said Purington. “The feeling was the selectboard would rather see that money going toward upgrading an electrical panel for the kitchen, and other major building improvements.”

According to Ward, “a couple members of the selectboard expressed a desire to not live in such a fear-based society.” He said he expected to see the request return in another form.

Also apparently on the night’s agenda was a continuation of a discussion about the future of the town newsletter, after the retirement of Pam Shoemaker, its editor of 15 years.

The newsletter, in Purington’s best estimate, dates to around 1981, and has been coming out four or six times a year. The town supplies the paper, the Northfield Mount Hermon school donates printing, and business card ads roughly cover the cost of postage.

“If there’s anyone interested in possibly being the next editor of the newsletter, they should get in touch with the selectboard, through me,” said Purington. “We don’t really have a job description, *per se* – it’s unpaid.

“They’re hoping to go down the road of redefining or reinventing the

newspaper with the new editor, so that person can help shape the mission of the newsletter.”

Fire chief Gene Beaubien was allegedly in attendance, and Randy Crochier allegedly congratulated him for his department’s showing at the previous week’s Franklin County Fair, where they won best presentation in the firemen’s parade and also made a strong showing at the muster, winning first places in the dry hose event and the judges’ choice.

Baubien discussed the town’s application for an emergency management preparedness grant due in October, for \$2,460 to be spent on upgrading the fire station’s 1980s-vintage Merlin telephone system.

The town is looking into the possibility of holding an auction for surplus fire department equipment.

An informational meeting on the proposed natural gas pipeline, which would pass through three towns Gill abuts, was held the previous week, and was attended by 25 to 30 people, only around 15 of whom were residents of Gill.

At Monday’s meeting, the board discussed Gill’s participation in a coalition of local towns opposing the project.

“I’m not going to be able to make [the coalition’s] next meeting, but I think Greg Snedeker will be able

to,” said Ward. “I don’t know if I like the idea of a financial contribution being required to be a part of that coalition, and I don’t know if that’s going to be held up.”

According to Purington, at Monday’s meeting “there was a very strong sense of supporting the cause in principle, but whether we commit funds would be a town meeting decision.”

“I can’t promise any money until we go to town meeting,” continued Ward, “and I wouldn’t want to – I’d want to know what the people want to do.”

Other alleged developments at Monday’s meeting include:

- The new LED streetlights have been delivered, and they should be installed by the end of the year.
- The project to install air-source heat pumps at the municipal building in Riverside is nearly complete, waiting now for Eversource to activate a new electric meter.
- Office construction is complete at town hall, and the clerk and collector-treasurer have moved into their new spaces.
- The board approved a quote from J.C. Madigan for \$15,325 of repairs to make the new highway department truck, bought used, winter-ready.
- A crew from NFL Films was approved to film on location at the public safety complex this week, for a documentary segment on the famous 1965 fire at Northfield Mount Hermon, during which NMH’s football

team continued to lose its Thanksgiving game to Deerfield Academy.

- The board gave highway super Mickey LaClaire the go-ahead to get a quick hitch for the tractor at the lowest possible cost to the town, an expense which may or may not be covered by a grant.
- It also gave its blessing to a deal in which NMH will transport its campus recyclables to the Springfield municipal recycling facility on the town’s account, avoiding a \$50/ton fee and contributing to the town’s \$10/ton credit.
- In light of Monday morning’s tractor-trailer rollover on Route 2 at Factory Hollow – the second rollover on that stretch in September – the board agreed to call for a meeting of the Route 2 Safety Task Force, which includes MassDOT and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. Purington guesses that the group last met in 2013, adding that in his view, “there are plenty of other good reasons for the group to come together again... It would be good to have an update on the suicide prevention efforts on the French King Bridge.”
- The town’s rec commission is back up and running, and is hosting Scarecrows on the Common from October 10 to Halloween. See the town website for more information.

Anyone who reads to the end of this newspaper’s Gill selectboard reporting and has an occasional Monday evening free is invited to contact the editors of this paper to discuss joining us as a reporter.

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ANNEX from pg A1

“In the short term,” Ramsey said, “we have to make sure the building is secured, and then we’ll figure out what to do.”

For several months, one of the building’s doors has stood wide open, and more recently a second door, facing the power canal, has been open as well. A third, still-closed, door bears graffiti exhorting the reader to engage in carnal relations with “Society”.

Though legally separate in their ownership, both the Railroad Salvage and its annex are surrounded by a chain-link fence, a precautionary measure taken since the main building started collapsing dramatically in 2006, under the ownership of Gary Kosuda and his company, Kosudaville LLC.

In February of that year, a section of its roof fell through five stories into the basement, and in May, its walls started to fall, prompting the town to barricade Power Street, and leaving only one working bridge into the Patch.

The last nine years have witnessed steady deterioration of the main building. But this month, the padlock was removed from the fence’s gate, and only a few No Trespassing signs inhibit entry onto either the publicly or privately owned parcel.

A Century-Old Boondoggle?

These parcels sit between the power canal and the Connecticut River, and are surrounded on all sides by land owned by FirstLight Hydro Generating Co.

The power utility, headquartered at Northfield Mountain, is a subsidiary of GDF Suez North America, whose French parent company, since April, is called Engie – the second-largest power company on the planet. As a successor company to Turners Falls Power & Electric Company, it owns the town power canal, as well as the only other property on the street, a small hydroelectric generating plant.

“The utility essentially controls the property, but doesn’t have to pay taxes on it,” says Peter Champoux, a Greenfield-based geographer and author, who spoke to the Reporter this week about his 2012-13 study of the main Railroad Salvage building. In his eyes, the local conventional wisdom that a series of negligent and deadbeat owners have caused its

rot and collapse are missing a major point.

Champoux has a unique vantage point. He was, briefly, its sole identifiable owner, according to the \$200 deed transfer from Nice & Easy to him “as agent for an unincorporated association of individuals” in 2012.

“I took possession of it,” he said, “in order to be able to speak to FirstLight to investigate the property... I was contacted by the owner to see what I could do with the property, if anything.”

In Champoux’s narrative, the true villain was textile capitalist Joseph Griswold, who built the structure in 1879 to spin, weave and cut cotton into consumer products including bandages, bunting, and cheesecloth.

When Griswold eventually sold off his mill, according to Champoux, leak and seepage rights were conveyed to Turners Falls Power & Electric Company. “[Griswold] was one of the board members of the utility at the time,” he added.

“The building is in the state that it’s in because of that,” he explained. “The utility has no responsibility to prevent leaks out of its canal....

“The building used to have a tailrace, which is a water duct that was used to turn the mechanical machinery. Where the leak is coming from is a very obviously cobbled-together repair job to block the tailrace....

“The concrete was just laid on the stone, so there’s all kinds of leaks coming through that tailrace, going through the center of the building and out towards the river.”

The water passing under and through the building, he said, plagued owner Ruby Vine during the building’s final career as the Railroad Salvage store.

Champoux said Vine attempted to remediate the problem by several means, including installing a system of drain tiles in the parking lot and around the building. At the same time, he said, “Ruby had all this lead paint that was hanging around, so he was painting all the walls with it... The windows all had asbestos caulking on them, so that would have had to be remediated as well.”

The long-term accumulation of moisture and toxicity doomed the building, in Champoux’s view, and plans pitched by developers like Mark Kislyuk in 2004 and Gary Kosuda in 2005 to renovate the build-

ing into studio and residential spaces were never realistic.

“It’s a boondoggle,” he said. “It was just a folly to imagine that you’d be able to use that for human habitation, because of the water conditions and mold.... I reported that to the EPA and various people: it was a water condition that prevented the demolition of the building, because you’d have all this toxic material that you’d be washing right into the river. It was kind of a catch-22.”

Creative Solutions

Not everyone who has worked with the property shares Champoux’s analysis.

“Fifteen years of roof leakage killed that building,” said town building inspector David Jensen, when he learned of Champoux’s conclusions. “Water ruined the building, he’s right about that. But it was the sky stuff.”

Although some water was leaking under the building, Jensen said, “It just went right through the sub-basement. I don’t think it did much damage – there’s nothing down there but ledge and pillars.... Water running under your building has some consequences, but it wasn’t a chronically moldy building.”

As late as September 2006, Jensen referred to the property as “salvageable” in the pages of the Reporter. And in 2007, the town successfully litigated against Kosuda, gaining a court order for him to secure and clean up the property.

Jensen is familiar with the ruined structure from his time overseeing Kosuda’s progress. After three and a half years, Power Street was able to reopen to one-way traffic, with both buildings surrounded by the fence.

Whether the main building’s fate was sealed in 1924 or 2004, the upshot is that it must be demolished, a project that will be quite expensive: Champoux said he got a “rough estimate” from a Springfield-based salvage company of \$750,000, a figure Jensen said is comparable to rough estimates the town has made.

When his study was finished, Champoux conveyed the property, again for \$200, to Solutions Consulting Group LLC. “Some of the members of [that] LLC were part of the association of unincorporated citizens” he had been representing, he explained, a structure “which was kind of legal, in a seventeenth-century sense.”

Solutions Consulting Group was formed about a week before that transfer, with paperwork indicating its general character was that “[i]ndependent consultants harmonize their specialties [sic] to provide creative solutions to individuals.”

At the time, Jeanne Golrick of Millers Falls, Paul Nolan of Virginia and Gordon Phillips of New Hampshire were authorized to execute documents for the firm, but last summer Nolan and Phillips were removed from the firm’s listing and Golrick was named “henceforth the sole remaining person with capacity of member-manager”.



COURTESY THRESHOLD COLLECTIVE

A view of the inside of the annex building in 2013.

Built Like a Tank

While all this was happening, Nice & Easy retained ownership of the annex building, which Champoux described as “a bit more high and dry.”

The building is split into two floors, with three large, adjacent rooms on each floor. The back of the lower floor is built into the slope of the canal wall, and the second floor appears to have been used as a loading dock, with entrances opening onto the canal side where a rail spur used to run.

“The whole building is built like a tank,” said Andrew Huckins. “You could tell it was a storeroom. It had really high-load floors, and low ceilings, and bad lighting.”

Huckins is a member of the ThreshHold Cooperative, a group that conducted a feasibility study on the Annex in late 2013 after the town turned down its proposal to rehabilitate Building 11 of the Strathmore complex.

“Of the mill buildings in the area that I’ve been in, it’s by far the most utilitarian,” he said. “It has very few frills, or brick ornamentation, or woodwork details inside. However, it’s got some beautiful characteristics because of its utilitarian nature.”

Huckins described the building as structurally sound, without any notable water damage. “A good bit of the lower floor feels dank,” he said, “like you can tell that a stone’s throw away, most of the water from the Connecticut River is flowing above you. But there actually isn’t much seepage.”

After an exploratory process documented on ThreshHold’s website, they ultimately did not purchase the building, for several reasons.

“We found out about various title problems,” Huckins explained. “The first was that, when the town conveyed the property to Bent, they were legally required to convey it to him personally. Instead they conveyed it to a corporation in Delaware” – Nice & Easy LLC – “which subsequently went defunct.

“We needed that corporation to do more than just sell the property. When [Bent] split the properties, it doesn’t appear that there was any legal counsel involved, and some utility easements that were essential to

developing the annex property were mis-written on the deeds. It said the main property has easements over itself, and the annex had no easements.”

Huckins also said the property boundaries recorded on the deed contradicted those held by FirstLight. “The biggest hurdle to developing the annex property,” he continued, “is that there’s no basic utilities. The only way to get those connected is to run them across a poorly-mapped system of brittle clay pipes that have been underground since at least 1924.”

A map made by the Power & Electric Company in that year bears the note: “Number, size, and location of cross-drains not known.”

The challenge of running domestic, sprinkler and wastewater lines through unknown subterranean territory, and then through land currently owned by the power company, will fall on any potential developer.

“To safeguard FirstLight against potential profit loss, we would have needed to acquire a significant performance bond,” Huckins added.

“FirstLight *de facto* owns the property. The indenture that gives FirstLight protective rights over the tile drains on that property is worded such that any subsurface work has to be approved by them.”

Jensen was more optimistic this week about the building’s prospects for development, though he said it had been “a couple years” since he had been inside.

“It’s a solid structure,” he said. “There’s a lot of possibilities for that building – anything from storage to a dancehall. It’s got parking with it...”

“It’s in a distressed neighborhood, though.”



The mill’s main building, in better times: A 2004 file photo.


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# MONTAGUE REPORTER



## ON THE ROAD

Paul Hilton of Park Villa traveled to Ireland in August.

The trip was set up by the Diocese of Springfield.

Paul brought the Reporter out with him at the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare.

Going somewhere? Send your photographs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)!

## This Sunday: World Ends?

By REPORTER STAFF

On this Sunday night, September 27, there will be a rare “Super Moon” or “Harvest Moon” eclipse, which happens when the moon and earth are closest and the moon will appear brighter and larger than normal.

We are lucky! We will get the best view of the eclipse here in the eastern United States, and it will be the last good view of a lunar eclipse on this coast until January 2018.

It is also called the Blood Moon, because the moon takes on a reddish color during the eclipse, but this is not a scientific term.

The earth’s shadow will begin to pass over the surface of the moon at 8:11 p.m. Sunday evening. The maximum eclipse will occur at 10:47 and last until around midnight, when the shadow will start to slowly withdraw from the face of the moon. There is no need for eye protection as in a solar eclipse,



of course, since moonlight is only reflected sunlight.

An eclipse is a good excuse to put down all devices, turn off the TV or computer, and head outdoors with family and friends to spend an evening somewhere with a good view of the moonrise. You can swap “end of the world” stories!

For more details, see [www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/lunar/2015-september-28](http://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/lunar/2015-september-28). End of the world predictions are also easily searchable online, or make up your own.

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THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

## Changes of Light

MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

By **LESLIE BROWN**

**MONTAGUE CITY** – As if the change in temperature and length of day has gone by without our attention, the calendar makes note of the occurrence of the autumnal equinox this week. The equinox is the day the sun shines directly on the equator and the date when the hours of day and night are nearly equal, signaling the official end of summer.

Depending on your cultural background and family tradition, September is a time of festival and/or ritual. In the mythology of ancient Greece, the fall is the point in the year when the goddess of spring, Persephone, returns to the underground to her husband Hades. In Greece this was a time to enact rituals of protection and security and a time to reflect upon the successes or failures of the past months. In Buddhism, this is a time to remember the dead whose spirits are now passing into Nirvana.

In our culture as in many others, the fall is a time to celebrate the harvest. For the gardener, it is a bit of both: a celebration of successful crops and a review of those plantings which did not do so well. As I put the garden to rest, I make a mental note.

Happily, we did not see a return of late blight in the tomatoes this season. Next winter I'll start the plants a little later because they were so large when I set them out

in late May that they could really be described as too leggy. They had a considerable period of adjustment which delayed blossoming and the setting of the fruit.

Then, too, June was slow to take off with its usual warmth. There may also not have been as many bees available for pollinating. That said, what fruit came on was good, although I don't think we'll plant Cloudy Day again. This plant developed for its blight resistance produced a strong but rather tasteless crop of tomatoes. Boxcar Willie, reputed to be a hearty beefsteak, did not produce many tomatoes even however small. The winning varieties were not unexpected: Sungold, one of the best and most prolific cherries ever; Rose and Brandywine, both producers of medium to large tasty fruit.

We also had huge crops of green beans, peas, Swiss chard as well as a bumper yield of asparagus.

Now the period of rest for the earth. Weed removal and the addition of composted cow manure will prepare the garden for the next season to come.

Fall is a season of regret for the loss of warmth and long golden days with starlit nights. It does have its own magnificent beauty, but for this gardener also a certain sadness. I will miss this intense grounding with mother earth, the miracle of large fruits grown from tiny seeds,

see **GARDENER'S** page B4

## ◀ OYSTERGIRL'S GUIDE TO REAL LIVING Oyster Stew ▶



QUERY PHOTO

By **VANESSA QUERY**

It's been a while since I've posted anything food-related. I thought this would be a good time to share my flagship oyster stew recipe, because, after all, everyone knows that you should only eat oysters in months with the letter "r" in them, right?

Actually, fun fact: That is not true, and has never been true. That old wives' tale about oysters is actually an old oyster-fisherman's tale:

"[I]t stands to reason that if a healthy female, round with some twenty million eggs, is taken from the water before she has a chance to birth them, the farmers lose.

May and June and July, and of

course August, are the months when the waters are warmest almost everywhere along the coast, and it is remarkably convenient that oysters can only breed their spawn when the temperature is around seventy degrees and in months with no R's in them. How easy it has been to build a catchy gastronomic rule on the farmers' interest in better crops!"

–M. F. K. Fisher, *Consider the Oyster*

Anyway. Regardless of actual truth, there's just something about oysters and autumn. And this recipe encompasses my favorite things about food: simplicity, fresh and local ingredients, historical and cultural importance.

see **STEW** page B4

## History of the Farren, Part 1



COURTESY IMAGE MUSEUM COLLECTION

*The Farren Memorial Hospital in its prime, with a smart-looking fleet of motorcars.*

By **ANNE HARDING**

**MONTAGUE CITY** – Bernard N. Farren's name cropped up in the newspapers quite frequently during his time in town. He was a mover and shaker of the times who came to the area in the 1850s.

Farren was one of the many engineers tasked with the completion of the Hoosac Tunnel, at that time considered one of the wonders of the world. He became interested in the development of Turners Falls and was instrumental to the financial success of the village during its industrial heyday.

Cecil T. Bagnall was not only the editor and proprietor of the Turners Falls Reporter, but a friend and neighbor of Farren's in Montague Center during the late 1800s. Excerpts of his articles from the papers of the late 1890s are quoted throughout this article.

Farren not only invested in the town, but made it his home and raised his family here for many years.

He had a son, and his namesake "grew to love the state very much, although his education was gained in institutions beyond its borders.

*He was a bright young man, the soul of honor, lovable to a degree, enterprising and ambitious, and in a business way bid fair to make the town of Montague a larger industrial center than it is today, but unfortunately he was taken ill and died in early manhood just as he had begun to perfect plans for business action."*

Years later, the elder Farren decided "that the long cherished idea of a memorial to the son that bore the honored name, should be erected in the place where both father and son had spent so many happy seasons, and that the memorial should be in the form that the people of all races, religions and creeds, might enjoy its blessings forever – a home for the sick where all will be afforded the greatest physical comfort, the best of medical treatment, the attention of skilled nurses, trained in schools and after methods the world has never seen equalled, and withal in an atmosphere of spiritual purity, calmness and repose that is grateful to every soul not beyond the beneficent influence of its creator."

see **FARREN** page B4

## Rescued Art to the Rescue!



*Gary Konvelski and Erin MacLean kick off the live auction part of "Rescued Art for Rescued Dogs" inside the LOOT store Saturday evening. The fundraiser collected roughly 3300 dollars to help the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter upgrade or relocate their Turners Falls facility.*



*Labri Bond and Victor Signore of "Tricasum" play music in the alleyway between LOOT and Gary's Coins, entertaining the crowd who came out to support the shelter.*

*Sita Lang donated this vintage eagle weathervane to be raffled off at the event, along with three paintings on paper by NY artist Fargo Deborah Whitman that Konvelski contributed. Cherie Lanoue was the happy winner of the eagle, though she says she will have to "build a shed" to put it on.*



*Roughly 100 people attended the silent and live auctions. A painting "rescued" by Anja Shutz went out the door for 200 dollars, the highest bid of the night.*



NINA ROSSI PHOTOS



# Pet of the Week



## “SABER”

Hellooooo there, my name is Saber and I am looking for an active home to call my own. I have lived

well with kids as young as six and would love to meet yours to see if I might be a good fit for your family. When it comes to other dogs I am active and energetic so I would prefer a fur sibling to share my enthusiasm. I am house-trained as well as crate trained. I would be a great first dog for a circus (very active) type home. If you think I might be the girl for your family please ask a Dakin team member for more information.

Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at [info@dpvh.org](mailto:info@dpvh.org).

## Senior Center Activities September 28 to October 2

**GILL and MONTAGUE**  
**Gill / Montague Senior Center,**  
62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m.  
All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the Center is closed.  
**Tues, Wed & Thurs** Noon Lunch  
**Monday 9/28**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise  
**Tuesday 9/29**  
9 a.m. Mat Yoga (Subscription)  
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Lunch  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle, Talk: Medication Management  
**Wednesday 9/30**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise  
Noon Lunch  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday 10/1**  
9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach  
10:30 Brown Bag  
Noon Lunch  
1 p.m. Pitch & 5 Crowns, Mexican Train Dominos  
**Friday 10/2**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise  
Noon Pizza Party  
1 p.m. Writing Group  
**WENDELL**  
Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and upcoming programs. Call the

Center for a ride.  
**ERVING**  
Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals.  
Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call the Mealsite Manager at 423-3308 for meal information and reservations.  
For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity.  
Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.  
**Monday 9/28**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise  
7 p.m. History of Farley  
**Tuesday 9/29**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance  
11:30 Lunch, Vaudeville Prod.  
12:30 Painting Class  
**Wednesday 9/30**  
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Chair Yoga  
12:15 p.m. Bingo & Snacks  
**Thursday 10/1**  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones, Muscles  
11:30 p.m. Brown Bag Pickup  
**Friday 10/2**  
9 a.m. Quilting,  
9:30 a.m. Bowling  
11:30 a.m. Pizza Movie Snacks  
**LEVERETT**  
For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us). Flexibility and Balance Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Senior Lunch – Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

**MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS**  
**Grant Support Available  
for Filming Events**  
**By PAM KINSMITH**  
It's another busy week at MCTV as we dig in to editing all the incredible footage from the many shoots that took place last week! Stay tuned for new videos from the Traveling Rhubarb Circus, What Really Happened at the Falls, and the LOOT: found and made fundraiser supporting the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter.  
MCTV has been working in collaboration with the Montague Cultural Council (MCC) to film and promote events supported by cultural council grants. In addition to being available on our website for streaming and as part of our TV schedule, programs supported by MCC grants are available at their website and include a synopsis of the program content.  
The Massachusetts Cultural Council supports the Local Cultural Council (LCC) program which is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation. It supports thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences annually. Each year, local coun-

cils award more than \$2 million in grants to more than 5,000 cultural programs statewide. The program promotes the availability of rich cultural experiences for every Massachusetts citizen.  
The Massachusetts Cultural Council manages 329 Local Cultural Councils in Massachusetts; the Montague Cultural Council is one of them, as are the Cultural Councils in neighboring towns such as Gill, Greenfield, Erving, Leverett, Wendell, and Bernardston.  
Catch up on area decision-making by watching the September 14 Montague selectboard meeting, and the meeting of the finance committee held on September 16. In case you missed it, the Gill selectboard meeting of September 8 is available for viewing as well.  
Get in touch and learn how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment!  
Call (413) 863-9200, email [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street in Turners between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. We'd love to work with you!

**Gill Cultural Council  
Seeks Proposals**  
The Gill Cultural Council has set an October 15 deadline for organizations, schools and individuals to apply for grants that support cultural activities in the community.  
These grants support a variety of artistic projects and activities including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies or performances in schools, workshops and lectures.  
This year Gill will distribute about \$4,400 in grants from the MCC.  
Application forms and guidelines are available online at [www.mass-culture.org/lcc\\_public.aspx](http://www.mass-culture.org/lcc_public.aspx) and at the Gill Town Hall. For more information, contact Gill Cultural Council chair Sue Kramer at 863-4621.

**THE HEALTHY GEEZER**  
**Legs That Just Won't Quit**  

**By FRED CICETTI**

*Q. I've been seeing lots of references about "restless legs syndrome." I've never heard of this condition. Is it rare?*

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) affects about one in ten adults in North America and Europe. RLS is found in both men and women but can begin in children. The percentage of people with RLS increases with age. And, seniors experience symptoms longer and more frequently.

Many researchers believe that RLS is under-reported. Victims of RLS are often diagnosed as suffering from insomnia, depression or a disorder of the nerves, muscles or skeleton.

RLS is a neurologic movement disorder. It produces uncomfortable sensations that cause an irresistible urge to move the legs. RLS symptoms can be relieved tempo-

rarily by movement. Symptoms occur during inactivity and strike most frequently during the evening. These attacks lead to sleep problems.

The Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation says there must be five essential features present for a diagnosis of restless legs syndrome:

- You have a strong urge to move your legs (sometimes arms and trunk), usually accompanied or caused by uncomfortable and unpleasant sensations in the legs.
- Your symptoms begin or become worse when you are resting or inactive, such as when lying down or sitting.
- Your symptoms get better when you move, such as when you walk or stretch, at least as long as the activity continues.
- Your symptoms are worse in the evening or night than during the day, or only occur in the evening or nighttime hours.
- Your symptoms are not solely accounted for by another condition such as leg cramps, positional discomfort, leg swelling or arthritis.

RLS may be inherited. About half of patients have a family history of the RLS. Also, there is a lower incidence of RLS in Asia than there is in North America and

Europe.  
There are two forms of RLS – primary and secondary. Primary RLS is unrelated to other disorders; its cause is unknown. Secondary RLS can be brought on by kidney failure, pregnancy, iron deficiency anemia, or some medications.  
Research has shown that there is a relationship between RLS and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).  
Most people with RLS also have periodic limb movement disorder (PLMD), which causes leg twitching or jerking movements during sleep.  
There are drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to treat RLS. These include Mirapex®, Requip® and Neupro®. There are also several drugs approved for other conditions that help alleviate RLS symptoms.  
It is possible to combat the symptoms in other ways. Walking, massage, stretching, hot or cold baths, vibration, acupuncture, meditation and yoga can help.  
Caffeine and alcohol can worsen RLS symptoms.

*If you would like to ask a question, write to [fred@healthygeezers.com](mailto:fred@healthygeezers.com).*

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Reactionary Alarm Systems

**Monday, 9/14**  
3:50 a.m. Alarm at East Main Street. Same was secure.  
3 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting tractor-trailer unit parked on Gunn Street. Same not blocking traffic; no hazard.  
9 p.m. Noise complaint at Gunn Street. Vehicle peeling out of driveway. Spoke to same.

**Tuesday, 9/15**  
9:55 a.m. Medical emergency on Maple Avenue. Found not to be in need of service.  
10:20 a.m. Report of shot fired in area of Old State Road. Advised resident it was hunting season (bear).  
12:30 p.m. Alarm at French King Motel. Found to be faulty fire alarm.

7:15 p.m. Took report of bicycle stolen from Farley Ledges parking area. Under investigation.  
9:30 p.m. Noise complaint on Forest Street. Spoke with complainant's upstairs neighbor.

**Wednesday, 9/16**  
1:45 p.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Prospect Heights Lane.

**Thursday, 9/17**  
8:30 a.m. 911 misdial at French King Highway. No emergency found.

**Friday, 9/18**  
12:45 p.m. Took report of the possible purchase of stolen item, turned in to department.

**Saturday, 9/19**  
8:20 a.m. Motor vehicle lockout at Weatherheads convenience store. Services rendered.  
10:35 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency at Farley Ledges.  
7:35 p.m. Report of dog missing from River Road. Located same at pound, advised owner.

**Sunday, 9/20**  
11:15 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on High Street.  
6:30 p.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Gunn Street.  
7:45 p.m. Mutual aid to Orange PD. Burglar alarm at Oaklawn Avenue, was accidental.

Franklin County's Community

“Out of the Darkness” Walk

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention holds a couple of different kinds of “Out of the Darkness” walks to raise funds to help with suicide prevention efforts: community walks, campus walks, and overnight walks. A community walk will be held on Sunday, October 4 at the Energy Park, at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield.

The Franklin County walk is now in its second year. “We want to make it an annual walk in Franklin County,” says Linda Bergeron, who has been chairperson both years. “I do it in memory of my daughter Tanner,” she said.

Linda has been involved with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention for 4-1/2 years. In that time, she has participated in the community walks and overnight walks, working as a photographer for them. Her first overnight walk was in Washington, D.C.

“I have done the Community walk for Springfield for the past four years,” she said. “We are very excited for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Franklin County Walk.... I can proudly say that we raised \$11,000 last year.” Organizers have set a goal to raise \$15,000 this time around.

A section on the AFSP’s website ([www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)) allows you to make donations for this one walk online. The site has a record of how many donations they are getting for the walk and if or when they reach their goal of \$15,000. The registration for the walk in Franklin County can be done online at

the American Foundation’s website up to the Friday at noon before the walk happens.

The organization behind the walks has been around since 1978, and has 75 local chapters to its name, from Arkansas to Washington State. It is headquartered in New York. New England chapters include Greater Boston, Western Massachusetts, and Northern as well as Southern Connecticut.

The organization also participates in International Survivors of Suicide Loss day, which falls this year on November 21. Senator Harry Reid, who survived his father’s suicide in 1972, led an effort beginning in 1999 to designate a national day for healing and support, which is now recognized worldwide. This year AFSP will premier a new documentary, called *Family Journeys: Healing and Hope after a Suicide*, on November 21.

I was told once that suicide is a cry for help. In all of the states that this organization covers, with all the money it has raised and people like Linda, who have helped with the walks, the cry for help is answered very well by the organization. Survivors are able to share a connection with each other and help. “I think it’s a wonderful outreach program for survivors,” Linda said. “We are not alone.”

Any person interested in doing the Franklin County Walk can register online, or in person at check-in time at 11 a.m. on the day of the walk. The walk will begin at noon and end at 3 p.m.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Meat Hawked; Baby Rides Dirt Bike; Females Attack; Art Freak Traces Shadows

**Monday, 9/14**  
9:28 a.m. Caller from Country Creemee reports that her business was broken into overnight; appears entry was made through a window. Responding officers found that only item missing was a jar of pennies. Report taken.  
11:18 a.m. Caller reports a female is outside of Food City trying to sell Food City gift cards she received from church. Female claims she needs the money for medication; caller assumes she needs the money for drugs. Gone on arrival.  
2 p.m. Caller from Old Sunderland Road requesting options for an illegal dumping and trespassing issue. Groups of teenagers have been partying in a field, leaving their trash behind, and doing donuts in the field. Extra patrols requested.  
10:12 p.m. Younger female party reported sitting outside Cumberland Farms asking customers for money or to buy her things. Female is currently going through the cigarette butts. Officer moved female along.

**Tuesday, 9/15**  
10:00 a.m. Town hall employee reporting seeing Facebook posts that were disturbing to her, including comments that may be directed towards town hall. Investigated.

**Thursday, 9/17**  
1:12 a.m. Officer advises that the gate to the gatehouse under the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge is unsecured and open; requests that FirstLight be advised. Contacted control room at Northfield Mountain; same was advised.

**Friday, 9/18**  
5:36 a.m. Caller from Montague City Road reports that one party was shoved by another party, who lives across the hall in another apartment. Caller advises that one party is intoxicated and has been yelling for hours. Officer clear; situation mediated.  
12:29 p.m. Party into lobby to inquire about getting an ID in MA as she is attempting to have utilities turned on at a local address. While officer spoke to party, dispatch ran her plate and license, which show status expired. Officer attempted to explain to party that she would not be able to drive her vehicle away as she does not have a valid license. She was given options as to renewing her VT license or taking care of her MA license. Party was very argumentative with the officer and requested several times that she be allowed to drive away. He again explained the situation to her and she was provided a courtesy transport to the Bookmill.

**Saturday, 9/19**  
5:52 p.m. Caller reports hearing gunshots tonight in Lake Pleasant; has happened a few times recently. Officer investigated and found that parties were at least 500 feet from any dwelling and had permission to be there.  
6:25 p.m. Caller meats. Caller declined and the party went to her neighbors. Chief requests that if party is located, they be reminded that they need to have proper permits from MPD and the Board of Health to solicit. Patrol units advised.  
6:16 p.m. Caller complaining of several four wheelers and dirt bikes in the roadway at Randall Wood Drive and Randall Road. One male party has no helmet. Second caller reporting parties “screaming” up the road at high rates of speed; at one point they witnessed one of the bikers with a baby on a bike (small child still in diapers). Officer spoke to parties in area, who denied involvement. Investigated.  
6:31 p.m. Caller from Vladish Avenue reports that approximately one hour ago, the truck marked “Northeastern Beef” came to his home. He did make a purchase and saw the truck head to Coolidge Avenue. Officers will be advised.

**Sunday, 9/20**  
11:11 a.m. Caller, a visiting nurse, reports that a lock box of medication in an Avenue A apartment

was entered and all of the meds (approximately 12 medications) are missing.  
5:59 p.m. Caller from Rite-Aid reports that a male party is attempting to pick up a hospice patient’s prescription. Note in the patient’s file states meds are not to be picked up by anyone other than the patient herself. Male party is also looking to purchase syringes. Caller is not willing to give out meds, and male is being confrontational about this. Responding officer will deliver prescription to patient. Male party is patient’s boyfriend and was attempting to pick up her meds for her. Services rendered.  
7:39 p.m. Caller from Central Street reports suspicious activity during the past couple of nights; since male neighbor has gained his mobility back, more people have been coming to the house. Caller just wants this on record.

**Monday, 9/21**  
5:36 a.m. Caller from Montague City Road reports that one party was shoved by another party, who lives across the hall in another apartment. Caller advises that one party is intoxicated and has been yelling for hours. Officer clear; situation mediated.

**Tuesday, 9/22**  
12:29 p.m. Party into lobby to inquire about getting an ID in MA as she is attempting to have utilities turned on at a local address. While officer spoke to party, dispatch ran her plate and license, which show status expired. Officer attempted to explain to party that she would not be able to drive her vehicle away as she does not have a valid license. She was given options as to renewing her VT license or taking care of her MA license. Party was very argumentative with the officer and requested several times that she be allowed to drive away. He again explained the situation to her and she was provided a courtesy transport to the Bookmill.

**Wednesday, 9/23**  
5:52 p.m. Caller reports hearing gunshots tonight in Lake Pleasant; has happened a few times recently. Officer investigated and found that parties were at least 500 feet from any dwelling and had permission to be there.  
6:25 p.m. Caller meats. Caller declined and the party went to her neighbors. Chief requests that if party is located, they be reminded that they need to have proper permits from MPD and the Board of Health to solicit. Patrol units advised.  
6:16 p.m. Caller complaining of several four wheelers and dirt bikes in the roadway at Randall Wood Drive and Randall Road. One male party has no helmet. Second caller reporting parties “screaming” up the road at high rates of speed; at one point they witnessed one of the bikers with a baby on a bike (small child still in diapers). Officer spoke to parties in area, who denied involvement. Investigated.  
6:31 p.m. Caller from Vladish Avenue reports that approximately one hour ago, the truck marked “Northeastern Beef” came to his home. He did make a purchase and saw the truck head to Coolidge Avenue. Officers will be advised.

**Thursday, 9/24**  
1:12 a.m. Officer advises that the gate to the gatehouse under the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge is unsecured and open; requests that FirstLight be advised. Contacted control room at Northfield Mountain; same was advised.

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Saturday, September 26 • 9 a.m. to noon

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Pre-register at 1 (800) 859-2960

Meet at the Great Falls Discovery Center

Beth says there will be a ton of donuts and whoopie pies

**STEW** from page B1

I’ve adapted this recipe, over several years, from this recipe from the 1906 *Inglenook Cook Book*:

“Drain the liquor from 2 quarts of oysters. Mix it with a small teacupful of hot water; add a little salt and pepper; set it over the fire in a granite saucepan; let it boil up once, then put in the oysters and let them come to a boil.

“When they ruffle, add 2 tablespoonfuls of butter; when melted and well stirred in, add a pint of boiling milk or part milk and cream. Take from the fire and serve with oyster crackers. If a plain stew is liked, add boiling water instead of the milk and more butter.”

Here’s my recipe (granite saucepan not needed):

OYSTERGIRL’S OYSTER STEW

Ingredients

- 1 dozen shucked oysters (separated from liquor)
- 1 or 2 medium shallots, sliced thin
- 1 or 2 cups milk or cream
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1 or 2 tbsp butter
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. In one pan, cook the shallots in milk over a low-medium heat.
2. When they get close to boiling, turn down the heat and let them simmer.
3. In another pan, cook the oyster liquor and water.
4. When the liquid bubbles, add the oysters.
5. When the oysters ruffle, add the butter.
6. Stir lightly until the butter is melted.
7. Mix together the contents of the pans.
8. Simmer on low for a while, then serve warm. Be sure to get a good whiff of it before digging in.

Variations

Because the oyster flavor (primarily from the liquor) is the real highlight of this stew, I find that the simpler the recipe, the better. That said, some variety is nice.

Traditional variations include adding a bit of cayenne or paprika, celery or celery salt. I’ve also experimented with adding leeks or scallions in place of the shallot, kelp noodles – nice due to their neutral flavor and ability to soak up goodness, and fresh herbs – sparingly – rosemary and thyme are recommended.

One-Pot Variation

The above recipe is great in its authenticity, but sometimes you just want to use fewer dishes. Here’s a super simple variation of my recipe, using just one pot.

1. Start cooking something in the onion family.
2. Strain 1 dozen shucked oysters to separate meat from juice (liquor).
3. Add oyster meat to onions.
4. Cook until the edges of the oysters start to ruffle.
5. Add oyster liquor and 2 cups of milk and/or cream.
6. Cook until broth steams but does not boil. Season to taste.

Vanessa Query, aka Oystergirl, digs all things local and sustainable, and identifies mostly with the paleo/ancestral movement. She writes about food and philosophy and more at *They Call Me Oystergirl*: theycallmeoystergirl.com. She welcomes responses and questions at oystergirl@montaguereporter.org.

**FARREN** from page B1

There was a flurry of newspaper activity surrounding his decision to fund a hospital in town.

The first mention I found referred to an April 17, 1899 town meeting warrant item, where it was unanimously voted that the selectmen “confer with Mr. B. N. Farren regarding the changes and repairs on the highway at Montague City desired by him in connection with his plans for building a hospital at that place.”

The meeting also authorized Farren to “make such repairs on said highway from a point in front of the premises of C. A. Bagnall to a point in front of the premises of Mr. Farren, as may be agreed upon; and are also hereby authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to establish permanently said highway.

“And it is also hereby ordered that the sum of one thousand dollars be raised by taxation during the current year and appropriated for this purpose.”

In the following issue of the *Reporter*, Farren writes from Philadelphia, thanking the people for supporting the project and stating, “it is too soon to say precisely what my plans are to be, but my wish is to found an institution that may be of lasting benefit to the people of Franklin County.”

It is hard to imagine supporting such a vaguely stated project in this day and age, but Farren’s reputation and deep pockets undoubtedly held him in good stead in the town.

By June 7, 1899 the *Herald* reports that construction will start in a few weeks and stone is being removed from the ledge in Farren’s meadow while architect Watson Eyre, Jr. of Philadelphia is in town to discuss the building details.

Bagnall writes, “The institution to be founded by Mr. Farren will be beyond anything of the kind erected either by private or public means in this part of the state, and will make the gentleman’s name revered in Montague as Mr. Moody’s is in Northfield.”

Nearby properties were purchased



The building, under construction.

and removed to alternative locations to make room for the hospital.

The August 2 edition of the *Herald* featured a sketch of the building and described the plans in great detail – the main building, two wings and a central rear wing in addition to a small morgue on premises.

The basement held boiler rooms, storerooms, and dining room while the two main floors boasted fully equipped patients’ wards expected to serve about 50 patients and a partial third floor held a library and recreation facilities for recovering patients.

The rear wing held the administrative offices and supporting operations like laundry, kitchen, coal storage, etc. in addition to the “etherizing” and operating rooms, infirmary, physicians’ offices, pharmacy and much more.

There were also living quarters for the medical staff and a chapel complete with chancel, vestry and organ room.

With great fanfare the Farren Memorial Hospital was dedicated on Tuesday, October 23, 1900. It was an invite-only affair due to the limited seating capacity of the chapel, but plans were made to open the building for public tours at a later date.

Friends and local dignitaries came from far and wide to honor the man who made it all possible.

“Archbishop Corrigan of New York, a warm personal friend of Mr. Farren for a great many years, was the first speaker. Mr. Farren had given him the pleasant task of representing him and transferring the building to its ultimate management.

“He spoke of the long and pleasant relations between him and Farren, saying the gift was like the river, modest and unassuming.”

Corrigan eventually formally turned the building and the podium over to Bishop Beaven who spoke about Farren’s decision to place the institution in the care of the Sisters of Providence, “who would see to it that efficiency and faithfulness were brought to their work.”

The Reverend Mother Mary was the sister superior placed in charge of the facility. There have been many changes over the years, but the Sisters of Providence maintain their presence at the Farren Care Center.

See next week’s paper for the continuing story of this landmark building. To access the scanned historic newspapers visit [www.montague.advantage-preservation.com](http://www.montague.advantage-preservation.com).

**GARDENER’S** from page B1

the unbelievable persistence of life. As I weed, I find one late bloomer green bean which despite the cool and impending dark, has produced a small plant with blossoms and a few tiny beans. Regretfully I pull it out just the same as for sake of hygiene; I am turning under the whole bed for vine crops.

It is a great pleasure to see that there is a strong crop of young farmers in our valley who choose to produce our local foods, some even using pre-machinery tools like oxen and hand tools. There is a certain optimism and daring to go out on a limb like this in the face of potential loss despite great investments of time and money.

There is so little good in the news: dysfunctional politics, the doors closed to thousands of refugees, the greed, the poverty of many, the continuing destruction of the environment, the natural disasters that bring

death and desolation, that I am grateful for these stalwarts who not only feed us but also remind us to focus on what matters.

This kind of farming takes us back to our roots when families felt lucky to own a piece of land and the strength of will to tend to it, working with the seasons and with the earth. This is far from easy living but it gives back as much as it takes in healthy food and good living.

I’ve only come to realize rather late in life what this close connection to mother earth means to me. Earlier on I was a winter enthusiast, a downhill skier and an ice skater. For many reasons, I no longer take these on. When we told friends we were going to northern Florida last winter, their faces glazed over with images of huge, populous cities by the crowded beaches.

Instead we were lakeside in a relatively poor rural countryside surrounded by aficionados of bass fishing with whom we had little in common. We have pondered long on why those five weeks were so pleasurable.

I think now it was because we were still gardeners there, walking out each day surrounded by strong plant life, often in bloom and ever-changing, still connected to the earth in a way that’s hard to be in several feet of snow.

Nonetheless, I don’t want to live there year round. I’d miss the joys of the change of season, the eager wait for the first flowers of spring, for planting time, the easy lazy summer days, the cool and the call of owl and the nights by the woodstove. Now I’m going out to set in the flowering vines which will decorate the pergola.

Enjoy the harvest and happy gardening!

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## ONGOING EVENTS:

### EVERY SUNDAY

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Celtic Sessions*, musicians of all levels welcome to play traditional Irish music, 10:30 a.m.

### EVERY MONDAY

Montague Center Library: *Evening Story Time*. Young children and their families are invited to wind down at the end of the day with stories. 6:30-7 p.m.

### EVERY TUESDAY

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope*. Hands-on environmental experience for young children, 3-6 years. 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

### EVERY WEDNESDAY

Great Falls Farmers Market, Turners Falls: Fresh produce, plants, crafts, etc. 2-6 p.m. Through October 30.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Story Time*: Thematic stories, projects, and snacks for young children with Ruth, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Tales and Tunes Story Hour*. For ages 0-5 and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m.-noon.

### EVERY THURSDAY

Montague Center Library: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll & Laurie Davidson*. Children and their caregivers invited. 10 a.m.

The People's Pint, Greenfield: *Derek Bridges*, live acoustic guitar, 7 p.m.

The Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls:

*TNT Karaoke*, 8:30 p.m.

### EVERY FRIDAY

Slate Memorial Library, Gill: *Story Hour*. Stories and arts and crafts 10 a.m. - noon.

### EXHIBITS:

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Ray Gengenbach*. Amherst



*A happy audience at last year's Brattleboro Literary Festival which begins this year on October 1 and runs through the 4th. This year celebrates the 150th birthday of Rudyard Kipling with over 40 well known authors speaking on the topic Stories: From Fairy Tales to Real Life. See brattleboroliteraryfestival.org for schedule and venues.*

artist's show of oil paintings and woodcuts, primarily of animals. Show runs through 10/16.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: September is Turners Falls History Month. Collaboration between the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Turners Falls RiverCulture. Great Hall Art Display: *Great Gods and Little Fishes*, new paintings by Charles Shaw. *September 1 - 26*. Open 7 days a week from 10 am to 4 pm.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Barnes Gallery, Leverett: *Painting Buddies*. LCA resident Susan Valentine and core group of painters from Greenfield Community College: Mari Rovang, Frankie Dack, Penne Krol, Sandy Walsh and Karen Chapman exhibit September 2-27.

Little Big House Gallery: Shelburne: *Lines Lines Lines Lines Lines & More Lines*. New pencil and ink drawings as well as Da'Muse wire figures and layered sculptures of Glenn Ridler. Through 10/18.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Sculpture by Elizabeth Denny*. Found objects transformed with humor and an acetylene torch. Through 9/29.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists Group Exhibit*. September 4-November 1.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: "Cornucopia," a Fall Members' Show. Pottery, fiber art and clothing, jewelry, ceramic tiles, paper art constructions. Oil, acrylic and water color paintings. Photography. Original arts for children. Check website for seasonal hours: [www.sawmillriverarts.com](http://www.sawmillriverarts.com) Show through October.

Shelburne Arts Co-op, Shelburne Falls: *"Crisp!"*, A group show by artists at the Shelburne Arts Cooperative; August 26 through September 28

### CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Sawmill River Arts, Montague

Montague Bookmill, Montague: *Ephemeral String Band*, and *The Briars of North America*. Bluegrass to gospel and beyond. 8 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Reprobate Blues Band*. 9 p.m.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Great Hall, Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Source to the Sea Clean Up*. 19th year of this important local environmental event. Volunteers needed to work in teams to clean up trash from the Connecticut River watershed. For ages 7 and older. Meet at the Great Hall at 9 a.m. 9 a.m. - noon.

Montague Bookmill: *Apple Hill String Quartet*. Classical. 8 p.m. \$

Leverett Crafts and Arts: *Blue Ganu*, rock. 8 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya, Shelburne Falls: *The Equalites*. Reggae. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Steve Kurtz/Dan Belmont Jazz Quartet*. 9 p.m.

Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *Groove Prophet*. Rock 'n Roll cover band. 9 p.m.

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Great Hall, Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *The Grand Trunk Hotel*. A Discovery Center staff member will guide a discussion piecing together the story of grand old days in Turners Falls, concentrating on the Grand Trunk Hotel, built in 1872. 1-2 p.m.

the Arts Block, Greenfield: *Sunday Improv Fun Time: An Open Improv Jam*. 7 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Screaming J's*. Ragtime Boogie Woogie Piano Band. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nora's Stellar Open Mic*. Cabaret. 8 p.m.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope*. This week it's squirrels! See *Every Tuesday* for details. 10:30 a.m.

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

Leverett Library, Leverett: *How Things Move: Exploring Simple Machines*. For ages 3-6 and their caregivers. 3:15-4:15 p.m.

14th annual Brattleboro Literary Festival, Brattleboro VT: Tonight's *Poetry Slam with Rachel Eliza Griffiths* jump starts the festival which runs through 10/4. 7-9:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya, Shelburne Falls: *The Collected Poets Series* featuring Teresa Carson and Dawn Potter. Poetry reading. 7 p.m.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

14th annual Brattleboro Literary Festival, Brattleboro VT: *Brattle-*

*boro Festival Celebrates Stories: From Fairy Tales to Real Life*. Presentations by Francine Prose, Ann Beattie, Jim Shepard, Bob Morris, Dinaw Mengestu, Bill Roorbach, Ann Hood, Gregory Pardlo, C.D. Wright, Vijay Seshadri, and more than 40 additional acclaimed authors. Runs through Oct. 4. Variety of venues in Brattleboro. See website [brattleboroliteraryfestival.org](http://brattleboroliteraryfestival.org) for details.

Mocha Maya, Shelburne Falls: *Ray Mason*. Indie rock. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Equalites*. Reggae. 9:30 p.m.

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# TURNERS FALLS BOUNCES BACK:

## TURNERS FALLS 34 - MAHAR 0

By MATT ROBINSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – The Turners Falls Football Indians improved to 1-and-1 after a 34 -0 drubbing of the Mahar Scarlet Senators, a team who beat powerhouse Amherst the previous week. Turners’ victory came after a disappointing loss to Easthampton in their own opening game.

“We were mad,” Turners coach Chris Lapointe told me after the Mahar game. “Mad at the way we played.” And their anger turned to success, as Turners dominated Mahar from kickoff to final whistle.

The Tribe took first possession and worked their way to midfield, but were forced to punt the ball away.

After a Tionne Brown punt and alert coverage by the kicking team, Mahar was pinned deep in their own territory on the Scarlet 9 yard line. The Blue D played with the same intensity they had in the first half against Easthampton. They held the Senators to 4 yards, but a roughing-the-passer on an incomplete pass gave Mahar a fresh set of downs.

Then on second and 10, Jack Darling fielded a bouncing fumble and sprinted all the way into the end zone, and Turners was on the score board. It was the first TD of the season for the Tribe, and the first of three 6-pointers for Darling.

Tyler Lavin added the extra point and at 5:24 of the first quarter, Powertown led 7-0. Lavin has stepped into the cleats of kicker Emmett Turn, adding one more option to Coach Lapointe’s play book.

A bouncing kickoff gave the Senators a 1-and-10 on their own 32, but two no-gains and a penalty gave them 3rd and 20. Then an Owen Ortiz sack forced Mahar to punt.

Turners took over on the Senators’ 41 and Quinn Doyle began pounding the ball. He got to the 30 on two runs behind huge holes by the offensive line.

This was a harbinger of things to come. Doyle would become the workhorse of the Powertown offense, carrying the ball 30 times and accruing 124 yards.

But then the Scarlet D tightened up. Two short gains and an off-the-hands incomplete pass attempt led to a 4th and 8, and Coach Lapointe had a decision to make. Too far for a field goal, too close for a punt – so he called Jack Darling’s number, and Jack scored his second TD of the afternoon. Lavin split the uprights and at 1:48 of the first quarter, Powertown took a 14-0 lead.

On Mahar’s next possession, Tahner Castine, Cullen Wozniak, Nick Croteau and Will Roberge each made tackles, and the Senators were forced to give up the ball.

Hard running by Doyle, Darling and John Driscoll behind forceful blocking by the line got the rock to the Scarlet 13, but a fumble gave it right back and kept the margin at 14.

Mahar made it to the 40-yard line on their next possession, but the Blue D stopped them on 4th and 2 and the Tribe’s offense came back on the field.

Games are won and lost on key plays. If a team is stopped on third down, they face a punting situation, and if they don’t get the first down on fourth down, they give up the ball and the momentum shifts. In this case, the Blue D dug in, and gave the ball to the Turners offense with very little time left in the half.

Turners systematically moved down the field on strong running by Doyle. But as Turners moved closer to pay dirt, with the clock ticking toward zero, Mahar’s defense tightened up once again.

And then the clock broke.

With less than 30 seconds left in the half, the scoreboard went blank, and the officials had to keep time with a stop watch. This only added to the suspense.

The ball was on the 8-yard line, Turners was facing 4th and 2, and only the officials knew how many seconds were left. Now it was Turners’ offense who were facing a key 4th down situation.

Tionne ran a keeper and squeezed ahead 3 yards for a first down, and the referee called out “18 seconds.”

18 seconds to gain 5 yards. Last season, Lapointe’s Cardiac Kids often scored with

less than 2 minutes on the clock. But that was last year.

First and goal became second and goal, and the crowd became silent with anticipation. Then Tionne ran another keeper, and with 11 seconds left in the half, carried the ball into the end zone, sending Turners into the locker room leading 21 to zip.

Mahar received the ball in the second half, and got it back after trading interceptions. On their second possession of the half, the Senators again tested the Powertown defense and ran a play on fourth and 2. Another key play, another stop by the Blue D. And the Turners offense trotted back on the field.

The Tribe started on the Scarlet 40 and again marched down the field, and when the third quarter ended, they had third and goal on the 1-yard line.

“Push the sled one yard,” Lapointe called to his boys, and they did. The line pushed the defense back and Quinn Doyle powered into the end zone, putting the Tribe up 27 to zilch with 4 seconds gone in the fourth.

Turners scored once more, when Jack Darling sprinted into the end zone with 2:14 left

in the game. Mahar threatened to prevent the shutout by banging down to the Blue 11 with 35 seconds left, but Powertown stopped them three times in a row, giving Mahar a fourth-and-7 from the 8-yard line.

And it became a contest of wills. One team was desperate to score, the other desperate to hold. And with 13.7 left in the game, the Turners D once again held their ground and preserved the shutout.

Quinn Doyle led the Tribe in rushing, with 134 yards on 28 carries. Jack Darling amassed 79 yards of his own on 9 attempts. John Driscoll carried the ball 6 times for 20 yards, and Will Roberge and Tionne Brown also carried the ball.

Brown went 2-for-4 in the air with a TD and an INT. Darling and Doyle both had receptions.

Brown and Doyle each scored touchdowns, and Jack Darling scored 3. Lavin added 4 extra points. On the defensive side of the ball, Brown and Darling both grabbed turnovers.

Turners’ next game is on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup>, when they play Frontier at home for Booster Day.



No. 13, Jack Darling, heads for the end zone to score his third touchdown of the game as the Turners Falls Indians shut out the Mahar Senators 34-0 at the Bourdeau Fields Complex last Friday.

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