



# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 14 – NO. 28

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 28, 2016

## Montague's Water Pollution Control Facility: Innovation, Teamwork, and a Little "Magic"

By JEN HOLMES

**MONTAGUE CITY** – About 3 years ago, the staff at the Montague Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF), the public works department responsible for treating residential and industrial wastewater, had the creative idea to make use of the waste created from their treatment process by turning it into compost.

While this is not a normal part of a waste treatment facility's operation, the Montague WPCF nonetheless began developing a plan, with guidance from a local compost facility operator, and successfully made their own compost out of the plant's concentrated waste byproduct called "sludge".

"At any time, we can take sludge out of the [treatment] process and de-water it to a brownie-like consistency, and put that to compost. We don't have to, but we can," says Bob Trombley, superintendent of the WPCF.

Sludge, an aptly named biological material, is the result of a number of processes that wastewater



The staff at Montague's Water Pollution Control Facility, left to right: Tina Tyler, Tim Peura, Tim Little (front), John Little (back), Anthony Suprenant, superintendent Bob Trombley, Abe Rathbun, and Kate Jones.

undergoes in basic treatment. The first process, preliminary treatment, involves a filtering of raw wastewater through a bar screen, where large debris such as sticks or rags are removed. The remaining flow of wastewater, or effluent, is slowed down in a grit chamber, allowing anything heavier than water, such as sand or silt, to settle at the bottom in order to be removed.

Next, in the primary treatment, the effluent goes into devices called primary clarifiers, in which the flow is slowed even more, al-

lowing anything heavier or lighter than water not removed in the preliminary process to settle or rise, respectively. Those materials are then removed.

Then, in the secondary, or biological process, the cloudy effluent enters a tank that is teeming with bacteria and single-celled organisms – "the same bacteria and organisms we have in the Connecticut River, in a pond, in a puddle of water," explains Trombley.

These indigenous bacteria and  
see MAGIC page A5

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Health Board's Regs Fail to Quiet Outdoor Music Debate

By JEFF SINGLETON

"That was amazing," said Richard Kanoff, the attorney representing Montague in its pipeline intervention at the Department of Public Utilities. Mr. Kanoff was not referring to the well-documented passions surrounding the natural gas pipeline, once slated to pass through Montague. Waiting for an executive session on that issue, he had just observed a highly contentious discussion of outdoor band noise at Hubie's Tavern in downtown Turners Falls.

Technically, the discussion at the April 25 Montague selectboard meeting was about a noise ordinance for the whole town, proposed by health director Gina McNeely.



Mike Nelson and Chris Boutwell, who both pull double duty on the town board of health and selectboard, and health director Gina McNeely bear Monday's arguments.

The ordinance deals with everything from outdoor bands to non-amplified orchestras to planes taking off at the municipal airport (which would be explicitly exempted). The theory was that the discussion would be

see QUIET page A6

## ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Board to Interview Town Coordinator Finalists May 7

By KATIE NOLAN

The committee screening candidates for Erving's new administrative coordinator presented the selectboard on Monday with the names of three finalists for the position, which has been vacant since July 2015.

The selectboard hopes to interview Bryan Jones of Greenfield, Sheila Dibb of Rutland, MA, and Steven Boudreau of Barre, MA on May 7.

"We will act on this as quickly as possible," said selectboard chair William Bembury, who has been volunteering 20 hours a week to help cover coordinator duties.

Jones has been program coordinator/academic counselor at Greenfield Community College since 2012. He formerly worked at Greenfield High School, and was enforcement coordinator for the Greenfield health department.

Dibb has been on the Rutland selectboard since 2007. She formerly

worked as customer service manager for HS Brands International.

Boudreau has been Petersham's administrative coordinator since 2012, and formerly served as the town administrator of Ware.

The interviews, held in the downstairs meeting room at the town hall, will be open to the public. The selectboard will accept citizens' written questions for the candidates at the interview session.

## Senior Housing Study

Bembury said that LDS Consulting Group of Newton was selected to conduct a \$16,200 senior housing marketing study for Erving and Wendell, funded by a community development block grant with Erving as the lead community. The purpose of the study is to create a market survey in Erving and Wendell regarding "the feasibility, design, need, and demand for housing seniors with low and moderate incomes."

Bembury said LDS has conducted  
see ERVING page A6

## Physician's Assistant Recounts Haiti Mission

By LEE WICKS

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – Oh, the things we take for granted. Like a sterile operating room, should we need surgery, or the absence of flies and roaches in the O.R., or having more than one autoclave to sterilize surgical instruments.

Those elements of a safe, anti-

septic environment are missing in the hospital in St. Louis du Nord, located in the northwestern part of Haiti visited by Jessica Bartlett this February. Ms. Bartlett, who is a physician's assistant at Bay State Medical Center in Springfield, spent nine days in Haiti as part of a twenty-member surgical team sponsored by the Northwest Haiti Christian

Mission Organization.

Her presentation on Monday about this journey at the fire station in Montague Center was organized by the First Congregational Church, where Ms. Bartlett, who grew up in Turners Falls and now lives in Montague Center, is a member. Ms. Bartlett made her presentation in the community room at the station (the room where voting happens). It's a good place for gatherings such as this, well equipped with technology for showing photographs and serving snacks afterwards.

About twenty people came, and many brought cookies and cupcakes and fruit salad.

Six years after a 7.0 earthquake that killed more than 200,000— some estimate many more— the people of Haiti are still in survival mode. One and a half million remain homeless; about fifty thousand people live in

see HAITI page A4



Bartlett's photograph of the operating room at the hospital in St. Louis du Nord.

## Sunday: "Rock for Dimitri" at St. Kaz

By JOE KWIECINSKI

**TURNERS FALLS** – "Rockin' for Dimitri" promises to be an outstanding benefit performance this Sunday afternoon, May 1 from 1 to 6 p.m. at St. Kaz Hall on Avenue A. The fundraiser is to help Dimitri Conway with medical and weekly travel expenses as the brave 7-year-old goes to Boston to treat acute B-cell lymphoblastic leukemia.

"We're a close community," said show organizer Mike Slahetka, "and those who stop by to support this cause will be greatly appreciated." Admission is free, and all ages will be admitted. Food will be available at the event; a contribution much appreciated.

Mike is also associated with the event's host group, My Old School Band, that features John Davis on keyboard and lead vocals. Slahetka handles guitar and vocals with Joe (J.D.) Foster on drums and lead vocals. My Old School Band specializes in the greatest hits of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, along with a little country rock.

The Sean Callaghan Guitar and Accordion Trio is  
see ROCK page A7



COURTESY CONWAY FAMILY

The fundraising concert is planned at St. Kaz this Sunday to raise money for seven-year-old Dimitri Conway's ongoing treatment in Boston.

## Town Broadband Committee Requests MBI Be "Removed" From Funding Decision

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE** – The Montague Broadband Committee has sent a letter to state representative Steve Kulik (D-Worthington) requesting that the Massachusetts Broadband Institute be "removed from the decision-making process" to determine what entity should provide broadband service to unserved areas of town.

The letter, which was read at Montague's April 25 selectboard meeting, charges that the Institute, which is distributing funds from a state bond issue to rural communities to extend broadband services, has wasted money, and

is "unqualified and biased in favor of Comcast."

The letter also complains that the state legislation authorizing the MBI grants, drafted by Kulik and state senator Ben Downing of Pittsfield, was written after consultation with Comcast. This is said to explain the law's "rather odd structure and confirms our suspicion that the facts will be forced ... in order to support the previously agreed decision in favor of Comcast."

The letter requests that the broadband committee's decision supporting a broadband build-out by the company Matrix Design, Incorporated "be respected," and  
see BROADBAND page A5



# The Montague Reporter

*"The Voice of the Villages"*

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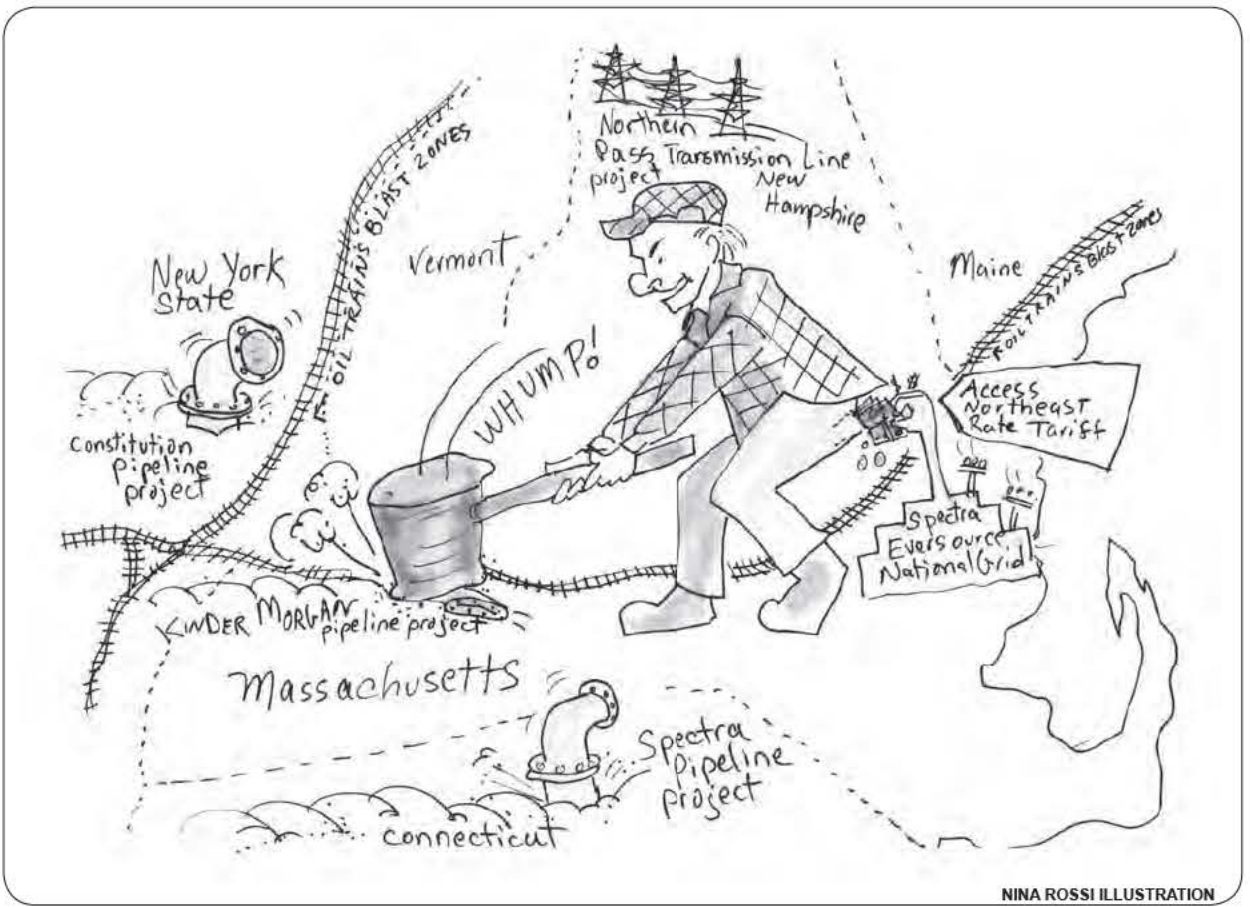
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## An Issue For The World

*Those who are afraid of you have not looked at you in the eyes. Those who are afraid of you do not see your faces. Those who are afraid of you do not see your children.*

*They forget that dignity and freedom transcend fear and division. They forget that migration is not an issue for the Middle East and North-ern Africa, for Europe and Greece. It is an issue for the world.*

— Pope Francis, April 16, 2016, at the Moria camp, Lesbos, Greece

The slowly grinding tectonic plates of the global economy have produced an earthquake, and a vast flow of refugees are piling up against Europe's door.

A global system of war and displacement now finds its clearest expression in Syria's four-way civil conflict. Masses of terrified Syrians have fled northward into Turkey, where they are joined by Iraqis, Afghans, Somalians, Iranians and others. Many attempt to continue into Europe, but, blanching at the idea of a potentially endless influx of strangers, Europeans are now sealing up their borders.

By and large, the migrants are people who had homes and jobs — "normal lives" — until the violence of bombs or the violence of prices made those lives impossible. Once moving, they become targets for profiteers. Many pay thousands of dollars for the chance to crowd onto a boat. (Last week, another 500 African migrants died in a shipwreck en route from Libya to Italy.)

Greece, which has spent the last several years being systematically broken and bled to preserve Europe's economy, now finds itself a holding pen for about 50,000 migrants trapped between the global South and North. Amnesty International warns that they are in "appalling conditions and in a state of constant fear and uncertainty."

German chancellor Angela Merkel, who last fall challenged Europe to welcome and integrate the refugees, is now scrambling to maintain her leadership role, and has turned to a strongman to help provide a solution: Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The European Union has offered Turkey \$6.8 billion to help solve the migrant crisis. The basic scheme is to deport unauthorized or "irregular" migrants from Greece to Turkey, in a one-on-one exchange for vetted and legalized refugees.

To transform Turkey, a questionably democratic state with questionable military involvement in Syria which already hosts nearly 3

million Syrians and many other refugees, into a giant processing center would certainly take the pressure off Greece and the Balkan states.

But Human Rights Watch and others question whether those sent back across the Aegean Sea will be safe there. Many claim that they left the country because, while officially tolerated, they were not safe.

Turkey doesn't recognize non-Europeans as refugees, for one thing. It doesn't permit most to work legally. It has been deporting migrants back into Syria, and reports are spreading that Turkish border guards have been shooting and killing those trying to cross.

Over the weekend, Merkel went one further, endorsing the collection of refugees in Syria, in "zones where the ceasefire is particularly enforced." This happens to be the policy pushed by the Turkish state, and while real peace in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere must be achieved in order to address the root causes of the refugee crisis, it will not be reached by trapping people in special enclaves there in order to help Greece ready its port cities for tourist season.

Erdogan has been imprisoning dissidents, shutting down newspapers, and trying to convince his supporters that Kurdish separatists and the Islamic State, mortal enemies in reality, are colluding to undermine Turkish society. The new deal with the EU puts his administration in a position of significant leverage.

Earlier this month, Merkel agreed to investigate a German comedian who read a dirty poem criticizing Erdogan on late night TV, on the basis of an arcane law against insulting foreign heads of state.

Far-right parties are making gains throughout the EU. In Germany and Sweden, attacks on asylum shelters have become regular events.

On Sunday, Italian protesters and Austrian police fought at a checkpoint in the Alps where Austria is tightening control, the latest sign of the breakdown of the Schengen Area within which free movement was supposed to have been guaranteed. In two months Britons will vote on exit from the EU.

These are globalizing problems with no real solution on the horizon, which threaten the fragile world economy, as well as the lives of millions of displaced people.

Unfortunately, the enemies of international cooperation appear to be winning the day, exactly when it becomes both more necessary, and more possible, than ever before.

## Letter to the Editors

### Turners Falls: Poor Planning Led to Downtown Noise Problems

After the Montague selectboard meeting of April 25, it was made clear to me that my message did not come off as I intended it to. The point that I tried to convey was that the Town has created an entertainment district, whether planned or not, which is not compatible with housing.

The Town has spent many years and plenty of Community Development Block Grant funds to create affordable housing. While that is laudable, without the creation of jobs to support those housed, it is only one step.

In creating housing in the business district, it must have been assumed that the businesses would operate during the day while people were at work, and the residents would be there after businesses closed for the day. On paper, this certainly looks like the buildings would then be always occupied with either business or residential use. However, many factors were not considered as

part of the plan.

At any part of this, did the Town consider that some of the residents would be working second or third shift? Did the Town consider the impact of businesses that remain open after "normal" business hours of 9 to 5? Did the Town recognize that the businesses that serve food and beverage would be operating through most of first and second shift times?

Almost all of these businesses are within a block on either side of Avenue A, in a six-block area from First Street to Seventh Street. Many bars and tavern type establishments offer some form of entertainment, ranging from jukeboxes to sporting events to live music.

Some of these types of events contribute more than others to the average ambient noise of the business district. People who live in this area must be aware that there will be more noise living in the more "city" part of town than they would expect

in the more "rural" part of town.

The Town has a responsibility to provide a good business climate in order to create local jobs for long-term survival. Some of those businesses will create additional sounds in their operation.

There must be a reasonable expectation for those who move into an area with any type of existing business operation that creates sounds to expect to hear those sounds.

The Town also has a responsibility to provide reasonable protections to the residents from encroachment to their quiet enjoyment of their property, and should be carried out through a careful planning process.

The Town should not, as the Town Building Inspector admitted, create regulations that are aimed at a single person or business. That is the dictionary definition of discrimination.

Jeanne Golrick  
Millers Falls

## GUEST EDITORIAL

### Leverett and the County Waste District: The Figures

By RICHARD DRURY

I'd like to follow up on the April 7 Letter to the Editor about Leverett's transfer station.

I've submitted four petitioned articles to Leverett's April 30 town meeting. All have obtained sufficient signatures and were accepted by the town clerk:

1. If a suitable employee cannot be recruited through the presently used mechanisms after two weeks, the position must be posted with University/College Student Employment;
2. Terminate the contract with the Franklin County Solid

Waste District; 3. The station will remain open both weekend days unless voted otherwise at Town Meeting; 4. The Station can only be closed by an environmental regulatory agency, or a majority vote at Town Meeting.

Most residents I spoke with quickly grasped the advantages of numbers 1, 3 and 4 but a couple (literally) did not feel comfortable signing the petition to terminate services with the Franklin County Solid Waste District (District). It may be more useful to focus on that, than try to cover all four.

When the District first offered its

services, it presented a hauling savings estimate of \$3,000; ostensibly through the use of tandem hauling, hauling two recycling containers at a time. The problem was, it cost twice as much per tandem haul, \$290, as the Town was paying to haul a single container, \$145. Thus no savings could be obtained.

At the same time every other cost, except tipping (dumping) construction waste (CW), was more: \$665. (The DEP does not provide figures for Leverett's CW tonnage for 2009 and 2010, so hauling is based on previous estimates.) Tipping trash

see GUEST ED next page

**Published weekly on Thursdays.**  
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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

Residents of Erving are having a **town wide tag sale** on Saturday, April 30 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Maps of tag sale locations are available at Erving businesses – Freight House Antiques, Pocket Saver Market, Railyard Restaurant, Crooked Tap Cafe, Weatherheads Convenience Store, French King Bowling Center, and Prondecki's Store – as well as the senior and community center, Erving Elementary School, town offices, and the Erving Public Library.

The rain date is May 1.

The Friends of the Erving Public Library will also hold a **Book Sale, Plant Sale, and Tag Sale** on Saturday, April 30 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., to continue through the next week during library usual open hours.

There are hundreds of plants, more than 1,000 new or gently used books, some DVDs, CDs, and magazines at incredible prices.

Do you have trouble reading maps, never mind folding them back up? Are you back in the stone age, and operating without a cell phone, or a GPS in your car? Or, worse, are you a guy who will never ask for directions?

You can still **use a compass**.

Learn how to navigate by us-

ing a compass from Paul Montero, who will demonstrate how to use this ancient tool at the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank on Saturday, April 30, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Montero resides in Royalston, and is a MassDOT engineer as well as a professional land surveyor.

Cameron's Winery, 105 Main Street in Northfield, is hosting an event to **benefit the Montague Reporter** on Saturday, April 30, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Come enjoy complimentary tastes of local fudge & goat cheese, and sip Cameron's wine. Music will be provided by Corki and Ken, and a gift basket raffle will be available. For just \$10 you can get 26 chances to win one of 25 spectacular baskets.

You won't want to miss out on this wonderful evening of local treats, local music, and the chance to support our local, nonprofit newspaper!

Come have some dinner (or just have dessert), something to sip on at the Wagon Wheel Word, **Poetry open mic and spoken word**, hosted by Eric Wasileski and featuring Lori Derosiers, on Monday, May 2, starting at 6 p.m. at the Wagon Wheel, 39 French King Highway in Gill.

**Tuesday, May 3 is Valley Gives**

**Day.** Donate online to local causes through [valleygives.razoo.com](http://valleygives.razoo.com), and the impact of your gift may be increased through matching grants and awards.

Participating local organizations include the Brick House, Center for New Americans, the Nolumbeka Project, Franklin County Community Meals Program, the Literacy Project, Prison Birth Project, the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, DIAL/SELF, Montague Catholic Social Ministries and the Shea Theater Arts Center.

Celebrate a historic victory for the land and the people of Massachusetts! **Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust** will be at the People's Pint all day on Valley Gives Day (Tuesday, May 3) for a party to commemorate the many, many people and organizations who joined together to fight back (and win) against the proposed Tennessee Gas Pipeline!

Join together with Leigh Youngblood and members of the Board and staff at Mount Grace to support land conservation with Valley Gives and honor a momentous victory. The People's Pint will dedicate a portion of the proceeds from the event to Mount Grace.

**Great Falls Farmers Market Opening Day** is Wednesday, May 4, from 2 to 6 p.m. Check out what is new. As always, the market, located on the corner of Second Street and Avenue A in Turners Falls, is rain or shine.

The Erving Senior center hosts their **Spring Craft Fair** on Saturday, May 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Erving Senior Community Center, One Care Drive, just past

Erving Elementary on Route 63 on the Erving side of Millers Falls.

The fair will feature Nana's Attic, arts, crafts, baked goods, great gifts, spring and summer décor. For info, please call (413) 423-3649.

On Saturday, May 7, **Sawmill River Arts** at The Montague Mill invites the community to help celebrate its 5th birthday with art demonstrations, special music, a bountiful raffle, and refreshments. Outdoors and inside from noon to 6 p.m.

The gallery is a cooperative of local artists featuring fiber and gourd art, photography, paintings and drawings, gifts for children, jewelry and ceramics.

Montague Congregational Church is holding a **Roast Pork Supper** with all the fixings on Saturday, May 7, at 5:30 p.m. Meals will be \$10 for adults and \$6 for children. Walk-ins will be seated as space allows, and takeout dinners are available for order by phone.

To make a reservation, please call (413) 367-3652. The church is located on North Street in Montague Center.

There will be a memorial gathering for **George M. Newton** on Saturday, May 14 from 3 to 7 p.m., at his former residence at 88 L Street in Turners Falls.

George, a former photographer for the Northampton Gazette and Greenfield Recorder as well as an Associated Press contributor, was well known downtown, and all friends and acquaintances are invited to gather in his memory.

Send your local briefs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).

**GUEST ED** from prev. page

was \$5 more per ton (\$75 vs \$70); the reported 206 tons would have cost \$1,030 more.

If one adds the reported averaged hauling administrative fee at that time (17.5%, or \$2,330), one gets a net \$4,015 increase in hauling cost. If one then adds the District's membership fee, \$4,671, and subtracts the in-house administrative savings of \$2,000, it comes to an annual increase in cost of about \$6,700.

There is little evidence to support economies-of-scale in other areas could have compensated for this deficit.

Of course, other District benefits should be considered. The District has selected and billed service providers, coordinated events, and obtained state grants.

But that's what I did while working for the Town. They're not that hard to do. The state has an extremely competent person, Arlene Miller, available to municipalities for recycling and grant-related issues. She is a fabulous resource, and costs the Town nothing.

There are a handful of invoices that arrive once a month that have

to be reviewed, which still has to be done, except now they're from the District. And information on the bills needs to be recorded. It is neither intimidating, difficult nor very time consuming; yet some seem to believe it's a burdensome task best left outsourced.

It boils down to this question: do the gains from having a third party handle billing, contracting and providing other miscellaneous services offset administrative fees? The numbers don't seem to support it.

I used the 2015 calendar year, the most recent period for which complete data could be gathered, as a comparison period for a financial review. The analysis involved several steps: 1. obtaining prices from other vendors; 2. comparing prices; 3. adding administrative-related costs; 4. adding any new in-house related costs; and 5. making adjustments for credits, etc.

The biggest benefit to using the District in 2015 was an \$1,800 fuel credit pass-through, due to the low cost of oil (for hauling). But even with this windfall, if one adds the \$3,510 in hauling-related administrative fees, and deducts what

would have been the net lower cost of an alternative hauler (\$624), the Town still paid \$2,334 more to haul with the District.

If that windfall were removed, it would have cost the Town around \$4,134 more to haul with the District.

The remaining major services – household hazardous waste and electronics – have also been reviewed in detail, and both would have cost marginally more in 2015. Other items have also been reviewed.

As of this writing, it would have saved Leverett residents, either through taxes and/or direct charges around \$6,500 in 2015. Without the oil credit, it would have cost \$8,300 more. This is an annual expense, so the amount lost piles up each year.

In light of the fact the Town was considering cuts, one has to wonder how spending money this way is supportable.

So, what about the future?

We were told we could leave the District at any time. I don't believe the general public is aware that if a timeline isn't adhered to, the Town would have to pay the annual fee

for the following year as a penalty. For FY'16, this would have been \$6,447.

District membership fees have increased from \$4,671 to \$6,447 (38%) in the last five years, while major fees, such as tipping and hauling have remained close.

Since the Town recruited the District, a \$2 per ton billing fee has been added, and then increased to \$4 per ton. The above indicates we would, on balance, pay less by recruiting service providers directly, and save significantly by performing administrative services in-house. Also, the State, through various free sources, could make up for any perceived losses in expertise and informational materials.

Two personal notes: I'd like to thank Jan Ameen for her cooperation with this effort; I think the District does the best it can.

And I think the rumor Dave Wickles (Trucking) is difficult to work with is unfortunate. He was an excellent service provider for the 17 years I worked for the Town.

Richard Drury is the former manager of the Leverett Transfer Station.



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## ANNUAL MEETING

MONTAGUE  
COMMUNITY  
CABLE, INC.

### LOCATION:

Montague Community TV  
34 Second Street, Turners Falls

### DATE:

Wednesday, May 18, 6 p.m.

### AGENDA:

1. President's report
2. Election of officers
3. Goals for the coming year
4. 2016 meeting schedule

Food will be provided.  
Please RSVP to  
[infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com)

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RECYCLE

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By MICHAEL NAUGHTON

When preparing its recommendations for a balanced budget, a finance committee has two basic tasks: deciding which of the various requests before it should be funded, and deciding where the funding should come from.

The first always involves some amount of discussion, as it should, and it's the chief reason that I believe that an effective finance committee should be as large and diverse as possible. I think that having people with different backgrounds, experiences, and points of view on the committee helps ensure that questions about how best to spend the taxpayers' money — our money — will be discussed as fully and thoroughly as possible, and that the decisions that are made will reflect as accurately as possible the wishes of the voters and taxpayers.

Decisions about where the money should come from are not usually controversial, but questions do arise. Montague has basically three sources of funds: recurring revenues (money that comes in every year from taxes, local receipts, state aid, etc.); reserve funds (money in special accounts called "stabilization funds"); and borrowing.

I won't say much about borrowing, except that it is typically only used for large vehicle purchases and major capital projects, such as the middle school/high school renovation, or the new police station.

It has the short-term advantage that it does not affect the budget



under discussion — saying that we will fund something from "borrowing" effectively removes it from the calculation of whether we have enough money available — but it has the longer term disadvantage of tying up some portion of budgets in future years, since borrowing always needs to be paid off.

Ordinary borrowing adds to the operating budget in future years by increasing the "debt service" amount, while "excluded" borrowing provides its own funding source by raising taxes enough to cover the debt payments. Both have their uses, and have been used, but a proper discussion of whether to borrow, and which kind of borrowing to do, is beyond the scope of this column.

Recurring revenues are pretty straightforward: they are the funds that come in every year from various sources, and they are the ultimate source of all the money that the town gets to spend.

Reserve funds are various stabilization funds that the town has set up and then put money into when it has been able to. Right now, the main ones are the general stabilization fund and the capital improvements stabilization fund. There

is also a stabilization fund for the Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) assessment.

As their name implies, stabilization funds are intended to provide some stability for revenue and expense cycles that may not be in sync. Ideally, funds are added to them every year from recurring revenues, and then they are used when necessary for extraordinary expenses.

Although any stabilization fund may be used for any legal purpose, the capital stabilization fund is intended for capital purchases — typically, vehicles and equipment. The town has defined a capital purchase as one for a tangible item costing at least \$25,000 and with a useful life of at least five years.

The general stabilization fund is intended for years when revenues are dramatically reduced (for example, during a recession).

All other spending should come from recurring revenues, which includes free cash.

That's the ideal, as laid out in the financial policies adopted by Montague's selectboard a couple of years ago. They were recommended by the town administrator, based on his conversations with the town's auditors. Before then, the town only had a general stabilization fund (along with occasional school-related funds), which it funded sporadically and used for extraordinary expenses and also, for several years, the operating budget.

Since adopting the policies, we have tried to follow them, but FY'17 presented a problem. Af-

ter our first round of votes on the budget articles, we found that our recommendations from recurring revenues produced a shortfall of almost \$165,000.

We had two choices: we could rescind some of our recommendations, or we could recommend another funding source. After some discussion, we chose the latter.

Thus, we are recommending that the DPW equipment fund (\$75,000) and the DPU case legal costs (\$50,000) come from general stabilization, while Carnegie Library repairs (\$14,000), Montague Center Library repairs (\$20,000), and library masonry repairs (\$14,000) come from capital stabilization.

Personally, while I would have preferred to have been able to follow our policies, I'm fairly comfortable with these decisions. Montague is not a rich town, and tying up money in reserve funds while operational needs are not being met seems like a poor practice. This year presented some special challenges, and overall I think we've come out fairly well.

Looking ahead, though, I hope that we can get back on track over the next year or so.

*Mike Naughton has been a Montague resident since 1974 and a finance committee member most years since fiscal 2001. He can be reached at mjnaught@crocker.com or by looking in the phone book.*

*The opinions expressed here are his own, and are not necessarily shared by anyone else in town government.*

## HAITI from page A1

tents or makeshift shelters; half the population can't read, and 75 percent has had less than five years of school.

The Northwest Haiti Christian Mission in St. Louis du Nord is a full-service community resource center with a hospital and orphanage, and elder care. On one side of the building rocking chairs for the elders line a porch. On the other side, small wheelchairs are parked in rows for children with Cerebral Palsy or Down's syndrome, who were left at the mission by parents who could not care for them.

There are also programs to help prostitutes learn jewelry-making so they have other means to support themselves, and elementary education programs for children.

When asked why people from such a family-centered culture send their elders and sick children to the Mission, Bartlett explained that the earthquake had not only ripped through the land and toppled buildings; it also damaged traditional ideals of family.

Healthy children and adults who could still work and contribute to the family have become the viable family unit. There is no capacity to care for the elderly or sick children, though family members bring food and tend to loved ones while they are in the hospital for conditions that can be fixed.

Bartlett and her team traveled with minimal personal possessions, and suitcases filled with sterile dressings, surgical implements and medications. They traveled by



Happy kids greet the visitors in one of Jessica Bartlett's photos from her mission trip to St. Louis du Nord, Haiti.

plane, small plane, trucks and buses over rutted narrow roads without guardrails. Bartlett reported that she spent a fair amount of time with her eyes closed.

Yet when she opened them to take pictures, the results are heart-breaking. Rubble still clutters the landscape. From high up, beautiful vegetation and flowers frame a small village in the distance. Up close, the village is a collection of damaged houses and narrow streets, with water running along the sides from nighttime rains.

And in those streets, children grin and beg for her phone so they can take "selfies," kicking soccer balls and goofing in front of the camera like children everywhere.

While there, the surgical team

treated 43 cases needing surgery: mostly hernias, large testicular swellings, a C-section, a hysterectomy and more. These surgeries were performed in operating rooms with old equipment, where flypaper hung from the ceiling and cans of bug spray were closely at hand.

"At times," said Bartlett, "We had to cover open wounds to keep flies away."

In Haiti, she said, any lump or growth is considered a curse, and will result in community-wide ostracism. People lined up to have such growths removed.

Ones that looked suspicious were tested back in the States. A large growth that prevented a woman from closing her mouth turned out to be benign, but ovarian cysts were

malignant, and the team relayed the bad news back to Haiti where treatment options are limited.

Nobody died, however, and the hard working team worked around the clock to monitor patients in recovery, using flashlights to get around the dark hospital because there was no power after 10:30 p.m. Dire as this sounds, it is better than the alternative.

The mission hospital has no surgeon on the staff. Other teams do visit this and similar missions throughout the year, said Ms. Bartlett, but there are still periods of time when the people do not have access to a surgeon. If a surgical team had not been there, these patients would have walked two or three hours to Port au Prince and walked back just a few hours after an operation.

At the end of her presentation, one audience member thanked her for her courage and exemplary work. Ms. Bartlett humbly responded that she did not do anything special, and that people who want to go on missions to Haiti do not need special skills. One member of her team spent all of her free time rocking a little boy with cerebral palsy, she said. The need there is so vast that anyone can help.

Nevertheless, Jessica Bartlett seemed like a special person, willing to give up what we think of as everyday comforts to serve people in need.

Those who want to see more pictures and learn about the Mission can visit the website at [NWHCM.org](http://NWHCM.org).



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MAGIC from page A1

organisms “eat up” the existing waste in the effluent and convert it into a material that will settle or float out – material called “waste activated sludge”.

A specific amount of sludge is left in the secondary process tank in order to repeat the process, much like a sourdough starter being fed the next batch of ingredients. But the excess sludge needs to be removed from the tank, and the Greenfield Road facility, by a private contractor.

A Pilot Project

It is this additional step, and expense, that makes the composting program seem that much more attractive, as the sludge could be utilized on-site rather than hauled away, and the compost could then be used by the town, or sold. However, the WPCF has encountered a few stumbling blocks along the way – though that’s not necessarily a bad thing.

“Right now, we’re waiting on the state to review our sampling and testing plan,” says Trombley. “Once we get that back we’ll know what we have to do, specifically how to sample and how to test, and then we can have the compost rated,” he says.

Trombley says the facility is hoping the composted solids will be classified as Type I, which would mean it could be used or sold, with minimal oversight by the Department of Environmental Protection, for any use including growing vegetation.

(Sales of Type II solids require DEP approval, and Type III can only be applied to land not growing any vegetation that enters the food chain.)

“I think it can happen, because we don’t have any metal plating in town, so we don’t have any heavy metals in the system,” he explains. Concentrations of heavy metals are often the largest factor affecting the safety of composted waste solids.

In addition to waiting for the go-ahead from the state, the WPCF pilot composting program has been in limbo because of staffing issues. When fully staffed, the facility has 10 employees, but presently is down to 8 – with one operator on leave, and a laborer position currently unfilled.

“The staff is doing what they can to compensate for those holes,



NINA ROSSI PHOTOS

A secondary clarification tank at the Greenfield Road facility.

but you can only do so much,” says Trombley, emphasizing that the composting program could be easily managed, on top of their primary duties, with full staffing.

Too Good At Their Job?

Lastly, aside from awaiting state approval and troubleshooting staffing shortages, the WPCF has run into challenges with the process of converting sludge to compost, primarily because their plant is so efficient at breaking down waste.

“We’re so successful at reducing the amount of carbon-based products in the regular waste there that we’re having a problem keeping the heat up in the compost process,” explains Trombley.

“And you have to get the compost mixture of sludge and wood chips up to a certain temperature, for a certain amount of time, to get pathogen reduction,” he says.

Trombley is not especially disappointed about this issue, as the low level of carbon-based products, or “volatile solids,” in the sludge is indicative of an extremely efficient wastewater treatment facility – and that result is not by accident.

Over the last 8 years, the Montague Water Pollution Control Facility has developed its own innovative wastewater treatment process, going from a conventional activated sludge process to an extended aeration process.

Essentially, what this means is that instead of introducing the bacteria and organisms during the secondary treatment, they now recycle that biology back to the headworks in the preliminary treatment.

“When the raw sewage comes in, we’re hitting it right away with organisms that are looking for, or are hungry for, food,” explains Trombley – with “food,” in this case, being input waste that can be decomposed.

“That changes the whole plant from a physical treatment/biological treatment two-step process, to essentially a combined biological process. The entire facility is now biological,” says Trombley, proudly.

The success of this altered process has been measurable. Not only does the treatment facility no longer have any excess sludge, but they are also making money for the town as a result.

Without any extra sludge, there is no need for private contractors to haul it away, thus saving roughly \$200,000 a year, according to Trombley’s calculations. Addition-

ally, the treatment facility is so productive that the department is able to truck in and digest biosolids from 24 other wastewater treatment facilities, bringing with it almost half a million dollars in annual revenue.

“I’m amazed on a daily basis that we can do this. And I’m amazed at the staff – they’re the ones who have grown this, they’re the ones that have been excited about this, and with coordination and my support, have continued to do this. They’re really the genius of the operation,” says Trombley.

Montague Magic

The idea for this combined process came from one of the facility’s operators, John Little, who, while on vacation with his family in Germany, visited a wastewater treatment facility on a U.S. Army base. Little learned about their process and returned home eager to incorporate what he learned into the existing treatment process.

“It’s a more biological way, more natural way, of doing things,” Little says. “We got smarter about our work, and started learning more about biology and organic chemistry.”

“John is very mechanically inclined and a thinker, as I like to refer to everyone here,” says Kate Jones, the facility’s secretary.

“Everyone here has the skill of looking at something and problem solving, and also turning it sideways and looking at it again. Sometimes you need to do that to figure out solutions,” she says.

Jones explains that the process is



A pile of the facility’s finished compost. (“It’s hard to take a picture of compost,” our photographer noted.)

very unique, and that the Montague plant is currently the only one in the country doing this type of wastewater treatment processing.

“The stage is set... A lot of people are going to get very interested in what this is about,” she says, adding that they hope to dig into the data and better standardize the Montague process in hopes of publishing a research paper.

“We know it works, but in terms of the particulars, there’s a lot more information to be mined,” says Jones.

In addition to publishing the data and specifics of the process, the Montague facility also is looking into the possibility of patenting their process.

“If we find out it’s patentable – which is a question in itself, because we’re using normal existing biology, and I don’t know if you can patent that,” says Trombley, “but if we can patent it, that’s another potential source of revenue for the Town of Montague. Assuming people catch on to what we’re doing.”

Many operators at other facilities are skeptical of the Montague process, despite its evidence of success, in terms of consistently high waste-removal numbers and increased revenue.

“[The operators] go to trainings all the time, and other people say, ‘oh you’re from Montague, you do magic,’” Jones says.

“They’re not necessarily saying that in a good way!” adds Trombley.

Jones suspects that it’s due to a “we’ve always done it this way” attitude in the field, and Trombley agrees.

“Like anything else that’s new, you know, it takes a while,” he says. “It’s a great thing; it’s just that people haven’t woken up to it yet.”

When asked about what makes their department so motivated and enthusiastic, the staff all echoed the same sentiment: that everyone’s ideas are heard. Trombley seems to have encouraged a work environment where creative thinking is validated, and teamwork isn’t even a question; it’s the norm.

Despite having such a small team, there seems to be no limit to the innovative, and cost-effective, ideas that the staff at Montague’s Water Pollution Control Facility can bring to reality.

Who knew so much good could come out of sludge?



BROADBAND from page A1

that “we want our share of the [state] funds...” to finance make-ready costs. “Make ready” involves surveys of telephone poles, which, the letter says, will be a “necessary precursor” to any buildout.

“Are you prepared to help us do this (or find an alternative path to the funds) without further delay?” the letter asks Kulik. “It’s a yes or no answer.”

Kulik did not respond to a request for comment from the *Reporter*. The selectboard did not specifically endorse the letter to Kulik at its meeting Monday.

A broadband committee in Hardwick has taken a similar position, and is coordinating its activities with Montague. It sent an identical letter about MBI to state senator Ann Gobi (D-Spencer), who represents Hardwick in the state legislature.

The relationship between small town officials and MBI has deteriorated significantly over the past year. In December, the institute re-

jected a cooperative broadband plan presented by 44 small towns in the region called WiredWest.

Last summer, MBI put out a request for proposals to provide broadband to a number of “underserved” communities in the region. Matrix Design and the telecommunications giant Comcast submitted proposals for Montague and Hardwick that were deemed qualified by the state agency.

The Montague broadband committee argues the Matrix proposal is broadly superior to that of Comcast, providing fiber-optic cable rather than traditional coaxial and promising to serve many more homes.

The state agency, however, has expressed concerns about the financing of the Matrix plan, and about the company’s experience serving rural communities. At the beginning of April, MBI announced it was commissioning an independent study of Matrix that will be completed by April 29. The institute then cancelled a meeting scheduled to discuss their concerns about Ma-

trix with Montague and Hardwick officials. The cancellation notice was ambiguous as to whether a future consultation with local officials would take place.

**“[P]lease note that this year, [MBI] grants to the towns come to \$14,000 while expenses include nearly \$2,000,000 for salaries and \$3,312,000 in professional fees.”**  
**– Montague broadband committee letter**

Kulik and Gobi have stated that they have a commitment from MBI to hold a meeting that would provide local input into the decision. Members of the broadband committee have said that MBI has not responded to their requests for clarification about the process because the agency has already made a decision in favor of Comcast.

“It was a done deal from the start,”

claimed the letter read at the selectboard meeting. “The goal seems to be Comcast, no matter what,” broadband committee member Rob Steinberg told the selectboard.

At the selectboard meeting, Steinberg charged that MBI director Elizabeth Copeland had approached the town of Princeton, which is building its own network, “asking them if they would be willing to accept a proposal from Comcast. This is the acting director of MBI, being a sales person.” This despite the fact that the Comcast proposal does not use the middle mile network that MBI spent \$90 million building, according to Steinberg and committee member Kevin Hart.

MBI has not responded to calls from this newspaper for clarification.

The letter presented to the selectboard cited a recent study by Harvard University’s Berkman Center, which it says “calls out MBI for poor performance.” The study recommended against copper cable, stressed long-term broadband solutions, supported

“increased competition,” and advocated giving “careful consideration to local town preferences.” The broadband committee’s letter concludes that “MBI is pushing for exactly what the study faults.”

The letter also analyzes a response to a public records request for information about MBI financing:

“...please note that this year, grants to the towns come to \$14,000 while expenses include nearly \$2,000,000 for salaries and \$3,312,000 in professional fees.”

Selectboard chair Michael Nelson asked what the committee needed from his board.

“Whether you think that this is a fight that you support,” Steinberg replied.

Selectboard member Rich Kulewicz said that he would need to do more research before endorsing every point made in the letter, but that he agreed “it makes sense to build out fiber, not copper.”

“Keep up the good fight,” said Nelson, and the rest of the board nodded.



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**QUIET** from page A1

about these broader issues, not just targeting Hubie’s.

But the conversation got off to a bad start when McNeely handed out a map of downtown Turners Falls showing a 200-foot radius within which band music should not be audible to apartment dwellers. At the center of that circle was Hubie’s Tavern, which McNeely called “the restaurant.”

“The restaurant?” asked owner Shawn Hubert. His partner Lynne Hubert strongly objected, noting that the discussion “was about a town-wide noise ordinance, not just Hubie’s.”

The meeting briefly turned to the proposed ordinance. McNeely was asked how the regulations would impact bands at Old Home Days in Montague Center, or the regular concerts of the Community Band at Peskeompskut Park.

After some confusion about the exact section of the proposed bylaws that would apply, McNeely stated that any amplified music at such events would require a special permit, and could exceed the baseline noise limits by ten decibels (dB).

“It’s amplification that requires the permit,” said selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz.

Similarly, she suggested that outdoor music at bars like Between the Uprights and Hubie’s could receive special permits to make noise up to 80 dB. As Kuklewicz pointed out, the core decibel limits in the new regulations are virtually identical to the current regulations.

Millers Falls resident Peter Golrick suggested that the regulations might be “picking on” particular genres of music. “Is the Trans-Siberian Orchestra an orchestra?” he asked. “You are saying it’s okay for an orchestra to play at 80 decibels, but a rock and roll band can’t?”

Selectboard members seemed to feel there might be a potential problem, although McNeely stated that “the decibel level is the decibel level.”

But the discussion soon returned to the events of the previous summer, when the selectboard had allowed patio bands at Hubie’s of up to 80 dB. Kuklewicz suggested that the noise levels that had resulted were sometimes “far in excess of 100” dB.

“Aww, come on,” said Shawn Hubert.

“They were certainly in excess of 70,” responded Kuklewicz.

Hubert then said that he had records of every phone call made to the police department about his music. The initial complaint was made by Third Street resident Michael Thorn, who said he had closed his window but could still hear the music. “And from there it’s been a direct assault on me, my family and my business.”

Hubert later complained that Thorn had tried to use his neighbors, including transient individuals, “as a pawn” in his complaints about the music. Yet, Hubert stated, when the police, who are charged with monitoring noise levels, responded to Thorn’s complaints, “in every single case we were below the decibel limit.”

“Shawn,” said Kuklewicz,” You admitted to me that you were over eighty decibels from time to time.”

“He admitted it,” agreed Thorn, who later gave a lengthy account of his efforts to resolve the problem directly with Hubert.

“I just wanted to make clear that Mr. Thorn is not the only one who

has a problem with this issue,” said building inspector David Jensen. “My niece is up there, and the relative numbers I hear jibe with her experience. Above 80. In fact, above 90 at times.... I’m here to advocate that the government intercede in our behalf, and put a regulation in place that will silence this noise and... what’s the right metaphor?”

“Restore the peace?” suggested Kuklewicz.

“Restore the peace to the public,” said Jensen.

In the end, the board decided to “stick with the current regulations,” in selectboard chair Mike Nelson’s words. These limit bands, indoors or outdoors, to 70 dB, though as Kuklewicz pointed out, “a business can apply for an exemption, which is what happened last year.”

The board of health will consider McNeely’s broader set of regulations at some point in the future.

## Shawn Hubert later complained that Thorn had tried to use his neighbors, including transient individuals, “as a pawn” in his complaints about the music.

### Disbelief of Suspension

The board went into executive session to discuss legal strategy for the Montague intervention before the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU). The intervention challenges a contract between local gas distributor Berkshire Gas and Tennessee Gas Pipeline LLC (TGP), which has proposed to build a gas pipeline through the town.

However, TGP announced on April 20 that it was “suspending” the project.

When the board returned from the session, the board’s appointed pipeline liaison, Ariel Elan, asked Attorney Richard Kanoff to explain the “true meaning” of the suspension.

Kanoff replied that since the suspension was announced, “we’ve all been struggling to understand what that means.... Does this mean ‘game over’? We don’t know.” He said that he had filed a motion to dismiss the DPU hearing the previous Friday. Both the TGP and Berkshire Gas have asked that the proceedings be put on hold for a month.

“What we are really looking for is a filing at FERC to cancel this,” he said. “We don’t know if it’s ‘game over,’ or if they’re trying to use the time to put together another proposal.”

Kanoff said that he thought Montague’s effort to challenge the contract had “played a role” in TGP’s decision to suspend the project.

The selectboard was asked about the status of the May 7 annual town meeting warrant article which would allocate \$50,000 to the DPU intervention.

Nelson stated that that would be discussed at the next selectboard meeting. The following day, he sent a clarifying statement to the *Montague Reporter* on the subject:

“There has been a suggestion that I clarify a comment I made during the pipeline discussion last night. The Town Meeting warrant article for the pipeline continues to move forward. Depending on how much co-funding comes in from

other Towns who also have this on their Warrants, the amount may be amended down at Town Meeting. This amount will likely be determined at Monday’s Selectboard meeting.”

The selectboard approved a button on the website of the Millers Falls Watershed Council to allow donations to the town’s pipeline intervention. The board also approved a municipal agreement with the town of Northfield providing for a \$5,000 donation for the same purpose.

### Chair Apologizes

Avenue A store owner Rodney Madison requested, and received, an apology from Nelson for allowing police chief Chip Dodge to claim during a 2014 selectboard meeting that Madison was running an “illegal business.”

Madison said he thought the claim had been “racially motivated,” and that “it was quite clear that it was a mistake by the selectboard to let that happen.” He stated that Nelson had personally promised a public apology, but that he had waited through seven meetings for that to happen.

“I’ll do it right now,” responded Nelson. “At the meeting in question, there was some conversation that went beyond the bounds... that were inappropriate, and should not have been discussed. And I would personally, and publicly, apologize to you for that.”

“Thank you very much,” said Madison. “That will go a long way for me to put that behind me.”

Nelson then commented on the “excellent art” Madison has been producing at his Avenue A gallery.

### Other News

Kevin Hart and Rob Steinberg of Montague’s broadband committee gave an update on developments in their efforts to convince the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) to approve their preferred option, Matrix Design Inc., to provide fiber-optic broadband service to unserved areas of town.

Steinberg read aloud a letter to state representative Steve Kulik that was sharply critical of MBI. (See article, page A1.)

Millers Falls resident Jeanne Golrick thanked the board for new signage discouraging trucks from attempting to take the very sharp right turn from Millers Falls Road onto Route 63 South. However, she noted, trucks coming in the other direction are still trying to make the sharp left.

Nelson said he “had an answer to that question.” Apparently the state had been asked to put up detour signs on Route 63 North, a state road, but “for whatever reason, the state forgot.”

Nelson said he had recently seen a “friendly little reminder,” in the form of an email to the state from police chief Chip Dodge, about the issue, and that the state had replied that “they would get the sign up.”

The board approved a food license for the Country Creemee, which has moved into the Crocker building on Avenue A. It also approved a license for sidewalk tables and chairs.

The board signed the election warrant for the May 16 town election, and then went into executive sessions to discuss a lease renewal at the town-owned Colle Building and collective bargaining

strategy.



### ERVING

similar studies in Conway, Belcher-town, West Concord and Sunderland, and their references were excellent. The senior housing committee will start meeting after the contract is signed. Bembury said that actual senior housing was “five, eight or ten years out.”

Selectboard member Arthur Johnson said he was “hoping to cut the time in half.”

Bembury observed that senior housing is often funded by towns themselves or by private developers, because “there is no money out there for a grant for senior housing.”

Todd Czernich was appointed to the committee.

### Green Community Status

Highway foreman Glenn McCrory and water and wastewater operator Peter Sanders presented the results of energy audits for the fire station, town hall and wastewater treatment plant. The town will receive rebates for purchase and installation of LED lighting for the town buildings.

Planning board member Jacquelyn Boyden said the planning board met with Jim Barry of the state’s Green Communities program. Boyden said that achieving Green Community status would make Erving eligible for \$135,000 in energy efficiency grants initially, and then for further competitive grants.

She said that the town has already fulfilled several of the criteria for Green Communities designation, including passing an alternative energy siting bylaw and expedited permitting for alternative energy siting. Boyden said that the energy audits for town buildings were helping to meet the criterion for establishing a baseline for town energy use and planning to reduce energy use by 20% in five years.

In addition, the selectboard would need to develop a policy to purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles and adopt the state’s energy-efficient stretch building code. Boyden said that larger vehicles such as those used by the highway and fire departments were exempt from the requirement, as were police cruisers.

She said that a previous selectboard had rejected applying for the Green Communities designation because the stretch code was stricter than the building code in place at the time. However, the state has since mandated use of the International Building Code (IBC), which is more restrictive than the stretch code.

Boyden said Barry informed the planning board that projects including the replacement of the inefficient geothermal system at the senior/community center could potentially be funded by Green Communities grants.

The board decided to ask Barry to attend the May 16 selectboard meeting, and possibly include a Green Communities article on the June special town meeting warrant.

### Riverside Park Contracts

The board reviewed the most recent version of its contract with Riverside Park designers Milone & MacBroom. In June 2015, a special town meeting approved borrowing \$775,000 to develop Erving Riverside Park at the former Usher Plant on Arch Street.

Under the Parkland Acquisition and Renovation for Communities (PARC) grant, the state will reimburse the town up to \$400,000 of the total cost of development.

At the March 28 selectboard

meeting, the board started reviewing the \$94,000 proposal from Milone & MacBroom for services associated with the park’s design, and consulting on the bidding and construction phases of the project. In order to retain the grant, all design and permitting must be completed by June 1.

At the April 25 meeting, selectboard member Jacob Smith said he noticed an overlap in services between the “owner’s project manager” scope of services from Tighe & Bond and the “construction phase design” scope of services from Milone & MacBroom.

Smith observed that Tighe & Bond is contracted for \$40,000 for owner’s project manager construction services, including attending weekly site meetings, inspecting construction and reporting to the town, and that Milone & MacBroom’s contract includes similar services for \$29,000. Smith said the town may be “paying for substantially the same services twice.”

Bembury said he had discussed potential overlap with Rachel Sherer of Tighe & Bond, and that she had said there was no overlap. The board decided to sign the Milone & MacBroom contract, because of the time constraints, but discuss the potential overlap with the firm, and possibly withhold payment if the town believes it is overcharged.

### Library Assistant

The library trustees placed an article on the May 2 annual town meeting warrant authorizing an increase of two hours per week for the library assistant, making that position eligible for health insurance and retirement benefits. Regarding the article, selectboard member Smith said, “The board did not want to bring it forth.”

Bembury said, “For the board, it’s purely money.” The cost of health insurance and retirement benefits could range from approximately \$7,000 per year for the employee alone to \$17,000 per year if a spouse and children are also covered.

The board had asked town counsel Donna MacNicol to review the legality of the article. At the April 25 selectboard meeting, Bembury stated that MacNicol “will address any legal questions on the floor [of town meeting].”

Library trustee Debra Smith said that providing the legal opinion at town meeting “was very last minute, and a disservice to the trustees.” The board approved the trustees calling MacNicol to understand her analysis. Trustee Smith said that the trustees would also consult with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for advice about the article.

### Roads

McCrory presented information about movable crosswalk signs, gathered after a citizen suggestion for crosswalk signs at Moore Street. He said the signs cost \$350 apiece, and that signs bought by Northfield were stolen and vandalized.

McCrory said that stationary metal signs were cheaper, at \$30 to \$70 apiece, but he needed state approval to place metal signs. He said he had checked with the Erving police department and found no records of pedestrian injuries in crosswalks.

Bembury said that crosswalk signs would be useful along Route 2.

Police chief Philip Wonkka commented that the state’s Route 2 master plan included addressing crosswalks.



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# Erving Town Meeting: Preview

By KATIE NOLAN

Voters at Erving’s May 2 annual town meeting will consider a FY’17 budget of approximately \$10 million, and decide whether the treasurer should be appointed rather than elected, whether the library assistant should receive benefits, whether to authorize library trustees to accept a schematic design for a new library.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at Erving Elementary School.

Town treasurer Margaret Sullivan spearheaded a citizen’s petition to put an article on the warrant changing the treasurer’s position from an elected to an appointed one. Sullivan plans to retire when her term ends in 2017. A similar article was defeated at the February 2015 special town meeting. Town voters will also be voting on this question at the town election on May 4.

Education costs are some of the most expensive items in the town’s budget: \$2,840,756 to fund Erving Elementary School; \$1,619,784 for secondary education; and \$544,652 for Franklin County Technical School.

Other higher cost items include \$1,293,856 for employee benefits; \$594,455 for public safety (police, fire department, emergency management, animal control and tree warden); \$591,998 for general government (town boards and committees, treasurer, accountant, tax collector and town clerk); and \$512,278 for public works (highway department and waste collection and disposal).

Town meeting will also consider putting \$779,476 into the stabilization fund, and \$300,000 into the post-employment benefits trust fund.

The library trustees placed an article on the warrant authorizing the increase of two hours per week, from 19 to 21 hours, for the li-

brary assistant. Employees working more than 20 hours per week are eligible for health insurance and retirement benefits. The finance committee did not recommend this article for approval, the only financial article they did not recommend.

The library budget, included within the culture and recreation article, includes \$16,771 to cover the extra two hours per week. The cost of health insurance and retirement benefits could range from approximately \$7,000 per year for the employee alone to \$17,000 per year if a spouse and children were also covered.

The selectboard does not support this article, and asked town counsel Donna MacNicol to review its legality.

At the April 25 selectboard meeting, selectboard chair William Bem-bury stated that MacNicol would address the issue at the town meeting. Library trustee Debra Smith protested that not having MacNicol’s opinion before town meeting gave the trustees very little time to prepare alternatives.

Besides accepting the schematic design for a new library prepared by architectural firm Johnson/Roberts, the meeting will be asked to put aside \$30,000 toward library renovations or replacement. Library director Barbara Friedman is preparing a grant application to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for partial funding for the new library building. The schematic design is for a building at 34 Northfield Road, near Erving Elementary School and the senior/community center.

The town meeting warrant, the entire budget with all line items, and the entire education budget are available in the Around Town newsletter, which was sent to each residence in Erving. Around Town is also available at town hall.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Rep. Whipps Lee Visits Wendell, Talks Rural Broadband

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard’s April 20 meeting was moved from the selectboard office to the meeting room to accommodate the number of people who came for the visit of Wendell’s state representative, Susannah Whipps Lee (R-Athol).

She arrived later than her scheduled time because a train parked on the tracks in Wendell Depot blocked her planned route to the town center. She got to Wendell by going around the train, and when she arrived she met the selectboard, broadband committee, and members of the finance committee.

More than anything, the conversation she had with Wendell’s people was about broadband. She said that the big problem facing towns in her district is a shrinking and aging population, coupled with limited economic opportunity. Young people don’t want to move here because there are few jobs, no internet, and sketchy cell coverage.

Whipps Lee described representatives in Boston who can walk their entire district. They can’t imagine, she said, that there are seniors in Orange who cannot get to the senior center because they have no transportation, that communication with a doctor through the internet is not an option, and that doctors cannot comply with state regulations without internet access.

She didn’t need to convince the Wendell people who were there about either the need for internet access, or the degree to which Boston area residents and representatives cannot imagine what western Massachusetts people face daily, good experiences and challenges.

Fin com chair Doug Tanner told her that Wendell residents now pay

\$300,000 a year for telephone, television, and whatever internet access they can get.

Broadband committee member Ben Schwartz said, “We’re not interested in wireless,” as the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) has recently proposed, an as yet undeveloped technology that may reach every house in this hilly part of the state, sometime.

Shared town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said wireless internet service in New Salem reaches only a few homes close to the center. Internet is an education issue, with more and more work needing online research, being submitted online, and involving video streaming.

Selectboard member Dan Keller mentioned the frustration residents and town administrators feel years after the Patrick administration proposed a “middle mile” connection to town centers and a “last mile” connection to every house in western Massachusetts. The middle mile was late and over budget, and since its completion, progress on the last mile has been limited to words.

“I don’t think there is a market based solution,” Whipps Lee said. The Wendell broadband effort has stopped waiting for WiredWest and MBI and has met with a smaller group of four to six contiguous towns to pursue a smaller, more manageable regional effort. Those towns would own the assets they borrow money for and they would start co-operating to get work moving.

Tanner said Wendell is too small for a bond rating, but in its place he asked that the state guarantee loans so the towns can get work started. He pointed out that Wendell has a 30-year history of sound fiscal management that has given the town a stabilization fund.

Whipps Lee said that a five- or six-town cluster might include some towns that have a sustainable internet market and other towns that may not have the resources so that all the towns can benefit.

The success of Leverett has been a good model for other towns, and that town, which stands to strengthen its network’s resiliency if neighboring towns tie into it, has offered them its help.

Keller said that he would meet with MBI, which is still able to help with system design, although its money disbursement has been paused.

### Pipeline Aid

The selectboard was able to conduct its regular business before Whipps Lee’s arrival.

During the wait, fin com and broadband committee member Ray DiDonato opened an email on his

phone and announced that Kinder Morgan had suspended its efforts to build a natural gas pipeline through Berkshire and Franklin counties because a secure list of customers is not there, the justification Montague used in its effort to stop pipeline construction.

Wendell is a member of the Municipal Coalition against the Pipeline, and Keller has proposed contributing to defray some of Montague’s expense. The town accountant has maintained that because the pipeline would not have passed through the town, it would not affect Wendell residents, and so the town may not spend that money. But the proposed route involved drilling under the Millers River near Wendell’s D&B demolition dump, which has already been shifting towards the river without disturbance from nearby drilling. Any more slipping, Keller and others have argued, would affect Wendell residents.

### Other Business

There are several pieces of information that the fin com needs for setting Wendell’s budget for FY’17, which will be voted on at the June 8 annual town meeting.

Wendell’s assessment of the regional dog shelter depends on the shelter’s state reimbursement, which is not set. The committee also needs a dollar amount for the town IT position and building maintenance.

The general opinion is that the town garage roof can be maintained for several more years with patching, \$2,000, before it needs a complete replacement.

Town officials got an invitation to attend a meeting of small towns that face similar issues: bridges needing repair, reduced state aid and inconsistent PILOT money, unfunded mandates, and shrinking school populations. The meeting will be held in Charlemont at 7 p.m. on May 5. Keller said he might be able to go.

Essays received by the April 25 deadline in the competition for a campership at Mass Audubon’s Wildwood camp will be read and decided on at the next selectboard meeting, May 4.

Town counsel David Doneski said that Seaboard Solar has another facility almost built, but sold to another entity, and when that facility is operating Wendell will be able to get some revenue from it. That may either be added to the town’s account of \$65,000 in credit, which it has been unable to collect or apply to its electric bills, or it may actually come to the town.

Aldrich reported that National Grid has announced a cutting plan to protect their wires, with work to be completed by March 31, 2017.

### ROCK from page A1

also on the marquee. This group performs a great vault of pop songs from the ‘50’s through the ’70’s. Callaghan does lead vocals and plays guitar, while John Culpo is the accordionist and Drew Hutchinson is the percussionist.

Also performing is **The Doug Johnson Band** of Charlemont. Singer-songwriter Johnson performs only his self-penned songs. His songwriting, flavored with pure country rock, comes straight from his heart. Billy Hamer is on lead guitar, while Stephen Mayhew performs on bass guitar, and Dave Konopka plays drums.

Konopka is also the bandleader and drummer for the fourth group of the afternoon: **Escape Route**, which concentrates on 1960s and 1970s classic rock. Smilin’ **Steve** handles bass guitar and Billy

Hamer lead guitar. Husband and wife Paul and Sherri Carpenter round out the troupe.

The musicians are all happy to lend a hand to help Dimitri. Young Conway travels to Boston each week to receive chemotherapy. Presently he is in remission.

“That’s a good sign,” said his mother, Mary Conway, who works as a basic needs coordinator for the Montague Catholic Social Ministries. “The leukemia started in his knee and continued showing up in his blood. The Bay State Children’s Cancer Hospital had never seen this type of leukemia, so my son was sent to Boston Children’s Hospital.”

Dimitri was diagnosed with acute B cell lymphoblastic leukemia. He went through an induction stage at that facility from January 13 to February 15.

“He has his up and down days,”

said Mrs. Conway. “When he starts a new chemotherapy drug, they give him steroids to try to boost his immunity. He’s been going out a little more recently, taking walks up and down the street.”

Mary is very proud of her family, which has pulled together during these extremely arduous times. Dimitri has a twin brother, Corbin, and an older sister Caitlyn, 16, who earned a CNA designation from studies at her school, Franklin Tech.

Mrs. Conway notes it’s a very touching moment when she happens to notice her daughter propping Dimitri up or helping him get more comfortable.

For more on community efforts to support Dimitri and his family, check out “TeamMeaty” on Facebook.



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

# Bears, Brush Fires and Bulky Waste

**Monday, 4/11**  
11 a.m. Larceny at Arch Street. Under investigation.  
**Tuesday, 4/12**  
7 a.m. Suspicious vehicle at French King Bridge. Operator stated he was resting.  
9:05 a.m. Medical emergency on Old State Road. Assisted on scene.  
**Wednesday, 4/13**  
Vandalism of guardrail at Dorsey Road.  
**Saturday, 4/16**  
7:45 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Old State Road. Not a hazard. Making own arrangements.  
6 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle on Route 2 at east end of Old State Road. Same moved off roadway.

Not a hazard. Will remove.  
9:20 p.m. Report of erratic operation at Weatherheads parking lot. Spoke with same.  
11:15 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for operating under the influence of alcohol.  
**Sunday, 4/17**  
7:45 p.m. Stood by at West Main Street address for vehicle repossession.  
**Monday, 4/18**  
10:01 a.m. Report of black bear in area of Old State Road.  
**Tuesday, 4/19**  
Assisted Erving FD at Laurel Lake for several brush fires in area.  
**Wednesday, 4/20**  
11:25 a.m. Assisted Er-

ving FD on Route 2 at Stoneville Auto for brush fire.  
12:18 p.m. Report of illegal dumping, Route 63. Found to be resident putting things out for "Almost Anything Goes" (Bulky Waste Pick-Up).  
**Thursday, 4/21**  
12:14 p.m. Report of larceny at Old State Road. Located subjects. Items returned to resident.  
4:10 p.m. Report of a bear with four cubs in North Street area. Same went into woods.  
8:50 p.m. Disabled motor vehicle at French King Bridge. No hazard, owner awaiting AAA.  
9:54 p.m. Well-being check on resident on Lil-

lians Way. Was found to be fine.  
**Saturday, 4/23**  
4:30 p.m. Walk-in to station reporting mail theft. Report taken.  
**Sunday, 4/24**  
12:16 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle east end of Old State Road. No hazard. Owner will remove within 24 hours.  
11:01 a.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked registration, without insurance and failure to inspect.  
9 p.m. Brush fire on Northfield Road, Route 63 near railroad tracks. Assisted Erving FD on scene.

## Home Energy Conservation & Rain Barrels Too!

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On Saturday, May 14 from 10 a.m. to noon the Energy Commission will present a video at the Riverside Building, and an opportunity to purchase a rain barrel.  
The 60-minute video by Janet Masucci, based on materials devel-

oped by Peter Talmage, PE and a workshop facilitated by local builder Andy Cole, who specializes in building super-insulated homes, condenses key points including a dozen ways to reduce your home's energy use and concludes with a short guiding you through a home energy audit.  
The video helps to identify low-cost solutions so you can prioritize how to best spend your resources. Information on low cost/no cost

programs and rebates also covered.  
At the conclusion of the video, a limited number of rain barrels with diverter kits will be available to those who have pre-registered, for the low price of \$35.  
To register contact Janet Masucci at (413) 863-8694 or email [jmasucci@msn.com](mailto:jmasucci@msn.com).  
"Like" the Gill Energy Commission Facebook page to stay updated about new postings and offerings.

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## Montague: Absentee Town Ballots Available

Absentee ballots are now available at the Town Clerk's Office for the May 16 Annual Town Election. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is Thursday, May 12.

To vote absentee you must be out of town on the day of the election, have a religious belief that prohibits you from being at the polls or have a physical disability that prevents you from going to the polls.

All absentee ballots must be returned to the Town Clerk's Office by the close of the polls on May 16. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Registered voters of Montague will be voting for Selectman, Town Clerk, Treasurer/Tax Collector, Assessor, Board of Health, Parks & Recreation Commission, Tree Warden, Library Trustees, Montague Housing Authority, Soldiers Memorial Trustee (Veteran) and Town Meeting Members from all six precincts.

Voters will also be voting for the Gill-Montague School Committee.

Town Hall hours are Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Town Hall is closed on Fridays.

The Town Clerk's Office is located at the Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls.

For more information call 863-3200, ext 203 or email [townclerk@montague-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@montague-ma.gov).

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## Raisin Toxicity a High-Stakes Gamble for Dog Owners

MONOSSON PHOTO



*The Monosson's dog Ella survived a raisin binge and purge episode that ended up costing them a lot of money, while raisin toxicity itself remains somewhat of a mystery.*

By EMILY MONOSSON

**MONTAGUE CENTER** – We were closing in on the end of a glorious spring weekend when my husband discovered the bag. “Any chance you left this lying around... empty?” he asked, holding the remnants of a one-pound bag of Trader Joe’s raisins I’d purchased just the day before with images of molasses filled hermit cookies in mind.

I hadn’t – nor had I made the hermits, or chewed away the corners of the bag. Apparently our dog Ella had consumed every last raisin, save the two handfuls my husband snacked on before leaving the bag on the living room floor.

“I bet she won’t be feeling too good later,” he said, eyeing the ever-expectant dog sitting at our feet, tail wagging, hoping for a few more of the sweet treats.

He had no idea. Nor had I. Not really.

I’d had some inkling of a rumor that raisins and grapes were bad for dogs, but never paid too much attention. It’s one of those things you hear at the same time you hear of people treating their dogs to grapes. So, to be safe – and feeling a bit sheepish that, as a toxicologist I ought to have an answer to the raisin question – I suggested he call the vet.

And that is when we fell into the

raisin hell rabbit hole.

Five minutes later, dog and husband were on their way to the doggie ER, pushed ahead of the mixed breeds and the Golden and the sad-sack bloodhound and their people waiting for service.

Meanwhile I took to Google. Was this really a life or death dog emergency? If so, why weren’t we more aware?

I get it, that one species’ treat can be another’s poison. Differences



*An engraving showing Bacchus apparently taunting a dog with grapes, circa 1515-1527, by Marco Dente.*

in uptake, metabolism, excretion. Feeding Tylenol to cats is a very bad idea (as if you could feed a cat a Tylenol tablet). And pyrethrin-based pesticides in canine flea and tick preventions are verboten in felines. The inability to fully metabolize and detoxify these chemicals can kill a particularly curious cat.

But raisins in dogs? Not so clear.

Googling will either send you racing off to the vet or to bed. You may even toss your best friend a few grapes for a late night treat, smug in the knowledge that those who have bought into the hysteria are hemorrhaging dollars while paying off the vet school debt of a veterinarian who is gleefully inducing their dog to vomit, while you snooze.

Even Snopes, the online myth-buster, was confused, though they suggest erring on the side of caution.

By the time I arrived at the clinic, uncertain enough to follow up on husband and dog, Ella’s raisin-packed gut, under the influence of an injection of apomorphine (a morphine derivative which induces vomiting in seconds), had done its thing.

While Ben and I waited for Ella’s return in the treatment room, somewhat relieved, we played, “Guess how much?” Treatment with a drug, time with the vet, multiplied by the “after hours factor” – this being a Sunday evening, after all – we’d settled on something in the \$300 to \$400 range.

“Ella did great,” said the vet tech who’d taken her from Ben an hour or so earlier. “A pile of raisins came up. Some were even still wrinkled!”

Phew. Potential disaster averted. We’d accepted that it’d likely cost a few hundred – but we’d soon be heading home with Ella in the back seat. We had a good laugh about the revisit of the raisins.

But the vet tech wasn’t finished. That was just the first step.

“So now we’ll give her some activated charcoal,” she continued,

see RAISINS pg B3

## Making a Mountain out of an Ant Hill

By JOE PARZYCH

**NORTH FIELD** – This is the time of year when ants show up. I’ve tried red pepper, borax and other remedies to no avail in trying to shorten their stay.

However, there is a sure-fire remedy to keeping ants out of the house, devised by Francis Robert Schell, who once lived in Northfield. He had just finished putting on a four story addition of 40 rooms onto their modest home, when his wife complained to her husband, “Francis, there are

ants coming in the house. What are you going to do about it.”

“There’s a simple enough solution to that; we’ll just have the house torn down,” Francis said, “and we’ll build a new one that ants can’t get into.”

He arranged for the demolition of their house and hired a contractor to build a new house of granite and brick, before going off to Europe on a two-year tour. His wife wanted a modest cottage just big enough for the two of them, but Mr. Schell wanted to surprise her.

Mr. Schell, who never worked a

day in his life, other than spend inherited money, commissioned a five story castle-like chateau with a basement and a sub-basement below that, to be built on a hill.

He hired a contractor to move the hill to a site with a better view, but lacking sufficient height. The contractor laid a narrow gauge railroad, and hired a crew of Italian laborers to load the train’s dump cars by hand to transport earth from the old hill to the site of the new hill.

Two years later, when Mr. Schell and his wife got back from Europe, she was appalled when she first set eyes on the castle-like five story chateau and its friezes, capitols, and turrets with pennants gaily flying. She hated it with a passion.

When he died – let us hope not by her hand – Ms. Schell sold the castle and all the sumptuous trappings to Mt. Hermon School for \$34,000. The learned school trustees, in their infinite wisdom, paid Paine Contractors of Keene a small fortune to demolish the beautiful castle, displaying about as much sense as Francis Robert Schell.

In their defense, I can only surmise that the trustees found ants in the castle.

### FILM REVIEW

## A Permaculture Paradise?

By PETE WACKERNAGEL

**WENDELL** – The documentary film *Inhabit* will be screened this Friday, April 29 at 7 p.m. at the Wendell Free Library. The first feature-length film by Costa Boutisikaris, *Inhabit* is a snapshot of the permaculture movement in some parts of the United States.

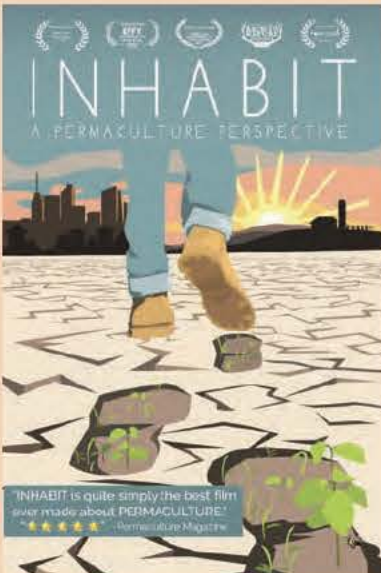
Permaculture is a school of thought whose goal is to use agriculture as a regenerative force, by basing its design on natural systems.

The film is full of interviews with leading figures in the movement. Many of the subjects live in New England, and most seem to somehow have the time to write books.

Ben Falk, Conway School graduate and author of *The Resilient Farm and Homestead*, discusses building permanent landforms such as swales to amplify the land’s natural productivity.

Eric Toensmeier lives in Holyoke, where he intensively gardens his 1/10<sup>th</sup> acre back yard. He has co-authored two books, *Edible Forest Gardens* and *Paradise Lot*.

UMass professor Lisa Depiano, one of the founders of the Northampton-based company Pedal People, talks onscreen about her

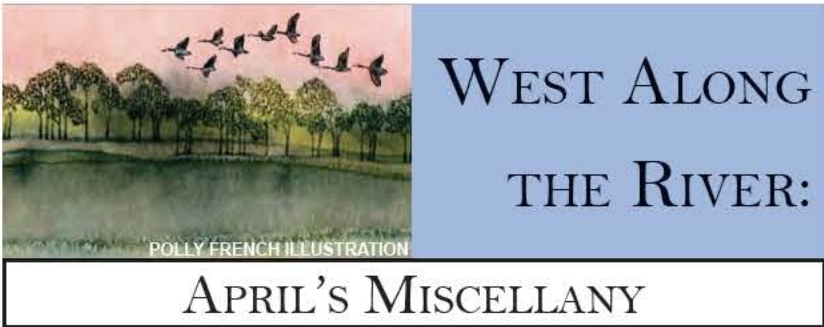


belief in creating “no-waste” systems. Pedal People hauls compost and recycling with bicycle trailers.

*Inhabit* is easy on the eyes. The footage of the various permaculture sites is Edenic: it’s always summer, and the greens and blues that predominate are washed out through a nostalgia-provoking filter. Also recently washed are the permaculturists’ flannels, which they wear on their beautiful, glowing skin.

Even the counterpoint footage of industrial agriculture seems picturesque. The perfectly angled lines of combine harvesters

see INHABIT pg B5



By DAVID BRULE

**ERVINGSIDE** – “*It is not enough that yearly, down this hill / April / Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers...*” – Edna St. Vincent Millay

Perched here on the leading edge of May, April lingers these last few days, confusing us with on-again-off-again weather changes, like March used to do. This month’s a tease: not winter, hardly spring, a few random hardy flowers, and a scruffy-looking promise, never quite delivered upon. A random bear shambles through the nighttime back yard, wind-blown redwing blackbirds gurgle and puff red epaulets, but April is better than February!

In fact, in my notes way back on February 18, I was thinking spring, and writing in compound tenses with hypothetical clauses, combin-

ing the past perfect and past conditional as should a proper teacher of grammar. I had been thinking of Claude Monet of all people, that February morning. I noted:

“If I hadn’t been sitting here on a twenty degree morning, diligent, and not unlike Claude Monet painting outdoors, working on his snowscapes as his paints congealed, I would not have heard the song sparrow sing his very first tentative song of the year. . .”

That day, and that first song opened the spring of the year back in February, but now that April has teased her way through her allotted thirty days, she’s pushed us to and fro, in between winter and spring.

The song sparrows never doubted the season however, piping up with their songs all month, being joined by other members of the sparrow tribe: the white-throats, tree sparrows, trilling juncos, and even a

see WEST ALONG pg B5



COURTESY OF NORTHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY CA. 1941

*The Schell Chateau once overlooked the Connecticut River in Northfield.*



Pasarella iliaca – Fox sparrow.



# Pets of the Week

Hi there, my name is Emma. I came in with my sister Priscilla, so we have to go home together. We just turned five.

If you're looking for an adorable pair, we might be right for you!

My person described me as a friendly, independent couch potato.

I enjoy playing with all kinds of toys. I like to be petted under my

chin and on my back. I have also lived with younger children.

If you would like to meet my sister and me, stop on by and ask an adoption counselor for more information!

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



EMMA & PRISCILLA

## Senior Center Activities MAY 2 to 6

**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**  
**M, W** 10:10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise

**Monday 5/2**  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

**Tuesday 5/3**  
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting

**Wednesday 5/4**  
9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach  
12:45 p.m. Bingo

**Thursday 5/5**  
9 a.m. NO Tai Chi  
10:30 to Noon Brown Bag pick-up  
1 p.m. Cards & Games

**Friday 5/6**  
1 p.m. Writing Group

**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 5/2**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise  
11 a.m. Manicure appointments

**Tuesday 5/3**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance  
Noon Poets Seat Lunch RSVP  
12:30 p.m. Crafty Seniors

**Wednesday 5/4**  
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing  
9:30 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic  
10 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Bingo, Snacks & Laughs  
12:30 Friends Baking Day  
1 - 3 p.m. Veterans here to guide

**Thursday 5/5**  
8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics (fast moving)  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones  
Noon Brown Bag Pick-up  
12:30 p.m. Friends set up Craft Fair

**Friday 5/6**  
9 a.m. Quilting  
9:30 Bowling Fun at French King  
11:30 Pizza Salad & Dessert  
12:30 p.m. Painting, Friends set up Craft Fair

**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.

**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.

# Great Falls Farmers Market Opens Wednesday, May 4

By REPORTER STAFF

**TURNERS FALLS** – Spring is here at last, and we are all enjoying spring flowers and sunshine and the magic sound of peepers in the evenings. The farms are beginning to awaken, too – what a wonderful sight to see the farmers back in their fields, getting ready to produce delicious and healthy food. Soon we will be enjoying fresh greens, asparagus, strawberries, and other delights from our local farms.

What better way to celebrate our agricultural blessings than to visit the Great Falls Farmers Market, opening next Wednesday, May 4. Sponsored by the Montague Agricultural Commission, the Market happens every Wednesday, rain or shine, on the lawn next to the Discovery Center, at the corner of Second Street and Avenue A, from 2 to 6 p.m.

There will be some new vendors this year, as well as music and special events, according to market manager Donna Francis. In addition to the regular farmers and growers folks have been used to seeing at the market, Different Stuff Bakery from Greenfield will be selling scones, muffins, cookies, quick breads, and pies.

Also look for the *Montague Reporter* table at the market, and say hi to staffers Nina Rossi (features) and Hannah Sanchez (advertising), there on alternate weeks. You may start a subscription, pick up a copy of the current issue, and find out about advertising or volunteering with the paper. You may also claim your fifteen minutes of fame and be interviewed right there for a cameo feature in the MR.

Also new this year: SNAP & Save: your SNAP dollars will be doubled, up to a maximum of \$10 – every week. Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture is providing the market funds to do this.

“We thank the folks at CISA for all their fundraising efforts. This is a fantastic bonus for everyone who uses their EBT card at the market,” says Donna, who handles many of these transactions herself on Wednesdays.

The market is pleased to announce the winner in the poster contest for this year is Sarah Adam, an illustrator and graphic designer from Orange.

Says Sarah, “It was a nice surprise to win the poster contest! I’m excited for the Farmers Market this year – it’s great to see the community and have access to fresh, local produce. I was previously one of the designers at the Brattleboro Food Coop, so my passion

for veggie design went right into this project.” Sarah will be at the opening market to claim her prize.

The market is recruiting vendors, and welcomes all sorts of locally grown or produced products – plant starts, flowers, vegetables, meat, eggs, maple syrup, honey, baked goods, wool, crafts, etc. Musicians interested in playing at the market can also contact them.

There is a low set-up fee of \$5 each week. Vendors from other towns are welcome. And community organizations are invited to set up displays – no fee!

For more information, contact Donna at (413) 687-1288 or [greatfallsfarmersmarketurners@gmail.com](mailto:greatfallsfarmersmarketurners@gmail.com).

Look for more information each week on the market’s Facebook page, or at [greatfallsfarmersmarketurners.blogspot.com](http://greatfallsfarmersmarketurners.blogspot.com).

The Farmers Market is a wonderful place to see friends and neighbors, buy healthy food and plants for your garden, listen to a song or two, and support the local economy.



The Great Falls Farmers Market was pleased to receive many fine submissions to their poster contest. Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls has offered to display all of the entries. This is the winning poster, designed by Sarah Adam.

## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# Hooked on Gum?



By FRED CICETTI

*Q. My uncle used nicotine gum to get off cigarettes. Now he chews the gum all the time. Do you think he's hooked?*

Over-the-counter nicotine gum, which is sold under a variety of brand names, was introduced in the United States in 1984. Since then, there have been many reports of gum addiction. There are chewers who've been consuming in excess of 10 pieces a day for more than a decade.

Nicotine is an insidious and highly seductive drug that is responsible for making cigarettes an addiction. Nicotine gets into your brain, gives you pleasure and makes you want to come back for more. In addition, nicotine helps you to concentrate and reduces anxiety. There are many

drug experts who rank nicotine over alcohol, cocaine or heroin for creating dependence.

[Personal note: On the first day I tried a cigarette, I consumed an entire pack. I quit decades ago and still would love to have a cigarette.]

Each year, about two million Americans use nicotine gum to quit smoking. The nicotine level in the gum is much lower than it is in cigarettes. You're supposed to use the gum no longer than 12 weeks. More than half of those who use the gum stay with it for longer than six months.

The gum is available in 2-mg and 4-mg pieces. Users are instructed to use a piece of gum every 1-2 hours for the first 6 weeks, then to reduce use to one piece every 2-4 hours for 3 weeks, and one piece every 4-8 hours for 3 weeks. In highly dependent smokers, the 4-mg gum is superior to the 2-mg gum.

Using nicotine gum can double the quitting success rate from about 10 to 20 percent. Most side effects such as a sore jaw or headache don't last long. If you absorb too much nicotine accidentally, you may suffer some dizziness, a racing heart, nausea, and insomnia.

If you try to stop chewing the gum and experience withdrawal

symptoms, you're probably addicted to the nicotine. Symptoms include headaches, irritability, depression, and difficulty concentrating.

There's no proof – so far – that chewing nicotine gum for long periods is harmful. While nicotine increases your heart rate and accelerates blood pressure, there is no known vascular or heart problems associated with long-term use of nicotine gum. One study suggests that using the gum for a long time may lead to diabetes. Another indicates that nicotine is linked to delays in the emptying of the stomach.

It's not the nicotine in cigarettes that kills you. Cigarette smoke is a complex mixture of chemicals produced by the burning of tobacco and additives. The smoke contains tar, which is made up of more than 4,000 chemicals, including more than 60 known to cause cancer. Some of these substances cause heart and lung diseases, and all of them can be deadly.

One of the most cited problems with nicotine gum is the price. A daily supply of 10 pieces of the gum costs about the same as a pack of cigarettes.

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

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Sharon Cottrell  
Property Manager





RAISINS from page B1

“and you can pick her up on Tuesday.”

Total estimated *low-end* estimate? A bit over \$1,000, paid up front. (I have wondered what would have happened if we couldn’t pay – but that is a whole other issue.) Apparently, we had underestimated the price of a good vomit.

“We can’t be sure we’ve got all the raisins. So we treat with aggressive IV. Two days is the standard minimum.” Noting our jaws dragging on the floor, or maybe my comment “that’s a plane ticket to Europe,” she looked at us a bit less sympathetically and added “well, of course you can take her tomorrow, or even tonight...*if that’s what you want. But that’s what we do. You can talk about it with the Vet.*”

Or: sure, go ahead take your chances. Poor dog.

Emetics like apomorphine, according to the literature, are only good for purging 40 to 60% of a dog’s stomach contents. So, even a good barf will likely leave some raisins behind.

Two days, though? With IV? While waiting for the vet, another bout of Googling confirmed the standard treatment: induce vomiting; charcoal; two days of IV, and kidney chemistry panel. Ouch.

But, here is the kicker: no one in the whole Google universe could tell me *why* we were doing this. Why the fruit we take for granted in our cookies can kill our dogs. The virtual gauntlet thrown, I took the challenge. Surely the scientific literature sitting behind a pay wall would provide the answer.

But even in my go-to database, the *Web of Science*, a site that normally yields far more papers than I care to even skim their titles, there was a handful of articles. Yet there was evidence of poisonings: one article reported kidney failure in a shih tzu and a yorkie in South Korea. Another wrote of a Norwegian elkhound, lab, border collie and a dachshund all poisoned by raisins.

The most popular article, published over ten years ago, focused on 43 cases of renal failure following raisin consumption, drawn from a decade’s worth of reports to the AnTox database (sponsored by the ASPCA).

That study confirms renal failure following raisin ingestion. But since all dogs in the study were already presenting with symptoms, the authors couldn’t provide information on what *proportion* are sensitive. Though they acknowledge that there are plenty of anecdotal dogs for whom grapes and raisins are a risk-free treat.

They also suggest there is no correlation between amount of raisins ingested and degree of kidney toxicity. In other words, there is *no dose response*. That alone is enough to confound a toxicologist (dose response is a basic tenet of toxicology, the dose makes the poison and all that), and spark controversy amongst dog owners. A dog can eat a few and die. Or eat a whole 16-ounce bag and get by, with or without treatment depending (albeit with the upset to be expected after eating a heap of dried fruit).



Not only that, but no one knows why raisins cause kidney failure. There have been plenty of guesses: fungal toxins; pesticides; something intrinsic to a particular variety; or canine genetics. But there just isn’t enough consistency to identify a mechanism of toxicity. And so vets err on the side of caution.

One vet tells me her dog went into kidney failure after eating some grapes she discarded. (She managed to save the dog.) Another says she’s never seen a dog with raisin toxicity. Of course, absence of evidence isn’t evidence of absence – but those dogs who can eat grapes and not die won’t show up on the vet’s doorstep, either.

“Sorry to hear about your dog’s experience with raisins,” wrote veterinary toxicologist John Babish, after I emailed him about Ella’s ordeal and asked: what’s up with the raisins? John was my adviser while in graduate school at Cornell University.

“The same thing can occur with grapes – all kinds and colors,” he said. “Canine responses to grapes and raisins are highly variable and some dogs are not affected at all – about 30% are sensitive to very sensitive, and a clear majority do okay with no effects. A negative fallout of the inconsistency of response is that some bloggers maintain that grapes/raisins are not toxic to dogs.”

Which explains blogs and websites like the Dog Place posting *Snopes and ASPCA Poison Control Urban Legend: Poisoned by Grapes, NOT; Grape/Raisin Debate*; or No More Vet Bills, *Grapes Toxic to Dogs?*

We are not used to uncertainty. We live in a high-tech age of data. We can sequence the human genome and create disease resistant rice. We can measure toxic substances down to the parts per quadrillion – trust me, that’s a really small amount – and tease apart the inner workings of our cells in detail unimaginable even a decade ago.

But sometimes you have to make a decision with the information you have. We weren’t willing to bet that Ella was in the majority.

Two days later we collected our pooch, happy as ever and oblivious to the whole ordeal. We won’t ever know (I hope) if she is in the minority of dogs who can’t handle their grapes and raisins; or if that \$1,000 worth of purging saved her life, or simply emptied our wallet.

But, just in case – that replacement bag of raisins I bought? Those will remain on the top shelf, hidden away until I get the urge to make some hermits.



Monday, 4/18

2:07 a.m. Party into lobby stating he noticed that one of the dining room windows at the French King Restaurant is open and thought this was odd. Party attempted to contact Erving PD but got voicemail. Call placed to Control.

11:28 a.m. Caller from Court Square requesting assistance with an injured skunk that is under his barn. Message left for animal control officer, who is off for holiday but will follow up tomorrow.

12:10 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

12:28 p.m. Report of an injured or rabid skunk behind a shed/barn on Main Street. Believed to be same skunk from previous call, which animal control officer advised he will be following up on tomorrow.

12:37 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street requests removal of an unwanted female who reportedly hit the caller, who now has a knot on her head. MedCare advised to stage short of scene until officers secure scene. Units clear; all involved parties spoken with and advised of options. Medical treatment refused.

1:47 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports that a male party was just outside causing a disturbance. Male was reportedly yelling about an MPD officer and making statements such as “I should have killed him when I had the chance,” “He never should have made it through his shift,” and “[I] should have taken every breath out of him.” Unable to locate. Officer in question made aware of call.

Tuesday, 4/19

10:56 a.m. Report of a shopping cart in the road on L Street. Responding officer found no carts in road but several in the area. Message sent to manager of Food City advising him to have someone retrieve the carts.

12:25 p.m. Caller reports that there are people camping in a tent in the woods off Turners Falls Road in Greenfield on what the caller believes to be a Native American burial ground. Caller referred to Greenfield PD.

1:45 p.m. Animal control officer received a call about a sick or injured skunk on Court Square. ACO called back advising the skunk has been taken care of.

3:09 p.m. Caller from Southworth Paper Mill reports a breaking and entering that occurred over the weekend; party is on video. Report taken.

5:06 p.m. Caller from Fed-

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Injured Skunk; Sick Fox; Loose Cow; Unattended Horses; Struck Deer; Thrown Eggs; Flown Drone; Pulled Gun

eral Street reports what she thinks might be a sick fox in the field across from her house. Area search negative.

6:22 p.m. Report of a car with multiple occupants smoking marijuana near the old bridge abutment on First Street. Officer checked on six occupants; all were smoking cigarettes, nothing else noted. 9:47 p.m. Officer spoke to several parties at the skate park; they were sent on their way.

10:24 p.m. Caller reports that someone threw eggs at her husband’s vehicle as he was coming up the hill near Third and Unity Streets. Investigated.

10:40 p.m. Request for K9 unit to respond to Erving for a 15 year old female who is “out of control” and has taken off on foot. Services rendered.

Wednesday, 4/20

5:33 a.m. Female 911 caller from Central Street reporting that someone just opened the outside door and tried to open the main door multiple times. Area around home checked; no one on foot in area.

5:59 a.m. Male 911 caller from Charron Street reporting that approximately 30 minutes ago he and his girlfriend were woken by sound of windows and screens being opened in their home. Officers checked area and home; 2 screens pushed open from outside; does not appear entry was made.

5:41 p.m. Caller from Dunton Street complaining of neighbor running a “chop shop” in the driveway; residents are working on cars in the driveway and had one vehicle on the road with a car seat on its roof. Caller advised this would be passed along to an officer. Area checked; all quiet.

5:50 p.m. Report of vehicle vs. telephone pole at Sixth and J Streets. Ever-source contacted; vehicle towed; citation issued for failure to use care.

Thursday, 4/21

6:45 a.m. Caller reports cow loose on Taylor Hill Road. Area checked; no cow located.

12:52 p.m. Officer noticed male party parked across road from airport flying a drone; request contact someone from the airport to determine rules regarding same. Vehicle appears to have moved along. Airport rep responded that any drones flying within a 5 mile radius of airport need to advise/receive permission from airport personnel prior to flying. 5:30 p.m. Caller requesting officer to respond to skate park, where two approximately 20 year old males are “out of control.” Caller states males are telling people to leave, telling the younger kids that scooters are not allowed, and talking about giving out drugs to people just to make them leave; parties are now standing in park smoking. Officer advised situation resolved for time being; combination of older kids not behaving appropriately, and younger kids not having the proper equipment and just running around the skate park.

8:04 p.m. Multiple 911 calls regarding fight between two female parties in alley between Third and Fourth Streets; one call advising of male beating up female. Officers on scene; all parties refused medical attention and were advised to file own complaint with court; this was a mutual fight.

Friday, 4/22

3:52 a.m. [redacted] was arrested on a probation warrant.

6:52 a.m. Caller reporting 4 horses unattended in the road (Turners Falls Road, 1-2 miles south of TFFD). Possibly 1 person attempting to catch same. Traffic backing up. Officer on scene reports situation under control.

7:03 a.m. Male caller reporting vehicle vs. deer collision. Deer expired; no injuries; vehicle disabled. Impact of accident threw deer into a ditch off the roadway into a pool of standing water. Resident will be picking up deer.

8:49 a.m. Caller from Simon’s Stamps reports that

this location was egged overnight. Advised of options.

10:04 a.m. Caller from Salvation Army requesting removal of an unwanted person who has threatened her in the store in the past. Responding officers spoke to subject and verbally trespassed him from the store.

7:07 p.m. Caller on 911 wireless line, very difficult to understand, requests an officer to respond as she is being threatened online. Caller states that she crochets and attempts to sell the items online. She was contacted about an item from what the caller felt like was a scam. Caller told party she did not want to do business with them, but later received a check in the mail. Officer advised party of options.

10:19 p.m. Caller advising female party involved in last night’s fight on Fourth Street was just yelling/threatening her; caller very upset that party was not arrested last night. Caller advised that an officer would be advised of this call and if these parties returned to call the PD so an officer could respond immediately.

10:38 p.m. Multiple 911 calls reporting another fight “like last night” in the alley behind the Rendezvous. All units advised. Female caller called back to advise that when her boyfriend went outside to tell involved parties to leave, a male pulled a gun on him. All units clear; parties have been separated for the evening; all verbal tonight.

11:56 p.m. Officer in area of Brick House on foot; kids throwing eggs. Shells found in area; unable to locate culprits.

Saturday, 4/23

1 a.m. Two additional reports of cars being egged on/near Unity Hill. Unable to locate persons involved.

Sunday, 4/24

1:31 a.m. [redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.

**MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!**

**SEBARSH RL VEDN AEYNGNLL**

**BAOS O LWANVN EU VNDDRVNSB.**

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MIKE JACKSON PHOTOS



# Spring Arrives!

By REPORTER STAFF

The sixth annual Franklin County Spring Parade took place last Saturday on the Hill in Turners Falls, following the third annual associated 5K Road Race. The weather was *once again* fantastic for the event. This year's theme was "Under the Sea."

The parade award for "Best Agricultural Entry" went to the Montague Agricultural Commission and Great Falls Farmers Market. The Montague Reporter's own Oystergirl passed out information on the farmers market, dressed in fine spring fashion.



The Franklin County Boat Club took the prize for "Best Use of Theme."



Team Relay for Life won the "Most Wicked Awesome Float."



The contingent from Sheffield and Hillcrest Elementary Schools won for "Most Spirited Group."



"Best Musical Entry" went to the North County Line Dancers.



The final award, for Sweetest Antique Car, went to Duane Jenks. We don't think we got a photo of Mr. Jenks' ride, but at right is the former Millers Falls Fire Department's old Engine No. 1., a 1926 American LaFrance/Brockway Torpedo, according to Northeast Firenews (firenews.org.)

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**WEST ALONG** from page B1  
pair of fox sparrows. These big russet scratchers and tossers of leaves down in the back of the garden spent the entire month with us, setting all kinds of house records for fox sparrow-lingering. A towhee slipped in right behind them once they finally exited on Patriot's Day.

So, capricious April brought a yodeling band of jays and melodious sparrows with their elaborate songs, just before dumping seven inches of snow on the chorus of frogs down at the pond, and cruelly silencing the hyla spring peepers chancing an early start in the woods.

Stranded phoebe flycatchers desperately searched the woods that day, hovering close to tree trunks for random stranded and sluggish insects caught out in the snow.

I confess I had a sleepless night worrying over the flycatchers and woodcock, hanging on for dear life in the bare poplar and scrub oak in the snowy woods. They had gambled on being the first back on their

preferred territories, and now were betrayed by an April storm.

The snow, that poor man's fertilizer, faded within a day, and eventually gentle rains helped green things up.

On *April 2, 1855*, in speaking of greening, Henry David Thoreau wrote in his journal:

"Green is essentially *vivid*, the color of life, and it is therefore most brilliant when a plant is moist and most alive. A plant is said to be green in opposition to being withered and dead. The word is from the old Saxon *grene*, meaning to grow, and hence the color of herbage when greening."

So this is the week that April ends, having at least delivered the state of affairs described by those old Saxons. Sky-blue Siberian scilla, capable of blooming in the snow, are now fading under the light April rain.

There's a promise of dogwood flowering, cherry buds swell, and the shadbush, glowing ghostly

white through the bare birches, reminds the spirits of the Indians who lived in these parts that the shad and salmon will be soon arriving at Peskeompskut.

The painted trillium holds forth far off in the woods along the river, where perhaps no one sees but me.

And that's what April is, and has been this year. Still making up its mind, it brings sometimes a chill wind, sometimes a summery seventy degrees.

Tonight however, it is cold enough to threaten snow, cold enough to light the fire in the Greenwood cook stove, and hunker down. No springtime bats will fly and no whippoorwill will call, not yet.

But the familiar April sound of the crack of the bat reminds us that just maybe, the Red Sox, sputtering in April, will get their act together yet tonight, and pull something out once again in the bottom of the ninth, at least before the month of May!



## INHABIT from page B1

reminded me of the Blue Angels, flying in formation at an airshow I attended as a child. (The stealth bomber showed up late, finally arriving to the great relief of hundreds of concerned young boys.)

The permaculturists in the film project an enviable level of personal fulfillment. You can hear the kind of pride in their voices that can only come from either the satisfaction of building something real, or from successfully assuaging one's sense of guilt.

One of the most moving parts in the film is when Camden, NJ teenager Louis Sanchez, still authentically wearing his heart on his sleeve, describes building a rain garden on the site of an abandoned gas station. He can see the project's positive effects on both his community and the watershed, and how the two are entwined.

Wisconsin farmer Mark Shepard was the one speaker in *Inhabit* whose work directly addresses big agriculture by offering an alternative on a comparable scale.

Shepard grows hazelnuts, chestnuts, and butternuts, believing that these perennial tree crops can and must replace annual grains as our

staple crop. Our common processed foods, from pasta to crunchy extruded snacks, can be made from these nuts.

Shepard's New Forest Farm is a 106-acre revelation of what the grain belts of North America could look like in a hopefully possible future. He makes the point that every civilization that has lived off annual grains – which, I think, is every civilization – has declined and fallen.

He also mentions, anecdotally, that the Midwest's **incredible soils** were made from the manure of megafauna, such as the mastodon and the woolly and Columbia mammoths.

(Once, while visiting a friend at Yale, I helped sort through over a hundred soil samples from Shepard's farm that had been scattered across a Texas highway after a grad student researcher fatally crashed his car.)

Permaculture is both a movement and a buzzword. Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren are considered to be its founders, coining the term back in 1978. In the media and popular imagination, however, Mollison has come to be known as the originator.

In the way that some seek to legitimize their ideas by borrow-

ing words from the Bible, the permaculturists of *Inhabit* reverently intone the sayings of Bill Mollison throughout the film.

As a buzzword, "permaculture" also feels shackled with so many specific meanings and top-heavy connotations that many working in related fields choose to avoid it.

Nana Manos, the nonagenarian I hitchhiked around St. Thomas with, taught me to distrust trends masquerading as movements. Nana Manos describes herself as a gardener, and I have a feeling that if she watched *Inhabit*, she would wonder why its subjects do not do the same.

The big question is: will permaculture's clannishness and inward focus ensure that its benefits are mostly enjoyed by its own practitioners, or can it grow to create widespread, lasting cultural change?

*Inhabit* is a stunningly shot movie that captures its subjects and their passions well. If seeing other peoples' success at **carefully constructing** their own meaningful, paradisiacal lives inspires you to do the same, then I highly recommend watching *Inhabit* Friday evening in Wendell.

For more information, call the Wendell Free Library: (978) 544-3559.



## Art Garden HATCH-ing New Ideas for Hill Towns

**SHELburnE FALLS** – The Arts Garden in Shelburne Falls is pleased to announce an opportunity that should interest many artists in Franklin County: the project is "HATCH" which stands for "Hill-town Arts & Thriving Communities Happenings."

This is a call for public art projects for the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Hawley, Heath, Plainfield, Rowe, or Shelburne – all towns served by the Greater Shelburne Falls Area Business Association, which together with the Arts Garden, received an Adams grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to launch this initiative.

Although the event or installation has to happen in one of the hilltowns, the artist may be from elsewhere in the county, as long

as they establish a connection to it through their work. Projects should be aimed at engaging the local community and its visitors. All ideas are welcome for consideration: spectacle, performance, street art, sculpture; permanent or temporary. The project should be completable within a year, with a realistic timeline and budget.

A three-part process will support the development, refinement, and launching of projects brought forward by artists and other community members. Three free work sessions, facilitated by working artists Jane Beatrice Wegscheider, Artist Director of The Art Garden and Phyllis Labanowski of Conway will be offered to develop and receive feedback on project ideas.

At the end of each session, those interested in moving their projects

forward can apply for the next step: they'll present their project at a community "hatching" event on June 25. Seed money will be awarded to selected projects along with, if needed, additional support from the community.

Brain storming sessions to develop ideas for submission will be held at The Art Garden on Thursday May 5 and Wednesday May 18, for applications to be submitted by Friday, May 27. Up to five projects will be selected for notification in early June. All applicants will also receive mentoring and support through the business association.

For more information, contact Carmela Lanza-Weil, executive director of GSFABA, at [carmela@shelburnefalls.com](mailto:carmela@shelburnefalls.com).

## join us this saturday!

april 30 – 6 to 9 p.m.

join the *montague reporter*  
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with music by corki & ken,  
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reporter through our basket raffle.  
we look forward to seeing you!

### MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

## This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

The Montague Planter Committee met on April 20 to discuss the possibility of professionally designed planters for Avenue A, as proposed by Local Harmony, a Leverett-based non-profit. Horticulture students from Franklin County Technical School would install the planters. A video of this meeting can be found on the MCTV website.

Also available for viewing this week is a "Stop the Pipeline" update from April 12 by Pat Hynes. This 22-minute program discusses the need to invest in renewable energy resources in Massachusetts.

Don't forget to check out live

broadcasts of local meetings every week, including the Montague selectboard meeting on Mondays at 7 p.m., and the finance committee meeting on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. If you can't tune in at that time, catch it the next time we show it on MCTV! You can check out our TV schedule at [montaguetelevision.org](http://montaguetelevision.org).

Something going on you think others would like to see? Get in touch to learn how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment.

Contact us at (413) 863-9200, [infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetelevision@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!

## Spring Awakening Rocks the Orange Town Hall

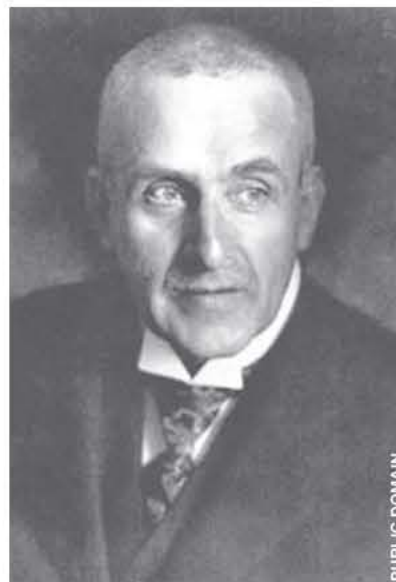
**ORANGE** – The Arena Civic Theater presents the musical *Spring Awakening* in production at the Ruth B. Smith Auditorium at Orange Town Hall. *Spring Awakening* revolves around complex themes of teenage struggle with life and sexuality, and the adults in their lives who try to control their behavior without providing them with the information they need to make intelligent decisions.

Due to the mature storyline, this show is not appropriate for children.

With book and lyrics by Steven Sater, and music by Duncan Sheik, the musical is based on a play written by Frank Wedekind in 1891. It won Tony Awards in 2007 for Best Orchestration, Best Original Score (Music), and "Best Musical", as well as a Grammy for Best Musical Show Album.

ACT's staging is directed by Megan Healey, with musical direction by Ted Trobaugh and choreography by Sue Dresser.

Performances are Friday, April 29 and Saturday, April 30 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, May 1 at 2 p.m. A community talk-back session will follow the Sunday afternoon performance.



PUBLIC DOMAIN

German playwright Frank Wedekind, whose 1891 play *Spring Awakening* is being produced locally as a rock musical by the Arena Civic Theater. The play caused a scandal in Wedekind's time for its frank depiction of a wide range of youthful sexual behavior.

Tickets are \$16 general admission, \$13 for seniors and students, and may be purchased at the door. For reservations, call (413) 233-4368 or go online at [arenacivictheater.org](http://arenacivictheater.org).

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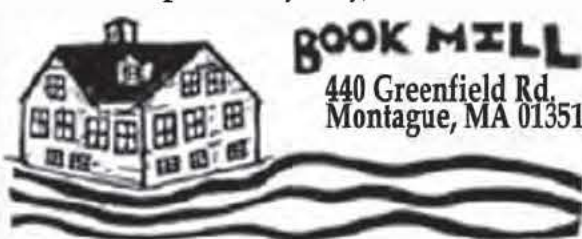
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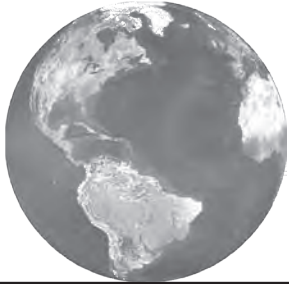
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# Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página en español del periódico The Montague Reporter. Aquí podrán encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias mundiales en español. Si quiere participar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a: [spanish@montaguereporter.org](mailto:spanish@montaguereporter.org). Esperamos su participación.



**Relatos del lector:** Para celebrar el 400 aniversario de la muerte de Cervantes y el Día Internacional del Libro, queremos invitar a nuestros lectores de todas las edades y nacionalidades a enviarnos sus propias historias, recuerdos de la infancia o leyendas autóctonas que publicaremos en nuestra página. Anímese a participar y envíenos sus relatos al correo electrónico indicado arriba o directamente a la sede del periódico.

## El que lee mucho, ve mucho y anda mucho: Cervantes

Por VICTORIA MAILLO

El 23 de abril se celebra el Día Internacional del Libro. La leyenda dice que en esa fecha murieron en 1616 Cervantes y Shakespeare, también en ese mismo día murió el Inca Garcilaso de la Vega al otro lado del Atlántico.

Digo que es una leyenda ya que en realidad Cervantes murió en la noche del 22 de abril en Madrid y William Shakespeare murió el 23 de abril, aunque siguiendo el calendario juliano, ya que según el calendario gregoriano, que rige actualmente en Europa, la fecha sería el 3 de mayo. Inglaterra adoptó el calendario gregoriano en 1752. En cualquier caso este año se cumplen 400 años de la muerte del considerado como “Príncipe de los Ingenios”, el autor de El Quijote, la obra literaria más famosa en lengua castellana.



Cervantes

Al igual que Shakespeare, se conoce solamente parte de su vida. Sabemos que fue recaudador de impuestos, que huyó a Italia evitando ciertos problemas legales, que perdió el uso de una mano formando parte de la armada española en Lepanto (de ahí su otro sobrenombre: El manco de Lepanto) y que estuvo cautivo en Argel.

Durante el año pasado el Gobierno de España llevó a cabo una investigación para tratar de encontrar los restos de Cervantes. Treinta y seis expertos llevaron a cabo un estudio en unos restos encontrados en la iglesia de las Trinitarias en Madrid, y creyeron encontrar restos del escritor, aunque no han podido corroborarlo al cien por cien. Los restos encontrados corresponden a 16 personas diferentes, y una de ellas podría ser Cervantes.

Lo único que se sabe a ciencia cierta es que Cervantes pidió ser enterrado en esa iglesia, ya que estaba en su barrio, y al que su hija natural profesó como novicia en dicho convento. Esto contradice

claramente la tesis impulsada por algún académico mexicano que se atrevió a decir que Cervantes nunca quiso ser español. Claro que se atrevió a decirlo en Barcelona, en Sevilla no lo habría dicho.

Cervantes amaba España. Conocía perfectamente nuestros defectos y los enumeró ampliamente en sus obras: La picaresca, la fijación con la limpieza de sangre y la obsesión por la honra, la necesidad de querer aparentar, y otros muchos. Y como Cervantes vivió la plenitud y la decadencia del Imperio, en sus obras también recoge nuestras virtudes: la lealtad, la lucha por la libertad y la igualdad. Todos conceptos novedosos en la literatura de la época.

En su obra cumbre, los dos personajes principales, Don Quijote y Sancho Panza representan los dos extremos del carácter humano: el idealista y el realista. Y al mismo tiempo la necesidad de compensarse y ayudarse para conseguir el favor de la amada Dulcinea o la Ínsula Barataria.

Para mí, Cervantes supo captar extraordinariamente las diferentes facetas del ser humano y con sus personajes pone un espejo ante nosotros. Cervantes es un escritor comprensivo con el ser humano que utiliza la sátira y el humor para mostrar nuestras grandezas y flaquezas.

Cada año coincidiendo con el 23 de abril se entrega uno de los más prestigiosos premios literarios en lengua castellana, el Premio Cervantes. En esta ocasión fue recogido por el novelista mexicano Fernando del Paso, que en su discurso a la hora de recoger el premio criticó duramente al gobierno mexicano cuál Quijote idealista, aunque mostrando la realidad sociopolítica de su país tal como Sancho Panza.

En mi opinión, los verdaderos restos de Cervantes son sus libros y no unas cenizas que contienen los restos de otras quince personas. Desde aquí invito al lector que se acerque al Quijote, no los decepcionara y encontrara enseñanzas tan actuales como este párrafo:

**“Hoy es el día más hermoso de nuestra vida, querido Sancho; los obstáculos más grandes, nuestras propias indecisiones; nuestro enemigo más fuerte, el miedo al poderoso y a nosotros mismos; la cosa más fácil, equivocarnos; la más destructiva, la mentira y el egoísmo; la peor derrota, el desaliento; los defectos más peligrosos, la soberbia y el rencor; las sensaciones más gratas, la buena conciencia, el esfuerzo para ser mejores sin ser perfectos, y sobre todo, la disposición para hacer el bien y combatir la injusticia donde quiera que estén.”**

## La visita de un hombre sincero<sup>1</sup> a Cuba.

Por VICTORIA MAILLO

El pasado 20 de marzo fue un día histórico para Cuba y Estados Unidos. El presidente Obama y toda su familia visitaban la isla caribeña después de más 50 años del conflicto político que se inició en 1959, justo después de la revolución liderada por Fidel Castro y que tuvo sus momentos más tensos con la fallida invasión de la isla por los estadounidenses en 1961 y la crisis de los misiles en 1962.

Todo empezó el 17 de diciembre de 2014 cuando Obama decidió reanudar las relaciones diplomáticas con Cuba. Por primera vez, las protestas convocadas por los cubanos radicados en Miami tuvieron una escasísima afluencia de partidarios lo que demostró que las cosas estaban cambiando en la nueva generación de cubanos exiliados. Este pasado marzo también se convocaron protestas ante la visita de Obama a Raúl Castro que tampoco obtuvieron mucho éxito.

Por supuesto, nada de esto hubiera ocurrido si no hubiera habido cambios políticos y sociales en las dos naciones. Obama ha sido clave para esta visita y, por supuesto no es casual, que sea el primer presidente afroamericano de la historia. La mayoría de los cubanos lo consideran uno de los suyos en un país donde la población es mayoritariamente de ascendencia africana. Por su parte, los estadounidenses han visto fracasar el embargo y creen que hay que intentar nuevas opciones.

En la rueda de prensa ofrecida durante la visita a la Habana, hay que decir que exigida por Obama, quedó patente la larga historia de desavenencias políticas y diplomáticas que ha hecho que estas dos naciones hayan estado enfrentadas. Las separan dos modelos económicos radicalmente opuestos y su diferente posición en todo lo referente a derechos humanos.

Obama dejó claro en Cuba que este era el mayor escollo a salvar para normalizar sus relaciones y que el futuro de Cuba dependía únicamente de sus ciudadanos, pero ejerciendo sus derechos democráticos y de libertad de expresión. Castro dejó claro que el fin del embargo y la base de Guantánamo son fundamentales para reanudar las relaciones y habló del derecho humano a la sanidad gratuita.

La rueda de prensa permitió que los periodistas hicieran preguntas. Jorge Ramos de Univisión preguntó por los presos políticos a lo que



FOTOS DE CHRISTINA CROASDAILE.

Portada del diario Granma, periódico oficial del régimen castrista.

Raúl Castro respondió que en Cuba no había presos políticos y que si los había, antes de la noche estarían libres. Ramos le entregó una lista con 47 nombres de presos políticos que siguen en prisión en el momento de escribir estas líneas.

La agenda del presidente incluía la visita al monumento en memoria de José Martí, gran poeta y héroe nacional cubano, que murió en 1895 luchando por la independencia de Cuba contra las tropas españolas. La revolución cubana se apropió de su figura pese a estar muy alejado en su pensamiento político del que proclamaba Fidel Castro. Otro de

su propia campaña política en 2008: “Sí se puede”.

La hija mayor de Obama también tuvo ocasión de practicar su español ejerciendo como traductora de su padre en algunas ocasiones durante la visita.

Toda la información anterior ha aparecido en diversos medios de comunicación estadounidenses. Pero ¿cuál es la opinión del diario Granma, medio de comunicación cubano por excelencia acerca de la visita?

He podido conocer esta información gracias a la inestimable ayuda de Christine Croasdaile<sup>2</sup> que se encuentra en La Habana y me ha prestado su colaboración desinteresada. En este diario se incluía una página entera titulada *El hermano Obama* en la que el propio Fidel Castro reflexionaba sobre la visita del presidente.

Lo califica de ilustre visitante y a continuación pasa a citar algunas de las palabras del discurso de Obama a los cubanos como que ambos son países colonizados por europeos y descendientes de esclavos africanos o que había ido a la isla para dejar atrás la Guerra Fría.

En la misma página, Castro critica al presidente objetando que se olvidó hablar de la población nativa de ambos países y también de subrayar que la discriminación racial en Cuba fue eliminada con la revolución. Añade también jugosos comentarios como por ejemplo la historia con detalles del intento de invasión de Cuba por los Estados Unidos en 1961, la política de Reagan en Sudáfrica, y finaliza con la frase: No necesitamos que el Imperio nos regale nada.

Parafraseando a Cervantes, Castro quiso decir: *¿Qué locura o desatino me lleva a contar las ajenas faltas, teniendo tanto que decir de las mías?*



Reflexiones de Fidel Castro acerca de la visita de Obama en Granma.

los eventos organizados para la visita fue un partido de béisbol, deporte que une a los dos países, aunque en la isla se denomina pelota.

Una parte emocionante de la visita fue durante el discurso de Obama dirigido a los cubanos en el que utilizando su más que decente español, leyó las palabras del activista mexicano Cesar Chávez sobre un futuro de esperanza y que contienen uno de los mensajes que utilizó en

1. Los *Versos sencillos* de José Martí empiezan con este verso: *Yo soy un hombre sincero...* El poema es internacionalmente conocido debido a la canción *Guantanamera*.
2. Christine Croasdaile se encuentra actualmente en La Habana y ha cedido amablemente las fotografías que acompañan este artículo captadas por su propia cámara. Pueden seguir las aventuras de Christine en La Habana a través de su blog *Cocodrilo en Cuba*.

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## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT



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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.

## ONE MONDAY EACH MONTH

Wagon Wheel, Gill: *Wagon Wheel Word*. First week of each month. Monthly poetry reading, often with special guest poets. 6 p.m.

Carnegie Library: *Outside the Lines!* Last Monday of each month. Adult Coloring Group. Supplies provided. 6:30 p.m.

## EVERY TUESDAY

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: Crafts and activities for children of all ages. 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

## EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

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

## EVERY THURSDAY

Carnegie 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.

Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *Watchdog Open Mic*. All musicians, comedians, and

magicians are welcome! 8 p.m.

## EVERY FRIDAY

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

The Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *TNT Karaoke*, 8 p.m.

## EXHIBITS:

Avenue A Storefront Galleries, Turners Falls: *Dune Shack & Havana Streets: Photography by Trish Crapo*. Work from Ha-



These oil lamps were Trish Crapo's "companions" when she spent two weeks in a Cape Cod National Seashore Dune Shack doing a photography series. They are now on exhibit at the Avenue A Storefront Galleries in Turners Falls. Through May 21.

vana Cuba and the Cape Cod National Seashore. Through 5/21.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Vintage Powerhouse - Cabot Station: A One Hundred Year Retrospective*. This exhibit features historical photographs dating from the early 1900s that tell the story of the construction of the new concrete dam at Turners Falls, new power station and power canal expansion. At the time of its construction, Cabot Station was the largest hydroelectric facility east of Niagara Falls. Through 5/28.

Leverett Arts & Crafts, Leverett: *The Birdwatchers*. Through 4/30.

Loot, Turners Falls: *Zuihitsu: paintings by Greta Svalberg*. *Zuihitsu* is derived from two Kanji characters meaning "to follow" and "brush." Through 5/8.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *On the Cusp*. Exhibit of Natasha Henna's photographic art. Though 5/7. Closing artist's reception at the Nook on 5/7, 5 to 7 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne

Falls: *Buddha Nature*. Paintings by Juliet Seaver who spent one year painting a Buddha each day; on exhibit are 20 paintings from that exercise. Also *The Hawley Bog & Recent Works* by Ashfield painter Peggy Grose. Both exhibits through 4/30.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery, Montague Center: *From Darkness Into Light/ A Spring Exhibit*. Recent works by gallery members of this collaborative. Though 5/31.

Shelburne Arts Co-operative, Shelburne Falls: *Something Else*. Photography, oils, and watercolors by Candace Silver. Opening reception 5/7, 4-6 p.m. Exhibit through 5/30.

## CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Slate Roof Press, a member-run collaborative, invites submissions to its annual poetry chapbook contest. The winner receives \$500, and will have

memorative Concert. 8 p.m. \$

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Comedy Caravan* to benefit the Greenfield Police Association. 8 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Bruce Batteau*, Indie rock pop. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Charlie Scott & the Mighty King Snakes*. Blues baby blues! 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *A-Rhythmic Sound Experiment*. 9:30 p.m.

## SATURDAY, APRIL 30

First Congregational Church, Greenfield: *GospelFest*. 3 p.m. \$

Turners Falls High School Theater, Turners Falls: *GMEF 12th Annual Gala - "Jukebox Memories"*. Gill-Montague Education Fund presents Brian McCullough, tribute artist as Conway Twitty and Roy Orbison, plus the American Longboards doing rock 'n roll from the '50s through the '70s. Fundraiser. 7:30 p.m. \$

Arts Block, 4th floor, Greenfield: *The Garden of Eden - a Satiric Comedy by Alan Harris*. Premiere reading. 7:30 p.m. Donations.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Parsonsfeld, Parker Milsap with Ghosts of Paul Revere*. This event is for all ages. 8 p.m. \$

Orange Town Hall, Orange: *Arena Civic Theater presents the musical, "Spring Awakening"*. A community talkback session will follow the performance. See Friday's listing for details. 8 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Birdsong at Morning*. Folk pop. 8 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Ab-sinthe Rose, Wishbone Zoe, Liberated Waffles, and Jake and the Infernal Machine*. All ages, substance free space. \$, 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Wild Bill & the Flying Sparks*. Roots/rock/country. 8:30 p.m. Donations for Franklin County Meals on Wheels.

Arts Block, Wheelhouse, Greenfield: *Roots Country Music Party with Bye Darlin' & The Old Fashioneds*. 8:30 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Wildcat O'Halloran Band*. Not your father's Blues Band! 9 p.m.

Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *Community Smokes*. 9 p.m. \$.

## SUNDAY, MAY 1

Orange Town Hall, Orange: *Arena Civic Theater presents the musical, "Spring Awakening"*. See Friday's listing for details. 2 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Mike Dimin*. Solo Bass. 2 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Lazy*

*Bones*. Old-time jazz, blues, and more. 8 p.m.

## TUESDAY, MAY 3

Replay, Greenfield: *Horse Lords, Brompt Treb, Curse Purse, and Death Savings Flag*. 8 p.m., \$

## THURSDAY, MAY 5

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Eric Love. '60s & '70s Gold*. 8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, MAY 6

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Bleak, Twin Lords, No Window, and Sun Burial*. Heavy. All ages, substance free space. 8 p.m., \$

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



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*Wild Bill & the Flying Sparks* (roots/rock/country)  
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# TFHS: The Week In Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

The Turners Falls sports teams played a number of games this week in spite of widespread cancellations on Tuesday, April 26 due to an anticipated storm. The boys tennis team defeated Sci-Tech at Blunt Park. The girls tennis team beat Saint Mary and lost to West Springfield. And the baseball team went 1 and 1.

This week, we'll catch up with the softball team – along with an update on the upcoming football season.

### Football

The big gridiron news this week was the realignment of the old Inter-county League. I spoke with Louis Conte, Executive Secretary of the PVIAC, to get more information.

It seems that Franklin Tech, who won the Tri-County League last year, will play in the Intercounty North League next season. Turners, Athol, Frontier, Greenfield and Mahar have also been placed in the INL.

The other three teams from the old Intercounty League – Belchertown, Easthampton, and Ludlow – have moved to Intercounty South.

So what does that mean to fans of the Blue Tribe?

Aside from competing against the other ICN teams and playing one game against IC South and IC West teams, according to Mr. Conte, Turners will play Greenfield twice: once during the regular season, and then again at Thanksgiving!

I've done an informal straw poll, and it seems most of the people I've asked believe it will hurt the teams'



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Mackenzie Phillips sends the beat over the plate, striking out 14 as Turners Falls High School defeats Southwick Regional School 7-0.

traditional rivalry. But who knows? For now, let's focus on softball.

### Softball

Without putting too much pressure on this year's team, I want to review last season. As you may remember, Turners won the state championship. What you may not know is five of last year's ladies team – Gabby Arzuaga, Amber Caouette, Mackenzie Phillips, Jenna Putala, and Mackenzie Salls – made the Western Mass D-3 first team, one (Nicole John) made the second, and one (Jordan Meattley) got an honorable mention.

To have more than half of first-team players from one team is remarkable, and having seven players designated as among the best in the West just shows the depth the Lady Indians had last season.

But that was then, and this is now. How will they do without the talents of Ms. Caouette, John and Salls? Well, coach Garry Mullins has been plugging in other ladies to fill these important gaps, and although those athletes will surely be missed, it seems the outlook for the Softball Indians remains bright.

For example, MassLive does a "Softball Super Seven," acknowledging seven superstars from every Western Mass division, and two Lady Indians, Phillips and Putala, were selected. In that context, it seems a little unfair that two of the best players are again on the same team!

Speaking of Ms. Putala, Jenna played in the Bay State Games last year, and her West Softball team took the gold. As for Phillips, her father Michael told me she has been recruited to pitch for Worcester Polytechnic Institute – not bad for a small town kid!

The 2016 Lady Indians are currently undefeated, and have been consistently ranked in the top three of all Western Mass schools. But it's a new day and a new season, and let's hope, above all, the kids remember to have fun.

### TFHS 8 – Mahar 0.

The Turners Falls Softball Indians opened their 2016 season on Friday, April 15 blanking the Senators from Mahar, 8-0. Powertown scored consistently throughout the game, scoring one or two runs in every inning except for the second.

Defensively, it was a joint effort, with two pitchers taking the reins. Peyton Emery pitched 5 innings, allowing just one hit, no walks and

clocking 11 strikeouts, while Mackenzie Phillips pitched 2 innings, let up a hit and fanned 5 of 6 batters.

At the plate, Jenna Putala slammed a double and a homerun. Jordan Meattley went 2 for 3, knocking in 2 runs and drawing a walk. Gabby Arzuaga also had 2 hits and a RBI.

Jordyn Fiske had a hit and scored a run. Peyton Emery got a RBI and scored a run. Hailey Whipple had 2 walks and scored once. Alyson Murphy had a walk and crossed the plate once, and Phillips drew a walk.

### TFHS 12 – Athol 2.

On Tuesday, April 19, the team again traveled down Route 2 and trounced another league team. The interesting thing about this game was that Athol actually led 2-0!

After the Tribe failed to score in the top of the first, Athol came out and scored 2 runs. But the lead was fleeting, as Turners scored 2 in the second and clamped down defensively to keep Athol off the scoreboard for the rest of the game.

Turners took the lead in the third, 3-2, and piled on four more in the fourth. They got a run in each of the fifth and sixth innings, and drove in 3 more for insurance in the seventh.

It was a good test for the Indians, who were in the unfamiliar position of having to play catch-up softball. Another interesting fact from the game is that Putala skied another home run – her second in two games. Jenna went 3 for 4 from the plate, scoring two, driving in two, cracking a homer – and getting hit by a pitch.

Arzuaga was also hot at the plate, going 3 for 5, scoring 2 and walking twice. Phillips helped her own cause, hitting a homerun and knocking in 2 runs. Jessica Loynd also hit the long ball, ripping a triple and scoring.

Alyson Murphy had a hit, a RBI and scored a run. Jordan Meattley had a hit, drew a walk and scored twice. Sienna Dillensneider, Melissa Hersey and Hailey Whipple all scored runs, and Cassidy Wozniak had 3 RBIs.

Again the Circle duties were shared by Phillips and her protégé Peyton Emery. Phillips pitched 6 innings, allowed 1 hit, let up 2 runs, fanned 15 and had no walks. Emery pitched one inning, allowing no hits, walks or runs, and striking out 2.

### TFHS 3 – Frontier 0.

The home opener against Frontier was not a runaway as the two road games had been. This wasn't be-



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Close Call: Abby Loynd slides into third as the throw goes to the base. Her RBI triple plated Jordyn Fiske for a run, as TFHS shut out Frontier 3-0 at home.

cause the Blue Ladies weren't hitting the ball hard, but because they were shooting the hits directly at fielders.

This was another early test for the team. How can you keep a good team like Frontier from scoring if you can't score yourselves?

Early in the game, the Tribe faced just that. Red had the bases loaded in a very low scoring game. But through crisp fielding and "nun-chuck" pitching, the Tribe met the challenge and ended the threat. Turners got two runs in the second and one more in the fifth, and proved they can win the close ones as well as the blowouts.

Phillips pitched the entire game for the Tribe, throwing 11 Ks, and allowing just 3 hits, 1 walk and no runs. Arzuaga, Abby Loynd and Murphy accounted for the 3 RBIs, with Loynd blasting a triple.

Fiske, Johnson and Whipple scored the runs. Phillips went 2 for 3 at the plate, plastering a double in the process. Hersey and Putala had hits.

### TFHS 20 – Ludlow 1.

On Friday, April 22, the Ladies got back on the blowout bus, cranking out 20 runs on 15 hits in a road game against Ludlow. Although the Tribe didn't score in the first inning, they scored six runs in the second, five in the third, and going into the bottom of the fourth up 18-0.

After Turners scored two more runs in the fifth, the game was called. Ludlow got their last ups, but there was no reason to keep playing. With the score 20-1, the game was stopped via the mercy rule.

The stats for this game were staggering, so I'll just hit the highlights. Long Ball: Arzuaga, 1 double; Murphy, 1 double; Putala, 1 triple, and Meattley, 1 home run.

Defensively, one of the hardest things in sports is not to sit on a lead. Especially with an insurmountable lead. It's easy to let up and get lax because you know you're going to win anyway.

But that is not the case with Mullins' crew. Turners played errorless ball, and Emery and Phillips struck out nine batters in five innings, allowing just a walk and a hit apiece.

### TFHS 7 – Southwick 0.

The biggest challenge of the early season came on Monday, April 25 when the Southwick Rams came to town.

Although Turners was probably the favorite going into the game, Southwick is no slouch. They're a competitive team who seem to make the playoffs every year and this season, their only previous loss was against powerhouse Monson.

But after holding the Rams scoreless in the top of the first, Turners made a statement by scoring four runs in their half of the inning.

After that, the game was relatively even, with Turners scoring their remaining runs through smart communication with the base coaches, Sully and Eddy Marvell.

And in the pitcher's circle, Phillips used her infamous nun-chuck fire to fan 14 batters.

Putala kept her extra-inning hit parade going with a one-run double. Meattley also clocked a 2-bagger. Phillips again supported her cause by going a perfect 3 for 3 at the plate, and batting in 3. Fiske and Hersey both had RBIs, and Arzuaga and Wozniak accounted for the other 2 hits.

So with five games under their belt, the Lady Indians are sitting in the catbird seat, toting a perfect 5-0 record.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Turners still has some tough, challenging games ahead of them, and we don't want the girls to take the games – or themselves – too seriously.

Enjoy your time in the sun. After all, you're still a bunch of high school kids playing a game.

Next Week: Focus on Baseball.

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