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The Montague Reporter

YEAR 14 – NO. 30

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 12, 2016

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Early Retirement May Leave Town in the Lurch

By JEFF SINGLETON

Bob Trombley, superintendent of the Montague Water Pollution Control Facility, has resigned his position effective June 30, well before his scheduled December 18 retirement. This leaves little time to hire



FILE PHOTO

Trombley has worked at the Montague wastewater treatment facility for 22 years.

a replacement, or resolve disagreement over a reorganization plan he has proposed for the department.

That reality became apparent at the Montague selectboard meeting on Monday night.

Well before the meeting began, six members of the facility's staff sat in the third row of the selectboard room. Trombley himself was not present. The meeting agenda contained a somewhat cryptic item titled "WWTP Superintendent Search" which apparently referred to Trombley's position at the WPCF.

The facility's secretary, Tina Tyler, did not wait for that agenda topic, but rather sat down at the front table during time at the beginning of the meeting slated for public participation.

Tyler read a statement which began: "The employees at the WPCF respectfully request a meeting with

see RESIGNATION page A4

Gill Town Meeting Accepts Cemetery, Continues in June

By KENT ALEXANDER

Gill held its annual town meeting on Monday night at the Gill Town Hall. In attendance were approximately 75 residents, as well as the members of the selectboard, finance committee members, and the Town Clerk. John Zywna served as the evening's Moderator.

The meeting, which lasted more than two hours, saw the approval of most articles on the town's docket, with only a handful of articles "passed over" for later attention.

Two major items that saw unanimous approval were the operating assessment of \$1,574,992 for the 2017 fiscal year, and an additional \$18,030 in debt service costs, for the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Highlights of the rather cordial meeting include the unanimous approval of the following articles:

Article 4 authorized the town to accept the transfer of the Riverside Cemetery on Main Road, and connecting land on Mountain Road also owned by the Riverside Cemetery Association, which is dissolving this year. The land consists of about 4.4 acres of land in total.

Article 5 authorized the selectboard to negotiate a "payment in lieu of taxes" agreement with Borrego Solar, for a solar array the company plans to build on land leased from Northfield Mount Hermon school on Main Road.

Article 8 authorized the board to work with the Gill-Montague Regional School District toward

see GILL page A5

The Week in Sports: TFHS Softball

By MATT ROBINSON

It's been two weeks since I've reported on Turners Falls Softball. In that time span, Turners improved their record to 9-0 by beating Hopkins 17-5, Pioneer 12-0, Athol 10-1,



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Birthday Bash: Jenna Putala slams 2 home runs as the Turners Falls Indians defeat the Athol Red Raiders 10-1.

and Frontier 14-0.

These double-digit wins are not an anomaly for the Blue Tribe. The team has consistently scored runs while keeping their opponents off the scoreboard.

And no two blowouts are the same. The Champs have several different patterns of scoring. Sometimes, they get a couple of runs each inning until they build a 12-run cushion. At other times they jump all over the pitcher in the first few innings. Still other times, the game is relatively close until Turners has a one inning explosion.

So after a week of rain delays, the Lady Indians finally got a chance to get back on the diamond and prove why they're the defending champions.

TFHS 17 – Hopkins Academy 5

The pitfalls of fair play and mercy-giving were on display in the April 28 game against Hopkins. By

see SOFTBALL page A8

The "Rod Shop": Famous In Its Day



NINA ROSSI PHOTO

The remains of the old factory in Montague City. Now under private ownership, the building is being stabilized for eventual reuse. The water tower was used to supply the factory's sprinkler system with sufficient water pressure in case of a fire.

By JEFFREY WEBSTER

MONTAGUE CITY – Split bamboo: sounds like an Asian restaurant. Or maybe a dish at an Asian restaurant: "I'll have the sweet 'n sour split bamboo, hold the MSG."

Okay, maybe not, but split bamboo does have something in common with a sushi bar. That's right, fish!

Split bamboo – also called split cane – is a technique for manufacturing fly fishing rods. From 1882 to 1955, Montague City was the capital of the split bamboo fishing rod industry.

Montague Rod & Reel, right smack dab in the middle of the village, was a happening place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today, the Rod Shop, as it was known locally, has joined the roster of other big names that once called Franklin County home: John Russell Cutlery, Greenfield Tap & Die, Millers Falls Tool, Strathmore, Griswold Cotton, Lunt Silversmith,

and Lamson & Goodnow, to name a few.

Ancient History

Fishing, whether for sustenance or for sport, goes back as far as people and fish inhabited the planet together. According to Wikipedia (it must be true, right?), fly fishing can be traced back to Japan in the ninth century BCE (that's what us old-timers used to call just BC). Around the end of the second century CE (or AD, depending on the amount of gray in your hair), Claudius Aelianus, a Roman, first described Macedonians fishing with artificial flies. These were pieces of red wool tied around feathers.

Sometime in the early 1800s, someone came up with the idea of splitting bamboo and re-gluing the sections into a strong, yet flexible rod for fly fishing. Until then, fishing rods were either wooden or solid bamboo.

France, England, China and the see ROD SHOP page A7

A Generous Town Meeting Triggers 2½ Override Votes

By DAVID DETMOLD

MONTAGUE – Residents have a lot to look forward to following Saturday's annual town meeting.

By the end of the nearly eight hours of debate, the Gill-Montague schools had received full funding for their assessment request, the airport commission had received permission to study the possibility of developing a business – or a possible solar farm – on a part of their property not used for aviation, and the transfer station will soon feature

a new cardboard compactor, for an investment of only \$12,500 in town funds, with the balance to be paid by a grant from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Town meeting members took the first steps in ridding the derelict Strathmore Mill of hazardous materials and asbestos by agreeing to borrow \$385,000 to fund that work. They also agreed to borrow up to \$1 million to repair a partially plugged and leaking combined sewer overflow and storm drain system running see MONTAGUE page A6



Town planner Walter Ramsey presents at the podium at last Saturday's town meeting.

MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Police Search Land, River For Murder Suspect

By REPORTER STAFF

GILL – State and local police departments continue to search the Connecticut River and local towns for Tyler Hagmaier, a 24-year-old Plymouth man believed to have stabbed an elderly neighbor to death late last week.

Police ask any resident who sees Hagmaier not to approach him and to call 911 immediately.



According to Plymouth County District Attorney's office, Hagmaier is the sole suspect in the Thursday night killing of 76-year-old Vibeke Rasmussen, a Quincy College professor.

Hagmaier's Toyota Prius was found abandoned at the French King

see SUSPECT page A7

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Offers Top Job To Bryan Smith

By KATIE NOLAN

The Erving selectboard has offered Bryan Smith a position as Erving's new administrative coordinator. Smith, who holds a master's degree in public policy and administration from the University of Massachusetts, is currently a program coordinator and academic counselor at Greenfield Community College. He formerly worked at Greenfield High School as community outreach and work study coordinator.

The selectboard interviewed Smith and two other candidates on Saturday, May 7, in a public meeting that started at 9:30 am. Deliberations continued after the interviews until 5 pm.

The selectboard's initial letter to Smith provided starting pay of \$62,000 annually for a 40-hour week. The selectboard asked Smith to begin work no later than June 6.

According to municipal clerk Betsy Sicard, that offer was revised on Wednesday to \$65,000. As of press time, he had been asked to reply by 4 p.m. on Thursday.

At its regular meeting Monday night, the selectboard, with Scott Bastarache sitting at the selectboard table for the first time, elected Jacob Smith as chair. The board briefly discussed replacing the rectangular selectboard table, where board members sit facing the public, with a round or triangular table, where board members would face each other.

The board reviewed draft articles for the June 28 special town meeting. Draft articles include \$25,000 to \$30,000 from Comcast funding for the cable advisory committee for purchase of cameras and other

see ERVING page A3

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August, 2002

Town Hall, or Stone Wall?

By almost all accounts, the staff at Montague's Water Pollution Control Facility have been doing a fantastic job in recent years with what we send them. A lot of this, we are told, has to do with the department's rank and file feeling empowered to experiment and innovate.

The man who has overseen this success, Bob Trombley, is due to retire, and he is asking the town not to simply replace him, but to take the opportunity to reorganize the department to better suit the facts on the ground.

His reorganization plan, presented to the selectboard in January, would essentially eliminate the superintendent position and elevate two current staff members to run the department. The job descriptions of several other veteran staff members would also be upgraded.

This may or may not be a good idea. There are a number of benefits to the town of having one person serve as the head of each department.

It is easier to have a single person in a position of responsibility for drawing up a budget, interacting with town government committees, hiring and firing staff, and producing results. We don't know what the impact of such a restructuring would be on the department's labor costs.

Although tailoring positions to the skills of two current staff members might make sense in the short run, it could significantly complicate things down the road when the time comes to hire their successors. And if the two managers come into disagreement or conflict over an issue on which their responsibilities overlap, there may not be a clear way to resolve it.

But none of this has been discussed publicly – even though this is a public department in a democratically governed town. Instead, the selectboard has kept their conversations about the proposal in closed-door executive sessions, citing "collective bargaining."

We have been told that both unions whose members are in the department – United Electrical Workers Local 274, and the Town of Montague Employee Association – have no qualms with the restructuring proposal.

The state Open Meeting Law al-

lows executive sessions to "discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position or the public body."

Is that really the case here?

"Probably every issue that was raised in reviewing the reorganization proposal touches in some way on the collective bargaining process," town administrator Frank Abbondanzio explained on Monday night, "so it is in management's best interest to keep those discussions in that process."

We do not feel that the Open Meeting Law provision allows every policy proposal that might impact collective bargaining to be discussed in an executive session. Such a loose interpretation of the spirit of the law could justify virtually any deliberation being taken out of the public realm.

Nevertheless, the collective bargaining rationale was used first to remove the WPCF's proposal from consideration by town meeting, and now apparently to justify making a policy decision – to seek a replacement for Trombley under current job descriptions – behind closed doors.

It is no wonder that the department's staff are expressing anger and frustration. We should fear their demoralization, for the sake of the Connecticut River.

And it is no wonder that Trombley has now announced he will retire next month, instead of in December.

Once more, we should say that deciding against restructuring the water pollution control facility's staffing might be the best choice. But it is clearly the one favored by the staff at present, and we see no reason why a simple question of how to appropriately set up a departmental chain of command should not be subject to a transparent, public discussion.

A town that sacrifices good governance in the pursuit of good management will end up finding it has accomplished neither.

There are serious challenges on the horizon for Montague, not the least of which is the town administrator's own impending retirement.

We hope the selectboard will not approach them in such a haphazard manner.

Letters to the Editors

Levenson for GMRSC

In her terms on the Gill Montague Regional School Committee, Marje Levenson has been an independent voice for both educational excellence and fiscal reality.

She has never had a hidden agenda, and her only interest has been to make our school district the best it can be. Whether on teachers' contracts, educational programs, or school safety, she hasn't been afraid to speak out and advocate for what she thinks is necessary.

I haven't always agreed with her, but I've known that with Marje what you see is what you get, and what we've gotten is someone passionately dedicated to the education of our kids, both now and into the future. Please join me at the polls on May 16 and help re-elect Marje Levenson to the Gill Montague Regional School Committee.

Mike Naughton
Millers Falls

Levenson for GMRSC

Next Monday, May 16, please vote for Marje Levenson for the Gill-Montague School Committee. Marje is seeking a third term as our representative, and should be rewarded by voters for her dedication, numerous skills and decisive voice as a school committee member.

For the last six years Marje has consistently worked to make our schools as fine as they are, and has never been afraid to speak out when speaking out was needed. Indeed, she has played an important role in helping to enhance and shape the district's mission.

She brings an astute knowledge of education, and a true concern for increasing educational quality and opportunities at all levels. We have no doubt she will continue to serve our community and schools with dedication and diligence.

Patricia Pruitt and Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Turners Falls

Phillips for GMRSC

Joyce Phillips believes continuity in leadership is important. It builds strength and allows growth.

During Joyce's 22 years of service as a member of the Gill Montague Regional School Committee she has gained professional development and experience.

Joyce's goals are to focus on student learning and implementing policies that will ensure success for all students. Recognizing, supporting and celebrating staff, programs and students.

Maintaining parent involvement and support as they follow their children's educational experience at

Phillips for GMRSC

I would urge voters in Gill and Montague to join me in supporting Joyce Phillips as a candidate for the Gill-Montague School Committee.

There is no one on the GMRSD board that has a better perception of the legal requirements that are needed in guiding the public education forums in our community and the State of Massachusetts. Joyce through her work and commitment on the boards of the GMRSD School Committee and Gill Montague Education Fund works tirelessly to enhance opportunities to all children in the school district.

I have had the pleasure and honor to have served with Joyce on the Gill-Montague School committee on two different occasions. I have also worked with her in the support of the GMEF (Gill Montague Educational Fund).

Joyce clearly understands state mandates and goal requirements that drive public education, and also the rewards of enhancing the educational program with outside support.

As a resident of Montague, Joyce is keenly aware of the crucial balance needed between funding education and the financial limitation of the communities she serves.

Through speaking with Joyce, she believes that our tax dollars fund public education for *all the children* in the GMRSD, and does not support sending funds out to private charter schools. I ask you to join me in supporting Joyce Phillips for financial and scholastic progress and accountability.

Douglas P. Brown
Montague

Harmon for Library Trustee

I'm writing to encourage Montague voters to cast a ballot in the May 16 election and to choose David Harmon for Library Trustee.

The Trustees are a volunteer, elected board who represent the public's interest in decisions about the general operating and administrative policies of our public libraries. They advise and partner with the library director, who supervises internal management, daily operations, and procedures.

The Trustees are also involved in planning for the future of the libraries in our town. In the next few years, they will play a lead in helping us move forward on addressing the deteriorating condition of the buildings that house our town libraries.

David Harmon is well-qualified to do this work, and he is already an experienced Library Trustee. Since 2015, the Trustees have twice asked him to serve as a replacement for Trustees who have resigned. If we elect him this year, he will be able to complete the remaining two years of the term he's currently filling as an interim.

As a long-time resident of Turners Falls who has also lived in Montague Center, David understands the vital, multi-faceted role that libraries play

Levenson for GMRSC

It's time to turn away from the old ways and move forward with creative ideas.

Marje Levenson is an independent voice on the Gill Montague Regional School Committee. Marge thinks outside the box and is not afraid to ask the tough questions. Marge advocates for education with rigorous standards and expectations.

Marje reaches out to foster community engagement. Marge votes for sustainable budgets, always advocating for the towns and school district to work together.

Vote for Marjorie Levenson on May 16. Polls are open in Gill from 12 to 8 p.m., and in Montague from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

As a resident of Gill, I too can vote for Marje. These are at-large elections, and anyone from Gill and Montague can vote for Marje!

Marie Putala
Turners Falls

Claire Chang
Gill

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

On Friday the 13th, there are two ways to **help raise funds for the Brick House** Community Resource Center at the Rendezvous, at 78 Third Street in Turners Falls.

Beginning at 5 p.m., a portion of the night's specials – the Mighty Mighty, the Mighty Meaty, the She's a Brick House, and the Shake it Down Now – will go to the organization. Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band will play a dinner set.

After 9 p.m., stick around for a **benefit show** with Secret Lover, Bryan Gillig and Vanishing-DMC!

Also on Friday, May 13 at 7 p.m. **Moonshine Holler** will perform in the Great Hall at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls. Moonshine Holler, the husband and wife duet of Paula Bradley and Bill Dillof, has been described as "a two person music festival capturing the essence of American southern roots music."

The concert will feature old time Appalachian ballads, blues and breakdowns on a variety of musical instruments, with some flatfoot dancing to boot. An engaging and entertaining duo; sometimes rowdy, sometimes reverent, always a ruckus. Suggested donation admission.

Classical music comes to Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls, in a fun, family sort of way, with Dr. Larry Fader as your host on Saturday, May 14.

Watch as Mozart turns a man

into a bird with a magical flute! Go to the Zoo with Camille Saint-Saens and discover the sounds of a mute swan. And finally, see Mickey Mouse, with the help of Ducas, get way over his head in trouble because of his curiosity!

This whimsical presentation will be sure to delight both young and old alike. Show starts promptly at 10 a.m.

Learn about the **"Great Migration Challenge"** at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Saturday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Birds, fish, and butterflies are on the move. Where are they going? Where have they been? What do they need while they stay with us here?

This story hour with crafts and activities focuses on the many wonders of life in the Connecticut River watershed. For ages 6 to 8, with a parent or guardian. Meet in the Great Hall.

The **National Spiritual Alliance presents a Healing Expo** on Saturday, May 14 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. TNSA, located at 2 Montague Avenue in the Montague village of Lake Pleasant, has been serving spiritual needs since 1913.

Come check out local health alternatives, such as therapeutic services and natural products, and participate in a raffle of many products and services. Admission is free.

For more information, find the TNSA on Facebook or at www.spiritualallianceusa.org.

Saturday, May 14, from noon to 4:30 p.m., Montague Center residents will host the second annual **"Good Music Makes Good Neighbors!" music festival**.

See article on page B4 of this issue for more details.

Also on Saturday: The whole community is invited to celebrate the dedication of the **Unity Park Accessible Swing Project**, starting at 3 p.m. at Unity Park in Turners Falls.

The addition of the accessible swing and the skate park, along with the very popular water spouting whale and all the improvements to fields and basketball court, are making Unity Park a Franklin County destination spot.

And more this weekend: the Young Shakespeare Players (YSP) East present **William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"** on Saturday, May 14 and Sunday, May 15 at 6 p.m. at the Shea Theater, at

71 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

YSP East is a non-profit program offering young people ages 8 to 18 the opportunity to perform full length original works of Shakespeare. All performances are free and open to the public.

Concessions will be available for purchase during intermission, with all proceeds to directly benefit the Young Shakespeare Players East Scholarship Fund.

Montague Community Television's Annual Meeting takes place Wednesday, May 18, at 6 p.m. The agenda includes a president's report, the election of officers, goals for the coming year, and setting the 2016 meeting schedule.

The public is welcome to join. This may be a great opportunity to learn more about your public access station. MCTV is located at 34 Second Street in Turners Falls.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

ERVING from page A1

equipment, \$3,000 for a security system for the Union #28 offices at the Pleasant Street school building, and funding for exercise equipment and a landscape equipment shed at the senior/community center.

Selectboard member William Bembury told the board that the finance committee had approved a payment of \$9,438.26 from the reserve fund to pay lawyers' fees for negotiating with Pan Am and Erving Industries regarding the POTW #2 railway crossing at 45 East Main Street. The selectboard's line item for legal fees is overspent.

The town owns 45 East Main as a private road and Erving Industries subsidiary Erseco operates the town-owned POTW#2. In May 2015, Pan Am Railways informed the board that safety defects found by the Federal Railroad Administration at the Pan Am crossing on the road leading to POTW#2 could result in repairs costing \$310,000. According to a 1974 contract with Pan Am, Erving is responsible for the cost of maintaining the cross-

ing. The negotiated agreement has Erving Industries paying most of the repair costs.

The board awarded the bid for the surplus 1978 fire truck to Ryan Betters, who bid \$1,500. A bid of \$4,126 from Richard Cornwell of Bernardston was rejected, because Cornwell won a bid for the truck in November 2015, but never took possession of the truck.

Selectboard member William Bembury said of the previous bid, "he did not remove the truck within ten days as specified in the bid package," that "he had all kinds of excuses," and that Cornwell also claimed that parts had been removed from the truck. Betters said he would move the truck from town property within a day.

The board looked at samples of vinyl siding in order to pick a style for the bid specifications for siding town hall. The board decided on Fairway Premium in a standard color, but not white.

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting.



GUEST EDITORIAL

Katsoulis: "The Right Person at the Right Time"

By HEATHER KATSOULIS

I was born and raised in the Pioneer Valley, and have lived in Turners Falls for four years with my husband and two children. I graduated from WPI with a Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering and worked in the field for a few years.

It wasn't long until I realized that kind of work wasn't satisfying to me. I was in between jobs, and decided to substitute teach temporarily. That is when I actually fell in love with teaching.

I taught Math in West Springfield public High School and a public high school of choice, Monadnock Community Connections (MC2) in Keene, NH. MC2 is an affiliate of the First Amendment Schools (FAS) Project, a national reform initiative designed to transform how schools teach and practice the rights and responsibilities of citizenship that frame civic life in our democracy.

FAS shaped my beliefs in my own democratic involvement. I've been a Town Meeting member for 3 years, I am a parent representative on the Sheffield Elementary School Council, I am an

active member in the Friends of Sheffield parent teacher organization, and if elected as a school committee member, I will utilize my knowledge, experience, dedication and passion to work toward a stronger relationship between the district and the public it serves.

I would like to address the challenges the Gill-Montague Regional School District faces, namely, decreasing the 13% of our families that choose schools out of district, which costs us \$2.6 million, and improving our accountability level by meeting our proficiency gap narrowing goals.

That being said, I would also like to ensure our schools' strengths and successes are communicated to the community at large. We have wonderfully diverse learners, and caring, committed, proficient teachers, staff, and administrators, and we need to celebrate them and their accomplishments.

My family and I are deeply invested in our community and I believe that I am the right person at the right time to represent Montague on the School Committee. Please vote for me, Heather Katsoulis, for School Committee on Monday, May 16.



More Letters to the Editors

Two More Endorsements

Marje Levenson, a current member of the Gill-Montague School Committee, is running for re-election on May 16.

Levenson has been a well-spoken voice for clarity and reasonableness during a particularly contentious period for the Committee these past few years. Efforts to improve discourse, to increase openness and to assume respectful behavior, have slowly begun to take hold, thanks, in large part, to the tireless work of Levenson.

Additionally, Levenson has a most impressive background: an advanced degree in Labor Relations, former member of the Montague Finance Committee, and a successful business owner.

With great respect and confidence, I wholeheartedly submit to you the name of Marje Levenson for school committee.

Bob Avery
Turners Falls

If you've ever watched a school committee meeting, you know that those who serve are willing to tackle complicated issues involving fiscal oversight and educational excellence.

In her years on the school committee, Marje Levenson has studied the issues and been an outspoken advocate for policies that "provide an education with rigorous standards and expectations."

She is seeking re-election, and she will have my vote on May 16. Marje Levenson's combination of experience and conviction will forward her goals of working more closely with the community, and both the Gill and Montague Finance Committees, to establish a school budget that delivers the education our students deserve.

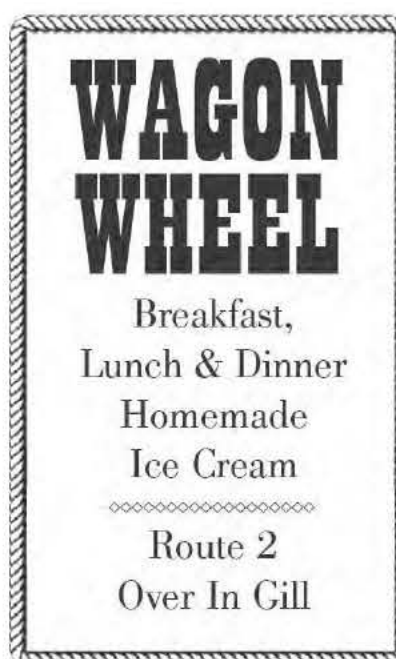
Marje is both a practical businessperson and an idealistic advocate for public education. She understands fiscal reality and the complexities of teachers' contracts, curriculum reform, and more.

Her experience, commitment and hard work make her worthy of my vote and yours.

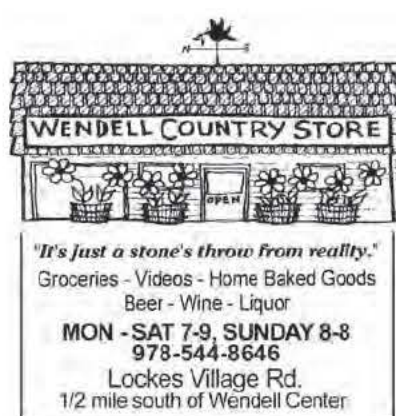
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Grade 7
Abigail Hoynoski
Phoenix Kimball-Phillips

Grade 8
Hailey Jackson

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6:00 PM
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GUEST EDITORIAL

By JOYCE A. PHILLIPS

Educating the whole child is more than a concept or vision. As a school committee member, I believe it is a moral and ethical responsibility. It means a quality education for every child with equity in services and programs.

Our communities, parents and staff must know that school committee's decisions are made in the best interest of all students for today and tomorrow. These decisions must be made on the merits of issues and on the best available information; with respect, integrity and fairness to the District and Community. If we envision consistency in excellence for the "whole child" and "every child" in our district, this will help us to focus and plan the future of our schools and community. We are all "stakeholders," and every voice must be heard and respected.

For the public watching, school committee meetings can often be like looking through a keyhole, while school committee members are allowed to see into the entire room. We must have open communication, trust, and respect; without it, everyone becomes frustrated and angry, and the process stagnant. I believe it is important for our communities to get to know us, hear our views on the issues, and to feel a part of the process.

I believe quality elementary and secondary education that provides equity in programs, services, staffing and facilities is key to attracting more school choice. School committee must be

Phillips: Why I Seek Re-election to the GMRSC

positive, proactive, and demonstrate pride in the GMRSD. Our community, and those around, must see by our actions that the GMRSC continues to make every effort to provide quality educational programs. Communities must see that the GMRSC values its staff with their high quality professionalism, dedication, commitment and hard work to make each day in the lives of all our students "the best they can be." Confidence in our schools begins with the GMRSC.

There will always be school choice, because there are personal issues and reasons beyond buildings, budgets and curriculum. One element that is fundamental to minimizing school choice out is having parents' support, enthusiasm, ideas, and energy follow their children throughout their educational experience at Gill-Montague. Secondly, we must provide quality opportunities for all students to help them meet their needs for growth and develop to their best potential according to their own individual abilities.

I believe it is important to foster academic potential in every child; to generate a respectful and caring approach to learning; and to encourage lifelong learning. To be "educated" has a different meaning for every student. For some it is preparation that will lead our young people to becoming professionals – astronauts, doctors, engineers, secretaries, and teachers; for others, it will be living a comfortable life with basic skills of independence; for all students, we want them to become knowledgeable, productive, and caring citizens.

School Committee has two primary responsibilities: policy and budget. Our policies must reflect our choices for education. We must then adopt a fiscally responsible budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.

We cannot stay "floating" in a boat without oars. We are not sinking, but we are not moving forward. As a result, we are on the threshold of slipping back.

Budget decision are investments in students, staff, services, programs and facilities that must be sustained. As an example: In 2004, we opened a renovated, state of the art MS/HS. Without maintaining this investment made by taxpayers, we are losing the quality of our \$32 million dollar renovation/addition to a 1970s high school.

Communities must be mindful of the impacts to the District's needs when they analyze and vote the annual school budget. State and local government must demonstrate the value of education by funding their mandates. This requires working together, speaking out in a strong voice and reminding our legislators of their "political" commitments. Budget is a *shared responsibility*.

I believe my past 22 years of service to Gill-Montague are evidence of my ability to effectively utilize my time, energy, and experience to provide the best educational opportunities possible for every student.

I ask for your support on Monday, May 16.

RESIGNATION from page A1

the Sewer Commissioners to discuss the future of the Montague Process at the plant." Montague's selectboard also serves as the town's sewer commission.

The statement complained that the staff was working under "outdated job descriptions which don't show the additional responsibilities each and every one of us have taken at the plant," and went on to state that "[d]iscussions are to take place between the governing bodies and their employees and then go to the union.... That discussion has not taken place."

The employee statement, and Trombley's abrupt resignation, are the apparent result of the decision of the selectboard and town administrator Frank Abbondanzio to consider a reorganization plan proposed by Trombley and his staff as a collective bargaining matter which prohibits public discussion.

Trombley's proposal, also called his "succession plan," was first presented to the town's finance and capital improvements committees last December 2. A longer and more detailed version was presented to the selectboard on January 5. The proposal calls for eliminating the superintendent position, and elevating two members of the current staff to the positions of "administrator" and "chief operator," essentially dividing Trombley's administrative duties. The proposal would also elevate several other members of the current staff.

The process then stalled while the selectboard waited for Abbondanzio to return from an extended sick leave. In March, the board refused a WPCF request to place the reorganization plan on the annual town meeting agenda.

At a meeting on March 28, Abbondanzio, who had by then returned to his duties, stated he had received an opinion from town counsel that the proposal could not be publicly discussed because it involved collective bargaining.

The wording of the May 9 agenda item indicated that the selectboard had rejected the plan in favor of simply hiring a new superintendent. At both the annual town meeting and at

the subsequent selectboard meeting, officials refused to discuss the decision, again citing collective bargaining constraints.

Trombley states that he has been told not to discuss the fate of his reorganization plan for the same reason.

At Monday's meeting, WPCF operator John Little argued that neither employee union "had a problem" with the reorganization proposal. Selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz said he would need to see a current statement of the unions' position, not one that was five years old.

Abbondanzio and the selectboard also stated that they support innovations made by WPCF staff, and want to see them continued. Kuklewicz told the staff that the town was under certain "collective bargaining constraints," but "you need to trust that we're not here to undermine what you are doing. Everybody on this board has said we appreciate what the staff has done, and we want to see you continue to do that."

When the issue of a search process for a new superintendent came up later on the agenda, Abbondanzio noted Trombley's impending June retirement would mean "we're on a faster track." He stated that the board should "begin the process of searching for an interim solution, as well as a long term solution. Obviously, having a permanent person in place by June 30 is just not going to happen."

Abbondanzio mentioned hiring a consultant named Grant Weaver, who has been working with the department, for the interim position. Kuklewicz suggested discussing other options, including privatization, at the board's next meeting. Abbondanzio noted that implementing such an option would require putting the facility out to bid through a formal Request for Proposals.

Little stated that if they hired "the gentleman" Abbondanzio mentioned, "you're sitting pretty with this guy," because he is already familiar with the process at the plant. Someone in the audience stated Weaver was in Montana.

After a long discussion of whether the board could meet on the town election day, May 16, the board decided to try to organize a meeting

that night. Kuklewicz noted that "we may or may not have to have all of that discussion in executive session. We'll have to wait and see what it is, and make a determination."

More Noise

The selectboard continued to discuss potential changes in the ordinance governing outdoor band music. The issue has been raised due to the board's decision to allow music on the patio of Hubie's Tavern on Avenue A last summer of up to eighty decibels, an experiment which has been criticized by residents of the neighborhood.

The board attempted to hand the issue off to the town's director of public health, who responded by presenting a lengthy "townwide" noise ordinance. But the hearing on that proposal devolved into another contentious discussion of the decibel levels generated last summer at Hubie's.

Monday night's discussion continued that trend, although there was much more focus on how frequently outdoor music should be allowed, as opposed to decibel levels. It was pointed out by several audience members that outdoor music at relatively high levels has been tolerated in the past, but only at a few special events in the summer. Hubie's seeks the right to play music several times a week during the warm months.

Two proposed new noise regulations were presented at the meeting. One, apparently created by Hubie's owner Shawn Hubert and called "Draft A," would allow outdoor music at up to 80 decibels between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., or 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, up to eight times a month for any establishment owning an entertainment license.

"Draft B," apparently proposed by some neighborhood residents, would maintain currently permitted decibel levels of 70 from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. in business districts. This proposal says that "sustained periods of elevated noise shall not exceed four hours per day," and "in no case shall these events be more frequent than twice per month per city block."

The various proposals have been posted on the Montague town website on the "News and Announce-

ments" page. There will be a public hearing in several weeks.

Cable Meetup

Another recurring issue, not on the official agenda but discussed during "Topics Not Anticipated," is the buildout of broadband cable to underserved neighborhoods in town.

The town received word late last week that the Massachusetts Broadband Institute has received a consultant's report rejecting the proposal from Matrix Design Group to extend fiber-optic cable, in favor of Montague's current cable provider Comcast, which utilizes traditional coaxial cable. The MBI consultant expressed concerns about the financing of the Matrix proposal, as well as that company's lack of experience in rural areas.

MBI suggested a meeting to discuss the recommendation on May 12, approximately a week after the report had been issued. Montague's broadband committee, which has outspokenly supported the Matrix proposal, said such a short time frame was not realistic.

The selectboard agreed, and tasked Abbondanzio to schedule a meeting for the week of May 23.

Other Business

Dawn Montague of Third Street came before the board to request a permit for a 5K road race to benefit the Brick House Community Resource Center on Saturday, June 18. The race will proceed from Unity Park down the bike path to the patch and then return.

A police detail will not be needed, because volunteers in "shiny vests" will monitor the event at crossings. The board approved the request.

The board held two liquor license hearings involving the Five Eyed Fox and the Elk's club, both to approve changes in managers. The changes were approved.

Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen updated the board on new policies involving the disposition of surplus town equipment and financial policies and procedures.

The board will hold its next meeting on Monday, May 16, the night of the town elections, at 7 p.m. at the town hall.



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Turners Students Teach Younger Peers About Social Media



KREMS PHOTO

By EMILY KREMS

GILL-MONTAGUE – Digital citizen. By-stander. Upstander. Empathy.

These are some of the vocabulary words that fifth- and sixth-graders are learning at Gill, Sheffield, and Erving Elementary School this spring. Their teachers are middle and high school students who are members of the Cyberbullying Awareness Committee, a club in its fourth year at Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School.

Sixth-grader Samantha Thorpe says, “I enjoy meeting everybody who’s in the club and sharing my information about cyberbullying so that other people don’t get hurt.”

The lessons about social media safety are derived from Common Sense Media, a website dedicated to informing parents, educators, kids and others about the safety of TV shows, movies, websites, apps and other types of media and technology.

During the lessons, the young students are

prompted to think about how the world of social media makes them feel, and what they think their parents or guardians think of social media, regardless of whether they engage in those activities.

They are encouraged to empathize with others who, in a pretend scenario, are being harassed online.

In the past this club has presented to the whole middle school, hosted a speaker for a parent night, and spoken to the School Committee about the issues.

This year, the focus has been on educating elementary school students. Samantha Bocon, a ninth grader who has been a club member since she was in sixth grade, sums up the group’s purpose this year by saying, “I think it’s important to teach younger students because no one taught me these things when I was in elementary school.”

Emily Krems is a guidance counselor at Great Falls Middle School, and an advisor to the Cyberbullying Awareness Committee.

Eighth graders Dabney Rollins (left) and Josy Hunter (right) present on safe and ethical social media use.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Heard To Remain Chair; Bridge Bids Too High

By JOSH HEINEMANN

In its first meeting after the town election, the Wendell selectboard’s first job was to reorganize, or to elect its chair for the coming year. Selectboard member Dan Keller nominated Christine Heard, who has been chair since Ted Lewis left the selectboard, and who was re-elected to the selectboard in the May 2 voting. Selectboard member Jeoffrey Pooser seconded the nomination and gave Heard another year as chair.

In the competition for one campership at Massachusetts Audubon’s Wildwood camp in Rindge, NH, the selectboard received six essays on the importance of nature. Without giving the writers’ identifying information, town coordinator Nancy Aldrich read all six to selectboard members, and two conservation commission members, Robin Heubel and Adam Kohl.

Picking a winner was not easy, and at one point in the discussion Pooser said, “there has to be a way to award all six.” Asked for a delay until the next meeting, Heard said, “no, we have to decide tonight.” (The camp sessions fill up quickly and a delay in the decision may mean that the camper’s choice of sessions is closed. Also, a hard decision is seldom made easier by procrastinating.)

With three votes from the five voters, the campership was awarded to Cirdan Kearns for his awareness of the varied manmade threats to a stable environment.

The campership is an offer by Mass Audubon to recognize that they own property in Wendell but, as a non-profit organization, do not pay property tax.

Keller offered to create a certificate for each of the five writers who did not take first place, and announce them at Old Home Day.

Pooser said that a recent fundraiser for Seal Lamadeleine’s Deer Path Nature School earned a surplus that LaMadeleine said might be used to defray costs for that program. Deer Path is for younger children, but it might be enjoyable for one or more of the writers to act as a counselor.

Bridge Delay

Highway commissioner Mike Gifford opened the meeting with news that the lowest bid for replacing the bridge over Osgood Brook in Wendell Depot was \$97,000 over what the town had budgeted for. The specifications called for the concrete components to be made and cured ahead of construction, to minimize the time that Wendell Depot Road is closed.

Actually taking down the old bridge and putting the new one in its place was aimed for July or August, when no school bus uses that bridge, and when the water in the brook is likely to be low.

The construction estimate could be lowered if the engineer had contact with the con com, and that might be scheduled. Gifford also said the state has money available for just such projects.

A few phone calls in the next days may change the outlook, but Gifford said he doubted that the bridge replacement would happen this year. He said that the bridge in place now is good for another year.

The board voted to reject all bids, but refrained from announcing that the projected road closing will not happen in 2016. The engineer and con com will meet May 17.

Solar Delay

Haskell Werlin, representing the effort to build a solar farm off Wendell Depot Road, met the selectboard to try to move the project forward, and avoid some of the difficulty caused by the conditions given by the town’s conservation commission.

Werlin said those conditions are hard, the company has considered making an appeal in court to ease them, but he said, “our intention is not to bring the issue to court.” He asked for the hearing to be reopened, but Heubel said that could not happen. She also said that the con com is new, and the decision was rushed.

Werlin said that DEP does not consider the solar panels impervious, that the state rules are less restrictive than those imposed by the con com, and argued “we have to have alternatives to Kinder Morgan.”

Heubel said that con com deci-

GILL from page A1

major building repair projects at the Gill Elementary School. This could include a new roof, energy efficiency upgrades to the doors and windows, and any other projects that could be eligible for grants from the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Residents at the meeting also heard a list of projects or purchases recommended for the next five years by the capital improvements planning committee, including repaving the safety complex driveway; a new roof and ramp at the Riverside municipal building; an emergency generator for the elementary school; a new van, brush truck, tanker truck and pumper truck for the fire department; and a new chipper truck for the highway department.

Two major spending items recommended for FY’17 by the town’s

committee, **Articles 19 and 20**, would have purchased equipment for the police and highway departments including a new cruiser and backhoe. These were passed over at the recommendation of the selectboard, which was not able to finish its deliberations on those items in time to present a course of action for the annual town meeting.

Article 12, which would have approved a 1% cost of living adjustment for town employees and officials, was also passed over for the time being, but not unanimously.

A special town meeting will be held in June, and these three articles and five others that were passed over on Monday night could be on the warrant for that meeting.

Additional reporting was provided by Mike Jackson.



sions are moot until the DEP gives their decision.

Werlin said that there now may be a community solar garden, through which households may own part of a solar generating facility, and have the same benefits (and cost and loan programs) as if they had the solar panels installed on their own property.

Sunnectivity will meet with the con com on May 17.

Other Business

Keller said the Kinder Morgan natural gas pipeline project is suspended, not abandoned, and Montague, as an intervenor, is still challenging whether there was sufficient demand for the capacity, and now is looking into the decision by Berkshire Gas to refuse new customers until the pipeline is built, and waiting for the Berkshire Gas reaction to the pipeline suspension. The legal effort still needs money that he said he felt Montague should not have to pay alone.

The whole design estimate for a walkway between the Wendell Country Store and town common is \$34,000, and Keller said that amount should go on the town meeting warrant.

The kitchen committee found the old town hall curtain rolled up on the floor, and moved it to the town hall basement to allow construction in the kitchen. The curtain got moved again when the heating ducts were replaced in the town hall, and the place it landed left part of it on the dirt.

Aldrich said she got a telephone call from a woman who is research-

ing old town hall curtains and wanted to photograph it. She met with kitchen committee chair Kate Nolan and this reporter, and the three of us brought the old curtain to the office building lawn where we swept it off, looked at it, and rolled it back up and left it in the office building mechanic room, dry and off the floor at least.

The caller said that, after a photograph, her company could estimate the cost of restoration.

Pooser said “it sounds almost like a scam to me – clean your carpets, repair your roof, restore your town hall curtain, all from an unsolicited telephone call!”

Keller asked “what would we do with it?” and Heard suggested talking with the historic commission.

A 2014 inspection of the dam that holds back a pond across Lockes Village Road from West Street said the dam includes not just the concrete structure, but Lockes Village Road as well. As owners of the concrete dam, the Trousdale family has been paying for the inspections, but the inspection report said that trees are undermining the dam where it is Lockes Village Road, and they need to be removed, top and root ball, the resulting hole filled in.

The town can do that work without taking responsibility for owning the whole dam including the concrete structure. Keller said the cost of that work, \$5,000, might be a good line item for the annual town meeting warrant. That cost also could come from the town property maintenance budget.

Broadband committee member Robert Heller is asking the Baker

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VOTE - MAY 16

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TOWN OF GILL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

REGARDING
THE RENEWAL OF CABLE
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OF COMCAST OF
MASSACHUSETTS/
VIRGINIA, INC.

6 p.m. Tuesday, May 17, 2016

The Town of Gill Selectboard, as the Cable Television License Issuing Authority, will hold a public hearings on Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 6 p.m. at the Gill Town Hall, 325 Main Road, Gill, Massachusetts, pursuant to 207 C.M.R. 3.05(3) and any applicable cable television renewal license, laws, regulations or requirements, regarding the renewal of the cable television license of Comcast of Massachusetts/Virginia, Inc.

The proposed Cable Television Renewal License and any relevant applications, reports, statements and/or amendments in the possession of the Town to be considered at the hearings shall be available upon completion for public inspection and reproduction at a reasonable fee at the Selectboard’s office during regular Town Hall hours.

SELECTBOARD,
TOWN OF GILL

May 5, 2016 • May 12, 2016

administration to get things moving in the effort to get homes and businesses in western Massachusetts connected to the internet.

The annual town meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 8, which means the warrant must be posted by June 1. The selectboard has only one scheduled meeting before then, May 18, so each of them will have to come in and sign the warrant some time between that meeting and June 1.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

under Avenue A and the power canal to the Connecticut River.

They agreed to spend \$44,700 for preliminary engineering work on a new highway garage near the transfer station on Sandy Lane, despite finance committee member Michael Naughton’s advisory that the final tab for that structure could end up costing the town as much as \$11 million – or about twice what Montague paid to build a new police station, complete with high-tech features, in 2009.

The sewer work and asbestos abatement at the Strathmore will now be subject to townwide approval by the voters in the form of debt exclu-

sion override votes, to be scheduled for late June, according to town clerk Deb Bourbeau.

Once the engineering and design work is complete – and a more accurate price tag developed – the new highway garage will certainly be subject to townwide voter approval too, but not before 2017 at the earliest.

Growing and Changing

At town meeting, police chief Chip Dodge got approval to create a new command position of lieutenant, a non-union position above the staff sergeant and three regular sergeants in his sixteen-member force. He also asked for and received a new \$39,500 police cruiser, and \$35,000 to upgrade the department’s radio system.

Highway superintendent Tom Bergeron will have two new fulltime employees as his department works to plow and maintain 108 miles of roadway and accompanying sidewalks, mow 24 acres of green space and parks each week in season, and handle repairs for a growing list of town-owned buildings.

Among those buildings, the Shea Theater will soon have a new energy-efficient heating and cooling system, thanks to \$55,000 approved by town meeting.

The Carnegie and Montague Center libraries will see their roofs repaired, and the Carnegie will have masonry upgrades to the front steps and wheelchair access ramp.

Vowing to stay prepared in the town’s ongoing participation in a Department of Public Utilities docket related to the currently suspended Kinder Morgan pipeline, the selectboard sought and secured an additional \$20,000 above last year’s contribution of \$15,000 to the coalition of towns mounting that legal intervention effort.

And Rodney Madison, one of the very few non-white elected town meeting members representing an increasingly diverse population in town, secured a commitment from selectboard chair Michael Nelson to spend \$3,000 on a facilitated workshop for town officials aimed at combating racism.

According to the US Census Bureau, Montague’s population has seen a growth of minority population from 4.87% to 7.3% from 2000 to 2010, with the percentage identifying as Hispanic or Latino doubling in that time period.

Schools Fully Funded

After several years of budget harmony, town meeting turned down a finance committee recommendation to vote down the Gill-Montague school budget. Instead, the meeting chose to fully fund Montague’s share of the school committee’s requested \$21.16 million budget, a \$705,736 (3%) increase over last year’s regional school budget.

Due to balky state aid and changes in enrollment, Montague’s share of the budget will rise by \$353,771 (4.16%) to \$8.85 million, despite superintendent Michael Sullivan’s admission that “the kind of increases we are talking about are not sustainable” for the town’s taxpayers.

Finance committee chair John Hanold echoed this appraisal in calling for a \$50,000 reduction in Montague’s contribution to the regional schools. His amendment failed by majority vote.

Sullivan said the school committee is “working on multiple fronts” to bring school assessments into a more affordable range for Gill and

Two Hires for Highway

After staff cutbacks over many years had reduced the number of fulltime employees on the highway department by a third, this year Montague town meeting added back funding for two of the three new positions highway superintendent Tom Bergeron asked to fill.

Those two new positions – one for grounds and one for building maintenance – were the only new employee positions added on the town side of the budget in a tight budget year, although the Carnegie Library sought and received a small increase in opening hours.

But town meeting voters stopped short of approving an amendment by Chris Sawyer-Laucanno seeking to fund another part-time groundskeeper for Bergeron’s department.

Sawyer-Laucanno made his amendment in response to Pat Allen’s concerns about the state of repairs at the Carnegie Library, where

staff have recently been forced to move their offices upstairs, due to moisture problems in the basement.

Selectboard member Rich Kulewicz said he would like to see “a more comprehensive plan to approaching the problem” of maintenance at town buildings before adding a third new position at the department of public works. Referring to the state of repairs at the century-old Classical Revival library building on Avenue A, he added, “Rome didn’t deteriorate in a day, and we’re not going to be able to solve it in just one year.”

Building inspector David Jensen said, “Building maintenance is the stepchild of the DPW. It’s an irritant to their mission. In this case, organization is an equal problem; it’s not just the money.”

At an earlier meeting of the finance committee, Bergeron said a new groundskeeper would enable

Montague, but cited the rising costs of retirement benefits, a 9% increase in special education costs, and a net loss to school choice and charter schools of \$1.6 million in funding as the main factors driving the steep increase in his budget.

The final tab for the new highway garage on Sandy Lane could end up costing the town as much as \$11 million – about twice what Montague paid to build a new police station in 2009.

He said the district had cut 14 staff positions last year, and waived \$67,000 in new computers and technology aids for classrooms in his attempt to bring school spending down.

Those cuts are unlikely to reverse the endemic loss of state aid to students leaving the G-M district to school choice and charter schools, however. That trend has more than doubled in the last six years, leaving the superintendent between a rock and a hard place in

his budget balancing efforts.

Town meeting also turned down a second amendment to cut the G-M school assessment – this time by \$25,000 – offered by former finance committee member Jeff Singleton.

Singleton, Hanold and Sullivan all pointed to the lack of growth in state aid for the regional schools as the major culprit in the structural imbalance in the school budget. The growth in state funding for Gill-Montague has been frozen at less than 1% for a number of years.

Despite the apparent unanimity in their views, Singleton was unable to gain consensus for his approach on a petitioned article calling for a joint effort by town and school officials to lobby the state for an improved school funding formula.

Retirements

After receiving approval for \$120,000 in new equipment at the wastewater treatment facility, long time superintendent Robert Trombley received a round of applause from meeting members who congratulated him for a job well done. Trombley will be retiring this year.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio also announced he would be retiring, by summer of 2017. Abbondanzio first served as town administrator in Montague from 1980 – 1992, left to serve the town of Lee

the department to better support the work of the tree warden in replanting shade trees in the village centers of Montague.

At town meeting, selectboard chair Michael Nelson said his board “fully supports” efforts to plant more trees in the town’s five villages.

In February, the town’s energy committee also stated its support for planting shade trees, arguing that they reduce cooling costs for buildings and remove carbon from the atmosphere.

Airport commission chair Peter Golrick said his commission had been working on a plan to re-establish a shade tree nursery at the airport using land on the joint boundary with the Franklin County Tech School, and utilizing students in the Tech School’s horticulture program to tend young trees for municipal replanting.

in a similar capacity until 1997 when he returned to the Montague town hall, where he has worked ever since, for a total of 31 years.

Dipping Into Savings

Following Saturday’s meeting, finance chair John Hanold reflected on town meeting’s generosity in meeting all the departmental requests, including the full funding of the school budget (\$50,000 above the finance committee’s recommended level) and an extra \$5,000 for the heating and cooling system at the renovated Shea Theater.

“The consensus of town meeting was to spend more money on departmental requests than was originally recommended,” Hanold said. “That’s going to have to come out of savings. I was wondering at the time if there was any magic we could work. There really isn’t. That has downstream implications for major issues in the future.”

Hanold said the town’s stabilization fund – essentially Montague’s general purpose savings account – will now show a balance of about \$769,000, just below the state’s recommended minimum benchmark of 5% of the town’s general operating revenue.



Brass Expands

In a rare standing vote, town meeting approved police chief Chip Dodge’s request to create a new “second in command” position of lieutenant at the Montague police department. The final vote was 46 in favor, 26 opposed to creating the new, non-union position, which will be compensated at a rate between \$34.78 to \$37.68 an hour, with benefits.

In advocating for the new position, Dodge said, “Public safety jobs are becoming more specialized,” in an effort to deal with problems in the public at large, such as, “the opioid epidemic that is taking place right now, [which] is taking the lives of addicts of all ages.” He added, “We’re seeing mental health problems far greater than they ever were when I started in the department, many years ago.”

Dodge said that in his role as chief, he needs to spend a good deal of time working in a liaison role with community groups and officials – and it would be helpful for him to have a lieutenant to oversee the police station when he is called away. Having someone to act as a second in command would actually result in the three sergeants having more ability to be “out on the streets” with the rest of the patrol force, Dodge said.

Patrick Pezzati praised Dodge for the proactive role his department is taking on in dealing with the opioid abuse epidemic in town, and spoke in favor of giving the chief what he needs to do the job better.

But other meeting members questioned what they felt might be a “top heavy” chain of command, in a 16-member police force, with three sergeants subordinate to one staff sergeant, who will now be subordinate to a lieutenant, subordinate to the chief.

Dodge said he planned to hire from within the department to fill the lieutenant’s position, and indicated he would look to one of the active detectives to take on that post.

Pat Allen said she supported the creation of a lieutenant’s position, but wondered whether it would be wise to lose a detective now, when law enforcement is changing to deal with new scourges that may be more health related than criminal in nature. She advocated taking a second look at the position of staff sergeant, to see whether that post would still need to be filled once a lieutenant is hired.

Complex Housekeeping

“I know there’s two camps when it comes to the Strathmore Mill,” said town planner Walter Ramsey, introducing an article seeking town approval to spend \$385,000 to abate hazardous materials – including asbestos cladding for pipes, wall and ceiling panels, and boiler room installations – at the 227,000 square foot former paper mill.

Built in 1874 and operated as a paper mill by Keith Paper and the Strathmore Paper Company for 120 years, the town acquired the property for back taxes in 2010, and has invested over half a million dollars in roof repairs and the fire suppression system in the mill.

“There’s the tear-it-down camp,” said Ramsey, “and the redevelop-it. Approval of this article would be a strategic step forward for either argument.”

Ramsey said the presence of asbestos in the rubble of Building #10 at the Strathmore following a 2007 arson fire vastly increased the cost of disposing of the waste. By extension, any demolition at the mill would cost the town far more unless the asbestos is abated first.

On the other hand, the presence of asbestos remains a major deterrent to any possible redevelopment at the mill.

Ramsey said the town has accepted an offer to invest \$2.2 million to redevelop the 35,000 square foot Building 11 at the mill, one of ten remaining structures on the site, from a private developer hoping to create mixed-use live/work space there through the town’s commercial homesteading program.

Building inspector David Jensen said, “It’s clear we are in a long term relationship” with the Strathmore. He said there are four main obstacles in the way of successful redevelopment at the Mill: “water, sewer, pedestrian access, and hazardous materials.” He said the town was making progress on each of those issues, and urged a yes vote on the asbestos abatement.

Marje Levenson added a touch of levity to the proceedings when she asked if the town was keeping the buildings insured. “What would happen if a brick fell down and hit me in the head?” she wondered. The selectboard assured her she would be covered if that occurred.

Town meeting voted by majority to spend the \$385,000 to clean up the asbestos at the Mill. A majority of voters across town will also have to approve spending that money in a debt exclusion override vote expected in late June.

A separate article was approved allocating \$6,500 to study the possible demolition of some or all of the buildings.

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SUSPECT from page A1

Bridge on Friday night. Authorities have not determined whether he jumped into the river. High waters have complicated the search, which State Police Air Wing and Dive Team members have joined over the last week.

“I would like to see everyone playing it extra safe,” Montague police chief Chip Dodge wrote on Saturday on the department’s Facebook account. “I promise you the police will continue to search on land and in the water until the suspect is found or we are convinced there is no longer a threat.”

Hagmaier is a Montague native

who maintained ties to Turners Falls after moving to Plymouth. According to the Associated Press, he was sentenced to probation after a November 2011 knife attack on a 41-year-old neighbor in Montague, and ordered to live with his grandparents in Plymouth.

A November 3, 2011 *Montague Reporter* police log reads: “Tuesday, 11/1. 3:24 a.m. Arrest of Tyler Lane Hagmaier, age 20, for assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, trespassing, and attempted murder.”

As of press time Wednesday, Hagmaier’s whereabouts were still unknown.



ROD SHOP from page A1

U.S. all lay claim to inventing the split bamboo rod. I suspect that the French were pretty good at it, because Montague Rod & Reel acquired some French-made rods to study. My father, Russell Webster, was an avid fly fisherman, and he ended up owning two of the French rods. I can still picture him casting flies in the Deerfield River near Stillwater Bridge.

First Came Chubb

In 1868, the Thomas Chubb Rod Company began making fly rods and accessories in Post Mills, Vermont. They produced Chubb-branded rods, as well as generic, unmarked rods, and rods that were rebranded for specific retailers. Chubb became the leading producer of rods in the country, but over the years, the company was plagued by a flood and a couple of devastating fires.

Around 1881, brothers Leander L. and Eugene Bartlett purchased the fishing rod company of J.G. Ward in Pelham, MA. Mr. Ward was Eugene’s father-in-law. Around 1884, Leander sold his half to Eugene, and moved back home to Montague City.

A couple of years later finds Leander partnering with Charles Hazelton and Bernard N. Farren, the chief engineer during the completion of the Hoosac Tunnel. Of course, he also went on to build the Farren Memorial Hospital in memory of his late son. The three amigos formed the Montague City Rod Company, and soon acquired Eugene’s company, and Eugene.

A Cast (get it?) of Hundreds

Montague Rod & Reel is estimated to have employed a few hundred at its height, including my mother for a time. Along with their famous fly rods, they made rods for all types of fishing, along with reels, and accessories such as hooks, leaders and floats.



An old advertisement from the company.

More than 50 models of fly rods were manufactured spanning a wide range of quality. Montague rods did not fall into the high-end craftsman category, but they were popular nonetheless. The target market was your “average Joe” fisherman, although, today, the rods are coveted by some collectors.

Netting the Raw Material

The *Turners Falls Herald* of January 3, 1941 ran a story detailing how evolving world events affected the company.

In the 1890s, Montague Rod & Reel was the first to discover the superior qualities of cane from the Tonkin region of China. According to the *Herald*, this particular cane was considered “the best in the world for making split bamboo fish rods.” It was grown in an area about the size of Franklin County. After harvesting, the cane had to be shipped downriv-

er, to the ports of Canton.

Once Chinese growers realized that they had a monopoly on fishing rod bamboo, they refused to export shoots, fearing a loss of business. Montague Rod & Reel treasurer Sewell N. Dunton was of the opinion that if shoots could be obtained, the cane could successfully be grown in the U.S., because Tonkin’s climate was similar to that of Pennsylvania.

After the Japanese invaded China, bamboo became harder to obtain. From 1938 to December 1940, no cane was shipped. Some occupying soldiers even dumped loads of cane in the river, not understanding its value.

After 1940, some shipments started arriving. Dunton is quoted as saying, “It is not because the Japanese military officials have relaxed their stand on goods leaving China that enables us to get cane now. It is because brokers over there know which Japanese officials can be bribed to permit the stuff to come through.”

The cane that did “come through” was in smaller and less organized bales. Dunton speculated that was because children, women and old men were doing the work, instead of the younger men, who were now fighting the Japanese.

In January 1941, the *Herald* reported: “The price of cane has increased from 200 to 600 percent in the past decade, and ocean freight charges since the Japanese invasion have doubled. Insurance rates on the cargo have increased greatly.”

Confusion was the order of the day. One specific lot of cane was offered to Montague Rod & Reel by three different companies, one Chinese and two Japanese. Dunton responded that “whoever was able to get it shipped first would get the order.”

To a lesser degree, the company’s business was also affected by the Spanish Civil War, which decimated cork forests. Cork was used for rod handles. Portugal soon became the dominant supplier of cork.

World War II had another significant impact on the company’s product. Wayne Perkins, a Turners native, found an article from the *Springfield Union* (May, 1965) that described the company’s contributions to the war effort. In addition to promoting the peaceful activity of fishing, Montague Rod & Reel turned out primers

and fuses for artillery shells.

A Red Sox Hook

Paul Letourneau writes on the *Remember Old Turners Falls* Facebook page: “My father said Ted Williams used to go there to put on demonstrations. Ted was a great fly fisherman. He said he could pluck a handkerchief out of a tire with a fly rod.”

Bob Nylander adds: “Ted learned to fly at Turners Falls Airport during World War II. It’s not hard to imagine that he visited the factory at that time.”

All Good Things...

At Eugene’s death, controlling interest of the company was placed in trust for his wife. But, without a Bartlett brother at the helm, it was only a matter of time until the reel ran out of line.

In 1935, Ocean City Reel Company lured Montague Rod & Reel into a sale. The Montague name finally floated away for good in the 1950s, when an embargo of Chinese bamboo led to a supply shortage. Just about that same time, man-made materials were coming into vogue, and split bamboo became the forte of small, high quality rod makers.

Today, a quick search on eBay turns up Montague split-bamboo rods selling in the \$125 to \$250 range.

Trolling for Information

A variety of online sources were used in my research. In some cases historical events were dated differently from other sources, and I also found some information that was obviously wrong (can you imagine that?). I used the dates most frequently cited. In any case, the general chronology is correct. On one site, Leander was renamed Evander; on another, Eugene is not listed among Leander’s siblings.

Thanks to my big brother, Russ Webster, for suggesting this article. Russ grew up across the street from Montague Rod & Reel. Thank you also to Nina Rossi of the *Reporter* for research assistance and editorial support, and Susan Webster for her eagle-eyed proofreading help.

Jeffrey Webster grew up in Turners Falls, and now fishes for applause as an actor in southern Arizona.



A Montague Rod & Reel Company “Kosmic” brand reel.

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SOFTBALL from page A1

the fourth, the Tribe was leading 15-0. So of course, third base coach Sully prevented any more scoring by holding his runners at third.

Even with a passed ball lost by the catcher, he held his man on base. This was out of a sense of fair play and sportsmanship. After all, Turners was going to win anyway. Why pile on the points?

But in the bottom of the fourth, Hopkins got hot and scored 5 runs, thus requiring another inning. In order to win via the mercy rule, Turners was forced to score another two runs in the fifth.

Hailey Whipple hit the long ball for Turners, cracking a triple, a double and a single. Gabby Arzuaga, Jessica Loynd, and Cassidhi Wozniak added two hits each. Peyton Emery, Melissa Hersey, Alyson Murphy and Mackenzie Phillips also had hits.

Sienna Dillensneider, Abby Loynd and Jenna Putala all scored runs, and Jordan Meattey crossed the

plate twice. In the circle, Peyton Emery pitched all five innings, picking up 7 Ks, and allowing 5 hits, 5 runs and a walk.

TFHS 12 – Pioneer 0

Speaking of the mercy rule, the Lady Indians trounced the Pioneer Panthers 12-0 on May 6. In this game, however, there was no late-inning rally to extend the game past regulation.

The game was not a blow out at first. It was a 2-run squeaker going into the fifth, and it turned out last, inning. That's when the game was stopped as the Tribe scored the obligatory 10 runs to satisfy the mercy rule.

Wozniak, Fiske and Arzuaga all cracked doubles. Also hitting for the Tribe were Murphy, Meattey, and Phillips. Whipple and Loynd drew 2 walks and scored 2 runs each.

In the circle, Phillips pitched a no hitter, allowed a base-on-balls, and whiffed 11.

Turners Falls 10 – Athol 1

"I was hoping she would pitch it in the same place, and she did," Jenna Putala said, smiling, after she scored in the fifth inning.

Jenna had been hitting deep fouls which would have been homers if they had stayed fair. One rocketed out of the park and hit the Pesky-pole on the adjoining baseball field. With two strikes on her, Jenna parked the next pitch well over the left field fence.

The 2-run homerun broke the stalemate and put the Tribe up 3-1 in the May 10 game. Then in the seventh, Turners poured on the gas and scored 7 insurance runs. Jenna helped the rout by parking another home run in that inning.

On a concerning note, Jordan Meattey, being the competitor she is, sprinted down the first base line and just beat a throw to load the bases. However, Jordan was injured on the play. In a show of good sportsmanship, both teams gathered around her to wish her well as she was loaded into the ambulance.

Phillips had another stellar game, pitching all seven innings, allowing only one run, spreading out 3 hits, and blazing 14 Ks.

Putala, who finished with 5 RBIs on her two home runs, wasn't the only long ball hitter. Both Murphy and Arzuaga blasted doubles.

Other ladies with hits include Wozniak, Fiske, Whipple and of course Meattey. Jessica Loynd and Phillips contributed with walks.

TFHS 14 – Frontier 0

In the fifth inning, Mr. Bush approached me and solemnly whispered, "You know, she's pitching a perfect game."

Mr. Bush was referring to Mackenzie Phillips, who had yet to allow a single base runner. Mackenzie did finally give a base on balls, but she preserved her no-hitter. And she got help from the Blue batters, who methodically put runs on the scoreboard, inning by inning.

After 3 innings, the score was 5-



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MEANWHILE, IN BASEBALL...

DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Tionne Brown steals second base during the bottom of the seventh inning during Monday night's game against Frontier, placing him to score on a Jalen Sanders sacrifice fly. Frontier won the game, 5-2.

0, and after 4, it was 8-0. Two more in the fifth made it 10-0. And all the while, Mackenzie and the fielders kept the Hawks off the bases.

Four more insurance runs in the seventh put the Tribe up 14-0, and three outs later, the game was over.

Turners came to Deerfield ready to hit. Fiske and Hailey Whipple both parked homers, and Arzuaga went 4 for 5 from the plate, one of which was a double. Abby Loynd also banged a two-bagger.

Phillips, Putala and Wozniak each had 2 hits and Murphy drove in 4 runs. Phillips faced 22 batters, allowed no hits, no runs and 1 walk while fanning 12.

So the Turners Falls Softball Indians outscored their opponents in the last four games by a total of 53-6. They're undefeated, the defending state champions, and are ranked number 3 in western Mass.

But they are soon to be tested, because big challenges are coming up quick. On Thursday, May 12, they have a showdown against the undefeated and surprising Greenfield Green Wave. Then on Sunday, May 15, they play the reigning D-II State champions, the 13-0 Hampshire Red Raiders.

Both games will test the mettle of a team who wants to show that they can compete against any team.

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Unearthing Some Facts on Plow Day

By JOE PARZYCH

NORTHFIELD – The Lord blessed Plow Day's annual event with sunshine and balmy weather. The sun shone bright and a gentle breeze wafted across the 150 acre corn field on Bill Llewelyn's Five Point Farm in Northfield.

The event, held on Saturday, April 30, was organized by shakers and movers Tony Amato and Paul Morehouse, members of the International Harvester Collector's Club, New England Chapter 18. The Franklin County 4-H Club ran a food concession stand. Sixty-two tractors, 20 horses, and their enthusiastic owners took part plowing, showing and socializing with the large friendly crowd that turned out.



Brian Hubbard of Winchester, NH poses his Half Morgan team alongside Bill Llewelyn's huge John Deere 7930 tractor.

The horses seemed to enjoy the attention as they were curried, brushed and admired, fed and watered. Officially, the event was to begin at 9 a.m., but at a little after 8 a.m., eager participants were already plowing the 150-acre field with all manner of tractors and horses.

Most of the tractors were of International heritage. An iron wheeled 1930 John Deere made its debut in the shadow of Llewelyn's modern 200-hp diesel tractor with chisel plow attached, in contrast to the participants' mostly 20-hp tractors with mold board plows.

Of considerable interest were a few home Model A Ford and Model T cars converted to "doodle bugs." Most often doodle bugs are cut down to the bare essentials, with a substitute worm drive truck rear end installed. Model A doodle bugs

sometimes have a truck four-speed transmission substituted for the car's three-speed tranny.

A Model T conversion doodle bug tractor at the Plow Day site had a small pinion gear at each side of the rear axles in place of the rear wheels. The pinion gears engaged ring gears, about three feet in diameter, which were bolted to large diameter truck wheels on each side, thereby giving the 20-hp conversion tractor a slower speed but greatly increasing its torque, or pulling power.

Sears and Roebuck offered these reduction gear conversion kits in their catalog during the Model T's heyday in the 1920s. Ford did not offer a 4-speed truck transmission option on trucks because the Model T engine, transmission and magneto

factory water injection feature, though Fordson farm tractors, also manufactured by Ford, did have kerosene-water systems. Kerosene burning engines were popular during the hard times of the Great Depression because kerosene was cheaper. The kerosene burning tractors have separate tanks for kerosene and water, with a small tank holding gasoline for the initial startup. Introducing water keeps the kerosene burning engine from knocking (pre-ignition) but the expansion of water as it turns to steam boosts the power of kerosene or gasoline as the fuel burns and the water turns to steam for a steam engine effect.

WWII gasoline piston engine fighter planes used water injection for an extra boost of power when needed. The downside of water injection is dealing with water freezing in the winter, but adding alcohol can remedy that.

Henry Ford eliminated water and kerosene tanks by about 1939, when he introduced the Ford Ferguson model. Henry Ford had the foresight to team up with Harry Ferguson, English inventor of the hydraulic "Three Point Hitch" using the famous "Handshake contract" that Henry thought was unenforceable. Ferguson sued and won.

The three point hitch makes hooking up implements easier, but its major feature is that it pins the rear end of a tractor down, giving a small tractor the capability of a much larger one. The patents have run out, so the three point hitch is now used almost universally on tractors throughout the world.

Ned Brett's 7,000-lb. International Harvester powered by a 425 cubic inch engine has kerosene burning capability with a separate carburetor to supply water to two injectors mounted on the intake manifold of the tractor's four cylinder engine.

Contrasting the assembled tractors, which in most cases had 20-hp engines, Bill Llewelyn's huge John Deere 200-hp diesel tractor with an attached set of chisel plows sat smugly on the corn field throughout the activity. "We'll have to go over the field with the chisel plow to get the land ready for planting," Bill said.

The alluvial flood plain soil on
see **PLOW DAY** page B3

A Simple, Soft Good-bye: Last Dance Shrouds



Dina Stander fits a burial shroud on a model.

By NINA ROSSI

SHUTESBURY – When Dina Stander set up her display at the recent Home Show in Greenfield, she had a modest goal of having five meaningful conversations a day during the weekend of the show. "Some folks shuddered as they walked by. I knew some people wouldn't want to talk about it, and they looked away when they saw what it was," reported Dina. "I didn't really expect to be selling any, I just wanted to have this catalyst for conversation."

The fledgling business she premiered at the show was "Last Dance Shrouds," ecological burial shrouds for home funerals and funeral homes. Designed by Dina to envelop the body in soft folds of premium organic cotton, her shrouds are an ecological alternative to burial in a casket – though one can certainly use both, if desired. However, her product complements what is known as "green burial," an environmentally sound burial practice that is becoming more and more popular among people who are interested in burials that conserve resources and protect groundwaters.

The trend of embalming bodies

started as a way to ship Civil War soldiers home for burial via the railroad. According to the Green Burial Massachusetts brochure, contemporary funeral practices put 4.3 million gallons of embalming fluid into the ground every year. Also going underground are caskets with 64,500 tons of steel, 2,700 tons of copper and bronze, and over 20 million board-feet of hardwoods; vaults account for some 1.6 million tons of concrete and 14,000 tons of steel.

Simple burials seek to avoid wasting resources in the ground or polluting with heavy metals, by using biodegradable materials only.

A shrouded body may be buried directly in the ground, or in a simple pine or cardboard casket that will compost quickly. A depth of three to four feet is recommended to aid decomposition. For cremation, a board may be inserted into a pocket along the bottom of the shroud for transferring into the crematorium.

Cremation is simpler, more flexible, and less expensive than traditional burial, but still requires fossil fuel to sustain temperatures of 1,400 to 1,600 degrees for four hours. It also produces air

see **SHROUDS** page B8

"At The Gate": Paintings by Georgeanne Jud



Illustration: At the Gate by Georgeanne Jud

By RICHARD BALDWIN

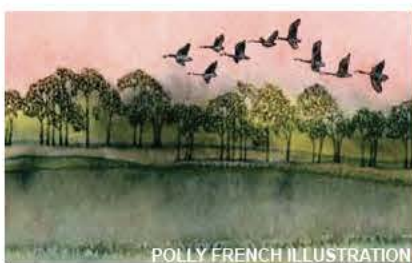
WENDELL – The Wendell Library is pleased to present "At the Gate," the first solo exhibition of paintings by Georgeanne Jud of Lawton, Pennsylvania. The bold energy of the work is palpable. The title of the show refers to the artist entering her seventh decade, but the energy expressed here suggests one much, much younger. Twelve medium size paintings, six watercolors and seven oils, fill the gallery space with swirling, bright colors.

About her work Ms. Jud writes, "As an artist, I am a recorder. I re-

cord energies, events, people and landscapes that have been part of my life. I want to see what emerges through the paint as I explore my inner terrain, moving through mythology, dreams, energy and feelings. I love to build images and colors into movement. I love light. This journey of my life and my art has been an exploration that meets some thread of my yearning for deep connection and meaning that transcends words."

Indeed, as one walks through the gallery one is pulled into her visionary worlds. The bright colors and swirling brush strokes demand

see **JUD** page B5



WEST ALONG THE RIVER:

"MAY IS A PIOUS FRAUD..."

By DAVID BRULE

James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), that crusty, cranky curmudgeon of a New England poet, wrote cynically about May, way back in the 1880s. He could well have had his reasons to be snide about the month of May, and maybe we do too, or at least we did, up to three days ago.

We have to admit that May has been frustrating, with the first eight days of the month mostly mist, rain, clouds and raw weather, more like chill November than the so-called Merry Month. Maybe it was merry back in Old England in Shakespeare's time, but in New England it's been more like Lowell's own words: "a ghastly parody of real Spring."

May 3. This has been the third day of rain, with crabapple, dog-

wood and cherry blossoms glowing through the mist-covered yard. The red-eyed towhee, optimistic just the same in spite of the weather, chanted over and over his *drink-your-tea!* refrain from the moss-covered tree trunk lying along the ancient privet hedge. He'll soon be back to scratching in the wet leaves, while I listen to the grass literally growing on a rain-forest day like this.

The orioles, recently back from southern climes, feast on oranges we put out on the feeder. They're glad to find some nourishment on this bug-less, worm-less gray day.

Indoors, a fire in the fireplace can do no harm, driving the dampness out of the house and making for good company on a dreary day like this.

May 4. Down to the river in the rain, with the new pup bounding



Pipilo erythrophthalmus – Eastern Towhee

through the woods, no clear direction to his sprinting, just good to get out and burn off some of that pent-up energy.

The goose family is out on the rushing river this morning, a flotilla in the swift current. The watchful parents squire the fluffy yellow young ones away from me and the dog on the beach. They head to a lee against the hemlock cliff on the other bank where they can glare at us in calm water.

I have a godfather-like affection
see **WEST ALONG** page B5

LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

Pets of the Week

Meet Daredevil, he came in with his sister (and best friend) Angel Kitty when their caretaker had to move away. He's a bit more reserved than his sister, usually preferring to chill on a comfy couch or lounge around all day.

He is very sweet and loves a good ear scratch! He has lived with dogs (beagles) before and would do well

in a home with older children who would rather relax with him than anything else. Look into those stunning brown eyes and fall in love. Do you have space in your heart for two senior kitties?

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



“ANGEL KITTY & DAREDEVIL”

Senior Center Activities

MAY 16 to 20

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, F 10:10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
Monday 5/16 Closed Town Elec. Tuesday 5/17
9:30 a.m. Mat Yoga (fee)
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Knitting Circle
Wednesday 5/18
9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach
12:45 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 5/19
9 a.m. Tai Chi
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 5/20
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 congregatemeals.
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 5/16
9 a.m. Tai Chi
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise
Tuesday 5/17
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance
11:30 a.m. Home Cooked Lunch
12:30 p.m. Friends Meeting
Wednesday 5/18
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
9 a.m. Foxwoods Motown Concert
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
Noon Bingo, Snacks & Laughs
Thursday 5/19
8:45 a.m. Aerobics (fast moving)
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
12:30 p.m. Creative Coloring
Friday 5/20
9 a.m. Quilting
9:30 Bowling Fun at French King
11:30 Out To Lunch: French King
12:30 p.m. Painting

LEVERETT
For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or 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.

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rental office on the corner of Ave. A & 4th St.

Sharon Cottrell
Property Manager

Interview: MR at the Great Falls Farmers Market

By HANNAH SANCHEZ

responded, “the blue monster.”

When I asked where she bought her raincoat, she had no comment. A girl must keep her fashion successes a secret!

Iris attends Meadowsweet School, where she has fun and plays in the woods. Her favorite part of town is Unity Park. Take a look at Iris’s favorite monster!

The Montague Reporter staff and volunteers will be at the Great Falls Farmers Market every Wednesday afternoon in Turners Falls. Stop by and say hi!



Iris points to the blue monster.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Bridge Workers Use Vulgar Language; Peregrine Falcon Found Dead; Secret Service

Monday, 4/11
9:45 a.m. Arrest of female resident on French King Highway for alcohol-related charges.
3:22 p.m. Motor vehicle vs. moped accident at business on Main Road, no injuries reported.
Tuesday, 4/12
9:30 a.m. Report of past accident on Hoe Shop Road. Assisted party.
11:45 a.m. Arrest of female resident on French King Highway for mental health issues.
5:55 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with arrest of male subject in their community.
Wednesday 4/13
9 a.m. Restraining order issued to resident on

Franklin Road.
Thursday, 4/14
4:35 p.m. Report of dead Peregrine Falcon on West Gill Road. Investigation to follow.
5:35 Report of vulgar language being used by workers on Gill-Montague Bridge.
6:55 p.m. Assisted citizen to unlock motor vehicle at business on Route 2.
Friday, 4/15
7:50 p.m. Erratic operator reported on Main Road. Stopped, talked with same.
Saturday, 4/16
10:50 a.m. Moved along subject selling wood products from French King Bridge area.
8 p.m. Located dog in Roadway on North Cross

Road. Located owner.
Sunday, 4/17
9:20 a.m. Checked area of French King Bridge for subject reportedly upset who may hurt himself.
Monday, 4/18
12 p.m. Assisted citizen with unlock of motor vehicle at a business on West Gill Road.
Tuesday, 4/19
2 p.m. Trespass order issued to resident on Oak Street.
6:50 p.m. Reported female overdose somewhere in Gill, based on cell being “pinged”. Party was located in another town.
Thursday, 4/21
2:45 a.m. Assisted Montague police with plane crash in their community.

Saturday, 4/23
1 p.m. Complaint by subject on a bicycle of harassment by a motorist on the French King Highway.
2:15 p.m. Complaint of 2 males with guns on Grist Mill Road. Investigated.
Wednesday, 4/27
4:10 p.m. Resident on North Cross Road with mental health issues, placed in custody.
6 p.m. Resident on Franklin Road with mental health issues, placed in custody.
Monday, May 2
3:35 p.m. US Secret Service assisted with subject in community.
6:30 p.m. Firearm issue reported on Main Road, investigated.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

The Bigger Picture

lief, cancer-causing chemicals in the environment cause fewer than 5 percent of cancer deaths in the United States. Most cancers are caused by family history, and lifestyle choices such as smoking.

Iodine: If you don’t get enough iodine from your diet, the thyroid gland in your neck can grow to the size of a baseball. When this happens, you get what is called a “goiter.” These became rare after iodine was put into table salt.

Worker Safety: About 137 workers die daily from job-related diseases. This is more than eight times the number of people who die from accidents on the job. Many of these illnesses are caused by chemicals.

Lead: Paint chips, dust, fumes and water containing lead can get into your body. Even small amounts of lead in your system can impede learning and generate behavior changes. Large quantities of lead can be fatal. A simple blood test can alert you before lead poisoning causes significant problems.

Mercury: Mercury is a poisonous metal that can get into your body from eating contaminated fish. This silvery metal can build up in the body and cause health problems. Years ago, mercury was used to shape hats. Factory workers breathed fumes from the mercury, which can damage the brain, liver and kidneys. This phenomenon may be what is behind the saying, “mad as a hatter.”

The Sun: Deaths caused by

melanoma – a lethal form of skin cancer – are increasing by four percent a year. You can shield yourself from the sun’s dangerous rays by applying sunscreen, wearing protective clothing and avoiding the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Fluoride: Almost half of all Americans drink water that is either naturally fluoridated or treated with fluorides. This has lowered the incidence of cavities as much as 65 percent. Use fluoride toothpaste.

Carbon Monoxide: A fire alarm is not enough to protect you in your home. You need a carbon monoxide (CO) detector that you can get at the hardware store. Carbon monoxide is a byproduct of combustion that is produced by a home heating source. If a chimney from your furnace is blocked, carbon monoxide can collect in your home and kill you in your sleep. If you don’t have one in your house, get one.

Radon: Radon is an invisible, odorless radioactive gas that could be in your home. A naturally occurring gas that seeps out of rocks and soil, it comes from uranium buried in the earth and is itself radioactive. Radon poses a risk of lung cancer. Get your house tested.

Warning Labels: Read the labels on all house and garden chemicals – even the ones you have been using regularly. The directions change often.

If you want to ask a question, write to fred@healthygeezzer.com.

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Sharon Cottrell
Property Manager

PLOW DAY from page B1

Llewelyn’s farm is Hadley type loam, and reportedly is as fertile as the Nile River Valley. In this case probably more fertile, since the land is fertilized with manure produced by the tenant’s 300 head of milking cattle housed in the barns.

Bill Llewelyn gave up the dairy business to concentrate on growing, drying, and bagging corn for sale to small farmers and for use in corn stoves. Llewelyn produces cracked corn as well as whole kernel corn on 500 acres of land. He likes the freedom of growing corn as opposed to dairy farming. “I can go to the beach for a couple of weeks while waiting for the corn to grow. It’s a lot better than having to stick around home to milk cows twice a day.”

Plow Day participants using horses for plowing opened more than a few eyes, since the horses were keeping up with the tractors! The outstanding eye-opener in the plowing demonstration was the team, Chub & Bill, chestnut “Half Morgan” horses, owned by Brian Hubbard of Winchester, NH. They plowed at a trot. Whenever Brian halted the team to give them a break, the zealous Half Morgans gave a little leap when they eagerly resumed working at a trot when signaled by Brian.

The reason for the term “Half Morgan” is that they are about half as big as a regular Morgan. Morgans are all-around horses used for farm and logging work, as saddle horses, as carriage horses, and were once used by the military as war horses.

Brian’s father, Don Hubbard, brought his team of black Morgans,

which he favors. The larger Morgans did not trot when plowing, but steadily plodded along, demonstrating far less eagerness to work than Brian’s Half Morgans, but are reputed to be stronger with their greater muscle mass.

“My Half-Morgans are smaller,” Brian proudly conceded, “but at the end of the day, they’ll finish right at the back door with the Morgans. Half Morgans are more nimble. In competition my Half Morgans score 100 points when pulling log scoots between traffic cones without knocking off tennis balls sitting atop traffic cones, leaving just 1-1/2 to 3 inches of clearance as they pass.”

Some participants used their horses for gathering maple sap, for logging, for pulling contests at fairs, for weddings, funerals and transporting Santa Claus during Christmas.

Another eye opener was the number of young people skillfully driving farm tractors. Some children learned to drive a tractor before they started school. Seven year old Josh Poole, given a tractor ride at two, drove one at three. Jake Amato began driving at six years of age. Samantha Knowles skillfully handled her pink 1945 20-hp Farmall Cub tractor that her parents gave her as a 9th year birthday gift.

Bud Streeter of Bernardston, now in his 90s, once had his head run over by the rear wheel and tire of a Farmall model A tractor, lived to tell about it, and has the scars to prove it.

Bud didn’t specify the year his head was run over, but said, “They make ‘em tough in



The Wendell Community Chorus

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

The town of Wendell has a Community Chorus with “between 15 and 20 members.” It has been around for six years, and Morningstar Chenven is the director of the chorus. It features women, men, and their children.

“We sing a lot of songs from a lot of different traditions,” says Chenven. “At the holidays, we sing holiday songs from a lot of different traditions from around the world. Sometimes we sing popular songs, one example being called ‘Happy.’” Other types are jazz and folk songs.

“We had Doug Tanner, a violinist and harmonica player, come and play with us,” she continues. “A woman named Carrie Ferguson, who’s a local songwriter, taught us one of her songs. We sing gospel with my husband Moonlight Davis. He’s a gospel singer, and he comes and teaches the chorus gospel songs. Other local musicians come and teach us songs too.”

Beside the many different types of songs which they do, they also have sung at a few different types of locations. They did a Christmas concert last year to raise money for Chorus Scholarship Funds and Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse, an organization that seeks “to preserve, maintain, and protect the Wendell Meetinghouse, a cornerstone to the Wendell Town Common and Historic District.”

Morningstar also mentioned, “We sang at the Stone Soup Cafe in Greenfield, at the Unitarian church. We also do our own concerts in the Wendell Town Hall. We performed 12 times at the town hall.”

The Stone Soup Cafe is a pay-as-you-go cafe that is being run at that church in Greenfield.

The Chorus runs for two sessions. The one for the fall started on September 21 and the one for winter on February 29. On top of learning songs from different performers, and different types of songs from places in the world, the group has learned songs from “Rabbi Shefa Gold, creator of many rounds and chants.” To me, that shows they really do quite a large group of songs.

Their Facebook page also states that no experience is needed when it comes to singing in the chorus. So, if you have fears of sounding like a fool when doing this, then you won’t be alone with those fears. Morningstar also said when it comes to those wanting to join the chorus, “The chorus is open to new members every season.”

Personally, I wish anyone the best of luck when they decide to sing in the chorus. From what I learned, and a little of what I have seen on their Facebook page, it looks like it would be a great deal of fun. You would at least sing quite a few different songs. I like different cultures. I believe that would contribute to people’s enjoyment with the Chorus.

If you want to contact someone about the chorus, you can do it at this address: TheWendellCommunityChorus@gmail.com. Look for them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Wendell-Community-Chorus.

Join the Community Chorus on Sunday May, 22 at the Town Hall at 5 p.m. for an eclectic evening of music. Light refreshments served; donations welcomed.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Goats Eat Neighbor’s Flowers; Other Neighbors Leave Fan On In Bathroom; Skunk Just Stares At Caller; Mask On Stick Causes Alarm

Monday, 5/2
1:11 p.m. Missing juvenile from Charlemont located on Avenue A after sending emails to a teacher using local business’s Wifi.
8:10 p.m. Complaint regarding traffic light sensors at intersection of Avenue A and Seventh Street; caller reports that when traveling northbound, she has had to wait for another vehicle to come up to the lights before they would change. DPW advised; stated the town just put new sensors into the lights so they should be working fine.
Tuesday, 5/3
7:31 a.m. Report of a business vehicle broken into overnight at Depot and Eleventh streets. Driver’s side window was smashed and items taken. Report taken.
11:38 a.m. Caller from Avenue A reports that he noticed a vehicle in their parking lot with a male party at the wheel slumped over. When he knocked on the window, he stated the male seemed startled awake. Caller noticed needles in the vehicle. Party drove out of lot going south on Avenue A. BOLO issued to Greenfield PD and State Police. Bernardston PD later advised that vehicle was located at Windmill Hotel in Bernardston. No further action taken at this time.
4:43 p.m. 911 caller from Second Street advising non-emergency; she found a syringe by the dumpster when she arrived home. Caller provided business line for future non-emergency calls. Officer will retrieve item.
6:09 p.m. Caller advising of verbal altercation among 6-7 people at Unity Park; some pushing/shoving along with threats to shoot each other. Area search negative.
Wednesday, 5/4
4:34 p.m. Caller from East Chestnut Hill Road reports that his neighbor’s goats have been in his yard eating his wife’s flowers and everything else they can get to. Caller advises he has walked the goats home today, so no immediate issue; however, this was a problem two years ago and he is hoping to address the situation before it becomes a problem this time. Copy of call left for animal control officer, who is at a training today but will follow up when he returns.
Thursday, 5/5
11:04 a.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road requesting to speak with animal control officer regarding how many dogs someone can legally own at one time. ACO advised.
11:41 a.m. Officer observed goats from previous call in a neighbor’s yard. ACO

checked area; advised goats were back on their owner’s property. ACO will do extra patrols in that area and contact the owner again.
1:07 p.m. Caller calling on behalf of her elderly mother reports that goats are back on her property eating her bushes. Caller requesting ACO assistance and inquiring about her mother’s legal options beyond what has already been done. ACO advises that the state will come to the property with him tomorrow to perform an inspection, and he will likely request a hearing with the selectboard regarding this ongoing issue. Upon responding to property, ACO found the goats still loose. ACO rounded up goats and got them back on their owner’s property. ACO took photos of goats while they were loose. Officer located documents from 2010 when MPD dealt with similar ongoing issues with this party; at that time, citations were issued, and when the owner failed to pay the citations, a criminal complaint was issued. 20+ calls regarding these goats located since 2010.
3:55 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reports that an unwanted party is on his neighbor’s property; neighbor has asked caller to contact MPD if he sees this party on her property. Officer spoke with party, who advised that he had made contact with the property owner and was going to do some power washing on the back deck. Officer unable to make contact with property owner; advised party not to return to property until situation could be resolved. Caller later reported that he has a picture of the party putting things into his vehicle from the residence. Officer spoke with property owner, who stated that the male party is not wanted there and that he has been advised of this several times.
4:15 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on two default warrants and two straight warrants.
6:50 p.m. Caller on 911 line advising of an unhealthy raccoon in the area of Vladish Avenue. Caller states same has been seen during the day; animal was just in their yard a few minutes ago and his wife was able to get a better look at the animal. Wife stated the animal did not look too good. Officer clear; raccoon is no longer on the property. Caller’s wife was mostly concerned about the welfare of her chickens. Copy of call left for ACO.
11:21 p.m. Caller from Central Street reports that her neighbors leave the exhaust fan in their bathroom running all night, which causes her not to be able to sleep. Officer spoke to tenant; fan turned off.
Friday, 5/6
1 a.m. Officer checking on two parties that are fishing in the area of Railroad Salvage. Parties moved along.
10:04 a.m. Caller advising that neighbor’s goats are on her mother’s property again. ACO advised and responding.
2:52 p.m. Caller advises that neighbor’s goats are in her backyard. ACO was off duty at noon today; officer advises that there are 25-30 goats in the caller’s yard. MSPCA on scene for inspection. Officer contacted goats’ owner, who is en route. Officer advised owner to repair the fence so that the goats cannot get out. Owner advises he will repair the fence this weekend.
7:23 p.m. Caller from Davis Street advising that a skunk has been in his backyard for a little while. Caller tried to scare the skunk away, but it just stares at him. Message left for ACO.
10:40 p.m. Caller from Hatchery Road advises that there is a dead deer in the roadway. Message left for DPW.
Saturday, 5/7
2:18 a.m. Report of suspicious person possibly trying to enter caller’s house on Turners Falls Road; subject also approached the caller at his car as well as in the parking lot. Possibly subject from previous be-on-lookout. Greenfield PD and MSP advised; MSP requests callback if any contact made with subject. GPD assisting in search of area. Caller could not positively ID subject when shown photo. GPD advised to cancel; same done.
8:58 a.m. Report of a skunk in the playground area of Hillcrest Elementary School. Caller saw skunk yesterday as well and is concerned it might be sick. Officer checked on skunk, advises it does not appear sick but appears to be scrounging around for food. Officer watched skunk for a while longer; no further action needed.
10:50 a.m. Caller reports that while driving southbound on Turners Falls Road by the second entrance to the Montague Plains, he observed what appeared to be a human head on a stake on the side of the road. Officers checked area; object determined not to be a human head, was a Frankenstein mask on a stick.
12:27 p.m. Caller advises that neighbor’s goats were on his property again this morning. Caller was able to lead goats back to the owner’s property; unknown whether any are still loose. Officer spoke with goats’ owner, who advises that he is going to put up some new fence posts that he hopes will rectify the problem.
3:41 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a straight warrant.
8:56 p.m. Caller reporting that 10 or 12 kids are going up and down Coolidge Avenue; not sure what they are doing. Officer spoke with 2 kids who advised that they were playing a game. Kids advised to go home.
Sunday, 5/8
9:04 a.m. Caller reports that her client’s son’s lawnmower was stolen out of a garage on Bernardo Drive; lawnmower last seen this past Thursday. Report taken.

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OYSTERGIRL's guide to REAL LIVING

by Vanessa Query

#15: The Surprising History of Menstrual Care, Part 2

By VANESSA QUERY

Last month, we learned about the apathy with which history has treated menstruation, the surprisingly recent emergence of menstrual care technology and products, and how they may have had a hand in increasing women's social and economic equality.

To all this liberation, however, there may be dark cloud hanging over the silver lining of freedom.

Menstruation has long been something to keep hidden from others. Now, with products to be sold, we had to be convinced that the old-fashioned ways of dealing with our periods were insufficient. Early advertisers pushed a new idea: that menstrual flow was germ-ridden and smelly. It became a sanitation issue, one that only these products could quell.

This really took shape in the advertising war between pads and tampons. Kotex claimed that pads "protected and deodorized."

From a tampon ad: "With a sanitary napkin, the flow collects on the pad where the warmth of the body increases its odor.... Since [tampons] are worn internally where no air is present, no odor can form."

Then, deodorant powders to be used on pads were put on the market. They claimed to get rid of odors "everywhere on the female body." Manufacturers started adding deodorant to tampons. Now there are "feminine wipes," sold in individually wrapped packets alongside pads.

Menstruation became something to diligently manage and hide. What if we could do away with it completely?

Hey, we can! Birth control pills have evolved into menstrual suppression drugs. You can choose how often you menstruate, if at all. Say goodbye to that monthly nuisance! Nothing could go wrong! Right?

Problems with modern femcare technology

Birth control pills and menstruation suppression drugs can cause infertility, nausea, headaches, blood clots, strokes...

I'm going to stop, before I sound like the Micro Machines Man reciting the requisite list of side effects in a pharmaceutical commercial. Fact is, we're not sure what these drugs are doing to our bodies. The effects of continuous hormonal contraception have not been studied.

Toxic shock syndrome is a rare blood infection that can be caused by certain chemical compounds found in tampons. It was discovered in 1978, and within two years, 38 girls

and women had died from the disease. The known TSS-causing elements were phased out of tampon production, but there are still cases floating around. Thankfully, it is now treatable and no longer fatal.

There is concern about the presence of dioxin – chemical compounds that are highly toxic and carcinogenic – in tampons. Testing has indicated only trace amounts. But dioxin builds up in our system and doesn't really go away. Smaller amounts are not cancer-causing, but may be linked to other problems, like endometriosis, which can cause pelvic pain and infertility.

"Vulvodynia" is a new-fangled chronic syndrome characterized by burning, stabbing discomfort, throbbing, and/or itching of the labia or vaginal opening. It can be triggered by inflammation brought on by the synthetic compounds in soaps, douches, perfumes, and commercial femcare products.

The stuff that's supposed to keep us all so clean, fresh, and dainty is doing just the opposite. Conventional products, in trying to mask the scent of menses with chemical deodorant, are potentially aggravating the skin, and can just make everything smellier.

It's also bad for the earth. The average woman will throw away 250 to 300 pounds of pads and tampons in a lifetime. The production of these products uses countless energy and resources.

Increase need for menstrual care technology

There is another issue. On average, women menstruate more now than ever before in history. Women in modern Western society may have four times as many periods as their hunter-gatherer ancestors, and three times as many as they did 100 years ago.

Women were also pregnant more often, and pretty much exclusively breastfed, and for longer (the world-wide average is until age four) – and menstruation is typically suppressed during breastfeeding, for several

months or more.

Menarche – the onset of menstruation – is occurring at an increasingly earlier age.

Early menarche is the result of several environmental factors:

Exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) can disrupt our body's hormones. EDCs are everywhere: pesticides, fuel, plastic, and household items like toys, food packaging, hoses, raincoats, shower curtains, vinyl flooring, adhesives, detergents, shampoos... the list goes on.

Increased caloric intake is another cause. Our ancestors had inconsistent availability to food. Now we live in a time of immense abundance: supermarkets and refrigerators and fast food chains, oh my!

Less access to natural, whole, nutrient rich foods in comparison to ultra-processed foods high in calories but low in nutrients – a cause of childhood obesity, which is on the rise. Stored body fat and a higher BMI can cause the body to enter puberty early.

So unless you're constantly having babies, and if you need to leave your house once in a while, you're going to need to manage your menstrual flow. So what's a socially-conscious, eco-friendly menstruator to do?

Alternatives to conventional products

Menstrual cups: Generally made of silicone or rubber, menstrual cups are inserted, like tampons; but rather than absorbing flow, they collect it, to be dumped out periodically.

There might be a learning curve, but many women have learned that these are comfortable and effective. The Divacup is one popular brand.

Sea sponges: These are sponge-like creatures that grow on the ocean floor, to be used like tampons. Once inserted, they expand and soak up the blood.

Reusable cloth pads: A new take on what women have done for millennia. They are usually made of naturally absorbent materials like cotton and bamboo.

Period panties: Traditionally just simple absorbent cotton, companies recently have been making high-tech, moisture-wicking, anti-microbial, leak-resistant, and highly-absorbent period panties.

A stash of cloth pads and period panties from a company such as Lunapads (maker of the Divacup) can cancel out the constant purchasing of products and accumulation of trash, and add one load of laundry a month to one's routine. High-tech period panties such as Thinx and Padkix can make the ease of reusable femcare even easier.

Bleeding for several days every month is still not fun, but by switching to reusable products, women can have a much better relationship with the natural byproduct of their fecundity.

For further reading, check out *Flow: The Cultural Story of Menstruation* by Elissa Stein and Susan Kim, published by St. Martin's Press in 2009.

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



PHOTO COLLAGE SUBMITTED BY OYSTERGIRL

Clockwise from top left:
Diva cup from divacup.com. Sea sponges.
Cloth pads from lunapads.com.
Period panties from sbethinx.com.

Good Music Makes Good Neighbors

By LEE WICKS

MONTAGUE CENTER – Good Music Good Neighbors, a community-based music festival in the style of Boston's "Porchfest," is happening for the second year at homes and porches in Montague Center this Saturday May 14 from 12 to 4:30 p.m. The locations make for a walkable loop, but there is also parking for those who want to drive.

This festival, will feature 12 musical groups, mostly from Franklin County, performing in 4 locations. Check out the map and lineup at montaguemusic.org.

The afternoon of music is an opportunity for neighbors to meet neighbors, friends, musicians and

music-lovers to meet each other. There will be homemade snacks and lots of good music and conversation.

Organizers have enlisted a wide range of musical styles from Balkan dance music to classical cello and piano, psychedelic funk, traditional Irish, classical banjo, folk, pop, and more.

Some of the performers who may be familiar to Valley music fans are: Michael Nix, Stephen Katz, Orkestar Banitsa (formerly Xopo), Mark Fraser, Daniel Hales, Pat & Tex LaMountain, and Leo Hwang & Vimana.

There is no fee to attend, but donations which go directly to the musicians are strongly encouraged and appreciated.



Orkestar Banitsa plays Balkan odd-meter grooves at House A (28 Taylor Heights) in the Good Music Makes Good Neighbors music festival this weekend.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV:

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

A warm hello from the staff here at Montague Community TV!

Looking for some local fun this weekend? Check out the Montague Music Festival on Saturday, May 14 from 12 to 4:30 p.m. Learn more at www.montaguemusic.org.

As always, you can check out local meetings live on MCTV, including the selectboard meeting on Mondays at 7 p.m. and the finance committee meeting on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

New programming available

on our website and the TV schedule include "Highlights," an artistic production presented by Bret Leighton, the May 2 Gill selectboard meeting, and the Erving Library proposal from April 14.

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, 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!

Summer Yoga Series at the Montague Common Hall

Kick-start and refine your Yoga practice!

This series blends gentle Yoga postures which help unwind the body, with low-impact strengthening exercises to help build stamina, balance and strength. In each class, we will spotlight a few fundamental postures to help establish safe and optimal alignment for your practice.

Breathing and relaxation techniques will help maintain a calm focus and improve emotional well-being.

The course is developed with beginners and advancing Yogis in mind, but seasoned practitioners

will benefit greatly by bringing an open mind and curiosity, and refining their practice.

Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. Session 1 runs June 9 through July 7, and Session 2 runs July 14 through August 11.

Preregistration is required – save money by registering before May 20!

15% of your fee will directly benefit The Montague Common Hall, helping maintain this historic building for all of us to enjoy.

For more information, see www.sunessenceyoga.com/summer or contact nadyayoga@gmail.com.

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GREAT FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL 3rd QUARTER HONOR ROLL

GRADE 6:

FIRST HONORS: Laura Cioclea, Olivia Delisle, Zachary Emond, Dalton Henderson, Jada Jurek, Britney Lambert, Lucy Postera, Abigail Sanders, Ivan Sankov, Olivia Stafford, Samantha Thorpe, Madison Tirrell, Hannah Warnock, Emily Young

SECOND HONORS: Willa Jane Beltrandi, Alicia Emond, Caitlyn Jacobsen, Amos Koyama, Jacob Lyons, Jacob Norwood, Odalis Ramirez-Martin, Devin Willor

THIRD HONORS: Anayah Brewington, Joshua Brunelle, Brendan Driscoll, Adyson George, Lestat Senn

GRADE 7:

FIRST HONORS: Haley Bastarache, Catherine Bezio, Gabriella Castagna, Emily

Denison, Jacob Dodge, Isabelle Farrick, Kate Graves, Haleigh Greene, Isabella Johnson, Natalie Kells, Mackenzie Martel, Mercedes Morales, Taylor Murphy, Audrey O'Keefe, Karissa Olson, Catherine Reynolds, James Robison, Amber Taylor, Brynn Tela, Taryn Thayer, Leah Timberlake, Luke Timberlake, Jade Tyler, Hailey Wheeler, Olivia Whittier

SECOND HONORS: Austin Demers, Dylan Demers, Nicholas Lyons, Derek Martin, Dalver Perez, Jacob Sak, Kelli Schneider, Lana Spera, Julie Sprankle, Shelby Terounzo, Maralee Wiles

THIRD HONORS: Timothy Agapov, Paige Bonarrigo, Kaden Cash, Xavier Chagnon, Gemaia Cruz, Starr Morin, Morgan Pendriss, Sonjai Rathore, Juliana Rode, Kolby Watroba

GRADE 8:

FIRST HONORS: Hailey Bogusz, Cameron Bradley, Karissa Fleming, Jordan Floria, Josy Hunter, Eliza Johnson, Joseph Kochan, Tucker Millane, Dabney Rollins, Brody Trott, Abigail Waite, Allison Wheeler

SECOND HONORS: Andria Ames, Jaeden Ausikaitis, Mirela Cioclea, Joshua Gaulin, Luke Mayrand, Kaitlyn Miner, Alyson Murphy, Kayani Rodriguez, Emily Sisson, Connor Waitkus, Lindsay Whiteman

THIRD HONORS: Kyle Brunelle, Jakob Burnett, Alden Courtemanche, Liam Driscoll, Madison McCassie, Chantelle Monaghan, Brian Poirier, Aidan Smith, Lucas Upham, Jaden Whiting-Martinez, Madeline Williams

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Are you looking for A FULFILLING SUMMER JOB? Do you enjoy interacting with children? Then look no further, the Erving Summer Park Program is the place for you! We are currently seeking an ASSISTANT DIRECTOR and FOUR COUNSELORS to finish our 2016 summer team. Requirements for a Counselor: Must be at least 16 years of age, Energetic, Punctual, Responsible, Cooperative, Flexible, Creative and preferred experience with children. Assistant Director: In addition to all of the above, you must be Organized, a Leader and MUST have experience with Children.

Applications can be picked up and returned at the Erving Town Hall, 12 E. Main Street, no later than June 1. (No late applications will be accepted.)



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LOOKING BACK:

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was May 11, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

USDA Lends Wendell \$1.3 Million

The town of Wendell has been approved for a \$1.3 million United States Department of Agriculture loan, under the Rural Development Program, to help finance the construction of a new library and town office building, along with the public water supply and septic system for those buildings.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said the town received word of the loan late last week, and he said the approval "improves the financing for the projects dramatically."

"The four projects will cost the town \$3.2 million, of which the town has approved taking \$1 million from stabilization," he said.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners has approved a \$926,000 grant toward the construction of the new library. The USDA loan will make up the balance.

Lake Grove Site Plan Nears Approval

The Wendell planning board appears to be heading toward approval, with conditions, of the contentious site plan review for Lake Grove at Maple Valley School's expansion.

The school has proposed building a barn and animal pens on the former Fiske property at 97 Wendell Depot Road, to house a

therapeutic farm and animal program for students of the residential school. Lake Grove director Roland Paulauskas has said only the best-behaved students from among 67 emotionally disturbed boys and young men at Lake Grove will be allowed to use the farm program, and he expects the responsibility of caring for farm animals to be of benefit to them.

But abutters have spoken out against the expansion, saying they fear it will overextend Lake Grove's ability to keep track of its students, some of whom have gone AWOL or unaccounted for on the school grounds in the past.

Ja'Duke Plans to Expand

Nick Waynelovich is a busy man. When he's not playing in a professional swing band, producing musicals, or running the TV studio at Mohawk Regional High, he is orchestrating the performance arts education of 200 students at the Ja'Duke Center for the Performing Arts.

His current production of *Beauty and the Beast* is garnering sell-out crowds at the Shea Theater, which he has served in various roles since its inception.

With space running out for students in his classes and audience members at his productions at the Shea, he has announced plans to build a performing arts educational center and performance space next to the Franklin County Tech School, on Industrial Boulevard on the Hill in Turners Falls.

WEST ALONG from page B1

for these goslings: the goose couple had done their morning nuptial flight over the yard and river daily back in March, before deciding on a nest site next to the massive beaver lodge across the river in the marsh. Their noisy morning flights became less frequent over the neighborhood, the closer the time for hatching came.

Now they are shepherding their young through their goose territory, the next generation of goose overseers on our banks. Luckily for them, the prehistoric monster snapping turtle who hunts at the base of the cliff has not risen from his winter sleep quite yet, and the vulnerable goslings are safe from an underwater attack, for now.

May 9 The morning actually dawned with a clear sky and a ray of sunshine, instead of the cloudy gloom and dispersed light as for the past twelve days. Below the bedroom window, the oriole called out

his high optimistic tune, gaudy in the orange and black heraldic colors of Lord Baltimore.

The catbird must have arrived in the night and is holding forth in its endlessly mimicking way. Both species have ties to this particular real estate along the river, since they are clearly familiar with the yard's landmarks: the burning bush, the bird-bath, and the lilac grove.

The catbird will stay with us all summer and if it remains true to habit, will still be here until mid-October, long way from now, perched as we are on the brink of summer.

The oriole is already inspecting his last year's nest outside the bedroom window, forty feet up in the furthest overhanging branch of the maple. Although we know he won't use the same nest as last year, perhaps it's just familiar to him. Maybe it was his and his mate's nest last season, or maybe he himself grew up

in that woven, swaying cradle that has remained secure even through the heavy winds of winter.

*"The season need but turn his hour-glass round,
And Winter suddenly, like crazy
Lear,
Reels back..."*

So let us be forewarned. Anything can happen this month. There are frost warnings for tonight.

But still, every dogwood blossom, the whole forest floor covered with trout lilies and unfurling fiddlehead ferns, every lilting swallow in the sky, and the oriole's cheery call, all are trying to convince us that it just isn't so, that winter won't be back this time, and even cranky Lowell adds that perhaps:

*"May can trust the date
And with her handful of anemones,
shivering, she can steal out
into the sun."*



JUD from page B1

immediate attention.

Jud mixes many elements in these paintings. She uses multiple images of hands, faces and eyes, scattered throughout the work. The more realist images take center stage in the two watercolors titled *The Vision A and B*. In one, a distant vision of two heads and hands are surrounded by rainbow-like swirls of color. In the other, we are presented with a close-up of the same faces and hands placed dead center.

Hands and eyes play a major role in most of the work here. In the series paintings on the east wall, *Reaching*, *Reaching Through to the Other Side*, *Trust the Unfolding*, and *Reaching Toward*, hands are prominent and doing the reaching, but they do so against fairly abstract fields of swirling colors. The hands are restful, the background turbulent.

Whenever recognizable elements occur in a work, the viewer tends to invoke some form of narrative: "What is happening? Who is doing what to whom?, Where are they going?" The artist gives the viewer clues, but then she is left swirling around and around in a sea of color

often against a dark blue star-filled night sky.

In the largest work, *The Map*, we are presented with a galaxy, a dark blue background filled with stars and a myriad of tiny recognizable imagery: hands, faces, eyes, and heads. It is as if this work is the culmination of all the reaching and yearning presented in the other pieces.

Georgianne Jud has been painting for forty years and received training at both the University of Texas and the Art Student League in NYC. She credits Vincent Mariani at the University and Rudolf Baranik of the League for encouragement and good teaching with a nod of deep appreciation for the work of van Gogh and Chagall. Visit the artist's website to see more of her work including a peace poster, a book and many more paintings: georgianne.net.

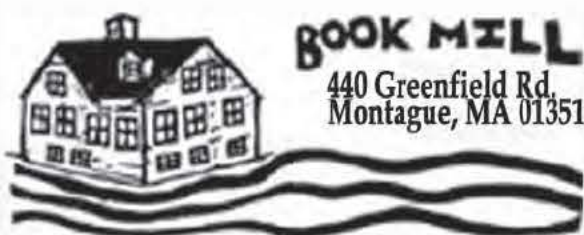
The exhibition runs from May 7 through June 30.

Library hours are Tuesday 12 to 7 p.m., Wednesday 10 to 7 p.m., Thursday 3 to 7 p.m., Saturday 9:30 to 3:30 and Sunday 11:30 to 3:30. Beginning in June, the library will be closed on Sundays for the summer.



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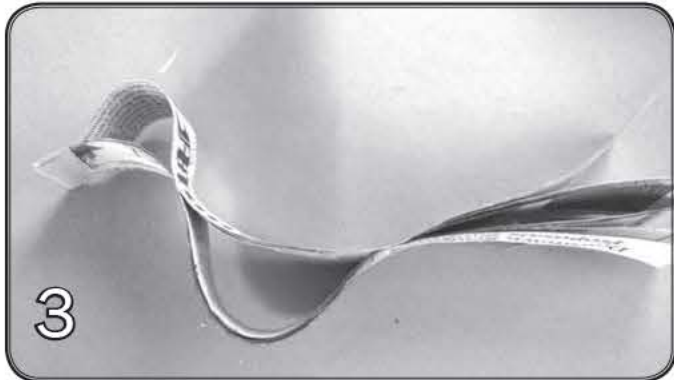
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The Children's Page

YONDERNOD ILLUSTRATION

You can make a paper bird from your old newspaper, if you have a stapler:

BEVERLY KETCH PHOTOS



Make the body by creating a bulge with the lower strips and stapling them in place.



Taking the whole paper, cut some one-and-a-half-inch strips from the edge.



Then make the head by scooting some of the top paper strips forward and stapling them in place.

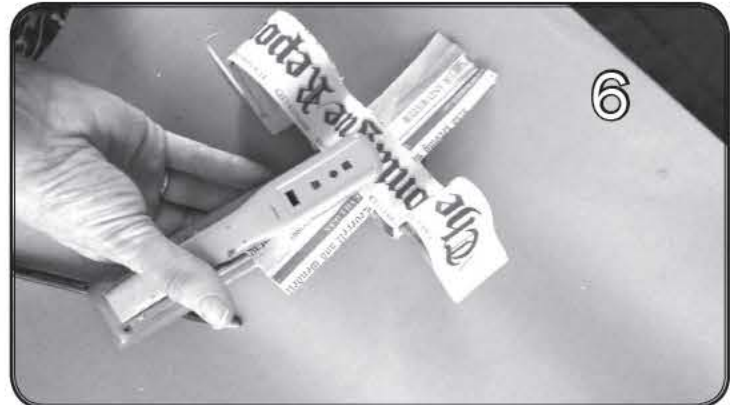


You can make a tail by curling the bottom strips around a pencil.

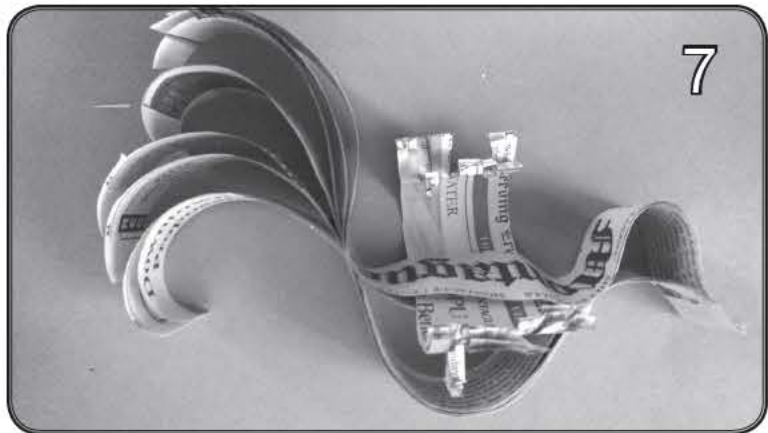


You can make wings by cutting a piece of newspaper into a rectangle shape, and making cuts along its edge.

How would you color the chicken king?



Insert the wings through the bird's back and curl them up to be more like feathers.



Your paper bird will look something like this.



Here is a beautiful Mother's Day bird and garden, painted by Velouria Menegoni, age 8.




Collage by Velouria Menegoni

Would you have fun helping with the children's page? Your newspaper crafts, childrens drawings and favorite activity suggestions would be a wonderful addition!

Contact Beverly Ketch at kidspage@montaguereporter.org


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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



JACK COUGHLIN ILLUSTRATION

ONGOING EVENTS:

EVERY SUNDAY

McCusker's Co-op Market, 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. 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.



"There's a Snake in My Boot" by Nina Rossi is one of the pieces in the current show "Thrones" at Nina's Nook. Local artists Labri Bond, Edite Cunba, Liz Denny, Christina Gusek, Anne Harding, icxbelaile, Trouble Mandeson, Margorie Morgan, Nina Rossi, Gina Vernava and others have taken on the challenge in various ways, from functional to purely sculptural. Opening reception is Friday, May 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. Show runs through June 25.

EXHIBITS:

Artspace, Greenfield: *Photography of Angelina Delaney*. Through June 6.

Avenue A Storefront Galleries, Turners Falls: *Dune Shack & Havana Streets: Photography by Trish Crapo*. Work from Havana Cuba and the Cape Cod National Seashore. Through May 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 May 28.

Leverett Arts & Crafts, Leverett: Barnes Gallery presents: *Susan Valentine: Annual Open Studio & Gallery Show*. Through May 29.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls:

Thrones. Artists transform the common toilet seat into new art forms. See photo this page. Opening reception on 5/20, 5 to 7 p.m. Through 6/25.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Along the River: pastels by Rebecca Clark*. Artist's reception May 15, 4 to 6 p.m. Through June 27.

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

Shelburne Arts Co-operative, Shelburne Falls: *Something Else*. Photography, oils, and watercolors by Candace Silver. Exhibit through May 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 his/her chapbook published by Slate Roof. Winners make a 3-year commitment to the press. 5/15 deadline. For full contest guidelines, visit www.slateroofpress.com.

Silverthorne Theater, Greenfield: Sponsoring a competition to select a new play by a local playwright of color for possible production during the 2017 season. Deadline for submissions is 9/1. Complete information at www.silverthornetheater.org/new-play-competition2.html

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, MAY 12

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: GCC Music presents: *Poetics of Song Concert*. 7 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Doug Plavin All-Stars*. Rock/Folk and a little bit of everything. 8 p.m.

Replay, Greenfield: *Bucket T, Matt Krefting, Rump Roast*. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Larz Young*. Singer/songwriter. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 13

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: 6:30 p.m., *Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band*. Americana-ana. free. 9:30 p.m., *Brick House Benefit* with *Secret Lover*, *Brian Gillig*, and more TBA. Donations!

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Great Falls Coffeehouse presents: *Moonshine Holler*. American southern roots, Appalachian ballads & blues. 7 p.m. Donations.

ArtsBlock (Wheelhouse), Greenfield: *Friday the Thirteenth Hip-Hop! Features DroBrown, Riqqy Welch, eRATT, FL, Ray Reed, Shotti Wavez and Special Guest Luiego*. 8 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson*. Hyno Boogie Blues. 9 p.m.

Shutebury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Larry Dulong and Random Sighting*. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

Montague Common Hall and neighborhood, Montague Center: *2nd Annual Good Music Makes Good Neighbors House Concert Festival*. Musical house tour: 12 groups play classical, Americana, Balkan dance, Irish, Indian, pop, more. More info at www.montaguemusic.org 12 noon to 4:30 p.m. Donations.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Young Shakespeare Players East present: *Romeo and Juliet*. 6 p.m. Donations go to support YSP East.

Replay, Greenfield: *Rhyton, Decimus, Sunburned Hand of the Man, and Noise Nomads*. 8 p.m. \$

Arts Block, Greenfield: *The Happier Valley Comedy Show with the Ha-Ha's: Shrink: Where Freud Meets Funny*. Comedy Improv. 8 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Definite Maybes*. Original rock, blues, and soul. 9 p.m.

Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *Ruby's Complaint*. 9 p.m. \$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Groove Night with DJ Drew*. Hip-hop/funk/r&b. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 15

Deerfield Arts Bank, Deerfield: *Talk and Slide Presentation by visiting German artists Marlis Glaser and Samuel Fischer-Glaser*. Brings together biblical, historical and biographical content, and elements from the history of art and the "Abraham Project". 3 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: see Saturday May 14 for details.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Franklin County Sweethearts*. Sassy mix of jazz, blues, and country. 8 p.m.

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

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18

Arts Block (Wheelhouse), Greenfield: *Mama's Broke*. Folk styles ranging from old-time to Balkan to Celtic. 7:30 p.m. \$

THURSDAY, MAY 19

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half-Shaved Jazz*. 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault Trio*. Original guitar music with Doug Plavin and Klondike Koehler. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MAY 20

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The Well Tempered Ukes*. Acoustic ukulele trio cover their way through Renaissance, parlor, pop, and art songs. 7 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Seth Adams*. Pop rock. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & the Pistoleros*. Out-law Country! 9 p.m.



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9:30 \$5-20 *Secret Lover*
Vanishing-DMC - Bryan Gillig
(Brick House benefit - no one turned away)

SAT 5/14 9:30 FREE
Groove Night w. DJ Drew

SUN 5/15 9pm FREE
TNT Karaoke

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MONTAGUE REPORTER



ON THE ROAD

Killing time during Bomp Treb's April tour of Europe, Neil Young of Turners Falls finds our historical edition of the Montague Reporter on a newsstand in Rome. Going somewhere? Send pictures to editor@montaguereporter.org.

SHROUDS from page B1

pollutants from substances being burned and the combustion process. The heat is rarely captured and put to use.

"I want us to stop being afraid of handling a body," explained Dina. "Putting it in a shroud – if there has been no trauma to the body – is a chance to be gentle and loving. I think of after-death care as how we help our bodies return to an elemental state – to return to star stuff. We

have choices, but we don't give it a lot of thought beforehand."

Dina has worked as a celebrant for 25 years, helping others craft ceremonies marking marriage, birth, death and other life events. As a celebrant, Dina says she tries to write what will "help the community step forward into life from there, in a way that feels all right and real, and maybe even goes beyond what is necessary. I can help people write obituaries, and offer support for speaking at

a funeral. I feel it is a real calling."

Shrouds are not just for home use. Dina plans to work with funeral homes to make it a choice for people using these more traditional services as well. She has been invited to write an article for the National Funeral Director's Magazine. There has been public demand for a greening of this industry, and the industry is starting to respond.

"I'm hopeful these will go with the funeral homes," she said. "Funer-

al directors provide an immense service to their communities, and they are worried about green burial." She also feels that the shroud is a good fit with old fashioned New England frugality: "I feel I should advertise in *Yankee Magazine!*"

Dina has designed several models of shrouds, and will customize any of them to suit. The Simple Gifts shroud is a blank slate of fabric that can be decorated by the community of mourners, "a canvas to express love." The Chrysalis shroud has an overleaf that can be customized in various prints, and is made of cotton organic broadcloth. Dina plans a line of vintage tablecloth overleafs in this line.

After the body is folded into the soft fabric so that it is completely enclosed, at various points there are sash ties that are done up to secure it. "My daughter modeled each of these for the product photos," said Dina. "She commented 'I feel so loved!' when wrapped in the softness of the fabric."

One model that is completely open for customization is her recycled pajama shroud. She took five or six pajama tops and attached them along either side of where the body lies. The sleeves were attached and lengthened to serve as cross ties. This idea can be customized using clothes from the deceased's wardrobe, such as dress shirts, uniforms, or other symbolic articles of dress. Items can be put into pockets on the shirts as well.

Each shroud has five handles on either side for carrying. Separate jute straps can be ordered to make low-

ering into the grave easier. Refining her design has taken some time. She kept asking herself, *How simple can we make it?* Other shrouds she saw for sale were fancy and fussier, using linens and silks. These weren't soft and comforting, and she felt they would not reflect the Yankee aesthetic.

Last Dance Shrouds, when not made from recycled materials, use premium organic cotton sourced from a supplier in Connecticut. Dina works with a local seamstress, and even found someone local to create the sewn-on product labels.

"Shrouding is definitely coming back into practice as people look for more ways to have hands on care. There are four major world cultures still using shrouds: the Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i and Hindu faiths use shrouding and simple funeral practices."

Dina recommends the National Home Funeral Alliance, homefuneralalliance.org, as a resource for those interested in learning more about green burial and/or home funerals, as well as local resource Green Burial Massachusetts, greenburialma.org.

There is not yet a dedicated green burial cemetery in Massachusetts, but several cemeteries will allow green burial in them. If you have sufficient land, you may be able to bury on your own property with approval from your town's board of health.

Last Dance Shrouds is online at last-dance-shrouds.myshopify.com, or call Dina Stander at (413) 237-1300.



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