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# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 14 – NO. 39

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JULY 21, 2016

## WENDELL SELECTBOARD

### Mass Resignation Upsets Wendell Broadband Effort

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard's first meeting of the fiscal year brought out acrimonious disagreement over the board's decision to form two committees – one for operations, and one for construction – to carry out the town's planned broadband project. Afterward, a number of broadband committee members publicly announced their resignation, and all parties have been invited back to dis-

cuss the decision next Wednesday.

Selectboard and broadband member Jeoffrey Pooser was not at the July 12 meeting, but when board chair Christine Heard and member Dan Keller made it clear that they were not going to change their decision, broadband members Ben Schwartz, Robin Heubel, Nan Riebschlaeger, Trevor Kearns, and Robert Heller all said they would not serve on either committee.

see WENDELL page A5

### Church Raises Funds After Farmworker's Tragic Death



Wilver Perez, in a 2013 Facebook selfie.

By MIKE JACKSON

**DEERFIELD** – Wilver Perez, a 30-year-old Guatemalan man working in Nourse Farm's fields off McLelland Farm Road, lost his life on Saturday after he and fellow workers took a break to swim near the confluence of the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers.

A spokesperson from the Northwestern District Attorney's office said Perez had apparently been caught in an eddy and drowned, and that no foul play was suspected.

Perez, a father of three, had been living in the Springfield area for

about five years.

His family in Guatemala hopes that his remains can be returned to his homeland for burial, and the church he attended in Springfield, Iglesia Pacto Eterno, is helping to raise money to help them with the funeral costs. Donations can be made online at [www.gofundme.com/2f7bvgs](http://www.gofundme.com/2f7bvgs).

"He was almost four years with the church," said Pastor Jilson Salem. "He was one of our best members – he used to drive the van, and everyone got to know him. He was very polite, very friendly, and always smiling."

According to Pastor Salem, Perez worked picking strawberries, as he had every summer since his arrival in Massachusetts. In the winters, he found work shoveling snow.

Salem said Perez was from San Marcos, across the Mexican border from Chiapas and a six-hour drive from the capital Guatemala City. One of his young daughters still lives in Guatemala.

"They're very poor people in Guatemala," Pastor Salem said. "Any money we can raise for the family would be great."

### Chinese Middle Schoolers Get to Know Wendell



JOSH HEINEMANN PHOTO

The visiting students spread rock dust at the community garden.

By KATIE NOLAN

**WENDELL** – Sixty middle-school students from Beijing, who are studying at Kemsley Academy for three weeks, were introduced to the town on Saturday.

Divided into groups of twenty, they participated in a scavenger hunt

at Wendell Free Library, they met with local author Pam Richardson at the Center Cemetery for a discussion of local history, and worked in the community garden.

At the garden, the students spread three cubic yards of stone dust on the paths in the walking/ornamental garden, cleaned up an abandoned

plot and laid down cardboard and wood chips to create paths between individual garden plots. The community gardeners were impressed with how hard the students worked, and how much they accomplished.

Academy director Mark Kemsley wrote in an email, "They were fascinated by what they learned at the cemetery and even loved working

in the garden. Most of them worked very hard despite never having done that kind of work before. They also enjoyed the scavenger hunt for books in the library."

"Most of all they enjoyed meeting with, speaking with and working alongside the great people of Wendell. I believe they'll remember the day for years to come."

## BREAKFAST IN THE PARK



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Congressman Jim McGovern (left center) stopped by Unity Park on Monday morning to visit the federal summer meals program operated by the Gill-Montague school district. Free breakfast is available to all children every morning at the park fieldhouse and Sheffield and Turners Falls High School cafeterias, and free lunch is served at those sites as well as Millers Falls' Highland Park and the Brick House in downtown Turners. The program is funded by the USDA, and McGovern and USDA undersecretary Kevin Colcannon explained that the currently proposed Child Nutrition reauthorization could end the program in districts like Gill-Montague.

## BUNNIES IN THE ALLEYS



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO



JENNY SILVER PHOTO

Residents of Fourth Street in Turners Falls found these two rabbits, separately, and brought them to the Dakin Humane Society in Leverett. "Wild rabbits are always that same kind of dusky brown coloring," Dakin's marketing and communications manager, Lee Chambers, told us. "If you were to see one that doesn't fit that bill, it's certainly good for people to intervene on their behalf." Chambers said a third rabbit was turned in last week from Montague Center, but that it didn't seem unusual. "It's summertime, and that's always a busier season for us," she said. "It's nature, and breeding cycles are high for just about all of the animals that we take care of here." If you lost your bunnies, or might want to adopt one, visit [dakinhumane.org](http://dakinhumane.org).

## PLAYING FOR PAINT



MARIANNE SUNDELL PHOTO

Josh Levangie of Wendell was one of many performers at the "Playing for Paint" benefit concert last Sunday afternoon at the Deja Brew Pub, which raised money to paint the Wendell Meetinghouse.

## GILL SELECTBOARD

### Ward, Hastings Butt Heads Over Part-Time Police

By KENT ALEXANDER

The Gill selectboard met on July 11 and, after considerable debate, re-appointed ten part-time police officers. David Hastings, Gill's police chief, had recommended the list of ten men and women, all of whom had previously served as part-time officers.

But selectboard chair John Ward challenged Hastings over the necessity to reappoint everyone on the list, suggesting that the town could save money with a smaller cohort of part-time officers. He also asked what kind of training the officers received.

Chief Hastings responded that he did feel it was of utmost importance to reappoint everyone he put forward. He noted that six officers on the list were academy-trained, and that none had received any complaints in the past 15 years. Hastings also told the board that he felt it important to keep a female officer on staff, to attend to issues that could arise with searching female suspects.

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker asked how much each of the officers had worked in the past year. Hastings responded that not everyone had been "called out for shift work," but that they had been used for "special situations." He added that anyone who "went out on the

see GILL page A4

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Will MBI Get A Better Deal for Montague?

By JEFF SINGLETON

"What I'm hearing is that MBI's going to sign a contract [with Comcast], but there will be no contractual commitment to a map of who we serve," said Rob Steinberg of the Montague broadband committee.

"In the agreement, there will be a commitment to serve to the MBI's specification of a minimum of 96%," replied Alecia Mathews, senior director of governmental and regulatory affairs at Comcast.

The exchange took place at the Montague selectboard meeting on July 11. MBI, or the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, is an independent state agency tasked to distribute a large appropriation to fund access to broadband internet service in rural areas. They are looking for projects that would bring towns to a minimum threshold of 96% of households connected.

Much to the chagrin of the town's broadband committee, MBI announced in June that they would award Montague's grant to Comcast, which currently serves most Montague residents, rather than to a company called Matrix. Matrix, the broadband committee's preferred choice, had promised to install more up-to-date fiber-optic cable, and to

see ANALYSIS page A6



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NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

## Support for Shakespeare Youth Program

I write as the parent of a child who has participated in two Young Shakespeare Players East performances, and is signed up for another. YSP has been a transformative experience for my child, instilling self-confidence, experience working as part of a cohort, and an appreciation of complex literature.

A major component of the YSP program is that the productions are a collective effort of the young casts themselves, led by a team of 5-6 teenaged apprentice directors who are veterans of the program. The very nature and mission of the program entails that these highly responsible apprentice directors are sometimes entrusted to run rehearsals without an adult immediately present.

The tiny number of adult volunteer staff are generally moving about the parts of the theater working with multiple casts and tech crews, or otherwise supporting the program. It is neither guaranteed nor expected that any one child will be constantly supervised by an adult. Families enrolling their students in the program understand and agree to this.

In response to a family who wished to enroll their child with a severe nut allergy in the program, the program director agreed to make the program nut-free, and for the two permanent volunteer staff to learn how to administer epinephrine should it be needed. Given the structure of the program, however, she could not, and did not, guarantee that one of these adults would constantly be in her child's presence.

For a program designed to be run primarily for and by underaged participants, with background support

## Letters to the Editors

### Great Issue!

Just wanted to drop a quick line to let you know how much your publication means to me. It's one of my favorite things about living in Franklin County, where I've been located for three years now.

I really enjoy the content, and look forward to regular features like the police logs, Opertura's "Weird Healing," the *Gardener's Companion*, and the cosmic Pet of the Week corner.

I especially have enjoyed reading the *West Along The River* series, and all of the historical and geological reporting y'all do on the history of the area we call home.

I'm also really excited by any reporting the *MR* does on science, the environment, style, art & music, and the esoteric. Tia Fattarusio's article this week, "Healing With Sound," really struck a chord with me. I also recently read Bruce Watson's new book *Light*, and was excited to see a review of his book in my local paper.

Thanks to your paper, I feel like I'm more tuned in with my community, familiar faces, and current events. I love the *Montague Reporter*, look forward to Thursdays when it usually comes out, and often share it with friends and family who don't live around here, as well as encourage local folks to subscribe to it.

Thanks for all you do, keep up the good work!  
Warmly,

**Haley Morgan  
Greenfield**

and oversight from a tiny volunteer adult staff, it would be unreasonable, if not impossible, to constantly have a trained adult in the presence of any one child.

The website of the ADA concurs with this conclusion even when addressing child care centers – which YSP is definitively not, and for which the bar is presumably higher – stating that "...the ADA generally does not require centers to hire additional staff or provide constant one-to-one supervision of a particular child with a disability."

To require the program – which has no paid staff – to guarantee the constant adult supervision of any one child would constitute a fundamental alteration of the program – which the ADA specifically does not require of businesses and organizations. (See [www.ada.gov/childqanda.htm](http://www.ada.gov/childqanda.htm))

YSP is a fantastic program, and I would wish for any interested and motivated child to be given the opportunity to participate. In this instance, I feel confident that the organization offered reasonable accommodations to provide this opportunity.

**Emily Alling  
Turners Falls**

## July 28: A Call for Conversation

By MIKE JACKSON

**GREENFIELD** – "This is the time – right now – to try to get the conversation out there," says Keyedrya Jacobs. "Before things get worse, or things kind of blow over, and we never get the chance to see how people are feeling, or get to express what we are feeling."

Jacobs is inviting people to have a public discussion in the meeting room at Green Fields Market next Thursday, July 28 from 6 to 8 p.m.

She envisions the event to be the first of a monthly, facilitated discussion on a series of social topics, and the topic for this month will be race.

"If people were more open to having conversations, then we can get some of the issues we're having secretly out,"

she says, "and work toward making things better for the community, and maybe even for the world."

Jacobs hopes to host an open-ended conversation, without "any type of hate-mongering or fear-mongering," from what she describes as "a standpoint of someone who's been Black for 28 years" in western Massachusetts – growing up and going to high school in Springfield, and moving to Franklin County to start a family.

"Because we don't have a big Black presence [here], people don't understand why things are going so haywire in the urban communities," Jacobs explains.

"And I love this area of Massachusetts – I feel like it has a lot to offer, especially when it comes to sustainable farming... All of these positive things I

think go on in the community.

"But once I started working with the community, I started seeing a different side of this world... I don't even know how to put it, this feeling of not being accepted for certain things: things like skin color, things that I can't change.

"There's this quiet acceptance... when these things go on, [people] don't necessarily say things that they should say."

Jacobs, who works at the market, is calling the event "Let's Be Honest."

"I've taken the initiative to take on the conversation," she says. "I don't know how it's going to go..."

"I expect it to go freely, and openly."

*Green Fields Market is located at  
144 Main Street in Greenfield.*

## Poem: "Such Challenging Times"

Our communities are shaken as we shed so many tears  
the crisis around us that cause us such ongoing fear  
over and over the noise of the world in our burning ears  
we are longing for those that have been so dear

events that cause us to shed so many many tears  
We look to leaders about violence in another year  
seeking joint solutions with so many that are here

the tears, the fears, burning ears,  
just hopeful for better years  
May we find courage, strength  
and the power to shake hands and become one.

**Betty Tegel  
Turners Falls**

*This poem was submitted as a Letter to the Editors.*

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Compiled by **DON CLEGG**

Head over to the **Greenfield Savings Bank** in Turners Falls this Saturday, July 23, at 10 a.m. to join Lisa McLoughlin from the Nolumbeka Project (and the *Montague Reporter's* own monthly Science Page editor) as she explores the relationship between nature and culture over time right in our backyard, the Connecticut River Valley.

McLoughlin's presentation highlights the relationship between people and the environment, with an emphasis on how we all can treat and preserve our wonderful river valley.

Light refreshments provided, in comfortable air conditioning. No reservations required.

The **Friends of the Town of Montague Libraries** will present a showing of the little-known Upper Fall River Dam. The program will follow the Friends of the Library annual meeting. Ed Gregory will offer an inter-active, visual program showing the dam and its surrounding area on Thursday, July 28, at 6:30 p.m. at the Carnegie Public Library in Turners Falls.

The program is free and open to

the public. Light refreshments will be served, courtesy of the Friends of the Libraries.

Do you have a burning desire to learn how to **play the ukulele**? Well, here is your chance! The Erving Public Library is offering lessons on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on July 28, August 4, and August 18.

Registration is required. Call (413) 423-3348.

**No Strings Marionettes Puppets** present "Treasure Hunt" at Peskeompskut Park on Friday, July 29, starting at 10:30 a.m. The show will be inside the Carnegie Library if the weather is unpleasant. This program is supported by the Friends of the Libraries.

It's that time of year again! Saturday the 30<sup>th</sup> is **Christmas in July** at the Franklin County Boat Club.

There will be a decorative, floating Christmas parade at Barton Cove, followed after 9 p.m. by a **fireworks display**, visible and audible from both sides of the river in Gill and Turners Falls. Don't be alarmed, it's only Christmas!

The Great Falls Discovery Center's summer events include the popular "**River Rambles Canal-side Rail Trail Walk**" on Sunday, July 31.

Meet outside of the main entrance at 10:30 a.m. and join a DCR Park Interpreter as you leisurely explore level, paved bike trails and village sidewalks to explore stories of industrialization, cultural and natural history, and resilience along the Connecticut River and Turners Falls Power Canal.

After the walk, enjoy the air conditioning of the GFDC and the beautiful landscaping of the grounds. For folks who have not been to the downtown area this summer, there is now an ice cream establishment right next to the center. (Sounds like a pleasant summer morning – a leisurely walk, AC and ice cream!)

Save the date: For the third year, the **Pocumtuck Homelands Festival** will be held at Unity Park in Turners Falls on Saturday, August 6, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Festival will offer programming and activities of interest to all ages.

Hands-on experiences with primitive archery with Walt "Two Horses" Otten will be available throughout the day, as well as flint knapping demonstrations by Richard Kern, who also makes bows and many other traditional crafts.

Barbara Giammarino, a Penobscot hoop dancer, will perform at 2 p.m., and at the end of the performance she will give children an opportunity to try hoop dancing for themselves.

The Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation Recreation are planning a very special activity for children, which will encourage them to seek more in-depth information from vendors and presenters about the cultural offerings of the day.

Wildlife rehabilitators Medicine Mammals are bringing their tipi and traditional children's games, plus a couple of story telling sessions at 12:15 p.m. and 3 p.m. This year, children will also have the opportunity to make deer antler whistles (\$2 fee) at 1 p.m. There will be music throughout the day provided by five diverse performance groups.

The event is free, and everyone is welcome.

As a way of bringing public art into the community and enhancing our local sense of place, a newly-formed community organization, the **Millers Falls Improvement Association**, is organizing a mural painting activity in Millers Falls on Saturday, August 20 and Sunday, August 21.

Artists of all ages, shapes and sizes are encouraged to participate. There will be a community meeting to notify the neighborhood about the proposed artwork, and answer questions prior to the mural painting event. Please watch for posters at the Millers Falls Library, or visit [www.facebook.com/millersfalls](http://www.facebook.com/millersfalls) for more information.

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

## Turners Falls High School Sports: Year In Review

By **MATT ROBINSON**

The 2015/16 sports year was filled with excitement, disappointment, victories and defeat. New kids, many of whom had never played on the varsity level, had to step up and fill slots of graduated seniors, and at the end of the year, we had to say goodbye to men and women who graduated in 2016.

Throughout the year, I had the privilege and honor of attending more than 80 games, matches, and meets played by Turners Falls High School athletes.

### Fall Sports

**Field Hockey.** I hadn't attended a field hockey game since my mother coached for Turners, so when I went to one this year, I had a lot of questions for the Field Hockey Dads in attendance.

Such as, do they play three periods, like ice hockey?

The Dads were very patient, and answered my questions with good humor. I did manage to learn the rules as I watched and asked questions, and I knew some of the girls and their parents from other sports. (I didn't have a roster.)

Although the Turners Falls Field Hockey Indians had a losing record, both Sabrina Petrowicz and Cassidy Wozniak were named to the all-league squad.

The 2016 team will compete without the talents of three young ladies who graduated this year: Raleigh Carlisle, Petrowicz, and Maggie Sroka.

**Golf.** Although Turners will lose only one senior from its 2015 golf team, that senior is Ryan Lenois.

Mr. Lenois was the number 1

golfer for Turners. He shot an 82 at the State Championship, shared the individual crown in the Western Mass D3 Golf Sectionals with a 78, was honored by McDonald's as a student athlete, and was selected to the PVIAC All-League team.

One golfer who should be back this year is Travis Cutting, who was given Honorable Mention to the PVIAC All-League team.

**Volleyball.** The Lady Indians had a very successful season, finishing with a record of 12 matches to 7, and winning the Northern Class with a record of 9-1 before being eliminated by Mount Greylock in the second round of the playoffs.

Jordyn Fiske led the team in aces with 33, followed by Sienna Dillensneider (30) and Jessica Lloyd (28). Fiske also had the most kills, with 53. Hailey Whipple (41) and Tess Hunter (36) round out the top three killers. The Tribe loses three seniors from this year's squad: Nadia Hasan, Lloyd, and Whipple.

**Football.** Coach Pat Riley registered the trademark "Three-peat". I'm wondering if Coach Chris Lapointe could register the portmanteau "Five-peat".

On Thanksgiving, Turners Falls beat the Greenfield Green Wave for the fifth consecutive year. Of course, in 2016, Powertown will play Green twice in the regular season, so it will be interesting if that will influence their traditional rivalry.

Although Blue isn't the biggest team in the valley, they continue to have a very successful program. In 2015, they were ranked number 1 in the D4 West bracket, and Tanner Castine, Colby Dobias, Quinn

Doyle, Jalen Sanders, and Cullen Wozniak were all named to the All-Western Mass Division VI first team, while Jack Darling was named to the second team.

And although Turners is losing Dobias, Akeeva Forcier, Trevor Mankowsky, Sanders and Wozniak to graduation, the future looks bright for the Gridiron Tribe, with many kids returning to the squad – including Darling and Doyle, who just completed a training camp at UMass.

### Winter Sports

**Boys Basketball.** Although Turners had lost three starters from the previous year, the 2015/16 Powertown Cagers made the playoffs and won in the first round. But with a new year, more seniors say goodbye.

Star forward Jalen Sanders, who averaged more than 17 points per game, is one of those seniors. Captain Sanders was named to the All-Western Mass Division IV team, the All-Franklin team, and the Basketball Hall of Fame Western Massachusetts Senior All-Star squad.

The other seniors who left are Colby Dobias and Trevor Mankowsky.

But with four starters returning – including Josh Obochowski, who received honorable mention on the All-Western Mass team – Powertown should be in good shape next season.

**Girls Basketball.** For the first time in over 20 years, the 2016 Lady Indians made the playoffs.

And although they lost Nadia Hasan, who played on the All-Star team, Powertown has a young, talented squad, including Maddy Chmizinski, who already has 645 points and still has two more years

left of high school play.

**Girls Swimming.** Mackenzie Phillips was the only senior on the 2015/16 squad, but they will sorely miss her. Ms. Phillips led the team with a time of 28.02 in the 50-yard freestyle event, and was part of the 200-yard freestyle relay and 200-yard medley relay teams.

Other ladies who stood out this year include Jordin Muniz, Olivia Whittier, Jade Tyler, Allison Wheeler, Karissa Olson, Kate Garcia, and Melissa Hersey.

**Boys Swimming.** Both Jay Fritz and Riley Palmer graduated this year, and both did well in the pool, competing in the Western Mass tournament.

Cameron Bradley, Ed Reipold and Nick Taylor also swam in the tournament.

**Ice Hockey.** The Turners Falls Hockey team is an amalgamation of boys from Franklin Tech, Frontier and Turners. And although they only had one win this year, the atmosphere on the rink and the enthusiasm of the crowd were unparalleled.

Unlike most sports, the crowds at hockey games are extremely rowdy. Fans freely screamed at the players, the refs, and each other, and little old ladies frequently pounded on the glass.

In short, ice hockey is a fun, exciting, and invigorating sport.

### Spring Sports

**Baseball.** Many ball players and the head coach departed from the 2015 team, but Powertown still managed to make the playoffs in 2016.

see **SPORTS** page A8



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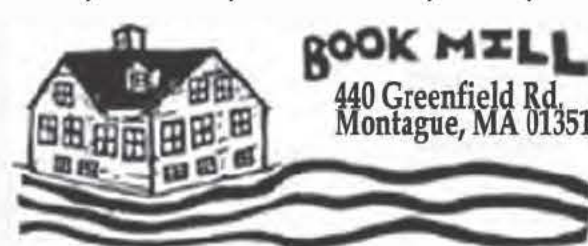
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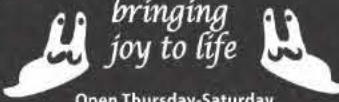


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**GILL** from page A1

road” had to go through mandatory training every year, including first-responder CPR training, defensive tactics, and firearm use certification. Everyone on the list, he said, was current with all certifications, except for the female officer, who never went out on the road.

Ward said he was concerned that some on the list had not been used. Hastings pushed back, saying Gill was “not unique” in the way it handles staffing, since it does not have three full-time officers.

Ward then said that he was concerned that younger officers have the opportunity to respond to a call. Hastings explained that he gives full-time officers first priority, and after that, uses part-timers on the basis of who answers calls first.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier noted that six out of the nine male officers had been given shift work, and asked if it were possible for Chief Hastings to provide specific details about who was called when during the past year. Hastings replied that such details were difficult to come by.

Ward gruffly asked the other selectboard members if they were ready to accept the entire list.

Snedeker more gently asked Hastings if he really did need every name on the list to be re-appointed, and Hastings responded with a firm “Yes.”

Snedeker then inquired if the large call force cost the town money. Hastings replied that part-time officers pay for their own training, and don’t cost the town anything if they aren’t working. Administrative assistant Ray Purington said he believed insurance cost the town around \$200 per officer, per year.

Snedeker then asked Hastings if he’d have a difficult time if the board “cut two names” from the list. Hastings responded that they’d just “have to wait and see,” but if the cuts were made, he’d ensure that those cut wouldn’t be any officer who lives in town and does the majority of the details.

Ward contentiously asked Hastings if the cuts would be up to him or the selectboard. Hastings fired back that they’d have to see, after he made the necessary personnel cuts. Ward continued to press Hastings, asking if he could provide the board with any specific details on the number of hours that each of the ten had served in the past year.

Crochier inserted that if the selectboard required such details of the police chief, then they should also require the same from other department heads, including the fire chief.

With no further arguments put forward, Crochier moved to appoint all ten officers, and Snedeker seconded it.

The motion passed 2–1, with Ward voting “no,” and Hastings thanked the board and left.

**All Emergency Services**

Next on the agenda was the approval of the fire department’s annual purchase orders. Fire chief and emergency manager director Gene Beaubien began the conversation by noting that the *Montague Reporter’s* coverage of the recent town meeting was incorrect, as the discussion of using money from the capital improvements fund was focused on “emergency services, and not just the fire department.”

The board quickly approved the purchase of a number of items over \$500. These included the county radio maintenance contract; an annual

code update; the annual service on the SCBA compressor; ACS software for state-mandated reporting; annual truck service costs from Raymond’s Repair; pump testing and servicing and ladder testing by KME New York; annual Jaws testing by IPS; and two sets of turnout gear from Firematic Supply.

Beaubien said he would seek a partnership with a neighboring town to save money getting the fire truck pumps tested this fall. The board approved spending on repairs for Engines 1 and 2 as needed.

The discussion shifted to air packs for firefighters. Beaubien stated that he was still waiting for an official notification from FEMA regarding a possible grant to cover some of the costs of replacing outdated packs. Each pack has two oxygen cylinders, a custom-fitted face mask, and a backpack rig that holds the gear in place and contains a small computer to alert firefighters about oxygen usage.

Each full unit costs \$8,946. The fire department will need to replace all 20 soon. But Beaubien also explained that because the town had not been purchasing replacement cylinders regularly, they were now in the position of needing to replace 20 of the 40 needed cylinders of air.

Several ideas, including leasing some or all of the equipment, were discussed, and no decision was reached. Crochier suggested they get pertinent information to the capital improvement planning committee and “let them do their work,” so that the selectboard could move forward without relying on a possible FEMA grant.

Beaubien agreed to send Snedeker information on how FEMA grants were scored, so that he might assist Beaubien in writing a more robust application.

The next order of business saw Kenneth P. Sears receive an award for “thirty years of exemplary service” to the fire department. Sears appeared extremely moved by the award, and the round of applause such a rare occasion called for.

After Sears accepted the award

certificate, each member of the selectboard congratulated him and shook his hand.

**Well Still Not Well**

Purington said he had met with the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) about ongoing well water quality issues at Gill Elementary School. The town will be mandated to install a bacteria treatment system at the school, but not mandated to treat for manganese or arsenic.

The selectboard decided to move ahead on two-part filtration system: an ion exchange unit, to remove iron and manganese, followed by UV light treatment to kill bacteria.

UV is not considered effective treatment for *E. coli*, which has never been detected in the water. The board decided to remove the iron and manganese because, as Crochier said, he didn’t want to “perceive” that the water was “not good,” and Purington noted that high iron content affected its taste.

The system will be designed with a connection to install a unit to treat for arsenic in the future, if necessary.

Crochier said that all work definitely needs to be done before students return to school.

He asked if the necessary work could be done by a local engineer, and Purington answered “yes.” Ward stressed the need to have the work done as soon as possible.

Purington, who told the *Reporter* he estimates the system will cost between \$40,000 and \$75,000, surmised that they could use money from the stabilization fund, which would require a special town meeting vote.

Ward suggested the option of debt exclusion vote, but it was decided that this was not viable.

**Cybernetic Merging**

The board signed a letter to Peter Larkin, chair of the Mass Broadband Institute (MBI). Tom Hodak, chair of Gill’s cable advisory committee, had previously suggested asking the MBI to assist the town in helping

Comcast reach coverage of 96% of the town’s households within three years, a goal set by the MBI.

The board agreed that it was important for them to sign the letter to Larkin so that residents would know the board is doing everything they can to get the service to as many as possible.

Crochier briefly reported that the committee dealing with placing cameras on the French King Bridge was still undecided as to which cameras should be purchased.

He said he was on record as one who did not want cameras that merely recorded every ten seconds, as some suggested. Instead, Crochier thought it important that there be a continuous feed, so that viewers could ascertain exactly what happened after someone exited their vehicle on the bridge.

**Other Business**

The board approved the town’s application for a Municipal Energy Technical Assistance grant to hire a consultant, who would design and prepare a proposal to install ground-source heat pumps at the town hall.

The appointment of Bill Tomb to the board of assessors through May 15, 2017 was instantly and unanimously approved.

After a quick but detailed conversation concerning a submitted sewer abatement request, Purington suggested that the selectboard not honor the request, due to the wording of current regulations regarding water usage.

Purington shared a letter announcing that Montague had received an American Battlefield Protection Program grant for \$81,000 in order to fund its proposal entitled “1676 Battle of Great Falls: Identification and Evaluation.” The selectboard applauded the grant, the second phase in the study of the battle or massacre.

Purington added that should anyone wish to know more of the specifics of the grant, that there was “a great article in a prior *Montague Reporter*” concerning the mapping project.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Bear In Yard; Mail Missing; Owners Back in Pasture

Tuesday, 6/14

8 a.m. Suspicious item in the roadway on Boyle Road. Possible explosive device. Checked ok.

8:35 a.m. Property damage accident on Riverview Drive. Under investigation.

Wednesday, 6/15

8:20 a.m. Animal complaint on Mountain Road of dogs running loose.

1 p.m. Suspicious motor vehicle travelling throughout the community reported. Located and checked ok.

4:55 p.m. Reported possible animal abuse at residence on Main Road. Under investigation.

8:40 p.m. Found lost dog on Route 2. Brought to kennel.

9:59 p.m. Medical assist at Stoughton Place.

Thursday, 6/16

8:50 a.m. Reported bear in the area of Franklin Road and West Gill Road.

9:25 a.m. Reported bear in yard of residence on West Gill Road.

3:15 p.m. Property Line dispute of neighbors, Mountain Road and Main Road.

5 p.m. Assisted DCF at residence on Boyle Road.

Friday, 6/17

4:40 p.m. Reported injured dog at Boyle and North Cross Road area.

Saturday, 6/18

10:50 a.m. Requested by Crisis Service to stand by French King Bridge for possible subject en route to jump.

2:30 p.m. Suspicious activity on the French King Bridge. Checked ok.

Sunday, 6/19

9:50 a.m. Officers spoke with juveniles on Riverview Drive operating golf cart on the roadway.

Monday, 6/20

8 a.m. Assisted Probation Department with party on Chappell Drive.

4 p.m. Neighbor harassment reported on Walnut Street. Under investigation.

Tuesday, 6/21

12:15 p.m. Assisted

disabled vehicle on French King Highway with tire service.

Thursday, 6/23

4:22 p.m. Assisted Montague police with assault in progress.

7:10 p.m. Assisted Bernardston police with motor vehicle stop and suspicious parties.

Friday, 6/24

10:20 a.m. Illegal dumping located on Bascom Road.

1:50 p.m. Reported young child on side of roadway, West Gill Road. Adult was present.

Monday, 6/27

8:05 a.m. Alarm sounding at Northfield Mount Hermon. Employee error.

8:40 a.m. Reported stolen mail from residence on Main Road.

12:50 p.m. Second report of stolen mail from mailbox on Main Road.

1:40 p.m. Reported “shots” fired on Main Road. Checked area. Nothing found or heard.

Tuesday, 6/28

12:15 p.m. Reported loose cows on Vassar Way. Owners got back in pasture on arrival.

8:52 p.m. Family disturbance reported on Chappell Drive. Under investigation.

Wednesday, 6/29

10:20 a.m. Assisted Bernardston police with arrest of subject on Route 10.

11:50 a.m. Assisted resident at Stoughton Place. Stuck in wheelchair.

3:10 p.m. Assisted resident on Chappell Drive with Section 35 process.

4 p.m. Reported phone scam call received by resident on Mountain Road.

10:45 p.m. Assisted Montague police with disturbance in their community.

Thursday, 6/30

11 a.m. Reported identity theft of resident on French King Highway.

8:50 p.m. Assisted resident on North Cross Road with harassment prevention order.

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WENDELL from page A1

Separation into two committees was favored by broadband member and finance committee chair Doug Tanner, as well as Pooser. But those opposed to the idea said the two sides of the effort are too intertwined for the separation to be useful or viable: the decision of how to reach homes at the end of a long driveway, for example, involves both “construction” and “operation.”

Heubel said it would be hard to leave with the broadband work incomplete, but she had enough to do with a full time job and her positions on the finance committee and conservation commission.

Heller, who has worked twelve years trying to bring high-speed internet service to Wendell, simply said, “no.”

Riebschlaeger said the change would “throw out all that we learned.” Schwartz called it a “recipe for disaster.”

Heard thanked them all for their work and hoped that they would reconsider. She also mentioned the possibility of joint meetings of the two committees.

Al MacIntire considered, and decided he would stay on as a member of the operations committee. “I’ll stay, to keep the memories going,” Wanita Sears told reporters as she left the room.

After the broadband committee left, Keller thanked Heard for her firmness, and for not letting the selectboard’s decision be overruled by the opposition by broadband members who were there.

**Ray DiDonato, a former co-chair of the broadband committee, wrote that though he had been nominated for the construction committee, he felt he would not take that position out of concern and respect for those who had resigned.**

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich created appointment slips for the two committees, and board members signed them. Heard, Pooser, Tanner, Alistair MacMartin and Ray DiDonato were named to the construction committee, while MacIntire and Ray DiDonato were appointed to operations. Positions are not official until appointees are sworn in by the town clerk.

Outside in the parking lot after the meeting, Schwartz said that only three out of eleven of the original broadband members recommended or favored the committee’s division, and that one of those three is selectboard member Pooser, whose attendance has been sporadic.

He continued telling Keller that the decision to create two committees was “arrogance” of the selectboard, and cited long hours of work by the broadband committee. Keller listened for a while, and tried to answer, but eventually said,

“I do not have to take this abuse,” and got into his car and left.

In the week since the meeting, the issue was aired over the Wendell Townsfolk listserv. Heard and Pooser from the selectboard, several members of the broadband committee, and some people on neither committee weighed in with emails.

Robert Heller, the face of Wendell’s broadband effort for a decade, wrote first. He argued that creating a fiber-optic network will be unlike overseeing construction of the town buildings, the model for having a separate construction committee. The network is a multi-town effort involving a state agency, Mass Broadband Institute (MBI). MBI will be doing all the hiring, and the construction logistics base will be shared by Wendell, New Salem, and Shutesbury.

Heller added that actual construction will not start for at least a year, after the pole survey and design work, making the construction committee “at best premature, at worst a waste of time,” and said he did not want to serve on a “useless committee.” He wrote that broadband committee members felt that their work of 10 to 12 years was not appreciated by the selectboard, and he signed his email as “former co-chair of the broadband committee.” Sharon Waschler asked Heller what solution he would like, and Heller responded that the selectboard should reconsider their decision, and pointed out they could be voted out of office.

Doug Tanner, broadband committee member and fin com chair, wrote that the selectboard accepted “all the broadband committee’s recommendations except the structure for moving forward.” He said the two-committee approach would have the “same goals,” and would be “consistent with the financing methodology we’ve had in place for 10 years of separating the development and management of infrastructure from departmental operations.”

Ray DiDonato, a former co-chair of the broadband committee, wrote that though he had been nominated for the construction committee, he felt he would not take that position out of concern and respect for those who had resigned. He called the situation a “mess” and said “the loss of [Heller’s] expertise is staggering.”

“Trust is the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work,” wrote Riebschlaeger. She wrote that if the decision had been made with input from both selectboard and broadband committee members, the pros and cons of each approach might have been worked out in a mutually satisfactory way.

“There did not have to be two sides,” she said, adding that “having multi-town meetings about broadband without consulting the broadband committee is another example of disrespect.”

Paul Wanta wrote an open email thanking all involved for the work they had done, but asking the selectboard what happened to the faith that

NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Flows of Capital Diverted

By ROB SKELTON

In the wake of an announced Eversource rate reduction, the Leverett selectboard strategized with the town’s energy committee last week to achieve maximum buy-in, and minimum opt-out, when electrical aggregation begins in a year.

While there was some parsing over what being “under the green flag” meant, the board and the committee agreed to sign on with Colonial Energy’s “50-50 mid-tier green program.” This means Leverett will be “contributing to the development of solar and wind in Mass., and that’s important,” said Brooke Thomas of the energy committee.

Although the committee was poised to choose Good Energy as an aggregate supplier, it agreed ultimately with the selectboard, who leaned toward Colonial Energy, which was minutely cheaper. Both companies broker from the same supplier. Good Energy is “non-profit,” while Colonial Energy is not.

“I think one of these companies has a mission; the other doesn’t,” said Thomas.

“We’re not buying “mission,” said selectboard chair Peter d’Errico. “We like them because they’re already wearing the [green] flag..... Anyone we hire is going to fly the green flag for us.”

“We’re talking a military campaign, folks,” he said. “We’re trying to divert cash, flows of capital... How can we get the greatest traction, so it doesn’t run out of steam?”

Military rhetoric notwithstanding, the committee agreed to a series of public explainings to promote maximum buy-in.

“These decisions tend to be made by default,” said selectwoman Julie Shively, referring to the minutia of utility billing.

“A lot of this is a brand new economy,” d’Errico added.

The board thanked the committee for its efforts to green Leverett.

**Measures of Wealth**

Shively reported from the Regional Assessment Working Group, convened to demystify the state’s arcane educational assessment rules, which take into account not only assessed property valuations, but also “ability to pay” based on income tax data grouped by zip codes, not by towns.

By this measure, and with lobbying by a vocal minority in Shutesbury, according to Shively, the state perceives Shutesbury as a poorer town, despite its \$1.2 million in “free cash” and \$800,000 in “stabilization.”

The Leverett selectboard contends that one especially wealthy resident has spiked its assessment average, and that Shutesbury is resentful of Leverett’s library and broadband. “We’d like to remove income as a wealth factor,” Shively said of the working group’s emerging consensus. “Amherst likes the formula the way it is.”

D’Errico pointed out that Pelham is the town in the district with the least ability to pay. He also spoke in favor of “equal cost per child,” rather than assigning different costs per student based on geography.

“The definition of “ability to pay” is more complex than Shutesbury has presented,” he said.

“Shutesbury kind of sprang this on us a year ago,” Shively said, referring to that town’s threats to remove from the Amherst district over these issues, which could cause budgetary havoc in Amherst, Leverett, and Pelham.

“It sounds like, pardon my French, a pissing match,” said freshman selectman Tom Hankinson.

**Other Business**

The selectboard signed off on a state-funded \$10,000 grant for a municipal information technology study to be conducted by Tim Haas, which is the first step on a path toward “internet protocol radio,” allowing better communications for public safety practitioners and first responders.

The board also signed off on a set of fiduciary guidelines for town officials – boilerplate financial parameters to which Leverett agreed, at the behest of bond rating agency Standard & Poor, when the town issued municipal bonds to finance broadband.

The board expressed confidence in the work of transfer station manager Ananda Larsen and approved the improvements she has been making there, and thought it was worthy of an article in a local newspaper.

The Leesa Crocker – Clayton Prince dispute in Moores Corner has not yet been addressed by county building inspector James Hawkins, who has thus far been unable to meet with Crocker, who was a no-show when he visited her EIEIO Farm on North Leverett Road, according to d’Errico.

If Hawkins fails to make a ruling one way or the other about the fence lines in dispute, the next step is mediation, which the town will reluctantly pay for. “Give ‘em thirty days,” said d’Errico.

Shively announced that the Covenant for Affordable Housing, which receives and holds CPA funding (an additional tax on real estate, diverted to “civic” causes), recently consummated its second \$30,000 mortgage buydown.

This is Leverett’s contribution and solution to the state’s low-income housing mandate, which requires towns to do something to make housing “affordable,” or risk developers skirting town by-laws based on this ruse, as they have done in neighboring Sunderland.

The selectboard entered executive session to discuss a matter involving real estate.

they had in the broadband committee, and asking the resignees to “reconsider [their] collective decision.”

Pooser wrote that the situation has not been accurately portrayed, and that he was sure the issue would be on the next selectboard meeting’s agenda, July 27. He did not consider the listserv to be the best forum for such discussions.

Heard chose not to respond to the negative comments about the selectboard posted on the listserv, and invited all interested parties to come to the July 27 meeting.

“We will clear up misunderstandings,” she wrote. “We may reconsider our decision. We will definitely be working to set clear goals and tasks for the new BB committee(s).”

**Other Business**

Aldrich announced that the Franklin County Technical School renovation that included new windows and doors and repaving the parking lot has cost less than anticipated, leaving a surplus of \$500,000.

The state encourages repurposing money left over like that, and the school committee had a list that included work by the school’s landscaping, plumbing, carpentry, and electrical shops.

Wendell got two bids for heating oil for the upcoming year, and the selectboard accepted Orange Oil’s bid of \$1.859 a gallon.

The school regionalization study committee has decided to stop meeting, because the efforts by

Leverett and Shutesbury to leave Union 28 have also stopped.

The DEP approved Wendell’s hazardous materials mitigation plan.

Wendell will need a special town meeting, but not until fall, and fin com chair Doug Tanner said it will not impact the tax rate.

Members of the board of health tried to inspect the property at 131 Lockes Village Road, the site of a large collection of machinery and other objects that are returning to the dust from which they came.

The property owner denied them access, so they have asked for selectboard’s approval to use town counsel and get a court order so they can go on the property.



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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

# Board Approves Big Sewer Contracts, Accepts Dion’s Resignation “With Regret”

By JEFF SINGLETON

At its July 11 meeting, the Montague selectboard approved contracts totaling over \$800,000 for work on the Turners Falls sewer drainage system, appointed an officer to fill the police department’s new Lieutenant position, and accepted “with regret” the resignation of long-time treasurer Patricia Dion.

There was also a lengthy discussion of the implementation of the decision by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute to award state funds to expand broadband service in Montague to Comcast Cable, and a very brief one of the annual report of the town’s local access provider, Montague Community Cable Incorporated (MCCI).

First on the agenda was Paul Gilbert of the consulting firm CDM Smith and Tom Bergeron, head of the town highway department. They requested that the board approve a \$63,000 agreement with CDM Smith for engineering services to implement the cleaning and reconstruction of the main drain and siphons under the Turners Falls Power Canal.

Gilbert and Bergeron also requested that the board approve a \$793,950 agreement with National Water Main Cleaning, Inc. for the work, which will be performed when the canal is emptied in September. Borrowing for the project was approved by the annual town meeting in May, and by voters in a debt exclusion vote in June.

Rich Kuklewicz asked if Gilbert “felt solid” about the project. Gilbert responded that he did, but that “none of us have been inside the siphon,” which has not been cleaned since 1962. Thus, there was a need for a contingency amount in the appropriation.

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell asked if CDM Smith would “take some pictures, so we know what’s down there.” Gilbert replied that the siphon and main drain would be inspected by a closed-circuit camera.

Gilbert also noted that the state Department of Environmental Protection approved the project after expressing concern about discharge of hot water used to “cure” the lining of the drain. The sand removed from the siphon will be trucked up to the town transfer station.

The selectboard approved both requests.

## Cable, Cable

Next on the agenda was Jason Burbank, chair of the cable advisory committee, who recommended that the board accept the 2015 annual report of the local access provider, Montague Community Cable Incorporated (MCCI).

Burbank noted that the previous year, “significant concern” had been expressed about the lack of local programming on the station, but that the report and data presented by MCCI was “quite an adequate showing” on the issue. The selectboard unanimously accepted the annual report.

## Dion Steps Down

The board voted to accept the resignation of town treasurer and tax collector Patty Dion, “with regret.” Dion will retire on November 30.

Rich Kuklewicz asked town administrator Frank Abbondanzio if the “next step” would be an election. The town treasurer is an elected position. Abbondanzio said that “basically, we will be appointing someone temporarily,” until the annual town election in May 2017.

He said that if the town decided to make the position appointed – thus creating a “department of municipal finance” – it would require action by town meeting and a special act of the legislature. Under those circumstances, the position would still need to be filled by election for two and a half years, according to town counsel.

## Cable, Cable, Cable

Alecia Mathews and Dan Glanville of the Comcast Corporation then came before the board to discuss the impending grant from the state to extend broadband services to unserved homes in Montague. Mathews is a senior director, and Glanville is a vice president of government and regulatory affairs, for Comcast.

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute has chosen to award the state contract to provide last-mile internet service to Comcast, despite the opposition of Montague’s broadband committee. Several members of that committee were in the audience, as was Peter Larkin, the chair of the MBI’s board of directors.

Glanville said that “if the grant goes forward,” there will be a “reconciliation meeting” to determine the number of unserved homes needed to get to a “minimum of 96%” coverage.

“We’d like to see more than 96%, quite frankly,” said selectboard member Rich Kuklewicz, to which Glanville replied that the agreement “will go above the 96% – between the 96 and 100...”

Broadband committee member Rob Steinberg commented that “what I’m hearing is that MBI’s going to sign a contract, but there will be no contractual commitment to a map of who we serve.”

“In the agreement,” Mathews responded, “there will be a commitment to serve to the MBI’s specification of a minimum of 96%.”

There was also discussion of when the high speed technology Comcast advertised in their proposal would actually be implemented in Montague. Mathews and Glanville would not commit to a date for the local “rollout” of DOCSIS3.1, which is currently on a trial run in Atlanta.

“Our goal is to launch it countrywide,” said Glanville, “and I think that our actions speak for themselves that when we launch a product, we really launch a product.” DOCSIS3.1 makes use of traditional coaxial cable. The Montague broadband committee showed a strong preference for fiber-optic cable, which it called “the wave of the future.”

## ANALYSIS from page A1

pass more homes. But the state questioned the financial viability of the company’s proposal and opted for Comcast, which plans to use standard coaxial cable for the job.

The count of currently “unserved” Montague homes in Comcast’s proposal to MBI has been a major bone of contention. The broadband committee has argued that the cable giant has undercounted the number by as many as 100 homes.

Mathews and Dan Glanville, a lawyer employed by Comcast who has been negotiating cable license agreements with Montague for over fifteen years, came before the selectboard to discuss the process for implementing the MBI’s decision, and resolving the controversy over the number of unserved homes.

Mathews’ comments imply that the company plans to first negotiate an agreement with MBI, in which it would only promise 96% coverage, and then participate in what Glanville called a “reconciliation meeting” to sort out the numbers issue with the town and agree on a map of who should get service.

In response to a question from selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, Glanville stated that the final agreement would provide service to over 96% of the homes – probably closer to 98%. But that decision seemed to be up to Comcast, based on what the company finds financially viable, and not the product of a negotiation with either the MBI or the town.

Although no one seemed to notice it at the time, this plan appears to contradict a clear recommendation made by the state Department of Telecommunications and Cable (DTC).

On June 20, the DTC published a report aimed at resolving a dispute between the towns of Montague and Hardwick and the MBI, weighing in in support of MBI staff’s recommendation to award MBI grants for both towns to Comcast rather than Matrix.

That DTC report specifically recommended that MBI, working with the towns and Comcast, resolve the issue of the number of unserved homes *before* awarding the grant to the cable company. It also recommended that the agreement set an ambitious target for coverage closer to 100%.

While this might seem to be a technical process issue, it could have a significant impact on the number of homes served under the

state grant, and appears to reflect on the relationship between the MBI and the state.

It is therefore worth quoting the DTC recommendation, signed by commissioner Karen Peterson, in full:

*Comcast stated that it is committed to working with the towns, including Hardwick and Montague, ‘to expand [its] plant to every resident seeking service.’ Comcast stated that it would ‘seek to partner with the Commonwealth, towns or individual consumer [sic]’ in order to reach unserved locations not included in Comcast’s initial grant application.*

*I strongly encourage MBI to consider making this proposed partnership and expanded build-out a part of any grant negotiations with Comcast in Hardwick and Montague.*

*As Comcast noted, the grant guidelines do not state the number of homes in each town. In fact, as was raised at the public meeting, there is a discrepancy in the record as to how many unserved homes and total homes there are in Montague and Hardwick.*

*MBI should work with the towns and with Comcast in the immediate future to ascertain a precise, agreed-upon number of unserved and total homes in each town, and the location of such unserved homes.*

*Only then will MBI be able to finalize grant negotiations with Comcast taking into account Comcast’s commitment to work towards serving every resident in Montague and Hardwick seeking service. While 96% penetration was the threshold in this grant program, additional homes passed above that threshold would be a desired outcome beneficial to the communities and the Commonwealth.*

In essence, according to the DTC recommendation, Comcast should not get the state grant money until it negotiates an agreement with MBI and Montague, with the state pursuing a goal of reaching 100%.

Will the town of Montague press the issue with the MBI?

It did not appear that either the selectboard or the broadband committee was aware of the DTC recommendation at the July 11 meeting. No one questioned Peter Larkin, current MBI board chair, about the process, even though he attended the meeting.

Nor did anyone seem aware that there was a significant difference between the process described by Glanville and the DTC’s

recommendation.

Members of the Montague broadband committee seem skeptical about pressing the DTC recommendations at this point. They appear to view the entire MBI process as a lost cause, and want to continue the search for fiber-optic alternatives to Comcast that could serve the 4% left out of the proposed build-out.

Of course, this assumes that 4% will be left out, which could be an incentive not to press those recommendations. Committee member Kevin Hart, who is on the selectboard agenda this coming Monday, has stated that the DTC recommendation would be discussed at that time.

When questioned about the DTC recommendation, MBI was non-committal, although they said that Montague would be included in negotiation over the coverage. “[T]he MBI will ensure that the 96% threshold is met in each town,” Larkin told the *Reporter*.

“During a field visit,” he said, “our technical team confirmed that several street sections that were in question are already served by Comcast, an important fact as we move into negotiations that will extend coverage even further in Montague.”

A spokesperson for DTC, Corey Pitz, suggested the department would not exercise any oversight over the MBI process, although he did note that Peterson, who signed the DTC’s report, also sits on the MBI’s board of directors.

“One can wiggle that DTC report as one likes,” a weary and skeptical Steinberg told us. “It’s not going to make a difference.... Everyone at the state level is sick of the fight and wants to move on,” he said, and is “throwing some chaff about to confuse us.”

“I don’t know if the MBI plan is a rejection of the DTC report,” he said. “I don’t even know if that report is serious, or delivered with any intention of affecting the process.”

Mathews and the MBI have said the entire process for creating a plan for Montague has a limit of 150 days.

However, the letter MBI sent to Montague announcing the award stated that “we look forward to quickly completing negotiations with Comcast,” so there may be a short window before the cable company is in the driver’s seat.



## Bonnett Steps Up

Police chief Charles “Chip” Dodge came before the board to request approval of Sgt. Christopher Bonnett to be appointed to the new Lieutenant position on the staff.

Dodge called the position, which he noted had been approved by the annual town meeting, “a true second in command,” who could run the department in the absence of the chief.

Two members of the department had taken a competitive exam administered by the firm BadgeQuest. Both had scored well, Dodge said, but Bonnett had obtained the highest rating.

## Other Business

Richard Widmer, director of the Millers Falls Arts Bridge project, came before the board to announce

a Veterans Day event in Millers Falls, and to request permission to paint a mural on the railroad bridge in the village.

He said that Chief Dodge had found a contact at the railroad company who had approved the idea. The selectboard approved the request.

The board approved a request by the Northampton Cycling Club to reschedule a race at the airport industrial park from its original date of July 27 to August 3.

It also retroactively approved a helmet drive to raise funds for the Turners Falls High School softball team, which had taken place on Avenue A on July 9.

The board approved two memoranda of understanding with the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, one for “hauling

services” and another to collect bags from the wood pellet stove recycling center.

It approved an agreement with the town of Deerfield for the use of Montague’s sewer vac truck to clean several Deerfield sewers. Deerfield will be charged the same rates as other towns that occasionally make use of the truck, such as Gill and Erving.

The board held a hearing and approved a telephone pole installation on Gunn Road.

Before going into executive session, the board approved a number of appointments, including to the town cultural council and the zoning board of appeals. Ariel Elan was reappointed as the town’s “pipeline liaison.”



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## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# Erving Mulls Proper Disposal of Summer People's Trash, Old Mill Buildings, and an Abandoned Well

By KATIE NOLAN

"I've got trash, what do I do with it?" a North Shore Road summer resident asked the Erving selectboard.

About twenty people packed the board's July 11 meeting to talk about trash disposal on North Shore Road. Twenty-three North Shore Road properties are located in Erving, but the road is accessible only by going over a causeway. The road is not plowed in winter, and none of the property owners live there year round.

Although property owners in other parts of Erving have free trash pickup through Erving's contract with Duseau Trucking, Duseau trucks are too big to go over the causeway, and North Shore Road owners are left to their own devices for trash disposal.

Summer resident Joseph Moulton told the board that, historically, the road's residents burned their trash. When that practice was determined to be environmentally unsound, Moulton said that they disposed of trash in a designated dumpster at the Erving town hall.

When that dumpster was removed, he said, the residents disposed of trash in the state forest dumpsters – illegally, but with the knowledge of state forest staff, who seemed to accept the arrangement because the amount of trash was minimal. Recently, that informal privilege was revoked when a canoe, mattress, furniture and other unacceptable items were put in the dumpster.

"There has to be a solution, said selectboard member Scott Bastarache. "There are a lot of open questions – I don't foresee a solution this evening."

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith noted that trash disposal "hasn't been offered for over 40 years" and that North Shore Road property owners had bought property there knowing that the service was not provided.

Suggestions from the summer residents, selectboard members, and other people attending the meeting included putting a secure locked trash shed in a location along Duseau's Erving route, or getting permission from the Department of Conservation and Recreation to put an extra dumpster near the state forest dumpster and have it picked up by the DCR's hauler, Waste Management.

Debra Smith asked what could be done if canoes and mattresses were put into the secure locked shed. Highway foreman Glen McCrory said he thought that the town's contract with Duseau prevented the town from contracting with any other waste hauler.

"We're looking into how we can help," Jacob Smith told the residents. "We'll do what we can to try to find a solution."

At the board's July 18 meeting, selectboard chair Smith said that administrative coordinator Bryan Smith had contacted the towns of Orange and Warwick to see if their transfer stations could take the trash. Jacob Smith said discussions with those two towns were ongoing.

In the interim, until Erving makes other arrangements, the board decided to have Duseau place a dumpster at the town hall parking lot for North Shore Road trash.

## Former IP Mill

Cody Sisson, president and chief executive officer of Sisson Engineering of Northfield, recommended that the town demolish all of the buildings at the former International Paper property on Papermill Road and begin the process of developing an industrial park there.

"It's a perfect place for an industrial park," he told the board. Sisson said that his company intends to expand, preferably in Franklin County, in the next year and a half, and that the former IP property is "a perfect location for us." He said he has also looked at the Greenfield and Turners Falls industrial parks, and has had encouragement from Winchester, NH to move his business there.

Sisson said his company would need to move to a larger facility in one and a half to two years. "I can't fit one more machine in my place," he explained. He projected that the company would grow from approximately 25 employees to 45 or 50.

"I would love to see Sisson in that complex," said selectboard member William Bembury, "but even if it's fast-tracked, I don't see [industrial park development] happening in a year."

Sisson remarked, "If I'm not part of it, someone else will want to be there."

In February, Tighe & Bond presented the board with a feasibility study that gave several scenarios for preparing the former mill property for development, including demolishing all onsite buildings, demolishing all except the historic 1902 brick building at the front of the property, and demolishing only selected buildings. Tighe & Bond estimated demolition costs ranging from \$13 million to \$49 million under these scenarios.

"I hate to see that four-story brick building come down," Sisson said, but demolishing all of the buildings would make it easier to develop the property for light industrial use.

The feasibility study suggested several options for future uses of the property, including mixed residential and commercial/industrial.

Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) director of planning and development Peggy Sloan asked the board, "What is your vision for use of the site? ... Do you want to proceed with light manufacturing or housing?"

Sisson observed that residential and light industrial uses might be incompatible. For instance, he pointed out, residents might object to nighttime activity if the industrial use included three shifts.

Jessica Atwood, FRCOG economic development program manager, told the board that, whatever the town decided to do with the property, hazardous materials abatement needs to be done.

Sloan told them that grant money is available for abatement, but

not demolition. "The good news," she said, "is that the site is pretty clean." She asked the board to consider whether the town was willing to invest in demolition.

Bembury asked Sloan and Atwood to help the town plan its next steps in developing the property. The board asked planning board member Debra Smith to have the planning board look at zoning and subdivision requirements that would affect development of the property.

Debra Smith said that the planning board had already started to research a "mill overlay district," and would continue working on it. The selectboard and FRCOG staff decided to meet again in August, once more information was available.

## Former Usher Plant

After reviewing the plans for the Riverfront Park at the former Usher Plant, the state Department of Environmental Protection recommended that the town formally abandon the former mill's water supply well.

According to the DEP, if the well is not abandoned, there are restrictions on use of land located within a protective radius of 100 feet around the well. These restrictions could affect the locations for parking areas at the Riverfront Park.

At previous board meetings, the Usher Plant re-use committee had proposed that the town explore using the well as a water source for future site development. The board decided on July 11 that the town should file with the DEP to abandon the well, and find out what is needed to close it completely.

At the July 18 meeting, Mark Arigoni of Milone & MacBroom presented the bid specifications for park construction. Arigoni told the board that the specifications will be published online, and available at the town hall, on July 21.

In order to ensure that contractor bids will fall within the budget approved by the state grant and town meeting, the specifications were presented as a "base package" and several "alternate packages".

The base package includes roadways, a community garden, parking areas, trails, a "great lawn" with a bandshell, a patio area with a pavilion, and environmentally-themed play structures. Alternates prioritized by the board were: electrical service to the bandshell, additional play structures, gateway signs to separate areas of the park, street-style lighting along park roadways, and a second pavilion.

Bids for construction of the park will be opened August 15. Re-use committee chair Jeanie Schermesser announced that there will be a groundbreaking at 1 p.m. on August 20.

## Future Library Building

The board appointed the library building committee. Members are: Marcia Bernard, Jacquelyn Boyden, Sara Campbell, Rebecca Hubbard, Rupert Roy-Clark, Debra Smith, and Charles Zilinski. Cynthia Roy-Clark was appointed as a non-voting youth member.

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**SPORTS** from page A3

This year, the Tribe loses seven more seniors: Akeeva Forcier, James Fritz, Tanner Jones, Seth Leamy, Trevor Mankowsky, Jalen Sanders, and Cullen Wozniak.

But, with their three main pitchers returning and a bevy of young talent, Coach Minckler told me they should do even better next year.

**Girls Tennis.** If hockey has the rowdiest fans, then tennis and golf have the most sublime. The 2016 Lady Indians finished with a record of 6-12. Kaili Lynch, Hailey Trott, and Alysha Wozniak will all return as seniors for the 2017 season.

**Boys Tennis.** The boys' tennis squad finished with a winning record, and qualified for the playoffs.

With no seniors listed on the roster, and promising younger netters, Coach David Bulley sees a very promising future.

**Softball.** Where do I begin?

The eight-time state divisional champions finished 24-1, are ranked as the best team in Western Mass by MassLive. ESPN ranks them third in the entire state. (Interestingly enough, Turners shut out their second-ranked team, Hampshire – twice.) The accomplishments of the Turners Falls Softball Indians go on and on.

There's not enough room to list all of their accolades, but I will say that Coach Mullins and his Tribe have made the entire community extremely proud. With the state title victory,

Mullins has now won 645 softball games – a state record – and was recently named the 2016 MassLive Softball Coach of the Year.

Sadly, Turners is saying goodbye to Jessica Loynd, Jordan Meattey, Mackenzie Phillips, Jenna Putala, and Hailey Whipple.

**Individual Achievements**

Although in my opinion, there are numerous student athletes from Turners Falls who deserve recognition, MassLive and ESPN singled out three seniors.

ESPN selected Jenna Putala to the MIAA softball All-State team, calling her "one of the most instinctive and pure hitters statewide."


As you may remember, Jenna was instrumental in the state championship game, getting Turners' only hit. With this year's title, Jenna has been a part of four championship teams.

Jalen Sanders was selected as Turners Falls' "Western Mass Male Athlete of the Year" by MassLive. Jalen has been a standout player and leader in basketball, football and baseball. He started in all three sports for years, and has been a team player as well as a leader.

Not only was Mackenzie Phillips named to ESPN's All-State team, but she was the first pick, and was named "Miss Softball" – an honor reserved for just one senior in the state each year. Phillips was also the tournament MVP, and was selected as Turners Falls' "Western Mass Female Athlete of the Year" by MassLive.



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## A Compelling, Intense Drama in *Two Rooms*



*Charles Holt as Michael Wells in Silverthorne Theater Company's production of 'Two Rooms.'*

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

**GREENFIELD** – The drama *Two Rooms*, now in performance at the Sloan Theater in Greenfield, is a compelling theatrical experience. Written by Lee Blessing, this latest production by the Silverthorne Theater Company is full of intense, personally intimate moments.

The story is told by four actors who play their parts in a drama of dire circumstance. A man is taken hostage in a foreign land. His wife sits at home waiting for him to return to her. To bring herself closer to him, to what she imagines he is experiencing, she clears a room of everything but a small rug and spends many hours alone in this room.

The man – a modern, educated American – now spending his days alone in a room, shackled and blindfolded, with no one to talk to and nothing to do. He tells his story in monologue, frequently addressing his wife as she does him, and together they weave a story of their lives together and apart.

The structure of the play lends

itself to monologue. The skill of the actors, along with the drama of the story, makes these scenes compelling. Lainie Wells, played by Emily Bloch, is the wife of a hostage being held somewhere in Lebanon, and feels herself more like a widow, as she describes herself and the other wives who await word as, “mourning widows of husbands who aren’t even dead.”

Having “cleansed” the room that was his office, painted walls and cleared all furniture, she now sits alone in this room that was his as he sits alone in a tiny dark room and they both wait for something to change.

Michael Wells, the husband who was a university professor in Beirut, now a hostage, wonders why they didn’t leave Lebanon sooner. Wells, played by Charles Holt, tells stories of his capture, speaks out loud the letters he wants to write to his wife, and engages in dialogue with her about her work with birds in the marsh near their home.

Frequently alone onstage but see **TWO ROOMS** page B5



By LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** – Back in the fifties, my family moved from suburban Chicago to a very rural village in Vermont, leaving the rows of tidy straight streets wonderful for roller skating and morning coffee klatches after the kids went off to school and the men to work in the city.

This was a neighborhood where children roamed at will safely, played in everyone’s yard and everyone knew everybody else. When I woke up early on a Sunday morning I was welcome across the street where pancakes were already on the griddle.

We went out trick or treating in packs without fear for our safety. Everyone knew everyone’s business, although not in a mean way.

I was nine when we moved even before the end of the school year, reluctantly leaving my friends and joining a whole new group during the last year that school was run out of one room.

After our Midwestern ways, we found the Yankees to be a taciturn lot. We might drive out the dirt roads exploring our new turf and, after

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## Plain Speaking

considerable time without signs or directives, stop at the field of a working farmer and inquire – does this road go through? – and receive the two syllable response of “ayuh,” followed by the firm closing of his lips.

After awhile we learned that what might have seemed like rudeness was plain speaking: question asked, question answered – a certain economy of language.

After some twenty years of education administration, which taught me the art of talking with staff and parents and students by listening and by responding supportively and, most of all, diplomatically, I have come full circle. A few years after retirement and surviving my dreaded seventieth birthday, I found increasing freedom to speak plainly. Not rudely, but in a direct voice.

Here, then, are some gardening maxims in plainspeak.

**Feed your garden soil annually** with composted manure and a dusting of limestone. Turn the soil lightly and let the earthworms do their job. Consider getting, or borrowing, a broad fork.

**Don’t over-fertilize** your plants. Set them in spacious holes with compost and bone meal. If you want to sprinkle with liquid food do it once. Too much feeding will give you huge

see **GARDENERS** page B4

## Wandering On Melville’s Trail

By IVAN USSACH

**PITTSFIELD** – Never read *Moby Dick*, I admit it. Still, I’ve been a fan of Herman Melville for years, and long harbored the desire to visit his Arrowhead farm and home outside of Pittsfield, where he lived for a dozen years with his family. Typically I would get the idea to visit during the winter when it was closed. But more recently, yesterday in fact, I had the chance to go, and go I did.

It was there he wrote of the White Whale, staring out the window of his study at the great mass of Mount Greylock that inspired him. He had moved his family up from New York City in 1850, by which point the success of his earliest and largely autobiographical novels about life among the Polynesians had waned in the wake of his subsequent novels, also based on his life at sea.

*Moby Dick* itself failed commercially when it came out, and received mixed reviews. His later work fared no better, and his literary reputation saw a sharp decline until the beginning of the Melville Revival circa 1920.

So, having dropped my wife at her booth at the Berkshire Arts Festival in Great Barrington, there I sat inside a Lenox patisserie, nursing a coffee and a filled viennoiserie, without a care except how to find Arrowhead without a GPS or cellphone.

I had with me an abridged 1949 Modern Readers edition of the whale book that I must have picked up for \$0.25 in the distant past. “Abridged” – doesn’t that mean some of the words are missing? How could one read a masterpiece of world literature that’s missing some of the words?

There was a short introduction by Maxwell Geismar, so I started with that.

I liked it immediately, after the first paragraph declared: “It is surely the best novel by an American author in the nineteenth century. And yet we do not altogether know why.” My unconscious resistance to the book stirred when Geismar referred, in his own words, to the opinion of Melville’s first biographer that upon the monstrous whale’s “snowy hump” Melville had “piled all the rage and hatred of mankind from the days of Eden down.”

That struck me as somehow too much, and yet terribly relevant.



*The view of Mount Greylock from Arrowhead.*

Arrowhead is not at all hard to find, being on Holmes Road right off of routes 7 and 20 (see [mobydick.org](http://mobydick.org)). I arrived a quarter after the hour to find no one had showed up for the 11 a.m. house tour and was offered the option to take it right then, and realized my good fortune at having the guide all to myself.

We went from room to room, as she worked hard conjuring the appropriate facts of the artist’s life that she was still practicing weaving into a coherent thread, amidst my numerous interruptions.

The farm was bought with money loaned from Melville’s father-in-law, chief justice of the Massachusetts Judicial Court, who my guide said had disapproved of the marriage. And she said I was the first visitor who had actually read his first novel, *Typee*, which surprised me – but she was relatively new. Despite its success, Judge Shaw didn’t like it, considering it pornographic (not a

see **MELVILLE** page B5

## Preserving the Past in Petals and Leaves



*Ruel Flynn works on a pressed flower keepsake.*

By JOE KWIECINSKI

**ORANGE** – Can the past live again? Well, Linda Ruel Flynn, the proprietor of Flora-Ly (pronounced *flor-a-lee*) is working daily to help people recapture some of their most significant memories. Ruel Flynn preserves flowers to create custom keepsakes – lovely works of art – that capture the physical and psychological essence of past events and important occasions.

Known in this region as The Keeper of the Flowers, Ruel Flynn produces botanical collages, calendars, greeting cards, and wall art, among other original products.

“I call my work ‘artisan flower preservation,’” said Linda, whose warm, highly focused demeanor and skill has resulted in a loyal clientele that reaches as far as folks who’ve brought in flowers from the coast of Maine. “I preserve moments as well as flowers. That is truly what

my mission is, along with bringing a contemporary view to this art form that is ages old.”

Linda’s mother established the business in 1981 in Ashburnham, north of Gardner on the New Hampshire border. Renowned for her work, she passed away five years ago.

“While my mom was ill,” Linda said, “orders were continuing to come in. I had dabbled in the process, so I explained the situation to

the clients and that I would welcome the chance to continue her work to their satisfaction. People liked my work and that encouraged me.

“It was difficult for me at first because I had a very close relationship with my mother as an only child. And yet she was leaving a full-blown, established business. It was hard to try to fill her shoes, but it was irresistible. With my mother’s blessing, I decided to follow her path.”

Linda’s style of custom creation and her mother’s are very different. The latter’s designs reflected Victorian England, while her daughter favors a much more contemporary approach.

Ruel Flynn always loved art, and early on she learned she had a remarkable talent. She sold her first painting at the age of 10 and went on to study fine art at Syracuse University.

“When I was a child, my mother would let me draw all over the walls before she redecorated. It was sheer heaven.”

After college, The Keeper of the Flowers painted murals and

see **RUEL FLYNN** page B5



*Linda Ruel Flynn takes wedding bouquets (left) and makes keepsake collages with the preserved flowers (right).*



# Pet of the Week

Joab is a fun young boy who leaves you full of laughter from his antics. He generally likes other dogs and loves to make new friends. In his foster home in Texas he lived with a two year old child and he loved to walk right alongside the stroller during walks and try to steal kisses.

Joab loves the outdoors and would be a great hiking partner, but also doesn't mind cuddling up with you

like the big lap dog he is after all his energy is out. If you ask him what his favorite things are about himself, he would tell you that he is very smart and full of energy.

If you think Joab might be the dog for you please ask a Dakin team member for more information.

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



“JOAB”

### Senior Center Activities

**JULY 25 to AUGUST 5**

**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.

**Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays:**  
10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise  
**Monday 7/25:** 8 a.m. Foot Clinic  
**Mondays, 7/25 and 8/1:**  
Noon Lunch  
8 a.m. Foot Clinic Appointments  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle  
**Tuesdays, 7/26 and 8/2:**  
9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
**Wednesdays, 7/27 and 8/3:**  
9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach  
12:45 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursdays, 7/28 and 8/4:**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:30 to Noon Brown Bag  
1 p.m. Cards & Games

**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 congregational meals.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call the Mealsite Manager at 423-3308 for meal

information and reservations.

For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity.

Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

**Mondays, 7/25 and 8/1:**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance  
**Tuesdays, 7/26 and 8/2:**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
10 a.m. Stretch & Balance  
Homemade Lunch (*sign up*)  
12:30 p.m. Crafty Seniors  
**Wednesdays, 7/27 and 8/3:**  
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Bingo, Snacks & Laughs  
**Thursdays, 7/28 and 8/4:**  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics (*fast moving*)  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones  
12:30 p.m. Creative Coloring  
**Fridays, 7/29 and 8/5:**  
9 a.m. Quilting  
9:30 a.m. Bowling; Walking Club  
Noon Lunch at Poet's Seat HC  
12:30 p.m. Painting Workshop

**LEVERETT**

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us). Flexibility and Balance Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Senior Lunch – Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

**WENDELL**

Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center for a ride.

# MR at the Great Falls Farmers Market: Here and There are Beautiful Places to Be

By NINA ROSSI

**TURNERS FALLS** – Eric Grab wandered within shouting distance of the *Montague Reporter* table at the Great Falls Farmers Market on July 6. While cornered under the tent, he explained his presence there using the following select words:

“Hey, I am here getting delicious food. I am the other artist at Madison on the Ave. We are going to have to leave, actually, the building is bought or may be bought soon, and so we are asked to vacate for a couple months while renovations take place.”

Eric and Rodney Madison are looking at opening an art spot in Millers Falls, which Eric likens to “Turners’ little brother – but it seems even more depressed. Turners is experiencing a revival, thanks to the arts and the Shea, but Millers doesn’t have that. Rodney and I and our creative partners are hoping that we can bring some creativity and culture down there.”

Eric hails originally from Portland, Oregon, and grew up in Rochester, New York and southeastern Massachusetts. He graduated from UMass-Dartmouth with a degree in art and education. He lost a teaching position “in 2008, when the banks went kaboom and my job was cut. I sort of wandered around and found Turners Falls, where I have been living now just over a year with my fiancée.

“I just love it out here. I love the people, the atmosphere, the closeness to nature, the closeness to the important things in life. People out here seem aware of their roots to the earth, the connection to one another too. It’s been a real joy to be part of.”

Eric was freshly back from an infusion of good vibes at the Rainbow Gathering in Vermont. “It’s a unity thing, white light refracted by a prism, you see all the rainbow: we are all one people, and you see all different tribes. The Gathering is when all those tribes get together to pray, to be, to pray for world peace. It’s a beautiful place to be. There were thousands.

“Theres a food circle every night where you just go to be fed and pass the hat around to sustain it. The night I was there, they got two thousand dollars. Everyone was sitting there being fed and saying ‘Om’ together and singing and drumming.”

Once released from questioning, Eric was seen walking in a northeasterly direction: Millers Falls, or a possible “Maine-bow Gathering”?

“I haven’t got confirmation yet about the Maine-bow, but if it does, I am headed there... that is my family, for sure!”

Thanks for talking with the *MR*!



Eric Grab

### THE HEALTHY GEEZER

# Fire Precautions

dangerous fumes.

- Always touch closed doors; if they are warm, don't open them. Don't touch doorknobs.
- If your clothing is on fire, drop to the floor and roll to extinguish flames.
- Avoid elevators; use stairs or fire escapes.

2. Install smoke alarms on all levels of your home and outside all sleeping areas. You double your chance of surviving a fire with alarms. Vacuum and test them regularly. Replace all batteries at least once a year. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years; they lose sensitivity.
3. Plan a primary escape route and alternates. Discuss your escape plan with family, friends, neighbors and run fire drills. See if everyone can evacuate your home within three minutes — the time it can take for an entire house to go up in flames.
4. Being on the ground floor is safer in an emergency. If you live in a multi-story house, sleep on the ground floor near an exit.
5. Make sure that the windows in every room are easy to open. Get escape ladders for upper floors and keep them near windows.
6. Ask your fire department for a home-safety inspection. Ask for suggestions to improve your escape plan.
7. The primary cause of fire deaths among older adults at home is careless smoking. Enough said.
8. When cooking, use a timer if you have to leave the stove. Don't

cook if you take medication that makes you drowsy. Keep dish towels, aprons, napkins away from stove tops. Don't wear loose-fitting clothing when cooking.

9. Don't overload electrical outlets and extension cords.
10. Buy a fire extinguisher. An extinguisher on each level of your home is ideal. A fire-sprinkler system is worth considering.
11. Do not exceed the wattage recommended for light fixtures.
12. Replace appliances that spark, smell unusual, or overheat.
13. Don't put electrical wires under carpets.
14. Keep lamps and night lights away from fabrics.
15. If children are in your home, make sure you put plastic safety covers on electrical outlets.
16. Children playing with matches is a major cause of fires. Hide matches and lighters when kids are around.
17. Keep portable space heaters away from anything flammable.
18. Put screens on fireplaces to contain sparks. Have the chimney cleaned annually.
19. Keep candles away from kids, pets and curtains.
20. One of the major causes of household fires is flammable liquids. Store them safely away from heat sources and children.

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

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Icons: House, Wheelchair



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

# Music, Food, Dance and More

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Greetings, all, from Montague Community TV! This week, check out our new cultural programming at [montaguetv.org](http://montaguetv.org) or in the TV schedule.

First, tune in to the A Natural Concert Band's July 12 performance in Gill. Hosted by the A Natural Music School, this performance brings together over 50 professional musicians from the tri-state area back to the location of their very first concert back in June 2014.

See them perform *Tempest*, a new piece from the New England Conservatory's Derek Weagle (check out his website at [risanaremusic.com](http://risanaremusic.com)).

Next, tune in to the Caribbean Food & Culture segment hosted by Richie Richardson and Great Falls Harvest. Watch as restaurant goers enjoy the cuisine, prepared by chef and owner Chris Menegoni, with recipes selected by Richardson.

In the second half of this episode, Richardson, a designer, gives viewers insight into his work displayed at the Harvest. You can find more of his art at [richierichardson.blogspot.com](http://richierichardson.blogspot.com).

[blogspot.com](http://richierichardson.blogspot.com).

Finally, how better to spend your down time this week than by witnessing the creative endeavors of Turners Falls youth? A video clip of the multi-talented Tieray Moore's dance performance at Avenue A and Third Street is now streaming on [montaguetv.org](http://montaguetv.org).

Looking for things to do in the community this week? See the art of Marjorie Morgan, Barbara Milot and Nina Rossi at the July 22 opening of *Cloud 9*, showing this month at Nina's Nook (125A Avenue A, 5 p.m.).

Looking ahead, the Nolumbeka Project and Turners Falls RiverCulture are preparing for the 3rd Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival on Saturday, August 6 at Unity Park. Stay posted for more details!

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, [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street in Turners between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. We'd love to work with you!

## MOVIE REVIEW

# Free State of Jones

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – *Free State of Jones* is a movie that tells the true story of a man named Newton Knight (played by Matthew McConaughey), a white deserter from the South who, along with several other men like himself and runaway slaves, held a rebellion against the South during the Civil War. They annexed three counties, which they managed to hold until the end of the war.

This story gives us a portrait of a man who surprisingly would not be called a "typical Southerner" by some. He didn't believe in slavery, and was a medic when he served with the Confederacy instead of defending the South through fighting.

One of the reasons that figured into why Knight deserted and rebelled was a law called the Twenty Slave Law, which the *Encyclopedia Virginia* website explains was "passed by the Confederate Congress on October 11, 1862, during the American Civil War (1861–1865), created an exemption to military conscriptions for the owners of twenty or more slaves."

This man led the people with him on raids to retrieve crops that were seized by the soldiers from other people in the area, making it difficult for them to survive.

Knight ended up in an illegal marriage in Mississippi with a slave named Rachel, and they had many children together. This whole movie shows him as being a decent man who believed, as mentioned in the story, that "no man ought to tell another man what he's got to live for, or what he's got to die for." He continued to be like this after the war, helping black men to vote.

Knight is also shown to be a kind and forgiving man, who allows his first wife and son to stay with him and Rachel after she left him. He understood completely why she did what she did -- it was just not safe for them to be there, given what the Confederate army did to deserters

It would be fair to say, based on

the film, that Knight values the rights of all human beings. While he could not marry Rachel legally, he did deed her some land, making her one of the few black women to own property.

This man clearly loved her very much. He requested upon his death to be buried next to her in a cemetery. Talk about being a defiant one right until the end!

Another event that occurred with his family – namely with Newton's great-great-great grandson – was featured in the film, involving Jim Crow-era laws in Mississippi about being black and marriage that led to his legal troubles. The law made it so he was thrown in jail for his family connection to Newton and Rachel. I won't spoil the twists and turns that go on with this particular situation, but let's just say his final decision would have made Newton Knight very proud.

I saw a segment from CBS Sunday Morning about the film, featuring a historian as well as descendants of Newton Knight and Rachel who didn't have any problem being related to them. Matthew McConaughey also talked about the man in the segment. He did his research, knew what kind of man he was playing in the film, and said he was proud of playing this part.

"There's great power, as an actor, in understanding who you are, and who you are portraying, and there's a clarity to that," he said.

That sounds like pretty good proof to me that this actor knew the kind of man Newton was. What I saw of this actor playing the character on screen made me like the movie very much.

I went to see this movie partially because my mom was interested in seeing it. I was concerned that it would be hit or miss when it came to whether or not I would like it. Needless to say, it was a hit for me.

The segment also mentions that on Newton Knight's tombstone, it said "He lived for others." That is, in my opinion, a very true statement about the man.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

# Six Shirtless White Males Flip Smart Car: Not So Smart Now! Also, Mom And Dad's Chevy Malibu Somehow Crashed Itself!

**Monday, 7/4**

1:27 p.m. Two 911 calls reporting rekindle at location of last night's bonfire in Montague Center. First caller advises fire is still relatively small and appears to have just rekindled. Shelburne Control and officer advised.

4 p.m. Caller advising of an assault from an employee at Family Dollar; states employee was throwing things at her and chased her to her car. Officer spoke to employee, who advises that the caller was the aggressor and that the caller makes comments to her under her breath and provokes her each time she comes in the store. Advised of options, including trespass.

8:08 p.m. Two calls advising of garage fire on K Street. First caller advises fire is small; believes he is getting it under control; no people/pets inside garage. TFFD and officer advised; TFFD has scene under control.

9:01 p.m. Caller requesting an officer check for her son who ran away on Wednesday; advises she received info that he was just seen downtown near an "artsy store." Downtown as well as areas of skatepark and F.L. Roberts searched extensively; negative findings. 9:21 p.m. Caller from Grout Circle complaining of 4 wheeler and dirt bike on their property, which is posted "no trespassing;" this is an ongoing occurrence. Caller believes that involved party has already been spoken to. Caller very upset that consistent riding is destroying the stream beds and wetlands in the back. Officer will check residence of suspected party involved.

**Tuesday, 7/5**

2:08 p.m. Report of larceny on Main Street over weekend; medication was stolen. Officer made contact with suspected party and will be returning items to caller.

4:38 p.m. Report of a small dog in a tan or cream Mini Cooper parked at Food City; one window is cracked, but dog looks really hot. Area search negative.

5:06 p.m. Caller reports observing a white male attempting to enter a residence on Eleventh Street; he seemed not to have any luck and went over a porch railing and entered a window next door. Investigated.

5:56 p.m. [REDACTED], was arrested on a straight warrant.

11:28 p.m. [REDACTED] was arrested on a probation warrant.

**Thursday, 7/7**

8:25 a.m. Caller requesting advice on how to remove a

baby skunk from the window well of a house she is looking after while the owners are away. Referred to animal control officer. 9:02 a.m. Report of vandalism to a vehicle overnight on Third Street. Report taken. 12:42 p.m. Report of assault at Millers Pub; caller states that male pulled a gun on him, threatened him with brass knuckles, and keyed his car. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was arrested and charged with two counts of assault with a dangerous weapon; two counts of threat to commit crime; and carrying a dangerous weapon. 12:43 p.m. Caller just watched party in Jeep throw cigarette butt out the window; vehicle then turned around to see what did/did not happen because of same. Report taken. 4:10 p.m. Caller reports ongoing issue with vehicles speeding around the corner at Court Square and School Street. Officer advised of call.

**Friday, 7/8**

2:05 a.m. 911 caller reporting he is camping in the Cabot Woods off of Migratory Way and was awoken by some large animal outside his tent; same was growling and getting close to tent. Caller concerned for his own safety. Exact location unknown. Responding officers found no animals in the area. Caller advised of options. 10:08 a.m. Report of stolen mail on Coolidge Avenue. 10:47 a.m. Report of two males physically fighting in a side yard on Fourth Street. One of the parties also has a burn pile going and is burning cardboard. Officer found that dispute was verbal and fire was a cooking fire contained in a hibachi grill. Fire department notified. 11 a.m. Report of stolen mail on Main Street. 11:35 a.m. Report of intoxicated male on Fourth Street who has broken a table and is threatening to assault the caller. Party taken into protective custody; was content to sleep

for a while; later released. **Saturday, 7/9**

3:37 a.m. Officer out with vehicle on side of Lake Pleasant Road. Operator is waiting for a text from his girlfriend and doesn't get cell service in area where he is going. 4:12 a.m. 911 call reporting burglary/breaking and entering on Crocker Avenue. Report taken. 5:41 a.m. Caller reporting breaking and entering into his home on Eleventh Street. Report taken.

6:01 a.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reports that picture window in living room was smashed at approximately 3 this morning. Nothing reported missing at this time. Report taken.

6:07 a.m. Report of burglary/breaking and entering on Twelfth Street. Report taken.

11:07 a.m. Report of burglary/breaking and entering overnight on Morris Avenue; entry was made through a side window. Report taken.

11:14 a.m. Report that flag flying at war memorial next to library appears to have been flipped upside down. Broken clip caused flag to fall upside down. Officer secured a new clip from Aubuchon's for \$2.88; flag is now flying appropriately at half mast in honor of fallen Dallas officers.

12:31 p.m. Caller from High Street reports that his parents are out of town and that overnight their blue Chevy Malibu had been moved; car is now covered in dirt and mud and reportedly has damage to passenger side fender. Caller has no idea what happened. Report taken.

4:13 p.m. Caller into lobby reporting harassing phone calls; unknown male is threatening to come to caller's house and castrate him. Caller advised to contact police if anyone shows up at his residence and to check with phone company re: blocking the number in question.

9:14 p.m. Caller advising of two parties with flashlights inside Old School

House in Montague Center. Parties were doing some "ghost research"; did have a key to the building and stated Historical Society gave them permission. **Monday, 7/11**

8:42 a.m. Party into lobby regarding possible break-ins over the weekend to both elementary schools. Investigated.

3:48 p.m. Party advising he intends to drive across the Gill-Montague Bridge with a camera on his vehicle taking footage for a documentary about the skate park. Party advised that as long as he doesn't stop/impede traffic, this should be fine.

11:05 p.m. Report of 2-3 kids on the roof of Hillcrest Elementary School. Unable to locate.

**Tuesday, 7/12**

11:50 a.m. Caller inquiring about having an officer stand by at the Elks for a Christmas card making event to assist with any behavioral issues. Referred to an officer.

4:17 p.m. Following a report of burglary/breaking and entering on Sunderland Road, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was arrested and charged with breaking and entering into a building in the daytime for felony and larceny over \$250.

**Wednesday, 7/13**

10:35 a.m. Cumberland Farms manager reporting group of 8 people causing disturbance. Group is now in Cabot Woods in the Patch. Group may have shoplifted a cup of coffee; manager not concerned about same. Officer spoke to all parties and verbally trespassed them from Cumberland Farms.

12:43 p.m. Report of suspicious person walking around a property on High Street.

2:22 p.m. Caller reports that her parked vehicle was broken into and money stolen from her purse in the upper lot at the Bookmill. Report taken.

2:22 p.m. Report of burglary/breaking and entering on High Street. Report taken.

see MPD page B4

# MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

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## MPD from page B3

Thursday, 7/14

4:39 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting two children's bikes stolen. Advised of options.

6:11 p.m.

was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

Friday, 7/15

2:39 a.m. F.L. Roberts clerk reporting shoplifting; male party came in twice and stole bags of M&Ms. Referred to an officer.

12:32 p.m. Caller reports that on July 13, someone maliciously damaged his tires while his vehicle was parked at work (Judd Wire). Advised of options.

12:50 p.m. Caller complaining of flower display partially obstructing the fire lane

in front of Aubuchon Hardware. Caller also requests "pedestrian signage" on sidewalk on Seventh Street between Food City Plaza and Peske Park. Officer clear; no obstruction in fire lane. Caller referred to DPW re: signage request.

11:05 p.m. Caller reporting a car that has been circling the area of K Street, T Street, and L Street for a while now at a high rate of speed. Referred to an officer.

Saturday, 7/16

1:38 p.m. Report of suspicious vehicle parked in front of caller's residence on North Leverett Road; vehicle has been there 3-4 times today, staying for 15-20 minutes each time. Officer spoke with vehicle owner, who advised she does

not get good cell reception at her house so she drove there to use her cell phone.

7:26 p.m. Caller reports a loud "boom" sound coming from across Lake Pleasant; this has been happening nightly. Investigated.

Sunday, 7/17

3:37 a.m. Caller reports that a group of 6 shirtless white males wearing masks or with their shirts pulled over their heads just flipped over a yellow Smart car in the parking lot of Keith Apartments. Investigated.

8:40 p.m. Caller requesting an officer to speak to her mother regarding the mother refusing to allow the 23 year old daughter (caller) to take her car out of town. Advised of options.



# The Great Race Comes to Turners

**TURNERS FALLS** – It's the greatest sports story of all time!

Welcome to The International Raceway. Our contestants: The Tortoise and the Hare. Who wins? You probably know the answer, but there will be twists and turns and hilarity before any critters cross the finish line. It's *The Great Race*, adapted and directed by Tom McCabe for PaintBox Theater.

PaintBox favorite (and Valley icon) Kelsey Flynn is coming out of retirement, dusting off her rabbit ears, and hopping into the race as that pesky hare. We promise lots of cheering and excitement as we present this folktale dash for glory.

This year, PaintBox Theatre – the Pioneer Valley's theatre of imagina-



tion and improvisation for all ages – has moved to the Williston Theatre in Easthampton – with side trips to the Shea Theater in Turners Falls. We're thrilled to expand our audience and bring our shows to these beautiful (air-conditioned!) theaters.

As always, PaintBox Theatre's shows will feature lots of audience participation, artwork created by dozens of local kids, and plenty of belly laughs.

*The Great Race* premieres Friday, July 22, 7 p.m. at Williston Theater in Easthampton with additional shows on Saturday and Sunday, July 23 and 24, 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

*The Great Race* comes to the Shea Theater in Turners Falls on Friday, July 29 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, July 30, 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Tickets available at the door or at [BrownPaperTickets.com](http://BrownPaperTickets.com)

For more info and to make group reservations email [paintboxtheatre@gmail.com](mailto:paintboxtheatre@gmail.com) or call 413-923-7159.

## LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here's the way it was July 27, 2006: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

### Too Darned Loud?

The selectboard has scheduled a hearing to address allegations of chronic, excessive and unnecessary noise in the downtown business district. The hearing comes in response to a letter sent this week by Christopher Janke, an owner of Suzee's Third Street Laundry.

Janke voiced dismay over a number of downtown noise sources, and was especially critical of the volume of late-night noise generated by Yesterdays, also on Third Street. Janke felt police noise measurements do not always reflect actual noise levels.

"I don't want to be negative about the town," said Janke late

Wednesday. "I just really hope that town officials do the right thing. I've been frustrated with the pace of action on this."

### Board Denies Planner Leave

Robin Sherman, Montague's town planner for more than seven years, will not be getting a one-year leave of absence to attend the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard to obtain a Master's Degree in Public Administration. That was the final verdict of the board of selectmen after almost an hour of discussion.

Sherman said that she has long had a home in Montague, that she loved her community and hoped to be able to return to her job as town planner for Montague when her year of schooling is up. "It has been a privilege working for the board

and working for the community and to be able to improve the quality of life for its citizens," said Sherman.

Although the Board stated emphatically that they recognized Sherman's outstanding leadership skill and performance, selectmen Patricia Allen and Allen Ross said they had many concerns surrounding the possibility of granting her a leave of absence. Allen said she would not have a problem if the leave of absence were for only three, or even six months. "But a lot can happen in a year, and in the meantime what will Montague do while waiting for Sherman's return, especially when there are a lot of projects for the town going on at once?"

In the end, a vote was taken with Allen and Ross voting to seek a permanent replacement, and Pruitt voting against. The board's next steps are to find someone to replace her.

## Cushman Library Hosts Free Concert this Friday



*Appalachian Still*

**BERNARDSTON** – Cushman Library is pleased to present a free concert by the pond with acoustic string band Appalachian Still on Friday, July 29 at 7 p.m. Folks are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and picnic dinners to enjoy the grassy amphitheater which is perfect for concert picnicking.

Playing high-energy Americana that combines old-time mountain music with bluegrass, rock, and folk, this group from Northampton has managed to create a unique sound that is distinctly their own, and they have a strong local following. One of their leading men is the Brick House's own Jared Libby.

Drawing from a repertoire of traditional tunes, original material, and covers, this band combines tra-

ditional music of Appalachia with many "modern" influences like The Band, Old Crow Medicine Show, The Grateful Dead, Norman Blake, and The Avett Brothers.

"Join us for a fabulous free concert by the pond!" urges library director Karen Stinchfield. "If it rains, we'll be inside the library, and Appalachian Still will fill every nook and cranny with fabulous music!"

This event is funded in part by the Bernardston Cultural Council, a local agency that is funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council; and the Friends of Cushman Library. Cushman Library is at 28 Church Street in Bernardston. More info: [cushmanlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:cushmanlibrary@gmail.com).

**GARDENERS** from page B1

plants but less fruit.

Once your plants are well settled, **mulch with hay or straw or grass clippings** to keep down the weeds. Then you can avoid hoeing, which is often very disruptive to plant roots.

**Water is integral to the health of your plants.** If the soil is dry and powdery, and there is no rain in the forecast, run a sprinkler over the garden for a few hours. Do not water in the hot midday sun, and stop watering and leave an hour or two for plants to dry before nightfall.

Learn the water requirements of your favorite plants:

**Tomatoes don't know when to stop drinking,** and overly watered tomato plants are at greater risk for rot and fungus. Water them when you can stick your forefinger into the ground and find no damp soil.

Leafy greens are shallow rooted and dry out more quickly. They'll need more frequent watering.

**Sunlight is necessary for all plants,** but some like more than others. All of the vine crops including tomatoes and peppers thrive on heat. Salad greens, peas, onions and root crops are tolerant of some shade and

are planted early because they enjoy cooler temperatures.

Most of us keep a small to moderately sized garden. **Devote your space to your favorites** and pick up space grabbers like squash and corn at one of our many farm stands for a very reasonable price.

If you enjoy tomatoes, plant several varieties to take you through the season: some cherries, some early small types and some beefsteak. If you have more than you can keep up with, share or make relish or cook up sauces and can or freeze.

**You can never have too many peas.** Plant several rows supported with chicken wire, and put them out as early as you can. If by some remote chance, you get tired of eating fresh garden peas, you can make a yummy cold sweet pea soup with pureed vegetable, a bit of garlic and chicken broth, garnished with mint. Or you can freeze some with great ease for future delight.

**Fresh string beans are like no others,** crispy and tasting of green. We like ours cooked quickly and garnished with butter and salt or marinated with vinaigrette as a cold salad. Green and wax beans also

freeze easily for winter eating.

**Give yourself the indulgence of an impractical crop or two.** We have a large pumpkin plant which will be allowed to sprawl below the tomatoes and near the cucumbers. We don't need it, but it's great fun to harvest your own jack o lantern. I grow sweet peppers because there are colors and flavors I likely won't find elsewhere. I enjoy the way grilling enhances their flavor. We also freeze them. If you slice or chop them while they are still frozen you can add them to any cooking you like.

**At the end of the season,** it's a good idea to remove any diseased plants and weeds. Do not compost them for next year's garden, or you will be recycling a problem. You can leave your mulching materials to blend into the soil over the winter rest and sprinkle them with lime to leach into the soil.

**Make a note of garden successes and failures for another season.**

Happy gardening! Or, in diplomatic, you may find this works well for you. Or, if not, in plain speak, don't do it.



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MELVILLE from page B1

word I would use).

I saw the large chimney, whose many virtues Melville praised in his sketch *I and My Chimney*, which I was familiar with from John Bryant’s excellent *Tales, Poems and Other Writings*. Also the piazza or porch Melville built to repose and take in the view of Mt. Greylock, which became the subject of his tale *The Piazza*, and which would give the name to his later collection *The Piazza Tales*.

Upstairs was his studio, with writing desk intact, facing the window. I was allowed to photograph Mt. Greylock from the window, and managed to include part of the desk. This was almost as exciting as entering Mark Twain’s study in his extraordinary mansion in Hartford, imagining the writer puffing on a stogie, which I did a few years back – it had been on my to do list for about a decade before that. The magazine rack in Melville’s study was Twain’s. The guide said he lived for awhile near Tanglewood.

Melville’s friendship with Nathaniel Hawthorne is more well known, with Melville greatly admiring the older and more successful Hawthorne, who, according to my guide, had recently fled Salem after *The Scarlet Letter* was published in 1850 and caused an uproar in his home town. Ending up in Lenox, the two eventually became such close friends that Hawthorne had his own small room at Arrowhead.

The tour concluded, I ate lunch and checked out the gift shop, where most of Melville’s books are for sale. I sat and read the back covers of several early ones I didn’t know. Referring to his *Redburn* (1849) and *White Jacket* (1850), Melville is quoted thus: “Two jobs,

which I have done for money – being forced to it, as other men are to sawing wood.”

I was tempted to buy one of them, but did not. I did however purchase a t-shirt proclaiming, “I would prefer not to” – my favorite Melville line. I will always remember the night a long time ago, when I was a teenager still living at home, that my sister came by and we spent the evening watching on TV, in shocked silence, the bizarre story of *Bartleby the Scrivener*, who spoke no words but those. The t-shirt is for my sister, who is retired: she’s earned it.

Pittsfield City Hall houses a collection of Melville artifacts, but it was too fine a day to spend more time inside, so I opted to visit the Balance Rock, one of several stops on the Melville Trail: places he frequented or admired, such as Mount Greylock, Monument Mountain, Hancock Shaker Village and the Crane Paper Museum in Dalton – Melville got his paper there by the “sleighload” – it’s on my list, but closed on Saturdays.

Balance Rock State Park is not far from downtown Pittsfield. You can see the rock from the parking lot. The irregularly-shaped glacial erratic is maybe roughly 12 feet by 15 feet by 20 feet, surrounded by numerous smaller lichen-encrusted outcroppings trailing off through the woods. Quite a serene scene. Of course, the rock is highly graffitied, which at first dulled its appeal, then intrigued me as I got my camera out and took a bunch of weird-angled closeups.

I thought hiking to the rock would be fun, but was not inspired to hit the trails just to be in the woods, having already ambled through meadow and forest at Ar-



USSACH PHOTOS

Balance Rock, near downtown Pittsfield on the Melville Trail: Nothing says “te amo” quite like spray paint on a historically significant boulder!

rowhead. Instead, the bumpy rocks beckoned.

I grabbed my little copy of the book and climbed atop a large boulder facing Balance Rock, a perfect vantage point from which to spy Balance Rock and its occasional visitors, who barely noticed me.

I opened the book, prepared to tackle Chapter One, but found instead after the introduction a section of whale-related excerpts from

world literature – full of profundity and literary flair. From Hobbes’ *Leviathan*: “By art is created that great Leviathan, called a Commonwealth or State – (in Latin, *Civitas*) which is but an artificial man.”

After Hobbes I put the book down and stared into space, finding comfort in the play of light on the rocky forest landscape and reflecting on many things, including the queer passage of time.

Then I picked it back up and began reading Chapter One. It begins: “Call me Ishmael.” I read the entire chapter, and loved it, was moved deeply by it, pondered it.

Here’s a prophetic gem from near the end of the chapter: after consigning the ultimate cause of his going a-whaling to fate, “part of the grand programme of Providence,” he has a go at the following cosmic headlines –

“Grand Contested Election for the Presidency of the United States.”

“Whaling Voyage By One Ishmael.”

“BLOODY BATTLE IN AFGHANISTAN.”

Santayana (George, not Carlos) was right. Having published the book in 1851, Melville is likely referring to the 1844 election, wherein James Polk defeated Henry Clay by only 39,000 popular votes (and 65 electoral votes) in a contest that turned on the controversial issue of slavery expansion through the annexation of the Republic of Texas. The First Anglo-Afghan War (there were three) was fought by the British East India Company and Afghanistan from 1839 – 1842.

There are many chapters, most not very long, often just a few pages: perhaps I will actually read it, one small chapter at a time, and savor it.

At dinner last night with friends, one of whom has long encouraged me to read *Moby Dick*, I briefly recounted my experience of the day. When my wife mentioned our upcoming visit to Nantucket later this month for another arts and crafts show, he looked me square in the eye and said: “You’ve got to read *Moby Dick*.”

Well: She’ll be working. What am I gonna do?



RUEL FLYNN from page B1

produced paintings from time to time. Ruel Flynn taught art at Swift River School in New Salem for six years before assuming the management of the Fiber Arts Center, a fine craft gallery in Amherst, for five years until it closed. In 2012, Linda began her full-time stewardship of Flora-Ly.

How does Ruel Flynn create her one-of-a-kind artwork? “I can’t reveal my entire process,” she smiled, “but I do press flowers in a traditional manner, always using special kinds of paper, pressure, and time. It takes about two weeks for the flowers to dry.”

Who uses her services? “All kinds of people like to utilize my one-of-a-kind artwork. In particular, though, individuals who have a real connection to nature are drawn to my work; for example, the bride whose flowers on her wedding day are so important to her, or the family member who chose certain flowers for a funeral that meant something special to the loved one.”

Above all, Ruel Flynn wants to help her customers remain connected to the past. Custom keepsakes can bring consumers back “to the moment you picked up your bouquet and took your first step toward your future. Flower preservation isn’t something everyone thinks of. It’s the newest oldest tradition.”

In 2015 alone, Linda originated and developed some 40 creations for her clients. She has appeared on “Mass. Appeal” TV show on Channel 22 twice, featured in 10-15 minute segments. Plus, she was

also a panelist with a group of western Mass. artisans on Channel 57’s “Connecting Points.”

Linda Ruel Flynn does speaking engagements and basic flower pressing workshops. She recently did a gig for the Gardeners on the Green, the East Longmeadow garden club.

Some of Ruel Flynn’s botanical collages are available at the Bower Studio in Pelham. One of the works was created for the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust in Athol.

Interested persons may call Linda at (978) 895-0560 for more information, or to schedule an appointment at her studio. Flora-Ly is located at 131 West Main Street, Studio 320 in Orange.



DANIFINE PHOTOGRAPHY

Ruel Flynn, at Quonquot Farm in Whately.

TWO ROOMS from page B1

often together, these two actors seem to live in the same space at times and their minds are fixed in time with only one goal, to get back to each other and freedom.

Completing the cast are reporter Walker Harris, played by Jay Sefton, and state department official, Ellen van Os, played by Sheila Siragusa. With great patience, Walker encourages and cajoles Lainie to tell her story and speak out to the press and the nation about her husband’s plight.

With similar persistence and perhaps patience – or is it tolerance? – Ellen van Os pushes back against the reporter’s efforts and tries to manage the situation in the way best from the point of view of the government.

That dynamic is most interesting as it tries to examine the various motivations of the players. Lainie, who only wants what’s best for her husband, has to figure out who is right, whose point of view is the one that will bring Michael home. While all of this plays out on a world stage with presidents and other hostages, inside those two small rooms Lainie and Michael remain clinging to each other and the world for them is very small.

Several of the scenes between Lainie (Bloch) and Walker (Sefton) capture the central dynamic of choice and danger, while also offering many of the lighter moments in the play. On occasion with Walker, Lainie may even laugh, forget herself, allow a little pleasure into her life if only for a moment. His con-

sistent interest in her story gives her much of her only human contact during these solitary times.

Although Lainie admits to van Os from State that she demands home visits rather than phone calls just for the company, those visits are not so fulfilling. The interaction of these four actors provides thought provoking drama of a very personal nature.

Director Rebecca Daniels has done an outstanding job of guiding these gifted actors towards finding that balance of emotion and drama where each scene captures the audience attention and holds it. As we come to know and care about each of these characters, the depth of the story unfolds before us.

The language Blessing offers is often quite elegant, with images presented in great detail that add to the quality and complexity of the play. When you bring together fine actors, a skilled, knowledgeable director and elegant script the result is a superior theatrical experience such as this.

Charles Holt is a Northampton native and spent many years as an actor working in New York City off-Broadway theater. Emily Bloch, a singer and actor new to western Mass., has been performing in cabaret and musical theater in her hometown of New York City. Her credits include playing a Disciple in *Godspell*, and Titania in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

Jay Sefton is an award-winning writer and Equity actor with credits in many cities in both theater and film. He and his wife now live

in Hadley. Sheila Siragusa is a co-founder and director of the August Company, directing Shakespeare and Chekov among others. She received the Social Justice Award from The Kennedy Center for her original play *Water*.

Producer Lucinda Kidder has guided this and all productions this season with care, from script selection, choice of directors, casting, to attention to all those details that leave actors and directors free to do their creative work.

The ever important crew for this production are: Carl Erikson, stage manager, Sharon Weyer, Assistant to the Director, John Iverson, sound recording, Robert Moore, lighting design.

The Silverthorne Theater Company is a professional summer theater in the Connecticut River Valley, co-founded by Lucinda Kidder and David Rowland.

This production of *Two Rooms* continues for another weekend, with shows on July 21, 22 and 23, evening performances at 7:30 p.m. with a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. There will be a talk-back session on Thursday after the performance. All performances are at the Sloan Theater, located on the campus of Greenfield Community College.

For tickets and other information, see [silverthornetheater.org](http://silverthornetheater.org), or call (413) 768-7514.

The season continues with a performance of *The Turn of the Screw*, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher from the novella by Henry James and scheduled to premier on Thursday, July 28.



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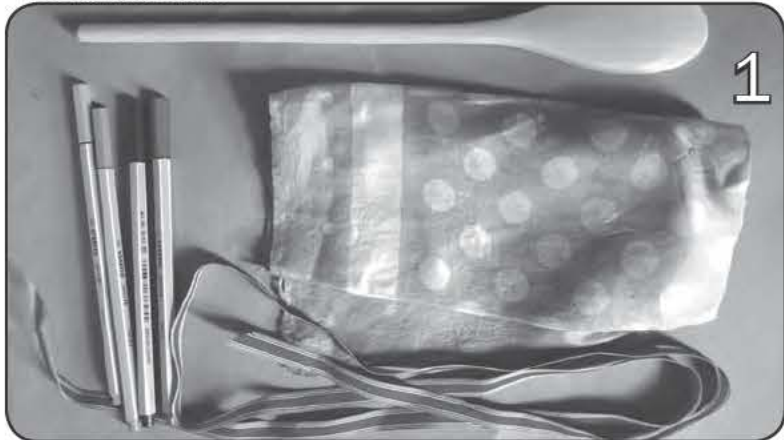


YONEROD ILLUSTRATION

# The Children's Page

## You can make a puppet from a kitchen spoon!

BEVERLY KETCH PHOTOS



Take a regular wooden kitchen spoon that you have permission to draw on. Find markers, ribbons and scraps of cloth – anything that might be good for decoration.

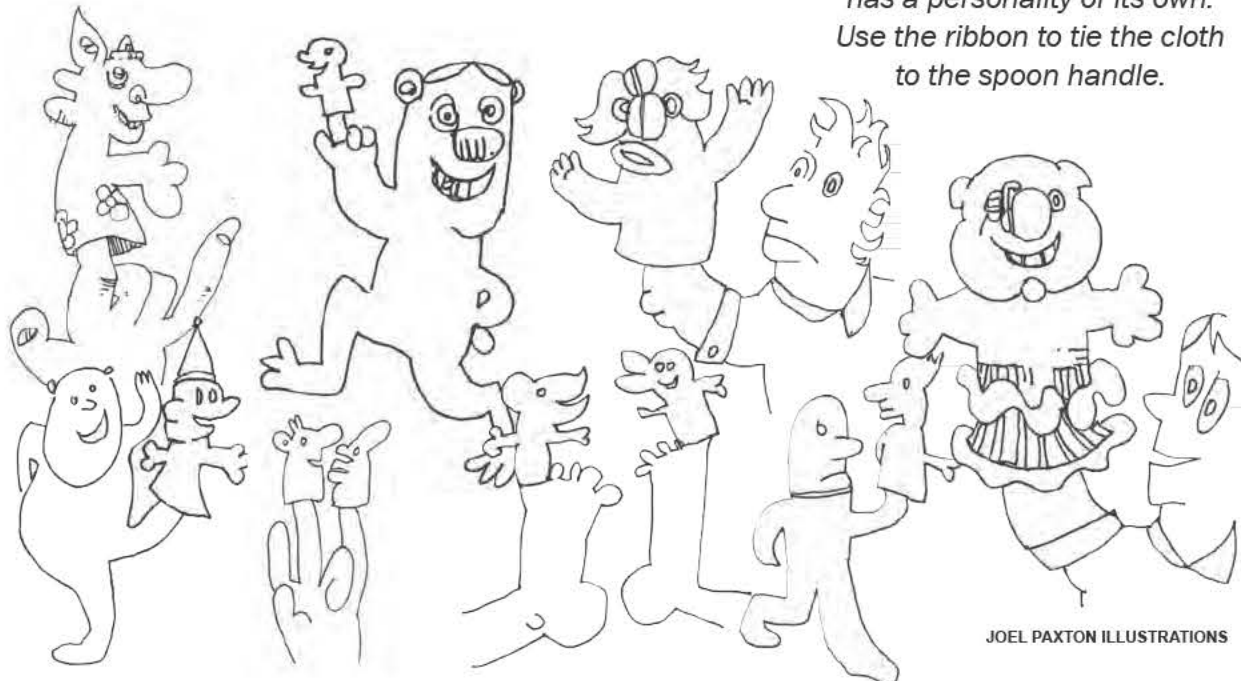


Draw a face! You will find that it has a personality of its own. Use the ribbon to tie the cloth to the spoon handle.

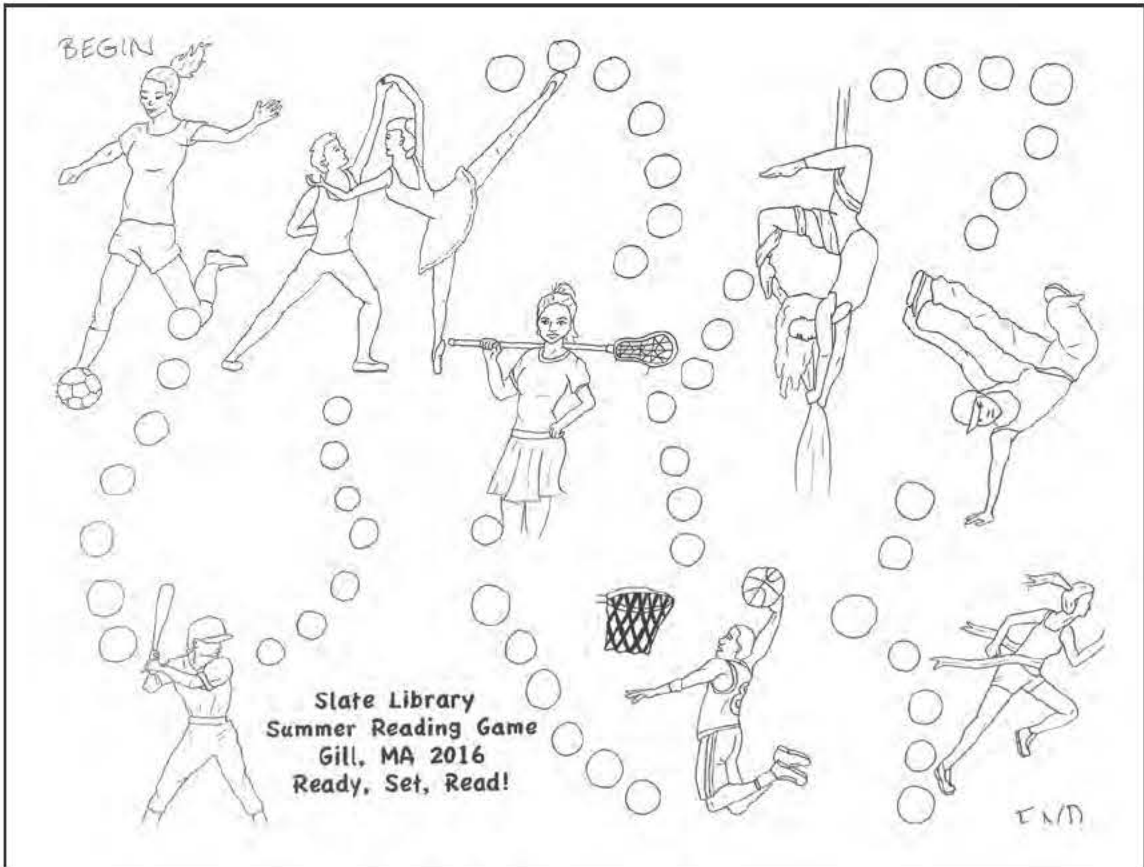
Get another spoon! Make another puppet, because everyone needs a friend...



Puppets can be used for puppet shows, or just to play. What does your puppet's voice sound like? Is your puppet friendly? Does it have a name?



Cut out this reading chart and mark each day you read by filling in the circles. You can collect a prize at the Slate Library in Gill once a week if you read every day!



Would you have fun helping with the children's page? Your newspaper crafts, children's drawings and favorite activity suggestions would be a wonderful addition! Contact Beverly Ketch at [kidspage@montaguereporter.org](mailto:kidspage@montaguereporter.org).

When you make a puppet, you are creating a character that you're bringing to life.

When Nell Koenings, a local artist, made this puppet, she named it after her favorite author.

But then she found herself making a toy for her puppet, and realized it was the same toy she had when she was a little girl.

She had really made her own self as a child!



## CHILDREN'S CRAFT ACTIVITIES AT THE SLATE LIBRARY IN GILL:



Saturday 7/23  
Kitchen Spoon Puppets

Saturday 7/30  
Mandala Postcards

Saturday 8/6  
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



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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

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.

1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAY

Arts Block (4th floor), Greenfield: *Creacion Latin Big Band & Late Night Open Mic JAM*. 20 piece ensemble play son, salsa, chacha and much more. 8 p.m. Open Mic starts at 9 p.m. Free.

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.

1ST AND 3RD THURSDAY

Hubie's Tavern: *Open Mic*. 6 p.m.

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 THIRD FRIDAY

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *Brule's Irish Band*. Food carts supplement the local beer. 6 p.m.

EVERY FRIDAY

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

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

EXHIBITS:

Artspace, Greenfield: *Hear, Now, and Always*. Paintings by Nancy First and wood carvings by Janice Doppler. Reception, 7/29 from 5 to 7 p.m. Through August 12.

Forbes Library, Northampton: Local artist Nina Rossi joins two others for "*Progressions*" exhibit. Opening reception on 8/3 from 6-8 p.m. Through August 31.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Impressions of Turners Falls*, paintings by Karen Evans. Through July 30.

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Camera Materna*. Group photography show "revealing the artist behind the nurturer". Through July 31.

Memorial Hall, Deerfield: *Relics and Curiosities in Memorial Hall*. "Interesting" objects such as wreaths made of human hair and weapons made from shark's teeth are in this exhibit. Through October 30. \$

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Clouds*. The "sky of mind" of three artists, Marjorie Morgan, Nina Rossi and Barbara Milot fill the Nook with sculpture, pen and inks, and small canvases. Reception Friday, July 22, 5 to 7 p.m. Through August 27.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Homecoming*. Paintings by E. Joseph McCarthy. Through July 31.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery at The Montague Mill, Montague: *Summer Celebration*. Featured artists: Louise Minks, Roy Mansur, Christine Mero, Christine Pellerin, Patricia Czepiel Hayes. Exhibit runs through August 29.

Shelburne Arts Co-operative, Shelburne Falls: "*Out and About... Shelburne Falls*". Group show by artists celebrating Shelburne Falls. Through July 25.

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *Take Me to Your Leader: New paintings by Charlie Shaw*. Through 8/31.

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, JULY 21

Energy Park, Greenfield: Coop Concert Series presents: *Austin & Elliott, Orlen & Gabriel, Katie Clarke*. 6 p.m.

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

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Patrick Coman Band*. Roots/country/folk/rock. 7:30 p.m. \$

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

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Niall Connolly*. Singer/songwriter. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 22

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Meet John Doe*. 1941 Frank Capra art-imitates-life movie about presidential candidate. 7:30 p.m. Music at 7 p.m. (see ad this page). \$

GCC Sloan Theater, Greenfield: Silverthorne Theater presents *Two Rooms*. Love amidst hostage taking. 7:30 p.m. \$

White Church Community Center, Deerfield: *Yankee Tavern* by Steve Dietz. 7/22, 7/23, 7/29, 7/30 at 8 p.m. 2 p.m. matinees on 7/24 and 7/31. \$

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Violet Maeve*, All girl indie rock band. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 23

GCC Sloan Theater, Greenfield: Silverthorne Theater presents *Two Rooms*. Love amidst hostage taking. 2 p.m. matinee, and 7:30 p.m. \$

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Meet John Doe*. 1941 Frank Capra art-imitates-life movie about presidential candidate. 7:30 p.m. Music at 7 p.m. (see ad this page). \$

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Mist Covered Mountains*. Celtic trio. 7:30 p.m. \$

Jaume I, Greenfield: Porx Fest 2 feat. *Think Tank, Ned Paige, Mal Devisa, Lucy, Mozzaleum*, and *Divorcee*. 7:30 p.m., \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Lines West*. Acoustic pop. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Shadow Twisters*. Classic '60s and '70s rock. 8:30 p.m.

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

SUNDAY, JULY 24

Jaume I, Greenfield: Big Fruity Picnic 2 feat. *No Sound, Brompt, Treb, Bryan Gillig, Stephanie Marie Germaine* and 11 more. Noon. \$.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem:

*Ethan Bremer*. Opera selections from Carmen. 4 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Franklin County Sweethearts*. Jazz/blues/country. 8 p.m.

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

MONDAY, JULY 25

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Junior Ranger Program*. Nature workshop for ages 8-11, Earn Junior Ranger patch. 10:30 a.m.

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

TUESDAY, JULY 26

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Amandla Chorus: Freedom's Beautiful Song*. 8:30 p.m. \$

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Twisted Pine & Low Lily*. 7:30 p.m. \$

THURSDAY, JULY 28

Energy Park, Greenfield: Coop Concerts Series presents: *Pint-sized String Band with Michael Pattavina*, and *Zydeco Connection*. 6 p.m.

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Shel*. Sisters indie/roots/pop/trad band from Colorado. 7:30 p.m. \$

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Lonesome Brothers*. Country/folk/rock. 7:30 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Hill Band*. Original Americana w/Jen Spingla. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 29

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Paintbox Theater presents *The Great Race of the Tortoise and the Hare*. 7 p.m. \$

Jaume I, Greenfield: *Kohoutek, Willie Lane, Matt Krefling, Egg Eggs*, and *Jen Gelineau*. 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Mark Nomad*. Blues. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TAWDRY*, Old Timey/American/Eclectic with tuba. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 30

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Paintbox Theater presents *The Great Race of the Tortoise and the Hare*. 10:30 a.m., 1 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Cassidy and the Music*. Singer/songwriter. 8 p.m.

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

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

SUNDAY, JULY 31

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Cassidy and the Music*. Singer/songwriter. 2 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *T-Bone & His Uke*. 8 p.m.

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 1

Brick House, Turners Falls:

*Cherry Death, Chemiplastica, The Right Aheads*, and *Mudskipper*. All ages, substance free. 8 p.m. \$

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3

West Whately Chapel, Whately: *Sox in the Frying Pan*. 7:30 p.m.

Memorial Hall Theater

POTHOLE PICTURES

Friday & Saturday  
July 22 and 23, 7:30 p.m.

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Friday, 7/22 – 9 p.m.  
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Saturday, 7/23 - 8:30 p.m.  
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Sunday, 7/24 – 8 p.m.  
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FRI. 7/22 & SAT 7/23  
no show

SUN 7/24 9pm FREE  
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Mon 7/25 8pm FREE  
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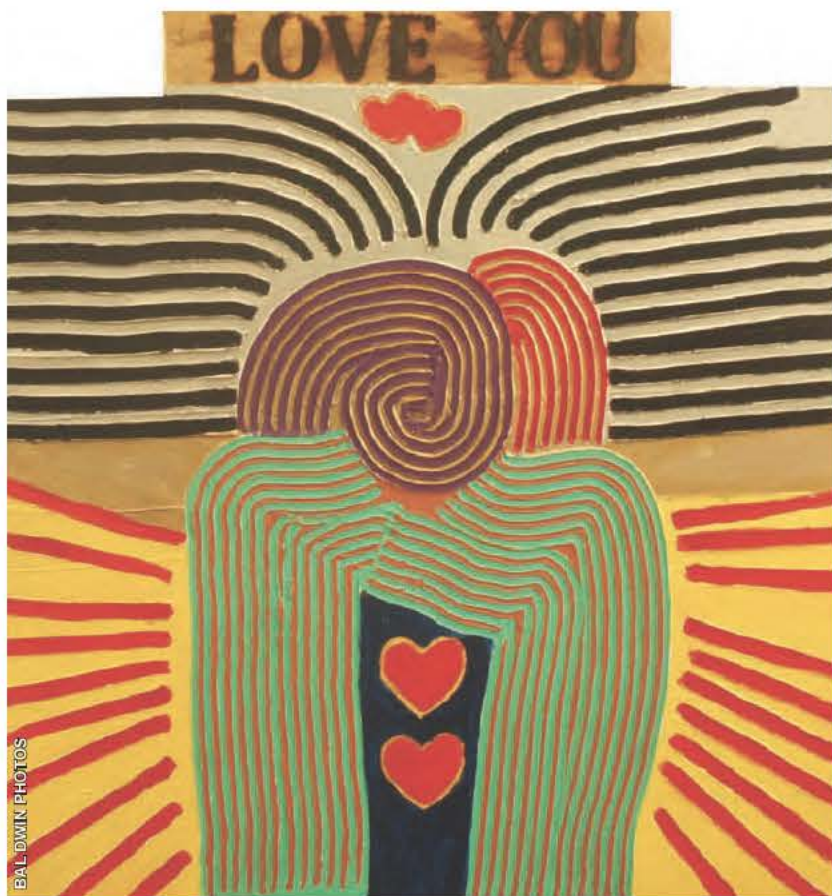
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# Charlie Shaw's Paintings Bridge Time and Culture



Love You, by Charlie Shaw

By RICHARD BALDWIN

**WENDELL** – The Wendell Free Library is fortunate to host a second exhibition of paintings by Charles Shaw of Northfield. In this show, titled “Take Me To Your Leader,” ten medium-sized acrylic paintings brighten up the Herrick Room with direct, colorful images that are related to the bold work of

indigenous artists from the Northwest, Canada, Africa and the South Sea Islands. Shaw’s intention is to link basic themes across older cultures and show how these are pertinent to the present.

Shaw collects, cuts up and prepares cast off inexpensive panel doors, which he primes with a skim coat of ready-mix joint compound. He then draws in this surface with

trowels or any other handy narrow tool, leaving linear ridges on the surface. These become an integral part of the paintings, forming the edges of the linear areas he then fills with color.

This process results in works that feel spontaneous. Once the furrows harden, he generally stays with the resulting composition, delineating areas by filling them in with intense colors of latex paint right out of the can. In two works here, *Star Man* and *Love You*, he adds text at the tops using wood branding to make the letters. This craft form, which he has been using for several years, often plays an important role in his work.

Shaw’s combination of developing compositions in wet joint compound with wood branded text brings a strong sense of physicality to the work. Combined with his use of non-traditional painting materials it creates a perfect vehicle for linking the pieces to indigenous art.

While the work here can be taken in at a distance and at a glance, viewers might do well to look at the paintings close up. The physicality of the work is then quite prominent. This direct handling of materials has much in common with ancient stone carvings, indigenous painted wood carving, graphic images painted on cave walls and native fabrics from many cultures.

All the paintings are emphatically flat and sign-like in their directness. Even in the two works that incorpo-

rate a horizon line, *Space Dog* and *Bethlehem*, there is no attempt to create a sense of three-dimensional space. In Bethlehem, though there is a horizon line, the town is presented as a group of colored-in geometric shapes and the whole is dominated by a large spiral form suggesting light or energy of some kind.

All the pieces in this show are filled with colored patterns. This treatment results in images that are iconographic. In each work, a central element, usually figurative, dominates the composition with diagonal lines spreading outward.

While being interviewed, the artist talked about how the title of the exhibition referred to the long standing theory that extraterrestrials visited earth eons ago and left behind evidence of this in both found artifacts and in early indigenous graphic work. In many of the paintings the large spiral with lines moving outward could be viewed as energy from outer space, and could be understood within this theory. This is one of the themes that run through all these works and link them to ancient image making across numerous cultures.

Charles Shaw has had as varied and colorful a background as his work. He studied art at the University of Massachusetts, has been a house builder, a repo man, a professional surfer renting and selling surfboards in California, worked at a local Honda dealership, developed



and marketed a line of “Old School” t-shirts, and even once lived in Wendell, where his children attended Swift River School.

He now works for Franklin County’s Meals on Wheels program, helping seniors get regular nutrition. He and his wife live in a renovated old school building in Northfield. He can be reached at (858) 663-9049 or [gimyt43@hotmail.com](mailto:gimyt43@hotmail.com).

The exhibition runs from July 1 through August 31. Summer Library hours are Tuesday 12 to 7 p.m., Wednesday 10 to 7 p.m., Thursday 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 to 3:30 p.m.

There will be an artist reception on Saturday, August 20, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., followed by a demonstration of his wood branding. All are invited.

*Richard Baldwin is on the Wendell Free Library’s art exhibition committee.*

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