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# The Montague Reporter

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

YEAR 12 – NO. 27

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 24, 2014

## Montague's May 3 Town Meeting To Vote On \$23,379,013 Budget

By CHRISTOPHER  
SAWYER-LAUCANNO

Elected town meeting members in Montague will be voting Saturday on a four-article special town meeting warrant and on another 32-article annual town meeting warrant, both on May 3.

The special meeting begins at 8:30 a.m.; the annual meeting a half hour later.

The special town meeting, usually devoted to housekeeping items, this year asks for some substantial appropriations, including \$81,779 for upgrading the drainage and stabilization of a slope off of Millers Falls Road.

Other appropriations are \$12,000 for the veterans' benefits budget, \$8,334 to repair navigation hazard lights just outside the perimeter of the airport, and \$10,000 to augment the Henry Waidlich Conservation Fund.

The annual town meeting will provide even more excitement.

Besides fixing the salaries of elected and appointed officials, voters at the annual meeting will decide whether to spend \$8,136,058 to fund town departments – a \$170,751 increase over last year.

But this isn't quite the total for town departments. Two other articles ask for additional money to fund the implementation of collective bargaining agreements.



FILE PHOTO

Former selectboard member Al Ross addresses last year's annual town meeting.

The first, with the Town of Montague Employee Association, seeks an additional \$62,724 for FY'15, with increases to be paid retroactively to July 1, 2014.

The second article would appropriate \$44,469 to implement an agreement with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 274 for FY'15. Those increases would also be paid retroactively to July 1.

The Gill-Montague Regional School District will also cost more money this year. \$8,293,458 is being requested, a \$327,901 increase from last year. Another article asks for \$38,000 to upgrade security at Montague schools.

Montague's share of the Franklin County Tech School's operating budget, however, is actually decreasing—at least for a few minutes.

The appropriation of \$682,601, represents a \$49,058 reduction from last year, because fewer Montague students will be attending the Tech

see TM PREVIEW page A3

## Good Enough to Eat: An Interview with Llani Davidson of Broadfork Permaculture

By LEE WICKS

**MONTAGUE** – With help from Broadfork Permaculture, you can have a beautiful yard and eat it, too.

The three-person collective located in Montague offers a range of organic, sustainable services in which practical knowledge and aesthetic sensibility join to create vegetable, herb and flower gardens, stone walls, earth ovens, raised beds, intriguing pathways, water features and more. Their website, [www.broadfork.coop](http://www.broadfork.coop), offers a gallery of local projects.

The goal of Broadfork is to help people develop a relationship with their food and how it grows. I met up with Evelyn Lane and Ashley Schenk, two of the worker-owners, at the Deerfield Inn where

they were replanting raised beds of organic herbs used in the Inn's kitchen.

In a growing medium that is forty percent topsoil and sixty percent compost from local sources, the young plants will thrive right outside the dining room windows, a very literal interpretation of the farm to table movement!

Another part of Broadfork's mission is to regenerate soil and create interconnected systems that foster plant, insect and animal health.

The collective uses all organic methods, and likes to introduce some kinds of edibles into the landscape, hopefully something new that people haven't even heard of, such as fruits that are not sold commercially because they don't pack and ship well.

see GROWERS page A5



WICKS PHOTO

Lane and Schenk plant herbs at the Deerfield Inn.

## LEVERETT SELECTBOARD Regional School Budget A Wild Card For Town Meeting

By DAVID DETMOLD

Voters at annual town meeting in Leverett on Saturday, May 3 will have to wait to hear how Shutesbury votes that same day before taking up the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District (APRSD) budget.

That is because some Shutesbury voters have signaled a willingness to drop the alternative assessment formula the four towns of the APRSD have used for many years, in favor of the state's statutory method of determining assessments.

Doing so would save Shutesbury money in the coming fiscal year, would save the town of Pelham a lesser sum, but would cost Amherst and the town of Leverett significantly more in the coming fiscal year.

The four towns have worked together to reduce budgetary unpredictability for many years, adopting by mutual consent an alternative to the state's formula for paying for regional schools.

The alternative that has governed since FY'06 allows the towns in the APRSD to calculate their regional school costs based on a five-year rolling average of school enrollment, whereby each of the four towns pays exactly the same, per pupil, to educate their students in the upper schools.

The statutory method of regional school assessment calculates per-

see LEVERETT page A6

## Moving At Full Speed, Skate Park Campaign To Seek Town's Commitment

By CHRISTOPHER  
SAWYER-LAUCANNO  
and MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – The Montague selectboard, in tandem with the parks and recreation director, the town planner, and the Unity Skate Park committee, will come to the May 3 town meeting seeking a financial commitment to a new skate park.

This united front is asking town meeting members to allow the town to borrow up to \$400,000 for building a long-planned skate park at Unity Park. The actual amount needed will likely be considerably less.

According to town planner Walter Ramsey, he will be applying in July for a Massachusetts Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant to greatly offset the cost. He says he is confident it will be awarded.

PARC funds would pay for 68 percent of the park's cost. The remaining 32 percent must be covered by the town and skate park committee.

Unity Skate Park committee member David Detmold says the group has already raised nearly \$28,000, and he expects by town meeting that the amount will increase to \$30,000.

"Fundraising will also con-

tinue through the summer and fall," he said. "The town's share, in the end, will be fairly small."

The actual amount required to build the new permanent concrete skate park is still uncertain. An early estimate put the amount over \$400,000, but Detmold notes that three similar parks built in Western Mass. over the last few years – in Pittsfield, Holyoke and Northampton – had price tags between \$250,000 and \$350,000.

"We never believed that initial figure," he said, "and we've taken a number of steps to reduce it in any case."

Even if the new skate

park should cost \$400,000, \$272,000 of that amount would be paid by the PARC grant. The skate park committee has set itself a goal of at least \$50,000.

This would mean that the new facility would cost taxpayers only \$78,000 – about the same price, says Detmold, as sewer line inspection and cleaning along Canal Street.

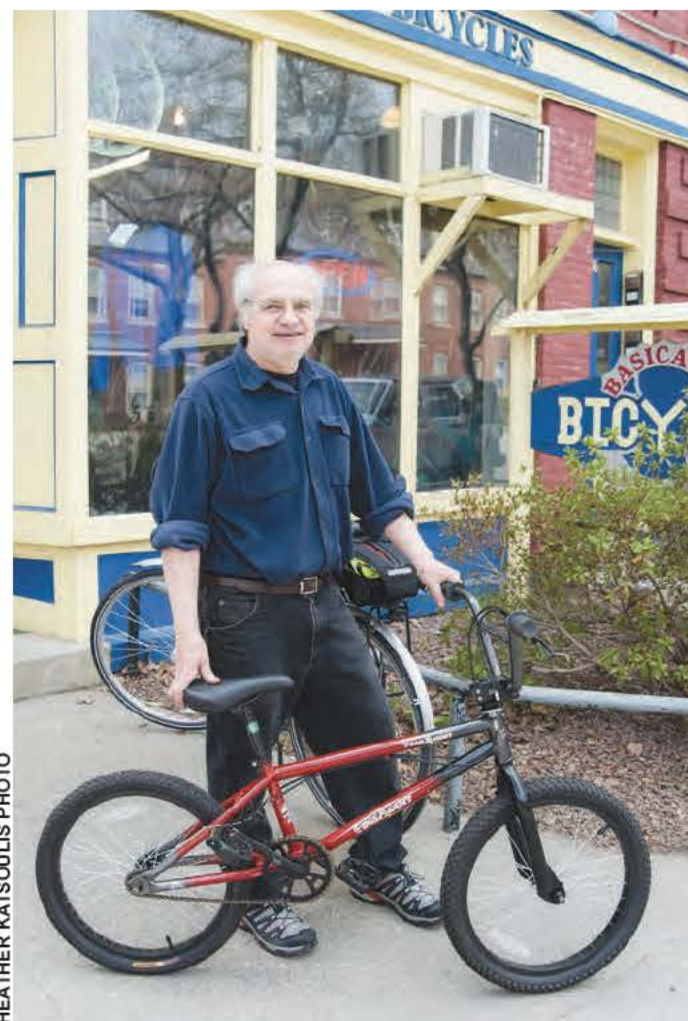
They hope to further reduce this price tag by securing in-kind donations for gravel and other materials.

The skate park committee has been extremely active this spring. In two months they have met a \$5,000 challenge grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation, and a second \$5,000 match from local businesses.

\$1,700 came in to the group from the 5K race on April 12, in the name of the late Greg Ellis, once an active member of the committee. A bottle and can drive at the Spring Parade that day raised over \$200, an April 19 concert at St. Kaz's netted an additional \$420, and thousands more have been raised by a raffle and private donations.

They plan to continue to fundraise from May to October to further offset the town's contribution.

This Saturday, April 26, the committee and Turners Falls RiverCulture are holding a silent auction and music night at River Station, located



HEATHER KATSOULOS PHOTO

Dave Carr of Basically Bicycles holds the kids' stunt bike he donated as the top prize for the Unity Skatepark raffle.

in the former Chick's garage on Third Street. The event begins at 6 p.m. and will run until 10.

The auction is of more than three dozen skateboard decks that have been transformed into works of art by local artists. Sandy Bailey and Cold Stone Fox, along with Heavy on the Harsh, will play music,

and beer, wine, pizza and other goodies will be available for purchase.

The committee will be selling tickets outside Food City on April 27 for a second raffle, with its grand prize a stunt bike donated by Basically Bicycles. The drawing will be held on May 2, the eve of town meeting.



JACKSON PHOTO

Skate park committee member Diana Pedrosa shows off eight of the over 40 repurposed skateboard decks the group plans to auction off during Saturday's fundraiser at River Station.

# The Montague Reporter

*"The Voice of the Villages"*

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## To Reform Campaign Finance, Amend the Constitution

The U.S. Constitution is unusually difficult, but by no means impossible, to amend. Article V states that there are only two ways to amend this document. The first is by a two-thirds vote in both the House and Senate followed by ratification of three-fourths of the state legislatures (38 states). The second is to convene a constitutional convention.

Over more than two centuries, the constitution has been amended only 17 times since the first 10 – which make up the Bill of Rights – were ratified in 1791. But it is time for a new one: A constitutional amendment regulating campaign finance.

Indeed, in light of two recent Supreme Court decisions, *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon v FEC*, an amendment may be the only way to restore free and fair elections.

The McCutcheon decision, that essentially paved the way for unlimited political donations, is the culmination of eight years of misguided rulings that have managed to eviscerate campaign finance reforms enacted after Watergate.

McCutcheon virtually eliminated all limits on donations to candidates, and struck down the ban on corporate “giving.”

Instead of the people deciding freely which candidates to elect, these decisions open the electoral process to manipulation by special interests armed with boatloads of cash.

At a basic level, what this means is that those already in Congress will have powerful inducements to vote for legislation that will help enlarge their campaign coffers. Conversely, a candidate short on cash, or at least rich powerful friends, might as well give up a race for political office.

Since incumbents, in general, have more money to spend than their challengers, a race is skewed from the outset. Third party candidates might as well not even bother to enter the fray.

It would be nice to believe that Americans would be able to see through the barrage of advertising that is sure to be unleashed this summer and autumn on the populace in even greater quantity than before.

But the power of advertising is great, and money has made a huge difference to a candidate’s prospects in recent election cycles.

More money was spent by Political Action Committees in the

2012 presidential race than ever before, and incumbents, who in general outspent their challengers, were overwhelmingly returned to office.

We can’t help think that the real target of the Supreme Court is democracy itself, particularly the right to vote freely.

We do not feel it is coincidental that the same five justices who voted for *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon v FEC* are the same who last summer also struck down the Voting Rights Act.

Since 1965 this act has protected minority voters from disenfranchisement. For the Court to decide that the act was unconstitutional smacks of political, rather than constitutional reasoning.

Indeed, the majority completely dismissed the systematic effort Republicans have been using to restrict access to the ballot by poor and minority voters, in other words, Democrats.

In McCutcheon, they embraced the already far too abundant negative effects that lobbyists and their money have on Congress.

In 2011, Tom Udall, a Democratic senator from New Mexico, introduced on the floor of the Senate, a proposal for an amendment to the constitution.

In introducing the legislation, Udall said: “James Madison argued that the U.S. Constitution should be amended only on ‘great and extraordinary occasions’.

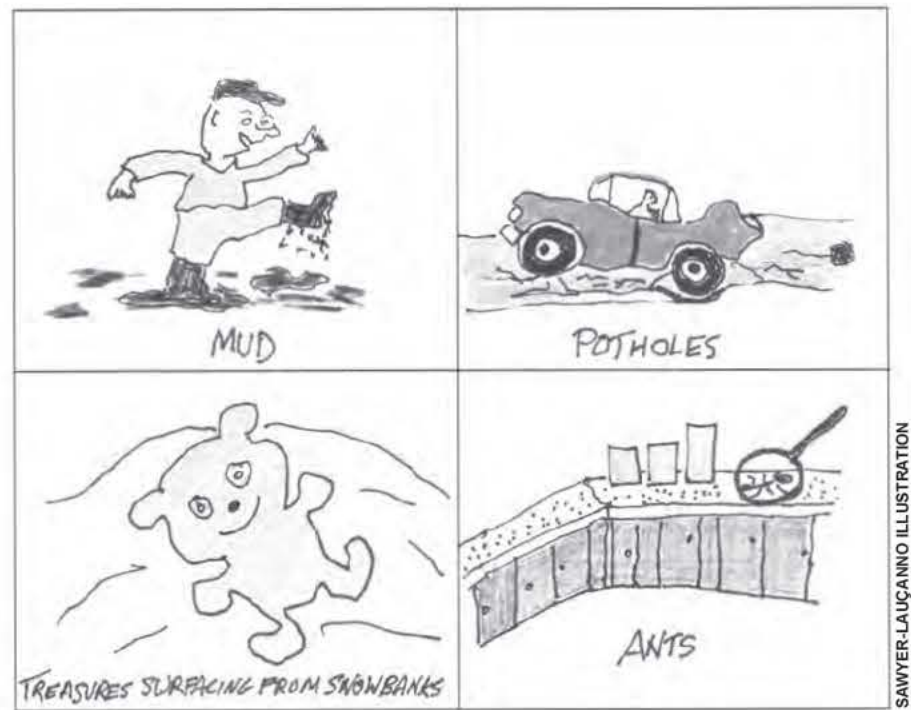
“I believe we have reached one of those occasions. Our elections no longer focus on the best ideas, but the biggest bank accounts, and Americans’ right to free speech should not be determined by their net worth.”

Udall’s proposed amendment had, until McCutcheon, languished. But now there is renewed momentum. It is time. It is right.

Both the Senate and the House need to hear from the American people, not just their lobbyists, that the moment has arrived to begin the long process of amending the constitution.

In 1823, Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to A. Coray, wrote: “Whatever be the Constitution, great care must be taken to provide a mode of amendment when experience or change of circumstance shall have manifested that any part of it is unadapted to the good of the nation.”

We couldn’t agree more.



Signs of Spring in Western Massachusetts

## Letter to the Editors

### EGGstravagant Gratitude

Hundreds of children and adults from throughout Franklin County (and beyond) attended Montague Parks & Recreation’s Annual Peter Cottontail’s EGGstravaganza, that was held on Saturday, April 19 at Sheffield Elementary School in Turners Falls.

Children aged four to twelve were given the enviable task of finding well over 5,000 toy and candy-filled eggs placed around the back

field of the school.

Many participants were also lucky enough to get their picture taken with Peter Cottontail on what was an absolutely beautiful spring day.

The EGGstravaganza would not have been possible without the generous support from Hillside Plastics, The Montague Elks, Greenfield Savings Bank, Sirum’s Equipment Company, Gill-Montague Regional

School District, Lisa Greene of Montague, and our many volunteers.

We would also like to make a special thanks to Peter Cottontail for setting aside time from his busy schedule to be present during the festivities.

See you all next year!

Sincerely,  
**Jon Dobosz, Director**  
**Montague Parks & Recreation**

## GUEST EDITORIAL

By BETH ADAMS

Drones are arriving in our midst at lightning speeds. Many drone sightings have been reported in the skies of Western Massachusetts. Believe it or not, there is such a huge drone market under construction within the US that a *Drone Pilot University* has been established.

Start-up, post-training earnings with no previous experience are over \$100,000 per year. In spite of the sweet salary deals, recruitment of drone pilots is unpopular. The word is out. Drones kill innocents, and it’s the pilot’s fault. “*Moral injury*” (Jonathan Shay) sets in, and PTSD...

What the pilots and the public alike aren’t told by drone pilot recruiters and marketing agents is that “the fox is guarding the henhouse”. The FAA Rule-Making Committee is dominated by drone industry representatives who are deciding on privileged access to airways, including above your house and around your property.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) sets federal aviation standards without citizen input, and they are planning on ignoring the Air Commerce Act of 1926 and the Supreme Court Decision of 1946, which jointly have established rights to homeowner privacy in the airspace surrounding and up to 500 feet above someone’s property.

If they get their way, the joint drone corporation/tech giants/FAA plan is to supersede legal precedent, and use airspace “as they please” all the way to the ground. In addition

## Stop the Drone Profit Mill!

while the hype they use in marketing their Unmanned Aerial Vehicles is in the guise of “increased security,” police departments would be equipped with drones subsidized by our tax dollars.

This, barring transparency, regulation and monitoring, would eliminate Constitutional authority and what we have come to experience, prior to decades of erosion, as the “rule of law.” We must continue to expect adherence to the highest standards of the Law and moral authority as well. Killing of innocents is never acceptable no matter what the root causes are.

How might this play out? One example sends a chilling prediction of how the silencing of dissent could occur in our future. Let us imagine the scenario in which citizens decide to organize a vigil to protest the construction of a natural gas pipeline going through several neighbors and your own property, even a whole region.

With drones in our skies and rules made by the wealthy manufacturers that thrive on chaos and conflict, it could be fairly easy to repress people’s dissenting views by spying on protesters, spraying them with harmful tear gas and other chemical agents, shoot Tasers, or even use weapons to kill individuals they claim as “eco-terrorists”.

Why can I dare to imagine this seemingly far-fetched scenario? Despite protest and U.S. Representative Barbara Lee’s bill to reign in assassination using drones, they continue to be used in violation of the US Constitution and international law to wage extrajudicial warfare, so-called “signature strikes” (often followed by oppressive 24/7 surveillance) in sovereign nations where no war has been declared and no one found guilty of being a terrorist or threatening anyone.

These are innocent men, women and children of different ages. They could easily be my own daughters, their husbands, my grandchildren being killed in Afghanistan, Palestine, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and now in other countries in Africa.

They have suffered because they live in areas where strategic economic advantage is being sought by US and multinational corporations propped up (as they have always been) by the military establishment, now come drone bombs and missile launchers.

The USAF, the CIA, NATO among other allied operators, claiming deceitful “rogue state legal authority” by naming innocents “militants” have jointly murdered thousands of people who have never posed a threat toward the country or agency launching the missiles or dropping bombs from drones.

Whether individuals with leadership potential or a group of community leaders meeting to find solutions to the illness of their loved ones caused by a nearby mining operation, or dangerous “drinking water” caused by natural gas fracking, the missiles and bombs are launched by drones on specific, “signature” targets, which could potentially interfere with “business as usual”.

These drone attacks have become

see GUEST ED next page

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Compiled by DON CLEGG

The Franklin County Chamber of Commerce and the Greenfield Business Association will hold the “little e,” a combination home show and green fair, which brings together exhibitors for home improvement and green living.

The wildly popular Local Brewers Sampling Tent returns. Enjoy a taste of each of the beer, hard cider and mead that is made locally in Franklin County. There will be a fee charged and I.D.’s will be required at the entrance to this tent only.

The event will be held at the Franklin County Fairgrounds located at 89 Wisdom Way in Greenfield from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more info call (413) 773-5463, or visit [www.thelittlee.org](http://www.thelittlee.org).

**The Pioneer Valley Citizens Concerned About Drones** are holding two educational events on April 29, both in Amherst. The first from 3 to 5 p.m. is a public question and answer session at 246 College Street, featuring Nick Mottern, Jeff Napolitano, Paki Wieland and Paul Voss.

The second session is a public forum later that evening at Amherst-

Pelham Regional Middle School at 170 Chestnut Street, Amherst from 7 to 9 p.m. featuring keynote speaker Nick Mottern along with Paul Voss and Dr. Frank Gatti.

The brother/sister duo, **Ken and Corki**, return with their musical talents and harmonious voices to the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls on Saturday morning, April 26, from 10 a.m. to noon.

**Tuesday, April 29 is the last day to register to vote** for the upcoming May 19th Annual Town Election. Registration will be held at the Town Clerk’s Office for all Montague residents who will be 18 years old on or before Monday, May 19.

Office hours will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Town Clerk’s office is located at the Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls. For more information call 863-3200, ext 203 or email at [townclerk@montague-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@montague-ma.gov).

On Thursday evening, May 1, starting at 6 p.m. come by the lawn at the Discovery Center in downtown Turners Falls for a free **dance performance**. This double feature will showcase two Turners Falls dance groups.

Aorta, a new contemporary movement group, will show their first work, “Mess,” a dance to welcome in the spring currently being shown at the Muck Boot Banquet in Easthampton. Awesome Art in Motion, a children’s dance company run through the dance school Great Falls Creative Movement, will show their newest work, titled “All in a Day.”

This free show will be picnic style, so bring warm clothing, a blanket to sit on (or a chair if you’d like), and join us for a strange, messy, beautiful, and welcoming ode to spring.

As part of their “**Conversations for Racial Justice**” series, Mass Slavery Apology is hosting a Workshop on White Privilege on Saturday, May 3, hosted by Dottie Morris, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Greenfield. Doors open at 10 a.m.

The workshop is free, and childcare is available for those who RSVP to [email@massslaveryapology.org](mailto:email@massslaveryapology.org). Bring a brown bag lunch.

**Wing Masters: Birds of Prey**, also known as raptors, will be presented at the Great Falls Discovery for 2 shows at 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 3.

Raptors include eagles, hawks, falcons and owls, and the presentation, which incorporates five live birds, gives an overview of these different categories. The program is designed to explain predation, the birds’ place at the top of the food web, their different hunting adaptations and their status in a rapidly changing world.

Because many birds of prey are

declining in number, this presentation also features one or more of the endangered raptors that are cared for by Wing Masters, and explains why these species face an uncertain future.

These presentations are free, enjoyed by all ages and sponsored by the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center and a grant from the Montague Cultural Council.

**A Spring Diaper Drive** to benefit young children and families living in Franklin County is being sponsored by the Perinatal Support Coalition and the Early Childhood Mental Health Roundtable; two groups of professionals from a range of organizations that serve young children and families.

You can help close the diaper gap and help low income mothers and families meet their diaper need. Diapers matter in a big way! The health and social consequences for babies and families who do not have sufficient diapers can lead to a whole mountain of problems. For more information contact Amy Olson at (413) 548-9869.

Individual cash donations of any amount are greatly appreciated. Make checks payable to: “Community Action – Diaper Drive.” Mail to: Clinical & Support Options, Attn: Amy Olson, 1 Arch St. #1, Greenfield, MA 01301. Contact Amy Olson if you would like to donate diapers.

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

**GUEST ED** from previous page unacceptable to a growing number of Americans and global citizens because, in addition to the Supreme Court bowing to “corporate citizenship” and “bankers bailout”, people have learned that profits come before people and “it’s all about the money” when it comes to drones.

What does it mean that Google is now into drones by purchasing Titan? And how might we construe the secretive manner in which decisions by the FAA are being made behind closed doors?

From history we already know that, whatever they are deciding without citizen input *already* isn’t morally right, is downright dishonest and will undoubtedly increase security risks for people and planet, not help prevent them.

Scenarios of more fear and distrust will guarantee even larger profits for purveyors of weapons and the systems that keep them in place.

Democracy and freedom of expression will dwindle due to drones in our midst. We can count on the rules that the FAA is making unfairly protecting the assets of drone manufacturers, the US military, the CIA, private contractors and drone pilots.

We can count on “business as usual,” on only the wealthy being capable of protecting themselves from the dangers of drones in our midst. Who will monitor the airspace 24/7 to protect us? Drones? Whose drones?

We the people must do what we can to protect ourselves by passing comprehensive local drone resolutions, ordinances and Warrant Articles and by continuing to work toward people-informed, people-powered drone regulations that protect Human Rights, follow legal precedent and the rule of law.

*Leverett resident Beth Adams is the co-convenor of Pioneer Valley Citizens Concerned about Drones, and the author of the “Drone Resolution” that will be voted on at Leverett Town Meeting on May 3.*

**TM PREVIEW** from page A1

School. But the difference may not be going back into taxpayers’ pockets. The finance committee is urging members to place the same amount saved over last year into the Franklin County Technical School Stabilization Fund.

Town meeting members are also being asked to approve a number of other big ticket items including \$2,122,370 for operating the Water Pollution Control Facility and their pumping stations.

But aging and broken sewer lines and equipment will continue to be major items in the budget. One article asks for approval to borrow \$3,000,000 for financing the engineering, design, construction, and any other costs for the replacement of two sewer pump stations located at First Street in Turners Falls and Poplar Street in Montague City.

\$75,000 is also being asked for inspecting and sewer line cleaning of Canal Street lines and \$175,000 for lining sewer lines on Industrial Boulevard, Millers Falls Road, Crescent Street, and other unspecified roads.

With momentum rapidly building for a new skate park, the town is asking town meeting to allow them to borrow up to \$400,000 to commit to the park’s construction.

That sum is not the expected cost to the town: the bid is hoped to come in lower, 68% is expected to be reimbursed by the state, and the skate park committee has been raising funds privately to help toward the remaining 32%. [See related story, pg. A1.]

Capital purchases awaiting approval include \$15,000 for police equipment including tasers, bullet-proof vests, firearms and other items;

\$8,200 to fund computer equipment for town departments and \$9,500 for software for the assessor’s office.

The DPW is requesting \$43,325 for lease payments on a dump truck and \$75,000 for repairing and purchasing new vehicles.

Another article seeks \$15,000 to heat and maintain the former Montague Center School building, an increase of \$5,000 over last year.

The price tag for operating and maintaining the Colle Building is \$86,738 but this amount will be recouped from the tenant.

Operating the airport will cost slightly more this year than last. The Airport Commission is requesting \$45,512 from town meeting, an increase of \$3,512 over last year.

While this year’s budget is the highest ever, according to town accountant Carolyn Olson, revenue still exceeds expenses. Of the total budget of \$23,379,013, \$14,440,521 comes from taxation, and \$1,505,800 from state aid.

To help fill the gap are \$2,018,586 from sewer users, \$1,300,000 from local receipts, \$113,000 from stabilization and \$250,000 from free cash, as well as other smaller amounts of miscellaneous revenues.

Both the \$3,000,000 required for the new pump stations and funding for the skate park will be borrowed.


Among the few non-money articles is one that would authorize the moderator to create a special three-member committee to be known as a regional school district planning committee.

The committee would have one member from the Gill-Montague Regional School District School Committee and the other two from the community at large.

Town meeting is also asked to give permission to the selectboard to authorize on-premises liquor license holders to sell alcoholic beverages between the hours of 10 a.m. and noon on Sundays, the last Monday in May, and on December 25 and 26.

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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

## Gearing Up For May 5

By MIKE JACKSON

Gill's town government is deep in budget season, and at its Tuesday night meeting, the selectboard decided to hold off on approving the warrant for May 5 town meeting while a few final details are pinned down.

One of the most important details is hidden in three core samples taken this week from the Public Safety Complex roof. The roof, which has been leaking, needs to be replaced, but the cost of that undertaking depends greatly on whether those samples turn out, on examination under a microscope, to contain asbestos.

"We should have results in a couple days," said town administrative assistant Ray Purington. Purington presented the board with some cost scenarios drawn up from estimates he has solicited from roofing firms, architects and the bank.

Whether the roof is replaced by a tapered membrane or flat one, the total cost of the project would likely fall in the \$100,000 ballpark – assuming it does not contain asbestos.

About a fifth of that would hit this year's budget, and whether it would fall within the levy limit or necessitate a debt exclusion vote – 2/3 approval at town meeting and a majority of votes during the May 19 election – is not yet clear.

"Let's fix what we need to fix," said board member Ann Banash, in response to the suggestion that the roof might not need to be stripped down to the deck. "Let's see what happens with the asbestos. That would change lots of things."

WRRRP!

MassDOT is offering Gill \$22,639

for road repair under its Winter Rapid Recovery Road Program, the state's emergency response to an "extraordinary winter season."

Highway superintendent Mickey LaClaire would work up a project list by the end of May, for the town to submit in June. The money would be reimbursed by the state provided jobs are done by the end of September, on a "use it or lose it" basis.

The selectboard unanimously agreed to accept the state's offer.

## Hackers Strike

"Somebody somewhere, probably one-quarter to one-half my age," said Purington, "hacked in and infected a couple of the html files" on town's website two weekends ago, knocking it down for several days.

The town spent \$90 to enroll with a service that repaired the files, and would help fend off any other attacks over the course of the next year.

"The code that runs our calendar is old," added Purington, "and the code that runs the rest of the website is becoming outdated." He suggested that the town start looking at FY'16 for a website redevelopment, which could cost in the \$5,000 range.

## Electrical Aggregation

An effort led by the Hampshire Council of Governments (HCOG) to secure a bulk discount rate for electricity to 36 communities – including Gill, Montague, Wendell and Leverett – seems to be moving forward.

All twenty speakers at a recent public hearing on the proposal spoke in its favor, the HCOG has answered all the questions the Department of Public Utilities asked about the plan, and a letter of support dated April 16 was signed by a number of state office-holders including representatives Denise Andrews, Steve Kulik, and Peter Kocot, as well as senators Stan Rosenberg and Ben Downing.

If all goes well, Purington said, HCOG is "still hoping for an end-of-summer implementation" of the plan.

## Biweekly Grass

The board unanimously approved Snow & Sons to mow the town lawns every two weeks for the duration of the lawn season. The company submitted the lowest of several bids, at \$178 per mow.

Brian Piela was hired to hay the Mariamante parcel, at \$200.

## Part-Time Fuzz

After hearing that the town's personnel committee voted 5-0 in favor of a request to pay part-time police officers time-and-a-half on holidays, the board discussed the idea. Many area towns have such a policy in place, with the exceptions of Greenfield and Northfield.

"I was surprised to hear that we didn't," said board member Randy Crochier, adding that the issue may not have come up earlier because "most part-timers work in multiple towns. If they can work for time and a half there, why would

they put in for straight time here?"

"I want to see the wording," said board chair John Ward. The board gave Purington the OK to meet with town counsel and word a policy for approval.

## Custodian Throws In Towel

Town hall custodian Paul Fahey, who has been working 2 or 3 hours a week, or sometimes 3 to 5, according to Purington, has submitted his resignation in favor of other higher-paying jobs.

The town will advertise for the job, which can be done whenever town hall business is not in session, and starts at \$11.05 an hour.

## Materials Recovery

A \$500 grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection's "Sustainable Materials Recovery Program" was used to buy recycling bins and cute little compost pails. Any household in town can have a pail for free, first come first serve.

The thirty or so people who came to the Energy Commission's composting workshop went home with them, and about another 30 are left at Town Hall. Banash and Crochier each claimed one, leaving about 28.

"It gets a lot of materials out of the waste stream," commented Ward.

## Tick Ticks

As a member of the Cooperative Public Health Service, Gill is eligible for a program to test up to 100 of its ticks for pathogens, for free. Residents are encouraged to bag up any ticks they find – dead or alive, whole or smooshed – and send them to the UMass Laboratory of Medical Zoology.

Whether these ticks are found on a human, a different animal, or are just found lurking, they are worth testing, said Crochier. The program, funded by a Community Innovation Challenge grant, hopes to map out bacterial (or, in the case of babesiosis, protozoal) diseases carried by ticks.

"If we don't send 100, we've missed an opportunity," he said. "Tick-borne diseases are really misunderstood and misdiagnosed."

The program does not cover testing of humans. Full instructions are available at [www.TickReport.com](http://www.TickReport.com).

## Town Meeting Warrant

The board fiddled around endlessly with the order of articles in a draft version of the May 5 town meeting warrant.

In addition to the safety complex roof, two other major wild card items are on the agenda.

One is the question of upgrading heating systems in three town buildings: the Riverside Municipal Building, currently home to the Four Winds School; the Slate Library; and Town Hall itself.

An energy commission report on installing underground heat pumps in the three buildings had not come in by Wednesday's meeting, and the selectboard was unsure whether enough information had been established for town meeting to have an educated conversation on the matter.

"I don't want to prove Randy right and have the same boilers in these buildings next winter," said Ward.

"I'd almost rather have a special town meeting than go [to the May 5 one] without enough information," said Purington. "There are too many questions."

"I think there'll need to be education that goes along with it," said Banash.

Crochier said he himself "could go either way" on the proposal, and was waiting for more information.

As of Tuesday's meeting, the board was leaning toward sending the article to the May 5 meeting to, in Purington's words, "create an opening to talk about" the idea, though it would likely be tabled.

Since the fall town meeting would be too late to decide on replacing boilers before next winter, the proposal may go to a special town meeting in June.

An article that would establish a fund, recommended by some in town policy circles in response to changing state legislation, to cover liability associated with "Other Post-Employment Benefits" (OPEB) was discussed.

The town's finance committee has not yet made its recommendation about that proposal, and neither has the selectboard. Crochier said that it seemed one current suggestion about how much money Gill might allocate to such a fund had more to do with the "wobble room" remaining under the town's annual levy limit than any clear idea of its liability.

"If it were just me," said Banash, "I wouldn't fund it at all."

Crochier said that everyone might be better informed during the FY'16 budget cycle, suggesting it may as well be put off until then.

"Let's see what happens with the roof," said Banash.

John Ward asked Crochier and Banash if they were comfortable with everything on the warrant, given that, in his view, many residents see articles that go to town meeting as being implicitly endorsed by the selectboard.

"I don't happen to agree with you," said Banash. "Any citizen can put an article on the warrant. It does not imply endorsement by the selectboard."

The board and Purington slowly mulled over how to most parsimoniously print and staple the town's annual report for the meeting.

## Other Business

After Tuesday's meeting, the board faces three joint sessions with the Finance Committee, and will meet a final time at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, May 5 before the town meeting, which will begin at 5:30.

The Gill Energy Commission is hosting a free workshop, led by Peter Talmage, on electrifying bicycles on Saturday morning, May 10 at Town Hall. It will begin at 9 a.m.

The board appointed Doreen Stevens Election Warden for the May 19 election. Fred Chase II and Gregory Snedeker will compete that day for the selectboard seat currently occupied by Banash. One of them will start the job May 20.

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT

The Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization will open a 45-day public review and comment period for the draft Public Participation Plan. The comment period will begin on Monday April 21, 2014 and will end on Wednesday June 4, 2014.

Copies of the draft documents are available for review at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments located at 12 Olive Street, Suite 2, Greenfield, MA, by calling (413) 774-3167 x 126 to request a copy, or by logging on to [www.frcog.org](http://www.frcog.org).

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Which Side Are You On?

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Seventh Street parking paradox continued at the Montague selectboard meeting on Tuesday, April 21, as the board heard strong and occasionally passionate arguments about which side should suffer a proposed parking ban. The solution was a compromise proposed by DPW chief Tom Bergeron who had remained silent in the back of the room throughout most of the discussion.

Parking has been banned on the northeast side of Seventh Street for the past year in response to serious congestion in the winter months. The issue was revisited at the beginning of April when residents on the northwest side, as well as library director Linda Hickman, proposed moving parking to the opposite side.

It was recognized that Rev. Stanley Aksamit of Our Lady of Peace Church, located on the southwest side, might object to the elimination of parking in front of his church.

Father Stan, appearing before the board last Tuesday, was armed with many arguments for parking on the southwest side, and even a picture of the church in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

He pointed out that special events, particularly weddings, are “not an exact science,” but generally require access from the front of the church. In response to a previous proposal to encourage elderly parishioners to park in the parking lot behind the church, he pointed out that long-time residents often refuse to park in the back by tradition: “they insist on parking in the front.”

The old picture Father Stan presented to the board showed large numbers of parishioners in front of the church along with a number of horse-drawn carriages. “People need to form a community before they go into a church,” he suggested.

Charley Choleva, whose home is on the northwest side of the street, found himself in the unenviable position of countering these points.

Once again he stressed the problems some residents have had accessing their homes in the winter, particularly with young children or elderly residents in wheel chairs. He stated that the need for church parking only occurs a few times a week.

Linda Hickman argued for a southwest side ban, stressing the dangers of winter ice on the adjacent sidewalk. Hickman, too, had a picture: a more contemporary one, of an icy sidewalk.

The board seemed to struggle with the problem, as police chief Dodge insisted that parking should be on only one side of the street.

Then highway chief Bergeron suggested a compromise: allowing parking on the northeast side from Avenue A to T Street, then parking on the southwest side from there to L street. This would create parking in front of Choleva’s house, next to the safer sidewalk near the library but also in front of Our Lady of Peace.

The selectboard seemed to brighten up at his suggestion. Even Chief Dodge, who had initially insisted on a “one side fits all” formula, relented.

The board voted to approve the compromise but revisit the issue in October.

Raised Bed Idea Withdrawn

Next appeared Margaret Bates who had recently requested that the board approve the construction of raised beds to grow vegetables and flowers in the youth sculpture park at the corner of Third and Canal Streets.

The space, a former used car dealership, is currently the location of a youth sculpture park.

Bates, who lives in elderly housing in Keith apartments across the street, has not been enamored of the youth sculpture. She has proposed gardens for the elderly instead of, or in addition to, the art.

The selectboard had previously requested that Bates contact Montague Catholic Social Ministries, which had also expressed interest in the space. Bates had done so without receiving a response.

But she also found that none of the elderly in the Keith Apartments seemed interested in helping with the project. “I am not doing it alone,” she said, and withdrew the request for raised beds much to the chagrin of the selectboard.

Dog Complaints

Jody Rattigan came before the board to answer complaints about a dog owned by her mother that had been frightening neighbors. According to police chief Dodge, sixteen complaints have been received about the “pit bull type dog”, since December. Dog officer Calin Giurgiu noted that the dog “hates uniforms,” including, apparently, his.

Rattigan, whose mother is recovering from a stay in the hospital, stated that a serious effort had been

see MONTAGUE page A6

GROWERS from page A1

Llani Davidson is the third and founding partner, and in an email interview she answered the following questions about the business and the collective members’ backgrounds. Together, the three bring an impressive array of skills and experience to their work.

**MR:** *Could you provide some history of this endeavor?*

**LD:** I started a business called Gardens for Change in 2009. For 3 years it was a sole proprietor enterprise and I worked alone mostly doing small-scale installations.

In the fall of 2012, I was getting more calls and business than I could handle, and found it difficult to do all the paperwork, on site management, billing and marketing.

We started having conversations to imagine what it might be like to go into business together. The three of us started putting together mission and vision statements.

Evelyn, having just finished attending the Conway School of Landscape Design, was already doing some design work for clients on her own. Ashley also had a small operation building cob ovens and doing workshops.

We felt like we all brought different and varied skill sets to the table that fit together well. We also felt that working in collaboration and pooling our efforts, would make all of our personal enterprises much more successful.

We officially started being in business at the beginning of 2013.

**MR:** *Why a collective?*

**LD:** We chose this model for a number of reasons. Going into it, none of us felt like anyone should be the boss and we did not like top-down management in general.

The model of being a cooperative gives us a higher level of ownership. We all get to participate in the direction focus and vision of the business. We feel our various skill sets are seen and valued, and it feels more empowering to strategize and figure things out together when challenges with clients and with each other arise.

The three of us are setting up clearly defined systems of management so that when our business grows, it will also be easy to bring others on board.

**MR:** *How did you meet?*

**LD:** I have been a friend with Ashley for a number of years. We

had similar interests and started showing up at many of the same gatherings and potlucks. Evelyn was also introduced to this group through mutual friends.

**MR:** *How many projects have you done so far?*

**LD:** Since we became Broadfork, we have done about 30 projects. The range is quite vast from building a few garden beds, to building and installing an entire design on a large property.

**MR:** *Do you do this year-round or do you have winter jobs?*

**LD:** Our season begins with a lot of planning starting in winter. During the off-season we meet about once a week to work on marketing, organization, taxes and other details.

So far we all have other forms of part-time work. I spend my winters doing carpentry.

In the growing season, I also work 2 days a week as a part time garden manager for the Sirius Community in Shutesbury. This involves growing food for about 25 people or so and working with interns, volunteers, and community members.

I also collaborate with a fellow permaculture teacher and spend a number of days a year teaching parts of her Permaculture Design Certification Courses. This happens mostly in the summer.

Evelyn spends some time working for kids’ programs through the Hitchcock Center in Amherst.

Ashley has some side work building cob ovens.

**MR:** *If a homeowner does not have enough light to grow vegetables or fruit trees, can you design a shady ground cover yard that requires no mowing?*

**LD:** We would perform a site assessment and see what is possible at their home. We would assess whether more sun might be available from selectively cutting one or two trees. There are some edible options for shade and partial sun, though the yields drop quite a bit.

Yes, we could install a lower-maintenance system. We might use native ground covers, short clover, mosses, and some shade plants such as sweet fern, ramps, ostrich fern, or edible mushrooms.

**MR:** *Where do you buy the plants you use?*

**LD:** Some of our sources are

from Fedco, Nourse farms, Nasami, Hadley Garden Center, Greenfield Farmers Coop. and New England Wetland plants. We also get plants from the Sirius Community.

We are hoping to start our own Nursery for 2014 and are currently working on having a more permanent address on which to establish it.

**MR:** *What would you like to say to people who fear the work will be too expensive?*

**LD:** We work with the clients’ goals, and with any size budget.

Sometimes all we do is a consultation, which involves walking around their property and giving them ideas about what might be possible. That is the most basic and what we start with for all clients, even if they hire us for more work later.

With other clients, we may just make a design for the site and they take over from there and do all the work, materials sourcing and installation themselves.

Or, if a client wants more, we consult, design, and install everything. Sometimes they work with us onsite to learn skills and cut down on labor. It really depends on what the client wants and can afford.

Broadfork offers free consultations, but warned me that April is their busiest time, and people might need to wait a few weeks.

*Those who would like to learn more should go to the Sunderland Library on April 30 for a presentation by the Broadfork Collective.*



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LEVERETT from page A1

pupil costs differently, giving weight to the relative wealth of each community, for example, based on the towns' equalized property values.

If Shutesbury were to opt out of the alternative assessment method this year, that town would save roughly \$121,391 from last year's assessment, instead of paying \$80,849 more in FY'15, as Shutesbury will have to do if it upholds the alternative agreement, according to a recent blog post from Maria Geryk, APRSD superintendent.

But if Shutesbury voids the alternative agreement on May 3, it would negatively affect Leverett, in particular, forcing an additional \$132,144 in regional school costs onto the backs of Leverett taxpayers to meet the APRSD budget as it is currently projected.

That scenario would wreck the carefully balanced budget the Leverett selectboard and finance committee have crafted over the past several months with input from department heads and citizens.

If Shutesbury decides to make that switch, the news, which would reach Leverett's annual town meeting voters midway through their an-

nual meeting, would probably force a continuation of town meeting to a later date, to allow time for budget makers at the region and in town to come up with a new plan to fund the schools.

The potential upset to the budgetary appcarrt is so great that the selectboard has decided to put all spending articles from the general levy off until the latter half of town meeting.

This puts Leverett voters in the odd position of deliberating on citizen-initiated petitions – whether to ban drone flights in town airspace or oppose a pipeline planned to carry hydrofracked natural gas – before they deliberate on how much to pay for the town tree warden, or the tax collector's salary.

Presentations are planned on topics of wide import, such as discussions on the town's affordable housing strategy and the sustainability of the Leverett Elementary School.

Voters will hear about plans to regionalize the elementary school within the Amherst-Pelham district, and may consider the likelihood the town may someday have to pay to hook up homes on Teewaddle Hill Road, whose private wells have been

impacted by a plume of contaminants from the town's closed landfill, with a new water line connecting to the Amherst water district.

All these discussions may take place before superintendent Geryk travels down the hill from Shutesbury to deliver the news on how that town's vote on the regional school assessment will affect all the spending articles in Leverett's \$5.5 million budget.

Superintendent Geryk will have to bear those tidings in person, said selectboard chair Rich Brazeau on Tuesday, because "cell phones don't work" in Shutesbury. Or if they did, cell phone reception is even more doubtful in Leverett.

"We may have time to kill waiting to see what Shutesbury does," said Brazeau. He added, "We'll know by lunchtime."

No contested elections are expected for town offices, but candidates are still being sought for school committee. Leverett, unique in the Commonwealth (in many ways), continues to hold town elections by the old fashioned method, with nominations directly from town meeting floor.



MONTAGUE from page A5

made to restrain the dog since the owner had received notice of the selectboard hearing. The front door, which the dog could open, had been fixed, and a gate put in place to prevent the dog from getting to the front door.

The selectboard ordered Rattigan to complete a proposed fence on the outside of the house by May 31.

Barn Rebuilding

Lisa and Bob Adams then came before the board to discuss their desire to rebuild two very old historic barns on their property on Hatchery Road. The barns burned at the beginning of April.

Adams stated that the town by-laws allow them to rebuild even if the structures are "non-conforming" to town zoning regulations. However, they wish to rebuild five feet within the town's "right of way," which totals sixty-six feet.

Massachusetts General Law suggests they can not rebuild within the right of way.

Town administrator Frank Abbondanzio stated that the situation was "very confusing," but that he had received a "preliminary" legal opinion from town counsel recommending against granting permission to rebuild within the right of way, presumably because it would set a poor precedent.

Abbondanzio was joined in this

view by building inspector David Jensen and town planner Walter Ramsey.

"Shame on us, if we don't allow it," declared selectboard chair Mark Fairbrother, arguing that the Adams' situation, due to the historic nature of the barns, was unique and would not set a precedent.

The proposed rebuilding, he felt, would not interfere with the projected Greenfield Road project and its impact on Hatchery Road.

Michael Nelson seemed to agree with Fairbrother but then backed off a bit when Chris Boutwell suggested another legal opinion.

A decision on the matter was temporarily put on hold.

**One-Day Liquor License**

In other matters Walter Korby received approval for a one-day liquor license for his wedding, which is to take place at the old town hall in Montague Center.

**CDBG and the Bump out**

Walter Ramsey raised a number of issues about past, present and future community development block grants.

Among these was the question of whether the Selectboard wanted to consider the redesign of a controversial "bump out" on Avenue A to provide more parking.

The board, continuing to express negative feelings about the bump

out, indicated a desire to consider a redesign.

**Strathmore Costs**

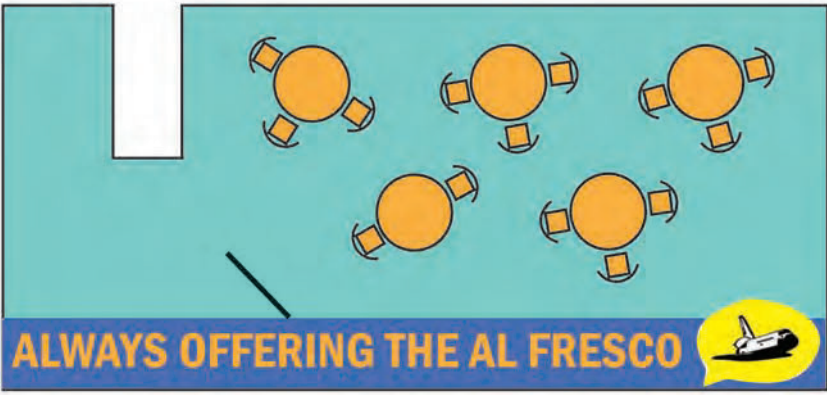
Bergeron and Jensen gave a lengthy update on efforts to clean out the Strathmore complex in Turners Falls. This work is a response to an order by the Turners Falls Fire Department. Bergeron described efforts to remove significant amounts of wood and paper. The latter, he estimated, would total 20 to 30 containers of material.

Jensen reported that three of the five open windows have been sealed. He discussed needed roof work, particularly to address leaks in roofs above stair wells, which he estimated would total \$9,000.

The Water Pollution Control Facility is looking at repairs to make the building's sewer system viable, which could cost as much as \$12,000 and the Turners Falls Water Department is looking at options for bringing water into the building. These costs were estimated at "\$20,000 and up," although a less expensive solution is being looked at.

**Money to Repair Roads**

The meeting ended on a somewhat optimistic note, as Abbondanzio said that the town was eligible for an additional \$74,970 in state highway funds under the "Winter Rapid Recovery Program."



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## THE HEALTHY GEEZER

### Ears & Hearts



By FRED CICETTI

*Q. Any suggestions for dealing with tinnitus?*

Most tinnitus – a symptom, not a disease – comes from damage to the microscopic endings of the hearing nerve in the inner ear.

People who suffer from tinnitus hear phantom noises that include not just ringing but whistling, hissing, buzzing, roaring and clicking. Tinnitus is most common in people over 65.

Besides treatments such as hearing aids, drugs and therapy, there are techniques for dealing with tinnitus. Here are some:

**Music.** Many people find focusing on music helps them ignore their tinnitus.

**Noise.** Avoid noise, which can make your tinnitus worse. If you can't escape a noisy environment, wear ear plugs.

**Salt.** Cut your salt intake which impedes blood circulation. Good circulation can help relieve tinnitus.

**Blood pressure.** High blood pressure can affect tinnitus. Get your pressure checked.

**Stimulants.** Stay away from coffee, tea, colas and nicotine.

**Exercise.** This improves circulation.

**Fatigue.** Get enough rest.

**Stress.** Stress can intensify tinnitus. Try relaxation techniques.

*Q. Is it possible to find out what the chances are of having a heart attack?*

see GEEZER page B2

## So Much Faith In Electrons

Part II

By D.O. OGDEN

Imagine your life with all systems down..... for years. A massive geomagnetic storm made of electrons (yes, electrons), protons and heavy ions has the potential to take out some three hundred and fifty major electrical transformers in the U.S. alone.

By some estimates large substation transformers could take years to be built and installed.

That's one major problem for the so-called developed or developing world; burnt out hi-tension lines on the grid is another.

Burnt-out communication devices are yet another problem; even with auxiliary power they remain useless. Destroyed communication satellites are another, as are damaged land lines.

In short, we could be back to square one in terms of communication. Without power for such extended periods, fuel becomes a problem. Without fuel, transportation of food and water is an issue.

Without fuel for back-up systems, the world's nuclear reactors begin to fail – think Fukushima writ large – creating the potential for vast releases of radiation, a problem even larger than the magnetic storm itself. (Matthew Stein, "Four Hundred Chernobyls: Solar Flares, Electromagnetic Pulses and Nuclear Armageddon." 24 March 2012, *Truthout*)

Emergency response and governing institutions would be hard pressed to deal with such catastrophic circumstances. The developed and developing societies, as we know them, could begin to

break down.

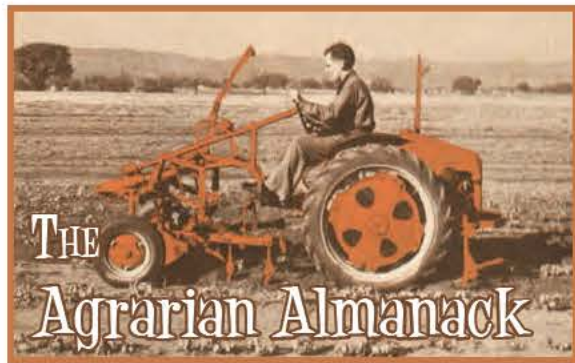
This may seem to some (and for many non-human species is) an excellent opportunity for a turning point in humanity's destruction of the natural world.

"Visualize industrial collapse" is a slogan touted by many of us more radical enviros. But what about all those nukes melting down? What about loss of power at chemical plants and laboratories?

Those potential catastrophes could affect all life on the planet regardless of where one lives. In view of this, the end of libraries may be doesn't seem all that important, unless of course, vital information you need to survive is no longer available. It wasn't until fairly recently that awareness of this catastrophe-in-waiting came to the attention of government. ([http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/NOAA\\_scales/](http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/NOAA_scales/)) When it became apparent that 2012 marked the beginning of a new active cycle in

see ELECTRONS page B4

NASA/SDO IMAGE



## Spring and the Garlic Pact



By PETE WACKERNAGEL

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – This time of year is all about anticipation for me.

Anticipation, hope, rising energy, all laced through with a little fear of the uncertain and the certainty of tribulations that we will soon meet. The anticipation and the waiting come together.

First we awaited the first day of horticultural spring, the first day of seeding – onions, leeks, herbs.

Now we occupy ourselves with little projects that were not taken care of last year. We spin our wheels cleaning up, mulching, preparing the CSA shareholder barn that will soon double as ice cream shop and miso outlet.

Now we wait for the fields to dry out from that rainy 3" weekend back at the end of March.

We must soon transplant the Magic broccoli and Afro kale whose roots are starting to burst from their plastic cells, in a greenhouse that's jammed to its plastic walls with fledgling plants.

So right now we spend our time hoping and savoring the charged, anxious anticipation of a runner

before the gun goes off. We hope that the winter was bitter cold enough to kill off some invasive pests and that our bodies are stronger now than they were this time last year.

Lime green garlic shoots are just now showing us their solar trajectory. We mulch them with oat straw to suppress weeds and pests, make a beneficial microclimate, create a layer of decomposing organic matter, and to avoid something Mother Nature hates – bare-assed earth.

I think that we grow garlic to ensure that we are here in the spring to start again. We push the cloves into the soil as late as we dare in November and from that point on we have a contract – with the garlic and with ourselves, to start again the agrarian project.

It's this seed garlic frozen in the ground the winter through that's the repository of our hope and the emerald rocket that brings it again to the surface in the spring. For me this year, hope has arrived first class.

*Pete lives in Montague City and works on a farm in Sunderland. We are happy to have him join us as a guest columnist this season!*

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## Leaving Turners Falls

By QUICKCHANGE

The occasion of the prospect of an upcoming move to Northampton presents me with an opportunity to say farewell to my beloved Turners Falls.

Some people say they are not good at good-byes. I, on the other hand, have always been good at goodbyes, too good at them. Hanging on, looking for closure, long after the yesterdays have gone by.

But now, thanks in part to the wisdom of a friend, I have no need for closure or good-byes. One day my friend said to me, "I don't like 'things.' Things keep me stuck in the past."

That one casual remark of my friend prompted me to sort through belongings and in so doing to discover many attachments I had held to my past unaware. The simple act of throwing out old letters healed a longstanding wound I didn't know needed healing.

I cleaned and cleaned, until the inside of my apartment felt as hollow as a temple. Suddenly, feeling lighter than I knew I could feel, in the midst of cleaning, I found myself laughing with delight at the realization that I now could go anywhere in the world.

I purged myself of costumes, song parody lyrics, and studio equipment, saying as I went, "Hello, Future!," knowing in faith that as I said it something I might love even better than the things in my present life could be on its way to me.

Within two weeks, the opportunity to move to Northampton presented itself. As a fairy slipping off a cloud – which was the way I had described the feeling to friends – the opportunity magically landed in my lap.

Spontaneously I was learning that saying goodbye to things I was attached to in my present could bring me opportunities that I might love even more in the life of my future. And that what was true for my friend, that saying hello to the future could thaw a frozen



momentum, was true for me.

People have said that Turners won't be the same without me, but if the number of comments I have received from fans regarding my having been an inspiration to them is any indication, then Turners will continue to be wonderful without me.

Turners turns out good people. During my third stint here, from 2006 to the present, my personality unfolded like crazy, and Turners is where my performance art began.

Though I didn't set out to be a performance artist, many things about Turners and the surrounding area were conducive to my becoming one. To name a few:

- \* Suzee's Third Street Laundromat Fashion Show
- \* Karaoke and Open Mic at the Rendezvous
- \* The Annual Turners Falls Block Party, and its Lawn Chair Precision Drill Team

see LEAVING page B4

## Faith Gives Meaning to Life and Death

By TATJANA MILESKI

**TURNERS FALLS** – When I was watching the Eternal Television Network, I recognized one of the Catholic preachers, Steven Roberson. His general speech and preaching impressed me a lot, and I decided to write an article and make a general presentation at an open mic at the Rendezvous in Turners Falls.

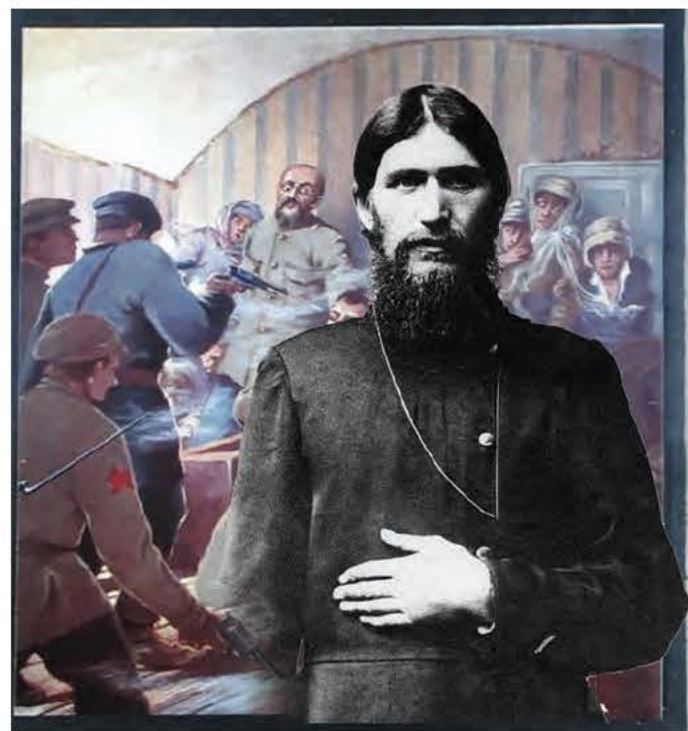
My presentation's main topic was "Faith, Hope, Generosity, Freedom, and Democracy."

In spite of the economic problems the United States is now facing, I am concerned about Russia, Ukraine, and Poland – countries that suffered so much under the Communist regime, but were continuously able to keep their faith and hope, and look at the bright side of the future.

Since 1917, more than 20 million have been killed, or sent to Soviet prisons and concentration camps in Siberia, called the Gulag.

Even after 23 years of Communism's collapse I realized what those Russian people were going through, who did not believe in Communism and wished to have a democratic government instead of a totalitarian one.

When law no longer reflects moral values or admirable goals, oppression or



chaos follows.

Communism survived for over 74 years in Russia. Between 1917 and 1991, Russia's totalitarian government destroyed the cultural values of general society, industry, and religions.

Almost 100% of the old population was wiped out.

Ten million Russian people fought for their freedom and democracy, because they didn't want to lose their principles, faith, and high standard of moral values.

Another ten million realized there was no longer democracy there: no private ownership, no justice, broken laws, loss of wealth and possessions. High class society and the surviving middle

class became poor.

They understood that, from that time, they were always going to live under oppression, under the attack of Communist guerillas, and they preferred to die.

Thousands of citizens of the country committed suicide. Others continue to live in poverty.

Many Russian pastors – sophisticated, bright, intelligent people – escaped their country and emigrated to Europe and the United States.

Here is the story of a remarkable man, Grigory Rasputin, who was born in a peasant family in Siberia in 1869.

In 1906, Rasputin, known as the Mad Monk, was

see RUSSIA page B4

## Pet of the Week

I'm a happy, friendly, strong gal who is looking for people who enjoy the great outdoors. I'm about 6 and housetrained.

A perfect day would include a long walk, playing, and then relaxing with you at home.

My previous family was hit with health problems and had to let me go. I am ready for my next journey in my life.



“LAYLA”

If you or your family loves going on walks and would like a best friend to join in on the fun, you might be the perfect match for silly, adorable, goofy me.

I need to be the only dog in the home; staff can tell you more.

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

## Senior Center Activities April 28 through May 2

### GILL and MONTAGUE

**Gill/Montague Senior Center,** 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.

#### Monday 4/28

10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

#### Tuesday 4/29

9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Lunch  
1 p.m. “Mabel & Jerry”

#### Wednesday: 4/30

10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise  
Noon Lunch  
12:45 p.m. Bingo

#### Thursday 5/1

9 a.m. NO Tai Chi  
10:30 AM to Noon: Brown Bag  
Noon Lunch  
1:00 p.m. Pitch

#### Friday 5/2

10:10 a.m. Aerobics  
10:55 a.m. Chair Exercise  
1:00 p.m. Writing Group

### WENDELL

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

### ERVING

**Erving Senior Center,** 1 Care Drive, Ervingside, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at (413) 423-3308, for meal information and reservations.

For information, call Polly Kiely, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call the Center to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out when is the next blood pressure clinic.

#### Monday 4/28

9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10 a.m. Osteo Exercise  
12:30 p.m. Quilting

#### Tuesday 4/29

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
12:30 p.m. Painting

#### Wednesday 4/30

8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Bingo

#### Thursday 5/1

8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones  
11 a.m. Brown Bag  
12:30 p.m. Computer Class

#### Friday 5/2

9 a.m. Bowling  
12:30 p.m. Beginner Quilting

### LEVERETT

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

Take-It-Easy Chair Yoga Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$5 (first class free).

Senior Lunch – Fridays at noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

### GEEZER from page B1

There is a calculator that tells you what the odds are of having a heart attack in the next 10 years. The calculator is for adults 20 or over who do not have heart disease or diabetes. You can find this calculator online at: [cvdrisk.nhlbi.nih.gov/calculator.asp](http://cvdrisk.nhlbi.nih.gov/calculator.asp).

The risk-assessment tool is based upon the Framingham Heart Study, a joint project of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and Boston University. The objective of the Framingham Heart Study, begun in 1948, was to identify the common characteristics that contribute to cardiovascular disease (CVD), which affects the heart and blood vessels.

The calculator asks seven questions: your age, gender, total cholesterol, HDL level, whether you smoke, systolic blood pressure (the first number), and whether you are taking medication for blood pressure. You plug in your numbers and the calculator generates your odds as a percentage.

*Q. Do you think an annual physical is really necessary?*

Regular health checkups are important. How often you get one depends on your condition.

Let me put it to you this way: How often do you have a mechanic check your new car? How many

times do you visit the garage with a car that's cranked over 100,000 miles? If you're over 65, get regular physical exams even if you feel great.

You can read about the federal guidelines for physical exams at the two following web pages. These are for people over the age of 65.

The guidelines for women are at: [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007463.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007463.htm).

The guidelines for men are at [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007466.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007466.htm).

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



## Wendell: Town Auction May 3

The town of Wendell will hold an auction on Saturday, May 3, at 10 a.m. at the Highway Garage.

A great many items have already been donated, and more are on their way. Among the many treasures

awaiting bids are hand tools, a large and small generator, extension ladders, hard hats, copper tubing, a trash pump, storage lockers, military surplus cots and folding metal chairs and desks.

## Erving: Volunteers Needed

The Erving Council on Aging is seeking Volunteers to work at the Erving Senior Center during hours when the Director is out of the building. Training will be available on

the different aspects of the position. Qualities needed are a welcoming personality, a calm disposition and a sense of humor.

Contact Polly at (413) 423-3649.

## Leverett: Chorus Director Wanted

The Leverett Community Chorus is looking for a new director. Our wonderful leader of the past 13 years, Anne Louise White, is retiring from that position.

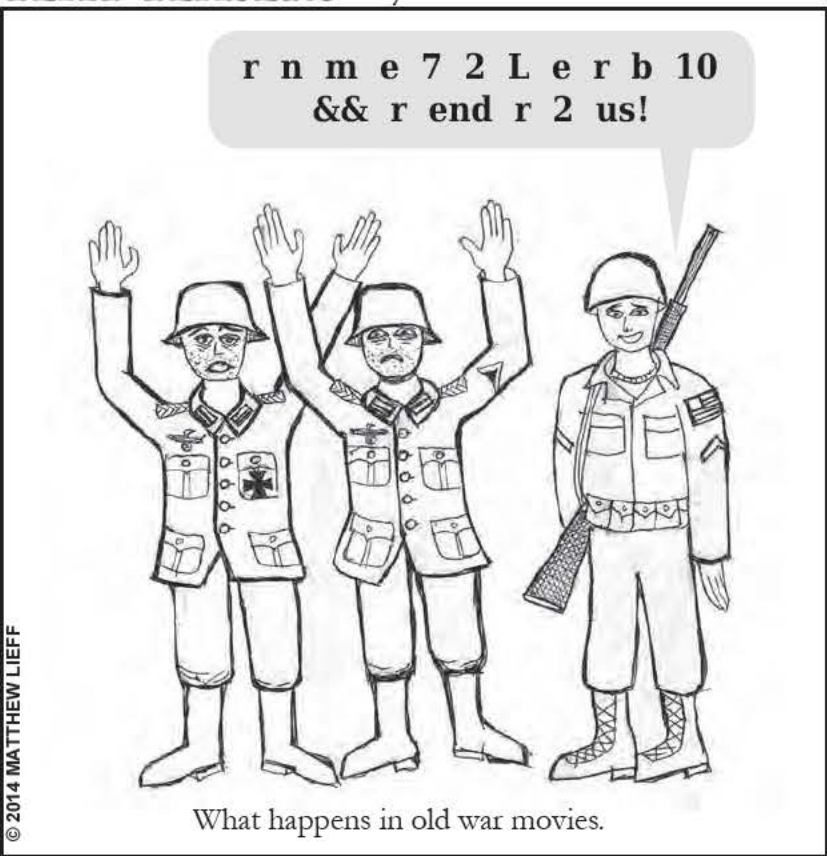
LCC has around 60 members, is inter-generational and has four sections. We are looking for a leader who can play keyboard, teach all

four voices, and have fun with us.

There are two sessions, a spring and a fall session, which each meet once a week on Tuesday evenings. We hold a concert after each session.

Contact Diane Crowe at [diacrowe@yahoo.com](mailto:diacrowe@yahoo.com) for more info or to set up an interview.

## TEXT TEASERS by MATT LIEFF



*What is he saying? Try your hand at this new game, designed by a local resident. Check page B6 for this week's answer!*

### WENDELL LIBRARY NEWS

## April 26: "Giant Gila Monster"

*The Giant Gila Monster*, another film in the monthly series of Science Fiction/Fantasy and Horror/Monster movies at the Wendell Free Library, will be shown on Saturday April 26, at 7:30 p.m.

A couple of teenagers are reported missing in a small Texas town, and it is thought they eloped. Sheriff Jeff turns to his friend, Clarence Winstead, a garage mechanic and leader of a hot-rod gang for help.

A series of tragic motor accidents occur and it becomes apparent that a giant gila monster is roaming the area and depleting the town of its citizens and passers-through, including two hot-rod-ting teenagers. And might have plans on attending the BIG record-hop party.

### MONTAGUE LIBRARY NEWS

## “Snow Off the Avenue” Contest Winner Named

By LINDA HICKMAN

**TURNERS FALLS** – The giant pile of snow in the Food City Plaza is finally gone.

An annual free raffle is held each year at the Carnegie Library to determine who can guess when the mound will finally melt away.

Leah Timberlake of Gill was the winner this year. She guessed April 16.

On April 17, I went over to check on the rapidly-disappearing pile. As I walked over, I saw approximately a quart of snow was left.

As I watched, a car drove over the remnant.

Three people guessed April 20, but Leah was the closest. She won a \$20 gift certificate to Second Street Bakery.

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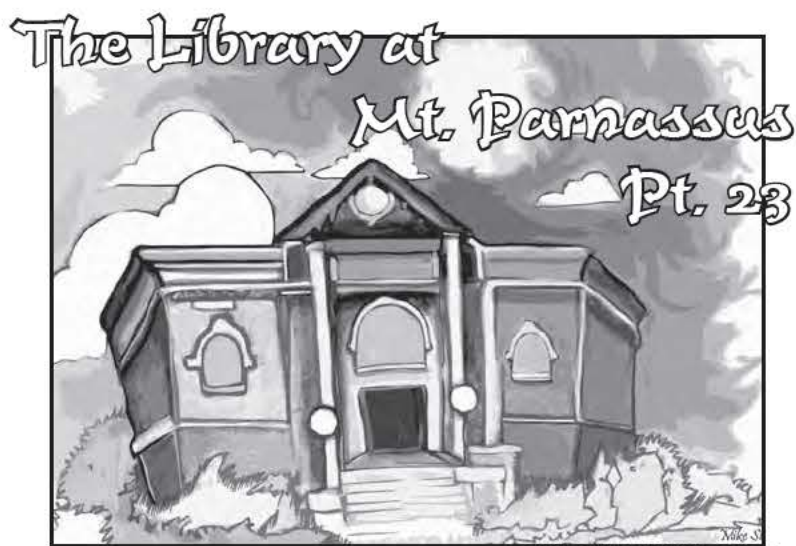
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No sympathy in the reading room.



MIKE SLIVA ILLUSTRATION

By DAVID DETMOLD

As Tony lay there, head down in a pool of spit on the table, I turned to Cadmus for support. But Cadmus was studying the complicated chart of a large family tree, a disbound insert to the larger folio he held propped up in his lap. Ulysses, perched on his shoulder, appeared to be studying it too.

Cadmus lifted one end of the voluminous chart up to the light, as if it were best examined in more than one dimension.

After a while, he turned it over. The heavy paper rasped against his thumb like an emery board. He studied the chart again from the other side.

I tapped him on the shoulder. "Tony's feeling poorly," I said quietly. "Lucius is giving him fits again. Why don't you read the paper to him? That would perk him up."

Ulysses raised one black leg and flexed his claw.

"Why don't you bring a cup of tea for my old crow here?" said Cadmus, to me. "He's thirsty."

"That bird drinks tea?"

"Sure."

"How does he like it?"

"Pretty well, once it cools down some."

"I mean, with cream and sugar, or with lemon?"

"He likes it black."

"What about you, Bo?"

"I don't care for tea. Tea's for pussies. Get me a scotch and water."

"I'll see if Melantha's got any."

"Get me a bottle of Bull's Blood," barked Klee. "Make that three bottles!"

"You guys." I shook Tony by the shoulder again. Nothing.

"Poor Tony. He's out like a light."

"Aptly put," said Cadmus returning to his family tree.

"Read to him, will ya, Bo? Read him the business section, that's his favorite; that's sure to bring him round."

"No chance," said Cadmus.

But then he, softened his expression and picked up the *Times* and opened it to the local section. "I reckon he ain't interested, but I'll read some anyway." He ran his finger down the page. I gritted my teeth and went back to the lobby.

"Melantha. How about a nice reviving cup of tea for Tony?"

The kettle was simmering on the hot plate on the side of the desk, as the sculpted Hermes gripped his caduceus above the twisting spout of steam. Melantha took a cup from the platter, dropped in a strainer full of tea and poured a scalding stream of water through it.

She handed the cup to me silently.

The leaves floated free and spread across the surface of the teacup in a thin blue film of tannin. They spun in graceful helixes to the veined edges of the porcelain and settled to the bottom.

"Can I get a cup for Eddie, too?"

Melantha poured another cup. The clouds on her dress, the steam from the kettle, the mist rising from the heating vents combined to create a weird atmosphere about her as she sat calm atop her three legged stool. She handed me the second cup and saucer, bending forward stiffly from the waist, her eyes staring blankly, like a figure on a ship's prow, gliding through the fog.

Slowly and distinctly, she said, "Give this to Eddie." Then she uttered some lines of doggerel:

*Blind to thy end  
Fate's pawn  
Havoc's friend  
Ate's spawn  
Death to he  
Who gave thee life  
Widowed be  
Thy mother wife*

"That will hardly cheer him up, Melantha."

She hissed at me.

*Continued next week.*

#### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Kids Skateboarding on Dangerous Ledges; Pipeline Company Rep Reports Harassment

Monday, 4/14

12:33 a.m. Noise complaint regarding a live band playing in a house on Third Street. Music turned down.

7:54 a.m. Larceny in Montague Center; suspected family involvement. Advised of options.

10:23 a.m. Report of illegal dumping in the area behind Food City on J Street. Services rendered.

1:05 p.m. Report of larceny, allegedly by a family member, and request for well-being check in Turners Falls. Investigated.

2:02 p.m. Graffiti spotted at and around Great Falls Discovery Center. Report taken.

2:28 p.m. Report that someone in a pickup truck has been throwing nip bottles out of his window near the canal; reporting party concerned that subject may be driving under the influence. Referred to an officer.

4:35 p.m. Report of possible attempted sale of stolen goods on Avenue A. Report taken.

6:39 p.m. Twelve year old female reported missing from Unity Park area. Girl located by officer and was heading home.

6:49 p.m. Report of highly intoxicated male at Second and L Streets. Party located and issued a verbal warning.

7:59 p.m. Following an incident on Avenue A,

was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct (subsequent offense) and disturbing the peace.

10 p.m. Complaint that noise from a leafblower being used in a nearby parking lot is keeping caller's family awake. Leafblower operator spoken to and will cease activity for the night.

Tuesday, 4/15

10:10 a.m. was arrested and charged with domestic assault and battery; assault and battery with a dangerous weapon; and disorderly conduct.

11:17 a.m. Report that various items, including a baby carriage, car seat, and mattress, have been dumped on Route 47 between the crossover and the town common. Caller did stop to make sure no baby was in the carseat or carriage. DPW notified.

3:16 p.m. Report of ongoing bullying problem in and out of school. Referred to an officer.

Wednesday, 4/16

2:46 a.m. Report of hearing what sounds like a woman screaming in the area of Thomas Memorial Golf Course. Area checked extensively; unable to locate.

11:30 a.m. Individual affiliated with the company that is proposing the gas pipeline project through Montague in to station to report threatening/harassing text messages from a local resident. Advised of options.

11:54 a.m. Two-car accident on the General Pierce bridge. One operator transported to hospital; other operator cited for failure to use care in stopping and following too closely.

7:03 p.m. Concerned neighbor reporting that two small children had come out of a bedroom window and onto the roof of a G Street residence. Sergeant spoke with parents; children "pinkie-swore" to officer that they would not be going out onto the roof.

Thursday, 4/17

12:28 a.m. Assisted State Police and TFFD with possible jumper on French King Bridge. Party located and transported to hospital.

5:01 a.m. Caller, suspecting marijuana use in basement due to "dead skunk" smell, requesting officer respond to residence. Advised of options.

9:27 a.m. Caller reporting issues with a former roommate who wanted to come and gather her belongings from the residence; requesting officer be present during property retrieval. Referred to an

officer. Shortly thereafter, former roommate called to advise that original caller was not allowing her to retrieve her belongings; also alleged that original caller opened her mail while she was away and read a private message. Advised of options.

10:37 a.m. Caller who works nights reporting that he has "had it" with his upstairs neighbors, whose excessively noisy daytime activities are disrupting him. Caller stated that "someone" should come over and "kick ass," but he doesn't think he and his brother should have to do it. Caller advised to refrain from "kicking ass" and advised that an officer would be notified of his concerns. Peace restored. Upstairs neighbor later called back alleging harassment.

12:39 p.m. Officer informed that several items, including mattresses, had been dumped on bike path behind Greenfield Savings Bank; will follow up.

5:14 p.m. Request for officer to respond to Hillcrest Elementary School with an ice pack for a little boy. Services rendered.

6:01 p.m. Report of child assaulted by another child on Griswold Street. No injuries.

7:17 p.m. Request for well-being check on a female on Avenue A. Removed to hospital.

7:25 p.m. Report of a loose Rottweiler knocking over a child near Kali B's on Avenue A. Referred to an officer.

8:55 p.m. Motor vehicle reported stolen from backyard on Central Street; caller suspects a known party. Advised of options.

Friday, 4/18

1:27 p.m. Wallet reported stolen from a vehicle that was parked on Bridge Street. Advised of options. 3:40 p.m. Caller reporting that two males had just stolen plywood from a construction site at Fifth and L Streets. Subjects located and stated that they believed the wood had been

discarded based on where it was left on the property. Items returned.

5:42 p.m. Caller concerned about welfare of young skateboarders on ledges behind Avenue A property. Skateboarders advised of concerns.

Saturday, 4/19

12:30 p.m. Report of gunshots in area marked No Trespassing near Green Pond Road and Beech Road. Subjects located and asked to leave area. Environmental Police also advised.

1:20 p.m. Report of gunshots behind residence on Hillside Road. Party located and determined to be at greater than legal distance required.

1:28 p.m. Break-in on Fourth Street; door kicked in. Nothing missing. Report taken.

2:04 p.m. Report of subject riding a go cart in the road at unsafe speeds on Randall Wood Drive. Rider spoken to.

2:20 p.m. was arrested and charged with failing to register as a sex offender.

6:42 p.m. Loose Rottweiler picked up and transported to kennel. Owner came to station to inquire about his dog; advised that he could retrieve dog during kennel's business hours.

6:46 p.m. Caller who earlier advised of gunshots behind property on Hillside Road reported engaging in a verbal altercation with the shooter. Investigated.

Sunday, 4/20

12:57 p.m. Shoplifting reported at Rite Aid. Investigated.

6:47 p.m. Report of a 3-5 year old child on Park Street removing mail from neighbor's mailbox and throwing it on the ground, as well as destroying solar lights on the lawn of another nearby property. Child's mother spoken to.

6:58 p.m. Cement birdbath reported missing from side yard on Griswold Street. Report taken.

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## ONGOING:

## EVERY SUNDAY

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

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

## EVERY TUESDAY

The Millers Falls Library Club: Free after school program. 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: Free *Texas Hold 'em Poker tournament*, with cash prizes.

## EVERY WEDNESDAY

Carnegie Library: Children and their families are invited to come enjoy stories, crafts, music and snacks. 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Karaoke with Dirty Johnny*. 9 p.m. to midnight. Free.

## EVERY THURSDAY

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

Arts Block, Greenfield: Thursday Night Jazz, *Ted Wirt and John Harrison*, 5 to 7 p.m.

## EVERY FRIDAY

Between the Uprights, Turners

Falls: *Karaoke with Dirty Johnny*. 9 p.m. to midnight. Free.

## ART SHOWS:

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Look At Me!* Playful wooden sculptures by William Accorsi. On display through April 26.

UMass Museum of Contemporary Art, Amherst: *Katy Schimert: Artist in Residence*, work on display through May 4.

Hampden Gallery, UMass, Amherst: *Priya Nadkarni: MFA Thesis Exhibition*. Opening reception May 3, 4 - 7 p.m. Work on display May 1 - 8.

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Ed Gregory's* photo exhibit in the Great Hall, high-resolution images of typically mundane subjects on display through May 31st.

## EVENTS:

## THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Pat Jones & Charlie Shew*, 20th Century Roots Music, 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scott Lawson Pomeroy* (of Orange Crush): Fear No '80's, 8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, APRIL 25

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Robin & Linda Williams*, bluegrass, folk, old-time and acoustic country. A concert to benefit the Connecticut River Watershed Council & the 17th Annual Source to Sea Cleanup, \$, 7:30 p.m.

Arts Block, Greenfield: *Mark Herschler & Becca Byram*, evening of soul, funk & blues, \$, 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Young Tricksters, Michael Graffius*, indie, singer/songwriter, 9:30 p.m.



Pottery by Northfield potter Tom White and many other potters as part of the Asparagus Valley Pottery Trail open studio tour, various locations, Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27. See [www.asparagusvalleypotterytrail.com](http://www.asparagusvalleypotterytrail.com).

## SATURDAY, APRIL 26

Asparagus Valley Pottery Trail, a sale and tour of 9 clay studios throughout the valley. 10 to 5 p.m. [www.apotterytrail.com](http://www.apotterytrail.com)

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *The Giant Gila Monster* film showing as part of the Science Fiction/Fantasy and Horror/Monster movie series, 7:30 p.m.

RiverStation, 151 3rd St, Turners Falls: *Skateboard Art Auction* Unity SkatePark benefit. Art created directly on skateboard decks. Refreshments, cash bar, music from *Sandy Bailey* and *the Stone Cold Fox & Heavy on the Harsh*, 6 to 10 p.m.

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Walnut Street Band*, old time/bluegrass, \$, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Jukin*, rock/reggae/funk, 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Friends With Benefits*, 9:30 p.m.

Route 63 Roadhouse, Millers Falls: *Lake Side Drive*, classic rock, \$, 9:30 p.m.

## SUNDAY, APRIL 27

First Church, Deerfield: *Alleluia! Sacred Choral Music* of the 20th Century. Featuring works by Thompson & Tavenor, Rachmaninoff & Rutter, Bieble & Britten with Grant Moss, accompanist. 4 p.m.

Turners Falls High School: The Aqua String Band, presented by the Gill-Montague Education Fund's 10th Annual Gala, \$, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

FAC Concert Hall, UMass Amherst: *Alonzo King Lines Ballet*, \$, 7:30 p.m.

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

## MONDAY, APRIL 28

Deja Brew, Wendell: *All Small Caps, a Night of Spoken Word*, open mic at 7:30 with featured readers to follow.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Burrie's Open Mike*, 8 p.m., sign-ups at 7:30 p.m.

## TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Great Falls Harvest, Turners Falls: *Fundraiser Dinner for The Montague Reporter*. \$, buffet at 6 p.m.

Bruce's Browser, Athol: Wendell resident *Kathy-Ann Becker* presents her work "Silencing the Women: The Witch Trials of Mary Bliss Parsons" biographical-historical exploration of life and times of a Puritan woman, 7 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

*Write That Thing*, a writing workshop with Jonathan Mirin at Green Fields Market, Greenfield. Free for co-op members, \$, Writers of all disciplines welcome. [www.ptco.org/training](http://www.ptco.org/training), 5:30 p.m.

## THURSDAY, MAY 1

*Dances in the Park*, double feature showcases two Turners Falls dance groups. *Aorta*, a new contemporary movement group, presents: "Mess", a dance to welcome in the spring. *Awesome Art in Motion*, a children's dance company shows their newest work titled "All in a Day". Picnic style, so bring warm clothing, a blanket to sit on (or a chair if you'd like), and join us for a strange, messy, beautiful, and welcoming ode to spring. On the lawn outside the Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, 6 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Fall Town String Band*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Roosters*, classic rock dance by Bruce Scofield & Mark Feller, 8 p.m.

## FRIDAY, MAY 2

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Ari and Mia*, reference the traditions of Southern and Northeastern fiddle music and the early American songbook to create a realm where their own compositions cross paths with older traditions, \$, 8 p.m.

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



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## Philadelphia's Aqua String Band To Perform At GMEF Gala April 27



ELLEN BLANCHETTE PHOTO

Captain Ron and the Aqua String Band at the Gill-Montague Education Fund Gala in 2010 performance at Turners Falls High School.

**TURNERS FALLS** – On Sunday, April 27 at 2:30 p.m., the Gill Montague Education Fund welcomes The Aqua String Band to the Turners Falls High School theater.

Organized in 1920, the Aqua String Band is one of the oldest, and most famous, of the Philadelphia Mummers companies.

Each year, the mummers prepare their costumes with a theme - military, ghost riders, Broadway, zombies and pirates, just to name a few, for the New Year's Day parade.

This year their theme is "Aqua String Band Shooting for the Stars." How appropriate that this is also their return engagement for the GMEF 10th Annual Gala.

With their performance, they will not only bring "a taste of Philadelphia" including a mix of Irish, Italian, Polish, and German tunes, as these represent their core heritage groups, along with many all-time favorites, but also an opportunity to shoot for the GMEF 'star of enrichment'.

All ticket sales, advertising, and tier-giving go directly to funding student enrichment grants. To date, the Gill-Montague Education Fund Board of Directors has awarded more than \$90,500 in grants to help ensure that Gill-Montague students have a rich, well-rounded educational experience.

You can support student enrichment as a tier-giver and join the Board of Directors at the pre-show reception at "The Golden Slipper Cafe". Try a warm, soft pretzel from "The Philly Counter", enjoy delicious local bakery treats from "The Dessert Bar" and a cold beverage from the "Soda Fountain" as you watch a history video of the Aqua String Band - their costumes, music and the parades.

Tickets are \$20 in advance, or \$25 at the door. They are available at The World Eye Bookshop, Greenfield; Scotty's Convenience Store, Turners Falls; by calling Sandy at the TFHS 863-7215, or at the GMEF website - [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org).

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