



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 13 – NO. 12

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 8, 2015

**LEVERETT
SELECTBOARD**

John Ingram Hired as Fire Chief

By DAVID DETMOLD

John Ingram of North Amherst, a captain in the Amherst fire department, has been offered and accepted the part-time position of fire chief in Leverett. The position is a 20 hour a week job, and Ingram will be hired at the top of the advertised pay range, at \$19,000 a year, said select-board member Peter d'Errico after a closed-door negotiation.



John Ingram

Ingram will be hired to succeed retiring chief John Moruzzi, who has served the town in that capacity for many years.

see LEVERETT page A6

Trains Coming In



LAURA RODLEY PHOTO

Photographer Sandra Pipczynski is thrilled, snapping pictures as the train, the Vermonter, arrives at the new Northampton station.

By LAURA RODLEY

NORTHAMPTON – A crowd of over thirty people, commuters and train fanatics all, waited with joyous anticipation to see Amtrak's Vermonter train round the bend in the tracks at the new Northampton station late Monday afternoon on December 29.

It was the train's inaugural ride, accepting passengers at new stations in Northampton and Greenfield. Many waved as the train rounded the bend, others snapped pictures, and children covered their ears.

The fruition of the new stations has been several years in progress, a goal of Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Governor Deval Patrick's administration, and Amtrak officials.

The previous Monday, December 22, Governor Patrick rode the train on a ceremonial run with other state officials, while Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz, accompanied by a brass band, met the train at the new Northampton station.

Holyoke is the next stop planned to be added onto the line, which runs between Saint Albans, Vermont and Washington, D.C., a 605-mile trip. Some people still remember when passenger trains traveled through Montague.

Amtrak president and CEO Joe Boardman, dressed in a black vest and pants with a tweed coat, was on board the train Monday, December 29, relaxing comfortably in his seat as the sun set behind him.

Brought up on a dairy farm, the see AMTRAK page B5

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Sale of Key Millers Falls Properties Approved

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague's selectboard kicked off 2015 by signing what amounts to a purchase and sale agreement with developer Robert Obear involving four buildings at the center of Millers Falls. These buildings, 26-28, 30, 34 and 34R East Main Street, include the Powers Block, and have been in extreme disrepair for over a decade.

The town recently acquired control of the buildings and now is in the final stages of selling them to Obear under its Urban Homesteading program. The process involved a

request for proposals and a detailed plan for use of the structures.

Obear has proposed installing a restaurant, other commercial spaces and some residential units in the four buildings. The town recently approved a request to the state for an additional liquor license to accommodate Obear's plan.

The agenda for Monday night's meeting indicated that the selectboard would approve both a real estate agreement and so-called land development agreement (LDA). However the documents presented by town planner Walter Ramsey

see MONTAGUE page A5



MARK HUDYMA PHOTO

Montague signed a real estate agreement with Robert Obear for the development of 34, 30 and 26-28 East Main Street, pictured here from left to right.

Best-Selling Author Wows Kids With Icky Books



LYN CLARK PHOTO

Jerry Pallotta, at right, works with a volunteer at the Irving Elementary School.

By LYN CLARK

IRVING – Jerry Pallotta, the author of some 80-plus nature-themed books for children, wowed an audience of young critics on Tuesday at the Irving Elementary School where he entertained with a fast-paced, fun-filled slide-show presentation.

Pallotta clearly likes children. It wasn't his 72 first cousins and 31 nieces and nephews that started him on the road to writing for children – as he said, "there were KIDS EVERYWHERE" – it was when he started reading the boring "A is for Apple" and "Z is for Zebra" to his own children.

He decided, "I can do that." His

first book was the *Atlantic Ocean Alphabet Book*, then the *Icky Bug Alphabet Book*, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Now his books, which sell in the millions, cover a wide range of topics, all guaranteed to appeal to the young, and choc-o-bloc full of interesting and often esoteric facts. Pallotta researches extensively for his books and designs the page layouts himself, but hires several artists to create the images which are predictably colorful and appealing.

His audience for his first presentation on Tuesday – there followed a second one for older students – included preschool through second-grade children, who were totally

see AUTHOR page A8

Putting the River Back to Where It Is

By TIA FATTARUSO

GILL – The successful completion of a Fall River spillway removal project on December 17 and 18 has reconnected 35 to 40 miles of that river to fish and wildlife. American Rivers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), the MA Division of Ecological Restoration and the Connecticut River Watershed Council partnered in the effort to remove International Paper No. 2 dam, which was located approximately ¼ mile upstream from what was once known as Factory Hollow Village, and spanned the Fall River between Gill on the east and Greenfield on the west.

"This project restores access to, and particularly benefits, the migratory species sea lamprey and American eel, and opens additional access for brook trout and other resident fish," said Amy Singler, associate director of river restoration at American Rivers.

Singler noted that the almost 40 miles of habitat gained made this dam removal especially beneficial, adding that restoring the natural flow of a river not only opens up river-way to fish, but "fundamentally puts the river back to where it is without impediment."

The river consequently transports sediment and nutrients, so that wildlife such as otter, mink and salamander, among others, "gain a lot of access to high quality habitat."

According to Karl Meyer, a local journalist and blogger, blue-back herring, which have been spotted spawning in the mouth of the Fall River in the past, also stand to benefit from dam removal projects, as do the endangered short-nose sturgeon.

"It's a great thing to remove a small dam that opens up habitat," said Meyer, "but this little river is left on its own when flow is stopped in the Connecticut by the Turners Falls Dam."

Meyer emphasized that migratory fish have their best chance if real flows are mandated by the government in the Connecticut.

The Fall River dam, which had been made of mortar, stone, and wood, was one of around 2,700 dams on the Connecticut River watershed, and one of over 80,000 dams in Massachusetts, over 3 feet high. "The majority of those dams are no longer serving their original

purposes," Singler said.

American Rivers only works with willing dam owners, such as those of the dam removed in Gill, which had been partially breached for a long time, according to Singler.

Prior to the dam's removal, it was approximately 170 feet long and 20 feet high. The pond extended about 300 feet upstream from the dam before leveling off to its boundary with the Fall River at 722 feet from the dam. There was never a mill on site, though there was a now-extant gate house.

The deconstruction took only two days, cost less

see SPILLWAY page A4



The dam circa 1900, and what was left of the spillway last year. Courtesy of the Ed Gregory Archive and Massachusetts Historical Commission.

The Montague Reporter

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A History That Matters

Black lives matter. That statement needs no qualification.

As a confrontation that began last August between residents and police in a poor Missouri suburb casts widening ripples through American society, it's a good time for us all to check in on where we stand.

Segregation is a knotty subject, especially since it was legally abolished fifty years ago. But it hasn't exactly worn off either.

A century ago, 90% of African Americans still lived in the Southern states. Many moved to industrial cities in the North, but in the wake of deindustrialization and divestment, the flow of today's great migration is southward.

If that is surprising, we should remember: even slavery wasn't just a Southern phenomenon.

We know that residents of Greenfield owned slaves: in a case that went to the state's Supreme Judicial Court at Northampton in 1796, the town of Shelburne was held not responsible for the welfare of African-American paupers born there, because their parents had been enslaved in Greenfield.

Right around that time, a two-pronged industrial revolution split our country's workforce geographically.

After advances in processing cotton allowed for twentyfold increases in productivity, a million enslaved workers were forcibly relocated into the deep South. Cotton became the country's chief export, but the sheer abundance of the material also drove a transformation in the river valleys of New England.

In 1814 Franklin County's first spinning mill was built in Colrain, and by the 1860s, Joseph Griswold presided over a thriving village of 100 looms.

At Fitchburg, an enterprising manufacturer named Alvah Crocker found a way to use waste cotton fiber in paper. His paper mills became the largest in the nation, and he would go on to found the industrial village at Turners Falls, among other glories.

In the 1870s Griswold built a large mill at Turners Falls, a structure familiar to us now as the ruined "Railroad Salvage" building.

These looms, and many other mills and shops, were worked under brutal conditions by European immigrants, a great many of whose descendants still live in the county. Over time, these ethnic groups were said to "Americanize," and many were encouraged to put down rural roots in the North.

In this process, many bought into the segregation of black migrants into the city: their exclusion from the Northern land base. The impact of this history persists.

According to the 2010 census, 13.6% of Americans identified themselves as black or African American, either alone or in combination with another identity. In Massachusetts, the figure was 7.8%. In Franklin County, 1.9%.

Montague, which includes Turners, was a little higher than that, 2.3%. And it is rising.

"We are a very small community," our police chief, Chip Dodge, said in a recent statement. "Many of us have chosen to live here because of this. Being a member of a small community has so many advantages."

We agree, and we were glad to see the chief's very public promise that no one will be discriminated against by his department, and his call for the community to work together to stay safe.

But that part about choice nags at our conscience. Are most of us here by choice? If so, why exactly do still so few black people choose to embrace the advantages of small, rural Northern towns?

In moments like this, when our nation's racial divides take center stage – protests in 170 cities against the perceived value of black life, or black death, in law enforcement – what is it like to be one of those 2.3%? To be part of that 1.0% in Gill, 0.9% in Erving, 2.6% in Wendell and 2.2% in Leverett?

Honestly: we don't know.

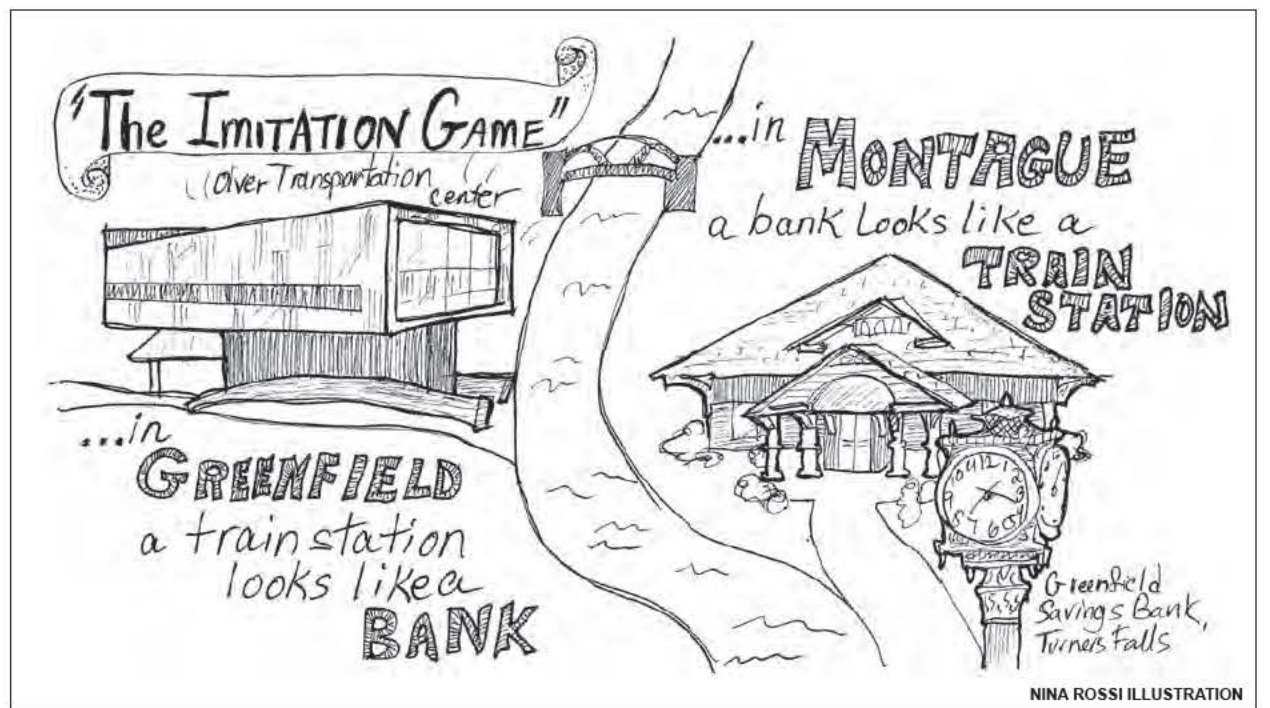
The production and editorial team at the *Montague Reporter* are entirely white, and so is our active base of writers. We are less racially diverse than the Montague Police, and a great deal less so than the neighborhood our office is in.

We aspire to represent the community, but we have failed to effectively invite, include or retain any of the relatively small – but growing – number of people of color, African American and otherwise, who live and work in our towns.

So to use this platform to editorialize too extensively about current events would feel inauthentic.

We have been sternly reminded, by black protestors as well as by numerous contemporary black journalists and essayists, that their lives matter.

We agree, and as a changing newspaper in a changing community, we will have to figure out what to do about it.



Letters to the Editors

Less Than Electrified in Wendell

My name was used in a recent article regarding a couple in Wendell who have moved into a non-electric apartment on their property.

Although I support the efforts of this couple to live a low impact lifestyle, I was dismayed by the divisive tone of the article, as well as by the significant amount of incorrect and incomplete information.

The tone of the article suggests an "us vs. them" dynamic that I do not believe is a prevalent aspect of our town dynamics, and I do not wish to be associated with such a suggestion.

It would seem that a publication such as the *Montague Reporter*, which strives to serve the population of the towns in which it is distributed, should make a more thorough effort to edit an article that is presented as news, or to clearly indicate that it is an opinion piece and place it on the editorial page.

Robert Shulman
Wendell

I am glad the interesting saga of Conservation Oriented Housing (COH) has been reported. I joined the Wendell board of health last February, after much of the COH debate and work had occurred.

I want to readjust perspective about the makeup of the Board at that time. There were members who helped conceptualize and legalize progression towards acquiring the necessary COH permits. Amy Simmons, Jim Thornley and Jen Christian are those members.

There was also a COH support committee, whose members I do not know. Innocent about my role on the board, I did what was imminently required at each meeting.

COH happened to be on the agenda, an original timely item which I believed to be a proposal that actively supported alternatives to environmental degradation.

I want to appreciate other board members of the past, who, while they were serving the public, declined to support the COH divergence from state law. They were trying to do

their jobs according to how the law was interpreted to them.

We thank our town political members even when we disagree, for our town tries to prioritize and continues to function well with team workers.

The learning curve remains steep.

Nina Keller
Wendell Board of Health

I think the dream of living with low impact implemented by Jonathan and Susan von Ranson, as recently described (*MR* Vol.13#10, "In Wendell, Earth Day Comes at Last") is magnificent. That the dream is finally realized is a testament to their determination and the work of lots of people in Wendell, and I believe some celebration is deserved.

However, speaking as a longtime supporter of the paper, I think the Reporter erred. The piece was presented as a regular news item, but it felt like an opinion piece both in tone and substance. I would have liked to have seen it labeled as a "Perspective" piece.

I view the work as a minor blip in what has otherwise been excellent local coverage. But the piece seemed also in places to create an "us vs. them" perspective which I do not believe is helpful. And in an imperfect project which ultimately led to a near perfect realization of a dream, there were many shared imperfections and much shared sweat equity.

Rather than taking the opportunity to unite our community, the piece instead might have served to open old wounds rather unnecessarily. What a missed opportunity!

Ray DiDonato
Wendell

In the December 18 issue David Detmold's look at the background of the recent approval of our apartment, for dramatic effect, emphasized certain divisions that are past and gone in our minds.

Mainly, Harry Williston, the former board chair whom, yes, the two of us didn't always feel warm and

fuzzy toward, stood up for fairness in the enforcement of regulations, and we of course respect that. We think his spirit helped make the new regulations better.

Generally, the article caught how we and Wendell, an it's-right-let's-get-it-done town for sure, together managed to legalize the idea of a non-electric dwelling.

A few omissions and corrections: Jenny Fyler's name was misspelled. As the first pro-simple living candidate for the board of health, she has our thanks.

Chairperson Amy Simmons had to leave the board for family reasons, but before she did was instrumental in focusing the board on what became the Conservation-Oriented Housing regulations. (Amy, a nurse, once said "When simple living is done right, it's holy.")

Jeny Christian, her colleague on the board, also deserves mention for her enthusiasm and grit. The other members involved all were mentioned in the article.

Glen Ayers, currently the FRCOG Regional Health Agent, and formerly the health agent for Wendell, acted as a volunteer consultant to the board and helped craft key parts of the program to make sure that it met state requirements while still allowing for alternative ways to protect human health and the environment.

A reader might infer from David's article that we charge our toothbrush and laptop in the apartment, and that would be incorrect. The batteries are charged in the workshop, a space next to the apartment. Our apartment really is non-electric!

(The object isn't perfection, but just to draw an ecologically-minded line. The deed restriction for the apartment is worded, "There shall be no installation of grid wiring or any electrical system other than incidental.")

Our warm thanks to David and the *Montague Reporter* for the coverage and editorial support over the years.

Jonathan and Susan von Ranson
Wendell

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JESSICA LARKIN ILLUSTRATION

LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

Join Scott Cote, **Franklin County Registrar of Deeds**, as he gives an inside look at his department and the services/information it can provide to area residents and home owners. Questions on the Homestead Act? Now is your chance to find out how easy it can be and the protection such a simple document can provide to the homeowner.

Held in the Community room of Greenfield Savings Bank, Turners Falls on Saturday, January 10, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

It's **Winter Trails Day** on Saturday, January 10, from 1 until 4 p.m. at the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center. Winter Trails Day offers older children and adults new to snow sports the chance to try snowshoeing and cross country skiing for free, and to discover the great fitness and social benefits of these easy-to-learn winter sports.

Winter Trails Day involves almost 100 resorts and Nordic Centers nationwide, and gets 11,000 kids and adults on the snow each year.

At Northfield Mountain **free clinics for first-time skiers** begin at 1, 2 and 3 p.m. and last for 45 minutes. Twenty-minute long **snowshoe clinics** are offered at 1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m. for those who have never tried the sport.

Clinic participants must arrive 30 minutes in advance of their scheduled start time to sign in and pick up equipment. This is a free event and is appropriate for ages 8 and older. Please call to pre-register at 1-800-859-2960.

On Saturday morning, January 10, Mass Slavery Apology will present an interactive workshop, **Race and Class: Past and Present Connections** as part of its free monthly program series.

In this workshop, participants will examine how and why race and class are connected and will learn

about historical and current resistance. Presenter Angela Berkfield, the director of ACT for Social Justice and a member of the Root Social Justice Center in Brattleboro, is an activist committed to working collaboratively to bring about justice and equity for all people.

The workshop will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 43 Silver Street in Greenfield. Doors open at 9:30. Admission is free; donations are welcomed. To reserve childcare, RSVP by January 3 with number and ages of children to 413-625-2951 or email@massslaveryapology.org.

Mass Slavery Apology offers free monthly programs, including workshops, films, and other activities. The organizers hope the series will build a deeper understanding of racism and racial justice while promoting a greater appreciation for our diverse society.

Turners Falls Knights of Columbus are sponsoring a **Youth Free Throw Championship**. All girls and boys ages 9 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2015 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship.

The local competition will be held at the Sheffield School Gymnasium on Saturday, January 10, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The competition is free, and winners of the age brackets for both the girls and boys divisions will move on to the regional competition held in February.

The KoC Free Throw Championship is sponsored annually, with winners progressing through local, district and state competitions. Boys and girls 9 to 14 years of age are eligible to participate and will compete in their respective age divisions. Last year more than 120,000 sharpshooters participated in over 3,600 local competitions.

All contestants on the local level are recognized for their participation in the event. Participants are required to furnish proof of age and written parental consent. For entry forms or additional information contact Joseph Vias at 774-4520. In past years there was an equal share of girls and boys, and fun was had by all.

The First Universalist Parish of North Dana will sponsor a **free**

public concert of brass music at St. James Episcopal Church in Greenfield on Sunday, January 11, at 3 p.m.

The Pioneer Valley Brass will perform a wide variety of specially arranged music including standards, traditional winter music, pop tunes and movie themes. This concert is the 762nd in a series of vespers programs funded by a trust started in the 1920s by members of the First Universalist Parish of North Dana, before the Parish was forced to leave for the creation of the Quabbin Reservoir to provide drinking water for Boston.

Vespers programs are sponsored by the First Universalist Parish of North Dana periodically throughout the year at various churches and nursing homes throughout the Quabbin Region.

Delight the senses: a **call for original poetry submissions** for "Love Your Food, Love Your Co-op" Poetry Reading on Friday, February 13, 6 to 8 p.m. on the mezzanine at Green Fields Market at 144 Main Street, possible publication in co-op's newsletter, "The New Beet," or being displayed in the store. Co-op members and non-members, published poets, non-published poets alike, bring on your talents.

Falling near Valentine's Day, the event's theme includes love, friends met at the co-op, romance, or an ode to your favorite treat. Limit 3 poems. Haiku, children's poetry welcome. Featured poet for reading to be announced, followed by submitters reading one poem each. Audience to vote for people's choice award; prizes will be given. Refreshments served.

Send up to 3 poems to event coordinators Laura Rodley at laurarodley@hotmail.com or Faith Kindness at fdk617@gmail.com. The deadline is February 1.

Save the date for a **Wine & Canvas event to benefit the Montague Reporter**: Tuesday, January 27 at 6 p.m. at the French King Entertainment Center in Erving.

We'll have more information on that in next week's paper!

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

CLARIFICATIONS

A couple things we touched on in our December 18 article on buildings in the orbit of public ownership by the town of Montague (*MR* Vol.13#10, "Progress – and Many Question Marks – on Town-Owned Buildings") deserve some clarification.

Of St. Anne's Rectory, we wrote that "Boundary lines had been drawn right down the middle of the building which had been, perhaps, illegally, separated from the church next door..." Apparently that line had been drawn down the middle of a garage between the two buildings. As indicated in the article, the issue was resolved. A feasibility study that would reutilize St. Anne's church and rectory for a new library is currently in the final proposal stage, pending approval by the Board of Selectmen.

The Powers Block, in case it was unclear, is only one building of the four adjacent properties in Millers Falls the town is offering through its Urban Homesteading program (see article, page A1).



More Letters to the Editors

Thanks Due For Race Help

On Thursday, January 1, Montague Parks & Recreation held their Annual Sawmill River 10K Run in Montague Center. Approximately 176 runners from the entire region participated in this major fundraising event that supports our Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program.

The race would not have been possible without the investment of time, energy, resources, and funding from many within our fine community.

We would like to thank A.H. Rist Insurance Co., Red Fire Farm, Turn It Up Music, Greenfield Savings Bank, Renaissance Builders, and Judd Wire for their generous financial support.

Thanks also to the Montague Common Hall, the Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club, and the First Congregational Church of Montague Center for much needed sup-

plies, materials and other services.

As many of you know, volunteer assistance is essential to the success of an event of this magnitude. Therefore, considerable appreciation goes out to the Montague Parks & Recreation Commissioners, The Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, FRCOG's Community Emergency Response Team, the Montague Highway Department, Montague Police, and the countless number of volunteers who spent a good portion of their New Year's Day helping us out during registration and at the finish line.

Finally, we would like to thank the runners who participated in the Sawmill Run. We appreciate your support of MPRD programs, and look forward to seeing you in 2016!

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

No Nukes – Yes Trains!

On the same day the Vermont Yankee reactor was "unplugged," the train through Greenfield was reinstated. This is interesting irony.

When I read of Vernon officials, nuke workers and business owners complaining about how to adapt to the anticipated loss of revenue, I object. A judicious parent will teach a child how to economize even a small allowance, and plan spending and saving for some desired treasure.

We have known the reactor was to shut down for years. Can the town of Vernon plead innocent of that fore-knowledge? After 40 years of tax bounty, have the financial masterminds of that town not planned ahead with rainy day funds? Have nuclear workers, paid far above the minimum wage, not done the same with their savings accounts and considerations of job changes?

Farmers confront the unpredictability of crops and seasons every

day. They have learned how to diversify so a chicken farmer begins to think creatively and opens a farm stand, initiates a compost service, a petting zoo, maple syrup products, woodworking talents, catering business...

In our changing environmental society, we can adapt and diversify, create different ways to use our skills, or bellyache when we don't know how to fit in to a changing economy.

I truly empathize with any family that must relocate when they have established ties and comfort in a community. It is far easier to invent a new logo for a local tee shirt than to bemoan the loss of a radioactive logo currently sold at a Vernon shop.

They have had a long time to think creatively. I hope they will not boast "High Level Radioactive Waste Capital of VT."

**Nina Keller
Wendell**

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SPILLWAY from page A1

than \$30,000, and was carried out by SumCo Eco-contracting. The remoteness of the site and lack of other infrastructure to consider, such as bridges or pipelines, made the removal easier than otherwise.

But the project was still 3 to 4 years in the making, due to the processes of planning, permitting and funding, which, along with help from the Gill and Greenfield historic commissions, incurred additional costs. Funding came from USFWS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Martha Naley, biologist with the USFWS, presented for the spillway removal project at the joint public hearing, ensuring that the deconstruction would be in compliance with the MA Wetlands Protection Act, according to Maureen Pollock, assistant planner, Greenfield

Conservation Committee.

Pollock praised Naley's thorough analysis, and called the removal a "great restoration project."

Naley, echoing Singler, said that while we once used the power of rivers to build, "the original purpose of many dams has been overtaken by technology. We don't often use candles anymore to read by."

"Sometimes I think we need to plan for the future - fish, habitat, clean water, natural sediment transport - so rivers don't get clogged and have to create new channels. This is a legacy for people to leave: a permanent, positive change to the ecosystem," Naley said, referring to willing dam owners who are interested in considering having those dams removed.

The Massachusetts Historical

Commission provided a host of information on the dam's history. The Montague Paper Company was manufacturing news printing paper, supercalendered book paper and refined wood pulp in the late nineteenth century to help meet the growing demands of newspaper companies and other presses. The quality of their paper was widely acknowledged.

At the time the mill was receiving water through a pipe from a spring on the other side of the Connecticut River at a rate of 3,000 gallons per minute, believed to be the largest supply of spring water received by any mill in the country.

It is unclear if the dam was contributing to that supply or not, but deeds suggest the dam was built by the company between December 1883 and August 1888. Between

1898 and 1908, the International Paper Co. consolidated 17 paper mills, the Montague Paper Company among them.

In 1925, the pond water from the No. 2 dam was being used for fire protection for the paper mill.

"Dams are an important part of our history. We look for where there is an opportunity to remove a dam that really benefits fish and wildlife," Singler concluded. She said there are no other dams currently slated to be removed in Franklin County, though American Rivers is always open to new projects.

For more information on dams, go to www.americanrivers.org, www.fws.gov, or www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/der/.

For Karl Meyer's coverage of the Connecticut River watershed and more, see www.karl-meyerwriting.com.



NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Tax Rate Set

By DAVID DETMOLD

It's a new year with a new tax rate for Gill property owners.

At a short meeting on December 29, the selectboard approved a new rate \$16.85 per thousand dollars of valuation, up \$.07 from last year's rate of \$16.78. Administrative assistant Ray Purington, in a follow up phone interview, said the new rate would impact the average single family homeowner in Gill with an increase of about \$13.00.

Purington cited figures from the assessors showing the value of the average single family home in Gill has declined only fractionally from \$191,985 in FY'14 to \$191,954 in FY'15. The average tax bill under last year's rate was \$3,221. Under the new rate, the average tax bill this year will be \$3,234.

The selectboard chose to keep a single tax rate in effect for all classes of property taxpayers in Gill again this year.

In other news, when an estimated 67% increase in Western Mass Electric Company's rates go into effect the town will be paying more, of course, for its municipal electricity bill - but this fact also affects the length of time by which Gill will realize a full payback for its planned investment in purchasing the 44 light poles in town from WMECo, and converting them to energy conserving LED bulbs.

Under the old WMECo rate structure, it would have taken Gill 7.6 years to realize full payback from its roughly \$35,000 investment in LED streetlights. Under the higher rates, it will only take 6.3 years to realize that payback, according to Purington.

The town recently tapped into the Green Communities grant for approximately \$32,500 to insulate the town hall and the Riverside municipal building. After the LED streetlight conversion, there will be about \$58,000 remaining in the town's DOER Green Community grant fund, Purington said.

The old sodium streetlights consume about 23,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually. The new LED lights are estimated to consume just 10,047 kilowatt hours annually. Tupper Brown from the Gill energy commission said residents will not notice much change in the illumination from the new bulbs.

The money to purchase and retrofit the streetlights will come from the town's Green Communities grant from the state Department of Energy Resources.

The town has filed a grant application with the US Department of Agriculture to study engineering solutions to address issues with the elementary school well, which has tested positive for coliform bacteria and shown slightly elevated levels of manganese which has drawn the interest of the Department of Environmental Protection (and led parents of many students to send their children to school with bottled water).

After design solutions have been arrived at, Purington said the town may seek additional funding from the USDA, which may require a town match, in order to implement necessary improvements to the well.

Meanwhile, Purington said the well is being tested monthly by East National Water out of Palmer. "Anytime within the next 12 months the well tests positive for coliform, we will have 21 days to implement treatment," Purington added.

The board sent a thank you letter to Leo Parent and Mark Fitzpatrick of the Central Franklin County Veterans Services District, soon to be disbanded and merged with the new Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Services District, which will serve veterans in all 26 county towns, plus Plainfield.

"Both Leo and Mark have done a great job," providing Gill veterans with access to their benefits, claims, job searches, and other services over the many years they have worked for the Central Franklin district, Purington said.

The Gill fire department has received two fire safety awareness grants from the state Department of Fire Services, one for \$3,523 for student awareness programs, and one for \$2,495 for senior awareness programs.

The annual disbursement from the Quintus Allen fund, a trust established long ago for the benefit of Gill elementary school students, will give Gill principal Cathleen Bailer \$3,633 in discretionary funds to use for student enrichment programs this year.

Maureen Parzych, of Ben Hale Road, was appointed to the cable

you are invited to a screening of
BROKEN RAINBOW

a fundraiser for
BLACK MESA INDIGENOUS SUPPORT

Sunday, January 11, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at
The Brick House Community Resource Center,
24 Third Street, Turners Falls.

This 1985 documentary film tells the story of the late 20th century forced removal of 12,000 Dineh (Navajo) people from their homes by the US government to make way for oil, coal, gas and uranium companies.



People on Black Mesa continue to resist removal, despite damage to the land and water by energy companies and the government's ongoing efforts to destroy their means of survival by impounding livestock. Black Mesa Indigenous Support is a volunteer organization which works directly with Dineh resisters to coordinate support activities.

This fundraiser will also help cover travel expenses for a Franklin County resident who herds sheep in the winter for elders resisting forced relocation from their homes. After the film, we'll hear from Aaron St. Jean about his experiences providing support to elders on the land as a shepherd in the winter, and have some time for discussion.

Donate what you can; no one turned away. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. Wheelchair accessible space. Kids welcome. Some snacks and tea will be available, as will literature about decolonization and information about the situation at Black Mesa. See supportblackmesa.org for more information about Black Mesa Indigenous Support.

access committee.

Fourteen sewer users from among the 114 property owners who use the Riverside sewer district are delinquent on their sewer bills. The selectboard approved a motion to commit the unpaid bills as sewer liens on their real estate bills, Purington said, in order to facilitate collection of the \$10,273.96 in unpaid bills.

In John Ward's absence, selectboard chair Randy Crochier thanked Ward - a long time anti-nuclear activist - and all others who have worked over the years to

achieve the permanent shutdown of the Vermont Yankee nuclear reactor, which was taken off line by Entergy Corporation in the closing days of 2014, after 43 years of atom splitting power generation.

The radioactive wastes stockpiled in the plant's seventh story cooling pool, and on the floodplain of the Connecticut River, will now become the focus of concern for local and state officials monitoring the closure of Vermont Yankee, and for the residents who live downwind of that reactor.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Two Public Hearings... But No Public!

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard's December 17 meeting continued the interchange of letters regarding low and intrusive helicopter flights over town, especially the flight that circled a memorial service that was taking place on the town common September 26, 2014.

Selectboard member Jeffrey Pooser brought in a draft of a letter he had written to Major Allain of the Massachusetts National Guard responding to Major Allain's letter to United States representative Jim McGovern about that flight. (See sidebar.)

Wendell's three selectboard members signed the letter and it was sent.

Where's the Public?

The meeting was preceded by a public hearing at 6:30 about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), part of the process for Wendell to get CDBG money. That money can be used for housing rehabilitation loans, to bring non-code compliant houses closer to code.

Preference is given to owner occupied homes and the loans do not have to be repaid as long as the property does not change hands, and when a loan is paid back the money would go into Wendell's fund available for another loan.

Wendell did not get additional grant money in the last round, but this time there is a regional approach with Erving as the lead town, and along with Wendell, Warwick, New Salem, and Northfield. The CDBG application is due February 13, 2015, and awards will be announced in July.

The hearing was held for public input, but no member of the general public attended.

A second hearing, Wendell's annual tax classification hearing, was held at 8 p.m., also with no member of the general public there. As in other years the assessors, Stephen Broll and Chris Wings, recommended a single tax rate for businesses, homes, and agricultural properties.

The tax rate is set at \$18.96 per thousand, down 22 cents from last year's high rate of \$19.18.

**The tax rate is
set at \$18.96 per
thousand, down 22
cents from last year's
high rate of \$19.18.**

Wendell's excess levy limit is \$400,299.94, which Broll said was a healthy amount. Later in the meeting Pooser said that money borrowed for Wired West and the last mile internet connection would be outside the levy limit.

Super: Buy the Grader!

Highway commission chair Harry Williston came to the meeting to tell board members that highway supervisor Rich Wilder looked at the used grader and decided it was good enough to buy for the town.

Selectboard member Dan Keller told Williston that he and fire captain Asa de Roode had installed house numbers everywhere one was requested, and were ready to return Williston's post hole digger.

Cultural Partnerships

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich read from a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance regarding cultural partnerships.

One in eight residents of the state receives some sort of aid. The letter offers low or free passes to the Boston's Children's museum and many other sites with no limit for low-income people.

Solar Letter

Nina Keller gave the selectboard a proposed letter to governor-elect Charlie Baker. That letter stated that Massachusetts should be getting 20% of its energy from solar generation, and that solar generation should increase by 27% a year. The annual increase now is 5%.

No Pay for Violence Victims

Town counsel, Kopelman and Paige sent the board its response to a sick leave policy for victims of domestic violence. The town has an option to include any time taken up to 15 work days a year, as paid, but Pooser said the default position for such leave is to make it unpaid.

The selectboard voted to approve that option. Town employees may use other paid leave time first.

Girls' Group

Kristen Bernard met the selectboard and asked to use the town hall two Thursdays a month from 3 to 5 p.m. for a fourth grade after-school girls' group. The girls can get there with the school bus and will just play and talk, discuss concerns if they have any.

Board members approved the request.

Heating System Report

Keller summarized a six-page report that town building engineer Jim Slavas had written about the town hall heating system.

The cold air return to the furnace is not functioning which makes the furnace heat air from the unsealed and damp crawl space, rather than air returned from the building's living area as it should. Leaks in the hot air ducts further reduce efficiency.

The report recommended working one step at a time, but overall Slavas projected that the improvements would save the town \$1,400 a year in heating costs. Keller said that Slavas' estimate was probably conservative.

Board members voted to approve the report and send it to the energy committee to approve for possible use of the green community grants money the town has available.

Cookies and Soda Bread

Nancy Aldrich provided the meeting with a large plate of cookies.

At the end of the meeting, selectboard chair Christine Heard reached into her bag and brought out loaves of Irish soda bread, one for every person at the meeting.

MONTAGUE from page A1

indicated that the LDA would wait for approval until the final closing of the transaction, which is scheduled for January 30.

There was some discussion of whether it was really necessary to wait until the end of the month to endorse both agreements, which had been presented to the board by Kopelman & Paige, the town's legal firm.

In the end it was decided to follow the time frame recommended by counsel. According to town administrator Frank Abbondanzio, the document that was approved, the real estate agreement, is similar to a purchase and sale agreement. The LDA will specify in greater detail what the purchaser, Obear, will be required to do as a result of the RFP process.

The discussion, which involved Ramsey, Abbondanzio, and building inspector David Jensen, was brief, in part because the acting chair, Mark Fairbrother, designated as acting chair in Chris Boutwell's absence, did not allow questions from the floor.

More Lots Hawked

In other news, Abbondanzio announced that the town had auctioned off a number of properties earlier in the day, for a total of \$59,000. These included 35 11th Street (\$40,000); 249 Wendell Road (\$7,000); 257 Wendell Road lot 225 (\$6,000); Rear Meadow Road Lot 17 (\$5,500); and West Chestnut Hill Road lot 33 (\$500).

Cane Rack

John Reynolds appeared on the agenda to continue the discussion of the Golden Cane, an award for the oldest citizen in town. The award, or a symbol of it, has been given to the oldest citizen but the cane itself remains in a closet in town hall. Reynolds has encouraged the selectboard to mount the cane in a place that is visible to the public, perhaps with a plaque with the names of present and former recipients.

Reynolds brought with him a cardboard box that showed the size of a potential mounting device, along with a piece of wood to give a sense of the plaque. Mark Fairbrother expressed strong concerns about the safety of any public display, particularly if it was not in one of the town offices. It was noted that a similar cane had been stolen from Greenfield town hall.

Selectboard member Michael Nelson, on the other hand, argued that while displaying the cane certainly involved risk, it was preferable to having the object sit in a closet. Reynolds was directed to return to the board soon with more details of the proposal, including its cost.

Federal Money

At its December 22 meeting, the selectboard held a hearing on the prospective FY'15 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) process. The grant's activities will focus on the rehabilitation of six buildings in the village of Lake Pleasant and in Rutters Park at the center of the village.

According to MJ Adams, the application was originally to fund design and construction. But Adams, Ramsey, and parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz decided "to step back" and develop a master plan, similar to the one used in the recent Unity Park project.

Adams has initially estimated \$60,000 for the planning process.

In addition to the park study and housing rehabilitation, the block grant will continue to fund the early childhood education program at the Montague Catholic Social Ministries in downtown Turners Falls, and the Meals on Wheels program for the elderly.

A number of questions were asked about Montague Center, which has not been the target of CDBG funds. John Reynolds pointed to the potential needs of low-income farmers in the neighborhood's outlying regions. Adams noted that CDBG grants had become more competitive, with low-income neighborhoods receiving higher point scores in the application.

On January 5, the selectboard endorsed a transfer of \$8,433 from "program income" to the 2013 CDBG program. This was accomplished by signing a "Budget and Program Revision" form which brought the block grant itself up to \$434,839. The additional money will be used primarily for roof repair and replacement on a number of buildings being rehabilitated under the block grant.

Sewer Lining

Tom Bergeron requested that the board award \$81,712 to the company Insituform Technologies for relining sewer pipe along Millers Falls Road and Turnpike Road. The funds for the project had been approved by town meeting subject to a bidding process. The need to reline older asbestos sewer pipes was highlighted by the recent breakdown of the system at the entrance to the industrial park.

DPW head Tom Bergeron stated that the department, in conjunction with the consulting firm CDM Smith, had "camera-eyed" the line from just west of the industrial park to Turnpike Road and then down Turnpike Road to what he called the Rabbit Hill area. The funds will primarily be used to reline pipe in this area that has become degraded. Bergeron stated that Crescent Street in Millers Falls had also been inspected, but that pipe lining "looked brand new."

Other Business

Also on December 22, the board approved a transfer of a liquor license from Jake's Tavern to Hubie's Tavern. The popular bar restaurant is at 66 Avenue A in downtown Turners Falls. Shawn M. Hubert of Gill will be the new manager.

The board voted to declare both downtown Millers Falls and the Turners Falls Historic-Industrial District as areas of "disrepair and disinvestment." This is necessary to apply for funds under the federal slum and blight program.

The board voted to extend the contract for the cable access provider, MCCI, until June 30. Mark Fairbrother, who sits on the Cable Advisory Committee, noted that the CAC had made significant progress in its negotiations with Comcast.

However, he said, the CAC would need more time to complete this process, and would then need to revisit its recommendations concerning the local access contract.

In response to a question from the audience, Fairbrother stated that "the board received recommendations from the CAC, and there was some fairly broad viewpoints that more work needed to be done."

He also said that "it's gone on long enough. We don't want to stretch it out any longer than we have to."



Wendell Responds to the National Guard

Dear Major Allain,

Congressman Jim McGovern recently shared the letter you sent him regarding the September 26, 2014 helicopter flyover that disrupted a memorial service on the Wendell Town Common. The incident in question was very distressing to those attending the service; and we, in our role as members of the Selectboard, felt compelled to find answers as to who was responsible.

We greatly appreciate your frank and open response, and hope that the apology you offered will bring some degree of comfort to the family and friends of the deceased.

We would like to mention, however, that your letter indicates 'the flight path passed over the site' of the memorial service. Perhaps you were not made aware that the helicopter did not simply pass over the site. It circled several times and made it impossible to hear what was being said at the event for a period of several minutes.

If the purpose of the flight was to conduct a drug interdiction mission, it seems fairly clear that one pass over the area would have been sufficient to conclude

there was nothing related to the mission happening on the Town Common.

That being said we would also like to note that of all the parties involved in this operation – the DEA, the Massachusetts State Police, and the Army National Guard – yours was the only agency to have the courtesy to acknowledge their role in the matter and to express regret for having upset the service. For that we offer our sincere thanks.

Wendell has been the target of these helicopter flyovers in the past, and despite our belief that they are a flagrant violation of our citizens' right to privacy and a gross waste of resources that could be put to much better use, we expect we will continue to be the target of such flights in the future.

We hope that the incident with the memorial service will, at the very least, trigger some sort of procedural review so that future missions do not make the same mistake and cause unnecessary grief for any other families.

Thank you for your response.

Sincerely,
The Wendell Selectboard

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LEVERETT from page A1

Ingram, in an interview with the selectboard on Tuesday, was poised and diplomatic as he articulated the approach he would take in running the department.

"I'm a very open person. I've always had an open door policy. We want to work together as a team, and have these talks before we have the conflicts. I am very supportive of everybody on the staff. I need to earn their trust, and be deserving of their trust in return. It is a constant learning process – and holding yourself in check."

Ingram was asked how he would handle a situation where he as fire chief might come in conflict with the selectboard over policy – the Leverett fire chief is a strong chief by Massachusetts statute, and as such will have authority to set policy for his department.

He replied, "There will be disagreements. We have to look at both sides, and work it out. The fire department is about being a team. I find that the same thing is true with the selectboard. We all work together as a team for the public."

Ingram, who was born and raised in North Amherst, said he had family roots in Leverett and personal ties with members of the Leverett fire department, with whom he has responded to many calls on mutual aid.

Ingram said he would be available to Leverett for emergencies, at least by cell phone, even during his shifts in Amherst.

His grandmother was born on Cave Hill Road, where the family farm – Marvel Farm – was located. His family owned a popular coffee shop in Amherst, where he joined the Amherst Fire Department just out of high school, in 1988.

He received a masters degree in fire science and administration from Anna Maria College in Paxton, MA, and attended the National Fire Academy, an executive fire program in Emmitsburg, MD.

"I would be very lucky to work with the Leverett Fire Department. I know all of them. It would be an honor to work with them," Ingram said.

Ingram said he would work to ensure that members of the department were trained to "the level of ability needed to respond to any emergency."

He said he intends to continue in his job with the Amherst Fire Department, which requires him to work a 24 hours on, 24 hours off, 24 hours on, followed by five days off schedule as captain.

Ingram said he would be available to Leverett for emergencies, at least by cell phone, even during his working shifts in Amherst.

He also said, "I would like to meet with Chief Moruzzi and work with him to figure out where the department is today, and where it would like to go in the future."

Civello Retirement

In other news, DeeAnn Civello, who has served the town as treasurer and tax collector for 33 years, announced she would retire by the end of this summer.

Civello said she had first been hired as town clerk, in November of 1980, when the selectboard invited her to come down and talk about the sudden opening left by the departure of Harriet Perry.

That was on a Monday before Thanksgiving when she was six months pregnant with her first child. They hired her on the spot.

The next day, she discovered the town's bank account was \$14,000 overdrawn – it turned out to have been just a problem of cash flow – and she dove into the role of treasurer, as well.

Deb Jacobsen took time to help Civello learn accounting skills, and she soon began working on computerizing the town census. By April of 1981, with a newborn in arms, she stepped down as town clerk, and has staffed the treasurer and collector's office ever since.

Civello is known for working diligently, late at night, when the town hall is quiet, even on a New Year's Eve, like the the year before last when she was still totaling figures as the calendar changed at midnight.

As it happened, the newly installed Adams furnaces in town hall malfunctioned that night, and Civello narrowly missed a serious case of carbon monoxide poisoning. And the tax bills continued to go out on time.

Private Trash Hauling?

Facing the May resignation of transfer station superintendent Neil Brazeau, the selectboard began a discussion of the possibility of switching over to a private hauler for curbside pickup, rather than continue operations at the difficult-to-staff transfer station.

Brazeau's dad, Rich, selectboard chair, acknowledged that the transfer station "is a great meeting place," where Rattlesnake Gutter Trust earns nickels for land preservation from recyclables, and where many residents enjoy the book swap shed and other amenities.

But residents could wind up spending less in fees, and save on gas, or discontinue their own private trash hauling services if the town switched to a Shutesbury-style system of weekly pickup.

**NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE****Crunch Time For Elementary Regionalization**

By DAVID DETMOLD

"This is a monumental decision," Union 28 superintendent Bob Mahler told Leverett school committee members on a chilly Monday night in the Leverett Elementary School library this week, referring to coming votes on a proposal to administratively move the Leverett and Shutesbury elementary schools into the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District.

That move, if approved by the APRS school committee at a vote expected as soon as next Tuesday, January 13, at a meeting scheduled at the Amherst High School library, will first require the approval of town meetings in the four towns – all of which are already joined in a regional school district for the education of their middle and high school students.

Creating a plan for a region that could include Shutesbury and Leverett with Amherst and Pelham in a unified K-12 district has been, recently, the work of a four town appointed regional school district planning board, and more recently by a subcommittee of the regional school committee known as the Regional Agreement Working Group.

Leverett's representatives to that group are Kip Fonsh from the school committee, Ann Delano from the finance committee, and Julie Shively from the selectboard.

After nearly three years of work, that four-town committee is putting the final touches on proposed amendments to the APRS regional agreement that will determine changes in district governance and financing, spell out conditions for any possible changes to future use or closure of school buildings, and guide the integration of educational programs and curriculum in a unified K-12 district.

Leverett school committee chair Kip Fonsh, a strong advocate of the proposed consolidation, said that the working document should be ready to present to the regional school committee at next week's meeting.

But he declined to answer a general question about the underlying philosophy informing the committee's work in the area of school governance, for a proposed district that would include the three smaller towns' elementary schools in the same region with Amherst, saying the working group's draft document will not be made public until the regional committee votes it up or down.

Fonsh told his colleagues on the Leverett school committee this week, "We are coming to the end of our third year of work. The final draft was to go out earlier this evening. We will make a final presentation to the regional school committee meeting," next Tuesday, "and after that the Regional Agreement Working Group goes out of existence."

If the APRS regional school com-

mittee votes to adopt the proposed amendments, the amended regional agreement would then be presented to town meetings in the four member towns.

"We are hoping the vote will be at spring town meeting," said Fonsh, who added, "If it passes in all four towns, the new configuration will go into effect in the fall of 2016."

If town meeting votes on the proposed amended regional agreement are all positive, Fonsh said, "Then this school committee will have to take a vote on leaving Union 28."

School committee member Alan Mully asked, "What if this group votes no?" after positive town meeting votes to adopt the amended regional agreement with Amherst, Pelham and Shutesbury.

"Then you will have a lot of explaining to do to town meeting," said Fonsh.

Meanwhile, acting on his own initiative, superintendent Mahler has set up informational sessions for community members on the proposed changes to elementary school administration in Leverett on January 7, and in Shutesbury, at the elementary school library, at 6:30 next Tuesday, January 13.

He referred to them on Monday as "Hey, what does this mean?" sessions, although he acknowledged he would be facilitating a discussion without having clear answers, with the working draft of the proposed regional amendment still not available to the public.

But it is clear a decision by Leverett or Shutesbury to leave the superintendency union with Erving, Wendell and New Salem, whose elementary schools have been joined together under School Union 28 for more than a century, would have a deep impact on Union 28 and the elementary schools that may remain under its administration.

"This is a cloud over Union 28, no question about it. I get paid to defend Union 28," said Mahler. "I think it is important for people to talk about this."

Fonsh said the Regional Agreement Working Group (RAWG) anticipates holding public hearings in all four towns once the text of the amended agreement is finalized and approved by the regional school committee. Due to the timing of Mahler's planned informational sessions, Fonsh said it was unfortunate, but RAWG members would be unable to attend either session.

Less In Grants

In other news, recently hired Union 28 business administrator Matthew Galman pleaded inexperience over an error he made in calculating the amount of revenue Leverett Elementary could anticipate receiving from federal grants in the coming fiscal year.

He presented a new draft budget to the school committee, reducing

grant revenue by \$10,000, and showing line item cuts to compensate for that calculation error.

The new draft, like the previous one, outlines cuts to programs and budgets totalling \$58,220, in order to meet a 3.5% decrease in overall spending for the elementary school from last year's figure – \$1,659,509.

The new budget – \$1,601,289 – aligns with the budget reductions the selectboard and finance committee have requested from all departments this year, in order to set aside enough money in reserves to deal with one or two outstanding property tax abatement cases, if they wind up being settled unfavorably for the town.

The selectboard and finance committees have also asked departments to prepare an alternate budget scenario showing 8.5% budget decreases, in case the town decides not to raise property taxes across the board to compensate for the revenue shortfall which may occur if those tax abatement cases are settled unfavorably, but Mahler said he would not be presenting such a budget at this time. "Too demoralizing," he said. "If that becomes reality, we can come up with one in 24 hours."

But such deep cuts to the school budget would inevitably include personnel cutbacks, Mahler said.

Even under a 3.5% decrease, the school will cut back on the hours of two teacher aides, along with professional development for staff, overtime for custodians, the rainy day fund known as the extraordinary maintenance budget, and \$1,500 in library materials, as an example of the across the board cuts recommended in the draft budget.

On the positive side, Mahler said professional development workshops for all Union 28 teachers, facilitated by UMass education professor Rebecca Woodland, were going well, and Leverett principal Margot Lacey chimed in. "It is so unusual to be in a school where you are able to pursue development in such a longitudinal way."

After Mahler

Mahler also said Union 28 has been fortunate in its recent crop of applicants to succeed him as superintendent – his contract is up in July of this year.

The field has been winnowed to two remaining candidates: Jennifer Haggerty, principal of Dexter Park elementary school in Orange, and Tara Brandt, supervisor of math at the Westfield public schools and a UMass doctoral student in educational policy.

Both candidates have years of classroom experience; they will visit the schools on the 12th and 13th of this month, and then face a final interview with the Union 28 advisory committee on January 26, at the Erving Elementary School at 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Pay for Firefighter Training; Funding for Fuel Assistance

By KATIE NOLAN

The Erving selectboard met on December 22 and January 5, but canceled its December 19 meeting.

International Paper

As of December 22, a request for proposals for a marketing feasibility study for the former International Paper mill property was due to be publicly posted January 7. The report, funded at \$65,000 by the November special town meeting, will be completed by June 2015.

Administrative coordinator Tom Sharp commented that approximately 15 to 20 contractors attended the pre-RFP walk-through meeting.

On January 5, highway foreman Glenn McCrory told the board that eight contractors submitted bids to board up windows and doors at the IP site.

Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) procurement officer Andrea Woods, who has been advising the town on the bidding process, told McCrory that the lowest bidder did not have sufficient qualifications for the project and should be eliminated from consideration. The board will review the bids and award the contract at its next meeting January 12.

Human Resources

The selectboard voted to pay firefighters for 25 hours of training time once they complete the Firefighter 1 class and another 25 hours of training time once they complete the Firefighter 2 class, effective immediately. Fire chief Philip Wonkka said the current training budget will be enough to cover the expense.

The board reviewed Wonkka's performance in meeting his 2014 goals. Wonkka was graded in areas such as communication, training, administration, budgeting, equipment, community outreach, and proficiency and received an overall above average score.

The board started the process of assigning human resources responsibilities to individuals or town offices. The selectboard will be responsible for developing job descriptions, classifying positions, and checking applicant statements for accuracy. The treasurer will develop standard employment applications.

The administrative coordinator will be responsible for criminal offender records information, equal opportunity and affirmative action compliance. Department heads will be responsible for establishing criteria for screening applicants and drafting rejection letters.

Block Grant Process

MJ Adams, Franklin County Re-

gional Housing and Redevelopment Authority community development director, reported that the latest Community Development Block Grant application for Erving, Wendell, New Salem, Northfield and Warwick is requesting an estimated \$1.1 million in federal Housing and Urban Development funds. The grant would fund three programs: housing rehabilitation loans for low to moderate income residents, a fuel assistance safety net, and planning for senior housing in Erving and Wendell.

The majority of the requested grant will provide improvements to existing residences to bring them into compliance with the building code and increase energy efficiency. Currently, 54 homes in the five towns are on the waiting list with active applications for rehabilitation. Twelve of the waiting list homes are in Erving.

A portion of the grant requests funding for Keeping East County Warm (KECW), a program to provide fuel assistance benefits for people who are over-income for other fuel assistance, but are within the income guidelines for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant program. Additionally KECW will provide for emergency fuel deliveries for eligible residents who face a "no-heat" emergency.

CDBG funding is also requested for a joint planning effort to advance the towns of Erving and Wendell in planning for the needs of low- and moderate-income seniors. Erving already owns property near the senior and community center that could be used for building senior housing.

Adams mentioned that the town also has architectural drawings for four or five multi-apartment buildings, drafted in 2008. Selectboard members Margaret Sullivan and William Bembury said they had never seen the drawings, and asked administrative coordinator Tom Sharp to provide them at the next selectboard meeting.

For Erving, CDBG funds will be used to do pre-development planning for the property near the senior and community center. According to Adams, Wendell is "at a much earlier place in the process."

Wendell has held several community meetings to discuss the topic and has worked with University of Massachusetts professor John Mulin and graduate students who are researching town needs and possibilities. CDBG funds will be used to help explore next steps in Wendell as the UMass project continues from fall 2015 through spring 2016.

Erving is named as the lead community for submitting the regional CDBG application and has been working with FCRHRA to prepare

the grant. Sharp noted that Adams and FCRHRA have usually been successful in obtaining federal funding through the CDBG program. Award announcements are expected in July 2015 and projects will start in the fall of 2015.

Office Space

The selectboard agreed to let the recreation commission move its office to the first floor of the Pleasant Street School building where School Union 28 uses the second floor for offices. McCrory said that the floor had been refinished and the walls painted in preparation for the move. The commission will be able to move in January 7, after new locks are installed.

Kiely to Retire

Selectboard members reviewed and revised the job description for an interim senior and community center director. The interim director will run the center after current director Polly Kiely retires at the end of February and will hold the position until a permanent director is hired. The position was advertised at the end of December, with an application deadline of January 21.

The board decided to create a seven-person hiring committee, consisting of one selectboard member, a council on aging member, two seniors, a recreation committee member, and two other citizens. The board hopes to hire an interim director by February 17, in order to allow overlap with Kiely's last weeks at the center.

Other Business

On January 5, the board approved the job description for a six-to eight-hour-per-week highway department secretary. The position will be advertised to current town employees before being advertised publicly.

The board approved hiring municipal clerk Betsy Sicard for six hours per week to record and write selectboard meeting minutes. Sicard currently works 34 hours per week.

The board approved paying \$350 to FRCOG to help prepare bid packages for emergency generators for the water department and fire station. Money for the generators was approved at the November 24, 2014 special town meeting.

The board is considering calling a special town meeting for February 23 or March 2, in order to change the treasurer position from an elected position to an appointed position.

If approved at the town meeting, the change would need to be approved by a town ballot vote within 60 days before it becomes effective.

TOWN OF ERVING INTERIM SENIOR DIRECTOR

The Town of Erving seeks an interim Senior/Community Center Director to administer the daily operations of the Center for a period of 3 to 4 months. Start date in mid-February 2015. Approximately 30 hr/wk. Salary range of \$500.00/week.

Applications and references due by 3:00pm on January 21, 2015 (or until the position is filled) to: Town of Erving, 12 E. Main St, Erving, MA, 01344. Attn: Board of Selectmen. AA/EOE.

Volunteer at the Botanic Garden of Smith College

Once-a-year Training Session in January

Each year, over 1,300 schoolchildren tour the Lyman Conservatory at the Botanic Garden of Smith College. They learn about different climates and geographic regions, various plant adaptations to those climates, and about why plants are so important to human life. They see living examples of important economic plants that provide us with oxygen, food, medicines, building materials, and much more.

The Garden serves as a living museum of plants native to New England and areas all around the globe. Our mission is to foster education about the science, beauty, and importance of the plant kingdom through the use of outdoor and conservatory plant collections, gardens, displays, and exhibitions, and to preserve and maintain the historic Olmsted campus landscape.



Now you can be a part of that educational mission! It is through community volunteers that this wonderful collection of plants from around the world comes alive for local students. Trained volunteers provide tours for K-12 classes, often working with teachers to connect the tours with what the students are learning in the classroom.

Only once a year in January, we offer an intensive three-day training program to those interested in volunteering. In addition to leading tours, volunteers also staff the reception desk on weekends and during the Spring Bulb Show, help with developing thematic tours, assist with exhibitions, and providing hospitality for special events. (Volunteers are not involved in any hands-on horticulture work.)

The next training session takes place on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, January 21, 22, and 23, 2015, 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pre-registration is required for the training — you must fill out a volunteer application.

The training includes a history of the Botanic Garden; tours of conservatories; some basic botany and horticulture; commercial, medicinal and food plants of the Lyman Plant House; and how to guide visitors and school groups. In exchange for the training, volunteers are required to volunteer at the Botanic Garden for at least one full year and attend additional monthly meetings.

Download an application from our website at www.smith.edu/garden/Friends/volunteers.html, or request one by phone (413) 585-2742 or email: garden@smith.edu.

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Greg,

Today, as every day, we are thinking of you and missing and loving you so much. Thank you. For being the son, brother, father and friend who is so greatly missed because of the amazing man you were. Thank you for teaching us, showing us and reminding us what being a genuine, loving and kind person is all about. You are missed; you are loved. You are with us in the birds that fly and the sun that shines. In the moments where coincidence is not the explanation. You once said, "It's all about making memories." You were so right, Greg. Thank you for inspiring us to make them, and for the ones of you we cherish always.

Love,
 Mom, Dad & Melissa,
 Jeremy & Mary Rose,
 Emily & Damien & Owen,
 Sarah, and Anthony

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AUTHOR from page A1 focused on Pallotta for one hour as he involved them in his rapid-fire dialogue. "I need your help," he told them. "Which title do you like the best, this one or that one?" They screamed their answer. "Which color? Green or red?" "RED!" they shouted. He cleverly introduced them to the writing process as he showed them the rough lists with which he starts, and his design sketches. "I met a boy who didn't like to read," he told his audience, "so I wrote books he *would* like to read." These range from the *Who Would Win* series (Whale versus Giant Squid, for example, loaded

with facts about both) to *How Will I Get to School This Year?* (To avoid riding the smelly bus, his students ride pigs, tigers, and several other exotic creatures to school.) Children were called up to the front of the room, and classmates were not shy about expressing their appreciation of some of the shenanigans that included a huge projected bee appearing to sting a volunteer. Pallotta's visit, arranged by school librarian Jane Urban and supported in part by a grant from the Erving Cultural Council, was a huge success with the students, whose delighted laughter could, I am sure, be heard throughout the school.



Jerry Pallotta and a book reader, with just some of the many books Pallotta has written over the years.

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MoRe

Locals Send Support to Ebola's Front Lines

By LEE WICKS

MONTAGUE CENTER – The Ebola outbreak in Africa may have slipped from the headlines, but the people of Sierra Leone affected by this disease are very much on the minds of a group of Montague residents. They are busy raising funds for urgently needed humanitarian relief there, especially for orphaned children.

Marina Goldman of Montague has a long history of involvement with Sierra Leone. She first went there from 1982 to 1984 as a Peace Corps volunteer. Over the years, Goldman has seen the country endure a ten year civil war that destroyed early advances in economic development. She could not visit during that time.

That war ended in 2002, and slowly but surely, some progress towards economic recovery began to emerge. She returned in 2007 after the civil war, and worked with a Sierra Leone medic and his sister, who was a midwife, treating mostly malarial and other parasitic and infectious diseases.

Then Ebola struck, taking lives, closing schools, destroying businesses, undoing the fragile progress of the past years, and disrupting every aspect of daily lives. She has first-hand knowledge of isolated villages, poor roads, and a health delivery system overwhelmed by Ebola.

At a house party in December, hosted by Montague's Leigh Rae, Goldman presented a slide show and spoke about the situation, and about the work of Ann Marie Caulker, a remarkable woman who has been serving her community in Sierra Leone as an educator and activist.

The goal of this house party, and any subsequent ones, is to raise



Ann Marie Caulker, founder of the Freetown, Sierra Leone-based Katanya Women's Development Fund (KAWDA).

funds for the Katanya Women's Development Fund (KAWDA). This non-governmental organization, operating out of Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, was started by Ann Marie Caulker in 1996.

Goldman explained, "Ann Marie Caulker first started KAWDA to help girls escaping from female genital mutilation (FGM)."

Caulker herself is a victim of FGM. She lost her mother at an early age, and married early, yet managed to attend a teachers college and start KAWDA.

A chance meeting in 2009 between Goldman and Caulker spawned all this energy and commitment. Goldman remembers it well:

"I met Ann Marie because I read in the Freetown paper that a woman had been stoned in a market place for trying to convince women not to submit to "cutting," otherwise known as female genital mutilation (FGM).

"I had no idea where I could find this woman, but one day I was driving in a car in Freetown and saw a

small sign in an alley referring to the organization she had formed. I recognized the name from the paper, followed the alley, and climbed up some rickety stairs to find an office of five people who were making posters and organizing their next conference to educate women leaders.

"Ann Marie greeted me in Kuranko, the tribal language of the north, and was shocked when I answered her in Kuranko. It turned out that her relatives had been my 'family' during my Peace Corps years."

Yet another small-world moment.

In the beginning, KAWDA was mostly a program to develop learning skills and keep young girls off the street and away from early marriage. Then around 2002 Caulker formed a free primary school that took students as young as 5 years old.

All schools in Sierra Leone are closed now, and the original mission of KAWDA has been usurped by the urgent needs of Ebola victims.

see KAWDA page B4



SKATEPARK BENEFIT THIS SATURDAY

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – Last spring, Montague town meeting voted for the town to commit to building a major skatepark at Unity Park if a state grant covered 68% of it, and in October, that grant came through.

Supporters have raised over \$40,000 to contribute, and have promised to continue to raise funds to reduce the public donation. This Saturday, January 10 there will be yet another fundraising event, this time with a totally stacked bill of heavier bands – **Rebel Base, The Warblers, Tides, and OFC** – at St. Kaz' hall on Avenue A.

Greenfield's two-piece **Rebel Base** cranks out stomping jams with science fiction themes. They basically sound like the biscuits and gravy at the Brass Buckle.

Amherst-based **The Warblers** (below) are a heavy garage band,

featuring some familiar faces, fresh off a recent album recorded with Easthampton engineer Justin Pizzoferrato. A previous *Reporter* article has described their sound as "on the main line between the Troggs and Brain Drain-era Ramones."

Tides (above), from Holyoke, play "hardcore with elements of reggae and hip hop."

The whole thing is topped off by Turners Falls post-skacore kingpins **OFC**, who have been playing skatepark benefits for years now and must just want to skate that thing before they're too old.

The show is all ages and the cover is just \$5, but do bring more money if you have it. Positive ID required for the bar, and all proceeds from the door, donation jar and t-shirt sales will go straight into the Unity Skatepark coffers.

St. Kazimierz is located at 197 Avenue A in Turners, and the show runs from 8 p.m. to midnight.



TURNERS BOYS START HOOPS SEASON STRONG



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Liam Ellis recorded his second triple double of the season against Greenfield December 29.

By MATT ROBINSON

The Turners Falls Boys' basketball squad has started the 2014-15 season strong, going 5 and 2 overall, and 4 and 1 in the Hampshire League.

The First Five Games

The squad's only loss in December was a nail biter against nonleague opponent, Narra-

gansett.

In their opener, on December 15, Turners exploded out of the gates, defeating Athol by 23 points, 63 to 40. In that game, 10 different Indians scored points, with Tyler Charbonneau (14), Liam Ellis (15), and Jalen Sanders each scoring in double figures.

"We ran the court well, and were rewarded

see BASKETBALL page B8

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

New Year Garden

I've been giving thought to this business of New Year's resolutions. Making lists of behavioral changes implies failure in the past year's performance. Kind of like having a large mama figure hovering and waving a list of "shoulds". Of course, these lists never get checked off. We're only human.

How about a list of last year's accomplishments? Here's what I'm thinking about this year. I'd like to make a list of important things I want to do. Not what I ought to do. In fact, right at the top will be "letting go".

I'd like to let go of useless worrying, those thoughts in the middle of the night that are never good. I'd like to let go of guilt over things past. I'd like to get rid of things I don't use or need. That way I could put more energy into enjoying the good, feeling happy, and making do.

So, ready or not, here comes a whole new year.

Those amazing, colorful seed catalogues have arrived, just in time to order for a new garden season. At this chilly season, absolutely everything looks delicious or beautiful to grow. It's hard not to go overboard with ordering one of everything. Before you do, check out last season's seed supplies. Anything dated for growing in 2014 can be planted next year, unless you didn't like the results or the taste.

After last year's late blight literally wiped out the tomato crops, Burpee has come out with what sounds like the tomato solution of the century. The seed is called Cloudy Day Hybrid. It promises a thriving crop in cool weather, resistance to both early and late blight, as well as juicy, flavorful fruits. Almost too good to be true, but well worth trying.

As a gardener who struggles to let go of anything that is alive and well, I have promised myself to grow fewer tomato plants this year. The last few seasons, I've started two seeds in every cell of my forty cell planter, thus ending



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

up with over eighty tomato plants. That's ridiculous even if I am able to give many away.

Maybe half as many this year, and only eight or ten plants in the garden. For some reason, it's always easier to share extra fruits than to persuade friends to adopt just one or two more orphan plants.

I'm letting go of growing summer squash, but looking forward to an even larger crop of butternut. The latter grew and stored well and were enjoyed right up to Christmas.

We're switching back from bush beans to pole climbers. They're easier to harvest and take up much less ground space.

There are never enough peas, so this year we'll set aside space for two double rows. Yummy garden candy to result and a well-nourished piece of earth for a later planting of greens, or some such, after the summer heat has passed.

Once again, I'm recommending the marigold for its insect repelling feature. We had absolutely no issue with aphids or bean beetles, and the crop of asparagus beetles was limited. This may not be the most beautiful nor fragrant flower of your garden, but they are unsurpassed for their other skills. Just enjoy planting other more fragrant beauties like sweet peas.

I've been browsing in a book called "The

see GARDENER'S page B4

Pet of the Week

I was brought to Dakin because my person developed allergies. I am a 9-year-old domestic shorthair mix, and an all-around purrfect cat. I have lived with dogs and cats in my previous home without a problem.



SNICKERS

I love being a couch potato and I love to be petted on my back and neck. I am a sweet cat that likes to snuggle in bed. I will go under the covers with you and lay on top of you (if you let me of course) but please let me because I love to be warm.

I can also be your bug exterminator because I can chase bugs and moths more or less follow them around the house.

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

Senior Center Activities January 12 to 16

GILL and MONTAGUE

Gill / Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m.

All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the Center is closed.

Monday 1/12

8:30 a.m. Foot clinic (by appt.)
10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday: 1/13

9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 p.m. Lunch

Wednesday 1/14

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
11:15 a.m. Friends' Meeting
12 p.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. Bingo

Thursday: 1/15

9 a.m. Tai Chi
12 p.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Pitch & Five Crowns

Friday: 1/16

10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
1 p.m. Writing Group

WENDELL

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

Call the Center for a ride.

ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for activities and congregate meals.

Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 24 hours in advance. Call Mealsite Manager Rebecca Meuse at 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 to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 1/12

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

Tuesday 1/13

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
9:30 a.m. C.O.A. Meeting
12:30 p.m. Painting

Wednesday 1/14

8:45 a.m. Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 1/15

8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles
12 p.m. Cards

Friday 1/16

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

LEVERETT

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

FACES & PLACES



MARK HUDYMA PHOTOS

Gill has a new package store, *The Spirit Shoppe*, located at 4 Main Road in Gill just before Route 2, in the previous location of *Great Falls Coffee Co.* Owner Steve Schechterle (inset) also owns *Spirit Shoppes* in South Deerfield and Sunderland, and with his wife owns *Four Corners Fine Wine & Spirits* in Greenfield.

THE HEALTHY GEEZER

Symptoms of Aneurysms



By FRED CICETTI

Q. Aneurysms are pretty scary things. Do they have any symptoms?

Aneurysms are artery bulges. And, yes, they are scary because, if they burst, they are lethal. Many victims of a ruptured aneurysm die before they get to a hospital.

The type and location of the aneurysm will determine the symptoms.

Chest aortic aneurysms, which occur in the large blood vessel (aorta) that carries blood from the heart to other parts of the body, may cause shortness of breath, a raspy voice, backache, or shoulder pain.

Abdominal aortic aneurysms may cause pain or tenderness below your stomach, make you less hungry, or give you an upset stomach. Cerebral aneurysms may produce headaches, pain in your neck and face, or trouble seeing and talking.

Ventricular aneurysms in the heart's main pumping chamber (the

left ventricle) may cause shortness of breath, chest pain, or an irregular heart beat.

Fortunately, aneurysms can be detected by a physical examination, x-ray, ultrasound and modern imaging systems such as a CAT scan or an MRI.

The size and location of the aneurysm determines the treatment method. For example, aneurysms in the upper chest are usually operated on immediately. Aneurysms in the lower chest and the area below your stomach are watched at first. If they grow too large or cause symptoms, surgery may be required.

If you have an aortic aneurysm, your doctor may prescribe medicines before surgery or instead of surgery. Medicines are used to lower blood pressure, relax blood vessels, and lower the risk that the aneurysm will rupture. Beta blockers and calcium channel blockers are the medicines most commonly used.

The standard treatment for aneurysm once it meets the indications for surgery is replacement of that weakened portion of the aorta with an artificial graft. Usually, a graft made from Dacron, a material that will not wear out, is used.

In recent years, a treatment has been developed to repair an aneurysm using less-invasive surgery. In the procedure, a stent-graft made of a polyester tube inside a metal cylinder is inserted into the bloodstream at the end of a catheter. The stent-graft is positioned to carry the

blood flow instead of the aneurysm. The following increase the risk of getting an aneurysm: being older than 60, plaque in the arteries (atherosclerosis), high blood pressure, smoking, injuries or infections of the blood vessels, a congenital abnormality, and inherited diseases.

Most aneurysms are caused by a breakdown in the proteins that provide the structural strength to the wall of the aorta. These proteins can gradually deteriorate with age. But inflammation that is associated with atherosclerosis can accelerate this process.

There are also naturally occurring enzymes that cause the breakdown of the proteins. An excess of these enzymes or other conditions that activate these enzymes may also contribute to the formation of an aneurysm, or its sudden growth. In rare cases an aneurysm may be caused by infection.

The combination of early diagnosis with safer, simpler, and ever more successful treatments can prevent needless deaths due to ruptured aneurysms. If you think you or one of your family members might have an aortic aneurysm, see a doctor without delay.

If you would like to ask a question, write to fred@healthygeezer.com.

If you would like to ask a question, write to fred@healthygeezer.com.

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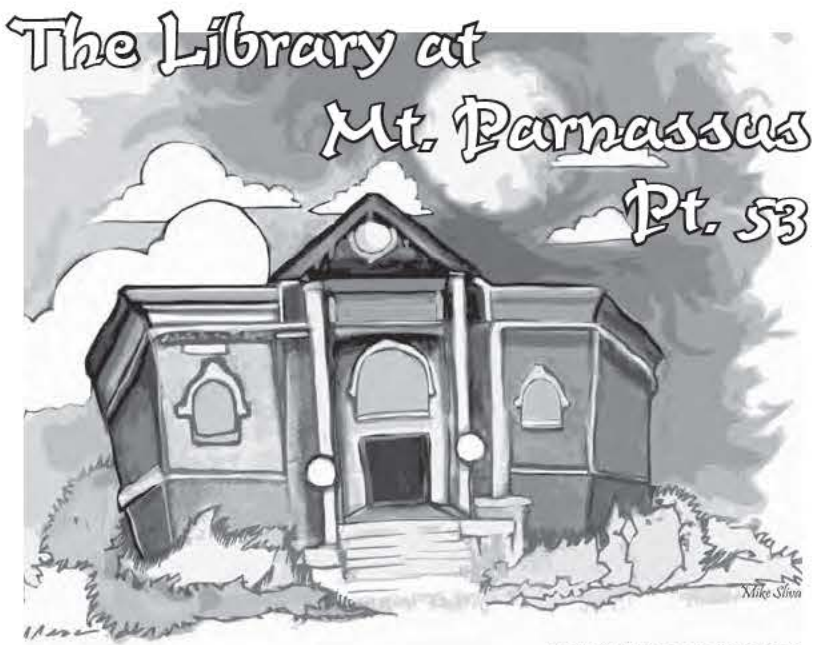
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Meanwhile, back at the Spotted Pig....



MIKE SLIVA ILLUSTRATION

By DAVID DETMOLD

Not knowing what else I could do, on Friday I got back in my Balkania Autotraktor and spent an hour or two getting it running again, with help from the neighbors, as usual, and drove back down south through Patras, to the Spotted Pig.

I didn't walk directly in the door. I drifted for a while, wandering the crowded streets of the town in an aimless pattern, examining the rear entrances of the drug store and police station, the Turkish bazaar and booksellers, back alleys and construction zones, the piled student warrens and their busy, teeming parking lots.

People dashed slantwise through the street, heedless of traffic patterns, and I pulled my collar closer. My ratty Irish wool was too thin for this winter weather.

Several times, I walked around the labyrinthine building that held the Spotted Pig, not always in the same direction, each time telling myself, "Just go in. Walk straight up to the bar. Act like nothing out of the ordinary is happening." How could anything be out of the ordinary at the Spotted Pig?

Each time I passed the front door my heart flew into my throat at the thought she might look out and see me, or worse, be standing in the doorway. Finally, on the third or fourth try, I made it through the door.

There was a clear path to the far side of the bar, but the thick over humid air inside formed an instant haze on the lenses of my glasses and even though she might have missed me crossing to the far side in the shadows by the staff bathroom, I couldn't see her either.

I found myself sitting in a studiously relaxed pose in a high backed bar stool directly across from the cash register where Iona stood, back to me, talking to the night manager.

"Thank you," I breathed. "That was perfect."

I took my glasses off and put them on the bar and pretended to study the menu. When she finally turned toward me, her eyes met mine, and hers lit up, which delighted me.

I could see emotions flicker on her irises like images from a magic lantern. They ran swiftly down the gamut from pleasant surprise to disbelief to wariness: what was I doing here two weekends in a row?

And then she did her best to put her feelings back behind her startling grey eyes.

She walked over toward me with the impulsive, horsey stride

that always makes the impressively tall upper half of her body look like it had been canted forward from her pelvis by some absent-minded sculptor up to his elbows in breathing clay but keeping, as she always did, her poised awareness of the wide wooden bar between us, she leaned over and in that low thrilling voice reserved for special friends and a few odd interlopers asked, "How are you?"

"I'm fine," I lied. In fact, my heart was beating in a staccato rhythm like a Benzedrine addict's. I was perspiring freely in the chilly bar, but Iona soon had me settled down with a pint of something smooth and black and redolent of charred barley and though very little had been said between us much had been communicated, not all of it hopeful, and now, I knew, she had to circulate.

People called out orders. The music was getting louder, and I did my best to hold on and keep my gaze level, directed mostly at the weirdly expressive paintings on the tangerine walls, portraits in swirling dark reds and blues of wounded men wearing halos and exuberant black women who had somehow been freed of pain and indulgent self portraits of the artist as a Spaniard in exaltation and every so often Iona would cross my line of vision like a sloop under sail before a steady gale and I held tight to the bar and tried not to let go.

"What have you been up to?" she idly asked, on one of her return trips.

"Oh... rearranging data." I felt a sharp pang of rue, and she laughed as if I had made some large existential statement, but it was true. And an isolate experience it had been, walled off from the world behind badly soundproofed partitions, the sterile click and clack of keyboards the only accompaniment to my desolate wanderings through the ruined dreamscape archipelago of modern humankind.

I longed for the chafed skin, muscle weariness, bruises and abrasions of honest labor, and as the torpor descended with each small swallow, I recalled the one and only truly uplifting sound I had heard all day: a wayward cricket, seeking refuge from the terrible outdoors, chirping by a heating grate in the company lunchroom.

"Can I get you anything else?" Iona was standing to my left, leaning companionably against the bar.

"A Laphroaig. Neat." She had taught me to say that to her, back at the Golden Mean.

Continued next week.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Yelling, Donuts, Pitbulls, Fireworks, Secret Camp, Lost Boy

Monday, 12/15

2:22 p.m. Larceny on M Street. Report taken.
5:38 p.m. Report of an intoxicated male yelling racial slurs at people passing by in the alley near the Pizza House. Area search negative.

Tuesday, 12/16

8:00 a.m. Laptop reported stolen from Avenue A office. Investigated.
7:48 p.m. [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested on a default warrant.
8:20 p.m. [redacted]

[redacted] was arrested on two default warrants.

Wednesday, 12/17

11:52 a.m. A party was arrested on a Section 35 warrant of apprehension on Fourth Street.

3:53 p.m. Report of a single car accident on Wendell Road. Airbags deployed; no operator in sight. K9 unit brought in to search for operator. Contact eventually made with operator, who stated she was not injured. Advised she needed to come into the station to make a report.

Thursday, 12/18

7:55 a.m. [redacted] was arrested on an extraditable warrant from Virginia.

8:03 a.m. Report that someone did donuts in the parking lot of an auto shop overnight, kicking up rocks and possibly damaging a customer's vehicle. Responding officer found no damage to vehicle, just mud; will attempt to contact suspect.

11:30 a.m. Request for an officer to assist with a student who is out of control, throwing computers, etc. Peace restored.

1:49 p.m. Complaint regarding 2 pitbulls allowed to run around and defecate on neighbors' lawns on Fifth Street as well as in the Fourth Street alleyway. Referred to animal control officer.

4:41 p.m. Second complaint regarding owners not cleaning up after dogs on Fifth Street. Copies of this and previous calls left for animal control officer; caller also encouraged to contact Board of Health.

5:48 p.m. Caller reports that while out walking she observed a red Subaru with two males who appeared to be trying to pick up an item, possibly an animal or a person. Responding officer spoke to parties, who live nearby; one of them had found a deer carcass and was cleaning it on the side of the road near the car.

Friday, 12/19

8:25 p.m. Caller reports a needle on the floor in the men's room at F.L. Rob-

erts. Services rendered.

Saturday, 12/20

12:42 p.m. Caller from Montague Center reports that a vehicle that he borrowed from a friend has been stolen from his driveway. Vehicle last seen at 3 a.m. today; door was unlocked and keys were in the ignition. State police and Greenfield PD notified to be on lookout. State police later called to report that this vehicle was found crashed and abandoned in Leyden today. Owner of vehicle filled out stolen vehicle form.

Sunday, 12/21

8:22 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street reports that his child went outside to play this morning and came back inside with a "heroin" needle stuck in his/her hand. Caller's girlfriend pulled it out and threw it in the dumpster. Caller went downstairs and yelled at neighbor (presumed source of needle); is very upset about situation and unsure what to do. Advised caller to take child to hospital right away. Caller stated that he was looking in the dumpster for the needle but couldn't find it; there were fresh tracks to the dumpster and he feels like the neighbor came to take the needle away. Caller en route to hospital with child. Investigated.

Monday, 12/22

12:58 a.m. 911 hangup call; male party who sounded intoxicated answered question with "Ahh who knows, see you later" and disconnected. Officers responded; no emergency assistance needed; party is intoxicated and does not recall dialing 911.

8:42 a.m. Caller from L Street reports that a male party wanted to fight him after caller intervened as male party was screaming at woman in car in front of caller's address. Last seen walking up Fifth Street toward Avenue A. Unable to locate.

Tuesday, 12/23

9:01 p.m. Playstation and several pieces of jewelry reported stolen from an apartment on Fourth Street. Report taken.

9:08 p.m. Caller from Walnut Street reports that her apartment has been broken into: the door was kicked in and several items are missing. Report taken.
11:38 p.m. Loud music complaint on Fourth Street. Investigated.

Wednesday, 12/24

2:23 a.m. Male 911 caller reporting structure fire on Ninth Street. TFD and WMECO advised and en route. Responding officers report that first floor is fully involved. Street blocked off due to live wires in road. Fire

marshal on scene. Report taken.

11:22 p.m. Complaint regarding people setting off fireworks in area of Hillcrest Homes. Officer spoke to a few people who advised that those shooting off the fireworks had left the area.

Thursday, 12/25

3:57 a.m. Loud noise complaint from Central Street apartment building. Officer spoke with neighbor, who said he would quiet down.

2:17 p.m. Couple returned home to Millers Falls Road to find that their house had been broken into and ransacked. Investigated.

Friday, 12/26

12:47 a.m. Complaint of fireworks being set off on G Street. Area search negative.

5:32 a.m. Caller reports that she let her dog out and it was attacked by a fox that may have been rabid. Caller reports no injuries to her dog. Officer unable to locate fox.

6:16 p.m. Laptop computer reported stolen from an Avenue A apartment. Investigated. Caller later reported that he had received his laptop back.

11:54 p.m. 911 caller reports what sounded like shots fired close to her house on L Street, possibly connected with a previous incident of someone knocking and running. Responding officers reported seeing a small burst of fireworks in the area of the top of the hill.

Saturday, 12/27

1:54 p.m. Caller from Franklin Commons reports that some kind of camp is set up behind her house. There is a tent-type structure, trash, beer cans, cooking equipment, and a spot where a fire had been set up. It also appears that someone was trying to build something and is digging into the ground. Responding officer will speak with tech school students when he sees them next.

3:16 p.m. Caller reports finding a young boy in the woods behind her home on Demers Lane. The boy was lost after walking in the woods with his dog. Officer provided transport; boy returned home.

6:04 p.m. Vehicle vs. deer collision on Federal Street. No injuries to vehicle occupants; deer injured and still on scene. Report taken.

9:29 p.m. Caller reports that his laundry was stolen out of one of the dryers at the Third Street Laundry. Report taken.

Sunday, 12/28

11:41 a.m. Caller driving near airport noticed a grey car that appeared to

have hit a white trailer at the airport near a hangar. Damage to vehicle observed. Responding officer located vehicle; it appears that it was crashed into a Hillside Plastics trailer. Vehicle towed; Hillside notified

3:17 p.m. Two-vehicle accident with airbag deployment at Turners Falls Road and Ferry Road. One operator cited with a warning for failure to use care when stopping (for a squirrel).

6:07 p.m. Report of needle in hallway of Fourth Street apartment building. Item retrieved.

9:45 p.m. Two calls regarding kids ringing doorbell, banging on door, running away, and looking in windows with a flashlight on Crocker Avenue and Davis Street. Area search negative.

Monday, 12/29

1:01 p.m. Report of highly intoxicated female who drove to Food City and was stumbling in the parking lot. Officer provided courtesy transport to Gill.

11:15 p.m. Report of intoxicated male walking in and out of traffic on Avenue A; caller almost hit him. Party taken into protective custody.

Tuesday, 12/30

1:19 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reports that his storage unit and the one next to his were broken into. A saw and a surround sound stereo were stolen. Report taken.

1:57 p.m. Complaint regarding ongoing problem with too many unregistered vehicles on a Turners Falls Road property. Services rendered.

8:20 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reports that she was assaulted by a male party. Summons issued.

Wednesday, 12/31

12:24 p.m. Report from Avenue A of ongoing noise and other issues with upstairs neighbors. Advised of options.

5:17 p.m. Following a disturbance in Gill, a male party was removed to the hospital.

Thursday, 1/1

4:11 a.m. Caller from Avenue C reports that when he went to start his rental car, he found that the passenger side window had been broken. Investigated.

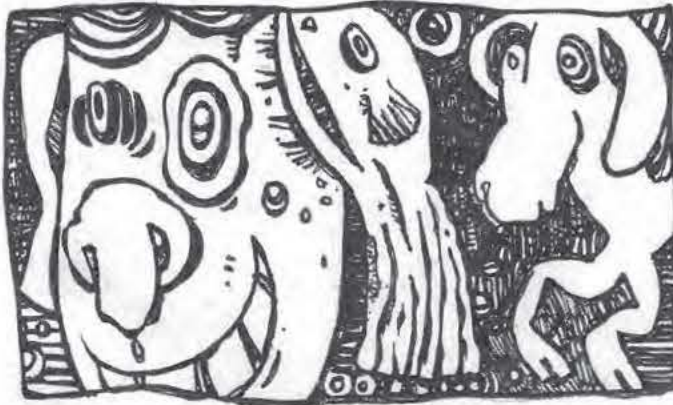
Friday, 1/2

7:22 a.m. Complaint regarding a train idling all day yesterday and today near South Prospect Street. Pan Am advised.

7:49 a.m. Caller advises that the red light is flashing on the pump station for the wastewater treatment plant in Lake Pleasant. WWTF advised; will see MPD next page

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was on January 6, 2015: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Montague Chief

Ray Zukowski, Montague's new chief of police, said if he had his wish he would like to see the three vacant positions on his force refilled.

Zukowski said the department has no Spanish-speaking officer, a serious drawback in maintaining relations or conducting investigations with the growing Hispanic community in town.

Errata

On Tuesday morning Richard O. "Dickie" Guy passed away at home. Guy was the last original member of Montague's representative town meeting still serving,

having served continuously since the first town meeting election in 1964.

Wendell animal control officer Maggie Houghton apologized for mistakenly euthanizing Joe, a cat owned by Jesse Merrick and Michelle Sullivan, who had entered a neighbor's house and acted aggressively.

America's Dad

On January 19, Bill Cosby will bring his message of parental responsibility to town, for a talk aimed at families of children in the Gill-Montague schools.

A resident of nearby Shelburne, Cosby scheduled the talk in Turners following a fight between neighborhood teens in August which left 16-year-old Eric Zieba dead of head injuries.



Montague Center's Marina Goldman meets with women in Sierra Leone.

KAWDA from pg B1

Once the Ebola crisis has passed, KAWDA will continue to strengthen civil society through education and skills training programs for women and children in Sierra Leone. The For Goodness Sake campaign, named after Caulker's deceased son Goodness, hopes to raise money to sustain the work of KAWDA.

The For Goodness Sake campaign will raise money for basic necessary supplies, such as rice and bleach. At the house party Goldman assured the guests that every dollar of each donation will go directly to serving the needs of families in Sierra Leone.

The New England Peace Pagoda has offered to serve as the fiscal agent for this effort, and checks may be sent to New England Peace Pagoda / For Goodness Sake, PO Box 416, Montague, MA 01351.

Rae was willing to host the first fundraising house party for KAWDA because she has a long involvement with the organization and with Goldman, whom she has known since college.

Leah's daughter Zoe traveled to Freetown in 2011 to work at Caulker's school, along with Goldman's sons, Noah and Jakob.

Rae said, "Ann Marie visited Montague in early 2012 and again in 2014, and during both of these visits, I spent lots of time with her. As a result, we formed a Board of Directors for KAWDA in early 2014," with Marina and Noah Goldman, Montague's Sue Lowery, and Ingrid Askew and Kristen Elechko from Amherst and Northampton.

The goal of this board is to help Caulker maintain her ability to serve during this difficult time and to help her develop more organizational capacity to respond to a larger audience.

Rae added, "In the long run, we would like to support some badly needed improvements to her school: a well for clean water, a real structure that is not threatened every time there is a storm, support for teacher salaries, and more."

Goldman, Rae, their children, and other caring people, refuse to sit back and wait for more and more bad news, especially since some international aid programs have evacuated or had their resources severely stretched.

Goldman's family jump-started the fundraising effort by foregoing holiday gifts in favor of making a donation to KAWDA. She said, "Our family and one or two family

friends gave thousands of dollars to various organizations in Sierra Leone, instead of spending any money on Chanukah."

The For Goodness Sake campaign has a website, kawdablog.wordpress.com, and a Facebook page. It is possible to send these links around the globe. The stories are compelling, and the photographs show hope in an environment of despair.

We live in a time of global connection, yet the world suddenly seemed smaller as Goldman and Rae and their respective children shared knowledge about a woman thousands of miles away, facing challenges that are hard to imagine, particularly in a New England village with twinkling lights in most windows.

About twenty people showed up for the presentation, including Mary Averill, whose humanitarian efforts in Nepal I recently wrote about in this paper.

It seemed as though Montague has arms around the world.

Anyone interested in hosting a house party, or learning more about this project, may contact Goldman at marinagold2@yahoo.com.

GARDENER'S from page B1

Unsung Season: Gardens and Gardeners in Winter" by Sydney Eddison. It's been fun to read about what gardeners do to fulfill their gardening itch even through the winter months.

There is considerable discussion of what I'd call design gardening. Many gardeners take great pleasure in the line and shape of their yard, creating interest for the eye with fencing, curving rows and foliage of varying shapes and size.

Then there are those who plant so as to have color in winter. I keep busy enough tending crops and weeds to spend much time on shapes and lines, but we are enjoying the copper tops of the garden gate, the curving branches of the Forsythia and the wild growth of the undisciplined fruit trees. Even the shape and hills of the yard stand out now and please the eye.

There are beautiful perennial grasses in reds and blues, plumes and clumps that are hardy in New Eng-

land. We'd like to put in some of this color another year.

What gets us through the winter is ordering supplies and planning for next year's garden. We can drool for hours over the luscious colors and descriptions in the incoming seed catalogues.

Sydney Eddison writes, "One thing I've found out is that gardeners are happier than most people..." If this is true, I think it's because gardeners spend much time in the sun and fresh air with our hands in the earth.

But I also believe we are happy when we find something for which we have a passion. It can be anything: painting, teaching, writing, planting, working with others.

If I had one New Year's wish for all of you, it would be to throw yourself into something with passion. Finding and doing something we have a passion for makes us happier, healthier and kinder human beings. What more could we wish for?

Happy New Year!



MPD from prev. page

look into matter.

2:14 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on three default warrants.

3:32 p.m. Child reported missing in Lake Pleasant. TFFD advised; state police contacted for helicopter. While on phone with grandfather, he advised that child is back. No injuries; all OK.

Saturday, 1/3

10:16 a.m. Caller from Unity Street reports that two red Radio Flyer tri-cycles were taken from his yard since Thursday. Report taken.

3:11 p.m. 911 caller reports that his rubbish did not get picked up today. Caller advised that this was an emergency line. Caller called back on business line and stated that he believed the rubbish

collector forgot about them. No police service necessary.

Multiple auto accidents due to weather.

Sunday, 1/4

3:54 a.m. Truck vandalized on Fourth Street. Report taken.

7:42 a.m. Caller requests that officer speak with first floor neighbor who frequently talks loudly in her apartment in the mornings, disturbing the

caller's peace. Officer determined that noise level was not unreasonable and advised caller that he could not tell the first floor tenant not to talk in her apartment.

8:37 a.m. Report of assault and battery over a parking issue on H Street. Peace restored; parties advised of options.

Multiple auto accidents and traffic hazards due to weather.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

Rabid Fox on West Gill Road?

Monday, 12/29

6:05 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle located in corn field. Checked out OK.

9:20 a.m. Assisted Governor's Task Force on School Safety.

3:15 p.m. Report of residence from West Gill Road with harassing contact with Athol youth. Under investigation.

6:40 p.m. Assisted Attleboro PD with investiga-

tion of a local resident in connection with larceny in their city.

Tuesday, 12/30

3:45 p.m. Suspicious person on Main Road. Directions provided to friend's residence.

4:30 p.m. Assisted West Gill Road residence with harassment issue.

Wednesday, 12/31

3 p.m. Rabid fox reported at West Gill Road resi-

dence. Not located.

5:15 p.m. Walnut Street resident taken into custody for mental illness evaluation.

Friday, 1/2

10:20 a.m. Truck reported missing from Center Road. Investigation located it in Bernardston. No charges pending.

3:20 p.m. Officer assistance requested for resi-

dence. Not located.

with mental illness. Saturday, 1/3
7:30 p.m. Assisted Bernardston PD with motor vehicle accident on Route 10.

8:32 p.m. Medical assistance at Walnut Street.

Sunday, 1/4

10:30 a.m. Firearms issue reported on West Gill Road. Officer investigated same; all set.

SAWMILL RIVER 10K RUN: RESULTS

The Montague Parks & Recreation hosted their Annual Sawmill River 10K Run in Montague Center on Thursday, January 1. One hundred and seventy six runners braved the chilly temperatures to ring in the New Year, and it was Charlie Hale of Florence bringing in the best overall time of 35:16. Madeline McKeever of Providence, Rhode Island was the female winner with a final time of 40:17.

Results per Division are as follows (female/male):

Youth Division

Ages 18 & Under

Emily Woods of Greenfield

60:46

Sohan Tyner of Leverett

41:04

Senior Division

Ages 50-59

LeeAnn Cerpovicz of

West Springfield

51:03

Nat Larsen of Amherst - 35:34

Open Division

Ages 19-39

McKeever - 40:17

Hale - 35:16

Senior + Division

60 & Up

Ann Van Dyke of Montague

56:45

Ted Hale of Florence

47:50

Master Division

Ages 40-49

Vikki Lenhart of Amherst

44:48

Barney Collins of Greenfield

39:23

Proceeds from the event benefit MPRD's Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program.

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Eager enthusiasts snap pictures of train approaching while children cover their ears at the new Northampton station.



Fred Fournier, Amtrak's Northeast deputy general manager of the Northeast, sits in front of the train theater's window, viewing the trip along the new route. A map is above him delineating exactly where the train is with a view above of the line for those further back.

AMTRAK from page A1

second oldest of eight children, Boardman rode a train for the first time when he was 17 years old, from Rome, New York to Syracuse, New York, on his way to the Air Force.

"I think it's great. It's great weather, a cool day, a lot of people on board," almost three hundred in all.

"The connectivity to the Northeast Corridor (NEC) network is what's important," said Boardman. The NEC is a large network of high speed and commuter rail service linking Boston, New York City, and Washington D.C., with spurs to Springfield and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The Vermonter's route through Massachusetts has been dubbed the Knowledge Corridor. The area is dense with hospitals and universities. Rail service will connect commuters and knowledge jobs.

What are knowledge jobs? "It can be anything you want to use that transfers our knowledge, to whatever people's ideas are," said Boardman, adding that about 39 percent of all venture capital deals occur here in the northeastern part of the country.

Traveling from Northampton to Greenfield, the Vermonter rides along tracks owned by Pan Am Southern Railway, which owns and maintains the tracks. Ownership switches to New England Central Railroad above Northfield.

Project funding was

provided through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. During fiscal year 2014, ridership on the Vermonter's former route increased 6.6 percent, serving over 89,000 riders. Now one train travels south daily from Saint Albans, Vermont to Washington D.C. and another travels north, each stopping at 30 stations during the 13 and a half hour trip.

There were few seats left on Monday, as some people rode purely for the joy of the occasion.

"We met a lot of train freaks on the way down," said Richard Stafursky of Brattleboro, Vermont. He jokingly claimed to be the only "vegan conservationist atheist" on board.

He and his wife Susan traveled south from Brattleboro, lunched in Northampton, and were riding back home. "Cross Westfield, cross the Connecticut River, there was a fork there. Freights continue on down on this side; the engineer slowed down at that historic divide."

"For 47 years it's been going west across the river from the east side to Amherst. It's not doing that anymore," he said, since the Amherst station has been closed.

For security purposes, Amtrak police were on board during this inaugural run. Since the train is riding along rails that for years people just walked across, with no fear of trains approaching, railway officials formed a proactive safety team.

They have given over 100 presentations to over 50 schools, warning students to stay away from the tracks and right-of-ways, and

educating them on the stopping distances of the train. An average train, going 55 miles an hour, takes a mile to stop.

They also met with local police officials, and community groups, to spread the word on safety. Outreach efforts use rail safety information and materials provided by a national non-profit called Operation Lifesaver, which is dedicated to reducing railroad-related deaths and injuries.

On Monday, passengers left these and any worries to Amtrak. Their watchword was fun.

Justin and Laura Wheatley took their children Owen, 5, and Layla, 2, for a trip on the train, purely for fun, to mark this historic event. They planned to travel to Brattleboro, stay overnight, and return Tuesday.

Sandra Pipczynski heralded the train's arrival with her grandchildren, Devon and Cameron Carey, and her daughter, Sarah Carey.

Inside the last car of the train was a theater where special guests could watch the train's travels through an 8-foot-tall window. A map on the left, on top, and a film showing on a screen on the right followed its progress. Fred Fournier, deputy general manager of the NEC, had a front row seat, keeping an eye on progress.

Brian Gallagher, Amtrak's director of operations, also kept an eagle eye on proceedings. He stepped out at the Northampton station as happy riders entered the train.

"Large crowds everywhere today," he said. "It's great! Crowds are huge. A lot of people riding the train. It's all good."



Amtrak president and CEO Joe Boardman on the inaugural trip.

"If Usage Goes Up, You Will See Additional Trains."

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

GREENFIELD – In a joyous celebration of the successful completion of a project many years in the making, Governor Deval Patrick arrived onboard Amtrak's Vermonter train at the John T. Olver Transit Center in Greenfield on December 22. Mayors, congressmen, and town and state officials joined him, along with partners from Pan Am, Amtrak, and community members.

They spilled out onto the new platform, smiling and greeting people who had been waiting for the train to arrive, mingling for a while outside, and then moving into the Transit Center for a more formal presentation. The room was packed with members of the community who had come to celebrate and hear the governor speak.

Each speaker praised the work of everyone involved, with always a special thanks to former Congressman John Olver for his tireless effort to bring train service back to the area.

Greenfield mayor William Martin welcomed everyone, and spoke of the importance of the return of

rail service to Greenfield and to the economy of the wider region. Martin referenced future plans to develop commuter rail service, and encouraged those listening to show the need by using the Amtrak train. He said, "Everywhere the train has stopped, the economy has improved. That's because the residents make use of it."

Governor Patrick said, "I am thrilled to see this critical project completed, restoring service along the historic Knowledge Corridor."

He acknowledged the importance of the stimulus package that provided funding for building the transit center and the track restoration. "I thank our federal delegation including Congressmen Neal, McGovern, and Olver, and the Obama administration for their unwavering commitment to making this vision a reality."

Congressman James McGovern spoke with enthusiasm on the importance of rail service to the region. He said, "We want to see tourists get off the train in Springfield, Holyoke, Northampton and Greenfield to enjoy the amenities that we all treasure."



Former congressman John Olver speaks to the crowd gathered inside the transit center named for him on December 22 as Greenfield celebrated the return of rail service.

He also cautioned, "While this is an incredible start, the job is far from over. There is still much more work to be done because there is absolutely no question that western Massachusetts is hungry for additional rail service."

Olver was a tall, imposing figure as he stood at the podium, with a view of the train behind him. He spoke of the vision that inspired his

work bringing train service back to the region, and noted, "If usage goes up you will see additional trains."

The challenge is on. If ridership goes up on the Vermonter, it will indicate to planners that regional rail is something they should invest in. With train stations conveniently located within our towns, new options await travelers who decide to take to the rails.

Sample Schedule

Southbound Train 55 stops in Greenfield Monday through Friday at 1:07 p.m., and arrives in New York City at 6:25 p.m.

Northbound Train 56 leaves New York City Monday through Friday at 11:21 a.m., and arrives in Greenfield at 4:27 p.m. It continues on to St. Albans, VT which it reaches at 8:57 p.m.

The southbound train leaves St. Albans at 8:58 a.m.

The times are the same on weekends, but the trains' numbers are 57 southbound and 54 northbound.

A one-way ticket to New York City is \$61, and to Essex Junction (south of Burlington) it is \$46. Fares may adjust in the future, depending on ridership.

Travelers may book travel via Amtrak.com, mobile apps, or calling (800) USA-RAIL.

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ERVING POLICE LOG

Cars Crashing into Bears and Cafes

Tuesday, 12/9

10:30 a.m. Report of larceny at a West High Street residence. Found to be a civil matter; report taken.

Wednesday, 12/10

4:30 p.m. Report of a suspicious male subject on the French King Bridge. Found to be OK.

9:25 p.m. Larceny reported at French King Highway. Report taken, under investigation.

Thursday, 12/11

6:53 a.m. Took report of motor vehicle crash, Route 2 at Holmes Street.

2 p.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on

Northfield Road.

Friday, 12/12

7:10 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Warner Street.

5 p.m. A motor vehicle crashed into a bear on Route 2 in the area of the police station. Took report; environmental police handled scene.

Saturday, 12/13

1:30 a.m. Suspicious vehicle at bowling alley. Found to be lost. Gave them directions.

5:50 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Mountain Road.

8:15 a.m. A motor vehicle crashed into the Red Lan-

tern Café on Lester Street. Took report.

11:50 p.m. Report of a loose chocolate lab in the High Street area. Animal control officer called to take custody.

Monday, 12/15

12 noon Trespass on Ridge Road property. Mediated misunderstanding.

12:40 p.m. Report of lines down on River Road. Contacted Comcast.

4 p.m. Criminal application issued to [redacted] for operating a motor vehicle on a suspended license.

4 p.m. Criminal application

issued to Kim [redacted] for allowing the unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle.

5 p.m. Report of a breaking & entering at a West Main Street residence. Under investigation.

Tuesday, 12/16

4:10 p.m. Report of a suspicious motor vehicle at Tim's RV on East Main Street.

Thursday, 12/18

10:20 a.m. Neighbor complaint at Forest Street residence. Found to be civil.

Friday, 12/19

2:05 p.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on Warner Street.

Monday, 12/22

3:50 p.m. Arrested [redacted] for possession of a Class A substance and being a minor in possession of alcohol.

6:30 p.m. Report of suspicious subjects at Lester Street bridge. Gone on arrival.

Tuesday, 12/23

6:45 a.m. Disabled motor vehicle reported on Route 2 near Box Car.

3:45 p.m. Mutual aid to Gill for motor vehicle hit and run.

Wednesday, 12/24

8:15 a.m. Suspicious motor vehicle at French King

Bridge. Owner located and moved on.

8:40 a.m. Assisted on scene of medical emergency on East Prospect Street.

3:30 p.m. Assisted Gill PD with a suspicious vehicle driving around Patterson Field in Gill.

10:45 p.m. Alarm at convenience store Found to be delivery.

Thursday, 12/25

10 a.m. Report of a line down on River Road at West High Street. Comcast line. Previously called in to company.

11:10 a.m. Alarm at Cross Street. Same secure.

What Do You Think About the Pipeline?

Interviews by MARK HUDYMA

A proposal by Kinder Morgan / Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company to run a major natural gas transmission pipeline through our towns garnered strong opposition initially, but amid rising electricity bills, frosty weather, and announcements by some local gas distribution companies that they are not taking new customers, others sense the project could be necessary.

We wanted to get a sense of public opinion on the issue, so we sent our best intern out on the Ave in single-digit temperatures, with a notebook and a camera, to find out. Here's what you told him. — Eds.



"One, we don't want it. Two, we don't need it. And three, why would we let them, with their safety record? We don't want it anywhere near our water sources, or animal refuges, or under our rivers. It's another way for them to make money, shipping it to Europe. Why don't they repair the pipelines they have, and why should we pay for it?"

Nancy Warner, Montague



"I think it should come through town. It would mean more gas in the area. I have all gas appliances, and that is the safest, cleanest and cheapest way to run them. I think the moratorium is about politics. Many people are living hand to mouth, and this is their cheapest answer. I would let it through my yard."

Karl Hansen, Montague



"The only reason I'm against it, is it's going through prime farmland, and I have yet to see a pipeline that doesn't leak. If they found a safer way, I might be for it. Whoever owns the land should have a say. So, overall, I think I'm against it."

Raymond Vias, Jr., Montague



"I don't have much to say about that. I just want heat."

Casey Aiken and Beth Erickson, Turners Falls



"If the gas was staying here, I might reconsider. As it is, we're doing a lot of harm to our country, so I'm against it."

Lee Knash, Millers Falls



"I don't really think we need it. All of a sudden, electricity rates are going up, and they're not taking any new customers for gas. It seems like a funny coincidence..."

M. Morin, Turners Falls



"I'm not well informed... If it's an unnecessary addition to our community, then I am generally against it. I am against any intrusion which is unsafe or unnecessary."

Rodney Madison, Turners Falls



"In general, it's not a black and white issue. The gas is needed. I'm not keen on taking people's land, or on going through the Plains. At the end, I would say no."

Anne Nakis (photo declined), Turners Falls

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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 MONDAY

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

EVERY TUESDAY

Slate Memorial Library, Gill: *Story Hour*, stories, popcorn, and a hands-on craft project. We welcome new families, 10 a.m.

Leverett Library *Spanish Conversation Group*. Brush up on or improve your Spanish in a casual and friendly environment, 4 to 5 p.m.

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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

EVERY THURSDAY

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

EVERY FRIDAY

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: *Karaoke with Dirty John-*

ny. 9 p.m to midnight. Free.

CALL FOR ART:

Call for original poetry submissions. "Love Your Food, Love Your Co-op" theme. All welcome to enter, all styles. Falling near Valentine's Day, the event's

uary 21, for people ages 7-18. Rehearsals sixteen weeks on Sundays & Wednesdays, Shea Theater, Turners Falls.

EVENTS:

FRIDAY, JANUARY 9

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson*, hypno boogie blues! 9 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Michael Nix* performs solo at the Great Falls Coffeehouse. Coffee and homemade baked goods. Museum and museum store open during intermission, \$, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

Race & Class: Past and Pres-

Tides. \$, 8 p.m.

The Arts Block and Cafe, Greenfield: *The Happier Valley Show with THE HA-HA'S*, \$, 8 p.m.

Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Pangeans* benefit for Shutesbury Public Library. Refreshments, \$, 7:30 p.m. open mic, the feature act at 8 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bulldog, Tom Cain*, 9:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Zydeco Connection*, mix of Louisiana zydeco, 2-steps, waltzes, boogie woogie, and a little swing. 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

McCusker's Market, Shelburne Falls: *Artist's reception for Janice Sorensen* who has work on display this through 1/14. Refreshments, 3-4:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Crow's Rebellion*, warped Americana, 8 p.m.

Flywheel, Easthampton: *Laika's Orbit*, new power pop from western ma/Boston. *Squill*, Lily from Parasol returns to bring the sad and loud. *Remote Desire*, Dark and melodic post punk from Western Ma. \$, 8 p.m.



ANJA SCHUTZ PHOTO

OFC will play Saturday's skatepark benefit at St. Kaz. See page B1 for more info.

theme includes love, friends, romance, or an ode to your favorite food. Poetry Reading on February Friday 13, 6-8p.m. at Green Fields Market Co-op. Audience to vote for people's choice award; prizes will be given. Send up to 3 poems to event coordinators Laura Rodley at laurarodley@hotmail.com or Faith Kindness at fdk617@gmail.com. By 2/1/15.

Call for art submissions for the Fourth Annual *Triple S: Sensual, Sexual, Smut* show. Looking for a wide spectrum of erotic art from regional artists, previous participants encouraged. Exhibit opens February 2015 at Nina's Nook, Turners Falls. Send to naban@verizon.net before Jan 23. www.ninasnook.com

ART SHOWS & MUSEUMS:

Local libraries have passes for area museums. *Wendell Free Library* has: Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Historic Deerfield, Mass MoCa, and more. *Leverett Library* has: Clark Art Institute, Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Historic Deerfield, Springfield Museums and more. Check with each library for availability & restrictions.

CASTING CALL

Young Shakespeare Players East Spring Production: *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare, casting begins Wednesday, Jan-

ent Connections Mass Slavery Apology interactive workshop. Examine how and why race and class are connected and will learn about historical and current resistance. Presenter Angela Berkfield, the director of ACT for Social Justice and a member of the Root Social Justice Center in Brattleboro. Held at the First Congregational Church, Greenfield, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (413) 625-2951 or email@massslaveryapology.org

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Pirate Party!* Aaaaargh, mateys! Are ye ready to play like pirates? Play games, make some booty (crafts), and eat some grub! 10:30 a.m to 12 p.m.

Green Fields Market: *Valley Time Trade Orientation*. Bring your laptop or tablet if you have one. www.valleytimetrade.org 2:30 p.m.

Green Fields Market, Greenfield: *Art display reception* for work by youth participants in the Deer Paths program. Art, song and stories about bats. Refreshments, 3 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Square Dance*, \$, 6 p.m.

St Kaziemerz Society, Turners Falls: fundraiser for Unity Skatepark. Four LOUD Bands: *OFC, The Warblers, Rebel Base* and

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Shout Lulu*, southern string band, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

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

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Tommy Filiault Trio*, original guitar, 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Glenn Roth & special guest Kristen Graves*, 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Levangie & The Pistoleros*, outlaw country, 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Lehar's The Merry Widow*, The Metropolitan Opera Live in HD. Victor Léon and Leo Stein, based on the play L'Attaché d'Ambassade by Henri Meilhac English translation by Jeremy Sams. \$, 12:55 p.m.

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

MONDAY, JANUARY 19

Greenfield Community College, Main Campus: Celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.. Com-

munity is invited to celebrate the legacy and birthday of this civil rights leader. Activities and programs for children and families will be available from 10 a.m. to noon and conclude with lunch and presentations.

LOOKING AHEAD

JANUARY 23 to 25

People's Music Network Winter Gathering held in Greenfield. The PMN Winter Gathering brings together a rich blend of activists and artists using music for social change. Workshops, skills sharing, peer support and performances. More info: peoplesmusic.org

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BASKETBALL from page B1

with many lay-ups as a result of our fast breaks," coach Garry Mullins said after the game. "I was happy with our defense as well that night," he added.

On December 17, Turners played Narragansett. Turners led by 7 points at the end of the third quarter but was outscored 19 to 9 in the fourth and dropped the game, 52-49.

"A very disappointing night," Coach Mullins lamented. "As a team, we shot 26.5% from the floor, and only made 10 of 19 from the foul line."

Turners held the lead until late in the fourth quarter. But in that period, Liam Ellis suffered a bloody nose and had to leave the game for more than three minutes. In spite of losing three-plus minutes, Ellis managed to score 27 points. Nick York finished with 11.

The next night, December 18, Turners defeated Mohawk by 10, 69-59. In that game, Ellis scored a triple double: 13 points, 10 rebounds, and 10 assists.

Tionne Brown scored 14 points, Jalen Sanders also scored 14 and Nick York scored a career high 22.

On December 23, Turners played Lee. The Tribe led 33-19 at the half and never looked back. Turners beat Lee 63 to 50. Charbonneau (12), Ellis (11), Sanders (15) and York (14) led the way in the victory.

Against Greenfield, on Decem-

ber 29, Turners won handily, 60 to 41. Ellis again earned a triple-double; scoring 18 points, snagging 12 rebounds and getting 10 assists.

"There is no question that this is Liam's team, and the wonderful thing about Liam is that even though he is our best basketball player, he is our hardest worker in almost every practice and every game," Mullins explained.

But basketball is a team sport, and Ellis has had plenty of help from his team mates. Ten Indians had playing time and kept Greenfield at bay with both York and Sanders scoring in double figures.

Turners Falls to Hopkins in 4th

Turners was leading for most of the game against powerhouse Hopkins Academy on Friday, January 2. But at the end of the third period, with the Tribe leading 46 to 45, Hopkins took the lead at the buzzer. And Turners was unable to score again until there was only three minutes 20 seconds left in the game.

The Golden Eagles had scored 13 unanswered points, and the Turners Falls Indians found themselves behind, 46 to 58. With time running out, down by double digits, Turners was forced to shoot the ball quickly on each possession and as the game wound down, they were forced to shoot three pointers.

And as the minutes turned to seconds, Turners had to foul just to

get the ball back. They were able to cut into the lead but ended up on the losing end, 69 to 62.

"I'm proud of the way our kids played today," Coach Mullins said after the game. "[But] they got tired in the fourth. Hopkins is a big team with a lot depth and we couldn't keep up."

The Hopkins depth helped them solidify the victory. The bench contributed 16 points, and not one Hopkins player had to play more than 29 minutes.

The Tribe's bench only scored 4 points, and two players, Ellis and Sanders, were forced to play more than 31 minutes. Sanders had only 42 seconds of rest and Ellis played the entire game without a break.

Nick York was the high scorer for the Tribe with 25, sinking five 3-pointers and going 6 for 7 from the free throw line. He also had 6 rebounds and an assist. Liam Ellis added 23 points, 12 rebounds and 5 assists. Liam went 8 for 11 on two pointers and shot two 3-pointers. Jalen Sanders scored 5 points, an assist and grabbed 10 rebounds.

Tionne Brown had 5 points, 2 rebounds and 2 assists. Charbonneau contributed 4 points, 2 rebounds and 1 assist. Emmitt Turn had 2 assists and 1 rebound. Nick Croteau also contributed with an assist. Eulalio Veras gave the starters some rest by playing more than 7 minutes.

Overtime Win over Smith

The 2014/15 Turners Falls Basketball Indians have never trailed at the half. In their first 7 games, they have always led at the midgame whistle. This fast-scoring offense puts their opponents in the precarious position of playing catch-up basketball.

But on Monday, January 5, the Tribe proved that they can play hard into the fourth, and even the fifth, period.

With the game knotted at 47 at the end of regulation, Turners Falls scored 8 points in overtime, taking



Jalen Sanders gets up to the net in the January 2 game against Hopkins.

out Smith 55 to 52 in a hard-fought, exhausting victory.

Sanders was the high scorer for Turners Falls with 16. Charbonneau added 12 more including a game tying layup at the end of regulation. Once again, Ellis scored in double digits with 10. York also got 10 points, and Brown added 7.

The win gives the Tribe a 5-and-2 record, moving them into a tie for second place in the Hampshire League.

So how is Turners Falls going to do this season? Basketball is really two seasons, the regular season and the playoffs. If Turners can contin-

ue this caliber of play, they should be seated pretty high for the playoffs, but Coach Mullins knows the roadblocks ahead of him.

After all, this is his thirtieth season, and he's been down this road before.

"Rebounding and defending have to be priorities for us. Due to our lack of size, we need to get a good share of run outs each night to beat most of the teams in our league," Mullins explained.

The next boys' basketball game will be at home on Thursday, January 8 at 7:30 p.m., against Frontier.



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