



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 15 – NO. 30

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 11, 2017

As Town Elections Approach, Gill-Montague District's Fiscal Challenges Come Into Focus

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – It was not the first time this year an upset crowd had packed into the regional school committee's cramped meeting room at Turners Falls High School.

But while most public attention since September has been on the committee's decision to retire the high school's former sports team name, the Indians, the message delivered Tuesday from parents and students was about academics – specifically, an outcry over the administration's plan to combine fifth and sixth grade classes next year at Gill Elementary.

"What is required of students now, and what is required of teachers now, as far as MCAS results, I think is just an insane thing to expect of a combined classroom," said Kelly

Stevens of Gill, a parent of two students at the school. "I urge you to really consider what that classroom space would actually look like, and what their academic futures would look like as an impact of that."

The class consolidation, and termination of Gill fifth-grade teacher Jackie Chase, are part of a raft of cuts superintendent Michael Sullivan proposed last week after the district received word that its state Medicaid reimbursement would be much lower than anticipated, both this year and next. A high school phys ed teacher, a literacy coach at the Sheffield and Hillcrest schools, and six paraprofessionals would also be laid off.

GMRSD's official FY'18 budget has already been approved; over the weekend, Montague town meeting approved an assessment of \$9,356,560, and Gill is expected to

follow suit with its part early next month. The late-breaking news that state auditors had ruled that many of the one-to-one services paraprofessionals provide to students are not eligible for the reimbursement they have received since at least 2009 sent district officials scrambling to cut from the spending side of an already-lean budget.

Alone among the proposed reductions, the Gill consolidation would constitute a "programmatic change," and therefore will require approval from the school committee on May 23, Sullivan said. But a spirited pushback from Gill families, and an anticipated increase in returning sixth-graders from eight to 11, may lend uncertainty to that decision.

Katia Williford of Montague City, mother of a rising Gill sixth grader,

see GMRSD page A4



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

Gill Elementary students and parents urged the school committee Tuesday night to rethink the plan to cut a classroom teacher.

The Week In TFHS Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

This week in sports, the Turners Falls softball team rebounded, the girls' track team wrapped up their regular season, the baseball team won two big games before dropping an extra-inning contest, Owen Ortiz broke a record – and "upset" seemed to be the word of the week.

Softball

TFHS 11 – Mohawk 0

TFHS 16 – Athol 4

TFHS 6 – Pioneer 1

On Wednesday, May 3, Turners Falls defeated Mohawk 11-0. It was tense

and very competitive in the early going, mainly because Turners was riding a two-game skid; the crowd was hanging on every pitch, with the True Blue Faithful hoping to reverse their team's fortunes.

The Blue Tribe went 1-2-3 in the first two innings and could only muster a walk in the third. But in the fourth inning, Powertown got back to their old ways as Turners batted the order plus one, and sent 6 runs home.

Alyson Murphy reached base, Abby Loynd cracked a double to the fence, and then Hailey Bogosz, Maddy Johnson, Olivia Whittier and

Cassidhe Wozniak all managed to reach base.

Then Gabby Arzuaga came to bat. Gabby got way ahead on the count, and was facing 3 balls with no strikes. "If she throws you an apple, then pick it. Otherwise, let it go," coach Gary Mullins advised. Gabby took a called strike and then fouled one off putting the count at full. On the next pitch, she got a base hit, and Athol changed pitchers.

Turners got a couple more runs in the fifth, and added 3 more in the sixth, courtesy of homers by Jordyn Fiske and Alyson Murphy. In the

see TFHS SPORTS page B5



A Great Leap Forward:
TFHS senior Owen Ortiz smashes the school record in the triple jump with this 43' 1 1/2" jump during Monday's track and field meet in Greenfield.



DAVID HOLTT PHOTOS

A Better Bicycle Heads Out For The Highway



KEVIN MURRAY PHOTO

Our reporter gives the new hybrid vehicle a test drive.

By PETE WACKERNAGEL

DEERFIELD – There is but one roadworthy electric chariot made in Franklin County. The PEBL, or Pedal Electric Bike Life, will soon go into production in a new manufacturing space in Deerfield. The PEBL, incredibly, is a velomobile that is designed, engineered, and built locally.

The PEBL was born in 2013 as a father-son adventure in experimental bicycle engineering. The idea for a human/electric-powered vehicle that could be used in place of a car was conceived of by Leverett residents Kevin and Nevin Murray.

To build the PEBL, the Murrays had to invent their own body, frame, and seat track, along with the integration of the vehicle's other organs, including an electrical

system and bicycle mechanisms. Pedaling provides additional power to its electric motor.

Kevin, an acupuncturist, naturopathic doctor, and lifelong cyclist, wanted a vehicle for "when a car is too much, and a bicycle is not enough." He has demonstrated that the PEBL can be used for tasks like grocery shopping, transporting skis or a bicycle, and, inferentially, hunting or fishing gear.

Legally, the PEBL is a bicycle, but it looks more like a car. This appearance of size and substance is a crucial safety element, as it makes it attractive to people who do not feel comfortable riding a bicycle on the highway. "It had to stand out in the road," says Kevin. "Drivers are respectful, they gawk at it. You feel comfortable being in traffic."

see PEBL page A7

Wendell Takes Major Stride Toward High-Speed Internet

By JOHANNA BARTLETT

At their latest meeting on May 4, the Wendell broadband committee voted unanimously to hire Westfield Gas & Electric to do a design study for the high-speed fiber optic network they hope to build in the town. This step will allow the committee to arrive at the overall cost of building their own network. In turn, this information will allow the committee to use more accurate cost estimations in choosing the plan best suited to the town's needs and resources.

The broadband committee is actually two committees – an operations committee and a construction committee – which have been meeting for the most part together for over a year. According to Alistair MacMartin, chair of the building committee, it has been a long and arduous process for the committee, especially in the last two years, as the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, the state's mechanism for funding aid to towns for broadband, has changed its policies numerous times.

"The ground keeps shifting," said MacMartin, which has required the committee to respond each time with adjustments to their own plans. Despite the challenges, the committee has persevered, developing detailed data about several proposals, and is now in a position to order the design study.

At their meeting on April 20, Ray DiDonato, a member of the

operations committee, presented an extensive spreadsheet developed by the group over the past two years, which they then spent about 90 minutes updating with new information from the various companies interested in taking on the project.

The joint broadband committee decided to get a design study done before choosing between the town's various options for the system's construction.

Categories such as "governance structure," "total cost to the town," and "service" were reviewed. Several proposals were considered viable at that time, among them proposals from private companies Matrix Design Group and Crocker Communications, and from Westfield Gas & Electric and WiredWest, which have offered to operate the system after it is built.

It was decided that the next meeting on May 4 would begin with a review of the "risk assessment" category. The committee intended to assess the financial risks of each proposal to the town, and to reach a decision about which company offered the best plan for Wendell.

Town meeting has already passed a warrant article allowing see WENDELL page A3

The Montague Reporter

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The Single-Issue Wrecking Ball

“The referendum will not have any effect on the sports team name. But it may well have a much larger effect: electing people to the school committee who care a lot about not changing sports team names.”

That’s what we wrote in this space back on February 9, just days before the Gill-Montague school committee decided, by a 6-3 vote, to eliminate the “Indians” team name at the high school.

The writing was on the wall then, and it may have been there as far back as September, when the idea that other people might think a thing is racist led to an eruption of public rage and disgust usually reserved for area murderers.

At their September 27 meeting, the committee was already debating whether they should set a goal to make the decision, one way or another, before the spring election. The risk, which they alluded to in lightly veiled terms, was that a pending decision on a single issue – controversial, and barely related to the regular challenges committee members must understand and solve – could hijack the logic of the election.

On October 18, when the committee first discussed a call for a referendum on the issue in Montague, they didn’t seem too concerned. “If the towns decide that’s what they want to do, I think that’s their area,” Jane Oakes of Gill said then.

But by late January, with four months down and three to go on the decision’s intended timeline, the committee was living and working in a fishbowl, scrutinized and second-guessed by two hostile camps of activists, and had barely finished with “education,” the first of three phases necessary for the decision.

It was a lose/lose. They were being regularly accused of tearing the community apart, wasting district resources on the decision, dragging it out, and sustaining a climate that was damaging to students.

Postponing the decision for the referendum would also mean postponing it until after the election – something members wished to avoid. And as it turned out, a majority didn’t think their decision would rest on the outcome of such a vote.

It’s understandable that residents – very plausibly, a majority of residents – who feel the committee does not represent them on this one issue feel ignored, and therefore disempowered.

But beyond a “voice” of support for the former team name, a high Yes vote on Monday will tell the world something else: that it took messing with the sports team name to get a large number of people to pay attention to the difficult work of maintaining our public schools.

The last time Gill and Montague voters were this involved in district politics, the school committee was trying to decide *which school they had to close*. At this rate, that could also be the case next time.

Montague’s race is among three qualified candidates: very different in temperament, and with a range of life experience, but who would all make good committee members.

But in the Gill race, many will cast a revenge ballot – for a nice guy, maybe, but one who shows no particular qualification for public office and no particular understanding of the district’s true challenges.

His victory may well return the school committee to its old factional, dysfunctional state, and encourage single-issue hardliners to extend their campaign all the way to next spring.

We see no need to weigh in on the referendum. It’s a symbolic measure about a symbol.

But we do hope many Yes voters, in the privacy of the voting booth, will take a deep breath, remember that there is far more than one issue at stake, and cast the responsible vote to return Sandy Brown to the school committee.

Correction!

In last week’s Montague selectboard notes, we wrote that a proposed 25-year lease agreement with Kearsage Energy of Watertown, which plans to build a solar array on town-owned land, “would generate \$15,200 in revenue for the town in its first year, with a 1.5% annual escalator.”

One sharp-eyed reader, who might also be a town planner, spotted an error in this statement. The revenue is actually projected to start out at \$155,220, with a 1.8% annual escalator.

This may seem like a fine distinction, but bear in mind that in the project’s twenty-fifth year, that little difference would add up to \$216,445.56, which is a lot of newspapers.

We apologize to our readers for the error!

Letters to the Editors

Vote No, Or Else Boycott

An unfortunate and foolish decision by our town Selectboard allowed the odious non-binding question about the school mascot issue to be included on our upcoming ballot.

It was foolish because our School Committee has already made the decision – doing the job for which they were elected – and it was unfortunate because the rights of minorities should never be subject to a popular vote.

The numerous lawn signs around town calling for a YES vote which also display the stereotypical image which our Native American neighbors have pointed out is offensive and disrespectful to them and their rich ancestral heritage nauseate me, and I have to wonder at the insensitivity and stubborn tone-deafness of the people who are displaying them.

I imagine families from out of town with young children who are home shopping driving past these many signs and then driving right out of town to buy in a neighboring town where their children won’t be growing up in such a place.

I will be voting NO and I urge my friends and neighbors to either vote NO, or else boycott this question while still showing up at the polls to vote for Sandy Brown for School Committee.

Hopefully this will bring about the end of this ugly campaign to re-institutionalize a racist stereotype. I can’t believe in the year 2017 we’re even still discussing this!

Paul Kaufman
Montague Center

Don’t Boycott – Vote No

I would like to offer a suggestion to those who – like me – rejoiced at the decision to discontinue the use of the “Indian mascot” for TFHS.

While I respect everyone’s right to peacefully express and act on their opinions (freedom of speech is a precious privilege) I believe that *a vote rather than a boycott is of value*, for the following reason.

Mr. Sullivan and some members of the school committee have suffered harassment as a result of their stand for civil rights. I know that a non-binding referendum may seem pointless, especially in view of pending state legislation on the issue and in view of the fact that the decision has already been made by the appropriate authorities.

However, casting a vote is still a chance to say thank you to Mr. Sullivan and those members of the school committee who supported the decision; it is a way to make up to them for the often abusive emails they have received.

This is why the sign in my yard asks that you please vote. I raised two TFHS graduates, and I believe pride depends on the kindness and integrity of one’s behavior and not on symbols, especially symbols which may be painful for some of us.

Thank you,

ML Magrath
Montague Center

Monitor the Aliens

A recent issue of the *Boston Broadside* newspaper featured an article about legislation that would require the Commonwealth of Massachusetts “to verify that an applicant is a US citizen or a lawfully present alien prior to being eligible for state entitlement programs.”

The article goes on to explain that there exists a federal program called SAVE (Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements). SAVE is an electronic system operated by the USCIS (US Citizenship and Immigration Services), which is a component of the Department of Homeland Security.

From the *uscis.gov* website: “The SAVE Program provides a fast, secure and efficient verification service for federal, state and local benefit-granting agencies to verify a benefit applicant’s immigration status or naturalized/derived citizenship.”

SAVE should be fully utilized by every agency in Massachusetts involved with spending taxpayer money on MassHealth benefits, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits, Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) payments, and subsidized housing. I applaud Rep. Marc Lombardo (R-Billerica) for submitting this legislation, bill #H103, “an act relative to the utilization of the systematic alien verification for entitlements program by the commonwealth.”

If you agree, contact your state senator and state representative to let them know that you support bill #H103. For more information about the bill, Rep. Lombardo can be contacted at Marc.Lombardo@ma-house.gov and (617)722-2460.

Joan Milnes
Beverly, MA
(formerly of Millers Falls)

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Compiled by DON CLEGG

Stop by the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls for some light music of the **Connecticut River Flute Choir** on Friday, May 12, from 5 to 6 p.m. The Choir is an ensemble of musicians who love to play the flute and are sure to delight you with their soothing and distinctive sounds of their animated instruments.

And on Saturday morning, May 13, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m., Colleen Campbell comes to the bank bringing her message of support and compassion for local Heroes, Horses and Hounds.

Through love, patience and positive reinforcement, Colleen is able to bring out the best in those involved with her program. Saturday’s event will feature one of the miniature horses in training for mobility service. The public can also be educated in approaching a service animal. After all, they are working!

All are welcome to this family-friendly event. Light refreshments provided by the bank.

Join Nur Tiven and David Brule of the Nolumbeka Project for a **Native History Walking Tour** along the Pocumtuck Ridge Trail on Saturday, May 13. Shuttles will leave from the Rendezvous in Turners Falls at 1 p.m.

The PRT passes through beautiful highland wilderness and riverside forests, offering some great vistas along the way. Learn about the history of the region and its original inhabitants and stewards, the Pocumtuck people. The history will span before, during, and after contact with the European immigrants.

The five-mile hike will end at the Woolman Hill Conference Center in Deerfield, where there will be a presentation at 6:30 p.m., also open to non-hikers, on **“Tales of Great Beaver, King Phillip’s War, and the Great Falls.”**

Both events are by donation. To register for the hike, or for more information, call (413) 387-8195.

Don’t forget **Mothers’ Day** on Sunday, May 14.

The **Great Falls Farmers Market** has started, and will continue each Wednesday from 2 to 6 p.m. through October 25. The market is located near the corner of Avenue A and 2nd Street in Turners Falls. There is plenty of parking on the Avenue or in the parking lot behind the market. A visit to the Discovery Center and the Turners Falls Fish Ladder could round off your afternoon.

The dedicated actors of the **Young Shakespeare Players East** will perform “As You Like It” at 6 p.m. each evening on Tuesday May 16, Wednesday May 17, and Friday May 19 at the Shea Theater. The YSP East Ensemble, actors age 7 to 17, invites you to experience the music, comedy, and many delights of this timeless masterpiece.

All performances are free and open to the public. All ages are welcome to attend. Concessions will be available during all shows, with funds raised going directly to YSP East’s Scholarship Fund.

Professor Lisa Brooks of the Abenaki presents **“Shoshanim’s Journey: Turner’s Falls and the Treaty of 1676”** on Friday, May 19, at 7 p.m. at Greenfield High School, 21 Barr Avenue.

Professor Brooks will present new research on King Philip’s War and Turners Falls, focusing on the spring of 1676 when the Nipmuc leader Shoshanim traveled toward

the Connecticut River Valley on a diplomatic mission, which was halted by the violence at the traditional fishing and gathering place.

This mission was part of the larger peace negotiations during the spring and summer of 1676, a treaty that never fully came to fruition. This new research raises crucial questions about how Puritan narrators and later historians have portrayed the “end” of the conflict, and places the war in the context of Indigenous diplomatic protocols.

Western Massachusetts residents can receive free legal advice on Wednesday, May 24, through the Massachusetts Bar Association’s semiannual **Western Mass Dial-A-Lawyer** call-in program.

Volunteer lawyers from the MBA will field phone calls from 4 to 7 p.m. from residents of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties who have legal concerns or problems. The legal advice is provided at no charge as a public service.

The Dial-A-Lawyer phone number is (413) 782-1659.

The Leverett Historical Society will be having their annual **Plant Sale fundraiser** on Saturday, May 27, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Leverett Town Hall, 9 Montague Road, rain or shine. Plant donations are needed! Plants can be dropped off behind the town hall during the week prior to the sale. Please label all donated plants. Master Gardener Dawn Marvin Ward will be on duty to help assist with plant choices and general garden questions. For more information, contact Dawn at 367-9562 or Julie at 367- 2656.

There will be a **Wendell Town-wide Tag Sale** on the Town Common (Gazebo side) on Saturday, May 27 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Any Wendell resident is welcome to come and sell (or buy). Participants are asked to donate 20% of their sales to one of Wendell’s wonderful non-profit organizations (or more, if they’d like). This is a “pack in, pack out” event – everyone is responsible for setting up and cleaning up their area.

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WENDELL from pg A1

for up to \$1.9 million to begin the process of bringing broadband to town, but MBI is expected to reimburse \$700,000, and the committee hopes to complete the project for significantly less than the \$1.9 million.

When the joint committee met on May 4, discussion led them to the conclusion that they needed to complete the design phase of the project before they could make any final decisions about the building phase.

At this point, the committee decided not to proceed with analysis of the spreadsheet data, and instead to get a design study done, and re-

visit the various options after it was completed. They chose Westfield Gas & Electric for the job.

Once the design has been completed, the town will choose a contractor to build the network. After that, the committee tentatively plans to hire WiredWest to operate the completed system. This entails day-to-day responsibilities such as maintenance, legal and insurance issues, and accounting tasks.

Plans beyond the design study are not finalized, and could well change as more is learned about the building phase and beyond. Contracting for the design study, however, represents significant progress in the goal of bringing fi-

ber-optic cable to Wendell.

“It’s especially great that the committee was able to vote unanimously on this step,” said selectboard and construction committee member Christine Heard. “It demonstrates the willingness of a great many different voices to come together to make significant progress.”

The Wendell selectboard and fin com will host a forum at 7 p.m. on May 24 at town hall in order to prepare for the June 10 town meeting. The forum will offer an opportunity for townspeople to find out more about the progress of the broadband committee, as well as the other items on the warrant.



Another Letter to the Editors

The Nature and Extent of Control

With the editorial “Someone Else’s Problem” of April 20, we are once again indebted to the *Montague Reporter* for providing its readers with previously hidden information concerning what our government’s highest leadership was actually about at the deepest levels. It is sad-denying to learn that FDR, one of our country’s much loved presidents, nonetheless was willing to forsake his humanity for the false God of commerce – as long as his inaction was kept secret.

“For nearly the entire duration of World War II, the American and British government were aware that the Nazi regime was slaughtering Jews in the death camps. . . In America, powerful players in the State Department wanted to put a lid on any discussion of [Hitler’s] genocide, out of fear that broad prosecution of German war criminals would endanger postwar trade relations between the US and Ger-

many. They maneuvered to undermine Herbert Pell, Roosevelt’s representative to the United Nations War Crimes Commission, who was documenting the atrocities.”

For today’s world, we are again engaged in a massive struggle for our humanity and our subsistence, both physically and as a nation presumably dedicated to democracy. We will not be able to address our existential challenges most effectively unless we know fully and in detail the nature and extent of the tools of control being currently utilized.

Over the years I have learned of many individual examples of US maneuvers regarding other countries (for example, John Perkins’ 2004 book “Confessions of an Economic Hit Man”). However, it was only after reading Naomi Klein’s “Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism” – toweringly researched, stunning, actually horrifying at times – followed by her

“This Changes Everything” that the breathtaking magnitude of the “grand design” is revealed.

That “design” entails invoking beyond-evil levels of destruction against people and economic structures. Then with a reeling population, quickly comes a transfer of each country’s assets and resources from the people, to private entities and corporations. Taken together, these two books provide a full education for those who also ponder our existential plight and wish to respond effectively.

To take just one example from Klein: How can concerned citizens begin to take on those “Chicago Boys” of the University of Chicago Department of Economics? These “scholars” assiduously plant the seeds of economic mechanisms used for transfer of physical and governmental resources to private entities once the “softening” was and is achieved in country after

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Mascot Question**

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Community Members for Civil Rights
Signed: Bob Mahler,
David Detmold, Diane McAvoy,
Joy Kaubin, Nur Habib,
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**Great Falls Middle
School Students
of the Week**

week ending 5/5/2017:

Grade 6

Juan Tarrios

Grade 7

Maria Romashka

Grade 8

Catherine Bezio

GUEST EDITORIAL

By **JIM HICKS**

LEVERETT – In a time where the best journalists lack all capacity to convince, and the worst are full of passionate intensity, in local newspapers one still hopes to find an island of sanity, reason, and calm. And the *Montague Reporter* has often met such expectations: coverage of newsworthy events in Leverett by David Detmold or Ann Tweedy has generally been praiseworthy, the sort of work that helps make communities stronger.

As such, I simply have to respond to the closing comments of Rob Skelton's May 4, 2017 "Notes from the Leverett Selectboard." I would like to correct several obvious errors as well as defend the reputation of a tireless and talented town employee. I write out of sadness, not to mention shock and dismay, at remarks that are unprofessional as well as erroneous.

Skelton begins his penultimate paragraph by referring to "[l]ongtime assessor Steve Schmidt." Steve has indeed served the town of Leverett for many years, as its Administrative Assessor. He is a part-time, in part clerical, employee. Skelton, however, places Schmidt "*at the helm* as Leverett *overtaxed* Yankee Candle *titan* Mike Kittredge's '*Neverland*' estate" (my emphasis, his purple prose).

I suspect that someone at the *Montague Reporter* must understand better than Skelton the structure of Leverett's town governance; if not, I would be happy to explain it. As the actual helmsman of Leverett's Board of Assessors, the group to which Steve Schmidt reports, I do know we are lucky to employ such a talented first mate.

The key charge in the phrase

Reporting on Assessors Unacceptable

above is "overtaxed." We can set aside, I believe, fine distinctions; it is probably unnecessary to remind the readers of the *Montague Reporter* that assessors do not tax, they set property values, or that the amount of taxes property owners pay depends on town expenditures.

But what about this claim that Leverett's resident "titan" has been "overtaxed"? As Skelton himself notes, a recent decision by the state's Appellate Tax Board did set the value of a portion of Mr. Kittredge's Leverett properties at a lower value than their assessment by our Board. Skelton might in fact be seen as prescient, or simply prejudiced, in this regard, given that he also claimed, without citing evidence or sources – *in November of 2016, months before this ATB decision* – that Leverett had been "overtaxing for many years the estate of Yankee Candle founder Mike Kittredge."

In the recent ATB case, however, the abatement requests under consideration covered, not "many," but in fact only *two* years – so apparently even the property owner's opinion differs from those expressed by this Montague reporter.

Skelton, elsewhere in his serpentine syntax, also claims that Leverett was "slapped down in state tax court."

Again, what are the facts?

In a final attempt to settle the case, the Board adopted our expert's professional appraisal of the Kittredge parcels under consideration and agreed to set the total value at eight million dollars. The counter-appraisal, submitted in court by Mr. Kittredge's representatives, valued these same parcels at \$1.8 million. As Skelton would know, if he had consulted public

records concerning the case, the binding decision of the ATB set the total value at \$6.5 million.

Having spent my working life as a student of English and other languages, I must admit I remain unaware of any sense of the phrase "slapped down" where its meaning is, as was the town's settlement offer in this case, "largely affirmed." The ATB valued the property at over 3½ times the plaintiff's appraisal, a judgment less than 20% under the final value our Board had agreed on.

In the long run, such matters of fact are less important than the lack of respect, professionalism, and due diligence demonstrated in the comments by Rob Skelton. Each of the errors mentioned here could have been avoided by a simple phone call to our office. That no such call was made, and that the reporter chose, nonetheless, to cite the opinions and mischaracterize the actions of Steve Schmidt – who he had not even spoken to about these matters – is simply unacceptable, and merits an apology, if not sanction.

Stripped of its convoluted contortions, here is the main clause of Skelton's first sentence: "Longtime assessor Steve Schmidt [...] is retiring." What, it must be asked, do any of the above details about the Kittredge court case have to do with this decision? Skelton seems to imply, adopting the fallacious argument *post hoc ergo propter hoc* ("it came after, therefore it was caused by"), that Schmidt, in despair after this allegedly crushing defeat, is heading for the Shutesbury hills.

If anything, Steve chose to delay his retirement until the Kittredge case was settled; he preferred not to hand over a multi-year, high-stakes, exceedingly complex problem to a new hire. Uninformed, needlessly

aggressive, and erroneous reporting weakens our communities; its toxicity makes the work of public servants more difficult than it otherwise is. From the *Montague Reporter*, we hope for better.

That said, I would like to end on a positive note. Though the terms in which he characterizes his subject are again needlessly alarmist, the Leverett Board of Assessors would like to thank the *Montague Reporter* for informing its readers of what is indeed a transitional moment for our board. One of the current assessors, whose term is up next year, does not plan to run again. I myself, on the Board now for over twenty years, am also unlikely to continue.

Some time ago, when Dave Palmer (who served twenty-two years) and Don Robinson (who served thirty-six) were thinking of stepping down, it took us several years to find willing, good-hearted souls to replace them. Under our state system of taxation, assessing property values accurately is essential to good governance, yet this task is unlikely ever to be the most appealing form of service to our fellow citizens.

Nonetheless, I do assure the readers of the *Montague Reporter* that, despite the insinuations of Rob Skelton, our office has no plans to "outsource" its activities to Bangalore, Boston, or even the Berkshires, so long as qualified citizens choose to step up and do the work.

Good, informed reporting, as we have received in the past and hope to receive in the future, does indeed make that work easier.

Thank you for your service to our community.

*Jim Hicks is the chair of the
Leverett Board of Assessors.*

GMRSD from page A1

said that while she was not opposed to mixed-aged classrooms, she doubted it could work "without a curriculum that is set up and planned for such a case."

"Gill [Elementary] is really coming together in a way it hadn't been in previous years," Williford said, adding that eliminating Chase could make it difficult to hire a comparable teacher back the next year.

"I don't think the school district is going to seem like the kind of place that an exceptional teacher wants to come work, if they know that they could just be let go that easily," she warned.

Another parent who did not identify herself said the fifth-grade class had already suffered from a series of mid-year teacher replacements in their time at the school.

"By cutting one teacher, you're going to reduce the staff by 11%," argued Greg Snedeker, a parent as well as a member of Gill's selectboard. "These are actual resources: adults in the building, teachers that are helping other teachers, as well as students."

The small school, Snedeker said, already has the highest student-to-teacher ratio in the district, and the layoff would result in a ratio "60% higher than Sheffield [Elementary]." "I have to ask you if you think that's fair," he told the committee.

Town Elections

But it may be a different committee making that consideration

two weeks from now. This Monday, May 15, incumbent committee members from both Montague and Gill face challengers in town elections. The following night, the committee will hold a special meeting to reorganize and elect its officers for the coming year.

This year's controversy over the high school team name, or mascot, has galvanized interest in the election. Montague voters, who vote from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at their precinct polling stations, will have an opportunity to vote for a "non-binding" referendum advising the school "retain its Indian logo but alter the image to be more consistent with indigenous cultures in our region."

Not all who oppose this symbolic measure will vote against it. A faction calling itself Community Members for Civil Rights has issued a call to boycott the question outright. Last week their yard signs sprung up around town, joining the numerous signs featuring the old logo but calling for a "Yes" vote on the question.

In Montague, school committee members Michael Langknecht and April Reipold will be joined on the ballot by Cassie Damkoehler. Langknecht and Reipold both cast minority votes against the team name's elimination in February.

Though there are no other town-wide competitive races on the ballot, Montague town meeting may also receive an infusion of new energy from the issue. A number of activists against the change, including Jeremy Dillensneider, Tammy

Young and Chris Pinardi, appear on local precinct ballots.

In Gill, three-term incumbent Sandra Brown faces a challenge from Shawn Hubert, a TFHS alumnus, sports booster, and owner of Hubie's Tavern in downtown Turners Falls. At a recent candidates' forum, Hubert pointed to the district's athletics program as "a model that we can look at" for academic improvement.

Brown has been targeted for ouster in retaliation for her vote to change the team name.

Former Gill school committee member Jen Waldron explained on the "Save the TF Indians Logo" Facebook forum that she did not turn in papers this year in order to support Hubert's run. "I spoke with Shawn, he and I came to an agreement, he would run this year and I would run next year," she wrote. "We did not want to split votes and inadvertently help Sandy win."

All voters from Montague and Gill will be able to vote on candidates from both towns. The non-binding referendum question will not appear on Gill ballots, as advocates did not turn in enough signatures before the deadline, and the Gill selectboard declined a request to add it themselves by a 1–2 vote. Gill voters will cast ballots from noon to 8 p.m. at the fire station.

Last Monday, the town of Erving, which also enrolls pupils in the district, did vote on the question, though it has not sent a representative to attend any school committee meetings this year. With 11% voter turnout,

the town voted 93 to 23 in favor of restoring the team name.

Financial Management

At Tuesday night's school committee meeting, superintendent Sullivan reported that the district was in the process of hiring a law firm that specialized in healthcare law, in order to review the circumstances under which it was blindsided by a reduction in Medicaid reimbursement. Since 2009, the district has contracted with a firm called New England Medical Billing (NEMB) to process its claims; most one-to-one work paraprofessionals do with students who have individual education plans had been reimbursed.

According to NEMB, a state audit determined that only medically necessary services, like feeding tubes or bathroom trips, should be covered. This resulted in a loss of about \$130,000 in revenue in the current school year – triggering in a spending freeze for the rest of the year – and a \$160,000 loss in FY'18.

School committee members listened to concerns raised over the Gill Elementary proposal during the meeting's public comment period, but did not discuss the issue, or alternative ways to cut about \$50,000 from the budget, at any length. The topic is on their agenda for May 23.

With three more students expected to remain in Gill's sixth grade than had been estimated last week, the combined fifth and sixth grade class would have 27. Gill member Timmie see **GMRSD** next page

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NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

“Indian”-Free Poll Zone Stressed

By JEN AUDLEY

At the Montague selectboard meeting on Monday, Millers Falls’ Element Brewing Company sought permission to add seasonal outdoor seating in front of their business at 16 Bridge Street, as well as a one-day license to serve until 11 p.m. at the culmination of a bicycling event in mid-October.

Both requests were approved, pending a “quick review” of the premises license alteration by the board of health. Chris Boutwell, who works for a wholesale alcohol distributor, recused himself from the discussion and vote, as he typically does when the board addresses liquor licensing issues.

Element’s 9,000+ square foot facility is open from noon to 9 p.m. seven days a week, and includes a tasting room with pool table and darts. Diemand Farm’s pop-up kitchen prepares and sells food in the space on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Co-owners Dan Kramer and Ben Anhalt’s proposal would eliminate two parking spaces and use a removable fence to create an outdoor seating area for up to 28. Noting that the business is near several residences, chair Rich Kuklewicz wondered if the business had plans to offer any “outdoor entertainment” (the response was no), and cautioned the owners in any case to “just be aware of your neighbors.”

At that point, members of the Ket-cham family, whose residence shares a driveway with the brewery, spoke up, explaining that their front door is just seven feet from the edge of the proposed seating area. They described the brewery as an excellent neighbor, and said that while they were not opposed to the request and did not wish to ask for any adjustments, they felt they needed to speak up to ensure that they could ask for a review of the situation later on “if it

turns out to be a big hit.”

George Gadja, the abutter on the other side, also identified himself and said he and his wife had found Kramer and Anhalt to be “incredibly accommodating and responsive,” and that the business had brought “a wonderful nexus of energy to Millers Falls.”

Kramer added that “Ben and I are really committed to being good neighbors,” and Jonathan Ket-cham responded, “I can promise you, your word’s good with me. If there’s a problem, I know I can just talk to you.”

The selectboard approved the request and invited the abutters to check in with them in August, once the new seating had been in place for a while – or sooner, if needed.

May 15 Election

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau’s “Election Day Activities” agenda item was a late addition to the meeting. Bourbeau explained that the “high level of emotion” she’d observed related to the non-binding referendum question on the Turners Falls High School logo made her feel it was important to remind the viewing audience that voters are entitled by law to cast their ballots in an “influence free” zone.

This zone is defined by a 150-foot perimeter measured from the building entrance door of each polling place. Within this zone, no one may engage in electioneering or campaigning activities, which includes activities such as carrying signs or wearing items that promote or oppose any candidate or question appearing on the ballot.

Bourbeau distributed a press release (available at www.montague.net) that includes a detailed list of items prohibited within that 150-foot zone on May 15, including “clothing or other displays that include the logo of Turners Falls High School, the logo name (“Turners Falls Indians” or “Indians”), similar logos

(Washington Redskins or Cleveland Indians), similar names (“Redskins” or “Indians”), alternative logos (a circle with a slash over the image of a Native American with or without text), or other materials reasonably viewed as an expression of support or in opposition to the question.”

She summarized: “No Indian anything. No hats, buttons or bags. No costumes.”

Bourbeau said she will ensure the 150-foot boundary is clearly marked at each polling place, and that poll workers will enforce the rule. People who interfere with the sanctity of the zone will be asked to remove the prohibited item, and asked to leave if they refuse. If they do not comply, the police will be called.

“Just to clarify, these same rules apply in every election – this isn’t new,” said Nelson, and Bourbeau agreed. “These are the rules for every election.”

She added, “I know Montague voters will be respectful to their neighbors and to the poll workers. I’m sure everyone’s going to be on their best behavior.”

Kuklewicz suggested that this might be a good time to review regulations regarding placement of election-related signs. “The town is not allowed to have election signs,” he said. “The highway department removes them, respectfully, when they’re on public property.” Chief Chip Dodge added that the police sometimes remove them as well.

When asked by Boutwell for her predictions about voter turnout on May 15, Bourbeau recollected that the last time there was a ballot question that people felt really passionate about, the turnout was 33%. “I don’t know if we’ll get that, but I’m expecting more than the usual 10%.”

Unlike the Town of Erving’s election, where every candidate on the ballot ran unopposed, the non-binding referendum question is not the only item of interest on the Montague

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GMRSD from previous page

Smith asked whether any classroom in the district has over 24 students, and Sullivan told her that none do.

The committee heard a report from Pat Squillante of accounting firm Melanson Heath on her firm’s routine audit of the district’s FY’16 books. Squillante discussed the changing legal requirements for towns and school districts to measure liabilities known as “other post-employment benefits” (OPEB).

While the district’s unfunded liabilities reported for FY’16 amounted to \$17.8 million, Squillante said that changing standards in how OPEB was measured and reported would mean that figure could be expected to jump to \$35 million for FY’17.

Squillante added that while she estimated “90% of towns” had started putting money into special trust funds to prepare for the future burden represented by OPEB, very few regional school districts had yet to take this step. “You have that liability,” she said. “It’s there; it exists. People retired on that.”

The audit found no “material weaknesses” or “significant deficiencies” in the school’s fiscal operation, though the firm provided comments on a number of minor points in need of improvement, such as maintaining a “better au-



A contingent of Gill fifth graders came Tuesday to advocate for Ms. Chase’s job.

ditable trail” between school lunch cash registers and deposits.

“Since I’ve been on school committee, this is the best year?” Sandy Brown asked.

“Absolutely,” Squillante answered. “It’s been very much a steady improvement... It’s the best one in a number of years.”

Brown thanked business manager Joanne Blier for her diligence.

The committee also heard from food services manager Mistelle Hannah, who said that the district was required to implement a new policy addressing late lunch pay-

ment by July 1.

The district is currently owed about \$5,800 in delinquent lunch payments by student families, Hannah reported, and a significant amount of her work time is spent attempting to collect on this debt. She said she reviewed other districts’ policies, and that 93% of districts provide an “alternate option,” such as cheese sandwiches, to feed children with chronically unpaid bills.

“It’s not right to punish a child, so it’s kind of a thin line,” she said.

All lunches at Sheffield and Hillcrest are free, as the USDA al-

lots a Community Eligibility Provision to those schools based on their proportion of low-income students. Beyond that, Hannah automatically pre-approves free meals for any students whose names match a state database for aid recipients.

Hannah said that, after two years studying the problem, her sense was that “negligence,” rather than poverty, was the main driver of delinquency in payment. The committee agreed to study the matter and implement a policy by summer.

A performance review for superintendent Michael Sullivan will be delayed from April until August, as a “pilot” for timing the position’s annual evaluation after standardized test scores are published.

The committee reviewed two 2014 surveys of parents in district towns who send their children elsewhere, and those with children in the schools. They discussed methodology for running a similar survey this year, in order to support the district’s long-term strategic planning process.

The final 45 minutes of Tuesday’s meeting were spent revising criteria for a new high school team name.

“Because of the timing, we talked [in February] more about whether we should be voting at that moment, or waiting or continuing, and didn’t really get too deep into the why this

sz’s decision “with regret,” and approved Dodge’s request to begin the process of hiring a replacement.

Town administrator Steve Ellis sought and received the board’s approval to appoint treasurer Eileen Seymour as tax title custodian until May 2019, and presented a policy developed by Seymour and town accountant Carolyn Olsen that would allow representatives from each department to make work-related purchases using a credit card.

Ellis said the request came as a result of discussion at department team meetings. “There was a very strong consensus that it was needed.” The board agreed and approved the policy.

Ellis also shared an invitation for the selectboard members to attend the Turners Falls High School Awards Night on June 1 and Graduation on June 2, and thanked the many individuals and committees who contributed to a successful and well-organized annual town meeting on May 6.

The next meeting of the Montague selectboard will be Tuesday, May 16, at 7 p.m.

Draft Criteria for New TFHS Team Name (as of May 9)

- It should be representative of the GMRSD community and/or the environment.
- It should be easily identifiable and easily relatable. The school colors will remain blue and white.
- It should be non-gender specific and appropriate for all activities, projecting a positive image.
- It should not reflect, represent or be associated with a particular group based upon race, ethnicity, or culture.
- It should be void of any cultural appropriation.
- It should reflect or symbolize one or more of the qualities of integrity, persistence, dignity, strength, honor, and pride.

mascot symbol wasn’t appropriate,” chair Michael Langknecht said. “So I think this is the place where we need to be able to explain why, if it isn’t appropriate, why that is.”

The board condensed their draft criteria into six shorter ones (*see sidebar*), and agreed to continue the sports team conversation at another meeting.



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Pumps, Town Solar, Dam

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard’s May 3 meeting went late, with many details of town operation. The first order of business was to elect a chair for the coming year. Christine Heard was voted in unanimously.

Newly re-elected selectboard member Dan Keller went into the clerk’s office to get sworn in for another three-year term. As the meeting went on, selectboard member Jeoffrey Pooser remarked, “be careful what you ask for.” Although Ray DiDonato did not succeed in his run for the seat, he came to the meeting and stayed for most of it.

Facilities Upgrades

Energy committee chair Nan Riebschlaeger gave a Green Communities update. Keller said town facilities engineer Jim Slavas wants to replace both heating system circulation pumps in the library, which have never worked well, at a cost of \$2,900. Riebschlaeger said the cost is not appropriate for a Green Communities grant, it being a routine replacement.

She said that window replacement in the senior center was also not likely to get a grant because any energy saved by the replacement would not be quantifiable, but replacing the 60-year-old fluorescent tubes in the town hall is a likely project. She also said that Wendell is on track to reach a 20% reduction in energy use for FY’17. The ultimate goal of the energy committee is to have the sources of all Wendell’s electricity be local and green.

Robert Heller and Peter Golrick, the town’s hired technology consultant, came in with their plan to keep the town from falling behind in its use of computers, the internet, and information storage and retrieval. Until now departments have bought their own computers, and replaced them as needed within the department budget, and Golrick suggested that the town consolidate a long-term replacement schedule into a tech budget plan.

Computers can be transferred from high-demand departments to low-demand ones, and when they stop being useful, passed on to a school where students learn how they are put together. He suggested a yearly capital cost of \$3,000.

Golrick also said the town should have a central server, which would cost \$1,200 and hold public records immediately as they are created. He said the operating system should be Unix or Linux, not Microsoft. Storage can be added as needed, and the increase of video is driving the cost of storage down. Town officials should get a new and separate email address for town business, but not right away.

Town-Owned Lot

Citizen Don Stone talked about the community solar project that he is trying to establish on the town-owned house and land at 97 Wendell Depot Road. The entire property is a house with 12.9 acres on the west side of that road, and frontage on Farley Road as well, plus 21.6 mostly forested acres with 334’ of frontage on the east side of Wendell Depot Road.

Stone had met the con com at the proposed site, and together they found that there is room for the project to keep required setbacks from

wetlands, although they did not consider the trees that will have to be cut to allow sun to hit the panels. As a community solar project, members could buy shares up to 25 kilowatts, and Stone has pledges of financial support from several people to provide money for the legal effort of establishing a cooperative.

Abutter Wanita Sears said she does not want to look out her living room window at a solar farm. She can see all but the first floor of the house, and the slope of the property would ensure that she would see the whole project. Land on the east side of Wendell Depot Road is not suited for a solar farm.

Con com chair Robin Heubel mentioned that in their look at the site, they found a pipe, and could not figure its origin or its purpose.

There is other interest in the house and property, including a place for historical artifacts from town, but selectboard and fin com members would like to see it back on the tax rolls, and considered writing a request for proposals rather than selling it at auction. Treasurer Carolyn Manley said there are between five and ten properties that should be ready for auction.

Aldrich reported that Tom Chaisson boarded the cellar entrance in back to secure it, but he said there was 18” of water in the cellar. Stone will meet the selectboard at its next scheduled meeting.

Annual Town Meeting

The board set 7 p.m. on May 24 for a “pre-town meeting meeting” so voters can come into the actual town meeting, June 10, with some foreknowledge of the warrant. Board members mentioned three articles from the warrant.

One would provide property tax relief in exchange for work. Aldrich said the state does not tax money credited towards a property tax abatement, but the federal government does. Ray DiDonato said Leverett has a tax relief committee, and residents who choose to can pay extra into a fund that can be used to help pay others’ taxes.

Another article would have the town endorse a single-payer health care system in Massachusetts. The third would allow Ed Chase to continue as police chief beyond his 70th year.

Old Dam

The dam that creates MacAvoy’s Pond came back into consideration as a town liability. The state Office of Dam Safety has said it needs either demolition or repair, and both options are expensive.

The dam was built when there were no regulations. The concrete dam and spillway are owned by Ellen Trousdale, and a length of Lockes Village Road owned by the town is considered part of the dam. The spillway is in good condition, but its gate is rusted in place, and the state says trees must be removed on the town-owned part, root balls and all.

Keller said removing the trees will be expensive, but the Office of Dam Safety is too understaffed to harass the town terribly and might be satisfied if the trees are cut soon, and the root balls removed later, as long as the town is making progress.

Ray and Laurie DiDonato do not own the dam, but their property includes some of the pond’s shoreline, and Ray said there may be grant

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

“Back Door Approval” By Town Meeting?

By KATIE NOLAN

“Why wasn’t the full-time fire department put on the warrant as an article?” Donald Perkins asked the selectboard. At the May 3 annual town meeting (see page A8), a line item providing funding for a full-time fire chief and two full-time firefighters was approved as part of the town’s \$3.75 million general operating budget.

Perkins cited the Massachusetts Secretary of State’s website, which says: “A Town Meeting’s action is not valid unless the subject was listed on the warrant.” Perkins asked, “How was the subject listed on the warrant?”

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache answered, “The monetary increase was in there. It was clearly articulated that we intended to use the money for this purpose.”

Chair Jacob Smith said, “The mechanism for making the decision [for full-time staffing] was funding.”

“That’s almost like back door approval,” said Perkins. “It never would have passed, but nobody knew about it.”

Bastarache replied, “The subject of the warrant article was the budget.”

Smith said that the board had the figures available for funding only a part-time chief and call firefighters, and would have supplied the information for anyone who wanted to amend the line item. Bastarache said that moderator Richard Peabody had asked if anyone wanted to reduce the amount for the fire department.

No one attending the town meeting had offered an amendment reducing the fire department funding, and the entire general operating budget had passed unanimously.

Perkins said he had seen the increased amount for the fire department in the budget, but expected there would be a separate vote on the change in staffing. Bastarache suggested that Perkins should have gotten more information, rather than assuming how the board would present the change. “A simple phone call might have solved that for you,” said Bastarache.

Smith said, “It was a citizen decision whether or not to approve the funding... I was disappointed by the attendance [at town meeting]... I wish we had more of a turnout.”

Rebecca Hubbard said she heard comments and discussions after the meeting from people who thought

the process had not been transparent. “I can see why people kind of felt that it was slid in there,” she said. “The board went out of its way to inform citizens,” said selectboard member William Bembury. “I believe the public was forewarned. The board didn’t do anything to slide past anyone. You can’t not show up and then do Sunday night quarterbacking.”

Perkins left the meeting, saying, “I’m not done yet,” and said he would contact someone from state government to follow up.

Little Free Library

Hubbard had come to the meeting representing the Friends of the Library to inform the board that the Friends were considering installing a Little Free Library at Riverfront Park, or perhaps at other locations in Erving.

A Little Free Library is a book exchange, where people are encouraged to “take a book, leave a book.” Hubbard presented images of Little Free Library installations throughout the country. She said that the Friends would register the Erving Little Free Library with the Little Free Library organization, possibly making it a destination. Selectboard members recommended that the Friends meet with the recreation commission about placement of a Little Library at the park.

North Shore Road Trash

Twenty-three North Shore Road properties are located in Erving, but the road is accessible only by going over a causeway. The road is not plowed in winter, and none of the property owners live there year round.

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

At a selectboard meeting in July 2016, summer resident Joseph Moulton said that at one time, North Shore residents disposed of trash in a designated dumpster at Erving town hall. When that dumpster was removed, the summer residents disposed of trash in Erving State Forest dumpsters – illegally, but with the knowledge of state forest staff, who seemed to accept the arrangement because the amount of summer resident trash was minimal. In 2016, that informal privilege was revoked

when a canoe, mattress, furniture, and other unacceptable items were put in the state forest dumpster.

By the end of July 2016, Duseau had placed barrels and recycling containers at the town hall parking lot for the use of North Shore Road residents. In August, administrative coordinator Bryan Smith reported that only about three bags of trash had been disposed of.

At the April 24, 2017 meeting, administrative coordinator Smith said that Laurel Lake property owners had asked how trash would be handled this summer, and if they could participate in Almost Anything Goes. At that meeting, the board decided that, since Almost Anything Goes had a start date of May 1, there was no time to work out a solution. The board directed Smith to contact the town of Orange to see if Laurel Lake property owners could pay for trash disposal at the Orange transfer station.

At the May 8 meeting, the board considered paying the \$56 fee for out-of-town users, with the Laurel Lake owners being responsible for paying the trash bag sticker fees, and also considered placing Duseau barrels at town hall again.

Debra Smith told the board, “I don’t want to see it here: turn the town hall into a dump for the cabins. Bring it in, bring it out is a very common practice.” The board decided to consider the issue further at a future meeting.

Town Election

Town clerk Richard Newton reported a turnout of 11% of registered voters at the May 8 town election. There were no contested races.

William Bembury was re-elected to the selectboard. Julie Wonkka was elected treasurer, replacing retiring treasurer Margaret Sullivan. Jeffrey Rollins was elected as assessor, Mackenzie Bailey and Holly Fitzpatrick as library trustees, Richard Peabody as moderator, and Erik Semb to the school committee.

Write-in candidate Katelyn Mailoux-Little won both a 1-year and a 3-year term on the school committee. Newton said she would be able to choose which she preferred.

Christopher St-Hilaire was elected as tree warden, Art Kaczinski as constable, Debra Smith to the planning board, Renee Tela and Jeffrey Rollins to the recreation commission, and Bruce Scott to the board of health.

money that can help. He also suggested that the trees can be sold, but Al MacIntire, who has experience as an in-law of the Diemand Farm family, said it would not pay enough to be worth the effort. Ray DiDonato offered some financial help. Long-term maintenance is another issue that Wendell must face.

Other Business

Selectboard members were not happy with the mediation last fall, overseen by Quabbin Mediation, between them and dissatisfied members of the FY’16 broadband committee. The thought to shop for another group was brought up, but the two people who ran the fall session quit Quabbin shortly afterward, and so the board took no action.

Wanita Sears is both clerk and

needed, when Dickie is unavailable for an inspection. He went directly to the clerk’s office to be sworn in.

Keller said he would talk with the highway commission about replacing the light over the salt shed entrance with one that is activated by a motion detector, a suggestion that came out of the April 20 discussion about lighting the flag that flew over the north common.

In the two extra weeks allowed, no more essays arrived for the town contest for a campership at Mass Audubon’s Wildwood camp. The selectboard and con com awarded the campership to August Maiewski, who submitted the only entry. He wrote a short, handwritten, clear and direct essay.

The board accepted him, and told him he would be called only as

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE TOWN MEETING

All Spending Approved; Police Won't Do ICE Work

By MIKE JACKSON

On May 6, Montague town meeting passed a total budget of \$23,052,472, as recommended by the fin com. This included \$9,356,560 for the Gill-Montague school district, \$8,993,941 in general town expenses, \$2,384,214 for wastewater treatment, \$747,340 to Franklin County Tech, \$97,525 on the Colle building, and \$49,925 to subsidize the town airport. The remaining \$1,422,967 went to “special articles.”

It was asked whether user fees would ever be able to sustain the airport. Airport commissioner Peter Golrick said the FAA had approved a plan to update the facility’s master plan, which could be a first step in that direction.

Richard Martin, superintendent at

Franklin County Tech, said that his school faced declining enrollment countywide and had been working to “right-size” over the last several years. The business technology program has been eliminated, as have a number of teaching positions.

Montague resident Tawnya Brunelle, not a town meeting member, asked whether she could “ear-mark” her taxes to the tech school. “We don’t want it to go to the Turners Falls High School Community school,” she explained. “Kind of a school choice?”

“The simple answer to that,” said town accountant Carolyn Olsen, “is that the town meeting is doing that today by supporting the various appropriations.”

Gill-Montague superintendent Michael Sullivan gave a longer

presentation on his school district, which asked for the town’s affordable assessment, which had increased 4.65% over the previous year, a rate of growth exceeding state aid.

“The system is difficult for all of western Massachusetts, and it’s frankly unsustainable,” Sullivan said. “Superintendents in the area, increasingly school committees and town government people, have banded together to think of coherent and specific ways to approach the state legislature about the situation.”

The meeting approved money for a replacement to the 1955 electrical wiring at Hillcrest, new windows at Sheffield, and the conversion of the Hillcrest stage into classroom space.

Robert McDonald, the new superintendent of the water pollution control facility, presented on seven articles related to his department, currently undertaking a study to prove to the DEP that its unconventional treatment process can be carried out safely in a facility designed for a conventional process.

“This is not the last time we’ll be

hearing from Mr. McDonald,” said John Hanold of the finance committee. If the DEP approves the process, the plant will need to be retrofitted.

Besides the general budget and feasibility study, town meeting agreed to spend money for a new boiler and truck at the facility.

Director of assessing Karen Tonelli received the meeting’s approval to negotiate directly with FirstLight Power Resources for a potential settlement of the company’s contested tax assessment before the case is heard by the state appellate tax board. FirstLight is the town’s largest taxpayer, and there are four years’ worth of contested assessments pending. David Jensen of Precinct 2 noted that he was uncomfortable at the prospect, citing a similar situation in the past after which “the assessors’ overlay account became dark money ... sitting there for years, and tapped at various times, not fully disclosing to this body what the heck was going on. I don’t want that to happen again.”

Town planner Walter Ramsey

was authorized to enter a lease and tax agreement with Kearsage Solar LLC, which plans to build solar arrays on town-owned land behind the transfer station.

Director of libraries Linda Hickman won approval for an air exchange system and new roofing at the Carnegie Library, as well as an assessment of the department’s buildings. Highway boss Tom Bergeron was approved for \$385,000, the largest special article on the warrant, to reline the town’s aging asbestos sewers. Another \$176,000 was allocated to his department for vehicle repairs and a new dump truck.

After much discussion the meeting allocated \$1,500 to “community building activities in Millers Falls,” to be spent by the selectboard.

The meeting condemned money in elections, and declined to form a town municipal light plant.

By a vote of 43 to 22, the only one contested, the meeting instructed town police not to enforce non-criminal immigration detainers issued by the federal government.

PEBL from page A1

The PEBL is taller than most cars, and is only seven inches shorter than the Smart Car in length. As it is fully enclosed and comes with an optional heater, it can transport two adults comfortably in all seasons. It comes in bright, matte colors.

The PEBL is shaped like a lemon – or, geometrically speaking, like a rhomboid superellipse. Nevin Murray drew the neo-minimalist shape of the PEBL’s body at age 15. He claims to be inspired by “racecars, hypercars, and classic cars.” I could not, however, find any automobiles, other than the Smart Car, that resemble it.

A Test Drive

I managed to take the Murrays’ final prototype for a spin when I visited on a cool, sunny morning in April. Upon diving inside the capsule, I noticed its tasteful wood-grained maple dashboard, with key ignition, voltmeter (instead of a fuel gauge), and built-in charger.

The PEBL is piloted using flat-bar handlebars, similar to those found on many mountain bikes. Attached to the bar are hand brakes, buttons for turn signals, horn, and stretchy loops that one wraps around the brakehandles as the parking brake.

During a quick crash course, where I zipped around the *stupa* in the parking lot, I noticed a sensitivity of steering, a propensity to careen, which made tipping over feel possible.

The PEBL has three wheels in tadpole configuration: two in front, one in back. Unlike Buckminster Fuller’s unfortunately deadly Dymaxion Car, which steered from the back, it steers from the front. The front wheels are cambered inward to allow sharp cornering, and Nevin explained that the production models will have a slightly wider wheelbase to mitigate the feeling of instability.

With Kevin as flight instructor, we crossed Routes 5 and 10, took a right in front of Magic Wings, and headed up Hillside Road. The rocket-like rapid acceleration of the electric pod was thrilling. The 750-watt electric motor, commonly used to power rickshaws in the developing world, has torque that makes an internal combustion engine jealous.

The volume of the electric engine’s whine, on the other hand, was a major downside. Its high, insect-like drone was too loud to



Pete is passed in a no-passing zone by an anxious motorcar.

feel like you were peacefully cavorting through the countryside. Its sound was not at all similar to the low, hormonal throb of the internal combustion engine.

On a positive note, pedaling was easy, the force required not changing whether moving uphill or down. It was exactly what I imagined an excellent video-enhanced spinning class would be like.

At the top of the hill, where North Hillside met Hillside, we turned around. The PEBL can turn around in exactly the width of a standard 24-foot roadway. Although I was initially disappointed by the lack of a feeling of speed, the trip downhill felt exciting in a transgressive way.

“I’ve gone 40 on Cave Hill,” explained Nevin. “It was too fast.”

In the best of situations, both cycling and driving a car can be transcendent experiences. Cycling is an embodied experience – its elevating nature comes from the combination of a feeling of glowing, Wayne Gretzky-like strength and flow. Cycling has a feeling of easy speed that is apprehended by all the senses, like the feeling of air flowing around your body.

Driving can also be transcendent because drivers, through speed and enclosure, alienate themselves from the real world, and are transported to an alternate one. Jeffrey T. Schnapp observed that, beginning in the mid-18th century, people began to “envisage speed as a kind of drug: an intensifier, an *excitant moderne*.” I did not actually have this feeling of transcendence while driving the PEBL.

All the Little Walkers

One reason to drive the PEBL is a belief in the impending energy apocalypse. The other is daily survival. Armored bicycles are created by a

road culture that situates bicycles, pedestrians, and, in some states protesters, on the same level as popular roadkill like deer or skunks.

Highways are by far the largest public spaces we have in America – they’re for everyone, by definition – but cyclists are not treated like citizens of this spidery nation. Their pleas, however insistent and legally-backed, that they have the right to a full lane of traffic generally die unheard in this linear arena; power is horsepower, and when a car’s right to roll onward without impediment is thwarted, the driver feels irritation. Bicycles like the PEBL, in their morphological transformation into cars, respond to this antipathy.

Highways were not always so dangerous. The road was once a more democratic place, though during the latter half of the 19th century, it became a contested zone between the traditional and the modern. Through the 1800s, the motorcar was viewed as a life-threatening menace: in England, the Locomotive Acts of the 1860s set the speed limit at 4 mph for highways and 2 mph in town, and required that every motorcar have an attendant whose job was to “precede such Locomotive on Foot by not less than Sixty Yards, and shall carry a Red Flag constantly displayed.”

One can even find this tension over the propriety of the road present in Franklin County. Archived editions of the *Turners Falls Reporter* from the turn of the century describe countless conflicts between horses and cars. The automobile’s imperious demand of road space, along with the outright banning of horses in some cities, allowed cars to replace horses in the years between 1920 and 1939.

A particularly American authoritarianism was employed to clear the

road of pedestrians during this time. “Jaywalking” – originally a pejorative descriptor referencing a country person walking in the city – was remade through a spin campaign into a new illegal act by the institutions of automobility: car clubs, auto makers, oil corporations, and the state.

The strategy unfolded at both the local and national levels. A bulletin in a 1913 *Rogue River Courier* of Grants Pass, Oregon demonstrates how the message was communicated locally: “A campaign of ridicule directed toward the extermination of the ‘Jay Walker Family’ was inaugurated today by the local automobile club. The local automobile club today adopted resolutions suggesting propaganda to be distributed all over the country to ‘kill off the Jay Walker Family.’ Automobile clubs all over the country... will be asked to aid in exterminating ‘Mr. and Mrs. Jay Walker and all the little Walkers.’”

During the Depression, artists employed by the Works Progress Administration’s Federal Art Project made posters for a nationwide anti-jaywalking campaign. While the car’s domination of the road is often explained as natural, self-evident, and inevitable, it actually came about by a concerted effort of interested and powerful parties.

Thinking of Implications

Perhaps the PEBL – which after all, stands for Pedal Electric Bike Life – is not just a vehicle or a machine, but a crucial lifestyle symbol. As an expressive consumer choice, owning a PEBL allows the individual to affirm one’s identity through the performance of driving a green, earth-saving anti-car.

The PEBL’s website shows the bright, personality-heavy capsule exclusively inhabiting stunning natural locations or farmers markets, and allowing its users, through its energy asceticism, to live the lives of recreational leisure they desire.

In recent decades, Silicon Valley has monopolized the narratives of innovation and entrepreneurship. The PEBL, with its dolphin-like personality and its offbeat, slightly utopian social media presence, has an aesthetic at first reminiscent of tech industry solutions, but a second look it might be closer to the Life Is Good brand. Better Bike, the company the Murrays formed to build the PEBL, is far removed from Silicon Valley’s blithely arrogant worldview.

“They’re the Wall Street of inventors,” says Nevin. “They’re not thinking of implications. Our ethos is way different.” Better Bike’s ethic is based in sustainability, not a righteous technological triumphalism.

This guides both the PEBL’s use as a vehicle and also its construction. Much of it is constructed out of renewable, green materials. The body is made from an original formulation of layered organic hemp fabric and soy-based epoxy. “It took hundreds of hours of experimenting with hemp cloth,” explains Kevin.

All of the manufacturing for the PEBL, except some of its bicycle and electrical components, is done in western Mass. The frames are fabricated in Chicopee at The Metal Men. The doors are made in Holyoke. The body is formed and all assembly takes place at their shop in Deerfield. While Kevin describes their method of production as an assembly line, it is certainly not organized on Taylorist principles.

Better Bike, in addition to selling most of their prototypes, has presold 22 PEBLs at \$6,000 each. With a workforce of five, they will begin producing and shipping the vehicles all over North America when their mold arrives next week. In Massachusetts, one can operate a PEBL with only a learner’s permit; no registration or insurance is required.


The idea of the Third Car for the family, the embodiment and symbol of the teenager’s rite of passage, was created following the acceptance of the Second Car. Marketed as the wife’s helpmeet in domestic tasks, the Second Car briefly saved the auto market in the 1920s, before the market was wiped out by the Depression. For families that see the Third Car as a bourgeois hoax, the PEBL can viably fill this niche.

The Murrays are planning on promoting the PEBL through one of the most venerable vehicle traditions: the Famous Journey. Following in the footsteps of well-publicized culture-changing voyages like the 1908 New York to Paris Race or Amelia Earhart’s flight across the Atlantic, Better Bike is considering offering a prize to the first person to navigate their tricycle from coast to coast.

They also have some father-son bonding time planned for themselves: “Next summer,” Nevin explains, “we’ll do a cross-country trip, for charity and promotion.”



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Erving Town Meeting Approves New Library Building, Full-Time Firefighters; Hails Retiring Treasurer

By KATIE NOLAN

On May 3, Erving annual town meeting voters approved funding for a \$4.9 million new library building. The approval was contingent on receiving a grant for 58% of the cost from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Several voters commented that the proposed building was too large for Erving. Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that the MBLC had determined the appropriate size, and “if we reduce the size, we’re not eligible for the grant any longer.”

One voter said, “Erving is a great town, but we have to continually invest and move forward with the times. The [current] library doesn’t meet the needs for today.”

According to the library building committee, the average homeowner may see a \$20 annual increase in real estate tax for the next twenty years to pay for borrowing the money. The paper ballot vote of 62–16 met the 2/3 majority necessary for borrowing.

Voters unanimously approved \$3.75 million for the town’s general operating budget. Passage of the article increased the FY’18 fire department budget by \$120,000 to pay a full-time fire chief and two full-time firefighters. The additional positions may also cost up to \$60,000 in benefits. Currently, the chief is part-time and firefighters are paid only while training or answering calls.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache said the selectboard had held three public hearings on the proposal to create the positions, and that current part-time chief Philip Wonkka will be asked to continue as chief. (See page A6 for a reaction to this decision. - Eds.)

A hiring committee will make recommendations for the two full-

time firefighter positions, and the chief will decide which candidates to hire. Bastarache estimated that an average homeowner may see a \$25 annual increase in real estate tax to pay for the staffing change.

The voters also approved \$2,947,297 to fund Erving Elementary School, an increase of \$106,541 over last year. Union 28 Superintendent Jen Haggerty said enrollment had increased by eight to 141 students this year. She said the drivers for the increase included the estimated salary for a new director of finance, contractual salary increases, maintenance increases, a decrease in the preschool grant, and loss of the kindergarten grant.

Finance committee member Daniel Hammock said that the school’s budgeting process was “very responsible.”

Tuition for secondary education for 61 Erving students was funded at \$1,336,501, and the town’s share of the Franklin County Technical School budget was funded at \$596,850 for 33 Erving students.

The voters approved numerous other articles, including putting \$300,000 into an OPEB trust fund; \$175,000 for construction expenses at Riverfront Park at the former Usher Mill, for which the town will receive 52% reimbursement from a state grant; \$155,000 for roadwork; \$115,673 to pay elected officials; \$30,000 for town building maintenance; \$25,000 for revaluation; and \$20,000 for town records preservation.

At the Elementary School, the town spent \$26,700 for kitchen equipment, \$20,000 for computer upgrades and \$14,000 for a running/walking track.

Highway foreman Glenn McCrory said his department would be working on parking lots at town

hall, elementary school and the fire stations.

The voters approved establishing a Council on Aging food service revolving fund, and seeding it with \$3,000. The fund will receive revenue from payments for meals and expend money for food and preparation costs.

The meeting voted to establish a five-member capital planning committee to oversee the town’s capital improvement process.

The meeting voted to rescind snow removal bylaws of 1903 and 1979, and adopt a new “Winter Snow, Ice, Sleet and Parking Bylaw.” Police chief Christopher Blair said the older laws were not enforceable and that he gets calls “all winter long” about sidewalks not cleared after snowstorms.

Voters expressed concern about requiring elderly or disabled citizens to remove snow from sidewalks that about their properties, and Bastarache said enforcement of the bylaw would include “reasonableness.” The board agreed to consider citizen concerns and propose amendments to the bylaw in the future, as needed.

The town report was dedicated to Margaret Sullivan, who retired as treasurer this week. Sullivan has served the town as treasurer since 2002. She has also been selectboard member, assessor, personnel relations review board member, and senior center building committee member.

Typically direct, she said the honor was “a surprise – sort of. People kept asking me, ‘Are you going to town meeting?’ It has been my pleasure to serve the town for 35 years. Regretfully, I spent three years on the selectboard. I don’t wish that on anybody.”

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A Bucolic, Charming Home Music Festival

By JOE KWIECINSKI

MONTAGUE CENTER

– Meet Matthew Duncan and his wife, Nicole Nemec. They're pretty busy these days making final preparations for the third annual "Good Music Makes Good Neighbors" – a veritable community house concert tour – on Saturday, May 20.

The fun and music commence at 12 noon and continue until the final codas ring out at about 4:45 p.m. The festival will fill parlors, patios, barns and porches of the village with the sounds of 14 bands at four locations.

Offering a wide selection of styles, the schedule will appeal to almost every musical palette. Among the offerings: a bluesy organ trio, a ukulele orchestra, the strains of traditional Irish music, psychedelic funk, classic cello and violin, pop, folk, and others.

"We got the name of our musical festival," said Nicole, "from a poem by Robert Frost, who wrote that 'Good fences make good neighbors.' We feel that our hopefully new Montague tradition, on the other hand, brings artists and attendees together to share interests and possibly even exchange ideas for other potential musical projects."

Nicole added, "It's kind of a bucolic, charming enterprise, which is something like a village fair, or so we've been told by people who have attended."

Nicole Nemec is a native of Dallas, Texas, while Matthew hails from St. Louis, Missouri. The couple met back in 1991 as students at the University of North Texas in Denton. They moved to Montague three years ago.

"As we planned our first festival in 2015," said Matthew, "we applied for a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and received it. With the nominal grant in hand, we called friends, acquaintances and others, put up flyers, and we were on our way."

Both festival organizers love music and teaching. Matthew is interning as a high school English teacher for ninth and 12th grade students. Nicole teaches humanities in the Commonwealth Honors College at UMass-Amherst. In addition, Matthew has studied the piano for about 10 years and dabbled in other instruments. Nicole's instrument of choice is the French horn, that most delightful of brass winds.

"Our participation in putting together the festival," said Duncan, see **PORCH** page B4



Pat and Tex LaMountain play with friends during last year's festival.



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

Bittersweet Spring

By LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – Spring, much anticipated, our favorite season has arrived at last.

The first blush is exquisite: early crocus and daffodil, the sight of pale greens and yellows on the hillside, the poignant note of the song sparrow. The nights remain cool, but the middays are warm with soft air. The sugaring season flourishes.

Each day brings new sight and sound: the first of the bloodroot. Harvested as a small clump by the river, it now spreads through the woods. Then the sweet but short visit of the passing white-throated sparrow's winsome call as it heads to the northland.

The Manchurian apricot, like a delicate Japanese painting, blooms on the edge of the orchard. The peony shoots appear.

Light burgeons earlier each morning, heralded by the vigorous territorial mating calls of robin, titmouse and chickadee. The late afternoon extends bright and long. The asparagus shoots up one day like a jack-in-the-box. We have two soaking rains of several inches each.

Suddenly, the pace of this sweet season accelerates. One day the forsythia opens and the yard is a blaze of white and yellow daffodils. We have a couple of days when the unseasonably hot temperatures sap our energy.

The daffodils start to go by. The apricot browns off and the apple blossoms set pink. The leaves seem to burst open overnight on the trees, changing their dress from soft anticipation to full gown, the pastel colors turning primary. The morning birdsong is a muted murmur of nesting and feeding.

As the winter bulbs spend their beauty, the apple bursts into full bloom. They are busy with bees and small birds. More rain sags the blossoms, and lo and behold, the cedar waxwings return again. We have set up no less than two owls and a set of clanging pie tins to no avail.

Fortunately, this visitation comes after the height of blossoming has passed, and unlike last year's aggressive flock we have a small group of perhaps a half dozen. These birds are no less brassy, however, and remain undeterred by owls and metal clanging.

There is so much seed life see **GARDENER'S** page B5

Kids' Music, Deadheads, and Reproductive Health: Two Lively Saturdays at the Shea



Hadley's Carinae will play Nest Fest on May 20.

By ANNA FORBES GYORGY

TURNERS FALLS – The month of May will bring some exciting new shows to the Shea Theater. The upcoming programming puts an emphasis on collaboration, community engagement, and family fun – all fitting with director Linda Tardif's vision for the future of the town-owned venue.

There will be *two* shows at the Shea this Saturday, May 13. From 11 a.m. to noon, Latin Grammy award-winning children's musician **Mister G** will perform his signature blend of bilingual, genre defying music which encompasses sounds from bluegrass to bossa nova, funk to folk, and reggae to rock.

It will be the Shea's first time booking children's music programming. "We are so excited that we not

only get an award-winning children's musician to perform right here at the Shea, but also a performance that is multicultural and will be a blast," said Tardif, who hopes to incorporate more children's programming into the Shea's schedule in the future.

"What better time than now that we not only invite the youngest Pioneer Valley members in for a morning of arts, sharing, and dancing, but that we celebrate the Latino community that is right here in Franklin County."

Tickets for Mister G's performance are \$10 each, or \$30 for a family pack (up to 4 people); children under 1 are free. The first 50 families in the door will get a free CD from Mister G.

Later that night, the Shea will host the **Black Tie Dye Ball**, hosted by the organizers of the Green River

Festival. There will be music from the tribute band the **Dead Collective**, a special Grateful Dead-inspired beer from Berkshire Brewing Company, and a raffle.

Prizes include tickets to the Green River Festival coming up in July, and a special prize pack from festival headliner Joe Russo's **Almost Dead**. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the show starts at 8. Admission to the Black Tie Dye Ball, which is open to all ages, is free.

The following Saturday, May 20, the theater will host **Nest Fest**, a pop-up music festival to benefit Tapestry Health – a vital community public health resource providing the Pioneer Valley with access to sexual and reproductive health care, community based health services, birth control, clinical breast exams, family planning, overdose reversal medication, drug use counseling, HIV testing, safer injection supplies, and more.

"The Nest" is the concept of Emma Ayres, a musician, artist, and educator originally from Amherst. These family-style events, which began in the basement of Ayres' parents' home, have grown and spread to venues around the Pioneer Valley, showcasing artists of many see **SHEA** page B8



Mister G plays for the kiddos.

Wendell Library Hosts New Exhibit by Self-Taught Artist Michael Wing

By RICHARD BALDWIN

WENDELL – Wendell Library's spring exhibition for May and June is a collection of work by Michael Wing of New Salem Road, Wendell. Mike displays paintings, drawings, two metal sculptures and wood toys in both the Herrick Room and the Display Case.

Filling the Herrick Room are two-dimensional works in watercolor and acrylic, along with two pen and ink drawings and one metal sculpture. The medium-size paintings are all done in very bright colors and filled with energetic marks made by numerous brush strokes. The two drawings in the show are also replete with many small detailed shapes creating a patterned surface. This emphasis on pattern and surface texture, coupled with intense colors, makes for an upbeat, lively show.

Largely self-taught, Mike has been making things since he was a child, and has great fun putting together art work from a variety of materials. He has a fascinating collection of metal sculptures he has made out of old nails, washers, nuts and bolts, car parts, springs and whatever other metal parts he can get his hands on. His three-dimensional work is especially whimsical and humorous. He has two of these pieces in the show.

Mike has taken many art classes over the years, though his experience while incarcerated may have



"Swiss Pass" painting by self-taught artist Michael J. Wing.

given his creative energy an accidental boost. While institutionalized, Mike began to make small two-dimensional drawings and paintings out of typing paper and whatever other materials he could use to make marks.

He used ball point and Bic Pilot pens to make drawings and then added coffee and coffee creamer for a variety of shades of brown. He used fruit and vegetable juices and other food items to make colored pigments. Later, he used the colored sugar coatings of peanut M&Ms, mixed with water, to make a wider range of colors.

When he was able to take art classes there he continued to refine and enrich his work. Later, Mike enlarged many of these small pic-

es, turning them into greeting cards, a number of which are in the display case at the library.

He also uses some of these earlier images as the basis for larger paintings in acrylic and mixed media.

Mike has shown his work at the Jones Library in Amherst and the Coop in Brattleboro, where he plans to show again soon. He has also displayed and sold his work at numerous craft fairs. He can be reached at (413) 559-8133.

All are welcome to come to the artist's reception on Saturday, May 20 to the library from 1:30 until 3:30 p.m.

Library hours are Tuesdays 12 to 7, Wednesdays 10 to 7, Thursdays 2:30 to 7, Saturdays 9:30 to 3:30, and in May only, Sundays 11:30 to 3:30.

Pet of the Week

Sweetie’s name says it all. She is a sweet little gal who, once she gets over her initial shyness around you, will become a friendly companion. Sweetie gets along with other cats, but dogs are a definite “no.” She has been an indoor/outdoor kitty and accustomed to living in a quiet household with someone who went into a nursing home. Now she’s looking to be someone else’s Sweetie. Is that you?

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



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“SWEETIE”

Senior Center Activities MAY 15 TO 19

GILL and MONTAGUE
The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at Noon.
Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11:00 A.M. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.
Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open.
Tues–Thurs Noon Lunch
M, W, F 10:10 a.m. Aerobics
10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise
Monday 5/15 Closed for Election
Tuesday 5/16
9:30 a.m. Tech Tutor
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
Wednesday 5/17
9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach
12:30 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 5/18
9 a.m. Tai Chi
10:15 a.m. Mindful Movement
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 5/19
1 p.m. Writing Group

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

ERVING
Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregate meals.
Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 2 days in advance. Call (413)-423-3649 for meal information and reservations.
For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity.
Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.
Monday 5/15
9:30 a.m. Healthy Bones
10:30 a.m. Tai Chi
Tuesday 5/16
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance
Homemade Lunch
12:30 p.m. Friends Meeting
Wednesday 5/17
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:15 p.m. Bingo, Snacks, Laughs
Thursday 5/18
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
12:30 p.m. Game Day
Friday 5/19
7 a.m. Walking
9 a.m. Quilting Workshop
9:30 a.m. Walmart
11:30 a.m. Pizza & Dessert
12:30 p.m. Painting Workshop

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.

FACES & PLACES



Perhaps there are a few more Elvis fans in this world after the Gala event held by the Gill-Montague Educational Fund on April 29. The “More Jukebox Memories” Gala marked the 40th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley with a concert by tribute artist David Lee and The American Longboards.

Joyce A. Phillips, executive producer of the Gala, had these words to share: “Tonight, we pay tribute to two extraordinary men. One: his legacy as an educator; the other: his legacy as an entertainer. Their lives parallel – inspiring, strong, loved, hero, genuine, humble, family, friend. They unselfishly shared themselves with others. They had a positive impact on countless lives. Often described as ‘larger than life.’ Both leaving us far too soon and much too young. Their legacies live on in family, memories, dreams and in each of us... ‘Living Our Best Lives.’ David Lee will perform a song in tribute to Earl McGraw and Elvis Presley. As you listen to the words, I believe you will feel them in your heart and know this is truly their story.”

Left to right: Tina Phillips, Tara Roseberry, Joyce Phillips, David Lee, Carol Gloski, Nancy Daniel-Green, and Roxanne McGraw pose with the Fund’s recognition plaque.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

We at MCTV have been very busy delivering new content to our website and on our TV schedule! Look for these videos this week:

- Montague Center Congregational Church, 4/9/17 *Sunday Service*
- *All Cooped Up 3/25/17*: featuring the Franklin County Musicians’ Co-op, performing at the Great Falls Discovery Center.
- *Entertain or Die*: Episodes 5 through 8.
- Home Body music: Spinner Park Arbor Day 4/29/17. For more of Home Body, visit [home-body](http://home-body.bandcamp.com).

bandcamp.com!

- Greenfield Savings Bank: *Nova Motorcycles with Sayre* – all about Nova Motorcycles, in downtown Turners Falls. On June 3, Nova will be holding a Road Rally – more information at www.novamotorcycles.com/events/.
- Tree Advisory Committee: *How Not to Kill a Tree*, with Michael Marcotrigiano.
- Statement from the Community Members for Civil Rights 5/3/17. Community Members for Civil Rights called for a boycott on the referendum regarding the mascot, and gave their reasons why.
- Gill Annual Town Meeting,

part 1, 5/1/17.

- Precinct 1 Town Meeting Forum 5/1/17.
 - Precinct 5 pre-town meeting.
 - Montague Annual Town Meeting, parts 1 and 2. 5/6/17. Enjoy!
- Something going on you think others would like to see? Get in touch to learn how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment.
- Contact us at (413) 863-9200, infomontaguetv@gmail.com, or stop by 34 Second Street in Turners between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.
- We’d love to work with you!

Notable Poets to Read at Voo

TURNERS FALLS – Poets John High and Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno will read from their new books at the Rendezvous, 78 Third Street at 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 21.

John High, poet, teacher, translator, Zen monk, is the author of ten books and the editor of several more. His latest book, from which he’ll read on the 21st, is *vanishing acts*, the fourth volume in the interconnected series of poetry collections following *her e*, *a book of unknowing*, and *you are everything you are not*.

All books in this series are published by Talisman House in Northfield. John lives in Brooklyn and directs the MFA Creative Writing Program at LIU Brooklyn.

Local writer Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno will read from his latest




Christopher Sawyer Lauçanno.

John High.

book *Dix méditations sur quelques mots d’Antonin Artaud* translated from French into English by poet Patricia Pruitt (Paris, Alyscamps, 2017), as well as from his recent books of poems *Remission*

(Talisman House, 2016). Patricia Pruitt’s latest book of poems is *Drawing Point* (Paris: Alyscamps, 2017). Talisman House will issue her book *Full Moon at Sunset: Selected Poems* this fall.

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Introducing: The Leverett Alliance

By SHARON DUNN

LEVERETT– The Leverett Alliance is the new name for the citizens group formed in December 2016 under the auspices of the Leverett Peace Commission.

At its April 20 meeting, the Alliance voted the following mission: to build a resilient and inclusive community, protect our land and people, and create opportunities to act on common concerns. The Leverett Alliance envisions a caring, engaged and compassionate community responsive to concerns within and beyond the town. All who live and work in Leverett are welcome to join the Leverett Alliance.

The six working groups of the Alliance shared their ongoing initiatives. The Climate Action group is lobbying legislators on pending climate bills. At the April 29 Leverett Town Meeting it promoted a 100% renewable energy resolution, as well as leading a lunch recess climate action demonstration.

The Community Building group begins outreach this month with a presence at the transfer station, offering coffee and a brochure introducing the Alliance and asking residents to sign up for the town-wide listserv for announcements, which

will be created this year.

The Alliance’s book group, called “Reading American Communities,” meets May 4 at 7 p.m. to discuss Arlie Russell Hochschild’s *Strangers in Their Own Land*. Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* will be discussed June 1 at 7 p.m. at Dixon House (the small building on the side of the Leverett Congregational Church). All are welcome to attend. The group will resume in September, with reading list and dates to be announced in late summer.

The Bridging group has begun its work with a dialogue between Leverett non-Muslims and area Muslims. This dialogue is being facilitated by Paula Green of the Karuna Center.

The Sanctuary group is gathering information: where might sanctuaries be located in our area; what language is used in resolutions about sanctuary towns; how may we help answer the needs of migrant farm workers without papers. The Youth and Schools group has started in-classroom discussions of sustainability and will begin an after-school music program in the fall.

The Alliance’s next meeting will be at Leverett Town Hall, Monday, May 22, at 7 p.m.

The Mother’s Day Half Marathon

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

WHATELY – There will be a half marathon race, the 7th Annual Mother’s Day Half Marathon, starting at 8 a.m. this Sunday, May 14. The start of the race is at the Yankee Candle production facility at 102 Christian Lane in Whately.

I learned that the Yankee Candle facility has been a part of it since the first year that they were allowed to start the race there, and “it finishes at DPW in Whately. The field adjacent to DPW is where the runners go for food and drinks at the end of the race.” My source for this was Anna-Beth Winograd, who has been the community relations director for 8 years at the Cancer Connection in Northampton, the organization the race is a fundraiser for.

Winograd states that “the race has raised well over \$100,000 since the first year.” She also said she expects “600 runners this year and they get medals, and race shirts.”

As for the race itself, Sue Monahan is the race director, which she has been for its entire 7-year run. Monahan uses the words “I invented it” when speaking of the race. The race’s official website for the race tells the story of how she came to do that: She had a friend who was dealing with cancer and taking water aerobics classes at Cancer Connection, which basically showed her it was a worthy organization to support. That friend beat the cancer. To add a twist to the story, in the first year the race was run, Sue was diagnosed herself – and now she’s a six-year survivor.

She personally thinks the race has an “awesome vibe” to it, adding that “it’s one of the best marathons in the area.”

“Everyone is so appreciated,” Sue says. “Being Mother’s Day, everyone is just so happy. It’s a great race for beginners and seasoned runners.” She adds that “last year, we had about 485 runners. It’s been climbing steadily every year.” Sounds like a winning pattern of doing everything right with the race to me!

Beside giving the t-shirts and medals to the runners, they also offer what is called a “fundraising option”: runners who raise \$300 for the race pay no entry fee. There is a fundraising page set up through their registration process, which gives a link you can post on your social media or just share with your friends to get the same result as well.



Last on the list of cool things they do, which I learned off of *racewmass.com*, is that instead of you just dealing with photos that are not so good that you may have taken of yourself, professional photos of you that are taken by Sugarloaf Studios. These will be on the race’s Facebook page, or you could just keep any photos of you for free.

If you want to run in the Mother’s Day Half Marathon, race day registration is from 6 a.m. to 7:50 a.m.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Wood Thieves; Downtown Bear; Fox On Hill; Obstacles In Roadways; Noises At Night

Monday, 5/1
12:29 p.m. Caller from L Street located a cooler containing clothing, a syringe, and a bowl next to a dumpster on private property; inquiring whether she should dispose of cooler herself or leave it where it is. Caller advised to contact her landlord.
1:30 p.m. Caller reports that 1/2 hour ago, someone stole her purse from her shopping cart while she was buckling her child into his carseat at Food City. Report taken.
2:45 p.m. TFFD responding to J Street for report of smoke in building. FD reports fire extinguished upon arrival; will be remaining on scene ventilating. Fire alarm received for site at 2:51 p.m.; FD aware of delay.
5:06 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting that some guys in a pickup truck have been coming onto her property and stealing large amounts of wood from a tree that Eversource cut down around 3 months ago. Caller confronted men and told them not to come back, but they keep returning. Plate number for SUV provided; SUV was pulling a trailer onto which parties were loading wood. Plate traced back to local resident. Officer following up with involved parties.
6:51 p.m. Walk-in party reporting online harassment in the form of a false Craigslist ad. Ad is giving out some very personal information, including party’s address, and encouraging people to show up at party’s house. Advised of options.

Tuesday, 5/2
5:10 a.m. Caller reporting Nissan on left side of Old Northfield Road with front end in woods; unknown if anyone was in vehicle or if it hit anything. Responding officers found vehicle secured; no one around; vehicle may have hit a street sign.
7:25 p.m. 911 caller from L Street reporting that people on top floor of building are engaged in a heated argument. Unfounded.

Wednesday, 5/3
7:19 a.m. Caller from Randall Road reporting raccoon that looks sick on side of road. Animal control officer searched area but did not locate animal.
8:52 a.m. Employee from Sheffield School reporting that a few kids said they saw a duffel bag and a sleeping bag about halfway up the hill. Officer determined that item was not a duffel bag, but an old folding chair.
1:19 p.m. Caller reporting that while she was inside St. Kaz, somebody hit her vehicle, causing heavy damage. Investigated.

6:10 p.m. Report of large fireworks being set off on G Street. Parties advised of complaint. No more fireworks are left.

Thursday, 5/4
1:22 a.m. Officer advises that a large black bear was spotted downtown in the area of Seventh, J, and Canal streets. Officer spoke to one male in area and advised him to go inside.
12:03 p.m. Walk-in report of harassment from a soon-to-be ex-husband.
1:56 p.m. Two-car accident at the post office. No injuries. Written warning issued to one operator for failure to use care.
3:38 p.m. Caller from Highland Apartments reports someone stole a box of change, containing about \$10 to \$12, from her apartment. Later called back advising she located the box of change.
4:46 p.m. Report of two solicitors going door to door on G Street, a black male and a black female. Advised of proper procedure and permitting.
5:11 p.m. Same solicitors reported on Fourth Street.
5:18 p.m. Report of same solicitors on Fourth Street.
6:19 p.m. Report of same solicitors on Fourth Street.
8:57 p.m. Caller states lights were off at the Shady Glen, but that she made eye contact with someone in the restaurant who ducked down quick to where she could not see them. Officer made contact with the owner, who is there doing some work on the booths.
9:11 p.m. Caller on Old Greenfield Road reports neighbor’s dog has been barking for over 30 minutes. Resident advised of complaint; dog was already inside.

Friday, 5/5
2:13 a.m. Male caller reports 8 to 10 kids in intersection of Second and L streets with loud music. Three individuals found on First Street and sent home.
3:29 a.m. Officer initiated contact with two people speaking in Cutlery Block parking lot. No problems.
6:01 a.m. 911 caller reporting that a deer hit his vehicle on Route 63 in Millers Falls. Significant vehicle damage; no smoke, flames, fluids, or injuries to driver.

Multiple calls subsequently received reporting dead deer in road. Deer moved to side of road, vehicle safely removed from road. Report taken.
10:23 a.m. Caller from Davis Street requesting to speak with PD re: issues with his neighbor/property lines and with FD re: fire pit regulations. Officer and FD spoke with caller.
11:34 a.m. Caller from Gunn Road requesting to speak with ACO re: ongoing issues with a dog causing damage at his rental property. Dog has damaged a garden and garden fencing, bothered tenant’s chickens, and defecated on the property. ACO advised.
5:31 p.m. Caller advising that people are in the hallway talking about her. Referred to an officer.

Saturday, 5/6
8:58 a.m. Caller requesting that officer check on a fox near Marshall and High streets. Fox does not look unhealthy but is out during the day and not showing a fear of people. Officer checked on fox; fox does not appear sick but was moving slowly and appears to have something wrong with its rear left leg; request notify ACO. Subsequent call received from Stevens Street reporting that fox is in backyard and does not look well. ACO checked on fox; advises it does not appear sick or injured.
11:03 a.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road reporting vandalism to vehicle; rear windshield smashed. Report taken.
11:54 a.m. Caller requesting to speak with Environmental Police re: violations involving ATVs and dirt bikes in the Montague Plains. Information relayed to EP dispatch.
12:34 p.m. Report of two syringes next to blue pole at Lake Pleasant Road and Millers Falls Road. Items retrieved.
1:35 p.m. Report of bear in tree in backyard on Montague Street. Later report of bear entering garage of house on Montague Street. Caller beeped horn and the bear left; unknown where it is now. Bear cub later observed on camera in MPD parking lot by cruisers; cub wandered into woods behind

hind MPD.
3:58 p.m. Landlord of Fifth Street property states that someone has shot the windows of his property with a pellet gun. Caller stated that parties he evicted a few weeks ago have made clear that they are not happy about it; possible that they were the ones who vandalized the property. Report taken.
4:54 p.m. Caller from Ripley Road reports arriving home to a blonde woman passed out on her lawn. When woman was approached, she woke up and remained in the area for a while before leaving. Plate number of vehicle provided. Female moved along by PD and advised that she cannot randomly stop at people’s houses and approach them. Subject stated she was on her way to her friend’s house in Amherst.
9:13 p.m. Complaint regarding loud music coming from Between the Uprights. Officer reports that bar check was completed not long prior and music was not unreasonably loud.
10:35 p.m. Multiple calls reporting full-sized pallets lying in middle of Gill-Montague Bridge causing a traffic hazard. All MPD units tied up on other call; Erving PD will take care of pallets.
11:21 p.m. Officer en route to Park Street for a possible sick fox.
11:51 p.m. Suspicious party reported on Montague City Road; located on General Pierce Bridge and taken into protective custody.

Sunday, 5/7
1:10 a.m. Report of customer threatening/ harassing employee at F.L. Roberts. Investigated.
2:20 a.m. Report that fox is back on Park Street. On approach, fox took off from road and ran underneath a nearby porch.
2:23 a.m. Report of vehicle in gravel pit near tracks past Carroll’s Market revving engines and burning out. Unable to locate.
4:23 a.m. Caller reports that fox from earlier calls is back on tree belt on Park Street. Officers attempted to corral fox with no luck. Information passed along to day shift.

MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

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PORCH from page B1

“gives us a chance to contribute to our community. We’re so glad we moved to New England and became a part of the Montague arts zeitgeist.”

The musical house tour now receives grants from the Montague and Northfield Cultural Councils, local agencies, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state organization.

Among the many performers scheduled for the upcoming festival is **Le Cheile**, comprised of Jonathan Kennedy and his wife, Amanda Bernhard. It will be another great day for the Irish when Bernhard’s fiddle and Kennedy’s uilleann (pronounced il – LIN) pipes fill the air with traditional music of the Emerald Isle. The uilleann pipes are a series of pipes, similar to a bagpipe, with a greater range than the latter.

“Having lived at times in Ireland,” said Kennedy, “I try my utmost to show this type of music respect and dedication. It’s a wonderful, subtle genre of music.”

Jonathan is a science teacher at Belchertown High School who also conducts a class in Irish Gaelic. Amanda is a teacher of the Irish language, too, and will also teach a modern traditional song to the audience.

“Song has always been a part of my life,” said Bernhard, who is a native of Ireland. “It’s lovely to be able to share it with others through my voice and teaching. The town of Montague and the area are so rich in musical talent that it’s a joy to be a part of it.”

Another outstanding pair of performers are world-class cellist Mark Fraser and violinist Anthony Berner, jointly known as the **Deerfield Duo**. The two have played together for 15 years. At the festival, they will render works by Mozart, Jean Rivier, and Giovanni Platti.

Berner teaches violin and chamber music at Deerfield Academy. Fraser, who lives across the road from Matthew and Nicole, is originally from Canada. He has an active career with the Adaskin String Trio,

traveling through North America.

“I believe Anthony and I will be the only classical music performers on Montague’s music day,” said Mark. “I’m also very proud of my daughter, Mary, who will perform as a violinist earlier in the festival.”

Certainly, your toes will be tappin’ when **Marco and Mary** step into the spotlight. Marco strums his banjo, while Mary bows her violin, as they deliver classic Appalachian songs.

Another zestful offering is the **AEIOUkes Ukelele Orchestra**. A performance and brief workshop highlight this group’s presentation. The brainchild of Joe Blumenthal and Jim Beloff, AEIOUkes is an all-ukulele band. The audience may join in the fun during a singalong and learn a couple of simple songs on the uke. Ukuleles will be provided.

Other festival entries are: **From the Woods**, a groove-inspired group; gifted vocalist **John Lentz** and magical jazz pianist **Franz Roberts II**, teaming up to evoke multiple eras plus stirring gospel sounds; soloist **Stephen Katz**, who plays cello and guitar to create contrapuntal, tantalizing textures; and the **Franklin County Sweethearts**, who impart close vocal harmonies with their sassy and delightful blend of honky-tonk, country rock, and classic country.

Also on the program are **Blu-Groove**, featuring the classic trio of organ, guitar, and drums peppered by lots of horn and percussive additives to fuel solid soul jazz; noise-pop original rockers **The True Jacqueline**; **Pat and Tex LaMountain**, legendary performers of stunning genre-versatility; three-decade songwriter and acoustic guitarist **Jim Armenti**, whose songs have been covered by the likes of Pam Tillis; and the eclectic and lyrical **The frost heavens and hales**., who offer folk, rock, alternative/indie, and Americana like you’ve never heard.

In addition, **Behold! True Believers**, mixes a rhythm that “kills” and a swirling background of spooky sounds.

Saturday, May 20 will be an ex-

Youth Rise Together: Big Barn Benefit

By AVERY DAVIDSON CARROLL

MONTAGUE CENTER – Hello, my name is Avery and the last time I wrote an article for the paper I had a different name, but things change, as they say.

The Traveling Rhubarb Circus, a entirely youth-run and -directed circus group, is a name that you may not have heard within the last year or so, due primarily to many of our performers graduating high school and going on to other walks of life.

Nevertheless, she persisted – and now she, Lucia Mason (18), founder and director of TRC, has joined hands, or maybe I should say fabrics, with another group of impassioned young people to once again defy the laws of gravity.

Who are these young people, you might ask? The group, which was co-founded by Gabbi Perry and Larkin Christie – who is incidentally a former performer in TRC – goes by the abbreviated name of YRT.

Now of course you are wondering what YRT stands for. Could it be Yeast Ridden Teens? Or perhaps Youth Reject Trump? No (although you were much closer with the second one): YRT stands for Youth Rise Together, and that is *exactly* what this group intends to do, to stand up for what they believe in and help to insure that *all people* have equal rights.

Larkin Christie, when asked about their intention when starting YRT and what their goals for the future are, said: “YRT was founded as a way to get more teens involved in activism. So often (in my experience), young people are silenced in action groups. As a culture, we don’t trust and respect teens nearly as much as adults.

“I wanted there to be a space where young people could openly share ideas and thoughts without feeling



judged based on age, or pressured to represent an entire age group. It’s already growing and evolving, but I would love to reach more teens and inspire them to start speaking up for the things they believe in.”

And with that goal in mind, YRT is very excited to announce that they will be performing circus shows on May 20, inside of the big white barn behind 2 North Street in Montague. Shows will take place at 1 and 4 p.m., and admission is \$10. YRT will be donating 100% of the proceeds to Planned Parenthood.

If you are interested in pre-ordering tickets, you can visit circusforchange.brownpapertickets.com, but act quickly, because with performers as skilled as these they are bound to fill the house, or in this case barn, faster than you can say “I support abortion rights.”

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was May 10, 2007: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Intra-District Choice Approved in Gill-Montague

Montague held a special town meeting on Thursday to deal with the Gill Montague Regional School Committee’s proposal to open Montague and Gill elementary schools to intra-district choice. Also on the agenda were a number of bookkeeping articles transferring sums of money to cover shortfalls in various departmental budgets.

Although the meeting was predicted to be a short one, with less than the usual numbers of questions to debate, conversation lasted for two solid hours.

Emotions ran high at the Gill special town meeting also on Thursday, where 67 voters decided to keep the Gill sixth grade at the Gill Elementary School, defeating an amendment to the regional school district agreement backed by the school committee to move the sixth graders to Great Falls Middle School.

Voters then joined town meetings members in Montague in agreeing to adopt the school committee’s recommendation to implement intra-district choice between the two towns.

The project, in two phases, was projected to cost the taxpayers and sewer users of Montague \$5.7 million, but town administrator Frank Abbondanzio told the selectboard on Monday night the grants, received under the USDA’s rural development community facility loan program, will reduce the amount the town will have to borrow to approximately \$4.85 million.

At Monday’s selectboard meeting, board member Allen Ross had the opportunity to ask wastewater treatment supervisor Bob Trombley about alleviating a persistent bad odor that had been traced to a sewer line leading from the Australis fish farm in the industrial park.

Trombley said Australis has been phasing out the use of a 200,000-gallon manure storage tank last week. Having nearly completed that task, he said, the plant had measured “zero readings in the sewer for hydrogen sulfide,” the gas causing the rotten egg smell.

May Day Celebrated with Music, Dance and Song



Hart’s Brook Garland Women dance beneath the Maypole in Montague Center. The annual May Day celebration was held Saturday, May 5th and was attended by local residents who joyfully celebrated Beltane.

Sunday, May 21 in Greenfield: Anti-Racism Film Festival

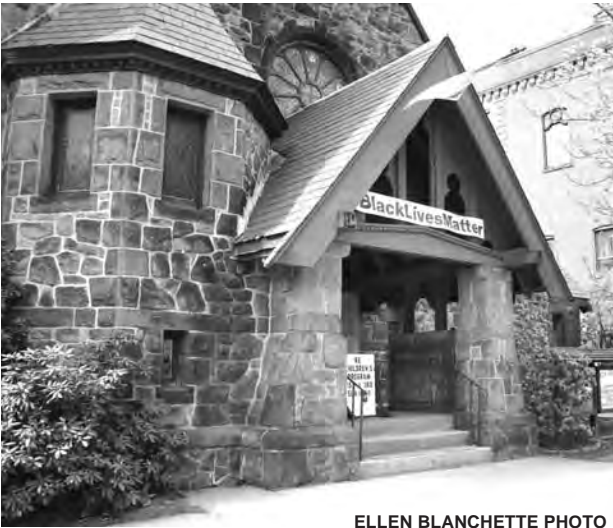
GREENFIELD – At this time when divisions of race, religion, ethnicity and class threaten to divide us, the Social Justice Committee of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church are proud to announce their 15th Annual Anti-Racism Film Festival to be held on Sunday, May 21. The committee hopes the festival will help to serve as a bridge promoting tolerance and collaboration in order to build a community that is strong, healthy and respectful of differences.

The festival will present three films with facilitators after each one leading a discussion. An evening meal will be served. The schedule is as follows:

At 1:30 p.m. “**A Thunder-Being Nation**,” directed by Steven Lewis Simpson. A landmark documentary filmed over 13 years about the history of Pine Ridge Reservation from its beginning to the present. The film features the voices of the people of Pine Ridge Reservation today. Released in 2012, the film is 86 minutes long. A discussion led by Strong Oak will follow.

At 3:35 p.m. “**13th**,” directed by Ava DuVernay. This 2016 Academy Award winning documentary film explores the intersection of race, justice and mass incarceration in the United States. The film’s **title refers to** the 13th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States which freed the slaves and prohibited slavery. The film is one hour and 40 minutes long. A discussion led by Carl McCargo will follow.

At 6:30 p.m. is **the supper**. A nourishing meal of local foods cooked by our favorite chef from the Stone Soup Café will be served. A sliding scale donation of \$4-\$10 is requested. No one will be turned away.



ELLEN BLANCHETTE PHOTO

At 7:00 p.m. “**The Visitor**,” directed by Tom McCarthy. An award-winning and moving drama about a college professor who travels to New York City to attend a conference and finds two immigrants, a Syrian musician and a Senegalese street vendor, living in his apartment. He first says they must leave, but then sympathizes with their situation and asks them to stay. A heartfelt human drama that sneaks up and floors you. The discussion led by Momodou Sarr will follow.

All Souls UU Church is located at 399 Main Street in Greenfield, Massachusetts, on the corner of Hope and Main streets. For more information call the church at (413) 773-5018 or Molly Chambers at (413) 772-0003. Free admission and free child care available.

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TFHS SPORTS from pg A1

circle, Peyton Emery allowed just 2 hits, 0 runs and 2 walks, while whiffing 12.

Then on Monday, Turners mer-cied the Athol Red Raiders, 16-4. I read recently that Athol’s victory over Greenfield was the biggest upset of the season. But I don’t believe that. Athol is a good team: a very good team, that barely lost their first contest against Turn-ers. And in high school sports, not many games are sure things.

In Monday’s game, Athol was out to prove that their win over Green-field was not an upset at all. Their leadoff man cracked a boomer over the centerfielder’s head, and another deep hit and an error put two Raid-er runs in the bank, though a pretty pickoff limited the damage.

In the third inning Red scored an-other run, off a base hit and a long double, expanding their lead to 3-0. But in the bottom of the frame, Turn-ers scored four runs off an Arzuaga home run, three steals, and a few well-placed singles.

Turners then went on a 9-run rally in the fourth, highlighted by a Wozniak grand slam. The teams traded runs to make the score 14-4, and then Woz cracked a 2-run homer to complete the mercy.

Turners completed their 3–0 week with a win over Pioneer in Northfield on Tuesday. Turners scored two runs in the top of the first, and Pioneer put up one on a solo homer. But that’s all Pioneer would come up with, and Blue put up another run in the fourth inning, another in the sixth, and two more in the seventh for the victory.

Emery struck out 10, while al-lowing just one base on balls, one run, and five hits. Offensively, she cracked two triples.

Also hitting the long ball for Turn-ers was Aly Murphy with a triple, and Wozniak and Fiske with doubles. Maddy Johnson and Olivia Whittier both had singles, and Arzuaga and Taylor Murphy scored runs.

Baseball
TFHS 8 – Belchertown 2
TFHS 7 – Frontier 1
Lenox 10 – TFHS 4

On Thursday May 4, Turners de-feated the Belchertown Orioles 8-2. Turners scored their first run in the second inning, taking a 1-0 lead. Then in the third, Kyle Dodge, Jon Fritz, Don Carne, Nick Croteau and Tionne Brown all scored RBIs as Turners took a 7-0 lead. Blue added an insurance run in the sixth, and took the game 8-2.

Kyle Bergmann and Quinn Doyle both clocked doubles in the win, with Croteau (2), Carne, Fritz, Dodge, and Brown all registering hits. Mike Babcock pitched the full 7 innings for Turners, striking out four, walk-ing one, and scattering eight hits.

Four days later, on Monday, the Blue Tribe traveled to Deerfield and beat the (7-2) Frontier Red Hawks, 7 to 1.

Later that evening at the soft-ball game, I was talking about the game with one of my buddies, who replied, “What a huge upset!” I had

to disagree. Turners may be incon-sistent, but they can hold their own with any of the opponents on their schedule, so I wouldn’t call any vic-tory a huge upset.

After an uneventful first inning, Turners scored two runs in the sec-ond when Dodge got a base hit, Fritz beat the throw to first, and Carne hit a scorcher into the outfield – but a double play and a strikeout capped the runs at 2.

In the third, Turners put three more runs across the plate. Croteau reached on a fielder’s choice, Berg-mann got him to third, and Croteau was waved in on a balk. The second came when Doyle hit a crisp line drive, sending Bergmann home, and Fritz then batted in Doyle for the third run and Turners took a 5-nil lead.

Turners scored another run in the fifth off a Doyle double, and in the seventh Bergmann batted in Brown to give Turners the 7-1 win.

Then on Tuesday, the Lenox Mil-lionaires had a late-game rally to beat the Boys in Blue in eight innings. The Millionaires scored two runs in the seventh inning and six more in the eighth to defeat Turners 10-4.

Lenox, coming off an “upset” no-hitter against #14 Hoosac Valley, was pretty confident going into the game. When they couldn’t put away Powertown, their confidence waned and they began to lament, “Why can’t we beat them? We’re so much better than them.”

But the game turned out to be a seesaw pitchers’ duel through regu-lation. In the second inning, Lenox drew first blood, taking a 1-0 lead. In the third, a standup double by Brown gave Turners a 2-1 edge.

Lenox tied it in the sixth with two steals and a sac fielder’s choice, but Turners got the run back in their half of the inning via a Babcock RBI. In the last regulation inning, with Turn-ers leading 4-3 with no outs and bas-es loaded, Turners pulled a fantastic home to first double play – and Turn-ers was one out from victory.

Then something strange hap-pened. Lenox illegally changed their batting order, sending in the leadoff man in place of their bottom batter. Turners skipper Scott Minckler was unable to appeal because the ump called a balk, sending the tying run home, which technically meant a play happened before the appeal.

Lenox managed to sneak another run home on a throwing error before Turners could get the third out. So Turners was down by a run, with three more outs to go.

In the last half of the seventh, Turn-ers got the leadoff man onto second, and the Lenox pitcher seemed to be getting rattled. Their coach called a timeout, and the next pitch hit Turn-ers’ pitcher Kyle Bergmann, sending him to first. Turners advanced their runners and Quinn Doyle was inten-tionally walked, loading the bases.

That’s when the Lenox coach took his second trip to the mound. The True Blue faithful were not too happy when the pitcher wasn’t pulled, but it was explained that the conference happened because of an injury, and the game contin-

ued. Turners managed to sacrifice one run home, but stranded runners on second and third, and the game went into extra innings.

Then in the eighth, it all unrav-eled for Powertown. Lenox shut the door with a sacrifice, two RBI walks, and a bases-loaded triple, putting 6 runs across the plate and taking the contest 10-4.

Brown, who has an amazing av-erage of .442, kept his hitting ways going with a single and a double. He also scored a RBI and was hit by a pitch. Dodge, Fritz, Carne and Bab-cock all got hits for Blue, and Jaden Whiting, who was called up after Campbell fell ill, got his first varsity hit. Babcock, Bergmann, Lavin and Brown all shared pitching duties.

Girls Track
Sabis 88 – TFHS 56
Greenfield 97 –TFHS 38

On Thursday, May 4, the Turners Girls Track Team hosted Sabis.

I have the privilege of sitting next to coach Ron Hebert during track meets. With his 50+ years of coach-ing experience, Ron fills me in on his training schedule, his opinions about his opponents, and his hopes for his young team. “You know, Sabis has more seniors on their team than we have girls,” he observed. “In fact,” he went on, “most of the schools we compete against are 9 through 12, and we have many 7th and 8th graders going against those 18-year-olds.”

And in typical kind fashion, Coach Hebert doesn’t push his young girls too hard. And Sabis, when they had the meet in hand, began to put in their younger girls in the later events.

In Thursday’s meet, 7th grader Chloe Sumner, fresh off last week’s 2-mile win, decided to go back to the 1-mile, as Hebert didn’t want to have a 7th grader run both long races. But Chloe broke her foot while running the mile, preventing her from running the 2-miler even if she wanted to.

Chloe managed to tough it out, and not only did she finish the race, but she won it, besting two varsity cross country runners.

Another standout for Turners was Dabney Rollins, who finished third in the 110m hurdles, first in the



Victory lap: Turners Cassidy Wozniak rounds second base on her second home run of the night, as Turners Falls trounced the Athol Red Raiders 16-4 at TFHS.

GARDENER’S from page B1 available in flowers and trees that they move rather distractedly from one feeding station to another. We are hopeful that they are leaving some apple starts for us. In fact, they have targeted the big trees and ignored the smaller Liberty and Freedom apples we look forward to tasting for the first time.

The roses leaf out, the magnolia prepares to unfurl its yellow cups, and the lilacs begin to open. The miniature azaleas are blooming, and soon we’ll have iris.

The tomatoes are thriving in the sunroom. All of the plants have grown to 6 to 8 inches after their first transplanting. They have been feeding on organic soil full of nour-ish-ing worm castings. Since we are a good 3 to 4 weeks away from outdoor planting (depending on the weather), we’ll give them one more transplanting. They are getting a bit leggy reaching for the sunny days, so in their new pots we’ll set them in deeply which will encourage root development on the lower stems and thicker growth above. That way they will be sturdy enough to toler-ate the cool, breezy days we often have at the end of May.

Meanwhile, we’re planting fin-gerling potatoes and setting in the dahlia bulbs. They’ll be well un-derground in case of a light frost or two, but will also begin to root.

That’s a good thing, because both crops will take the better part of spring and midsummer to develop.

We can expect flowers in late summer and potato digging in early fall if all goes well. These and a cou-ple of sweet potato plants I’m get-ting from a friend a little later into warm weather will be enjoyable to grow: first time for the potatoes and the second for the dahlia. It’s always fun to try something new each gar-den season and see how it goes.

It is like first love this season: sweet, tender, passionate and fleeting. We need to set aside time each day to say goodbye to some blooms and to notice the appear-ance of others. There’s always something new to see, smell or touch. Keep your eyes and ears open; there is so much to enjoy and it is short-lived. Bittersweet, indeed, but full of relish.
Happy gardening!

Try this pie which mimics the sweet tang of spring:

Strawberry Rhubarb Pie
3 cups of rhubarb and 1 cup of strawberries sliced
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Fill a pie crust and cover with an-other.
Bake at 425 for forty minutes. Yum!



fies her for the Individuals, Coach Hebert said she plans to focus on other events in the post-season. Rol-lins also placed third in the javelin, which also qualifies her.

Cooke and Kruzlic placed sec-ond and third in the 100m dash, with Kruzlic taking third in the 200m and Cooke finishing third in the long jump.

Kristin Slowinski was back after a 1-meet hiatus, taking second in the discus while Johnson took third. Cat Bezio (2-mile), Katlyn Miner (800m) and Karissa Fleming (high jump) all took third in their respective events.

Boys Track
Greenfield 101 – Franklin Tech 44

On Monday, May 8, photogra-pher David Hoitt and myself split up the day’s sporting events. Mr. Hoitt went to Greenfield to watch the track meet, and then went to the girls’ tennis match.

I went to Deerfield for the baseball games, and then went to the JV soft-ball game. We met up at the varsity softball game later in the evening. That’s when he told me that Owen Ortiz had shattered the Turners Falls High School triple jump record.

I spoke to Ralph Blair, who’s been working with Owen for years, when I saw him at the girls’ meet. Mr. Blair not only substantiated that the record was broken, but pre-dicted that Owen will break David Schaub’s long jump record.

Ortiz also won the 100m and the long jump in Monday’s meet. Also finishing first for Tech were Calin Giurgiu (javelin and discus), and Ricky Smith (shot put).



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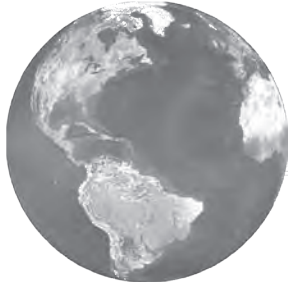
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Aquí se habla español

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



Estado de quiebra en Puerto Rico

Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO

El actual gobernador de la isla, Ricardo Roselló, llegó al cargo en enero de este mismo año. En ese momento la deuda era de 69.000 millones de dólares y en su campaña había prometido que Puerto Rico se convertiría en la estrella 51 de la bandera de los Estados Unidos.

La promesa electoral de Roselló incluía un referéndum este mismo año, que no se ha llevado a cabo, en el que se iba a preguntar acerca de estas tres posibilidades: La anexión a los Estados Unidos, continuar como Estado Libre Asociado o ser un país independiente.

La mala situación económica viene de lejos. Algunos historiadores enlazan esta dependencia económica con la llamada operación Manos a la Obra iniciada en 1947 en plena posguerra por iniciativa del gobernador Luis Muñoz Marín, basada en los conceptos de industrialización y exportación. Se buscaba así la rápida industrialización de la isla mediante una serie de incentivos económicos y fiscales a industrias de los Estados Unidos y de otros países. La idea fundamental era la exención de impuestos a las industrias que se establecieran en la isla, primero por 10 años, pero después se modificó hasta un límite de 25 años.

Los salarios en Puerto Rico eran mucho más bajos que en los Estados Unidos, así pues la propuesta resultaba todavía más atractiva para las empresas extranjeras y estadounidenses que quisieran adherirse a la operación. En los primeros diez años, las principales industrias que se acogieron a estas medidas de la operación Manos a la Obra fueron empresas textiles, peleteras, y de confección de ropa.

Al principio, el programa tuvo un relativo éxito ya que consiguió aumentar en cierta medida el nivel de vida de la isla, pero no solucionó el problema del desempleo. Así mismo la operación acabó con la agricultura en la isla ya que la mano de obra prefería desplazarse a las zonas urbanas para trabajar en la industria, abandonando los cultivos.

La población rural desplazada a las ciudades empezó a crear un excedente de mano de obra y se abrió así la válvula de escape de la emigración hacia los Estados Unidos. En la obra teatral *La carreta* de René Marqués se cuenta muy bien esta situación. Narra la experiencia dramática de una familia puertorriqueña procedente de una zona rural y que se traslada a vivir a San Juan, de ahí a Nueva York, para regresar al cabo

del tiempo a Puerto Rico.

A los 25 años empieza la segunda etapa de la operación Manos a la Obra. Se trataba de atraer empresas con una mayor inversión de capital, capaces de pagar salarios más altos y que creasen industrias secundarias que aumentasen el valor de los productos exportados. Esto nunca se logró: las empresas eran filiales de multinacionales que tenían sus propias redes de distribución. Las compañías que se acogieron a esta nueva ley de incentivos industriales estaban dedicadas a la industria farmacéutica y petrolífera.

Es cierto que la operación consiguió una industrialización y un crecimiento económico. El Producto Nacional Bruto pasó de ser en 1940 de unos 154 \$ per cápita a 3.479 \$ en 1980. El gobierno se convirtió en el mayor creador de empleo ya que en ese mismo año el 25% de la población activa trabajaba para el estado puertorriqueño. Así pues, Puerto Rico se convirtió en un modelo económico en esos años para otros países del Caribe y Latinoamérica.

Lo más paradójico es que se generaba crecimiento, pero no empleos. Se habían perdido todos los empleos de la caña de azúcar, café y tabaco.

En el 2015 la crisis se vio agravada y García Padilla, en ese momen-

to gobernador de la isla, confirmó la grave situación económica en la televisión y añadió que matemáticamente era imposible salir de ese agujero negro. Obama descartó en ese momento el rescate de la deuda.

Los economistas advirtieron que debían ponerse en práctica una serie de medidas, entre ellas una reforma fiscal, la limpieza de la corrupción institucional, y el incremento del salario mínimo.

Puerto Rico tiene en estos momentos una población de menos de tres millones de habitantes, con un desempleo del 12%, lo que ha empujado a la población a emigrar, en su mayoría a ciudades de Estados Unidos como Miami, Nueva York, Chicago o Holyoke.

Después de su toma de posesión, Roselló viajó a Estados Unidos para entrevistarse con miembros del círculo de Donald Trump con la finalidad de obtener un préstamo para poder pagar las pensiones ya que la liquidez de la isla permitía abonarlas únicamente hasta el mes de abril pasado. La situación económica está unida a la política ya que el gobierno de Trump sabe que la isla es un territorio demócrata y por ello no ha estado dispuesto al rescate.

En la primera semana de mayo, después de que fracasaran las nego-



El morro en San Juan, Puerto Rico.

ciaciones de la ley Promesa, el gobernador declaró a Puerto Rico en bancarrota y dijo que iba a pedir a la Junta de Supervisión Fiscal que Puerto Rico se acogiera a una ley de quiebra para poder saldar los 73.000 millones de deuda. El tribunal debe decidir ahora cómo, cuánto y cuándo debe abonar Puerto Rico.

El 1 de mayo hubo un paro nacional que provocó grandes enfrentamientos entre la policía y los manifestantes que están en contra

de los recortes anunciados por el gobierno como cierre de escuelas públicas, la cobertura de Medicaid, recorte de las pensiones y ayudas a los más necesitados. Los manifestantes expresaban su desacuerdo con el gobierno de Trump, y contra sus propios gobernantes a los que consideran que han dilapidado su dinero y algunos expresaban su sueño de dejar de ser territorio estado-unidense para volver a ser una autonomía del gobierno de España.



Por VICTORIA MAÍLLO

La semana pasada ocurrió algo que muchos nos temíamos. El gobierno de Trump venció su primera batalla en el congreso. Desde hacía siete años el partido republicano estaba esperando la oportunidad para acabar con el Obamacare y llevar a cabo su propio plan de salud, aunque durante esos siete años simplemente descalificaron el plan propuesto por los demócratas, pero sin aportar uno nuevo.

La victoria se ganó por un pequeño margen de 217 contra 213. Los congresistas demócratas votaron en bloque en contra de este nuevo plan de salud. Nos queda la esperanza de

OPINIÓN.

El sistema de salud que se nos viene encima...

que con esa pequeña diferencia no consiga pasar la cámara alta.

Las cosas no empezaron bien para el presidente Trump debido al aplazamiento del voto por sus compañeros de partido en el congreso en marzo de este año. A partir de ese momento empezaron las presiones contra los miembros del llamado *Freedom Caucus* para conseguir sus votos.

¿Y en qué consiste esta llamada contrarreforma sanitaria que ha logrado los votos del congreso? En primer lugar la destrucción del Medicaid que ayuda a las personas con bajos recursos. El dinero de Medicaid viene del gobierno del país y este lo traspasa a los diferentes estados.

Consiste también en eliminar un impuesto que gravaba a contribuyentes que ganasen más de 180.000 dólares al año y que ayu-

daba a financiar Medicaid.

Se eliminan así mismo las multas que había que pagar por no disponer de seguro médico y contribuían también al total del importe destinado al sistema de salud.

Y por último y no menos importante todas las condiciones pre-existentes por la que ahora las aseguradoras dependiendo del estado, que será el que decida, pueden denegar un seguro de salud o elevar los precios de este. Estas condiciones pueden ir desde tener acné, pasando por glaucoma, diabetes, o haber sufrido cáncer o depresión. La lista es tan amplia que no puedo incluirla en estas líneas.

Si la ley sanitaria de Trump consigue pasar el senado de los Estados Unidos, se calcula que unas 15 millones de personas perderán su cobertura médica en 2018. También algunos pacientes

verán incrementado el precio de su seguro en un 3.500 % si han padecido alguno de los trastornos considerados como condiciones pre-existentes.

Las mujeres sufriremos muchas de estas medidas, si la ley sigue adelante, ya que se eliminarán las ayudas financieras a algunas organizaciones como *Planned Parenthood* que hacen detecciones gratis de enfermedades de la mujer.

Este domingo 7 de mayo, el ex-presidente Obama, en un discurso tras recibir un premio en Boston, se mostró fuertemente en contra de la nueva ley de salud republicana y exhortó a los senadores a actuar en pos de la verdad, a no defender solamente los intereses de los potentados y a vencer la brecha que se ha abierto en el país después de las elecciones de noviembre.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ONGOING EVENTS EVERY SUNDAY

McCusker's Co-op Market, Shelburne Falls: *Celtic Sessions*. Musicians, all levels, traditional Irish music. 10:30 a.m.

Underdog Lounge, Shelburne Falls: *Jazz Night*. 6 p.m.

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

FIRST SUNDAY MONTHLY

Green Fields Market, Greenfield: *Co-op Straight-Ahead Jazz*. Balcony. Afternoons.

EVERY MONDAY

Greenfield Harmony Spring Session. No auditions. 6:45 p.m. Contact mcb Brass@vermontel.net for location and details.

EVERY TUESDAY

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

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Story Time*: Stories, projects, and snacks for young children and their caretakers. 10:15 a.m.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Tales and Tunes Story Hour*. Ages 0 to 5 and caregivers. 10:30 a.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Jazz Series with Ted Wirt and his Hammond B3*. 7 p.m.

1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAY

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

3RD WEDNESDAYS

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Roots at the Root Cellar*. Reggae DJs mixing up roots, dub, dancehall, steppas and more. 9 p.m. Free.

EVERY THURSDAY

Montague Center Branch Library,

Montague: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll & Laurie Davidson*. Children and their caregivers. 10 to 11 a.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Open Mic*. 6 to 8 p.m.

Pioneer Tavern, Millers Falls: *Franklin County Pool League*. 6 to 11 p.m.

FIRST THURSDAYS

Underdog Lounge, Shelburne Falls: *Open Mic*. 7 p.m.

EVERY THIRD THURSDAY

Tilton Library, S. Deerfield: *Book Discussion*. 6:30 p.m.

2ND AND 4TH THURSDAY

Hubie's Tavern: *TNT Karaoke*. 9 p.m.

EVERY FRIDAY

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

EVERY THIRD FRIDAY

Free Arms Library, Shelburne Falls: *Open Prose and Poetry Reading*. Arrive before 7 p.m. to sign up for 5 or 10 minute slots. 7 p.m.

Element Brewing Company, Millers Falls: *Brule's Irish Band*. 6 p.m.

EVERY FOURTH FRIDAY

Community Yoga and Wellness Center, Greenfield: *Greenfield Circle Dance*. 6 to 8 p.m. \$

FIRST SATURDAY MONTHLY

Montague Common Hall: Montague Center. Montague Square Dance. Family fun, October through May. 7 p.m. \$

EXHIBITS:

Arts Block, Greenfield: *Mother and Son Exhibit*. Jon Bander shows his welding artwork, with paintings and sculpture by *Nina Rossi*. Exhibit through May.

Artspace, Greenfield: *Photography by Trish Crapo*. Reception on Friday, May 12, 5 to 7 p.m. Exhibit through June 2.

VonAuersperg Gallery, Deerfield Academy: *Peter Kemble*, digital prints. Through June 12.

Easthampton City Arts, Easthampton: *Long Days, Long Nights, Swim Often*, prints, drawings, and paintings by *Hannah Hurricane Sanchez*. Artist reception on Saturday, May 13, 5 to 8 p.m. Through May.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Catch and Release*. Exhibit of river and water-themed art by western Mass. artists. Exhibit opening reception, Sunday, May 7, 2 to 4 p.m. Through May 29.

Hope & Olive, Greenfield: *Anja Schutz exhibit "Photographs"*, landscapes, portraits, still lifes, and dogs. Through May.

Leverett Crafts and Arts: *The*

Loss You Feel by Buzzy Napoli. Images and videos. Artist reception Thursday, May 4, 5 p.m. Through May.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Paintings by Louise Minks and her students*. Through June.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *The Time Tunnel*. Installation by Adrian Montagano. Through June 24.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *The Nearest Faraway Place by Christin Couture*. Encaustic landscape paintings. Reception Saturday, June 10, 4 p.m. Also: *Winter's Bone, digital photography by Carl Nardiello*. Artist's reception Saturday, May 13, 4 p.m. Through June 25.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery, Montague: Ongoing art offerings by gallery member artists.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *A World Beneath our Feet*, exhibit of rag rugs and floor cloths by *Lynda Faye and Joanne Gold*. Artists' reception on Saturday, May 13, 2 to 5 p.m. Through May 29.

Wendell Free Library: *Michael Wing Drawings*, paintings, wooden toys and metal sculptures. Artist reception on Saturday, May 20 at 1:30 p.m. Through June.

SUBMISSIONS:

Conway's Sestercentennial (250th birthday). Request for Proposals for one-act plays to be performed on Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10, 2017 at the Sportsman's Club Pavillion. Send all proposals and questions to Mike at verybratty@aol.com.

Slate Roof Press announces the 2017 Elyse Wolf Prize for their annual poetry chapbook contest. Deadline June 15. Details at: slateroofpresscontest.submittable.com.

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, MAY 11

Underdogs Lounge, Shelburne Falls: *Ray Mason*. 7 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, MAY 12

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Great Falls Coffeehouse presents: *The Bork, Tinen, & Kahn Trio*, contemporary acoustic and electric music. Donations support educational programming. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *GCC Dance Department Concert*. 7 p.m. \$

Underdogs Lounge, Shelburne Falls: *She Said*. House band. 7:30 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *TRIO BALKAN STRINGS* (Zoran Starcevic & sons) performs a fusion of Balkan music. 8 p.m.

Hawks and Reed Performing Arts Center, Greenfield: *Lee "Scratch" Perry* and *The Alche-*

mystics. 8 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Trio Balkan Strings*. World guitar. 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Youngstown, Mamma's Marmalade*. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band*. 8:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Galvanizer*. "Groove to the psychedelic rock, funk, dub, surf & jam sounds." 9 p.m. \$

SATURDAY, MAY 13

Shutesbury Artists Collective: Five women artists in one corner of Shutesbury offer this opportunity to tour their home studios. There will be demos of felting by *Nina Compagnon*, weaving by *Therese Legere*, sculpture by *Valerie Gilman*, natural shibori plant dyes and a garden tour by *Ziporah Hildebrandt*, and impressionist nature photography by *Leslie Cerier*. Handmade arts will be available for sale. See website for more info 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. See www.shutesbury-artistscollective.com

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Mister G's Spring Spectacular*. Children's entertainer. Free CDs to the first 50 families in the door. 11 a.m. \$; children under 1 are free.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery, Montague Bookmill: *Spring Celebration*, 12 to 6 p.m. Live music, artist demonstrations, refreshments, raffle basket.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne Falls: *Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier*. Metropolitan Opera Simulcast, 12:30 p.m. \$

GCC Sloan Theater, Greenfield: *The Michael Doherty Writing Contest*, sponsored by GCC's literary journal, Plum, will hold its award ceremony. Winners of the contest will be announced and all participants have been invited to read. Artwork by GCC students, music and food will all be a part of the fun. 7 to 9 p.m.

Montague Common Hall: *Open Mic Night*. Big town performance art in a tiny village. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *The Black Tie-Dye Ball* with the *Dead Collective*. Free all-ages show featuring Grateful Dead music. Best tie-dye apparel wins Green River Festival tickets and other prizes. Doors at 7, show at 8.

Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell Town Hall: *Ras Spectiv Reggae*. Benefit for Friends of Fiske Pond. 7:30 p.m., \$

Arts Block Ballroom, Greenfield: *Boxcar Lillies* with *Eric Lee & Co*, 8 p.m. \$

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne Falls: *Jennifer Mathews*, roots rock. 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill: *Henning / Austin & Elliot* Swooping shifts of genre and mood by Henning and thought-provoking lyrics and driving guitar by Austin & Elliot. 8 p.m. \$

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Feel Good Drift*, Groovin' Hits. 8 p.m.

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

SUNDAY, MAY 14

Arts Block Ballroom, Greenfield: *Jazz Sundays* with Evelyn Harris and Khalif Neville. 5 p.m. \$

TUESDAY, MAY 16

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *As You Like It*, presented by the Young Shakespeare Players East. 6 p.m. Free.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *As You Like It*, presented by the Young Shakespeare Players East. 6 p.m. Free.

THURSDAY, MAY 18

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Laura Wetzler*. 7 p.m. \$

FRIDAY, MAY 19

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Leafies You Gave Me, Birthing Hips, New Mom, and Flame 'n' Peach*. 7 p.m. \$

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Open Improv with 23 Quartet* and *NCMC Ensemble*. 8 p.m.



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SHEA from page B1

different disciplines.

The structure of the events, which all begin with a community meal, places emphasis on building community and fostering collaboration, as well as crowd-sourcing funds for organizations in need. Previous Nest events have raised money for the ACLU and Standing Rock.

"I want to use my art form as a vehicle for organizing and as a vehicle for rallying people around an issue, a cause, so that it's like the art is the leverage," says Ayres. "It's about using that in service for something greater than itself."

When she first spoke to organizers at the Shea about putting on a music festival at the space, Ayres found that she and Tardif shared a desire to organize events which foster conversation in the community, and use the theater as a place for various communities in the Pioneer Valley to come together.

"I love that it is a benefit for Tapestry, but any benefits – and any idea that somebody has that not only gets to showcase your work as an artist or your way of communicating, but is also a way to serve another organization in the community that needs help – is something that I am extremely interested in," said Tardif. "I am thrilled to be able to start that kind of programming pretty early into my position at the Shea."

Nest Fest will begin with a light potluck meal at 6 p.m., and music will go until 11:45 p.m. The lineup spans many different sounds from bluegrass, to psych rock and back again. It includes: **DJ Quils, Bella, Old Flame, Workman Song, Carinae, and Mamma's Marmalade.**

Tickets are \$10, and can be purchased online or at the door.



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