



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 15 – NO. 36 also serving Irving, Gill, Everett and Wendell \$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES JUNE 22, 2017

ERVING SELECTBOARD On Eve of Park Opening, Town Hall Pivots to Other Projects

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, the selectboard informed Usher Mill reuse committee (UMRC) members Jeff Dubay, Jeanie Schermesser, and Melissa Shiner that committee members would not be reappointed when their terms end on June 30.

At their June 5 meeting, while discussing appointments for FY'18, the board had passed over the UMRC appointments, and decided to meet jointly with the UMRC and the recreation commission at the June 19 meeting to discuss oversight for the new Erving Riverfront Park and the future role of the committee. On June 19, there was no discussion between board members about whether or not to reappoint the UMRC members, but all three board members had decided not to re-appoint the committee.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache said that, with Riverfront Park construction completed, the park, like other town parks, would be managed by the recreation commission and not the selectboard.

The grand opening for the park, an event organized by UMRC, is set for this Saturday, June 24 from 1 to 6 p.m., with a ribbon cutting scheduled for 3 p.m.

The UMRC members appeared
see **ERVING** page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD Five-Day Trash Week May Be Solution to Spotty Service

By JEFF SINGLETON

Residents of Montague may have noticed delayed or missed trash and recycling collections over the past few months. Town officials have been hearing complaints about inconsistent service, a topic on the selectboard's Monday agenda.

"I had some delayed pick-ups at my house," said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz. "Chris, you probably had too."

Selectboard member Chris Boutwell nodded in agreement.

"I talked to a resident in Montague Center last week – an elderly resident who has to get people to help her bring the trash out, Kuklewicz continued. "If it doesn't get picked up, she's concerned about it being left out overnight, and that creates undue stress."

Trash and recycling collection occur weekly in Montague, although on different days in different neighborhoods. Paper alternates with glass and plastic in the recycling schedule, while disposable trash is collected every week on a sticker pay-per-bag basis.

The program was originally administered by the town's
see **MONTAGUE** page A7

CHAMPS AGAIN!



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Seniors Maddy Johnson, Jordyn Fiske, Melissa Hersey, and Gabby Arzuaga celebrate Turners' state D-III softball championship win at Worcester State University last Saturday.

By MATT ROBINSON

WORCESTER – The Turners Falls varsity softball team broke the state record!

On Saturday, Powertown defeated the Austin Prep Green Cougars 2-1, and with that victory, took home the State Championship trophy for a record ninth time. And the community couldn't be prouder.

A sea of True Blue jerseys accompanied the girls to the game, and when they returned, the sirens

could be heard from two towns away, signaling their triumphant return.

Before the game it seemed like old times at Rockwood Field. As the tide of Blue shirts entered, the ticket takers at the gate greeted them and said things like "Welcome Back" and "Nice to see you again." A familiar face waved me through, telling me to sign in at the media entrance.

And as the Blue Wave settled into
see **CHAMPS** page A4

Saturday: Pride March

By ANNA FORBES GYORGY

GREENFIELD – There will be quite a lot to celebrate this Saturday, and many different ways to celebrate, as the Franklin County LG-BTQ community and its allies come together for a daylong celebration of the diversity and visibility of queer community in Franklin County.



"One of our themes is 'Celebration'. It's also 'Stronger Together,' which is being used all over the country by Pride events this year," said organizer and spokesperson Elizabeth Bridgewater, speaking with Monte Belmonte on WRSI. "This theme is in solidarity with Pride events all over the country, because especially this year we need to feel our strength together, and we need to be visible for each other."

Initially, the group of organizers – consisting of Elizabeth Bridgewater, her wife Pam Parmakian, Michelle De Lisio, and Trouble Erin Manderson – were unsure if a Pride event would garner community interest, or

the support of local businesses. But it quickly became clear that the interest in a celebration of the queer community was overwhelming.

"The outpouring of support from the community far exceeded what we expected, so we have a cushion to think even bigger for next year," said Bridgewater, who hopes that this will evolve into a yearly event.

"I think it's a culmination of so much activism and community spirit in Greenfield. We have a lot of really dedicated people, who really believe in coming together and speaking out against injustice," said Manderson.

Franklin County Pride will begin at 1 p.m. with a march through the streets of Greenfield, beginning at Greenfield Middle School and ending at the Greenfield Energy Park. There will be a rally at the park from 2 to 4 p.m. featuring a diverse group of speakers addressing themes of activism, unity, pride, and togetherness.

Attendees will hear from Greenfield town councilor Karen Renaud, who has worked to fight hate crime in the area, Reverend Marguerite Sheehan, the pastor of the "open and affirming" Trinity Church in Shelburne Falls, LGBTQ youth from the peer support organization Generation Q, and countless other activists and community members

see **PRIDE** page A7

Arts Community Celebrates Impact on Downtown Turners

By MIKE JACKSON

The installation of a new public sculpture at the intersection of Third Street and Avenue A was the occasion for a gathering of artists, musicians, bureaucrats, and curiosity-seekers last Saturday afternoon.

The overnight rain had let up, and Third Street was blocked off – by yellow sawhorses, and by a yellow-clad street band, blaring magnetic takes on familiar hits with brass, banjo, snare and cowbell.

Local sculptor Tim de Chris-

topher's "Rock, Paper, Scissors," comprised of three pieces in sandstone and limestone, is intended as an homage to the village's history of change.

"Turners has never been an easy town," de Christopher wrote in his proposal for the project, which was chosen among 30 entries and funded by a Massachusetts Cultural Council grant. "From its inception, we have had a complicated mix of cultures with overlapping and competing needs. 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' in
see **IMPACT** page A6

Local sculptor Tim de Christopher unveiled "Rock, Paper, Scissors" last Saturday at Third and A.



JACKSON PHOTO

GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Committee Hopes Students Will Pick New Team Name

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – It was a no-name softball team from Turners Falls that won the state championship this week, after the school committee's controversial elimination of the longstanding "Indian" logo. But by this time next year, Turners Falls High School sports teams may have a new name – one which the committee is considering having students pick themselves.

"I want alumni to always feel that Indian pride," said Cassie Dam-

koehler, newly elected this spring. "[But] I'm all for moving forward with our community. I think letting the kids take the lead in this is going to be the way to do that."

The committee held a special brainstorming session Monday night to begin to decide how the new name would be chosen. No votes were taken, but over the course of the meeting, a consensus started to emerge that the committee wanted to involve students at several stages of the process: soliciting ideas from the
see **GMRSD** page A7

TFHS Drama: "One of the Best Feelings In The World"

By LYDIA WRIGHT

GILL-MONTAGUE – The Turners Falls theater program is a great experience. A lot of hard work and dedication goes into the shows that we put on every year. It takes about three months to get each show to the best it can be.

The shows have middle and high school students. Typically, high school students get the lead roles, and the middle school kids get the ensemble, or smaller, roles. That's because they have more time to be in the musical than high school students.

About 30 students are involved, and auditions are held in December. After winter break, we come back and get started. At Turners, no students get turned away, and everybody is involved. I have been participating in the musicals for three years, and I'm so glad. I have made

so many new friendships, and now have my own little musical family.

I knew I wanted to start performing when I came to watch the TFHS
see **DRAMA** page A8



TFHS students in rehearsal for the Elephant Graveyard scene from the production of Lion King Jr. Left to right: Owen Ortiz, Lydia Wright, Emily Young, Catherine Bezio, Lucy Postera, and Samantha Thorpe.

The Montague Reporter

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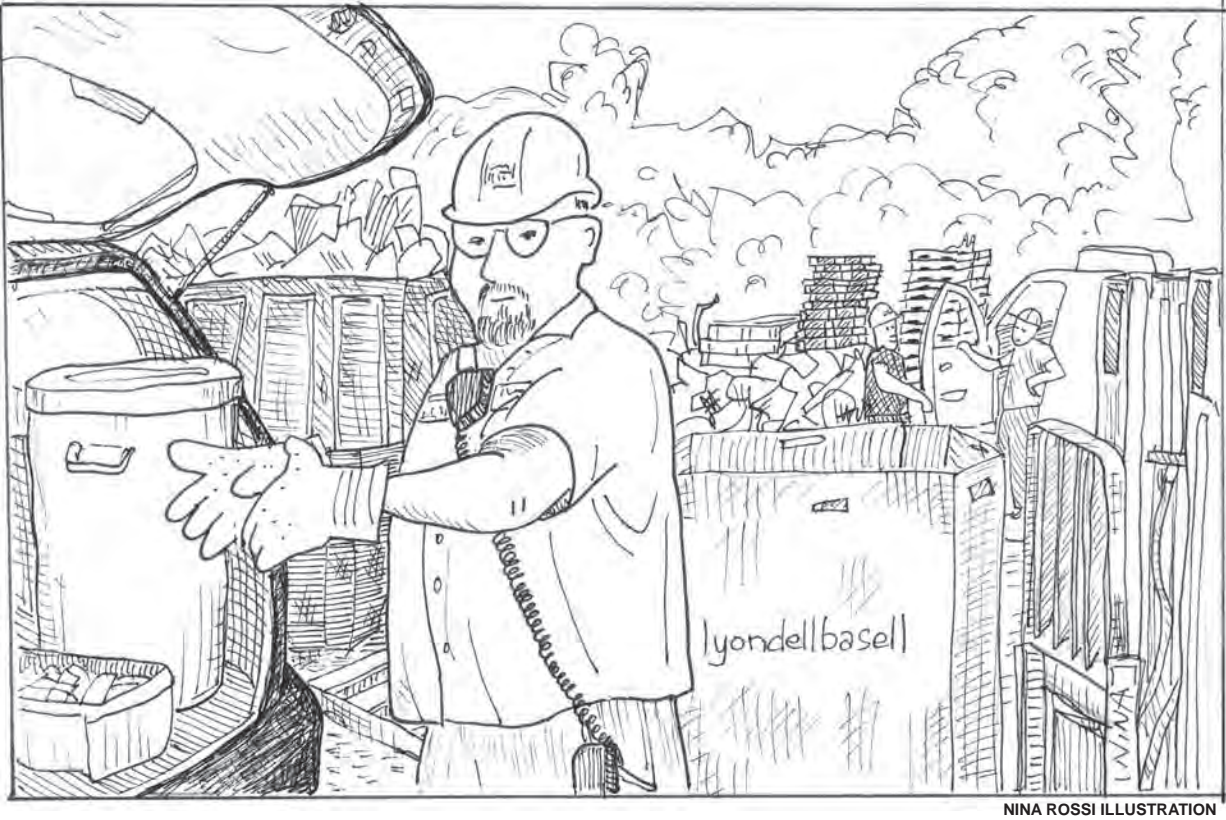
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Danny Abbott adjusts the cuff of his glove before unloading a bucket of aluminum at the WTE Recycling non-ferrous scrapyard in Cheapside.

An Escalation

We were stunned to learn Wednesday that Baystate Franklin has responded to a planned 24-hour nurses’ strike next week with a 72-hour lockout.

Not knowing otherwise, we assume that both Baystate and the Massachusetts Nurses Association are continuing to negotiate in good faith, though the nurses have been working for months without a contract.

Hospitals must continue to operate, and forcing management to hire expensive replacement workers – travel nurses – for a day signals the nurses’ resolve, hitting both parties in the pocketbook.

Baystate’s response – to publicly declare the strike action “illegal,” ask for an injunction from the National Labor Relations Board, and tell nurses they’ll be locked out without pay for *three* days is a doubling down. It’s also a calculation that the lockout will hurt nurses and their families more than it will hurt the hospital system.

Now, who knows what the NLRB will say. (The new chair of the board is Philip Miscimarra, a former union-busting lawyer who the *Washington Examiner* has frothingly called the “Antonin Scalia of workplace law.”)

But Baystate Health should be able to absorb the hit of the lockout. The company makes all of its financial statements from the last five years available online, and if members of the public are wondering if they should take a side in the dispute, they should check them out.

One insight: Baystate is growing. Its total operating revenue rose from \$1.54 billion in FY’11 to \$2.35 billion in FY’16. That’s 52.5% growth. And while expenses have grown at a similar rate, excess revenues (the equivalent of profit, though the system is governed as a nonprofit and is tax-exempt) in the last five years have ranged from \$34 million to \$93 million.

Over the same period, the share of revenues that end up as workers’ salaries has declined bit by bit, year by year: from 40.4% in FY’11 to 36.9% last year.

That doesn’t seem like much, but if employees’ share of revenue had remained steady over that half-decade, they’d have been paid an extra \$81 million last year.

Of course, it’s not that easy. Other categories of rising costs compete, and Baystate is scrambling to stay ahead of an underfunded state Medicaid program as well as Affordable

Care Act mechanisms that link reimbursement with performance (the sort of clever ideas schools are familiar with – which might drive beneficial competition in urban areas, but only pile on the strain in under-resourced rural ones).

But Baystate appears to be prudently managed, from a fiscal perspective; in five years, the company’s cash on hand has grown by 56%, its net assets by 36%.

It’s interesting to reflect that, in this day and age, we take a falling labor share for granted. It’s seen as good management to invest in hedge funds and land acquisition, but not in *improving* the experience of your workforce by hiring more employees.

Another insight: Baystate Franklin Medical Center accounts for only 4.18% of the system’s revenue, and 4.13% of its expenses. It’s keeping ahead, if only by a little. The Greenfield location made the company \$12.8 million over the last two years (the only two years that included a breakdown by facility).

But. *But*. Baystate’s approach to Greenfield is determined, in part, by its economic incentive to contain unionization. If contract negotiations in Franklin County gradually end up with a better deal for nurses here, those at other Baystate hospitals – even, perhaps, just down the river at the much larger Baystate Medical Center in Springfield – may be tempted to follow suit.

And so might other employees. (Security and maintenance workers in Greenfield now have separate union representation.) So, completely independent of the content of the negotiations, Baystate could be seen to benefit from taking an unnecessarily hard line.

If the two sides don’t settle over the weekend, this lockout is likely to be chaotic and acrimonious. Management will seek to isolate the nurses – from the support of other workers, from the community, and in the court of public opinion.

Watch out for statements of their undeservingness.

Nurses are better paid than most of us – as well they should be. They have stressful, essential, highly skilled jobs, and many withstand verbal and physical assault. They are exactly who should be in the tier of well-paid workers who can turn around and buy more goods and services from the rest of us.

If they do well, our whole county will, too. So let’s support them.

GUEST EDITORIAL

A Visit From the Sheriff

By JOSEPH KEADY

The Swift River Sportsman’s Club in Belchertown hosted its fourth annual Flag Day Second Amendment Rally on Saturday. It had created a mild sensation in the local press for several days beforehand due largely to the top billing it gave to ex-sheriff Joe Arpaio, a Springfield native who earned a national reputation as the swaggering, controversial chief law enforcement officer of Maricopa County, AZ.

Also slated to speak were Stewart Rhodes, head of the paramilitary organization Oath Keepers, Jeanette Finicum, widow of LaVoy Finicum, one of the occupiers of the Malheur bird sanctuary in eastern Oregon in early 2016, and Larry Pratt, president of Gun Owners of America (GOA).

Rally organizer Dave Kopacz took center stage before and after each speaker and stated at one point that he believed gun ownership was a “God-given right.” Nonetheless, he spent surprisingly little time talking about guns or the laws pertaining to them.

Instead, much of his time at the microphone was dedicated to announcing, without provocation, his credentials as a non-racist due to his “four black cousins,” that unnamed “public servants are sending their supporters into the street to break the law,” and that “the county sheriff will always be the highest elected official in the country.”

This last statement was later reaffirmed by Arpaio and Rhodes. It reflects an idiosyncratic interpretation of constitutional law that is popular within the contemporary militia movement but that has never been upheld in state or federal court.

The other speakers likewise devoted large portions of their time to expressing their opinions about a range of issues unrelated to guns or gun laws. Frequent reference points included climate change denial, allegations that the public school system is creating a generation of unemployable Marxist “snowflakes,” and a general disdain for Muslims. One of the organizations handing out litera-

ture at a table on the perimeter was dedicated to rolling back bathroom-access laws for transgender people, another population that came under repeated attack from the podium.

Also noteworthy was what was not mentioned. The rally took place the day after the verdict in the Philando Castile shooting case was handed down. And, while this would appear to be a textbook example of the kind of hostile government response to gun owners that organizations like the GOA frequently rail against, the case was never mentioned by any of the speakers.

To recap the basic facts of the case, during a routine traffic stop in a St. Paul, MN, suburb in July of last year, Castile, a Black man who was a licensed gun owner, informed the officer that he had a firearm in his possession. He then reached for his identification and the officer shot him seven times. Castile died of his wounds.

The fact that Castile complied with all legal requirements and generally accepted protocols would seem to make his death an obvious rallying cry for a community that prides itself on holding onto its guns in the face of government overreach. It is therefore perplexing that the case went unmentioned the day after the responsible government agent was acquitted.

For his part, Arpaio spent a significant portion of his time talking about Barack Obama’s birth certificate, which he continues to claim is a fraud. He also repeatedly expressed his ardent support for President Trump and pre-emptively argued against claims that he is racist, citing the non-white children that his daughter has adopted and vowing that, “I love the foreign people.”

Several times he asked aloud, “What does this have to do with the Second Amendment?” thus raising expectations that he would respond to his own question by saying something about guns.

The most sobering speaker of the afternoon was Stewart Rhodes. If he does not have the public profile of a figure like Arpaio, it is pri-

marily because he has not been in the public eye as long. He founded the Oath Keepers in 2009, a few months after Obama was inaugurated, as an organization of current and former law enforcement officials and military members with the stated purpose of reaffirming their respective oaths to uphold the Constitution of the United States.

The group’s website lists ten orders that members will not obey, including orders to disarm the American people, to turn American cities into “giant concentration camps” or force citizens into detention camps, and to infringe on the right of the people to free speech. Additionally, its bylaws prohibit racial discrimination.

However, the organization endured a period of crisis in 2015 when a group of members who went to Ferguson, MO, to support on-duty law enforcement during a period of civil unrest decided that their oaths were better honored by working with the local populace and teaching them to shoot.

They planned an open-carry march with Black residents of Ferguson, but the Oath Keepers’ leadership balked at the idea. The conflict resulted in a split in the organization and the exodus of several members, who cited race as a factor in the disagreement.

More recently, the Oath Keepers have gained notoriety for providing security for a number of far-right rallies around the country. Their defense of free speech has been overwhelmingly in support of figures like Milo Yiannopoulos, who has used his platform to out trans people and undocumented immigrants, and the recent Islamophobic “March against Sharia” rallies.

The speakers at the Second Amendment rally were clear about the many things they stand against. Left unsaid was just whose Constitutional rights they support.

Joseph Keady is a graduate student at UMass-Amherst, where his research focuses on translation, film, and social movements.

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

The “Whale” water spray feature is now spouting at Unity Park, on First Street in Turners Falls, and will continue through Labor Day. Whale operating hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week.

The Friends of the Greenfield Public Library Summer Book Sale will be held on Saturday, June 24, from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., in the basement of the library.

The sale includes over 11,000 books in the regular stacks, a great selection of children’s books, music CDs, books on CD, and DVDs, and a bargain book section, where a bag can be filled for \$2.

The sale also includes an exceptional assortment of books donated by Marc Platt and family in memory of Susan Platt, a longtime volunteer and member of the FGPL Board. The collection is comprised of approximately 320 books, including many “like new” books, signed by the authors. Many of the books are

first edition and/or first printings, and they are all priced at \$5 each.

The FGPL is a nonprofit organization founded to support library enrichment programs and services, such as the homebound delivery program, all of the children’s programs, and free passes for local museums. The support of book sales help make these things happen.

Join Diane Kimball-Hickey at the Greenfield Saving Bank in Turners Falls on Saturday, June 24, at 10:30 a.m. as she explores the art of pairing foods with wine, known as *somology*.

Take advantage of the local produce coming into season here in our valley. Choose your wine to complement your dinner menu, and impress your guests. Learn how to present a cheese and cracker platter to enhance the dining experience. Everyone can learn to be a better host or hostess with Diane’s expert guidance.

Light refreshments and a raffle are included free of charge.

Mutton and Mead is also this weekend! The medieval festival is held at 210 Turners Falls Road in Turners Falls. For a full schedule of events, visit MuttonAndMead.org.

The North Quabbin Energy Group and energy committees of New Salem, Orange, Petersham, Warwick and Wendell are co-sponsoring an information night about solar PV for residents’ homes at the New Salem town hall on Tuesday, June 27, at 6:30 p.m.

Jim Barry from the Massachusetts DOER Green Communities program will be presenting, as well as local solar installers. Refreshments will be served.

The Dickinson Memorial Library in Northfield is sponsoring a Video Game Day at the Northfield Elementary School gymnasium, 104 Main Street, on Saturday, July 1, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Here is a chance at interactive shoulder-to-shoulder game playing on multiple giant-screen projections, with ability to have more than ten participants competing at once, and quick competitions so everybody enjoys playing, watching, and cheering.

Team competitions give the event a game-show feel in which everyone participates, and non-violent games are appropriate for all ages 6 years old and above.

Middle-age participants will also enjoy a blast from their past on retro consoles like Nintendo and Sega Genesis, and everyone will enjoy new platforms like Xbox and Wii. Learn good sportsmanship, patience, learning through failure, and of course, have a blast playing video games!

The event is free, with no need to pre-register. For more information, contact the Library at (413) 498-2455.

Something to start thinking about: The Montague Reporter will be having a tag sale on Saturday, July 22, from 8 a.m. to noon. We will be reaching out to our readers for donations of items. Over the next few issues, we will provide more information about what items can be accepted, as well as drop-off and pickup times. So save your stuff!

The fundraiser, which will include a bake sale, Montague Reporter coffee mugs and raffle items, is sponsored by the Friends of the Montague Reporter. It is a bit early to call into the office, but start looking around your garage, closets and attic for suitable donations.

For more information, please email friendsofmontaguereporter@gmail.com, or call Lyn at 863-4779, or me at 863-5125.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Parts Cars, Tap Roots, Log Auction, Soggy Couch

By JOSH HEINEMANN

At the beginning of the selectboard’s July 15 meeting, town coordinator Nancy Aldrich confirmed to the board that their clerk, Laurel Brenneman, is giving up her position. Brenneman has not come to recent meetings and gave warning of her intention, and in that time board members have noted that she was the best clerk they can remember. She wrote accurate minutes, and had them ready quickly.

Selectboard member Dan Keller brought in a bar of handmade spiced chocolate, which he broke into pieces for those present to sample. None of the pieces were left at the meeting’s end.

Citizen Jesse Davis came to the meeting with a letter he got from the selectboard about the unregistered vehicles on his property. His approach was cooperative, but he did ask, “Why me?” He said he knew of other properties with more than two unregistered vehicles

Selectboard chair Christine Heard explained that there had been a complaint. The board generally does not pursue enforcement of the bylaw, which gives residents a limit of two unregistered vehicles per property, unless they receive one.

Davis said he is working to get rid of three of the vehicles soon, but he has other vehicles that he uses for parts, and others that he fixes and

sells. He deals especially with early 1980s Toyota trucks, and he tries to keep them out of sight. Some of the vehicles belong to his brother.

He said he does not consider what he does a business, but Keller informed him that if he sells parts and makes money, he has a business.

Town bylaw allows no new Class II automobile salvage yards, but Heard told him he can continue to work as he has been, but should apply for a special permit, which will have to be renewed yearly. The application involves a hearing, and the hearing requires that abutters are notified and given time to respond.

Davis said he would like to apply for the permit. Heard warned him that the process is slow. She also said she really appreciated his coming in, his being cooperative and honest, and that as long as he is in conversation with the town, the daily fine for excess vehicles would not be enforced.

Dam Maintenance

The annual town meeting authorized money for maintaining the town’s part of the dam that holds back water and creates McAvoy’s Pond. At an earlier selectboard meeting, board member Geoffrey Pooser suggested that someone speak with David Lenart of Lenart Consulting. Lenart had saved Wendell money by making a simple plan for maintaining and reinforcing the

Fiske Pond dam.

Keller said that Lenart told him he thinks the trees should be cut along the Lockes Village Road right of way, but that their roots balls can stay. The trees are mostly white pines, and so have a tap root. Cutting the trees alone would improve the dam’s condition from poor to fair.

The dam is owned in part by the town, and in part by the Trousdale trust; the division of responsibility for its maintenance is not clearly defined. Board members will meet with the trust, Lenart, and lawyer Sam Lovejoy. Heard suggested that the any decision should wait until Pooser, who was absent at the July 15 meeting, is there.

Fall Auction

Board members suggested a fall Saturday, possibly September 15, for the auction of the town’s surplus equipment. For collecting items for that auction, Heard said that of the two trailers near the town-owned house at 97 Wendell Depot Road, one is in good condition and full of solid wood furniture, while the other has holes in the roof and its contents are in bad condition.

National Grid is clearing trees back from their primary line between the Wendell Depot substation and Route 2A, and the logs salvaged from that cutting can also go to 97 Wendell Depot Road for the auction. The logs will have to

be placed so they are not in the way of the community solar farm that is proposed for that same property, or in the way of the trailers, or efforts to remove the soggy couch and mattress on the property.

Other Business

Board members signed a six-month electrical aggregation agreement that will cost a fraction of a cent more for coming from 100% green sources. A longer agreement would be more expensive, and so the town will continue to renew the agreement at six-month intervals.

Keller said he got a call from building inspector Phil Delorey with information that the highway department has money left over from its winter budget. They hoped to make repairs to the WRATS, but the bidding process will take them into FY’18, and so their next choice is to replace the pickup truck.

The selectboard gave an OK for purchase of a new pickup truck from the state list. It will be more energy efficient, and more dependable, than the old truck.

Aldrich informed the board that the owners of a property at the junction of Locke Hill Road and Jennison Road intend to take that parcel out of Chapter 61 and sell it. The town has a right of first refusal, and so the board forwarded that information to town departments, in case any department had a use for the land.

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more info? call: 863-2054

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Giant Yard Sale and Pie Auction

Sunday, June 25

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.


at the Bell Tower on Adams Street, Lake Pleasant

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CHAMPS from page A1

the first base bleachers, a Worcester man claimed to remember everyone, including Jordan Meattey and Jenna Putala, who played here last year.

There were a few differences from the Hopedale game. The first was the spirit in the dugout. In the Hopedale game, the Blue Ladies didn’t come alive until the sixth inning. But in this game, the girls began cheering right after the anthem, and didn’t stop until the last out.

Another difference was Sandstorm. You’d recognize Darude’s “Sandstorm” if you heard it; it’s the warm up song played before each game. But even without that Finnish trance song, the Blue Tribe warmed up just fine.

Turners was in the unfamiliar position of being the visitors, and were forced to bat first. Therefore, if they didn’t score first, they would be a half inning behind, playing catchup ball. They were familiar with Austin Prep, a team that had twice beaten the other half of the state. They’re a terrific team, and this year, AP skated through the postseason, allowing just two runs in five playoff games, with perfect pitching and terrific fielding. So scoring against them would be hard indeed.

In the top of the first inning, leadoff man Cassidy Wozniak was up to the task. She placed a ground base hit, and made it to first. Power hitter Gabby Arzuaga was also up to the task. She followed up with a long double, sending Woz home.



Jumping ahead: Aly Murphy and Cassidy Wozniak celebrate Turners’ first run early in the first inning of the championship game at Rockwood Field, Worcester State University.

This was huge. The True Blue Faithful took to their feet, screaming and clapping as Woz and Gabby – who was relieved from baserunner duties by Lexi Lacey – received high fives from their teammates and coaches.

After a pop foul and a sliding catch, Taylor Murphy smacked another base hit, and as Lacey went to third, Taylor took second. A “K” stranded the ladies at second and third, but more importantly, Blue took a one-run lead going into the bottom of the first.

A Lead Lost and Regained

Not only do the Cats have a great defense, they also have a prolific offense, scoring 49 runs in the postseason. But it was Austin Prep who was now in an unfamiliar situation, and they tried to make up the run and then some as their first three batters shot for the stars.

The leadoff man hit a deep fly to left field, but Maddy Johnson tracked it down. The next batter went down swinging, and the third hit a rocket to center, which was caught by Jordyn Fiske. Blue held the slim one-run lead going



Eighth-grader Taylor Murphy, who plays second base, performed like a seasoned veteran, with two hits and success on the field during the championship final.

into the second inning.

Turners went 1-2-3 in the top of the second. In the bottom, AP had some difficulty with Peyton Emery’s pitches. The leadoff batter hit the ball extremely high to third, but Abby Loynd snagged it. The next Cat popped a foul toward the Blue dugout, and Aly Murphy went after it for the second out. Emery then placed another K for the third and final out of the inning.

In the third inning, Wozniak got her second hit of the game, but a fly to shallow center, a strikeout, and a 1-3 grounder left her stranded.

Powertown held on to their slim lead, but it wouldn’t last for long.

In the Green third, Aly made a wonderful catch at first and Emery threw out the second batter. But never count the Cougars out, even with two outs. The third batter gapped a quick single just under Woz’s glove, and an error sent her home to knot the game.

With the go-ahead run at second, the next Cougar hit a deep fly to center, but fortunately for Blue, Fiske was there to retire the side. But the damage had been done, and after three full, it was a whole new ballgame.

Turners was back in the position of needing a run; otherwise Green would take their momentum to the plate. Taylor Murphy led off in the Blue fourth, and she looked like a seasoned veteran, getting her second base hit of the afternoon. Maddy Johnson hit an infield grounder for the first out, but Taylor scampered to second base.

The second out came three pitches later and Taylor was left standing at second, her left foot on the bag. Then Melissa Hersey came up, with two outs, one on, and the game tied.

Audentes Fortuna iuvat. (I heard this on the TV show Gotham.) “Fortune favors the bold.” Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn’t.

Hersey hit a popup between first and right, and by the time it landed, Taylor was rounding third and heading home. Anything could have happened. If the ball was retrieved in time, it would have been a short throw to home for the final out.

But on Saturday, Fortune did indeed favor the bold. The ball was dropped, and Melissa made it to first, while Taylor scored the go-ahead run. And Turners took back their one-run lead.

A Dead Ball... and Emery’s Arm

AP wasn’t done. In the fifth, they got the tying run on base after a one-out fly to shallow center and a ground out which advanced the runner to second. The Preppies were in the same situation Powertown had been in earlier: two outs, one on, and the go-ahead run at the plate. The batter hit a high fly. Aly Murphy called everybody off and snagged it for the third out, and Turners retained the lead with Prep down to their last six outs.

Powertown tried to get some insurance runs in the sixth. With one out, Taylor Murphy slapped a fast line drive into the shortstop’s face to get to first. Then she slid into second off a Johnson grounder, knocking the ball loose, which allowed her and Johnson to reach safely and prevented the inning-ending double play.

But two swinging “K”s kept the score at 2-1.

Green did not go gently into that good afternoon. In their half of the sixth inning, they got men on second and third base. Emery gave a two-out base on balls. Then the next batter hit a routine grounder, but the throw to first went wild – and hit Annie Maroon of MassLive.

This led to a discussion. The crowd grew eerily quiet as the umps conferred. The ball was ruled dead, but what did that mean? Would the runners who were now standing on first and third be given a base?

Much to the relief of the True Blues, one runner was sent to second while the other was held at third. But that meant that the Cougars had the tying run at third, and the winning one on second. The next Cat had the misfortune of hitting the ball to center field and Fiske retired the side, leaving AP just three more precious outs.

Turners had a final rally in the last inning. With two outs, Arzuaga clocked a long hit but was thrown out at second as she tried to stretch the single. As the game transitioned into the last half inning, the fate of the 2017 Turners Falls softball team was in the gloves of their defense, and the arm of Peyton Emery.

Gabby Arzuaga is a leader. And like in so many previous games, she proved it by holding the ball after a pitch, standing up, and giving instructions to her teammates.

The first AP batter tried to bunt, but Loynd picked it up for the first out. When Emery caught the second batter looking, the anticipation of the crowd grew.

The next batter swung hard at Emery’s first two pitches, hitting only air. She fouled one off, and with the crowd on the edge of their seats, swung again.

When she missed, Turners Falls became the 2017 Massachusetts D-III State Champions.



Turners’ ace pitcher Peyton Emery came through again during the state final game with five strikeouts, one walk, and allowing only three hits.

Rebuilding Every Year

So why is the Turners Falls Softball team so good? That’s the question. People from all over the state have asked that for years. A school so small that junior high kids start on varsity.

Any team that wins a state title and beats the best of the best has the right to celebrate, but to win nine... *nine*... state titles is mind-boggling.

If you ask Coach Gary Mullins, Mr. Humble, it has nothing to do with him. He just quietly points to the girls on the field, celebrating yet another state championship, saying “it’s not me, it’s them.”

And what will be in store for the 2018 Blue Ladies? They’re losing their whole outfield and their catcher.

“Ah, Coach Mullins will fill the holes,” one of the girls told me recently. And I believe it. Every year is a rebuilding one for Mullins’ Tribe, and every year, they have the potential of winning another state crown.

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Congratulations State Champions!



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

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863-4373 • Congratulations!

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Great Job! Way to Go! Congrats!

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Great job, Mully and Sully!

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Greenfield Savings Bank
863-4316 • To the girls of summer, all our love and congratulations!

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Kostanski Funeral Home
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Scotty's
863-9634 • Congratulations, Girls and Coaches! Awesome job as usual!

Shanahan Construction Supply Co.
298 Avenue A, Turners Falls
863-4322 • Congratulations!

Solar Store of Greenfield
Advice, Design and Installation
772-3122 • 2 Fiske Avenue
Congratulations for a job well done!

St. Stanislaus Society
6 K Street, Turners Falls
863-0187 • Yea, Champs!

Turners Falls Pizza House
119 Avenue A, Turners Falls • 863-8000
Congratulations, Team!

BEST OF LUCK TO THE CLASS OF 2017!



DAVID HOITT PHOTOS



Above: This year's graduating seniors, clockwise from upper left: Maddy Johnson, Melissa Hersey, Gabby Arzuaga, and Jordyn Fiske.

Below left: pitcher Peyton Emery, a junior, went 22-1 this season. Head coach Gary Mullins presents a state championship ribbon to Lexi Lacey. Mullins was named the MIAA Coach of the Year. This was his 38th season.

THE ACE PITCHER....



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IMPACT from page A1

this setting serves as a parable for our evolving history, and as a metaphor for a light-handed approach to conflict resolution.”

The state Cultural Council has recently designated a section of the postindustrial and gentrifying downtown as a “cultural district,” making Montague eligible for more targeted development funding just as the grant that has sustained the RiverCulture program is discontinued.

“We’re really at a culminating point of revitalization,” town planner Walter Ramsey told the small crowd assembled for the sculpture’s unveiling.

Indeed, a pinball parlor, day spa, and yoga studio are all opening this month on the block.

“In many ways, it feels like the town needs to be unveiled,” Ramsey said, describing a “post-industrial future where we support small- and medium-sized businesses – not relying on the large paper companies, or large industries, to come in and save us.”

“Montague had a really tough

time there, for quite a few years,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz, who credited the efforts of longtime town administrator Frank Abbondanzio with the downtown turnaround. In “Scissors,” a likeness of the recently retired Abbondanzio can be seen emerging from a barber shop.

“I’ve watched this town change, and I think it’s just astounding

what’s happening here,” reported Dee Boyle-Clapp, director of the arts extension program at UMass-Amherst. Boyle-Clapp praised de Christopher, who moved to town in 2001, as “one of the first artists to come outside and make Turners Falls the location of his studio.”

“He stayed here, persistently working, watching the community around him be transformed into an

arts-friendly and increasingly vibrant place,” she added.

A member of the Expandable Brass Band dutifully provided a drum roll, and de Christopher, RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto and a couple friends yanked the sheet off the new public art. The public crowded around, admiring its detail work and warm personality.

Soon after, adults and children lined up for a Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament. Kuklewicz explained the rules: Paper, he warned, must be thrown parallel to the ground, and Scissors perpendicular, so as to avoid cheating or confusion. Two wins eliminates an opponent.

Ramsey, sculptor Jack Nelson, and police chief Chip Dodge all joined Kuklewicz as judges. The tournament moved quickly, as 32 contestants whittled down to 16, then to eight.

The final four competitors were all very youthful, a fact that electrified onlookers. Finally, Velouria Menegoni of Turners Falls and Andre Widmer of Millers Falls faced off for the grand prize of \$200.

(Second place won \$50.)

Each took a turn smashing the other’s Scissors with Rock, and the match hung in the balance. But then Widmer covered Menegoni’s Rock with Paper, and the tournament title was his.

Fifteen minutes after the tournament, the block was nearly completely empty. Shannon Ketch of K Street, listed on event posters as DJ Shannon, looked up and down the street and grinned. New Riders of the Purple Sage’s *Gypsy Cowboy* spun in lazy circles on the turntable.

“I’ll keep playing ‘til they tell me to go home,” he joked.

A couple with matching sunglasses emerged from the café-bar with matching iced coffees. Down the block, a couple younger kids took advantage of the open street to kick a soccer ball back and forth, as the driving bassline of “Death and Destruction” echoed off the old brick carriage house and tenements.

But when the hot dog warmer tripped a circuit at the gem store, the sound system abruptly shut off.



The final round:
Paper beat Rock.

Our Interview with Second-Place Winner Velouria Menegoni

MR: What street do you live on?
VM: K Street.

MR: So what was your strategy? How did you decide what to throw?
VM: I actually didn’t have one. I just picked rock, paper, or scissors.

MR: How far in advance did you pick it, before it was happening?
VM: I probably – I just chose it the moment I was, whatever you call it.

MR: Were you surprised when you started winning rounds?
VM: Yeah, I was!

MR: Have you played rock-paper-scissors in the past much?
VM: No, not usually.

MR: Do you ever use it to decide how to do things?
VM: Huh?

MR: Do you ever use it, like, to decide who does something?
VM: Yeah.

MR: That’s like the main reason people use this sport.
VM: Yeah.

MR: Well, thanks very much for your time!
VM: You’re welcome.

MR: Do you have any final comments for our readers?
VM: No.

Our Interview with First-Place Winner Andre Widmer

MR: Can I interview you real quick for the paper?
AW: OK.

MR: So, you won today – did you expect to do that?
AW: No.

MR: What was your strategy? How did you decide which one to throw at any point in time?
AW: I just go in order: scissors, paper, then rock.

MR: So you had the same rotation, over and over?
AW: Mmm-hmm.

MR: And no one noticed that? Because if someone noticed that...
AW: No one did.

MR: You knew in advance, automatically, which one you were going to do at each point.
AW: Yeah, basically.

MR: And you won. So people who were picking in the moment lost every round against you – isn’t that interesting?
AW: I don’t know, whatever. I don’t really know.

MR: Were you surprised when you started winning?
AW: Yeah, because I’m really not the type of person who’s good at this game. I’m the worst in my family.

MR: Had you guys been practicing?
AW: No.

MR: But you’d played before.
AW: Yeah – just randomly, though.

MR: Do you have any other comments for our readers?
AW: Not really...

MR: What would you say to someone who’s an aspiring rock-paper-scissors player, who wanted to get good?
AW: Just pick an order, then just keep going in the same order.

MR: Awesome.
AW: Yeah. So you don’t need to think.

MR: And I guess hope no one figures it out.
AW: Yeah.

ERVING from page A1

to be surprised that the committee would lapse. “I am in shock,” UMRC member Jeff Dubay told the board.

“What happens to our committee?” asked chair Jeanie Schermesser. “We were created to oversee redevelopment of Usher Mill... There is still Phase 2. Some of the land is not parkland, Phase 2 is the redevelopment of buildings. The committee’s purpose wasn’t to create a park, but to redevelop the mill.”

“At this stage, we’re looking at Phase 2 as an expansion of the existing park,” selectboard chair Jacob Smith replied.

He said that if they wished, the recreation commission could decide to appoint a subcommittee to work on expanding the park at the property. He noted that, in that case, the commission would post their interest in forming a subcommittee, and ask for volunteers to join it.

UMRC member Jeff Dubay rose from his seat, and his voice grew louder as he said that the work completed to date by UMRC and Schermesser had been a “massive undertaking,” and that the town should support “that kind of energy, volunteers working endlessly.” He asked, “What about the building that’s not done yet?”

Bastarache said that Dubay was “soapboxing.” Dubay left the meeting, and Bastarache called after him, “I wish you would stay and listen to rebuttal.”

Recreation commission mem-

ber Rene Tela told the remaining UMRC members, “We have not discussed dismantling your group. Rec has been very supportive of everything you’ve done. We can continue Stage 2 and Stage 3 – we really want to see it through.”

Schermesser’s voice was emotional as she told the board, “We’ve done a fantastic job. The park is really beautiful, and you just throw us aside.”

Smith said, “This exemplifies why the board might not want to...”

Schermesser broke in, “Just dismantle us after all the work we’ve done... I feel we should be appreciated. I want to work with the rec commission to get the job done.”

Smith replied that the board had expressed its appreciation for UMRC’s work “many times over,” but “it doesn’t make sense to continue the structure we have today.” He said the board was moving into a supportive role for Usher Mill. “Let Erving enjoy the park,” he said, and let the board “get feedback before spending money on other development phases.”

He added that the town was taking on other large projects. “We can only dedicate so many resources,” he said. “We have other things we need to balance.”

“The committee will have to be dissolved,” said selectboard member William Bembury. He listed upcoming capital projects, including the new library building, redevelopment of the former IP Mill, and

a wastewater project. “It’s not a reflection on anything you’ve done,” he told the committee.

Senior Housing Design

At the Monday night selectboard meeting, Carlos Nieto of Berkshire Design Group presented the results of the existing conditions study for the town-owned properties near Erving Elementary School and the senior and community center.

Nieto told the board that there are constraints to building at these properties: the terrain is steep, and there are intermittent streams and river buffer zones. However, he identified two developable areas – one 3.8-acre area along Route 2, and one of 5.4 acres northwest of the senior and community center. The smaller area is zoned “central village,” where multi-family residences are allowed, and the larger one “rural residential,” which allows only single-family residences.

Senior housing committee member Jacqueline Boyden said her committee is working toward a development of 40 units. She said they had identified a need for at least 30 units, and that adding ten more would give the project more points toward federal tax credits, making it more appealing to developers.

Nieto provided several options for a senior housing project: use of the smaller lot, where the zoning would allow up to four buildings of four units each; use of the larger one, where the zoning would allow

only six to eight units; a “friendly 40B” development controlled by the town; or using the “municipal uses not covered elsewhere” catch-all clause in the town’s zoning by-laws to approve a senior housing development.

According to the Massachusetts Office of Housing and Economic Development, Chapter 40B is a state statute that enables the local zoning board of appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20 to 25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions.

Initial reactions from board members indicated that a “friendly 40B” process was the most appealing option.

The owner’s project manager, Bruce Hunter, said that the Berkshire Design Group report was very thorough and provided the necessary information for the next step – a feasibility study. “The process worked very well,” he said. Hunter told the board that \$15,000 was available in the housing revolving loan fund to study feasibility.

“I look forward to the next step,” Smith told him.

Borrowing \$2.23 Million

Clark Rowell of Unibank Fiscal Advisory Services, the town’s financial advisor, presented the options for borrowing the \$2.23 million for the new library construction. He said the town could choose either level principal and

declining interest, with declining annual payment amounts, or level debt service, with all annual payments essentially the same.

The level debt service option would make budgeting easier, but cost more in interest payments. Rowell also outlined alternative bond structures with ten-, fifteen-, and twenty-year terms.

Smith said he thought Erving would be most interested in the method with the lowest interest payments, but that the board would not make any decisions on financing for a while. “This is a lot to absorb in nine minutes,” he said when Rowell’s presentation ended. “Borrowing is not a familiar thing for us.”

The board asked Rowell to return in July with additional information.

Other Business

The board re-appointed David Brule, Beth Bazler, Carol Gregory, and Cyd Scott to the conservation commission. Peter Sanders was appointed to fill the vacancy created when Laura Hebert asked to be an alternate rather than a regular member of the commission.

Fire chief Philip Wonkka was appointed to a three-year term as fire chief.

On the unanimous recommendation from the hiring committee, the board approved hiring Rebecca Walsh as a full-time custodian for town buildings.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

department of public works, but this was found to place undue stress on DPW staff, as well as on the department’s budget. In 2009, the town began contracting with Republic Services, an Arizona-based company described as “the second largest provider of non-hazardous solid waste collection, transfer, disposal, recycling and energy services in the United States.”

“Republic has generally provided excellent consistency of service,” town administrator Steve Ellis reported. “There have been more issues recently. We wanted to let the community know that the town is very engaged with Republic in identifying the issues, and remedying those issues.”

Ellis paraphrased a letter from Republic municipal services manager Dan Higgins, summarizing the causes of the “services issues” and the proposed solutions.

Higgins began by citing “various uncommon truck issues,” which Ellis interpreted as meaning “they had equipment failures with the trucks.” Ellis said he was told the company was buying three new vehicles for the area which will allow them to retire some of the “problematic vehicles.”

Secondly, Ellis noted, Montague is on a four-day weekly pickup schedule, which makes individual routes longer. “That means they need to send out bigger trucks,” he said, “so there are fewer vehicles that they can deploy to this area.” Recent state regulations place greater limits on the number of hours each day drivers can work, “so at some point in the day, they have to stop picking up trash.”

Finally, pick-ups have encountered delays due to road construction, which has required altering existing routes.

Republic has asked the town to move to a five-day per week schedule, with limits on the number of holidays observed. Ellis suggested six per year. “We’ll be coming [to the board] with contract amendment that reflects this in the near future,” he said. “Perhaps in the month of August.”

PRIDE from page A1

with stories, hope, and personal perspective to share.

Many local artists and musicians will also perform, including a drum ensemble and belly dancers. There will be “sad country songs” from the Sad Bastards, high-energy punk from She Said, and even a last-minute addition of the out-of-town country folk band My Gay Banjo.

And for those who can’t attend the rally, or simply want to keep the party going, there will more music and dancing at “Glitter Bomb,” a Pride afterparty held at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center, in the Arts Block, from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. Performers include Solo Sexx, Conversion Therapy, DJ Fern, and DJ Sweetfreak.

Organizers and participants in this weekend’s march stand in solidarity with other Pride marches all over the country, using the public platform Pride provides to stress the importance of unity and equality in the LGBTQ community and beyond.

The Equality March for Unity and Pride, an offshoot of the National Pride March, was held June 11 in over 100 American cities and abroad. The Equality March’s website states that its mission this year was to “mobiliz[e] LGBTQ+ communities, our loved ones and our al-

“I left the conversations with Republic very much reassured that they are aware of the problem,” Ellis concluded. “They are accepting responsibility for the issues, and that we have good communication and a good strategy for resolving the problems moving forward.”

In the meantime, he said, residents should continue to contact the town when they encounter problems with the service.

Summer Exercise

Parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz announced that the town would be holding three “night skates” at the skateboard park this summer. The first was scheduled to be held Wednesday, June 21, between 6 and 10 p.m., with music from 7 to 8 p.m. Dobosz was before the board to request a one-day entertainment license.

Free hamburgers and hot dogs – “while they last,” Dobosz stressed – have been donated by Hubie’s Tavern. Portable lights have been provided by the Franklin County House of Correction. Dobosz said the second night skate has been scheduled for July 29, while the date of the third has not been determined.

July 29 will also be the date of a bicycle tour organized by Rivers Edge LLC. The ride will begin at Unity Park. Gay Brier from Rivers Edge came before the board to request the use of land from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. The request was granted.

This is the second year for the tour, which is called the “River Valley Ice Cream Ride.” As the name implies, there is an ice cream motif: the “Kiddie Scoop” route follows the Turners Falls bike path; the Single Scoop travels to Sunderland and back to Unity; while the “Double Scoop” travels north to Northfield, back through Montague and then down to Sunderland – a total of fifty miles, according to Brier.

The ride will raise funds for Turners Falls RiverCulture, for Community Involved in Sustainable Agriculture (CISA), and for MassBike Pioneer Valley.

Other Business

The board endorsed a commen-

dation from police chief Chip Dodge to sergeant James Deary, patrolman Jacob Lapean, and dispatcher Kyle Walker. Walker had dispatched Deary and Lapean to the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, where a man was leaning precariously over the railing. The officers prevented what appeared to be a suicide attempt, and then took the man to Baystate Franklin Medical Center “so he could receive the appropriate services he required.”

The board approved a request by RiverCulture director Suzanne Lomanto for the use of public property on First Street for the annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival in August, as well as an agreement with First-Light Hydo Generating Company for the use of their adjoining property on the Connecticut River.

The board approved a change of manager for the bar at the Turners Falls Rod and Gun Club.

The board approved an “internet technology consulting contract” of \$34,000 per year with Moody Consulting, and disbursed funds for consulting on the Avenue A/Peskeompskut Pak Lighting Project to Berkshire Design Inc.

The board approved a request by the town treasurer to create credit cards for certain municipal purchases to a group of town employees. These employees, all department heads, have been using their own credit cards for certain town expenses, then getting reimbursed.

The board executed a \$17,000 grant received under the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program. The grant is designed to develop strategies to address problems caused by global warming.

Ellis gave an update on the University of Massachusetts Clean Energy Extension Program.

Finally, the board endorsed a statement commending Greenfield Savings Bank on the fiftieth anniversary of its merger with the Crocker Institution for Savings.

After a very long agenda that was completed in well under an hour, the board retired to an executive session to discuss a grievance involving a highway department employee. The next scheduled meeting will be on Monday, June 26.





To our Dear Friends,
And wonderful neighbors —

A sad note —

Our Hank, cattle dog extraordinaire,
has left the streets of Turners Falls and our home
for the canine world beyond.
His death took place on June 16, 2017.

We thank this wonderful village for taking care of Hank —
Making sure he got home — and home he always came,
Usually having made a new friend or two along the way.

Hank, a friend to all,
conscientious objector to the leash law,
A caring companion, truly a gift.

Thanks for the love, Jack and Eileen



GMRSD from page A1

community; narrowing those down by the criteria the committee set forth last month; and making a final choice.

“The community that we have – if we find the right thing, these folks will rally around it,” Shawn Hubert said. “The idea being, is that now we have to convince the 75% of the people who weren’t on board that this is the way to go.”

“I don’t know if us making that choice is going to [do that],” he added.

“What I would really like to see is the students have the final say in this,” said Christina Postera. “I feel like if the students rally around it, their parents will rally around it, and the town will rally around it.”

“I chose to move here,” member Heather Katsoulis said, “and it’s because of the sense of community that I had experienced [here].... I want to get back there so badly, and I feel really badly that people are hurt, and I understand that.”

“I’d like us to do the best we can with going into it with an open mind,” she continued, “thinking it’s going to be a positive process.”

Hubert, also elected last month, suggested that the entire question could just be postponed a year, so the committee could focus on other problems. “We can go a year without a logo,” he said. “The papers can call us whatever they want.”

But his proposal to put the issue on the back burner found little traction among his colleagues, who argued that they had set the criteria by which team name ideas would be vetted, so another group should be able to carry out the bulk of the work.

Though the committee discussed forming a “taskforce” comprised of various “stakeholders” to lead the process, they also worried that the composition of such a group could be the subject of renewed hostility.

“I just worry that this taskforce – it’s going to be on a volunteer basis, and so you’re going to get people that want the change and want to move forward, and then you’re going to get that backlash of ‘it’s not our voice, because we didn’t ever want this’,” Damkoehler said.

“And that’s why I really feel like

it should be in the students’ hands, and I feel like there should be faculty involved, to use it as a learning tool.”

Damkoehler also said she worried about “giving too much power to people that don’t have vested interest in” the district’s schools.

Members considered handing responsibility over to the student government outright, but then worried whether students would have willing and able faculty supervision, in light of advisor Chani Craig’s announced departure from the district, as well as the logistics of mandating such a project for outside classroom time.

“If you could find someone over the summer who wants to take it on,” member Mike Langknecht told superintendent Michael Sullivan, “maybe we could come back and propose a process.”

The committee was ultimately unsure whether, or how, to include local voices beyond the schools. “Maybe the students are the ones that ask for input from the community,” suggested Lesley Cogswell. “That would be a huge learning experience.”

Postera said that Amherst College, which recently stopped using “Lord Jeff” and took a year to settle on the “Mammoths,” had harvested thousands of suggestions, which amounted to 588 “unique entries.” A committee at that school winnowed them down to 30, and the top five went to a vote of students, faculty and staff.

Langknecht recommended proposals be collected first, and then the rest of the process designed based on how many proposals are received. Most members agreed that the school committee would need to confirm at some point that a final list of name ideas all meet its criteria.

No final decisions were made, though the committee indicated it is seeking public input on the procedure, as well as suggestions for the team name, which it will probably hand over to some other entity in the fall.

The next regular meeting of the Gill-Montague regional school committee will be held Tuesday, June 27 at the Turners Falls High School.



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DRAMA from page A1

staging of *Legally Blonde* in sixth grade. I went to every show, and knew every song by the end of it. In the last couple of years I have performed in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and in the past year, *The Lion King Jr.* I now have no clue what I would do without the musical.

Participating in something like a school musical production is one of the best feelings in the world. You get to show your peers and community how much time and effort you put into it. No matter what part you get, you are accepted and belong to the drama family.

Our director, Kayla Roth, puts so much work and effort into the shows. Mr. Chappell, our arts teacher, and many of his students make the costumes or any props needed. This year, in *The Lion King Jr.*, his video classes made every mask for all the characters.

In the beginning, we stay at the school to meet our fellow cast members and read through the show. Leads start to memorize their lines and stay after for help. Everybody, from ensemble to leads, learns choreography. Depending on your role, students put two hours of rehearsing in every day. The week before the show we are here until 9 or 10 at night running through the show.

Our costumes and props are all made by either our cast or anybody who volunteers to do it. All of our sets are painted by cast members. Kayla Roth said, “The theater program here at Turners is special, I think. Turners is a small school, so that makes our numbers small. We have a high amount of girls, and two to three boys who join – so any boys at Turners please join!”

“We make it work every time, though. I love working with all the students, they know they need to come into rehearsal ready to work but we have fun while doing it.”

By the end of the show, we never want it to end. Some people cry, and some people take a deep breath and say “until next year.” It’s hard to leave a group that you have spent so much time with, every day. Now we see each other in the hallways on occasion and greet each other with a big smile and a line from the recent musical, in true “musical nerd” fashion.

At the end of each musical, we “go on strike,” which is when we clean everything up – the stage, the props, the costumes, everything. For some people this is the saddest day of it all. For others, it’s a relief, knowing we got through another amazing musical at TFHS. After it all, we have one last hooray at our cast party where we sign shirts and bowl, and just have fun.

Our musicals are truly one of the best experiences any student could have in their time at school. The production for next year is still being developed, but we hope you come out next winter to enjoy the experience of a live musical at our beautiful stage and auditorium at TFHS.

Lydia Wright is a 9th grade student at Turners Falls High School. This article was originally written as an assignment in Mr. Smith’s Current Events class.



Mutton & Mead Medieval Festival

June 24th & 25th

210 Turners Falls Road, Turners Falls, MA

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Our Shire’s beloved **Mutton & Mead Tavern & Inne** will be hosting its annual festival for your merriment. Enjoy the realm’s finest entertainers. Witness the daring spectacle of knights jousting. Stroll the enchanted paths of Sherwood Forest, encountering faeries, pixies, and wood sprites. Shop the most exotic of merchants and feast on the kingdom’s finest victuals, meads, and ales!

Bring Non-Perishable Food items in exchange for \$1 Festival Tokens! (Limit 3 per ticket)

MuttonAndMead.org

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Worn-Out, Broken Items Get a New Life



A “murderer’s row” of sewing machine operators are ready to stitch and repair.

By **GEORGE BRACE**

FLORENCE – The Northampton DPW’s ReUse committee held their first Repair Workshop at Smith Vocational high school earlier this month, and judging by the number of volunteer fixers, attendees, smiles, and broken items that were fixed, it was a major success. The event was organized and supported by the DPW and ReUse committee, with additional support coming from the Massachusetts EPA, local businesses, and a large number of volunteers.

These workshops have been growing in popularity around the country and serve multiple valuable purposes. The ReUse committee outlined the benefits and some of the thinking behind community repair in their press release:

“Community repair is a sharing economy movement which promotes repair rather than replacement of durable household items. The noble act of repair, once familiar to older generations, lost popularity as inexpensive imported household goods became available in the U.S. We’ve developed unsustainable dispose and replace habits that waste Earth’s

finite resources and produce vast amounts of trash. In addition to resource conservation, public awareness of repair promotes demand for repair skills, services and parts, enhancing the vitality of our local economy.”

Upon arriving at the event, the first thing I saw was a mobile bike repair station located in the parking lot, staffed by the owners of Speed and Sprocket Bikes. People who came with bike problems – and there were many – could have stopped here and gone no further if all they wanted was to get their bike fixed, but most if not all of them also went inside to look around.

When entering the workshop, the first step in getting something fixed was to check in at a triage table. DPW workers in their recognizable orange garb signed people in and led them to the repair station appropriate to their particular issue.

These stations were staffed by volunteers with skills in sewing, gluing, chair repair, electronics, electrical repairs, computers, printers, durable household items, and sharpening. They all saw plenty of activity. Not everything that people brought in was fixable, but the vast majority of items got a new lease on life.

Also just inside the front door was the sharpening station, manned by volunteer Ben Goldberg. He was a busy man, as all the repairers were, but was clearly enjoying his work.

In speaking with him, I experienced another benefit of the workshop: learning. I do a bit of sharpening myself, and had some questions for which he provided helpful answers and advice. You can learn a lot from books and the internet, but it is often the case that there is no substitute for a face-to-face meeting with a human being with a lot of experience. The workshop provided this in spades.

After talking with Ben, I spoke briefly with Susan Waite of the ReUse committee, the lead organizer of the event. She was quite busy but took the time to talk about a few things.

As we began talking one of the first things she mentioned was the old Yankee saying, “Use it up, wear it out, make do, or do without,” and how it was unfortunate that over time the positive aspects of that mentality had withered away to a great extent in favor of a cheap goods, throwaway economy which is

see **REPAIR** page B5



By **LESLIE BROWN**

MONTAGUE CITY – If four days in the nineties didn’t make it summer, the calendar made it official on June 21, the longest day or the summer solstice.

Spring ended on an odd note of weather: five inches of rain which left the garden soggy, followed by four days of unusual heat. The end result was over-watering followed by an oven-like atmosphere.

Sensitive plants like the tomatoes and the basil expressed their lack of appreciation with yellowing lower leaves, which then acquired sun spots or sunburn.

The heat-lovers, like the corn and green beans, responded with accelerated germination and exponential growth. We’ve never seen potato plants so green, tall or vigorous. We’ll either have a bumper crop of fingerlings, or create plants which are all foliage and little fruit.

We’ve enjoyed a long and tasty asparagus season. Now

THE GARDENER’S COMPANION

True Summer

the stalks are going to fern so as to build up the roots for next year’s crop. There has been a small influx of asparagus beetles, but nothing that can’t be handled with hand picking.

What an “on” year for flowering shrubs! Everything is blooming bodaciously.

We’ve enjoyed the magnolia, rhododendron, beauty bush and azalea. Now the peonies are fading with the heat, but we have blooms on the honeysuckle vine and the roses seem to be running a competition. Both beach and shrub roses carry a heavy bouquet of fragrant blooms which scents the whole yard and draws the bees and butterflies.

All of this makes up for the loss of the delicate colors and shapes of spring.

Summer joys: wearing fewer clothes, kayaking at Wickett Pond, swimming at the lake at the end of the day. Our favorite vegetables and fruits, much of them fresh from the garden. The roses. Cooking outside and sitting around the fire pit. Watching the bats and the swifts in the sky at dusk. Then, the bright stars and constellations

picking out.

Summer nuisances: ticks and biting insects; hot and humid weather.

When we were small, we loved this season for its later bedtimes; for running in the near-dark with open jars, scooping up fire flies and watching them blink until it was time to let them go; for wading in the icy creek; for ice cream dripping on bare toes and for fishing with safety pins.

Now I indulge in an hour of uninterrupted reading at siesta time and then a quick nap on the chaise lounge before returning to the demands of yard and garden.

The rain and heat have brought the lawn to new heights, and it demands mowing once a week.

The bittersweet is everywhere. It needs to be clipped out of the rose bushes before it drags their branches to the ground as it grasps and weaves itself towards the sun. We have not found a way to eradicate this nuisance plant, except by use of toxic sprays which we shun.

Speaking of pests, we see **GARDEN** page B2

Sewing Machines I Have Known

By **NINA ROSSI**

TURNERS FALLS – My introduction to sewing machines began in grade school, when my mother insisted that I learn to operate her prized 1954 Modern Age electric machine. I was already avidly doing cross stitch and other embroidery and crewel work; the ink and paint stained rug in my bedroom fairly bristled with dropped needles and pins.

My first sewing project was a very simple pillowcase, just a rectangle with one end open, but a good project to learn how to take a corner, lifting the foot with the needle in the fabric and turning the material, and to get a feel for driving the super highway of straight seams.

The foot accelerator unleashed table-rattling surges of power, the speed of which threatened to catch my fingers under the foot and needle or to cause me to veer far over the 5/8-inch seam allowance. The seam allowance was marked with tiny dots made by running a tool with a notched wheel along the pattern markings after placing a carbon paper between pattern and fabric. I don’t think people bother to do that anymore, but that was how I was shown to do it in the beginning.

My first seams were very crooked, and I ripped out many stitches straightening them out. Not fun.

It took practice to control the pressure on the pedal. I stumbled through another project to make a blue jumper, then I made several other things as I gained more mastery: zippered pillow covers, a shoulder bag, and by the time I was going into seventh grade, a cushion cover for my window seat that had cording going around the sides.

At that point, I was able to guide the fabric under the needle while pressing the pedal to the metal, making the kind of thundering noise that I fell asleep to so often while my mother

stayed up late to make curtains, bedspreads, tablecloths and clothing for our household.

In those days, yardage was relatively inexpensive compared to buying ready-made clothing or household goods. Not so much these days, with textiles averaging about 11 dollars a yard. A shirt or skirt can be two yards, a dress or pants three or more, making it easy to find a used or new bargain that will beat the price of making one, especially if you consider your labor into the equation.



The 1950s-era sewing machine the author’s mother used for most of her life.

What Price Style?

Of course, sometimes thrift is not the goal. Creating something original, rather than searching for a product to match your vision, motivates many sewers. My mother was a woman of style who needed to create her own clothing and decorate her home from scratch. She chose things carefully and with flair.

Her Modern Age sewing machine was a prized possession, her first major purchase after marrying my father and costing a whopping two hundred dollars in 1954. It was a see **SEWING** page B4

Karaoke Summer Tour, Part II: “A Rose at the Voo”



The first stop on our reporter’s karaoke tour.

By **BEVERLY ANN FORBES-ALLARD**

TURNERS FALLS – The Rendezvous, or the Voo, is a local watering hole located in downtown Turners Falls. Coming over the bridge from Gill, you take a left at the lights on Third Street. If you are headed north, you take a right on Third Street, and go to number seventy-eight on the right side.

There is parking on the street, as well as a large parking lot, with handicap spots, just before the Voo building on the right. As you pull into the lot you will see the sky-blue wall of the building with its yellow trim. When you walk to the front of the facility, you will be greeted by a grey-brown barn board exterior, with yellow trim and blue awnings. There is a concrete ramp with wrought iron railings, and a wood deck with tables and chairs for outside dining.

As you enter the long, oblong building

there is a long bar on the left, with a highly glossed and shiny wood top that is almost reflective in its polished glory. There are bar stools with green seats and glass front display cases behind the bar, with bottles of liquor inside.

In between the display cases is a large chalkboard with a list of specialty draft beers, and to the left is a wall color television with a sports channel playing. On the right side of the room is a row of green-topped tables and chairs that sit four to six customers, and there are benches along the outside wall that serve the wall side of the tables.

If you look upward there is a painted white antique tin ceiling, and looking down you see wood-grained floors. The wall decorations change their theme from month to month, with framed pictures or abstract watercolors in some of the displays.

On the Sunday night that I visit, there is a Karaoke DJ booth set up on the left side at the rear, with two television monitors set up in the middle back to back: one for the singers to follow, and one for the patrons to watch.

There are a couple of microphones behind the monitors for the singers to use, and flashing colored lights for effect. To the right sits a table with 4-inch-thick song books, song list slips for singers, and a box of pencils to fill out the slips.

As more singers arrive, they get a drink of their choice at the bar and pick up a song book and slips and a pencil, and grab a seat at a table or bar to fill out the slips with their favorite songs.

These slips are then submitted to the DJ Steve of TNT Productions, who rotates the singers in the order they submitted their slips.

Steve calls each singer up to the mic, and plays their song choices, as the rotation continues over the course of the evening.

see **KARAOKE** page B8

Pet of the Week

What My Foster Said About Me:
“Cute, Little, Friendly, Happy,
Furfect! This little guy will steal
your heart immediately!

Toby is easy to walk, loves to
be hugged and should have no

problem finding a home quickly!”

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



“TOBY”

Senior Center Activities JUNE 26 TO 30

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 6/26

Noon Pot Luck and Bingo
1 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday 6/27

9:30 a.m. Tech Tutoring
10:30 a.m. Chair Yoga
Wednesday 6/28

9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach
12:30 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 6/29

9 a.m. Tai Chi
10:15 a.m. Mindful Movement
1 p.m. Cards & Games
Friday 6/30

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
Better, Senior Center Director, at
(413) 423-3649. Transportation can
be provided for meals, shopping, or
medical necessity.

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

Monday 6/26
9:30 a.m. Healthy Bones, Balance
10:30 a.m. Tai Chi

Tuesday 6/27
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance
11:30 a.m. Homemade Lunch

Wednesday 6/28
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga

12:15 p.m. Bingo, Snacks, Laughs
Thursday 6/29

8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
12:30 p.m. Crafty Seniors

Friday 6/30
9 a.m. Walking; Quilting
9:30 a.m. Bowling; Food City

11:30 a.m. Lunch Outing
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.

GARDEN from page B1

seem to have managed a balance
of living with the deer, groundhog,
rabbits and ubiquitous squirrels
which share our space. Some low-
level fencing seems to have done the
trick, although I did look up from
my book one day last week to see
a chubby woodchuck ambling my
way as if to pay a visit. I shrieked
and rapped my plastic tea bottle on
my hand and he took off.

I got up quickly and poured
refreshers of castor oil into all

the holes I could find. Maybe the
heavy rains washed out the scent a
bit. To make doubly sure of keep-
ing our woodland friends out of
the garden, I'll hang some strips of
cloth saturated in ammonia around
on the top of the fencing. It only
seems to need a strip every couple
of feet to make the garden unat-
tractive to these visitors.

Meanwhile, we have yet to see
the Japanese beetles and have killed
just a few Gypsy Moth caterpil-
lars. Apparently in parts of our state

people have, like Rhode Islanders,
already wrapped tree trunks with
sticky tape in advance of another
tough season of defoliation. We
hope this will not happen again.

Summer: a love-hate season. We
much prefer the delicacies of spring
and fall. Still, without summer we'd
have no garden of fresh food and
beautiful flowers.

Be like Ferdinand the bull and
don't forget to smell the roses.
Breathe in deeply.

Happy Gardening!



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Hello out there from the team
here at MCTV! This week, support
Turners Falls softball Division III
team by watching a replay of their
face-off with Hopedale in the State
Semi-finals earlier this month. It's
available now on our website, and
on our very own Channel 17.

Something going on you think
others would like to see? Get in
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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here's the way it was June 21,
2007: News from the Montague
Reporter's archive.*

G-M Budget Impasse

“I don't know any district that's
been pushed to the limit we're at
now,” said Gill-Montague school
superintendent Kenneth Rocke.
“This is a failed budget.”

Rocke, twelve days into his tenure
as interim school superintendent, dis-
cussed possible next steps for getting
an '08 school budget approved with
a roomful of selectboard, finance
committee, and school committee
members from the towns of Gill and
Montague on Tuesday night.

“I'm hopeful we can build a
spirit of cooperation to get through
what is clearly going to be a diffi-
cult process to reach a solution we
can all live with,” said Rocke.

He said he had been in close
touch with officials from the state
Department of Education in the
last few days, including the com-
missioner of education, David
Driscoll. “If we do not have a bud-
get agreed upon by July 1,” Rocke
said, Driscoll will reach a determi-
nation “based on last year's bud-
get, what a one-twelfth budget will
amount to,” for the Gill-Montague
schools to operate on a month-by-
month basis until a new budget can
be approved.

Rocke said it will be up to the
commissioner to decide whether a
one-twelfth budget should include
last year's G-M debt payments
for the high school and middle
school renovation, even though
most of that debt has been retired.

If it does, Rocke said, operating
the schools on a one-twelfth bud-
get would result in a total operat-
ing budget only \$99,000 less than
the amount the schools have most
recently certified for the coming
year: \$16,534,401.

Meanwhile, the town meetings
in Gill and Montague have ap-
proved school assessments that
would leave a considerably larger
gap: \$863,421. When the state
steps in to authorize a one-twelfth
budget, the commissioner of edu-
cation has considerable statutory
power to force the towns to make
up the difference.

Problem Properties

Montague building inspector
David Jensen offered updates on
three problem properties in Turn-
ers Falls on Wednesday.

Jensen said the selectboard
had authorized the expenditure of
\$5,900 in town funds to repair the
sprinkler system at the Strathmore
Mill, and a contractor has been
hired. “Building 11 has a work-
ing sprinkler system now,” Jensen
said, “and if they stay on schedule,
Building 1 should have a working
sprinkler system by the end of the
work day today.” These are the two
abutting buildings that received ex-
tensive damage during the course
of the May 26 fire that took down
Building 10.

Jensen said the selectboard has
been apprised of the need to expend
town funds to repair and reactivate
the electrical and fire alarm systems
at the complex. Although owner
Jerry Jones had been ordered by a

judge to undertake repairs to these
systems at his own expense, Jones
pled indigence.

“We could argue with him for
months about whether he can do
the work,” said Jensen. But mean-
while, the mill is a present fire risk,
filled with warehoused rolls of pa-
per on many floors, and so the town
is moving forward to reactivate the
safety systems at taxpayer expense.

Turning to the former Railroad
Salvage building on the Patch,
where a partial collapse of a wall
led to the closure last year of Pow-
er Street – one of only two routes
to the dense residential area – Jen-
sen said owner Gary Kosuda was
“behind on his schedule” for per-
forming tasks he had agreed to on
that property.

These include strengthening the
safety fence, installing barbed wire
on the fence, bringing in a struc-
tural engineer to assess the stabili-
ty of the remaining walls, and re-
moving debris.

Over at 181 Avenue A, across
from the post office, Belchertown
developer Mark Kislyuk has one
more week to return the site of
his planned three-story mixed use
apartment building to a level grade.
Jensen ordered a stop work order
on that project due to an improp-
erly constructed foundation wall in
the summer of 2005, and the site
has been an eyesore and attractive
nuisance since.

After failing to appear in court
hearings about his property six times
in a row, Kislyuk was arrested on a
default warrant at his Belchertown
address and brought into housing
court in Greenfield on May 31.

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ELEVEN CDS FOR ELEVEN BUCKS

1. The Posies, *Amazing Disgrace* (1996)

By IVAN USSACH

Tiring of errands and desiring inspiration, I popped into Greenfield’s John Doe, Jr. Used Records to bathe in sounds somewhat obscure and maybe find a quick bargain CD to enjoy while driving. As racks of vinyl beckoned, a friendly voice said, “Check out the new huge discount section, everything’s a dollar.”

Scoring “new” music for a buck or two appealed, so I dived in.

At first the sensation is not unlike being underwater. Sloshing through the bins feels a bit murky, and you don’t know when, even if, something will snap into focus. Still, the chances for discovery are good.

I didn’t have to wait long before encountering “Life on the Mississippi” – film scores composed by William Perry for six Mark Twain stories featured on PBS. A few of the stories being not well-known, the CD booklet alone was worth the price.

When a gem slipped into my hands shortly after, I must have gasped: 20 hits penned by the Holland-Dozier-Holland team, almost half recorded by the Supremes, with Marvin Gaye, the Four Tops and the like for the balance. Baby I Need Your Loving!

Well, you can see where this is going. My searching landed 11 CDs – all sorts of music – for as many dollars. Back inside my car, a random snatch from the bag provided the initial selection. Of course it was the only one I was completely unfamiliar with. I popped it in.

1. The Posies, *Amazing Disgrace*

I made it through the entire disc without hitting the “next” button, which says something. In brief: grunge-tinged power pop with some



sharp moments of musical muscle; melodic, and just edgy enough to hold my attention.

Second time through, yeah, the songs are solidly written, played and recorded. Not so easily done: try writing a good song yourself, poppy or not.

So, The Posies: Were they big for awhile? The name sounds vaguely familiar. Four young guys, one with pink hair, are pictured on the CD booklet, caught playing in what could be an uncle’s basement.

I just now noticed the “parental advisory - explicit lyrics” label. Al-right, lyrics? Nothing unforgettable here. Perhaps this line from “Ontario” sums it up: “When I asked you, ‘Why Ontario?’ You said, ‘It sounds good on the radio.’”

Having managed to be reference-free so far, I’ll end with a mention of “There Has To Be An Upside: The Posies’ *Amazing Disgrace Turns 20*,” by Sam Lambeth, posted July 14, 2016 to *louderthanwar.com*. Insight galore, if you want it.

Lambeth’s opening line: “Dismiss The Posies as ‘power pop’ at your peril.” Later: “This, the band’s fourth record, occupies a curious place in a curious catalogue.”

And they’re still at it!

What will next week bring? Oh, joy!

THEATER REVIEW

The Shad Ladder Radio Hour

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

The Shad Ladder Radio Hour was held at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls on June 15. This event consisted of music, acting, and writing of a local nature from a group of people called the Plaid Shad Players.

It was sort of set up like an actual radio show that was done in the 1930s. Several microphones were on the stage, and people read from scripts they had. That is how I believe they were done on the radio back then. The hour had a theme to its name, called “Transitions.”

A special guest was also part of it, and his name was Jon Shina. He was the show’s musical guest. He played some instrument that made sound effects. One sound was like waves. Another sounded like bird calls. John sings all right, and I believe he was more or less singing a folk song. It was an interesting song to hear.

John played his instrument again and this time it sounded like he was playing a keyboard and a drum. He did this type of song twice.

A woman read a story about a kid spending time with her dad after a divorce. The story sounded very realistic. Like a teenager was really telling this story. It was called “Hitting Bottom.” It just felt like a true story – one that held my attention very well when being read.

They had a commercial in there, and one person did the job of reading

the commercial, while the others did the job of making the sounds one might hear in the ad instead of using objects to make those sounds. It was a nice effort.

A couple more people acted out another ad during the hour also. They also did a skit where a morning talk show was being done. That was realistic too.

There was a news broadcast skit, involving a wedding being sort of crashed by animals. People playing characters in this acted very well. The broadcast skit had a very nice offbeat quality to it.

Another story, called “The Four Kisses,” was read and it was about someone who had lost a loved one. That one was also really realistic – like there was a real person talking about losing a loved one. It was moving, and a very touching story to hear.

People also did poetry readings during the hour. The second person’s reading held my attention better than the first one. (I couldn’t really understand what the first reader was saying.)

The people who were doing the readings, and the acting, weren’t sub par. They acted and read well.

It’s too bad more people weren’t in the audience. With the job they did performing, they deserved more people being there. Hopefully better luck next time!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Rumble At Cabot Camp; Foul Odor On Fifth; Belligerent Drone Pilot; Game Day Fireworks; Fox; Cat; Deer; Bird; Coyote; Pokemon; Dog

Sunday, 6/11

7:18 p.m. Caller upset that her neighbors’ special needs foster child is being loud and caller can’t enjoy being outdoors. Advised of options.

9:56 p.m. Officer came upon disturbance involving a few male parties on Bridge Street. Peace restored within 30 seconds.

Monday, 6/12

8:23 a.m. 911 call for code red, possible fire at Farren Care Center. Second 911 caller reporting smoke coming from a vent in the room, but no flames. Confirmed evacuation in progress. TFFD determined the smoke was coming from a burnt motor; no active fire. TFFD remaining on scene for ventilation.

9:05 a.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road requesting to speak with animal control officer re: a fox that has been in her yard. ACO advised.

2:57 p.m. Message left in general mailbox; report of sick-looking cat on Fourth Street.

4:38 p.m. Caller reporting a deer carcass along the tree line on Ivy Street. DPW notified.

5:02 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that someone broke into his car last night and \$40 is missing. No answer on call back; message left.

7:11 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a large fight had just taken place at Cabot Camp on East Mineral Road. Caller states that a vehicle just left with some kids that were involved. Vehicles that may have been involved stopped by officers. Report from Erving PD of a possibly involved vehicle. Report taken.

Tuesday, 6/13

6:35 a.m. Anonymous caller is in the parking lot in front of Farren Care Center and reports that two male parties are verbally and physically fighting. Caller heard one of them yell that he had a knife and to stop fighting him. Caller states that parties are now walking away in the direction of Cumberland Farms. Officer located parties; peace restored.

8:26 a.m. Caller reports that his tire is flat; believes someone vandalized it overnight. Vehicle is parked in the alley between Third and Fourth streets. Yesterday, caller reported that someone stole money from his vehicle. Advised of options.

1:08 p.m. Caller requesting ACO for a baby bird that fell out of its nest and is lying on hot pave-

ment. ACO advised.

Wednesday, 6/14

12:56 a.m. Officer out with suspicious vehicle whose door is open. Camper on back had two occupants; they were woken to secure vehicle. Officers clear.

6:51 a.m. Caller from Turnpike Road reporting that he has seen, over the last four days, a wild dog, possibly a coyote, with what appeared to be cats and other small animals in its mouth. Caller reporting in case anyone is missing a small animal.

10:17 a.m. Officer out on Fifth Street to investigate a strong, foul odor.

3:42 p.m. Caller from High Street reporting that 5 or 6 younger individuals began to verbally abuse him and one spit in his face. Involved parties located. Report taken.

4:17 p.m. Owner of vacant Third Street building has received multiple reports that someone is sleeping and drinking on the back porch at night; requesting that officers keep an eye out and, if they find anyone there, advise them that they cannot be there and move them along.

6:36 p.m. Caller at skatepark reporting that a white pickup with New Hampshire plates towing a jetski is flying a drone in the area. When caller approached party, he became belligerent and said he can fly the drone where he wants. Party is taking off toward Third and L in the vehicle. Officer advised; unable to locate.

8:23 p.m. Caller from Alice Street reporting that three males and one female are going through items in the junkyard, and it doesn’t appear that they should be there. Officers en route; unable to locate. No signs of forced entry.

10:31 p.m. Caller from Park Street states that a drone is flying over her house; she would like to know if this is legal or not.

Thursday, 6/15

2:17 a.m. Officer out checking on suspicious vehicle at skatepark. Operator was playing Pokemon.

6:51 p.m. Caller reporting two males on an ATV riding up and down the street in the area of Griswold and Davis streets. Officer in area. Parties are riding ATV on their property. Officer advised parties to remain on the property and out of the road.

Friday, 6/16

2:30 p.m. Report of broken glass in road at Fourth and L streets. Caller advises that a group is congregating by a green house near the glass. Caller did not see how the glass got there but speculated that someone in the group may have thrown the bottle earlier in the day. Officer on scene. No glass in area.

3:07 p.m. Officer reporting hit and run in parking lot at Franklin County Technical School; requesting another unit. Report taken.

5:23 p.m. Clerk from F.L. Roberts reporting three parties stealing from the store. When clerk attempted to stop them, they ran out and fled up L Street in a vehicle. Officer searching area; second officer off at F.L. Roberts looking at video footage. Officer advising that vehicle is now back at F.L. Roberts. One party has paid for stolen items. Manager of store is satisfied. Units clear.

7:23 p.m. Officer calling in reporting that his neighbors stated that their friend had just called reporting a possible fight in the area of Second Street. Officer calling back to update; a skinny black male and a white female sped off in a black SUV from the back parking lot of the Cutlery Block. Responding officer states that vehicle may be a Jeep Cherokee, according to witnesses. One of the windows on the SUV is possibly punched out due to the male party hitting it. Nothing showing in area; units will be on lookout.

9:45 p.m. Caller from O Street states that her neighbor’s dog has been barking for two hours; ongoing problem. Caller has not seen owner and has not seen dog let out for several days. Officer on scene; building is secure. Neighbors state that it appears power is out to the home. Copy of call left for ACO. No dogs showing registered at this address in 2016 or 2017. Possible owner identified.

Saturday, 6/17
2:12 p.m. Report of several subjects target shooting in the Montague Plains in or in the vicinity of the sand pits. Conferred with Environmental Police dispatch. EPO will be responding.

8:48 p.m. Caller from G Street states that fireworks are being set off in the area. Second call received reporting same. Parties advised to stop. Units clear.

9:11 p.m. Complaints of loud fireworks in area of Marshall and Stevens streets. Officer en route. Nothing showing in area.

Sunday, 6/18
12:24 a.m. 911 caller from Griswold Street complaining of a loud party going on; states he has asked neighbors to quiet down to no avail. Officers spoke to occupants. Noise was not excessive and could hardly be heard from outside. Involved parties advised of complaint.

1:10 a.m. 911 caller from Griswold Street complaining of noise from address across the street. Officer spoke to caller; while there, advised that there was no excessive noise. Also spoke to the involved house; they will be turning in for the evening.

2:09 a.m. Officer checking on a vehicle on Poplar Street. Two parties fishing. Same advised to clean up; will be on their way.

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This \$30 treadle sewing machine was beautiful, but had its disadvantages.

SEWING from page B1

table-top model with a small electric motor. I believe it was made in Japan.

She used only this machine for over forty years before my father bought her a computerized machine that made fancy stitches – the Modern Age did not even have a zig zag stitch. She didn’t want a new machine, but he insisted that she try the upgrade that he bought for her, and eventually she found the fancy stitches indispensable.

I did not do any sewing in my high school years. Due to the ingestion of various substances, I got fatter than I wanted to admit, and so did not want to try to sew things for myself. Also, due to the ingestion of various substances, I was not motivated to follow precise directions.

However, still in my teens and living in Provincetown, I acquired a machine older than the Modern Age by several decades for only \$30: my first Singer treadle sewing machine.

I loved this machine but it took me several years to figure out how to use it, because it was missing the bobbin case and belt.

I simply loved how it looked, with the fancy decal of a sphinx on the machine itself, the wooden table with its six little drawers, and the cast iron treadle mechanism. I intended to restore it, but merely lugged it around with me for several years before figuring that out.

One year, I left it at my parent’s house while I bounced around between apartments and my father refinished the cabinet for me, painting it black with gold knobs to match the machine.

These early Singer treadles – mine was from the 1920s, according to its serial number – used a bullet-shaped bobbin case that held an inch-long narrow bobbin, much different than the short, round bobbin and case of later machines.

A foot pedal made a big wheel go round underneath the table,

and a leather belt connected it to a smaller wheel on the machine which made it go. You had to position one foot ahead and one foot behind to alternate the pressure on the foot pedal to make it go. If you fumbled the forward motion, the machine would stumble backward, breaking the thread.

Hooked Up

I found the parts to hook everything up and began using it around 1982 when I lived in Sturbridge. I made clothing for myself from odd pieces of fabric such as tablecloths, and sewed strips of cloth into bedspreads. I carved faces into apples, dried them, and made dolls in old fashioned costumes that I sold at a store near Old Sturbridge Village.

There was no reverse stitch; instead, you had to turn the material, and the bobbin did not hold much thread. In retrospect, it was a pain in the ass to use the Singer, but I was in

love with the vintage aspect of it and, Oh, the things you do for style...

Because millions of treadles were made and they were fairly indestructible, other treadles found their way to my house over the next twenty years. They arrived covered with chicken feathers, or with drawers filled with little black mouse turds. I welcomed them all.

I converted one Singer machine into a table-top model by putting a handle on the wheel and mounting the machine on a box. It was nice for children to use when their legs could not reach the pedal yet.

I liked the cabinet of one White machine I acquired because it had fancy carving on it, so I made that into a dressing table by attaching a mirror and putting a skirt around it. That was a purely frivolous fantasy. I didn’t need a dressing table. I never did more than brush my hair and tie my shoes when sitting in front of it.

But that first \$30 Singer machine was the one I used to make clothes, curtains, pillows for our home, and baby layettes. The husband liked the sound of it and the fact that it didn’t interfere in the TV screen; some electric models, including the old Modern Age, would create fuzzy lines across the picture when you pressed the pedal down to go fast.

As they grew older, my boys liked sewing things on the treadle machine, such as bags to hold marbles or Legos or geology specimens, pillows, and hacky-sacks.

There were real drawbacks to a treadle. In addition to not having a reverse stitch which is handy to lock the beginning and end of a seam, there was no way to stitch into the leg or arm of a garment, since the needle was basically in the middle of a table. I still had to do a lot of hand sewing in order to repair pants, for instance. And without a zig zag stitch, I was unable to do machine appliqué, an art form that I enjoyed but had to do by hand.



The nicotine-covered serger Nina hasn’t bothered to learn to use yet.

I did not get another machine until the early 2000s. I spent twenty years sewing by hand and with my gorgeous, but seriously limited, treadle. Partly because of stubborn frugality, I could not find my way clear to making an investment in something newer. For sentimental reasons as well, I hung on to the Provincetown machine the way I hung on to my 1970s-era tattoos: they spoke my story.

Electrified at Last

I broke down eventually and got a cheap used zig zag machine from the Necchi sewing guy in Greenfield, but I don’t remember what exactly pushed me over the edge. Maybe it was around the same time I got my first Mac computer. I guess I had ideas for new things



Cannabilized for interesting parts, this Polish machine has been retired.

to make, I had a bit of money from a poetry award, and I was ready to adopt some newer technology.

My newer machine cost \$60 and was some off-brand made in Poland, a white plastic portable machine that could do zig zag. This let me use a full satin stitch to attach and outline appliques on to pillow tops and clothing, which I tried to sell. Also I could repair rips and tears easily by slipping pants legs or shirt sleeves up on the free arm of the machine.

It was a vast improvement, but there was no style to the machine itself. It was just functional, like an electric carving knife. Then the lever that raises its foot snapped off a few years ago, rendering it useless.

I still kept the Singer in its black lacquer cabinet in the living room as a place to park plants and other items. But it did not escape the typical Singer treadle fate: after a few years, it ended up in the attic and mice are using the drawers for toilets. One drawer is full of old computer discs. After my mother died, the famously well-used Modern Age machine also took up residence in my attic, serving as an emergency backup machine.

My Sewing Stable

Actually, I have a total of four machines up there in storage. I inherited a serger from my mother, which I haven’t bothered to figure out how to use. The skeleton of the Polish machine is in there because I disassembled the whole thing to use parts of it in an art project, so it now looks like a vulture has picked it over.

So the Singer treadle, the Polish machine, the serger, and the Modern Age are all sitting under the eaves. I have several other treadles that currently form both ends of a large table that I cut mats on in my studio.

I perseverated over buying a machine to replace the broken Polish one; eventually I bought a \$300 Janome model that can do several different stitches, but is still me-

chanical rather than computerized. I bought it online, after comparing models and reading reviews for several months, but the look of the machine had nothing to do with why I bought it.

About this time, I also got new ink to cover the crappy old tattoos that I felt loyal to for so long. I now weigh close to what I did when I thought I was fat in high school, but I’ve accepted the truth told by the tape measure, and when I have fabric, I like to make my own clothes.

In the course of writing this, I was assigned the Yellow part of the human rainbow my band She Said plan to wear at Greenfield Pride. I gave up trying to find something used that looked good; yes, you might say there was “pride” involved in purchasing \$9.80 a yard fabric to make my own sleeveless yellow-with-white-polkadots dress. I have a pattern I know makes a dress that fits me and looks good.

My Janome made short work of this one-night project, and if it becomes too hard to be in a Yellow mood post-Pride day, I can always toss it in my dye pot and change the color...



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July 5: Charlemont Forum Reads Douglass Classic

CHARLEMONT – The Charlemont Forum will present two timely programs this summer.

Residents from seven Massachusetts hill towns will help kick off the first, which takes place on July 5. It will be a reading of Frederick Douglass’ historic 1852 speech, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” Douglass praises the values of the American republic, but decries the institution of slavery and its accompanying misery.

The production, spearheaded by Matthew Glassman, director of the Double Edge Theater of Ashfield, will include members of his theater company joined by readers from Rowe, Heath, Charlemont, Hawley, Shelburne, and Greenfield. Nationally-known composer and conductor Alice Parker will join the program, leading the audience in se-



lected spirituals from that era.

Artist Louise Minks of Leverett will lend four of her life size portraits of civil rights leaders to be hung in the Charlemont Federated Church, the venue for the event. The series, completed in 1990, includes paintings of Douglass, So-

journer Truth, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ida B. Wells.

The program, which will begin at 7 p.m., is free and is supported by Mass Humanities as well as the Cultural Councils of Amherst, Buckland, Conway, Charlemont/Hawley, Heath, and Shelburne. The reading will be followed by a question and answer session, and refreshments.

The Forum’s second program, slated for August 8, will focus on “Democracy: What is it and Why is it Worth Fighting For?”

Austin Sarat, associate dean of the faculty and William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Science at Amherst College, will examine whether and how America may be facing an erosion of public faith in long-taken-for-granted aspects of our political life.

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MISS STEMPLE RECALLS THE PAST Part XV (September 10, 1941)

In browsing the archives of the Turners Falls Herald (1940-1942) we were delighted to find the paper had tracked down Antonia J. Stemple, who had worked in various escalating capacities at the Turners Falls Reporter (1872-1922), and encouraged her to submit a regular column of her recollections.

We are reprinting that column, which ran irregularly in the Herald over an eight-month period under the title “Looking Backward,” in our own pages.

We should add that this week's installment contains expressions of racial prejudice, of which we do not approve. We are choosing to re-print Stemple's 1941 column in full for its historical significance.

– Montague Reporter eds.

Every newspaper office has its quota of queer visitors and the Reporter was no exception. “The Boss” was usually too busy to be bothered with the rank and file of callers. Beside, his patience was rather short so it was up to me to handle all comers. Very trying at times.

One day a stranger, obviously three sheets to the wind, hobbled into the office and without any preliminaries began waving his arms wildly and shouting, “I want everybody to get out of my way!,” repeating this warning over and over. Naturally I was somewhat alarmed but tried not to show it.

The man’s knowledge of English was rather sketchy but I tried long and diligently to find out what he meant and why it was so important that everyone should get out of his way.

At long last the mystery was solved and the explanation was

simple. It developed that the man’s wife had just left him and he wanted to put a notice in the paper telling the world that he would no longer be responsible for any debts incurred by her!

One of our funniest customers was a little sliver of a Chinaman. He didn’t speak much English either and what there was of it was a very strange brand. He was an excitable fellow and when I could not immediately guess what he wanted he lost his grip on himself and capered around the office, squeaking and sputtering vehemently in his efforts to convey his meaning.

I don’t know where he kept his proverbial Chinese calm but he didn’t have it with him on this occasion. It seemed as though I should never be able to get rid of him.

But this mystery was at length solved also. The little chap had recently established new prices in his laundry and he wanted an announcement about it in the Reporter.

After this was settled the question of cost naturally came up. I mentioned the sum of one dollar. There was an explosion. John Chinaman looked at me as though I had demanded his life, his fortune or his sacred honor. He was horrified and jumped about a foot into the air, crying out in agony:

“A dollar! A whole dollar! Oh, Oh, Oh!” then he suddenly turned tail and flew out the door and down the stairs as though a demon were in pursuit.

A very entertaining and almost incredible incident occurred when



One of at least three buildings occupied by the Turners Falls Reporter office, above the “N.B. Hall Dining Room,” now the Between the Uprights sports bar.

one of our citizens whom I knew well came into the office. Upon concluding his business he lingered on for a little chat.

After disposing of the weather and topics of that sort he began to grow personal and confidential. I did not like the trend of his conversation and tried to steer it in another direction or to start him on his way but he would not be diverted.

So I had to unwillingly listen to his matrimonial aspirations and to the qualifications of the various partners he had been considering. He even asked what I thought of one or two he mentioned and asked for suggestions as to the more promising.

Of course I refused to commit myself on such a delicate matter. Imagine my consternation when he edged up closer and inquired whether I’d consider him myself!

Never will I forget one afternoon, just before time to close the office. I was absorbed in balancing the cashbook and was counting the contents of the cashbox.

My hands were filled with currency and checks when the door noiselessly opened and a man entered. I was so startled that I dropped the money and grew as red as a strawberry when I saw the look on the visitor’s face.

It was evident enough what he was thinking. I knew I looked terribly guilty, exactly as though I had been caught in the act of robbing the till.

Of course I made some light and laughing remarks and he joked, too. That he had doubts aroused as to my integrity, however, was evident a few days later. He hunted up Mr. Bagnall privately, told him of the occurrence and earnestly warned him to be on his guard against me.

REPAIR from page B1

simply not desirable or sustainable. She sees one of the benefits of Repair Workshops as being a way to harken back to some of the better practices of previous generations which have gotten lost in the shuffle, while at the same time generating new and beneficial practices which promote a healthier environment and healthier people.

Regarding this last idea she pointed out that Repair Workshops and similar events promote a sense of community and encourage helpfulness. And this was undoubtedly one of the most noticeable aspects of the event. There were lots of smiles, lots of chatter and lots of people volunteering to help each other.

I was impressed by all the repairs, but maybe due to there being so many of them, one of the more notable stations to me was a murderer’s row of people with sewing machines. There was a professional costumer, a guy who made his own tent and backpack to hike the Appalachian Trail with, a guy who makes bow ties, and a couple of ladies who have been getting it done with a sewing machine for over 50 years.

’Nuff said, I think. I don’t think there’s much they couldn’t handle.

This was an interesting, fun, and productive event, and I’m looking forward to the next one.



This vacuum cleaner gets a diagnosis at the recent Repair Workshop in Florence.

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the poetry page

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at: 177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376
or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

Born in the USA

We were pumping our fists with Springsteen,
chanting the chorus as Reagan galloped
the campaign trail, still pretending
to be a cowboy, and the old man who lived

in the blue house with the white fence
lined with rosebushes was handing out mints
from a bowl made out of a buffalo skull.
Uncle Bob chopped off his thumbs

in a metal press on his first day on the job.
My father returned to Khe Sahn sleepwalking
past our bedrooms, shouting out the names
of smoke and moon. He had a woman he loved

in Saigon, sang The Boss. Across the bay –
Ferris wheel lights and roller coaster screams.
Child Services found my grandmother unfit
to adopt. An ambulance in front of the blue house

with the white fence lined with rosebushes.
A white sheet. The bones and feathers
of a dead seagull – a ship wreck
on a rocky shore lapped by green waves.

On their lunch break, my father, my uncles,
and both my grandfathers, their names
embroidered on their grease-stained shirts,
stepped out of the factory and coughed up

their paychecks to their wives idling in Regals,
Novas, and Gremlins. Out by the gas fires
of the refinery. My father's handlebar mustache
terrified me. My brother built me castles

out of blankets and chairs, larger than the house
that confined them. Taught me how to leap
off the couch like Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka,
how to moonwalk and breakdance. He'd go on

to teach me that disappointment's a carcinogen.
My father took cover behind the Lay-Z-boy
in his underwear. My grandmother offered
a pregnant runaway a place to stay in exchange

for her baby. When the plant relocated to Mexico,
my father brought home a pink slip heavier
than a Huey Hog. The rosebushes became thorny
switches. Over ham steaks and mashed potatoes,

our parents poured out their divorce.
We had to decide who we wanted to live
with before leaving the table. I'd go
wherever my brother went: that meant Mom.

My father took a job out of state.
My mother took a boyfriend, who
dragged his unemployment into a bar
called The Pit, then staggered

into our house knocking over houseplants,
and I was the one ordered to clean
the carpets with the wet/dry vac. We'd sneak
out of the house at 3AM to swim

in the neighbor's pool, or ping rocks
off hurtling freight trains. The city condemned
the blue house with the paint-chipped fence.
My mother's eye, blackened. We slept in parks,

better than home. She stood at the sink,
sobbed, scrubbed blood-splotches
out of her white jacket with a soapy sponge.
Wouldn't press charges. My brother bought

a dime bag and a revolver from a guy named Kool-Aid.
My mother was crowned a welfare queen, and drove
a Cadillac assembled out of political mythology.
I smoked my first joint on the roof of a movie theater

with my brother and the stars. An after-school ritual:
stepping over the passed-out boyfriend to grab
a Coke out of the fridge. We spray-painted
gang insignias across the boarded-up windows

of the blue house with splintered teeth. The boyfriend
could whip up one hell of an omelet. We didn't hate
him on Sunday mornings. My mother's stitches.
We swiped a bottle of Mad Dog, drank it while eating

peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. My mother stashed
bottles of gin in the leather boots my father bought
for their last Christmas together. Twice they called
me into the principal's office because a knife fell out

of my pocket at recess. We turned abandoned factories
into playgrounds, busted out the windows with tornadic rage.
Somebody was asking for it, and somebody was going to get it.
I overheard a teacher tell my mother, "He's going to grow up

to kill somebody." Thanks to the Black Panthers,
this white boy had free breakfast at school.
My brother waited until the boyfriend was drunk
on the toilet to burst in swinging a baseball bat.

Later that night while taking a bath, I fished
out a tooth biting me in the ass. Backhoes
and bulldozers devoured the blue house
with the collapsing roof. We rewound

and played back the catastrophic loss
that plumed over Cape Canaveral
on our VCRs. The boyfriend slammed
a stolen van into a tree. She'd pour me

a bowl of Cheerios, pour herself a scotch.
The boyfriend's dentist kept good records.
"I'm sending you to your father."
Son don't you understand now? Front-page news:

firefighters dousing the mangled inferno.
Got in a little hometown jam.
I stood before a judge, pled guilty to
shoplifting Christmas lights, the kind that twinkle.

Joshua Michael Stewart

Guides in the Desert

For Suzanne Paul and Sally

"Are you here because of the article in the Washington Post this morning?"
Blue bells thickened along the road edge as we crossed the Salton Seaway into the Anza Borrego.
Now brittle bush and yellows to the base of the mountains and poppies the wind has
swept up the knees and ridges of mountains. A dark blue like the evening sky scorpion weed
in the base of yellow blooming creosote bush. Verbena carpets the earth, scents the air.

I should answer the photographer, but there is ocotillo over his shoulder. Its limbs
open upward exultant, fifteen feet into the air end in coral candles small trumpets of infused breath.
Suzanne her love of flowers, "Lupine, chia, and indigo over here" names for her delight.
Paul and joy. "Brown eyed primrose," a precise petal discretion of butterfly intimacy.
My inquirer, camera lens chest high his tripod's tapered mahogany, their legs stand in sand.

Sally "Paul look, desert lilies, and Datura" the sacred, and the deadly
through the eyes of a heart. Paul, fibrillation of his heart nearly delayed being in this place of wonder.
The day before a vermilion flycatcher brought fluttering to all of our hearts.
"No, I say "I am here because of them." Blooms on barrel cactus seem cosmically informed, thousands
of years listening to stars Orion and the Pleiades above, Cygnus flying down the Milky way.

Al Miller

Sgt. Downey and Daniel

for Patrick Downey, Daniel, and Wilfred

There were dark curls of hair next my boot
The muzzle of a machine gun next to
where, face down someone I knew was lying on the ground.
It is hard for me to say, what my feelings were. Cordite blue gray smoke that gunpowder smell
prominent in the air, a sound like insects scuttling, debris and fragments
settling to the ground. Feelings? Resistant like moss covered fieldstones.
That moment after an explosion, the assessment, searching for that signature searing,
or blood, the way glass or sharp steel make your nerves think of fire, who lived, and the injured.
Time stopped, stops, Sgt. Downey is coming toward me slowly, deliberate to be stepping where
others had gone. Insisting, that I look at who was lying on the ground.
But I had already come to this decision, "It's a fallen tree," I insisted
while I straddled the still form stepping over it to dress the wounded.
Those dark curls of hair next my boot belonged to Daniel.
The muzzle of his machine gun next to where his face would have been down in the earth.
It is an echo now Downey saying to me "You are not God." Patrick Downey died on his next tour.
That strapping tall dark smiling Irishman securing faith in those of us standing around him,
the faith not to be God.

Al Miller

In Your Wake

This is a road you've already traveled. I follow
in your reluctant wake. My eyes miss
nothing. Did you see one thin cloud wreathing
Mt. Mansfield, one desolate chair
sitting empty by the river's edge, one sad
dovecote with rubber tired roof shingles, paint peeling,
passionate shutters now hanging in disrepair?

A lone hawk circles down close, shadow darkening
river and road, hedgerow and field...my brow.

My heart misses everything.

In no hurry to leave this landscape, where
WE existed, I pull over to let tailgaters pass.

Edite Cunha

Many Syllables of People

There were no dark crypts,

no burial
vaults, no shadowed passages

in the sky creating a floating

unworldly

state of mindless piety

Perhaps for lack of a better word bound
to mutter

RAINBOW
a sensation of light
assigning hours and tables silently

to generate a powerful stream

I did not know what it is like
but I could feel
many syllables of people

capable of self-deception

If a great horde
enacted for the first time

its true purpose

Patricia Pruitt

Contributors' Notes

Joshua Michael Stewart of Ware has published poems in the *Massachusetts Review*, *Louisville Review*, *Rattle*, *Night Train*, *Evansville Review*, *Cold Mountain Review*, and many others. His first full-length collection of poems, *Break Every String*, was published by Hedgerow Books in 2016. Visit him at www.joshuamichaelstewart.com.

Patricia Pruitt of Turners Falls edited the poetry page for many years. Her most recent book of poems is *Drawing Point* (Paris: Alyscamps, 2017). The poem on this page is from *Full Moon at Sunset: Selected Poems*, which Talisman House will issue this fall.

Al Miller, Vietnam veteran, furniture maker, poet and owner of Brookbend Farm in Montague Center, has frequently contributed poems to this page. His poem "David" was the winner of the Annual Pat Schneider Poetry Contest from Amherst Writers and Artists.

His poems have appeared in a number of national publications.
Edite Cunha of Turners Falls has written several award-winning stories, an autobiographical novel, and a fair number of poems. She was born in Portugal and came to the U.S. with her family when she was seven years old. She has taught creative writing for many years.

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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 mcbress@vermontel.net for location and details.

2ND AND 4TH MONDAYS

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scotty K's Open Mic*. 8 p.m.

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.

1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAYS

The Perch (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.

2ND AND 4TH WEDNESDAYS

The Wheelhouse, Greenfield: *TNT Karaoke*. 9 p.m.

EVERY THURSDAY

Montague Center Branch Library, Montague: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll & Laurie Davidson*. Children and

their caregivers. 10 to 11 a.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.

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. \$

SUBMISSIONS:

Nina's Nook 4th Annual *Triple S* (sensual, sexual, smut) *Show* scheduled for September is inviting artists to submit entries on the theme "from mild to wild"; limit size to 20" x 30". Send three jpgs to nalerossi@gmail.com. Info (413) 834-8800. Deadline 9/1.

EXHIBITS:

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Pioneer Valley Perspectives* by Susan Dion, who draws her inspiration from local buildings and landscapes. Through June 26.

Hawks and Reed Performing Art Center, Greenfield: *Emerging Forms* by Eric Grab. Through June.

Leverett Crafts and Arts: *Keeping Our Heads Above Water: Oil Paintings – Images of Leverett Pond*; and a series of tiny paintings entitled *Teetering*, by Susan Valentine. Through July 2.

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

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *The Time Tunnel*. Installation by Adrian Montagano. Over 200 clocks! Artist reception on Saturday, June 17, 3 to 6 p.m. 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. Through June 25.

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

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Portals and Passages*, a collection of platinum/palladium and gum bichromate prints by Amanda Quinby. Through June 26.

Wendell Free Library: *Michael Wing*. Drawings, paintings, wooden toys and metal sculptures. Through June.



Linda Tardif (who plays Mash) and Julian Findlay (who plays Dev) in the Silverthorne Theater rehearsal space this week, preparing for the performance of *Stupid F**king Bird*, which opens next week at the Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center in downtown Greenfield.

EVENTS:

THURSDAY, JUNE 22

Energy Park, Greenfield: Coop Concerts presents: *Joe Graveline, Helen Arbour, Ursula Elmes*. 6 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *The Gypsy Wranglers*. Unique acoustic swing. 7:30 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Stupid F**king Bird* written by local playwright Aaron Posner and inspired by Anthon Chekhov's *The Seagull*. Produced by Silverthorne Theater Co. 7:30 p.m. Repeats Friday and Saturday. 6/23, 6/24 and 6/29, 6/30 7/1. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Soul Magnets*. Valley soul/funk favorites. 8 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Jonathan Edwards*. 8:30 p.m. \$

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Kidleidoscope Story Hour*. This week it's turtles! Includes a story, interactive games and a craft to introduce your child to the natural world. Recommended for ages 3 to 6 with a parent or guardian. 10:30 to 11:20 a.m.

New England Art, Craft, and Design, (MoNEA), Northfield. Opening Reception exhibiting over forty works, from the early 19th century to the present, from private collections throughout New England. Launched by Deerfield Valley Art Association 6:30 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *The Grapes of Wrath*. Movie at 7:30 p.m. Music: *Coop jazz*, 7 p.m.

Hess Theater, Deerfield Academy: *Eggtooth Productions and The Dance Co-operative present "Perception"*, a theatrical evening of concert dance with *Fine House* by Lori Holmes Clark. 7:30 p.m. \$

Underdogs Lounge, Shelburne: *Avery, Canali & Marano*. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Roomful of Blues* with Special Guest *She Said*. Grammy-Award winning blues band with local opener. 8 p.m. \$

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Spontaneous Combustion #2*, open improv workshop with sets by *Fred Cracklin* and *Id M Theft Able*. All ages. 8:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Josh Hill & Friends*. Original Americana. 8 p.m. Pub will be open at 6:30 p.m. with full bar and pizza.

Root Cellar, Greenfield. *Rift*, Phish tribute band. 9 p.m.\$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Scott Kuzmeskus and Friends*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pride Dance Party Glitter Bomb!*, featuring *Solo Sexx, Conversion Therapy, DJ Fern*, and *DJ Sweetfreak*. 6 p.m. \$

Wendell Free Library: *Red Riding Hood* (2011), werewolf romance. Preceded by sci-fi episode of *Radar Men from the Moon* at 7:30 p.m., part of monthly sci-fi/horror series.

Hess Theater, Deerfield Academy: *Eggtooth Productions and The Dance Co-operative present "Perception,"* a theatrical evening of concert dance with *Fine House* by Lori Holmes Clark. 7:30 p.m. \$

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Dave Mallett*. Singer/songwriter, country and folk. 7:30 p.m. \$

Underdogs Lounge, Shelburne: *Blue Rendezvous*. Dance to blues with Rick King, Kate O'Connor and Rico Spence. 8 p.m.

Mocha Maya's, Shelburne: *Violet Maeve*, acoustic rock, and special guest Mike Herz. 8 p.m.

Montague Bookmill, Montague: *Pamela Means*, with *Austin and Elliot*. 8 p.m. \$

SUNDAY, JUNE 25

Underdogs Lounge, Shelburne: *Rachel Laitman*, 6 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 26

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Ava Mendoza, 23 Ensemble*, and *Brittany Brideau*. All ages, substance free space. 8:30 p.m. \$

THURSDAY, JUNE 29

Energy Park, Greenfield: Coop Concerts Presents: *Charlie Conant, She Said*. 6 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Wildcat O'Halloran*, blues. 7:30 p.m. \$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Rear Defrosters*. Honky-tonk with Kate Lorenz of Rusty Belle. 8 p.m.

Memorial Hall Theater

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SAT. 6/24 no show

SUN. 6/25 9pm
TNT KARAOKE

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KARAOKE from page B1**Only on Karaoke Night!**

As the evening progresses, the room fills up with 20 to 30 singers of all ages: smiling, talking, eating, drinking, and dancing to some of their favorite tunes. Most of them sing along and cheer on their friends as they take their chance to get up and sing.

There is a young man with long hair and work clothes, sitting at the bar by himself. He gets up when his name is called and performs a rap song. I don't know where he gets all the breath, as I would have been exhausted half way through the song! He does a great job with it, and gets a round of applause as he sits back down.

A mother, there with her two young daughters, encourages them as they get up and sing together. They giggle and laugh their way through the words, while the DJ takes pictures of them singing for their mom to keep.

Two gentlemen from the bar area take turns performing rock 'n' roll and blues-type songs, keeping the beat with their feet, as others



Patrons can follow along with the lyrics on a second screen.

sing along and loudly applaud as they sit down.

An older man in a coat and cap comes in and watches for a few minutes. He turns in a song slip and hangs out in the entrance door area until he is called up to sing. He sits casually on the chair by the mics, and performs a New Orleans-type blues song that sounds like he has been doing it his whole life. "A professional," I think, as he sings the song with his eyes closed and his body swaying

to the music. He receives loud clapping and thumbs up as he gets off the chair and leaves after that one song.

In between, the patrons, the bartender, and Steve the DJ also get up and sing their favorites, as a good time was had by all, as the saying goes.

My own evening ended after singing several times, including Bette Midler's version of "The Rose." To my pleasant surprise, a fellow singer stopped me as I was leaving to tell me he loved that song. He handed me a white paper rose that he made from a paper napkin while I was singing. Only on a Karaoke night out would you be gifted by a complete stranger that way!

The Restaurant

The "Voo" opened in September 2007, and has a 10-year anniversary coming up this fall. Check them out for great food and entertainment. They're open seven days a week, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 a.m.

Kitchen hours for food are 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, extending until 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. On Sundays,

they're open from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. for brunch, and switch to their regular menu until 10 p.m.

They serve eggs, hash, home fries, omelets, steak, pancakes, waffles, and bacon for brunch. You can also order maple syrup, toast, coffee, or a Bloody Mary with tomato juice and vodka, or a mimosa with orange juice and Prosecco.

There are also assorted small plates and sides, soups, burgers, flatbread pizza, grilled sandwiches, entrees, salads, and regular pizza, plus bar munchies. The Voo will host and cater events for adults and or children. You can search the menu and drink lists online at www.rendezvousfma.com, or call (413) 863-2866 for more information or takeout.

A list of current events is also on the website, and lists Karaoke every Sunday night from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Another favorite of mine there is Bingo, every third Monday night. They host Open Mic nights, that give singers and musicians a chance to perform, and assorted band nights, for your dance and listening pleasure.

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