



LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 16 – NO. 13

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 18, 2018

## Racing the Messengers of Yesteryear



WACKERNAGEL PHOTO

Race secretary Arianna Kendall shows off her three awards from last season – and her winning bird.

By PETE WACKERNAGEL

The Northwest Junior Flyers, based in Haydenville, are a pigeon racing club. The club was founded fifteen years ago by Tim Tessier of

Chesterfield and Jim Brazeau of Goshen. "I was in another club," explained Tessier. "The sportsmanship was so poor we decided to start our own."

Tessier is a retired educator, and

one major goal of the club was to introduce the sport to kids. "This is the biggest club for kids," he told me. The club now has more than sixty members of all ages, who come together to raise and race their birds competitively.

Some club members participate in the sport because of its nostalgic appeal. "People do it as a dying sport," explained member Marguerite French. Others believe the sport is a panacea to cure the addiction to digital entertainment that children often succumb to. "Most kids don't want to do it – they have electronics," says French. "[The club] wants to promote it for this reason."

*Columba livia*, the rock dove, is native to the coastal cliffs of the Old World, and humans have raised these birds for meat and their ability to carry messages since the beginning of civilization.

While the wolf was the first animal to begin living with humans (when people were living in hunter-gatherer bands), the rock dove was domesticated in the first group of animals to be tamed after the beginning of settlement and agriculture. This group included sheep,

see PIGEONS page A6

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Public Works Garage Climbs To Top Of Montague's Priorities

BY JEFF SINGLETON

MONTAGUE – Over the next few weeks, members of a special planning committee will hold public hearings to make the case for the construction of a new, \$11.1 million public works facility.

Montague's need for a new highway garage has been frequently raised – and rarely challenged – over the past few decades. The current facility, built in the late 1950s, lacks sufficient space to repair and maintain the current fleet of 32 vehicles and 30 pieces of large equipment. The "stacked" parking configuration means that several vehicles need to be moved to access those in the back. A number of vehicles are parked in a private lot across the street.

According to a "frequently asked questions" worksheet put out by the public works facility planning committee, "the current site exposes the town to a potential sudden fiscal and operations crisis should a system fail or building, electrical, plumbing, health or worker safety code compliance be enforced."

The problems raised by this seven-page flyer will not come as

a surprise to longtime members of Montague town meeting. They have frequently heard about the decaying highway garage whenever other large capital projects – the Turners Falls High School building project, the new public safety complex, and the Combined Sewer Overflow project – have been proposed.

But the highway garage has always been pushed aside in favor of other priorities.

No more. Somehow the highway garage has finally moved to the top of the list. The planning committee, formed in 2016, is coming forward with a proposal to build a new facility near the public safety complex on Turners Falls Road. The proposal will come before one of two special town meetings scheduled for this winter, probably the mid-March meeting.

But how, exactly, did the highway garage get to the top of the list of the town's capital priorities – and does such a list exist?

And what will the impact of the planning committee's proposal – particularly its price tag – have on other building projects that are also

see PRIORITIES page A8

## THE BIG PICTURE

### Choosing Our Final Resting Places

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE – This week, I sat down with Judith Lorei of Montague Center to talk about burial options.

Lorei currently serves as the sole member of Montague's cemetery commission, though she pointed out that this does not make her a "commissioner." She is also a cofounder of Green Burial Massachusetts.

We discussed how the ways our society has approached the question of burial have changed over the years, and continue to change today.

MR: Last time we spoke with you, you were going with our reporters up to Dry Hill Cemetery. Access to that cemetery has been a longstanding controversy in town. How many other cemeteries does Montague have?

JL: Montague has seven town

cemeteries, and Dry Hill is one of those seven – they're all old historic cemeteries. A lot of people don't realize that there are town cemeteries, and private cemeteries. In Massachusetts, cemeteries are either run by the municipality, or a religious organization, or a private benevolent association – in Massachusetts, cemeteries have to be nonprofits.

Montague has seven town cemeteries, and then seven private cemeteries. Some of them are run by the Catholic Church, and others are private cemeteries.

MR: Do you have oversight responsibilities over those private cemeteries?

JL: No, those are all taken care of by the organizations responsible for them.

So it's just the seven town ceme-



Judith Lorei

teries. And, because they're not active cemeteries, there isn't a whole lot, really....

see BIG PICTURE page A4

### Grassroots Disaster Relief Continues For Survivors Of Hurricane Maria

By DAVID DETMOLD

TURNERS FALLS – Three days before Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, Fernando Ortiz called his mother, Basilia Guzman-Velasquez, who lives in Caguas, a city of 140,000 in the central highlands of the island territory. He told her to buy some canned food and bottled water, because the hurricane was predicted to track directly across the island and hit Caguas hard.

It did. Ortiz watched scenes of the destruction on his computer screen on September 20, when it struck the island with winds ranging to 150 miles an hour, completely knocking out power to the 3.4 million residents.

Caguas received 37 inches of rain as the storm passed over.

Ortiz, who lives in Turners Falls and has worked as a computer repair technician at About Face Computer Solutions on Avenue A for the past three years, was unable to reach his mother, or find out any news about her condition.

"I tried to call my mother while the storm was raging," said Ortiz. "I could not reach her by phone. I started crying. I had never seen so much damage to anywhere. I was going insane."

For the next three weeks, Ortiz was unable to reach his mother. Though she has family nearby, she is blind and lives by herself in the



Aurora Santiago-Ortiz (left) and Jorell Melendez-Badillo (right), both graduate students at UMass-Amherst, spoke last Friday at the Brick House about hurricane response, diaspora, and Puerto Rico's social movements.

home her husband left her when he died eight years ago. Anything could have happened to her in the storm – which wreaked more destruction in Puerto Rico than any other natural disaster in that island's history.

Governor Ricardo Rosello is estimating the cost of rebuilding the territory, already strapped with \$70 billion in external debt, at \$95 billion.

In mid-October, Ortiz finally got word that his mom was OK, although the storm had ripped part of her roof

see GRASSROOTS page A7



DAVID HOULT PHOTO

Turners Chloe Ellis makes a shot from the lane as Turners Falls tops the Palmer Panthers 52-49.

### The Week in TFHS Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – This week, the Palmer Panthers visited Turners Falls for three different events. They won both swim meets, but the Turners girls' basketball team beat them when the Cats missed the tying shot at the end of regulation.

Also this week, the boys' basketball team couldn't hold onto their early lead, and the girls' team posed three important questions.

Swimming  
Palmer 45 – TFHS 37  
Palmer 66 – TFHS 23

Last Friday, January 12, the Turners Falls Swim Teams hosted the Panthers of Palmer. The girls' team lost the meet by 8 points, 45-37. The loss gives Powertown a 3-1 Constitution Class record, which is still a game ahead of Palmer in that class.

The Blue Ladies won four individual events and

see TFHS SPORTS page A5

# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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## Protected Status

The idea that we can draw a fair and meaningful distinction between the legal and illegal, deserving and undeserving residents of our country suffered another setback last week after 200,000 immigrants from El Salvador and 50,000 from Haiti were told, at the stroke of a politician's pen, that they were no longer welcome and would soon become subject to removal.

Temporary protected status, or TPS, was always a half-measure: acknowledgment that it would be too obviously cruel to send back those fleeing countries wracked by civil war and natural disaster, combined with lack of interest in their integration here as equals.

TPS has been kicked down the road in 18-month intervals, waiting for men like Donald Trump and his advisor Stephen Miller to come along.

"Those shitholes send us the people that they don't want," our president reportedly said during a horse-trading session between the parties over immigration "reform," before expressing his preference for immigrants from countries more like Norway. (That's according to Sen. Dick Durbin. Sens. David Perdue and Tom Cotton called this a "gross misrepresentation" – turns out he may have actually used the term "shitholes"...) Besides delighting every naughty news editor in the country, this quote provides a telling glimpse into his worldview: not just the seemingly racially informed double standard at play, but also the idea that people traveling across land to get from a country like El Salvador, where the murder rate is 108 per 100,000, into Guatemala (31), Mexico (16), and then California (5) or, say, Massachusetts (2) aren't regular humans seeking safety but are being strategically "sent" by their nefarious leaders.

In this view, deservingness is rooted squarely in desirability. The administration has rechristened family migration, the way new populations have always been integrated into the United States, as "chain migration," and is advocating for a "merit-based system" to replace it – a vision of the government as corporate headhunter supreme.

(We wonder how many merit points would be awarded to a prospective migrant for having, say, been born in Norway.) And by this logic, migrants with a better reason to leave their homeland are precisely the ones who should not be allowed to.

America is happy to import Fruit of the Loom, Hanes and Levi's products sewn by low-wage Haitian workers – and our State Department can even see fit to successfully intervene against a minimum wage increase approved by Haiti's parliament, as it did in 2009. (Just another fact about our government we only know thanks to Wikileaks!)

The balance of the value flows from the global South to the global North in such an arrangement. So after the apocalyptic earthquake of 2010, and subsequent cholera outbreak, where should those same Haitian workers have been expected to go to build a new life? Why shouldn't they follow the fruit of their looms northward?

TPS was granted to Haitians in the aftermath of the earthquake, but surprisingly few have taken advantage of it: the UN says 1.4 million Haitians are still in need of "immediate humanitarian assistance," given the continued toll of hurricanes, food insecurity and lack of clean water, but only about 50,000 have sought protection under the US program.

Their presence here is not parasitic, by the way: according to the *Journal of Migration and Human Security*, the labor force participation rate of Haitian TPS beneficiaries is 88%, as compared with just 63% of native-born Americans.

Unfortunately, our new head of state doesn't want them here – the *New York Times* claims two sources at a June meeting on visas both reported Trump said Haitian applicants "all have AIDS." So now they must all go back, or else go underground, fall asleep each night fearing they will be awakened by the knock of ICE agents at the door.

Legal or illegal, citizen or criminal, safe or dangerous, Norway-clean or shithole-dirty: the government is compelled to draw a cleaner line, build a taller wall, even if it passes through families, workplaces, or communities like our own. It must even create problems where problems don't exist.

Because the final goal is to establish and clarify the privilege of national belonging. When people can no longer move to the garrison nations of the North, then every civil war, earthquake, hurricane and outbreak south of our walls increases the relative value of the service our rulers provide us.

And if they can offer us a feeling of being better off, they won't really have to bother giving us anything else, will they?



Lucy Greto clears snow off her vehicle during Wednesday's snowstorm. The GCC hospitality student has been living in Turners Falls since September.

## Letter to the Editors

### Longtime Owner Sends Well Wishes

Dear Voo and Turners Family,

As of January 2018, I will no longer be an owner or manager of the Rendezvous – or booker of Rendezvous events – from here on out.

I want to thank you all so much for welcoming me to your community a decade ago and helping us all build this Rendezvous family. I will be focusing on other projects, and I wish the Rendezvous well in its

future endeavors.

I hope to continue seeing you all both out and about and at the Voo, the best "Bar with Food" in this or any valley, as a fellow patron and Turners resident, for many many years to come.

Thank you so much!

Jamie Berger  
Turners Falls



## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by DON CLEGG

This Friday, January 19, the Montague Common Hall will host a discussion with visiting Hawaiian elder Kalani Souza, "Neighborhood Response to Climate Change and Other Unpredictable Challenges of Our Times: An Indigenous Perspective."

At the Common Hall, formerly the Montague Center Grange, from 7 to 9 p.m.

On Saturday morning, January 20, learn about the finer points of fabricating with wrought iron from local designer, Ray Jarvis. Jarvis has been doing this type of work for many decades and will bring in some pieces to show case.

Held in the community room of the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls, starting at 10 a.m. Light refreshments will be provided.

Ahoy, mateys! Are ye ready to play like pirates? Play games, make some booty (crafts), and eat some grub at Carnegie Library on Satur-

day, January 20, from 10:30 a.m. until noon.

Designed for children of all ages and their families. Costumes are encouraged but not required.

Teaching Creatures presents Animal Defenses at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Saturday, January 27, from 11 a.m. to noon.

Join Rae Griffiths from Teaching Creatures to take a closer look at live animals that have evolved unique adaptations for defending themselves against predators. This program is free, but space is limited so please call (413) 863-3221 to reserve your spot! Sponsored by the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Attendance numbers for 2017 are in for the center – there were 18,852 visitors during the past year!

Montague native Ezra Ward and Leverett transplant George Lo-Cascio will present "A Day in the Life of a Hotshot Firefighter" on Sunday, January 28, from noon to 4 p.m. in the Leverett Library Com-

munity Room.

Come hear stories and tales about one of America's most dangerous jobs and learn how forest fires are fought in the western United States and Alaska. Co-sponsored by Rattlesnake Gutter Trust and the Leverett Library. This program is free, and handicap accessible.

The Town Democratic Party Committees of Shutesbury, Pelham, Leverett, and New Salem will host a family-friendly event on Sunday, January 28 at the Shutesbury Elementary School showcasing ranked choice voting (RCV).

Nearly 4 million Americans live in communities that use RCV, which allows voters to choose multiple candidates rather than casting a ballot for only one. In November 2016, Maine voters chose to make their state the first in the country to use the system statewide.

Speakers from Voter Choice Massachusetts will give a presentation on the benefits of RCV, while participants will get to experience a hands-on demonstration of the meeting while voting for their favorite cookie. (Gluten-free options will be available.)

The event will be held from 2 to 4 p.m., with cookie tasting and ballot counting taking place between 2 and 2:30 p.m.

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Published weekly on Thursdays.

Every other week in July and August.  
No paper last week of November,  
or the Thursday closest to 12/25.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Community Solar Project Wins Support of Selectboard, Heads to Town Meeting

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Of the four groups that met the Wendell selectboard at its January 10 meeting, the community solar project proponents spent the most time. Doing most of the talking for the group, energy committee member Don Stone narrowed down some details of the proposed community solar farm, how town requirements might affect their project, and how the project might affect the town.

State guidelines limit the size of a community solar project like this one to 250 kilowatts (kW) output, enough to supply 50 homes with average electricity use. 250 kW is the largest size imagined for this solar array. The required setbacks from wetlands and property lines would limit it further, but there may be some adjustment if a smaller fence is allowed, and if that fence is allowed within the setback zone.

The proposed layout of the array is the same as was shown to the board at an earlier meeting, when the thought was to subdivide the solar lot from the house lot at 97 Wendell Depot Road. Keeping the array and the house lot as one would eliminate the requirement for a setback on that corner of the proposed array, and allow a larger array. A larger array would have more economic viability, but reduce the value of the house.

The house in question is one of the oldest in Wendell, and the building inspector determined that it is still sound. It has been empty for some years, and the town took it for unpaid taxes. It needs some work, and its location near high tension electric lines make it unlikely that someone would invest the money required to restore it to its original beauty.

Finance committee member Al McIntire has looked into other uses for the building, and although at a prior meeting he was not optimistic, on the 10th he said that there are firms that disassemble and reassemble buildings if they have a willing potential client, and that he will continue to look.

Selectboard chair Christine Heard said that the road crew needs a place to put rocks and trees they clear from the roads – a possible use of the house lot, if the array goes in and the house is removed.

Stone said the last tax bill paid for the house and property was \$3,000. He said if the cooperative paid the town rent equivalent to two cents per kW, a 250-kW array would earn the town \$5,000 a year in payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT), while a 200-kW array would earn the town \$4,000.

Solar panels on that property would not need concrete foundations, but instead can be mounted to holes drilled into the bedrock. The coop plans a vegetation screen that would make the array invisible to the southwest neighbor, who has objected to the sight of more metal in the woods where it does not belong.

For a prospective cooperative member, the payments for a share of the array would be set to be equivalent to a present electric bill. After ten years, the panels would be paid for, and would generate income for the owners. The project's life is expected to be twenty years, with \$8,000 needed annually for maintenance, administration, and a decommissioning fund.

One unknown, and key, variable is what the connection to National Grid's lines will cost.

Energy chair Nan Riebschlaeger said one virtue of this model is that a household that uses electricity below the limit set for other subsidies can buy a share of the cooperative.

Another key element is the support of the town, without which the project may not happen. The site is the only place that Stone knows of that is close enough to both three-phase transmission wires and the road.

Selectboard members voted to support the project. The property now is owned by the treasurer, and a town meeting vote will be needed to transfer it to the selectboard.

The earliest possible dates for a special town meeting are Monday or Tuesday, February 12 or 13. Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich suggested that February 26 or 27 are preferable, and would make it less of a rush to get a warrant created and posted.

### Broadband

Another article headed to the next town meeting warrant is a citizen petition to have an elected municipal light plant (MLP) which would oversee the town's planned fiber-optic network.

Early in the process of trying to get broadband internet connections to Wendell households, the town created a three-member MLP and the three positions were taken by the selectboard. Until now, the MLP position has paid nothing and has required no work. Selectboard members do not want more work, and once the system is built and households are connected to it, there will be work.

Selectboard member Dan Keller said he thought that the time that the town needs a separate MLP, elected or appointed, has not arrived yet. (To hold an elected position, a person must live in town.)

Selectboard member Jeffrey

Pooser said that his opinion was that creating either an elected or appointed MLP now would be premature, and would be problematic if that choice has to be rolled back later.

### Town Meetings

Pooser has called a meeting on Saturday, January 27 to get a sense of what townspeople think of upcoming legal recreational marijuana. State regulations will be published March 15, and the state will accept applications for growing, processing, and selling after April 1.

Keller suggested a warrant article calling for a town moratorium, just in case. The article can be passed over if people don't find it necessary.

Town moderator Katie Nolan suggested a warrant article that would allow the town to create a position of deputy moderator. While writing a job description for moderator, she discovered that although the town has used that position, it has not had legal standing to do so until a vote to create a deputy moderator is taken. She also suggested an article that would allow a 2/3, 4/5 and 9/10 vote to be accepted by voice vote if the results seem clear.

Looking beyond the special town meeting, the selectboard consulted with fin com chair Doug Tanner about a date for the annual town meeting. This year, the meeting is supposed to be held on a week night.

Tanner said he wanted the meeting not too early, not too late, and not too close to the end of the fiscal year, June 30. They settled on Tuesday, June 5, which would allow the meeting to continue through to Wednesday if necessary without running into a scheduled selectboard meeting.

### Energy Savings

Riebschlaeger said the energy committee hopes to change some rules to allow more homes to take advantage of the Green Communities grant money available to subsidize energy-saving home improvements.

People who get fuel assistance may get an energy audit only once in eight years, but their homes may have use for more improvements. An audit has been a required first step. The energy committee proposal would allow a grant of up to \$750 for a list of qualifying improvements, insulation, storm doors and windows, and window quilts with no audit first.

There is still \$28,000 in uncommitted Green Communities money. The committee also is looking at the senior center with the intention

of reducing energy loss there. Selectboard members supported both the rule change, and the idea of making the senior center use less energy.

### Kitchen Fees

Kitchen committee members met the selectboard to work on a fee schedule for use of the town hall kitchen without renting the whole town hall.

Committee member Myron Becker spoke about liability, upkeep, and resupply, and the town getting some return on the investment of building the kitchen. (Town hall rental fees, without the kitchen, have never paid for the annual maintenance of the town hall, but they have been an attempt to offset some of the expense.)

Committee member Heather Willey said that Wendell's kitchen is one of twenty in the state, but most of those are in larger cities in the east. There is no clear model for what Wendell should charge.

Committee chair Mez Ziemba offered to meet with Heard and create a framework with the hope that it recovers some of the town expense, without discouraging people from using the kitchen.

Keller mentioned the possibility of an hourly charge.

### Other Business

The selectboard held its annual tax classification hearing with the board of assessors. Speaking for the assessors, Chris Wings asked the selectboard for a single business and residential tax rate, \$20.96 per thousand dollars of property value, up from \$19.31 per thousand in FY'18.

Wings said the town was at its levy ceiling, but not its levy limit. There was some discussion, without complete clarification, of the difference between levy limit and levy ceiling.

Aldrich said a third-party inspection of Wendell's WRATS had pictures of a broken wall and other inappropriate material behind the collection area where the landfill was. The town needs another place for that material.

The final agenda item was a town policy for weather-related closing of town events and buildings, as suggested at a small town administrators' meeting. Aldrich said that on the recent Thursday-Friday snowfall, she came to the Wendell office in the morning because she had some work. When the snow grew serious she grew cautious, and she left the office and followed the plow as it cleared the road in the direction of her home.

The selectboard chose to continue to use common sense rather than adopt a formal policy.



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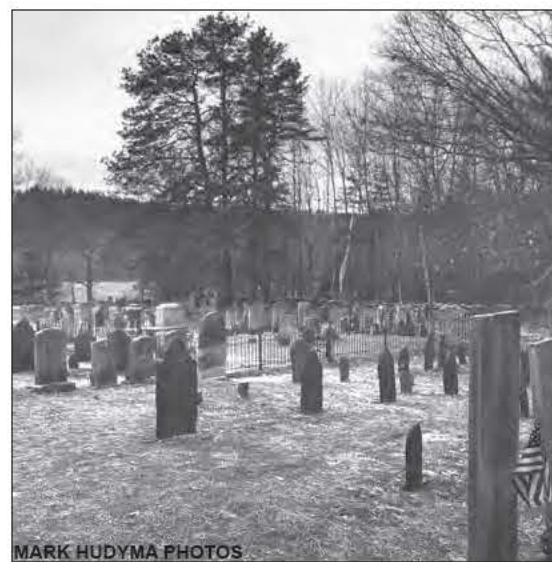
**Montague Center Congregational Church**  
4 North Street

**Ham & Bean Supper**

Saturday January 20  
5:30 p.m.

**Menu:**  
Ham, Baked Beans, Carrots, Coleslaw, Homemade Brown Bread, Apple Pie Squares, Coffee, Tea & Milk

Adults \$10 - Children \$5  
Reservations: 367-2652  
Walk-ins seated as space allows - Call for takeouts



The last available plots at Montague's Old South Cemetery, on Old Stage Road, were assigned in 2016.

**BIG PICTURE** from page A1

**MR:** None of the seven are active?

**JL:** Old South, in Montague Center, is the last one that had been active, but we stopped selling plots there in 2016, because it's full. So there are no town cemeteries that are active.

**MR:** What are your responsibilities with these seven?

**JL:** We make sure they're maintained - we work with a contractor, who does all of the mowing and the trimming around the headstones, makes sure they're clear of debris. Something very exciting that happened recently is we got beautiful new town cemetery signs; they were built by David [Detmold] and hand-painted by Nina [Rossi]. The old signs were an eyesore, so we've got these new signs, and that's terrific.

**MR:** Where does the money come from?

**JL:** The town - a line item every year, to take care of the maintenance.

**MR:** What's the rough annual budget?

**JL:** Seven thousand dollars.

**MR:** So, a thousand a cemetery.

**JL:** Yeah - although we aren't able to get up to Dry Hill. Mark Fairbrother has been taking care of Dry Hill on his own, as a volunteer, over the years, which has been really helpful for the town.

At this point, as a Montague resident, you would need to go to one of the private cemeteries if you wanted to be buried in Montague.

**MR:** How long have you been a cemetery commissioner?

**JL:** I'm not technically the "commissioner" - it's a three-person board, and I'm the person on the board. [Laughs.] Sue SanSoucie was on the cemetery commission for many years, and when she retired from the library, she retired from the cemetery commission.

I took that on [about] three years ago.... It's really mostly the maintenance. We are also working with the veterans' groups to put flags on graves.

**MR:** Is the town actively seeking more cemetery commission, uh, members?

**JL:** I would love to have more people on the cemetery commission, because I think there are different kinds of projects we could do. For example, some of those headstones really are in disrepair, and the town doesn't have money to repair them - dating back into the 1700s - so the idea of writing for some grants for headstone repair is something I would certainly welcome. There are preservation grants available.

**MR:** Do you also maintain burial records?

**JL:** There are burial records. The jurisdiction of cemeteries, for cities and towns in Massachusetts, comes under the board of health. Mass General Law Chapter 114 covers burial...

The Carnegie Library has binders in their reference section with vital records of Montague residents by cemetery. Old South Cemetery is the only one that has a comprehensive list of tombstone inscriptions - I believe [Montague historian] Lillian Fiske was involved in that project.

**MR:** How did you come to be interested in cemeteries?

**JL:** Many years ago, in the late '90s, I worked as a funeral director/embalmer apprentice. When I lived in Boston. I was really just interested in how we take care of our dead. For me, working in the industry wasn't really a good fit, so I left and became an advocate for funeral consumer rights - I got onto the board of the Eastern Mass Funeral Consumers Alliance. I really saw, when I was working at the funeral home, how it's very much an industry.

It used to be that we would take care of our own dead. We would lay the person out in the house. Some neighbors would make the coffin. You'd wash the body, and care for the body at home, and carry the body to the cemetery, whether a church cemetery or the graveyard.

And we did all that as part of a ritual. People used to have their babies at home, they used to wake their dead at home.

And then things changed, around the Civil War, when embalming was introduced - in order to get bodies from the South back up to the North on the trains. When Lincoln was assassinated, his body was embalmed, and he was on the long train across the country.

As industrialization started to happen, an industry came to be because of embalming, and moving the ritual of waking out of the house and into the funeral home.

**MR:** As a consequence of embalming?

**JL:** And people were moving to the cities, where it might have been less practical to have the home wake. And a whole industry sprang up out of that.

And as baby boomers, environmentalists - people who were really at the forefront of wanting to do things themselves - said, "we used to do this at home, we should be able to do this again," a more modern movement of taking care of one's own, and natural burial, started to develop in this country. I'd say in the late '90s.

**MR:** Funeral consumer organizing, or advocacy, predates the green

burial movement though, right?

**JL:** Yeah. Jessica Mitford wrote a book called *The American Way of Death* back in the '60s that exposed the funeral industry in a way people really didn't know about. Memorial societies were created out of that, and funeral consumers' rights out of that.

The first natural burial ground in this country is Ramsey Creek, in South Carolina. That was established in 1996/1997 as conservation burial ground - there's no vault or cement liner, no granite headstone, and the casket is a biodegradable coffin or shroud, and the body just goes right into the earth.

The viewscape is the same as if you didn't have bodies underground - you can use it hiking, birding, field or forest or meadow. You mound the dirt, and eventually it settles.

With conventional cemeteries, you have these vaults so you can have heavy equipment on top of the ground, be able to mow that and keep it very uniform.

**MR:** So we're putting a lot of concrete underground.

**JL:** Concrete, hardwoods, steel - and embalming fluid, formaldehyde. All of that's going into the ground. And so natural burial encourages much quicker decomposition.

Formaldehyde is more dangerous to the embalmers - they have higher rates of leukemia. It's just the idea of upsetting the body in that way.

But all of this is a choice. The work that I do with Green Burial Massachusetts is about educating people about having a choice: to use a funeral home, or to be more involved, as family and friends, in the after-death care.

**MR:** Why do some people prefer green burial to cremation?

**JL:** You're using less resources than you use with cremation, where you're firing up the retort to burn the body for a couple hours. There are emissions that aren't scrubbed out - like mercury fillings. And you're really removed from the process... Some crematories let you push the button to start the retort.

With natural burial, the idea of just being put into the ground to decompose is appealing to people, say, who have been environmentalists their whole life, or, you know, farmers - you get that cycle of life in a really natural way.

And with a conservation cemetery, you're conserving land from development, which is an incredible opportunity for land conservation. If you love to be in nature and you go to a forest or field to connect with a person who died, that can be a really beautiful experience.

Some people would prefer natural burial because they have more involvement in the process of preparing the body... There's something

really healing about being able to do that work when someone close to you dies. There's kind of a last act.

When you go to a wake, you get a couple of hours with that body. When you have the body at home, you can spend as much time to sit with the body - in the middle of the night, if you want. There's much more opportunity to go through that initial grieving.

**MR:** You mentioned fillings, but some people have a lot of metal, or ceramic, bionic components - what happens with them?

**JL:** They're collected after the body is burned, with cremation. With burial, they're buried. If you think about all the toxins we have in our body - if somebody, say, has cancer at the end of their life, and has chemotherapy...

Nothing is perfect, here. It's not like we're completely pristine.

**MR:** Where is the closest place people seeking green burial can go?

**JL:** In Massachusetts, there are some towns, and some private cemeteries, that do allow natural burial. Some towns are only for residents, but some do allow non-residents.

For example, Shutesbury allows non-residents, and they have a green section. Leyden. Wildwood Cemetery in Amherst, a private cemetery, allows natural burial. Chesterfield allows non-residents.

We really encourage people to do your homework - call your city or town. If there's a particular cemetery that you have your eye on, then I would inquire, because this is something that more and more people are asking for. I think things are beginning to change, a little bit, with wanting to offer that as an alternative.

**MR:** You've alluded to things changing, and this demographic, the baby boom generation. What are other trends you're seeing, as this part of our population gets older, in terms of how as a society we're approaching the end of life, and death?

**JL:** There's a rise in cremation rates. Some of that has to do with the fact that we're more mobile. It used to be that we would live and die in the same town - you'd get your plot and that would be it. But if you're retiring in Florida or the Southwest, it might not necessarily be practical; your family members might not live in that town anymore.

And it's cheaper. So it's definitely been on the increase.

When I was growing up, I was raised in a Catholic family, and we would have these big, multi-day wakes in the funeral home. And that doesn't happen much anymore - you're seeing one session of viewing in the funeral home.

A lot of people are looking at a much simpler kind of ritual. And you see **BIG PICTURE** next page

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**BIG PICTURE** from prev pg

see more customization – memorials celebrating the life of the person, bringing pictures and stories about that person, in a way that's different from how it was when I was growing up.

People want to have more involvement at the end of life. Just like with the hospice movement – having people at home. There is lots of research that points to the fact that people prefer to die at home, and so being able to take care of the person you love, and play more of a role in the whole process, is starting to happen.

And I think environmental concerns, for certain people, are having an effect on how they think about their end-of-life options.

**MR:** More planning, and forethought, around these things.

**JL:** That's certainly the hope. We often spend more time doing research on buying a car than taking care of what happens at the end of life.

I think it's really important that we do think about how we want to go out, and what's meaningful to us. That's different than it used to be.

**MR:** Death is still, generally, a pretty expensive event for families. What kind of aid is currently available to families who can't afford as much as they'd like to?

**JL:** The average cost of a funeral and burial is about \$10,000. There are organizations, like the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Western Mass, that do surveys of funeral homes, breaking down all of the services, so you can do that kind of research

ahead of time.

You can buy a whole package; you can buy a la carte: you can have the funeral home take care of certain services, and do other things on your own. We have much more access to information now, and the Federal Trade Commission requires that funeral homes provide information to anyone seeking the costs of their goods and services.

It really does pay to do your research – you can have a cremation package, for example, set at a price, and across the street it could be \$1,000 less.

But yeah – it's expensive to die, in this country.

**MR:** These days there's a lot of households with "negative net worth," even.

**JL:** And families shoulder that burden –

**MR:** As additional debt.

**JL:** Yeah.

I think we're conditioned that we're not paying respect to the person who died unless we buy the fanciest casket, or have the biggest service. We fall into that trap. Funeral consumers' groups try to put information into the hands of people, to say "do some comparison shopping," because yeah, families do incur that debt, and it can be a lot less expensive when you're going in, not in the hour of grief, right? But ahead of time.

Because on top of everything else, the last thing you want to worry about is paying for it. And if you don't have a life insurance policy that will cover that kind of thing...

**MR:** I'm seeing, so often, people put up crowdfunding appeals – especially in the wake of sudden deaths – to help families cover funeral costs. It's almost, in some scenes or communities, the norm already at this point...

That always seems scary to me, when I see that, but I guess in part that could be supplanting institutional support that existed earlier: churches, or societies; that's just how that resource-pooling looks now.

**JL:** Right. What it's come to, in a way – I think that's true. And people don't have information about how to make it a little more affordable – you could make a casket; you could buy a casket third party and bring it to the funeral home, they're required to accept them. You can buy a casket at Costco!

For natural burial, you can use reinforced cardboard. [Montague weaver] Mary Lauren Fraser is doing the willow baskets. There are places that sell shrouds, which are also beautiful.

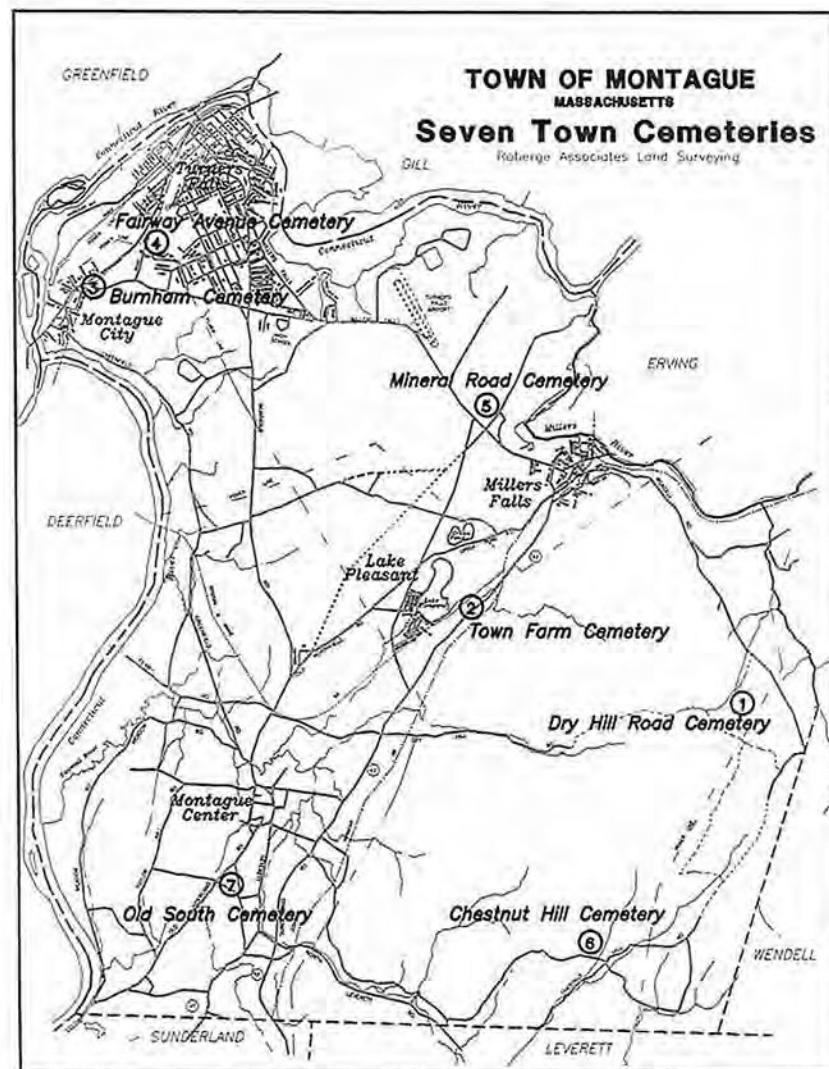
The takeaway is, there are a lot of ways to do it, and we can get creative.

My wife's aunt and uncle had some property up in the Adirondacks, and they wanted to dig their graves – it was a family project to dig their graves. They'll be buried on their land.

**MR:** That's some DIY ethos!

**JL:** There's something really meaningful about that, for people who want that.

And it's not for everybody – that's important. The funeral industry has



its place, and there are people who would prefer to do that. And there are other options, too, that can be meaningful.

When my father died, years ago, my brothers and I wanted to close the grave – we wanted to put the dirt on and bury him – and we weren't allowed to do that, because of the rules of the cemetery: liability or whatever. And that would have been a really meaningful thing for us, but it wasn't

an option, then.

**MR:** Is there anything you wished we'd touched on that I haven't asked?

**JL:** I don't think so....

It would be great to have some people who were interested in cemeteries join the cemetery commission – we would totally welcome that!



**TFHS SPORTS** from page A1

the 400-yard freestyle relay race. Jade Tyler finished first in the 200-yard IM (3:34.47) and the 100-yard backstroke (1:13.06).

Olivia Whittier also won two individual events. She completed the 50-yard freestyle in 28.87 and the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:18.56.

The relay quartet of Catie Reynolds, Allison Wheeler, Whittier, and Tyler won their event in 5:16.98.

In the boys' meet, Nick Taylor had Turners' only first place finish: the 500-yard freestyle, which he completed in 6:29.06. The rest of Powertown's points came from second- and third-place finishes.

**Boys Basketball**

Belchertown 72 – TFHS 67

On Thursday, January 11, the Belchertown Orioles came to town and defeated Blue 72-67.

Turners played the first quarter tough even when they were down by 6 points early, 16-22. An Anthony Peterson field goal sandwiched between two 3-pointers by Tyler Lavin gave the Tribe the lead, 24-22, after one period.

Turners maintained their lead until there was 2:43 left in the quarter. That's when the Birds went on a tear, outscoring Powertown 11-2 to give them a 42-34 halftime lead.

In the third, Turners chipped into the lead and trailed just 47-49 at 2:43 of the period. But foul trouble and a last-second bucket by Belchertown put the deficit back to 5 points, 58-53, going into the fourth.

Turners kept pace for most of the final quarter, but the Orioles went on another tear, expanding a 3-point lead to 9 points, 70-61. An intentional foul followed by three pointers by Chase Novak and Lavin made the final score 72-67.



Turners' Tyler Murray-Lavin goes up for a shot against Belchertown defender Colin Laramee last Thursday.

Peterson led Turners by hitting eight buckets inside the arc and sinking five free throws for a total of 21 points. Lavin hit four 3s on his way to a 16-point night.

Novak and Jimmy Vaughn also hit 3-pointers, with Novak scoring 12 points and Vaughn netting 7. Javoni Williams (5), Jon Fritz (4) and Jovanni Ruggiano (2) also scored for Blue.

**Girls Basketball**

TFHS 52 – Palmer 49  
Mahar 61 – TFHS 45

Last Wednesday, January 10, the Powertown Girls answered a couple of questions: Can the Tribe come back after trailing in the second quarter? Can they win the close ones?

The Blue Ladies have never trailed after one quarter this season. That is, until Wednesday. Also,

earlier this season, Turners lost two close games: against Lenox (32-34) and Putnam (31-33).

In the first quarter, Turners took an early lead when Maddy Chmyzinski landed a 3-pointer from way outside the arc, putting the Tribe up 11-5. But costly fouls and a late Palmer basket gave the Cats a 17-14 lead after one full.

Early in the second quarter the Panthers stretched their lead to 6 points, 22-16, and that's when the game got physical. Very physical. Girls from both squads were getting banged up, and at 3:50 of the period, Chmyzinski was hit hard and had to be helped off the court.

Turners took advantage of their aggressive foes as Chloe Ellis began driving to the hoop. She bravely forced her way through the defense and drew several fouls. This helped Powertown claw their way back into the game, and by the time Maddy returned, Turners had a 1 point lead, 25-24.

Then she hit another 3, and Blue went up 28-24.

When Palmer got the ball, Chmyzinski committed a foul herself, but Turners got it back and with 7.4 seconds left in the half, she drew another foul. Chmyzinski sunk both shots and the Tribe went into the locker room, leading by 6 points, 30-24.

In the third, Palmer had a comeback of their own and pulled within 1 point with 16.1 seconds left. Then a Blue foul and a backcourt violation put Palmer back in the lead 37-36 going into the final period.

The game remained tight in the fourth, with Palmer winning the battle of the rebounds and Blue making steals. Palmer scored with 20 seconds left to make it a three-point game, 52-49.

Then Palmer stole the ball. But

unlike the Vikings, they couldn't pull out a last-second miracle, as their last ditch three-pointer missed, giving Turners the hard-fought victory.

Ellis was the high scorer for Blue, with 17 points, even though she made only four field goals. Her other 9 points came off foul shots.

Chmyzinski only hit two baskets in the game, but they were both from 3-point land. Her other 5 points came from the foul line, giving her 11 points total.

Abby Loynd also hit two 3s and ended with 10 points. Dabney Rollins got the other 3-pointer on her way to posting 7 points, and Taylor Murphy added 4 points, while Aliyah Sanders got 3.

Then on Thursday January 11, the Turners Falls Girls Basketball Team had an even more important question to answer: Could they beat a good team without Maddy Chmyzinski?

In the first half, it certainly seemed they could, trailing Mahar by just a point, 24-25 at halftime. But in the third period, Turners only managed to score 3 points to Mahar's 20, and although they outscored Mahar in the fourth, they lost the game 61-45.

Sanders led Blue with 12 points, highlighted by two 3-pointers. Ellis made two field goals and shot seven free throws for 11 points.

Loynd hit two 3's and two foul shots for 8 points. Sarah Waldron sunk a 3 and hit two free throws for 5 points.

Murphy also scored 5 points off two field goals and two free-bees, and both Dabney Rollins and Emma Miner hit 2-pointers.



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**PIGEONS** from page A1

but not cattle, pigs, or chickens.

Before the telegraph, messenger pigeons were often the best way to send important communications. The ancient Persians may have been the first to train homing pigeons, and use of pigeons was ubiquitous in ancient Greece and Rome as well. For example, it is documented that the Greeks used pigeons to announce the winners of the Olympic Games to the cities of the Peloponnese.

Classical civilizations also pioneered the use of pigeons in military matters – Julius Caesar used them for military communication in his invasion of Gaul.

For some members of the Northwest Junior Flyers, animal husbandry is more important than racing. “I grew up on a small farm,” says French. “I love animals, especially avians. I’ve always thought [pigeons] were pretty.” French raises chickens as well. “They’re fascinated by chickens. They’ll sit by the chickens, and watch them for hours.”

**Valor Under Fire**

The domestic pigeon was brought around the world with the colonial powers, where they eventually escaped from captivity. The populations of pigeons in our cities today are feral birds descended from these avian colonizers.

Most people do not see these birds for their prior function as messengers because this function was usurped by the telegraph over a century ago. Obsolescence is not just something that happens to machines, but can happen to working animals as well. In their sudden purposelessness, our urban pigeons are kin to the dead payphones that stand like memorials on many of our street corners.

Pigeons have been used extensively in warfare in modern times. Their use was popularized during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. During the siege of Paris, messenger pigeons were airlifted out of the city by balloon, then loaded with messages on microfilm and released to fly back to their lofts inside – if they successfully avoided the hawks used by the Germans to kill them.

Thousands of pigeons fought on both sides during the world wars. In the air force, pigeons were carried aloft in the cockpits of planes and physically thrown outside, away from the propellers, in order to report on the success or failure of the mission.

Pigeons were used in intelligence as well. Pigeon photography was invented before World War I by a German apothecary who used pigeons to deliver medications. Intelligence pigeons wore tiny, time-delayed

cameras to take photos of enemy territory.

Many American pigeons have been recognized for their bravery and valor under fire.

There was “The Mocker,” who flew 52 missions before being wounded.

Pigeon Cher Ami was badly maimed, losing an eye and a foot, but managed to deliver a message attached to the stump of its destroyed leg that saved 194 infantrymen of the unit later glorified as “the lost battalion.” It read: “WE ARE ALONG THE ROAD PARALLEL 276.4. OUR ARTILLERY IS DROPPING A BARRAGE DIRECTLY ON US. FOR HEAVENS SAKE STOP IT.”

A previous message, delivered by a different pigeon, had requested that artillery bombard their location. For clearing up this confusion, the French awarded Cher Ami the Croix de Guerre.

During World War II, the pigeon G.I. Joe saved over a thousand allied soldiers from being blown to pieces by their own bombers in Italy, and lived to be 18 years old. He is now stuffed at the U.S. Army’s Communications Electronics Museum in New Jersey. 32 pigeons during the world wars received the UK’s Dickin Medal, “for conspicuous gallantry,” the highest honor bestowed on animals.

“Pigeon posts” operated as letter carrying services in many remote places before the telegraph. Pigeons brought mail between Catalina Island and Los Angeles, Nova Scotia’s islands and the capital Halifax, and New Zealand’s Great Barrier Island and the city of Auckland.

Pigeons still prove their usefulness in carrying communications out of the remote wilderness. Rocky Mountain Adventures, a rafting company in Colorado, uses pigeons to fly thumbdrives of digital photos back to their base camp for printing.

Important commercial information also has long been transported by pigeon. The success of the Rothschild family’s private Pan-European communication network, in which pigeons played a crucial role, was likely the cause for a vogue in pigeon communication among Europe’s financiers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Rothschilds were notorious for their advance information, which gave them an edge over their competitors in finance.

Nathan Rothschild, chief financier of the British war effort during the Napoleonic Wars, was notified through his family network of Bonaparte’s defeat at Waterloo a full day before the message reached London through government channels.



Club member Robert Nehring says he “has been fascinated with birds my entire life.” “My dream is that global warming stops killing all the birds, and other animals,” he tells our reporter.

**Bred to Race**

The modern sport of pigeon racing originated in Belgium. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Belgian pigeon fanciers began a program of systematic breeding like breeding programs found in horse racing and other animal sports.

The products of this program were the *voyageurs*: a new breed of fast-flying pigeon with incredible endurance. The pigeons raced today, known as “racing homers,” are descended from the *voyageurs*.

Pigeons often disappear during racing and training because of the many dangers of the air: weather, hawks, airplanes. This is one reason why pigeons are not given sentimental names, but are named according to their lineage: the people who bred them.

Tessier has a bird from a valuable bloodline known as a “Mars-Gordon.” “They came from Europe – they’re Osmond’s,” Tessier explains. “High-falutin’ business man in Boston bought them. Thought they were runts, but then he won the Boston Concourse.”

Most pigeon races involve one starting line and many finish lines. Pigeons are loaded into a special trailer and driven to a race point, up to 700 miles from their homes. The next day, the pigeons are released, and they fly home to their respective lofts. The club hires a local driver to accomplish this.

With their travel time and distance-flown, each bird’s average speed can be calculated, the winner being the bird with the highest average speed. Pigeons travel relatively fast – averaging around 45 m.p.h. According to Zachary Zowalski, the club’s second-term president of the club, “If you release a bird and try to beat it home, you’ll never do it.”

In recent years a style of racing known as “One-Loft” has become popular, in which all pigeons are trained by a single trainer and share the same home loft. One-loft racing has led to a focus on the abilities of the individual pigeon and its genetics, as opposed to the skill of its owner. The one-loft format proves which pigeon, and bloodline, is the fastest.

The South African Million Dollar Pigeon Race, a one-loft race, pays-out \$1.3 million in cash to the winners, with the overall winner taking \$200,000. (This is much larger than prizes for winning

NASCAR races, but smaller than that of the Tour de France, in which the winner takes home \$500,000.) I asked a club member identified as “Mo” if any of the Flyers participate in the South African race. “None of the guys around here,” he replied. “You have to be a millionaire to be in that race.”

The Flyers briefly enter the world of big-bucks racing during their bird auction. This auction, which generates most of their funding through selling winning pigeons, is their biggest event of the year. “They have bloodlines that sell for thousands of dollars,” says club member Astrid Halten. “People come from far and wide – foreigners, China and California.”

Training regimes are crucial to success in pigeon racing. With new birds, the goal is to train their homing abilities. The fancier must help them learn where their loft is within their 1,500 mile homing range.

### Raising pigeons, like raising any animal, is a window into the natural world and its vital processes.

Tessier, in his guide to raising pigeons, has listed nine steps to train young birds for their first race. The trainer helps them learn their territory in stages, releasing them and allowing them to fly home from various distances. Young Bird races are between 75 and 300 miles.

Training strategies for old birds vary widely, and many trainers keep their processes a closely-held secret.

One strategy uses the pigeons’ relationship preferences for encouragement: “Most people don’t realize this but pigeons are affectionate,” says French. “They mate for life.” With this training technique, the pigeon is only allowed to see its mate upon returning from a race.

Halten believes that diet and hygiene are most important for winning birds. “It’s all about food,” she explains. “And their lofts – making them something that they want to come to. Fresh food, fresh water, baths.” She also believes they need human love: “They like to be handled; talking to them.”

Halten gives her birds apple cider vinegar, garlic, and probiotics.

She has them bathe in borax.

**A Nebulous Fascination**

Pigeon racing is about expectancy, anxiety, and joy: people race to experience their return. “The thing that’s the most exciting is to sit in your backyard and wait for them to come in,” says Tessier. “There’s nothing else like it. They come in like a bullet.”

The love of pigeon racing may come from its literal performance of the well-known quote first published in the 1969 book *I Ain’t Much Baby – But I’m All I’ve Got* by Jess Lair: “If you love something, set it free. If it comes back, it’s yours.”

For some, associations with pigeon racing go beyond the secular and into the religious world: every pigeon return can be like the welcome return of Noah’s dove. “It’s a spiritual thing,” says Halten. “They go back to the Bible.”

Raising pigeons, like raising any animal, is a window into the natural world and its vital processes. It’s one way to teach children the importance of responsibility and care for the natural world, and can instill a sense of wonder in people of any age.

Thirteen-year-old club member Robert Nehring tells me that he “has been fascinated with birds my entire life.” He has many birds, including male and female cockatiels. “Cockatiels are valued at up to \$120,” he says. “Cockatoos up to \$1,000.”

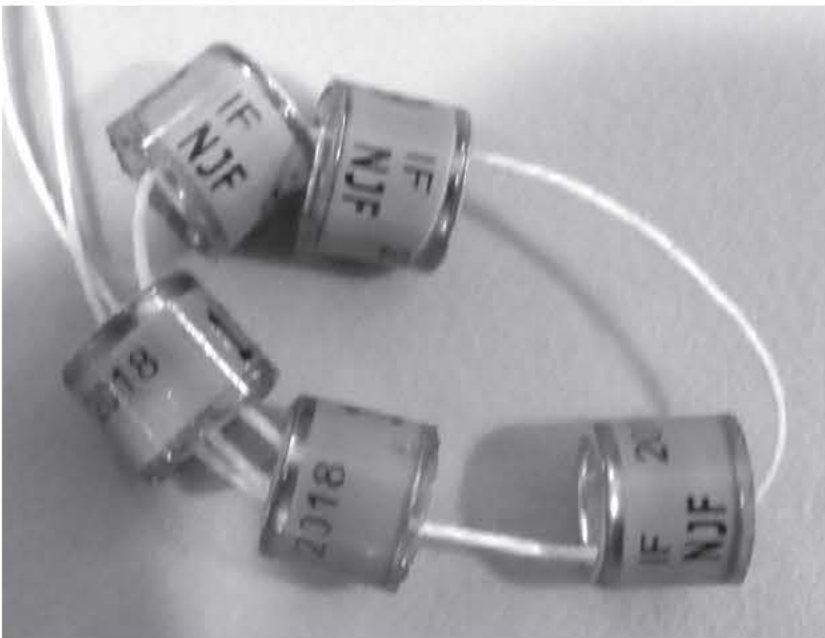
Raising birds makes Nehring contemplate survival, but not in the mythical, deluvian sense. His thoughts are more focused on the present: “My dream is that global warming stops killing all the birds and other animals.”

Members of the Northwest Junior Flyers share an ill-defined and nebulous fascination with pigeons.

Maybe it’s the bird’s intelligence that compels: “If it’s a thinking bird, you can see it in its eyes,” explains Halten. Or maybe it’s their heartwarming and longed-for ability to, unlike many humans, mate for life and always return home. Or it could be their strength as symbols in the rich categories of hope, peace, life, love, and death.

Whatever it is that makes people want to raise pigeons, all seem to agree with Marguerite French’s feelings on these long-kept companions of humanity: “They’re very curious, and I find them pretty cool!”

PETE WACKERNAGEL PHOTO



Tags used to identify pigeons: “IF” stands for the International Federation of American Homing Pigeons; “NJF” is for the Northwest Junior Flyers.

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**GRASSROOTS** from page A1  
off and destroyed many of her belongings.

A month after the hurricane hit, Ortiz was at last able to reach his mother by phone, and the tears flowed again.

Ortiz, who lives in Turners with his wife Leticia, who works at Australis Aquaculture, and their two children, says he is in touch with his mother more frequently now, and has sent her down a care package of coffee, lanterns, batteries, and – at her request – raisins.

More than a month after the hurricane struck, FEMA finally opened a disaster relief center in Caguas to help with rebuilding damaged homes and infrastructure in the city. Ortiz said they offered his blind mother a check for \$2,500 to repair her roof.

“You try finding materials and a contractor to fix the roof on a 600-square foot house on the island for \$2500,” said Ortiz. He noted everything imported to Puerto Rico is more expensive due to the Jones Act, a law restricting imports to the island to US-flagged carriers.

Congressional leaders like John McCain urged the Trump Administration to waive the 1920 law for a year to speed the delivery of relief aid for Puerto Rico. McCain said the Jones Act roughly doubles the cost of goods delivered to the US territory.

Trump waived the law for just 10 days, during which time he put in a brief, tone deaf appearance in Puerto Rico to cheer the populace with comparisons to “real catastrophes” like Katrina and to toss out paper towels to storm survivors.

Before departing, he gave himself a “10” for the excellence of his administration’s clean-up response.

“Why do you think,” I asked Ortiz, “that power was restored in Houston and Galveston to 96% of the population within two weeks of Hurricane Harvey, while tonight, in Puerto Rico, nearly half the population is still without electricity four months after the storm?”

“Obviously, it’s an island,” he replied. “You have to import everything. And – we’re not white. If we were white, Puerto Rico would have power.”

He added, “It’s racism, pure and simple.”

**From Protest To Mutual Aid**

On Friday, January 12, Aurora Santiago-Ortiz (no relation to Fernando) and her husband Jorell Melendez-Badillo addressed an all ages crowd at the Brick House Community Resource Center on Third Street in Turners.

They spoke about the legacy of colonialism in Puerto Rico and the organizing that led to seemingly spontaneous examples of voluntary citizen disaster relief on the island, and within the growing Borinqueño diaspora on the mainland in the wake of Hurricane Maria.

Santiago-Ortiz and Melendez-Badillo – who arrived ten minutes late to the talk after being stopped on Third Street by the police for a supposed traffic violation, then let go with a warning after a thorough check of their IDs – are graduate students at UMass-Amherst, he in History, she in Social Justice Education.

They said for the past decade, people who were either students or participants in the major strike at the University of Puerto Rico in 2010-2011 have been busy with grassroots organizing in urban centers and across the island, in tandem

with cultural outreach by radical artist collectives, like Papel Machete.

Papel Machete trained with and toured with the Bread and Puppet Theater, from Glover, VT, and brings their giant puppet masks to participate in many of the demonstrations and cultural events in Puerto Rico, such as the annual Titeretada, held on World Puppetry Day.

The student strike at UPR was called in protest of massive government layoffs and cutbacks in the wake of the 2008-9 recession, and was joined by artists, professors, and union workers – and even punk rock musicians like Melendez-Badillo, who brought out his band the Antisociales to raise the spirits of the striking students.

Together, these disparate groups have continued to nurture a network of social infrastructure that has matured, which enabled free kitchens and clinics to spring into action across the territory in the immediate aftermath of Maria, long before formal government support ever reached places like Caguas following Maria.

**They said up to 500,000 of Puerto Rico’s population of 3.5 million have left the island since the storm, 300,000 to Florida alone. As they flee, wealthy investors are acquiring the property for next to nothing.**

“FEMA says, ‘here is what we will give you, take it.’ We say, ‘listen to what the people want, then help them,’” said Santiago-Ortiz.

“We don’t have public libraries in Puerto Rico,” said Melendez-Badillo, giving one example. So they organized and put books out on the street for people to take for free.

“I believe in the independence and sovereignty of Puerto Rico,” said Melendez-Badillo. “But for now, we are second-class citizens.”

Last year, the government, unable to pay its bondholders, announced a new round of massive cutbacks to education and public expenditures, leading to a renewed student strike at the University.

**Dependency’s Legacy**

Boriken was once the name the indigenous Taino people gave their island, long before the Spanish arrived. Caguas is named after the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Taino cacique Caguax. The island he knew was a lush, tropical land where the tradition of native self-sufficiency was broken by the military might of the invading Spaniards, ushering in centuries of colonial rule.

Under the Spanish, the island’s arable land was put to use for coffee and sugar plantations, and the tradition of self sufficiency gave way to the practice of importing the island’s food.

The island was taken by the United States in the Spanish-American War in 1898, amid a virulent attack of Yellow Journalism and the cry of “Remember the Maine!” – after that warship mysteriously sank in Havana harbor, with the loss of 261 of her crew, following an explosion that may have been caused, not by a Spanish mine, but by coal gas spontaneously igniting in her boiler room.

Today, Melendez-Badillo said,

Puerto Rico imports 85% of its food, at inflated prices, with 11.5% sales tax added on.

After the hurricane, Santiago-Ortiz said, people could not find vegetables in the supermarkets, once they were reopened. “People are dying now of hunger in Puerto Rico,” she said. “So a lot of social kitchens have been sprouting up,” in the absence of effective outside relief.

The two visiting scholars pegged Puerto Rico’s death toll from Maria at 1,056, roughly double the government’s official estimate – putting it right up there with the so-called “real catastrophe” of Katrina. But Santiago-Ortiz spoke of the “bodies incinerated, bodies lying salted in the parking lots” when power failed in the hospitals and morgues, and implied a true death toll from the hurricane will never be known.

“Doctors were operating by flashlight,” she said.

Now, as the shape of the recovery comes more clearly into focus, Santiago-Ortiz and Melendez-Badillo said government policy, both on the island and in Washington DC, appears to favor the bondholders seeking repayment of loans over the immediate needs of a population still suffering in many parts of the island from the lack of clean running water and electricity.

They said up to 500,000 of Puerto Rico’s population of 3.5 million have left the island since the storm, 300,000 to Florida alone. As they flee unbearable conditions, corporations are snapping up the land and wealthy investors acquiring their property for next to nothing, they said.

“The state is basically pushing people out,” said Melendez-Badillo.

**Lending A Hand**

About two dozen people devoted most of a Friday evening to the forum at the Brick House. During the discussion, a young woman in the crowd said that 900 new residents of Hampshire and Franklin counties had arrived here from Puerto Rico since the storm.

By evening’s end, a notepad had circulated around the room, gathering signatures of people who were willing to help cook fresh food for some of these climate refugees, who need help adjusting to their new communities.

Presently, a large number of Puerto Rican refugees are being sheltered locally in places like the Quality Inn, and reduced to subsisting on microwaved food in their rooms, living in isolation.

The group hosting the event said they could be reached at [gf-books-throughbars@riseup.net](mailto:gf-books-throughbars@riseup.net) for information about helping with the cooking project, or to donate food, money or other supplies. (Donations can also be dropped off at the Community Action Family Center on Federal Street in Greenfield.)

In addition to local efforts to aid the Borinqueño diaspora, Santiago-Ortiz recommended giving to reputable relief efforts like the Maria Fund or Taller Salud in Loiza.

Meanwhile, Don and Judy Campbell, of Northfield, helped out by donating a portable phone to Fernando Ortiz’ mother in Caguas recently. Now he is able to stay closely in touch with her, and though four months after Maria she still doesn’t have power, a neighbor of hers gave her a small battery-powered transistor radio.

“So she does have music now,” Ortiz said. “That helps.”



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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was January 17, 2008: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

**Prospect Street Bridge Replacement Nears**

On the last day of December, at about 7:30 in the morning, Barbara Shamo, of Prospect Street, was trying to get to her job at Greenfield Savings Bank in a snowstorm. The town plow had recently come up Unity Street and left a windrow blocking the exit from the Jersey barricade alley that has served as the only way in or out of that end of Prospect Street for the last many years.

Blocked from going forward, Shamo found she was unable to back up in the narrow space. With the snow still falling thickly, she turned to a neighbor for help getting out, but the neighbor, Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, was unable to get her car out of the drifted snow and injured his back in the process of shoveling and pushing. She was stuck there for about forty-five minutes, as other cars attempted to access Prospect Street, and gave up the attempt.

“It suddenly became very evident what the issue is here,” said Sawyer-Lauçanno. “Suppose an ambulance has to get down the street today? Suppose there’s a fire? We have to get that bridge open.”

The bridge is the beautiful old barrel vault bridge that arches over Spring Street, and for the better part of a century connected one end of Prospect Street to the other. Since 1999, the bridge has been closed, and the neighborhood pinched off in the middle, accessible by pedestrian traffic, or by a complicated

series of left turns from downtown, or by a death-defying lunge against opposing traffic heading up around the bend of Unity. The bridge was closed because “the concrete under the bridge was cracking and becoming unstable,” said DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron.

Residents will have an opportunity to vote on special easements required to repair the bridge at the Wednesday January 23 special town meeting. The project has recently been fast-tracked, and funded to the tune of \$2.1 million, by Mass Highway.

**Hallmark Museum Expands**

It’s taken nearly six months and countless hours of design, construction and preparation, but as of this weekend the Hallmark Museum of Contemporary Photography has expanded across the Avenue to an additional location, in the Crocker Building at Second Street and Avenue A.

The elegant new interior – 2,300 square feet, with approximately 350 linear feet of exhibit space – consists of three galleries, an exhibit preparation area, a conference room, and a small photography bookshop.

George Rosa III, the museum’s founder and president, could not be more thrilled. “This undertaking is one of the most exciting and rewarding ventures of my life,” he said. “It allows me to give even greater recognition to the important role photography and photographers play in our daily lives. And, I believe it will be good for the greater Turners Falls community that has been so kind to me for so many years.”

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**PRIORITIES** from page A1

widely seen as needed?

Interviews with town officials suggest that the highway garage proposal emerged just as feasibility studies were underway for two other major capital projects – a new library, and a new senior center. A consensus developed, without much public discussion, that the garage was a higher priority.

**Library**

A new library – or a major renovation of the current Carnegie Library, which was built in 1905 – has been a topic of discussion for nearly two decades. The library is considered too small for its current holdings, and has significant structural and air quality problems, as well as limited parking.

According to head librarian Linda Hickman, a library building committee was established in 1999. In 2003, the town was awarded \$1.8 million by the state for a renovation and extension of the current library.

But by 2004, the estimated price tag had increased to \$6.4 million. And by that time, the high school building project was hitting town property taxpayers, and a new police station, which would be completed in 2009, was waiting in the wings.

As a result, the library proposal never went to town meeting.

In 2015, the library project surfaced once again when the former Ste. Anne's church, located on J Street in downtown Turners Falls, was purchased by a developer. The town came into possession of the

Ste. Anne's rectory through tax title, and the church itself was considered a potential option for a new library.

An architectural firm produced a proposal with a price tag of \$4.5 million, but the state, according to Hickman, was not in favor of the Ste. Anne's option.

**Senior Center**

Another building that has been the object of serious discussion in recent years is the senior center. The current center on Fifth Street, formerly a church and then the location of the Turners Falls Athletic Club, is widely considered too small for its expanded program offerings.

A planning committee was formed, an architectural firm hired, and a feasibility study produced in 2015. That study recommended the construction of a new senior and community center, with a price tag of \$4.7 million, at the site of the former "Cumberland Farms building" at Avenue A and Second Street.

After that, according to Council on Aging director Roberta Potter, there was "very little movement." The town purchased the building that houses the current senior center, which it formerly leased from Powertown Apartments, and made improvements including a paint job in October 2016.

Meanwhile, a proposal by a rafting company Crab Apple White-water to purchase and renovate the "Cumby's" building is pending, but supported by the selectboard.

Potter says that by the time the senior center study was completed, it already seemed the highway ga-

rage project had become the higher priority. "I have no negative feelings about that," she told this newspaper. "The town needs both."

**Debt Impact**

Town administrator Steve Ellis says the highway garage proposal will impact Montague's ability to finance other projects. The town is currently paying about \$400,000 in annual debt service for the public safety complex, and about \$132,000 for the high school renovation. Ellis estimates that the highway garage, at its current price tag of \$11.1 million, could add \$750,000 to that annual debt expense.

Greg Garrison, who serves on both the finance and capital improvements committees, suggested that the town needed to consider funding the public works project without having to pass a Proposition 2-1/2 debt exclusion. (In Massachusetts, such votes are necessary to raise property taxes above the 2.5% limit for particular projects.)

But this would require a discussion of what programs to cut in order to finance \$750,000 in annual debt while staying under the tax "levy limit" imposed by the proposition.

Ellis says the town may have to wait another decade, until the public safety complex debt is paid off in 2028, to embark on another major project after a public works facility is built.

But rumors that we may have to wait "ten to twenty years" to consider a new library, Ellis believes, are far too pessimistic.



Last week we printed a tribute to Greg Ellis, who died four years ago this month in a tragic automobile accident. We didn't realize it, but the picture wasn't of Greg with his son – it was Greg with his father!

"This year, Greg's memorial is also a tribute to his dad John," his mom, Joanne, wrote in a note we overlooked. "My children have always been blessed to have such an amazing Dad."

We apologize for our mistake, and send well wishes to all of Greg's family and friends.

**Reporter Given An Opportunity To "Grow"**

**TURNERS FALLS** – The Montague Reporter is proud to announce we have been awarded a Grow Grant by the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund. This will allow us to provide modest stipends this year for two journalists-in-training who want to investigate potential environmental justice issues affecting Montague, Gill, and Erving.

The project will be overseen by our managing editor, Mike Jackson, and science editor Lisa McLoughlin. If you know of an environmental issue in need of investigation, or a local resident who might want to try their hand at journalism, contact us at [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)!

About the Fund: "The New Eng-

land Grassroots Environment Fund (Grassroots Fund) energizes and nurtures long-term civic engagement in local initiatives that create and maintain healthy, just, safe and sustainable communities using stories, tools and dollars to fuel local activism and social change.

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# MoRe

## Montague On Ice: A Police Log Retrospective

Compiled by EMILY ALLING Illustrations by NINA ROSSI

Monday, 3/10/14



2:07 p.m. Caller concerned about people on possibly unsafe river ice near Canal Street bridge. Responding officer did not find people on ice, but did find a hole in the sidewalk of the bridge over the river through which a person could fall into the water below. Mass Highway notified; unsure whether they are responsible; looking into it. DPW notified; advised that this is Mass Highway's responsibility and that the town can't put anything over the area due to liability issues. Spoke with Mass Highway again; they will be sending someone out.

Monday, 1/12/15

1:02 p.m. Report of subject stomping on ice below the dam, possibly trying to make holes for ice fishing. TFFD advised subject to get off the ice.

Wednesday, 1/14/15

4:45 p.m. Caller reports that he can see two youths on the ice near the town hall/fish ladder area and they are pulling what appears to be skate ramps onto the ice. This was found to be adults that were on the river bank filling plastic containers with water. Subjects warned of danger due to the ice and dam so close by.

Saturday, 2/28/15

2:09 p.m. Northfield Mountain control room reports that their surveillance cameras are showing a man in the middle of the ice between the buoys and the dam. Party appears to be scuffing out letters in the ice. Officers and TFFD

responding. Subject refusing to come back in from the ice and is walking further away, toward the dam. Additional assistance requested. Gill PD en route. Subject remains non-compliant and is holding what appears to be an ice pick. Subject apprehended.

Tuesday, 3/10/15

1:39 p.m. Several callers concerned about swans on the ice under the dam. Two or three swans appear to be deceased; one may still be alive. Environmental police notified.

Tuesday, 1/12/16

8:12 a.m. Officer reports that the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge is becoming very icy due to the dam being open and the spray coming up. MassHighway notified and will be en route.



Wednesday, 1/20/17

4:41 p.m. Report of subject on ice by the rocks and dam below the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Subject did not appear to be in distress, but caller observed the ice to be broken in that area and did not believe that the ice was stable/safe. TFFD and officer advised. Confirmed subject was not in distress.



## Weaver's New Book Tells the Story of Wool

By NINA ROSSI

**BUCKLAND** – Peggy Hart designs and produces hundreds of blankets and throws, using old industrial looms in her barn workshop. She specializes in custom blankets for sheep and alpaca farmers using their own yarn. She is also a teacher, giving talks across the country at various textile conferences, museums, and guild fairs on the history of the textile industry in the United States, and in particular the wool industry and the Crompton & Knowles Loom works, makers of the 1940s power looms she still uses today.

About five years ago, Peggy realized that she was on the cusp of a much larger project altogether. While attending a weaving conference, Peggy ran into someone from Schiffer Publishing and proposed the idea of a book on wool to them. Schiffer specializes in books on history, collectibles, arts and crafts; all publications that include plenty of images, which is something she knew she wanted to use a lot of.

"I hadn't said to myself I was writing a book – it wasn't what I set out to do," she says. "It just evolved that each talk I had was a chapter, and when I started stringing all these talks together, I started thinking, 'well maybe this is a book!'"

**Long Overdue**

The happy result is *Wool: Unraveling an American Story of Artisans and Innovation*, recently released

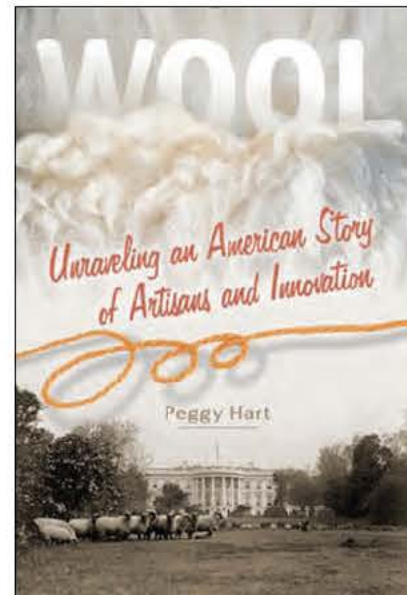
by Schiffer Publishing (Atglen, PA: 2017). Packed with over a hundred color and black-and-white photos and handsomely produced on a heavy white paper, the stylish volume might be the only history book on the subject of wool to be published in almost a hundred years.

Peggy, who was a history major in college, was surprised to learn that, "as important as it was to people, there wasn't a book about wool. There was this Harvard business historian who wrote *American Wool Manufacturing*, Volumes I and II, in 1921, and a guy that wrote *America's Sheep Trails* in the 1950s, and there are a number of books out recently about cotton. But there is nothing about wool."

Peggy did additional research for the book as she went about the country on her lecture circuit of guild fairs and sheep shows, visiting museums, historical societies, and library archives. "When you are writing a book, nobody is paying you to go to these museums and libraries, and so I started hitting whatever was within a day's orbit of my travels," she says.

"Locally, I went to Sturbridge, Old Deerfield, the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester... and the librarians were all fabulous. It was like they were waiting for people to come in the door, especially Sturbridge. They would dig stuff out for me: textiles, fabrics, all kinds of things, and let me take pictures."

Peggy likes the writing process.



"I've been a teacher, and had to put together lesson plans and organize information, so writing is just another way of doing that." She swears by what she calls the "envelope system," using the back of old envelopes to collect larger clumps of related information than the typical index card system of note taking.

The original focus of the book was to be a history of wool looms and the manufacturing process. Peggy realized along the way that it was really going to be a history of consumption. "Why did they stop the manufacturing of wool?" she asks. "It was because people stopped buying it. Why did people stop buying it? Synthetics."

**A Miracle Fiber**

The book covers several hundred years of the growth of wool as a commodity in the colonies and the rapidly growing young country. Wool was vital in keeping people warm, and sheep would keep them fed. Wool's scaly shaft makes it the "original miracle fiber," allowing it to trap heat, breathe, shed water, and stay warm when wet. It is also inflammable and is the only natural fiber with a crimp, making it stretchy. Wool was used for underwear, bedclothes, blankets, coats, rugs and most importantly, soldiers' uniforms.

The durability of wool is well illustrated by the following example from the book: in 1964, 14,000 bales of wool were raised from the bottom of the ocean from aboard the freighter *Oregon* which was sunk in WWII. After 22 years in the water, the cargo was all usable, except a

see **WOOL** page B8



Peggy Hart spins wool yarn on a great wheel during her *Linsey Woolsey* exhibit at Salmon Falls gallery a few years ago.

## CONCERT REVIEW

# Do It Now Does Not Disappoint At The Full Moon Coffeehouse

By DK KNAUER

**WENDELL** – On Saturday, January 13, a standing-room-only crowd at the Old Town Hall in Wendell had the opportunity to be part of a presentation by three Pioneer Valley artists. Paul Richmond, Tony Vacca, and John Sheldon performed "Do It Now," a fusion of spoken word and improvisational music.

As the title suggests, the overall theme of the performance was to encourage action; whether you are an advocate of social or political change or seeking to improve your own immediate world, the point is to address what needs to be done and to do it now.

Wendell resident Richmond, also founder of Human Error Publishing, was named the first Massachusetts Beat Poet Laureate in 2017. He is well known for coordinating and hosting the Greenfield Annual Word Fest (now called the Great Falls Word Festival and held in Turners Falls), and for participating in spoken word venues here in Massachu-



Richmond, Vacca and Sheldon perform "Do It Now" before an overflow crowd in Wendell last Saturday night.

sets as well as abroad.

Tony Vacca is a percussionist who has performed with well-known musicians, among them Sting. He uses a wide variety of instruments, ranging from various kinds of drums to a marimba and even includes a *donson'goni*, or hunter's harp, a stringed instrument from Burkina Faso, a West African country near Mali. He performed a

solo spoken word piece using this unusual instrument.

John Sheldon first came to the public's notice when he was seventeen and the lead guitarist for Van Morrison's band. He has written songs for James Taylor; has had his own bands; and, in addition, has composed and performed music for theater. He has also created and

see **FULL MOON** page B2

## WEST ALONG THE RIVER

### WINTER KEEPING

By DAVID BRULE

**ALONG THE MILLERS RIVER** – How to keep winter, and hang on until spring? We all have to, somehow. Many of us stay indoors, sheltering away from this cold snowy season. Yet others thrive on this adverse weather and spend days outdoors keeping an eye on winter things.

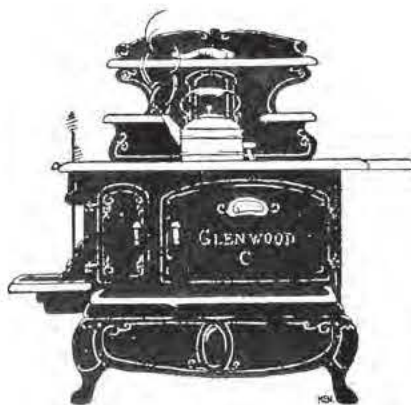
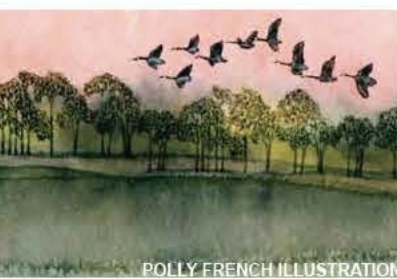


Illustration of a Glenwood C cook stove, by Henry Bugbee Kane.



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

I'm one of the latter, keeping track of the New Year's sun and its progress, the sullen then roaring river, the sparks from the snow-encircled night campfire rising up into Orion's sky.

Early frosty mornings, I consult a winter sun-dial of sorts. Mine is made up of that orb, and my roman numerals are the oddly-spaced sentinel pines lining the ridge over my valley. This sun dial tells me of our progress through the solar system.

Of course I know what time it is, in human terms, thanks to all the mechanical clocks in the house, but out here, the sun itself tells me where we are in solar seasonal time. Each morning the orb peeks over the ridge around 8:15, although the sky has been brightening for over an hour. But each day, imperceptibly, the sun comes up earlier and earlier, minute by minute, between the trunks of the pines just a degree

see **WEST ALONG** page B4

# Pets of the Week

We Guinea pigs love our veggies, and will call "wheet, wheeeet" when we see you bringing us some!

We live about four or five years.

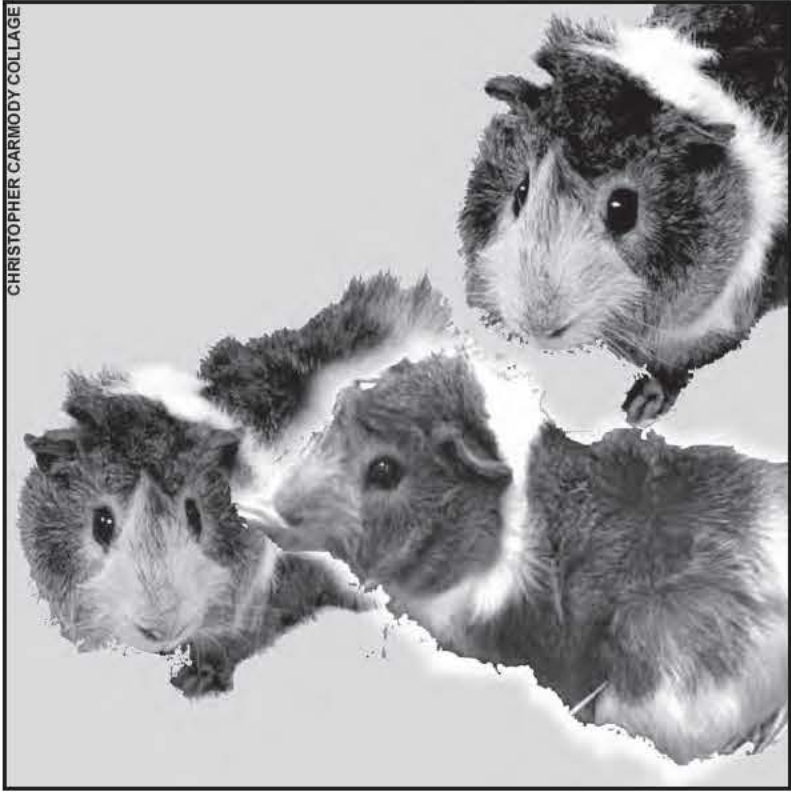
We are social creatures and require the company of other guinea pigs. We need spacious habitats equipped with hiding and napping places, things to climb on, safe wood to chew and guinea pig toys.

Our diet is: grass hay available all the time, with a small amount of timothy pellets, and daily veggies.

We don't make our own vitamin C, so we must get it daily from our diet. Veggies like red pepper, kale, mustard greens, dandelion greens, and other leafy greens are perfect for us!

Ask an adoption counselor about any other personality traits that we may have!

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



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE

## "ALMANAC"

### Senior Center Activities JANUARY 22 to 26

#### 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: 1/22**  
1 p.m. Knitting Circle  
**Tuesday: 1/23**  
10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga  
**Wednesday: 1/24**  
9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach  
12:30 p.m. Bingo  
**Thursday: 1/25**  
9 a.m. Tai Chi  
10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga  
1 p.m. Cards & Games  
**Friday: 1/26**  
1 p.m. Writing Group

#### LEVERETT

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

Flexibility and Balance Chair Yoga - Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free).

Senior Lunch - Fridays at

noon. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

#### 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, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

**Monday: 1/22**  
9:30 a.m. Healthy Bones  
10:30 a.m. Tai Chi  
No Lunch Served  
**Tuesday: 1/23**  
8:45 a.m. Chair Aerobics  
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance  
11:30 a.m. Homemade Lunch  
**Wednesday: 1/24**  
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing  
10 a.m. Chair Yoga  
Noon Bingo, Snacks, Laughs  
**Thursday: 1/25**  
8:45 a.m. Aerobics  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones  
**Friday: 1/26**  
9 a.m. Quilting Workshop  
9:30 a.m. Fun Bowling  
11:15 Music, Magic, Movement

#### 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.

#### FULL MOON from page B1

performs "The Red Guitar," a monologue set to music that explores his own life.

The quality of any kind of improvisation is dependent on the ability of the participants to develop a strong trust and a shared intuitive understanding of where they are going with the piece. It is obvious that these three performers have achieved a solid platform from which to explore the moment while being in concert with each other.

Richmond started the night with a piece on climate change, evoking a subtext that would be referred to several times: what we do now affects future generations. While many of his poems tackled the most pressing issues of our time: the possibility of nuclear war, racial injustice, social inequality and misogyny; he also managed to inject humor at times as well.

He reminded us of our materialistic tendencies with his piece about shopping for happiness at a big box store and running into the Dalai Lama. Later, Buddhism was brought up again with the mention of a boy wanting a dog and the unfairness he faced. He wanted to attain a Buddhist acceptance of it, but when all was said and done, he wanted a dog.

As mentioned earlier, Tony did a solo monologue while accompanying himself on the *donson'goni*. He spoke of being a child of the '60s and how difficult peace and love were where he grew up near Newark, New Jersey. That being said, he asked why can't we still believe in those things that were so much a part of the dialogue at that time. Peace, love and understanding are all still valid concepts and, perhaps, even more needed now.

Paul presented love and relationship within the construct of ordering pizza. Would the "main character" forgo his desire for anchovies and artichokes in order to make his lover happy and so gain a future reward? Not necessarily, especially when it was the argument that was the point of the dispute. Later, left on his own, he sought advice from the internet on how to romantically order pizza and found himself, instead, viewing naked bakers making it.

John's contribution to the music switched from acoustic guitar to electric guitar, both of which he played with intense abandon. Sometimes a facile weaving in and out of the spoken and drummed rhythms, and at other times rising above it all to accent the tenor of the piece.

He was so adroit at blending his

sound that at times it became difficult to tell where he left off and the others began. His attentiveness to what was happening and how to participate in it was exceptional.

The performance was almost two hours long, with a short intermission in the middle to allow the audience to interact and partake of the wonderful treats and non-alcohol refreshments provided by the Full Moon Coffeehouse folks.

Towards the end of the night, Paul focused on social and racial injustice with the exception of a quirky, but pointed, look at unconditional love as viewed through a conversation between the Pope and a dog. Then Paul encouraged everyone to not give up on their dreams and visions; to know that things have to get better and that we need to show each other the way. The performance ended with a standing ovation from the audience.

This trio has been invited to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this coming August. In the coming months they will be performing to raise the funds necessary to make the trip. Do not miss the chance to see them. You will be inspired, amused, and made all the more hopeful for it.



## Trump and Immigration: Franklin County's Response

**GREENFIELD** - How have the current administration's immigration policies impacted our community? How have we responded? Do you know your rights if ICE shows up? How can you get involved in helping our neighbors at risk?

Racial Justice Rising will sponsor a free panel discussion on Saturday, February 3 from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 43 Silver Street, Greenfield. To date, speakers include:

- Javier Luengo-Garrido, Coordinator of the ACLU of Massachusetts Immigrant Protection Project of Western Massachusetts. For years he has worked with immigrant families in the Valley. Javier brings to his ACLU position his own experience as a native Chilean who has successfully navigated the United States immigration system.

- Bill Newman, a civil rights attorney practicing in western Massachusetts since 1976, has been the director of the Western Massachusetts Office of the ACLU since 1987. His major victories include overturning a death penalty sentence in Georgia and freeing a detainee from Guantanamo. Following the presidential election of 2016, his ACLU office founded the Immigrant Protection Project of Western Massachusetts.

- Other speakers from Franklin County who work with immigrants.

For more information, see [www.racialjusticerising.org](http://www.racialjusticerising.org). Childcare is available - RSVP with number & ages of children to [email@racialjusticerising.org](mailto:email@racialjusticerising.org)

Light refreshments will be available. Doors open at 9:45 a.m. The program is free, and donations are most welcome.

## The 100 Mile Club

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**NEW SALEM and ERVING** - The 100 Mile Club was started in 1993 by a teacher named Kara Lubin who wanted to build the self-esteem of kids who among other things, in her own words, "just didn't want to be at school at all." The Summer Olympics had something to do with it as well.

She decided that she would have students run a total of 100 miles, and win a gold medal for doing that. Something called a pyramid of success, by a friend of hers named John Wooden, figures into it too. She made her own version of what he did with that pyramid and used it as a base for her club.

The effect of the running club has been calmer, more focused, and more motivated learners, according to the official website. There are over 4,703 schools across USA participating.

As for Massachusetts, there are 180 clubs in the state, according to regional coordinator Sarah Kilculen. There are chapters of the club in New Salem, Erving, Melrose, and Pepperell.

Nancy Mead is the head coach of the club at the Swift River School in New Salem. She says "started in 2014.... This is our fourth year."

Nan has been involved since the beginning. It began when she applied for a grant that got the program started. According to her, "170 kids" were part of it last year. "This year, our enrollment is down a bit - 154 this year," she says. Eight parents and staff members also volunteer.

I mentioned that you get a medal when you reach 100 miles. But you also get something when you reach 25 miles, 50 miles, and 75 miles. When you get to 25 miles you will have a red t-shirt to your name. On that t-shirt, you can mark off which level of miles you have reached.

Fifty miles has a gold pencil, saying you are halfway there. Seventy-five miles is where you get a wrist band.

Nancy personally thinks there are many benefits to doing the club, and also agrees with the positive effects on the students mentioned on the website. Lastly, she mentions this about starting a 100 Mile Club: "It's very easy to start. You

just need a place to run laps, and volunteers to keep track."

Another club, at the Erving Elementary School in Erving, has been active for two years. A woman named Gail is the head coach, and she mentions this is the "second year I have done it." 144 kids have been part of it this year, which she says is "about the same last year - it's the whole school." The number of volunteers for their club is four: "myself, and three of the Erving recreation commission," she tells me.

To my surprise, the 100 Mile Club turned out not just to be something that was out of Erving, like I first assumed, based on a flyer I saw on that town's website. It's actually quite a large organization with chapters all over the place. It looked like an interesting topic to write about, and from what I learned about it, my belief was right. Now I also think it's a surprisingly cool thing. I say that because you don't really expect something like that to become that widespread or have that many chapters. That is what I think, at least, and I wish them luck with staying strong in the future!

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MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

# This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Here at Montague Community TV we want to remind you that you can view local meetings that affect policy making on our TV channel and on our website, [MontagueTV.org](http://MontagueTV.org).

Some meetings air live – the Montague selectboard meeting airs live on Mondays at 7 p.m., the Montague finance committee meeting airs live on Wednesdays at 6 p.m., and the Gill-Montague school committee meeting airs live on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

You can also see these meetings and more at other times in the schedule, and online too. For example, a recent local meeting you can check out is "Planning Board: Zoning



Marijuana Bylaws 1/2/18." Our TV schedule is available on our website.

Something going on you think others would like to see? Get in touch to learn how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200, [infomontaguetyv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetyv@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street in Turners between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to work with you!



## Remembering...

### "The Breakfast Club"

By FRAN HEMOND

*Longtime Montague Reporter contributor Fran Hemond passed away in November. By popular demand, we will be periodically republishing a selection of her popular nature columns, written at her Montague Center home Cold Brook Farm. We hope you will enjoy them!*

The good bird sights in Montague are in many places, sometimes in your own backyard. The houses on our river opposite Barton Cove have a fabulous view of the eagle nest that is getting ready for this year's production. Pat Carlisle has a telescope with the eagle nest in sharp view, and recently the male and female eagles, their white heads and white tails giving them their regal aspect, sat on opposite sides of their large nest in a tree across the river, apparently contemplating on offspring for the season.

Closer by in the yard, a flock of redpolls, little winter finches with bright heads and black chins, enjoyed her feeder full of sunflower seed. This is their trip south for the winter.

The canal at Migratory Way is hosting more than thirteen goldeneyes, little diving ducks. They are often opposite the parking spots beyond the gates.

Six drakes, their white bellies a sharp contrast to their shiny green heads that look black at a distance, obliged recently by performing near shore. The goodsized white spot near their eyes gives them not only a name but real distinction. The seven girls, fabulous little divers who challenge the watcher to find them popping up from a dive, are demurely feathered. Their gray bodies

are topped by dull brown heads with white collars.

Not long ago, a flotilla of mute swans stopped by on the canal. They need no identification; their five feet of bird and frequency in parks make them well known.

Unfortunately, this species, introduced to beautify parks of American cities, has moved into the habitat of less aggressive American birds, and has propagated freely. A group sailing along with wings spread as if drying them out before lift-off is indeed a sight to behold, as a walker on the canal road interpreted the scene to me.

The swan boats in the Boston Public Garden, that delight children with boat rides on the park's waterway, share the space with real mute swans and kids' boats on a string in that big city. Our native swan, the whistling swan, is smaller, with a straight neck and black bill, and I have only seen him on the Delmarva Peninsula (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia) a flyway for many water birds. But he may stop by.

Montague regularly offers lots of interesting sights: turkeys scurrying through the fields and woods, hawks in the sky and over the meadows, gulls and ducks in the river, and regular customers at your feeder. (January 24, 2008)



The Common Goldeneye.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

# Dry Pub; Glare Ice; Strange Radio Traffic; Flood; Fights; Lightning; Toppled Cones

**Sunday, 1/7**

11:17 a.m. Report that the Millers Pub is without water; main line may be frozen. Water Department will be responding; TFFD also advised.

11:44 a.m. Two-vehicle accident at Millers Falls Road and Cross Street: no injuries, smoke, or airbag deployment, but positive for fluids. PD, FD, and DPW advised. Officer requesting DPW; advising another vehicle went off the road into a snowbank behind the accident scene.

5:49 p.m. Walk-in party reporting that the four-way intersection is glare ice. Contacted DPW; they advise that they sanded it several times today and the sand is just not staying on. Officers checking intersection; they advise that intersection appears to be OK and that operators need to be more careful.

7:18 p.m. Caller reporting single-vehicle accident in front of house on Federal Street. Vehicle is smoking. TFFD advised. Second caller advising of accident states that the people in the car fled the scene. Officer advises two vehicles involved; the operator of vehicle one did flee the scene. Tow requested for both vehicles. Perimeter set up; officers beginning track of parties who fled. ER contacted; no matching descriptions with head injuries consistent with motor vehicle crash. Operator of other vehicle did go to ER on his own after declining medical attention on scene. Investigated.

**Monday, 1/8**  
6:02 a.m. DPW requesting officer meet them at 7:00 a.m. at Third Street parking lot for snow removal. Officer assisting with tows.  
10:41 a.m. Caller requests to have on record that he received a scam call from someone claiming to be from the Publishers Clearing House; caller was asked to send them money and then they would send him his prize.  
3:22 p.m. Caller reports that a man pulled a knife on him, his friend, and a store clerk at F.L. Roberts approximately 10 minutes ago. Caller advises subject also made a gesture and threatened to slash his tires. No injuries. License plate of subject's vehicle provided. Officers spoke with caller, caller's friend, and clerk; conflicting accounts given. Clerk advises no knife was shown during incident. Registered owner of suspect vehicle later called with his account of events; advises that the previous caller followed him from

Deerfield to F.L. Roberts and an argument ensued, during which the previous caller threatened to shoot him. Caller admitted to threatening to pop the other party's tires and making a gesture of same, but denied that any weapons were shown. Caller advised that after the initial altercation he left but returned shortly after to apologize to the store clerk. Investigated.  
9:53 p.m. [redacted] was arrested on a probation warrant.

**Tuesday, 1/9**  
6:58 a.m. Report of vehicle off road at Mormon Hollow and Wendell roads. TFFD en route. Medical care refused. Officer advises vehicle hung up on guard-rail, requesting Rau's.

9:02 a.m. Car into guard-rail on Migratory Way. Caller advises operator appears impaired; can detect odor of what he believes is alcohol, eyes appear glassy, and behavior didn't seem right. Patient transported by MedCare; summons issued.  
10:36 a.m. Sewage backup reported on Norman Circle.  
10:37 a.m. Report of golden retriever that has been wandering around Avenue A recently and appears cold and malnourished. The dog tries to come inside the business when they open the door and has a handmade tag taped on his collar that states "Don't feed me." Most recent sighting outside Riff's North a few minutes ago. Unknown direction of travel. Animal control officer advised.

2:18 p.m. TFFD took complaint for erratic operation; vehicle was reportedly tailgating and trying to take pictures of the vehicle in front of it.  
3:36 p.m. 911 caller reporting car into snowbank on Millers Falls Road; car looks to be stuck. Officer requesting MedCare and Rau's to scene. Operator transported by MedCare.

5:03 p.m. 911 caller from Montague City Road reporting that he arrived home about thirty minutes ago to find his apartment had been broken into and ransacked. Investigated.  
7:34 p.m. Officer conducting motor vehicle stop. Verbal warning for excessive high beam usage.

**Wednesday, 1/10**  
8:13 a.m. Caller from Park Street states that a silver car was parked at the end of her driveway; inside was a man asleep behind the wheel with a pipe in his hand. Unable to locate.  
10:58 a.m. Hillcrest Elementary School principal requesting officers conduct a walkthrough of the building due to strange radio traffic. School advised to change frequencies for now.

1:16 p.m. Report of vehicle that has struck three other vehicles near Shady Glen. Report taken.  
**Thursday, 1/11**  
8:04 a.m. Caller from McCarthy Funeral Home states that someone broke two slats on the porch railings overnight. Ongoing issue.  
9:08 a.m. 911 caller reporting that a stove in the kitchen of Hillcrest Elementary is sparking and smoking. FD and PD en route. No active fire; issue with electrical plug. Units clear.  
12:53 p.m. Box alarm sounding at Southworth Paper Mill. Excessive water flow problem inside building near high voltage panels. Mutual aid requested; Greenfield FD responding with engine.  
5:14 p.m. Report of flooding on first floor and in cellar at Our Lady of Peace Church rectory; broken pipes suspected. TFFD Engine 1 on scene; request next piece out respond with squeegees and shop vac.  
11:32 p.m. 911 caller reporting possible fight about to occur in alley between Third and Fourth streets. Area checked; nothing found.  
11:39 p.m. 911 caller from

F.L. Roberts reporting male party in store causing disturbance. Officers believe this to be related to previous call reporting fight. Male has left the store.

**Friday, 1/12**  
12:46 a.m. F.L. Roberts employee reporting same male in store yelling at him and shining a bright light in his face, causing disturbance. Male has left on foot. Officer believes he has located vacant house where male is staying; no power or water. Officer will follow up with health and building departments.  
6:42 a.m. Caller from Bernardo Drive reporting hearing a loud "clap" and then her power went out. Officer advises he saw lightning in area around time of call; believes this was the culprit.  
8:02 a.m. Utility pole on fire on Turners Falls Road. MCFD on scene; Eversource en route.

5:33 p.m. Motorist reporting that safety cones blocking a piece of steel that is sticking up in the road on the General Pierce Bridge have been knocked down.  
**Saturday, 1/13**  
8:35 a.m. Report of ice dam in Sawmill River. Water is pouring out of the catch basin and is beginning to flood North Leverett Road. 911 call received from residence where water from river is almost up to the house. Officer checked bridge on South Street; water is up to the bottom of the bridge, flowing fast. No ice dams observed, but can hear ice hitting the girders. DPW en route to sand road. Officer rechecking affected areas; damming appears to have passed.  
10:05 a.m. Caller reports that her rear windshield was smashed overnight while parked at Our Lady of Czestochowa.  
6:16 p.m. Report of past breaking and entering into vehicle on Fifth Street; phone believed stolen. Investigated.

**MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!**  
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WEST ALONG from page B1  
or two further to the east.

I could fancy myself as some incarnation of crusty Claude Monet, painting the face of Rouen Cathedral, each canvas catching a different time of day. A mere writer *en plein air*, on paper I sketch out word-images of sun and snow effects on my cathedrals, the lofty white pines on the ridge.

For some, across our far-flung Franklin County, the sun's progress can be measured as it first lights the top of Mount Toby, then descends to brighten the lower reaches. For others it first reaches the tower at Sachem's Head, or Mount Sugarloaf. But here in the Millers River valley, it is now coming up over Grout's Circle at the foot of Dry Hill and over the steeple of old St. John's Church. Then golden light brightens the top of Mineral Mountain where the red-tail suns and catches the first rays.

One day soon, it will shine farther east, on Wendell Center first, then weeks later Wendell Depot will get first light, until by solar summer it will peek at us from over Crag Hill and Northfield Mountain.

But for now, that pale traveler barely makes first light between the pines near Highland School. No rush, it's just one more way of keeping track of our mere mortal lives down here in the valley, along the river, in deep winter.

One Saturday morning at 10 below, I was driven back indoors into the old kitchen by the brutal cold that coagulated my ink, threatened to freeze the hearty black coffee right there in its own cup. While outside the windows, the snowglobe out there swirls blue, the colors of the jay, with occasional hints of the buff colors of the doves, floating like late autumn leaves. Those birds criss-cross from window to window, pouring into the yard for a square meal to start the day.

This coldest day of the year was made more brutal by the Arctic-fierce wind blowing down from the plains of Québec – through Silvery, Sorel, Berthier, Victoriaville, and Megantic, where my *québécois* forebears were born and then fled down here into green New England. Somehow they brought me here, and dropped me off. I like to think that because of them, I don't mind this bitter cold and snowshoe weather, calling forth the winter stamina they likely have sent down to me through the bloodline.

But wait a few days and the weather gives us winter whiplash: we've gone from ten days at 10 below zero to the high 50s in a warm wind. Snow and ice that didn't quite get removed by shovel have vanished under warm rain and snow-eating fog.

The river, jolted from its frozen slumber, awakened violently to the swift-rising waters. The *débâcle* of two foot-thick ice floes barrel through the now flooded woodland creek, scarring tree trunks of maple and sycamore, while the main thrust of river rapids roar with angry broken ice choking the bottleneck at

By JESSICA RIEL

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Want to volunteer to make a difference in your community? The next Long-Term Care Ombudsman training is your chance! Volunteer Ombudsmen support residents of local long-term care facilities, and so can you. Learn to advocate for elders and people with disabilities in a few flexible hours a week with free training.

Volunteers in Greenfield, Shelburne Falls, and Turners Falls are especially needed.

The next free volunteer training for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is on February 26 and 27, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and February 28, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with breaks for lunch, in Holyoke. With questions or to apply, contact Trevor Boeding, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program director at LifePath, at (413) 773-5555 x 2241, or [tboeding@LifePathMA.org](mailto:tboeding@LifePathMA.org).

Even if you can't make it to this training, you can still reach out to be added to the list for a future session. Find application materials and more information at [LifePathMA.org](http://LifePathMA.org).

"An Ombudsman is someone that they can feel at ease with, laugh with, and talk to," says Annmarie Newton, a recently retired volunteer with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at LifePath, who



Linda Ackerman, volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman, visits with Richard Boyle, a resident of New England Health Center, a nursing facility in Sunderland.

visited residents of a local nursing home for nearly a decade. "My goal is to make people feel comfortable, good about themselves, and happier or more content."

Annmarie began her visits in the common room, where people are "hearing music, watching a movie, playing cards," and spoke to everyone, asking how things are going.

"You are the advocate of the residents," says Allen Ross, also a volunteer ombudsman. The focus is on confidentiality, listening, and establishing relationships with each resident, as well as helping to identify concerns. "The role of ombudsman really gave an opportunity to

respectfully enter the lives of these individuals," to offer support, listen, says Allen, and "assist in helping them find their voice."

For those individuals who feel unable to address a situation on their own, Ombudsmen will act as advocates on their behalf with facility staff. Quality of life and quality of care for the residents are the common goals.

Linda Ackerman, another volunteer, believes others would enjoy becoming volunteer Ombudsmen as well. "Anyone going into it, they don't have to worry about having a medical background," she says. "You're always learning."

Before it all begins, new volunteers receive in-depth Ombudsman basic training from the state, which covers topics like nursing facility regulations and negotiating, along with field training from Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Director Trevor Boeding.

"The mentoring experience was extremely important to me," says Ombudsman Robert Amyot. "Otherwise, I would not have been able to start doing Ombudsman work on my own as effectively and with enough confidence in myself."

Allen agrees. "You're not thrown into the job, but gradually move into the position." New volunteers go along on visits with Trevor, who checks in to make sure each volunteer is ready before venturing out on their own. "It's very thoughtful assistance in building one's confidence to go ahead and do it independently."

Interested volunteers must successfully complete the application process, which includes CORI, reference checks, and an interview with the program director, before attending the training. Volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage to and from the facility to which they are assigned.

T-RUMP



by denis f. bordeaux

the bend, roiling off the foot of the mountain cliff.

Just as rapid was the rise, so was the plunge of the thermometer back to ten above zero. Ice glistened from a million prisms on frozen branches through the woods, and the dun-colored bare ground shared the earth with spans of glare ice. Icebergs as big as kitchen tables, and two feet thick, line the edge of the woods. Like chunks of the glacier broken off, they'll sit where they came to rest, until spring.

The thaw does provide a respite no matter what else. The chance to do some work outdoors: it is about timing, opportunity, and keeping a weather eye out. Now, it's easier to trek out to the mounded woodpile

and to bring in wood to replenish the reserve near the door on the back porch. There's the opportunity to gather up small branches from the brush pile for kindling.

The sparrows don't appreciate my diminishing their sheltering tangle; it has served them well as a safe haven from the cruel talons of the sharp-shinned hawk that regularly raids the yard.

That woodpile has been feeding my Glenwood C cookstove, always hungry. Feed this beast and in exchange you get steady warmth, a place for drying boots and mittens, an ever-ready oven, and a snug spot for the dog to lounge and sleep on his back, content with four paws in the air and lost in dog dreams.

Salvaged forty years ago from a farmer's barn in Whately where it had been abandoned in the change to oil heat, it was a rusted jigsaw puzzle of assorted cast iron. We wired-brushed it back to its original luster, and with a lot of stove black and elbow grease, the intricate relic from 1912 became the ticking, purring soul of the house. Its cousin, the dancing flame in the oil burner down cellar, takes over the heating tasks from time to time when needed. But there's nothing like an old Glenwood to snuggle up to on a winter's night.

Today, there's promise of an afternoon snowfall that will extend into the evening. The thaw was but a tease. We'll plunge back into a

typical New England winter for at least another ten weeks before the real thaw happens and leads us into late April.

In the meantime, we'll keep winter as best we can, checking the sun rising over the valley rim, inching slowly over to the east in winter's own time.

Tonight in the snowfall at dusk, it'll be the perfect moment for a campfire on the point overlooking the floodplain and rushing river. Time to watch the crackling pine boughs send sparks floating up into the darkening sky. Time to listen for owls, perhaps the barking of foxes, and under snowfall or starlight, to keep another winter's night.



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## Outdoor Leadership Program is back with wind in its sails

With our lives increasingly taken up sitting in front of a computer or staring at a smartphone, it's more important than ever to spend time outdoors. Nature renews us and changes our perspective. As Bob Tremblay, Greenfield Community College's Outdoor Leadership Program Coordinator, puts it, "we, in this industry, respond to hi-tech with high-touch, with multi-sensory experiences that are very physical, very hands on. After spending all week in offices, people want to go canoeing or climbing or backpacking on weekends. And if they sometimes find themselves outside of their comfort zone - struggling to steer that canoe, rappelling down a rock wall, feeling cold and tired hiking - that's when learning happens. You learn about your capabilities and confidence grows. In this program, we train the leaders who will guide those experiences. What you get from a cohort of people going through something intense together, like OLP, is not just learning outdoor skills but learning about leadership, about teaching. This can be very rich." As one recent graduate, Carter Guddell, OLP 2016 -17 recounts, "OLP changed my life. The skills I learned don't only apply to the content of a sport; they can be used for so many things. OLP taught me how to understand and prepare for whatever life throws at me."

Last year GCC decided to thoroughly review this unique and nationally recognized program, now nearly 40 years old, which prepares students to be qualified professional outdoor leaders. It's kept what was best while making changes that meet the needs of current students and aligning the program with the ever-evolving adventure industry. Says Kathy Vranos, Dean of Business, Information Technology, Social Sciences & Professional Studies "We were so impressed with Bob's work. He spent the year doing intense market research with area outdoor adventure employers, talking to industry partners all over the country, working with colleagues at the Association of Experiential Education - our accrediting body - going to industry and risk management conferences, and especially talking to transfer institutions. GCC wanted to be especially attentive to students whose families live in western New England because of their love of the great outdoors."

The program schedule was redesigned so that courses can be accessible to more students. While the richness and intense learning of the core group cohort will remain, students who cannot attend full time can still complete regularly scheduled classes at their own pace. Content, theory and credits better match the transfer requirements of

colleges such as Prescott College in Arizona, Westfield State University and University of New Hampshire. Fees have been apportioned by individual classes. And while core classes and competencies remain, such as the Wilderness First Responder certification, new skills like satellite phone protocols are being introduced. Says Teresa Jones, Chair of the Science Department, "We are excited to have OLP students taking natural history with GCC science students and have even scheduled our classes around the OLP trip schedule. Understanding natural history can be a great asset for a trip leader who can point out native species or explain geologic features to a group." The program is now more flexible while maintaining its high standards of excellence.

Tremblay is also expanding the program with a proposal for an Associates Degree. Certain courses can now be taken as non-credit through GCC's Community Ed. And the program will still offer additional certifications such as PCIA Rock Climbing Instructor certification, ACA River Canoe Instructor certification, ACA Coastal Kayak Instructor certification, and ACCT Challenge Course Practitioner.

Says Catherine Seaver, Chief of Student and Academic Affairs, "Bob is developing partnerships with outside groups which is very exciting. Opening the doors to current students, allowing the public to enjoy our resources, equipment and what our campus has to offer - this fits our mission as a community college."

Students best summarize our programs. This is from Aidan Braverman, OLP 2016 - 17: "OLP helped me to become the adventurous adult I am today; in many ways it gave me the skills I needed to not only understand the natural world, and how to observe, and travel through it, but how to impart wisdom of the world and it's many environments to others so that they may find joy. OLP helped me to better understand myself: my strengths, my weaknesses and everything that comes with self betterment."

For more information on OLP, visit: [www.gcc.mass.edu/academics/programs/outdoor-leadership](http://www.gcc.mass.edu/academics/programs/outdoor-leadership)

To apply, contact: [admissions@gcc.mass.edu](mailto:admissions@gcc.mass.edu)



### Join us for OLP Alumni Reunion

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## COME VISIT !

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Contact [hardyt@gcc.mass.edu](mailto:hardyt@gcc.mass.edu) or 413-775-1801

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## NEW! Workshops for Spring

- HeartCode® BLS Skills Session (starts 2/15, 3/16, 4/17 or 5/11)
- Learn to Knit (starts 1/29/2018)
- African Dance (starts 1/30/2018)
- The Sacred Art of Painting on Glass (starts 2/6/2018)
- Introduction to Weaving (starts 2/6/2018)
- Ceramics: Throwing 101 (starts 2/6/2018)
- Carving Wooden Spoons and Utensils (starts 2/6/2018)
- Felting: The Basics and Beyond (starts 2/7/2018)
- Jewelry Bootcamp (starts 2/8/2018)
- HeartCode® ACLS Skills Session (starts 2/13 or 4/18)
- Coding for Beginners (starts 2/28/2018)
- Intermediate Tap Dance: Technique and Repertory (starts 3/1/2018)
- Managing a Business with QuickBooks (starts 3/14/2018)
- Advanced Beginner Waltz (starts 4/2/2018)
- Excel Tips and Tricks (starts 4/3/2018)
- Learn to Square Dance (starts 4/12/2018)
- Hidden Cave of Mount Toby (starts 4/14/2018)
- Pillow Mania (starts 4/19/2018)
- Automate Tasks with Excel Macros (starts 4/24/2018)
- Microsoft Word Tips and Tricks (starts 5/1/2018)
- Collage (starts 5/5/2018)

Register at [www.gcc.mass.edu/shopcreditfree](http://www.gcc.mass.edu/shopcreditfree) or call 413-775-1661.

Greenfield Community College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution. For disability accommodation, please contact the Coordinator of Disability Services (413) 775-1812.

Join the GCC Alumni Association now at [gcc.mass.edu/alumni](http://gcc.mass.edu/alumni)  
Stay connected. Membership is free!

# The Children's Page

YONDERMOD ILLUSTRATION

## Lovellights

...continued from last month

Story by Beverly Ketch

Illustrations by Hannah Brookman



Chella and Viola's cat, who they knew as Figaro, but who was also known as Ritin Theway, sat perfectly still sending a telepathic message to the queen of Catropia.

"Urgent, Infanterons have sent one of their subjects, Agent Zenith, on an exploratory mission into our territory."

The cat queen received the message in the throne room of the famed palace of mazes "Felice Feline"

where a sun-dial mirror system poured light perpetually onto the throne's large velvet cushion.

Languidly she purred her response. "I will teleport to the Infanteron command station, but first I will put on my pyramid headdress to deter their mind control powers."

The queen thus momentarily appeared in the shining silver heart of the Infanteron mothership.

Her appearance seemed to give the Infanterons the thrill of their lives, and they all seemed to want to show her the warmest welcome possible for them, in spite of her clearly standoffish stance. Her efforts to

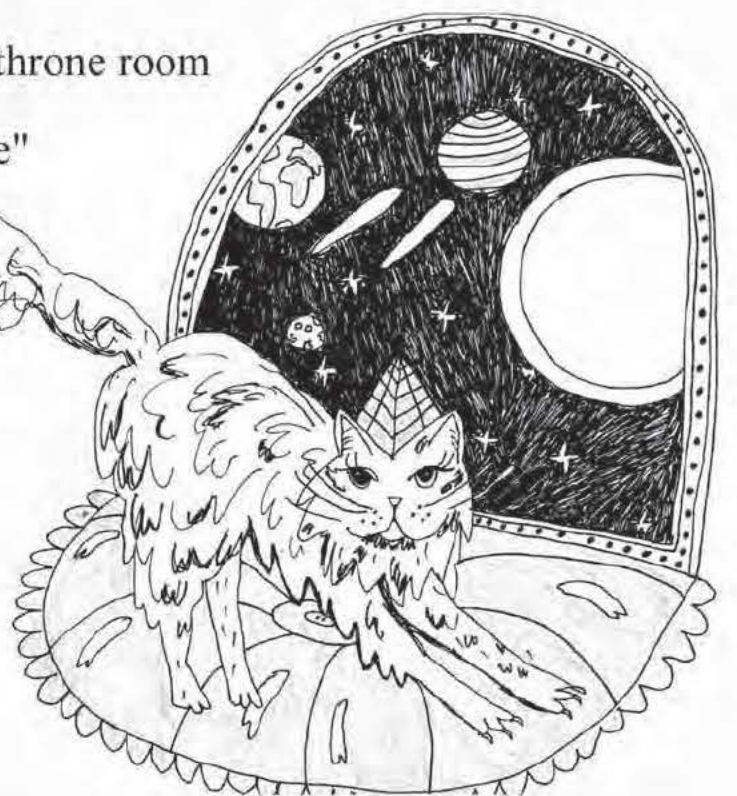
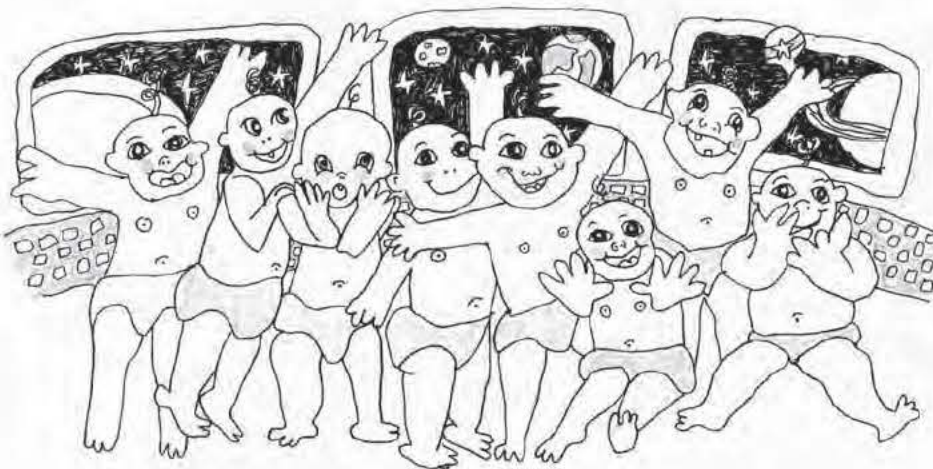
communicate telepathically with them were to no avail. She realized they understood no language. She was reduced to simply scampering away from them in a manner she considered beneath her dignity. She leapt to the top of a control panel. Then she focused her telepathy on a mental picture of their

Agent Zenith leaving planet Earth. This seemed to work, as they turned their attention to a monitor on which they observed agent Zenith holding Ritin Theway in plump little arms and petting his fur the wrong way!

The queen instantly teleported back to the throne room and went into action.

"Commander Underfoot, please bring me another pyramid headdress, I must teleport to Earth and rescue Ritin Theway from the clutches of an Infanteron!"

...to be continued next month



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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## ONGOING EVENTS:

### EVERY SUNDAY

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

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 [mcbass@vermontel.net](mailto:mcbass@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. Free.

### EVERY THURSDAY

Millers Falls Branch Library, Montague: *Music and Movement with Tom Carroll & Laurie Davidson*. Children and their caregivers. 10 to 10:45 a.m.

### 1ST AND 3RD THURSDAYS

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Open Mic Night*, 7 p.m.

### 2ND AND 4TH THURSDAYS

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Karaoke Night*, 8 p.m.

### EVERY THIRD THURSDAY

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

### EVERY FRIDAY

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Acoustic Country with Heath Lewis*, 9 p.m.

### EVERY THIRD FRIDAY

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

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

## EXHIBITS:

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield:

*There Must Be Something in the Water* by Paul Specht. *There Must Be Something in the Water* is a collection of composite photographs by Paul Specht, featuring portraits and landscapes from the artist's previous works.



*The Heather Pierson Acoustic Trio features Shawn Nadeau on upright bass and Davy Sturtevant on, as Heather often puts it, "everything else" – guitar, mandolin, dobro, fiddle, and cornet. At the Mount Toby Meetinghouse this Saturday, January 20, 7:30 p.m.*

As a photographer with a background in painting, Paul delved into photographs from his previous collections and created new images by digitally layering multiple photos into fresh compositions, putting figures into different surroundings, and creating stunning, unique works of art with new meaning. Through February 16. There will be an artist reception on Friday, January 26 at 6 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Remembrance of Our Past: Inspiration From The 1800s Women Abolitionists For Our Times*. Fifteen years ago fellow Librarians Mary Boehmer and Bambi Miller embarked upon a journey to illuminate the nineteenth century story of the Dorsey Family, Freedom Seekers from Liberty, Maryland and the Leavitt Family, staunch Abolitionists of Charlemont. Through adapting nineteenth-century documents into a chronological scrapbook, they have crafted a story of the Dorsey and Leavitt families' connections. Part of the exhibit includes contemporary Underground Railroad quilts created during many quilting bee workshops, historical artifacts and facsimiles. Through February.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne: *Fly Away Home... by Belinda Lyons Zucker*. Dolls and figures from Black folklore that tell of Africans that flew, perhaps as a desire to ease their weary lives; to dream of escape. Angel Doll making workshop with the artist January 28, 2 p.m. Through February.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *"Illumination"* brings light to a time of darkness. Paintings, prints, photographs, sculpture, fiber art, and glass relate to the

theme of illumination in its many symbolic, metaphorical, and literal aspects. Through January.

Whately Library, Whately: *Winter Light: Art Exhibit*. Handmade paper scrolls and origami lanterns by Sheryl Jaffe in the Muse Cafe. Through March 24. Reception January 27, 1 p.m.

## CALLS FOR ART:

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Small Works Exhibit and Sale*. Non-juried show of 2 and 3 dimensional visual art, any medium. Maximum size: 10" in any direction, including frame. Entry fee: \$5 per artwork. Artists may submit up to two pieces; at least one will be exhibited. The first 80 artists will be included. Exhibit dates: February 1 through 26 with reception February 3. Deliver application and art work between January 13 and 28. Questions? Louise Minks, (413) 367-2800.

Resist Art Show, Brattleboro: A call for art that reflects on the current political situation. Stand up and express your hopes, your outrage, your vision, in the face of the times we are living through. Open to all mediums, including writing (one page maximum and presented as visually engaging) that can be wall-hung. Exhibit to be in May 2018 at the River Garden. An opening reception will take place May 4, Gallery Walk Friday. Artists may submit a maximum of two pieces of wall art, no more than 36" by 36". Jury fee of \$20 is due with the application. Deadline for submission is March 15. All work must be submitted digitally. To receive an entry form, for further details on submission requirements, and any questions go to: [resistartists2018@gmail.com](mailto:resistartists2018@gmail.com).

## AUDITION:

Belding Library, Ashfield: Sinclair Lewis's "It Can't Happen Here." The play is about the election of a fascist American president (Buzz Windrip), his ensuing crushing of civil rights, and the underground rising against him by a Vermont

editor (Doremus Jessup) and his family and friends. Josh Platt of Greenfield is directing. From 3 to 6 p.m. on Sunday, January 28, and from 6 to 8 p.m. on Monday, January 29. No preparation or experience is necessary. Those unable to make these times can set up another audition by contacting Jackie Walsh at (413) 625-9413 or [itcant happen here-ashfield@gmail.com](mailto:itcant happen here-ashfield@gmail.com).

## EVENTS:

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 18

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

Greenfield Community College: *Danny Cruz Art Show closing*. 5 to 10 p.m.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 19

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: Staged reading of *It Can't Happen Here* by Arena Civic Theater. 8 p.m. Donations to fund ACT.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Epicenter, Epilepsia, Graviton, Uncomfortables*. Heavy metal, thrash metal. 8 p.m. \$

Shutesbury Athletic Club: *Franklin County Sweethearts*, country crooners. Bring your dancing shoes! 8:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 20

Mount Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Heather Pierson*, award-winning pianist, multi-genre singer/songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, arranger, bandleader, and performer. From New Orleans-style jazz and blues to rousing Americana and poignant folk narratives, Heather's memorable, intimate, and cathartic live performances, both solo and with her acoustic trio feature her virtuosity on piano, her bell-tone vocals, and her commanding yet playful stage presence while wielding a tenor banjo, melodica, ukulele, or acoustic guitar. 7:30 p.m. \$

Wendell Free Library, Wendell: *The Time Machine*. Film. A man's vision for a utopian society is disillusioned when travelling forward into time reveals a dark and dangerous society. 7:30 p.m.

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Ally and Mike*. "Southern Rain" country duo. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew Pub, Wendell: *The Pistoleros*. Outlaw Country. 8:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dust Witch, Bunnies, Hot Dirt, and Landowner*. *Dust Witch* is punk-filtered jazz fusion, prog rock inspired by Zeuhl and Italian horror. *Bunnies* is visceral guitar and synth music. *Hot Dirt* is rock music re-imagined to melt your frontal lobes. *Landowner* is hardcore music traveling the radio waves of the Aurora Borealis. 8:30 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Steve Kurtz/Dan Belmont Jazz*

*Quartet*. Latin jazz classics plus swing, bebop, and ballad songs. 8:30 p.m. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Problemaddicts with Soultree*. High energy rap, groove, funk. 9 p.m. \$

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

Polish American Citizens Club, South Deerfield: *Festibal - Danse Cafe* presents a French & Breton Music & Dance Party. Hors d'oeuvres potluck. 4 p.m. \$

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**WOOL** from page B1

small portion that was saturated with bunker oil from the sinking, and worth \$5.5 million.

European sheep arrived with the explorer Coronado in 1540 and at Jamestown with the settlers in 1609. Imported wool always remained a necessity, though, as demand usually outstripped production. George Washington had to order bunting for flags and woolen blankets for soldiers from abroad.

"Just after the revolutionary war, Alexander Hamilton began collecting an inventory of manufacturers. It was so interesting the anecdotal way they collected the information; it was very quaint. In every state there was someone tasked with going around and collecting information on what the household manufacturers were, and I read all of these letters – thankfully they are transcribed and collected," says Peggy, obviously delighted with doing this type of research.

During a residency at the Turkeyland Cove Foundation on Martha's Vineyard, Peggy realized the impor-

tance of islands to sheep raising – "there were no natural predators such as wolves on islands, so they were ideal for sheep" – and discovered the curious story of Grey's Raid.

A librarian told her that during the revolutionary war, "a British general realized that he could provision his troops by grabbing the sheep. They sent out notices, asking the residents to give up their sheep and that they would pay them for them (of course they never did) but they sent all these boats including Man o'Wars, and loaded thousands of sheep on them to eat – and they ate them all within a month."

**A Golden Age**

Domestic production of wools remained mostly a cottage industry until mechanization could catch up to spinning a woolen yarn strong enough to stand up to the primitive power looms of the 1800s. Mechanization of woolen weaving processes was desired in the US, but sparked revolt in England, where handcraft guilds opposed it.

Satinet used a cotton warp, and

therefore could be produced on the early power looms, and was very popular during that period. Peggy is currently working on a lecture about satinet for a textile conference in June.

Additional names of now-vanished textiles that Peggy mentions include amazon, baize, batiste, Bedford cord, brilliantine, broadcloth, challis, chincilla, covert, delaine, domett, Florentine, gabardine, hopsacking, kersey, poplin, prunella, whipcord, woolsey, and zibilene.

The Civil War created a surge in demand for wools, and since the allotment per soldier was 20 pounds of wools, Peggy speculates that the tents may also have been made of wool in addition to their underwear, uniforms and bedding. Per-capita consumption of wool continued to rise steadily throughout the 1800s, rising from 4 pounds per year in 1840 to a peak of 9 pounds in 1890.

Sheep farms spread westward, with a total of 44 million sheep by 1880. (Today, there are 5 million sheep in the US.) At one point, 25,000 sheep were driven to Cali-



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fornia to feed hungry miners during the gold rush.

The "golden age of wool" was from 1890 to 1920, states Peggy. Advances in mechanized weaving and the growth of the factory system of production, along with the marketing of ready-made clothes in catalogues and department stores were partly responsible. The growing popularity of home sewing machines and the sale of clothing patterns using standardized sizes, also contributed.

**Lost and Rediscovered**

By the 1930s, wool was taking a rapid tumble. The use of the closed automobile for transportation meant heavy wool travel rugs and great coats were not necessary. Rising costs of domestic help meant women were doing the family laundry themselves, and wool, requiring delicate washing and drying, was more labor intensive than cotton goods.

Better heating systems in buildings meant the advantage of woolen warmth was no longer so important and lighter clothes could be worn. The electrification of homes and adoption of mechanized washing machines also made it hard to be loyal to woolen clothing, since wool shrinks and tightens when agitated.

Another advantage of wool, durability, became less important as ready-wear clothes became cheaper, and changes in fashion more rapid. Woolens could not be put in new electric dryers, either.

And then, as if to point to the

shortcomings of wool, synthetic fibers arrived on the scene, starting with the invention of Rayon shortly after World War I and followed by nylon acetate, Dacron, Orlon, Acrilan, carbon fiber, and Kevlar. Polar fleece has now largely replaced wool sweaters and jackets.

Wool, which went from handcraft to industry, is currently thriving in home manufacture again and "sheep are back on the farm," writes Peggy in the concluding chapter of *Wool*. "Wool has a value beyond measure to knitters, crocheters, spinners, weavers, felters, rughookers, needleworkers, and all others who choose wool. In today's world, choosing wool is one of the ingredients in the stew of sustainability.

"It is at once a political and an emotional decision, arising from affection for sheep and the pastoral life, enjoyment of the fiber, and a preference for renewable resources. Love for wool may once have gotten lost, but now it is found."

Peggy Hart is scheduled to give three book talks locally. She will be at the Belding Library in Ashfield, on January 24 at 7 p.m., the Buckland Library on February 6 at 6:30 p.m., and at the Sheep to Shawl shop in Deerfield on February 18.

You may also order her book on her website, [blanketweave.com](http://blanketweave.com), or buy a copy at the Salmon Falls Gallery in Shelburne. The book is still listed as "not yet available" on Amazon as of this writing.



Joe Kopera sent us this picture of the "ice-out" last Saturday on the Sawmill River, at the Route 47-63 connector in Montague Center. A surge of rainwater created an ice jam, which piled up on the bank at this bend. Kudos to Rob Skelton for the tip!

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