

LAKE PLEASANT MILLERS FALLS MONTAGUE CENTER MONTAGUE CITY TURNERS FALLS

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 16 – NO. 36

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 28, 2018

## Fish and Game Buys Millers River Oxbow

By MIKE JACKSON

**MILLERS FALLS** – This week, the state Department of Fish and Game (DFG) officially acquired a 113-acre parcel of land off East Mineral and Millers Falls roads from the utility company Eversource. The land includes



The 113-acre parcel lies between Millers Falls and the airport.

forest, a hay field, the southern half of East Mineral Hill, a steep embankment, and an oxbow of the Millers River considered priority wildlife habitat by the state.

According to DFG land agent Christina Petersen, the land will be protected from development, and available for hunting and “non-motorized public access.”

“It’s a really unique property,” Petersen said. “It has a lot of different types of habitats, and it has very good access for hunting and fishing. There’s an old access road that goes right down to a beaver dam on the oxbow – the footing is a little dicey, but you can get down there.”

The DFG now owns nearly 4,000 acres in Montague, or about one-fifth of the town’s area, and is the largest property owner in town, followed by the Turners Falls Water District, according to Montague’s draft Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP).

Petersen explained that her department “acquires see **OXBOW** page A7

## SOFTBALL

## Western Mass Champs Go Down Swinging

By MATT ROBINSON

Abington 5 – TFHS 0

On Saturday, the Turners Falls softball team lost the D-III state title

game to the Abington Green Wave at Worcester State University’s Rockwood Field.

The loss marks the first time in four years that Powertown didn’t

win the state championship. But that’s OK: in the end, Abington was the better team, and deserved to win the title.

Turners was the visiting team on Saturday, which is a slight departure from the norm for the Blue Ladies. Batting first changes the dynamics of the game. Unless you score or threaten to score in the top of the first, the home team starts a half inning ahead when they come up to bat.

Turners’ first three batters all hit the ball, but Abington proved they could play the field, as Blue went down one by one. And Abington also hit the ball: a leadoff triple and a sac fly gave them a 1-0 lead after one full inning.

Turners came up empty in the second. In the bottom of the inning, Green benefited from walks and the long ball to take a 3-0 lead. It would remain a 3-run game until the fourth, when a walk, a shallow fly, and a RBI double gave Green the lead 5-0.

see **SOFTBALL** page A7



Aly Murphy takes a swing during the D-III Final at Worcester State.

## GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## District Parents: Wary Of Each Other’s Values?

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – Earlier this spring, the regional school committee made a plan to review the results of several 2017 surveys to seek insight into how students, district parents, and parents who send their children elsewhere perceive the district’s schools.

On Tuesday night, the first meeting of the summer, the committee discussed the data. Superintendent Michael Sullivan added a fresh batch of surveys of Gill and Sheffield Elementary students from the current year.

Students’ feedback about their school experience were generally positive, but showed some sharp differences from school to school. One question in particular – “I like coming to school” – elicited very different responses, with 91% of third- to sixth-graders at Gill agreeing, as compared with only 59% of their counterparts at Sheffield.

Montague committee member Heather Katsoulis pointed out what she saw as a contradiction: that while “parents and students think it’s important for their children to be in school, by such a high per-

centage,” but the parents tended not to agree with the statement: “The families at school share my family’s values about education.”

“That’s an odd perception thing, about what you think about the peo-

ple at your school,” Katsoulis said. This led to a wide-ranging discussion about how well parents in the district know each other, as well as various factors of modern life that

see **GMRSD** page A3

## A CRUNCHY SNACK



Lynn Pelland, whose raccoon photo graced last week’s Page B8, outdid herself with this shot of a gray fox bringing food to a nearby den last Sunday. “For the safety of the fox family the location is undisclosed, but it is in Turners Falls,” she writes.

## Free Food is Everywhere – If You Know Where to Look



The Great Falls Apple Corps has rejuvenated the community gardens at Unity Park.

By CINDI OLDHAM

**TURNERS FALLS** – You might have seen the peach tree on L Street, or the apple trees on the Avenue and the bike trail. They were most likely planted by someone who wanted to bring fresh, free produce to the neighborhood.

Unfortunately, the trees weren’t maintained long term, and much of the fruit they produce ends up rotting on the ground. What a shame that is, in a community where there are families dealing with food insecurity, and fresh produce can be too expensive to purchase on a limited food budget.

Last fall, while picking some of the local apples to press into cider, Annie Levine got an idea: “What if there was a group of people that got together to maintain the trees around town? They could call themselves the Apple Corps.”

In that moment, the Apple Corps was formed. Since October the group has increased to a dozen or more participants.

“Apple Corps is a group that advocates for and maintains edible landscaping in downtown Turners Falls,” says Annie. “We do it because we believe that food should be free.”

In addition to having access to free food, she believes that everyone should have free access to the knowledge and skills that go along with wild foraging. “All of that info isn’t lost, it’s just been hidden for awhile,” Annie speculates.

Though it started out as an idea to gather together for the purpose of maintaining fruit trees, the Great Falls Apple Corps has grown into something much bigger; the group holds organizational meetings once a month. The Apple Corps see **APPLE CORPS** page A5

## MEMORIAL

## Llan Starkweather’s Passing



Llan Starkweather, in a portrait taken by Robbie Leppzer in February.

By ROBBIE LEPPZER

**LEVERETT** – On June 15, longtime Leverett resident Llan Starkweather, age 88, passed on into the spirit world. He had been in declining health due to cancer for the past several months.

I’ve known Llan for 40 years, since we were both founding members of our pro-feminist men’s group, which began in September 1978, and still continues to this day.

Llan was a creative and vivacious soul, who created exquisite artwork and beautiful living spaces with his custom-designed houses and gardens.

He was constantly forging new horizons and creating alternative visions and lived his life decidedly “outside of the box.”

He came to terms with his own impending death with grace and compassion and acceptance.

An impromptu memorial gathering for Llan took place on June 17 at the New England Peace Pagoda in Leverett, where Llan designed their first temple, which burned to the ground six weeks after its completion and inaugural ceremony in 1987.

There will be another memorial and celebration of Llan’s life later this summer or in the early fall.

See page A4 for an obituary.

# The Montague Reporter

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# \$716 Billion

Median wages have trailed behind increases in the cost of living, interest rates have been near zero for a decade, and our towns, school districts, and state governments struggle to keep a lid on budget growth while level-funding services. But one giant budget is still allowed to grow uncontrollably.

Last week the US Senate, by an 85-10 roll call vote, passed their version of H.5515, originally titled the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019" but renamed, in a cynical appeal to sentimentality, the "John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019."

The House and Senate are now in the process of hashing out their differences over the bill, but they are minor. Most observers of Washington's machinery expect the final budget that reaches the President's desk to be very similar to the Senate version.

Which is to say, \$716 billion – \$82 billion more than the current year's budget; 13% growth.

Back in February, the Pentagon requested \$15.1 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration. That's a \$1.2 billion hike. Congress agreed to it, as well the as \$5.6 billion requested for "defense environmental cleanup" in the atomic category – though, for whatever reason, they slashed a relatively tiny \$30 million line for "defense nuclear waste disposal."

Next time anyone tells you a policy proposal you favor on the home front – universal healthcare access; raises for school teachers; improved public transit systems – is a wasteful grab of "taxpayer" money, have them scroll through the earmarks in H.5515.

The Army, for example, will be handed \$72 million for "Unspecified Minor Construction" in "Unspecified Worldwide Locations." \$112.7 million will go toward building an "F-35 Maintenance Hangar" at Lemoore, CA, while the Air Force itself will get \$195.6 million for "Planning and Design" at "Various Worldwide Locations."

Kaiserslautern Middle School, which enrolls about 400 sixth- to eight-graders on the Vogelweh Air Base in Germany, must be a very lucky school indeed: its allocation for the fiscal year is \$100 million. That's a per-pupil cost of a quarter million dollars!

The famous Lockheed Martin F-35, the most expensive weapon system in history, is all over this budget. Under development since 1992 and notoriously plagued with

problems, it is no longer the case that the F-35 has never been flown in combat; Israel started making use of the jets last month, entering Syrian airspace to attack sites associated with the Iranian Quds Force.

Here in the US, meanwhile, the Senate bumped up the House's procurement figure for "spare and repair parts" for the F-35B and F-35C from \$1.79 billion to \$1.84 billion. Who doesn't suddenly need another \$50 million worth of spare parts now and again?

Further down the list, the Senate also threw in \$50 million extra for "F-35A Modifications Increase," the same sum again for "F-35A Spares," and then an extra \$25 million "Increase for F-35 sustainment to accelerate depot component repair capability."

These aren't totals, remember – just requests that happened to pop up in the three weeks between the two houses' approval of this bill. There are dozens of other huge earmarks for the fuel depots, parking aprons, and dormitories required for the jet program.

*Okay, okay, you get the point.* It's still baffling that the US military budget – larger than the next ten, China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, India, the UK, France, Japan, Germany, South Korea, and Brazil, combined – is treated as an exception to economic reality.

Both of Massachusetts' senators, thankfully, were among the Nay votes on this budget. But 38 of the 47 Democrats in the Senate went along with it.

Why? If it's that a two-party system ends up requiring a certain number of acquiescent, bipartisan votes to allow space for more important party-line fights, why is the *military* in that category? Why is keeping over 800 bases in 80 countries treated as a normal fact of American life?

How have we let criticism of military spending become a fringe concern? And didn't Republicans call for a strategic retreat from our outdated responsibilities on the world stage in order to focus our resources on our domestic woes?

International disarmament will require working across borders to build international political movements. Instead, the government squanders our wealth to maintain its role as the world's police.

That it does so unchallenged makes it all the more inevitable that it will end in war. All that hardware, aimed at someone desperate and angry: *drop the weapon, drop the weapon or we'll shoot.*



Katie, Kelly, Ameily, and Abby gather around a menu before the dinner rush begins at the Gill Tavern.

## Letter to the Editors

# Keep It Away From Pets, Kids

I was a little surprised to see that Mr. Skelton's DIY cannabis growing article (June 7, 2018, *OKCannabis Part 2: Grow Your Own*, page B1) missed a chance to include safety precautions. I appreciate his can-do attitude, and resistance to commercialization, but there are other dangers involved with home growing.

It's important for growers to know that modern strains of cannabis have three times more THC per ounce than the cannabis of the 1970s (see <https://medicalmarijuana.procon.org/view.additional-resource.php?resourceID=000191>), and can be toxic for pets to accidentally ingest.

Responsible adult growers are also aware that marijuana is dangerous for developing teenage brains, and will take steps to keep their product away from people under 21.

I'm glad that the legalization of marijuana gives adult home growers the chance to retain control over their product, and I believe it's always healthy for humans to learn to plant things. But, as with all things, with power comes responsibility.

This post-legalization era is a great opportunity for home growers to set the cultural standards for responsible adult-only use of marijuana. Share the cultivation knowledge, for sure, but keep on message that recreational cannabis use is neither healthy nor legal for teens.

Elizabeth Irving  
Montague Center

## GUEST EDITORIAL

# By the People: A Call to Action

By JEANNE GOLRICK

**MONTAGUE** – Yes, again about the highway facility.

It was refreshing to see so many people come out and voice their position about the building of a new highway facility. It was especially telling the vote passed by a slim 39-vote margin, with only a 2% difference!

The job, however, is just beginning – both for the government, and for the people who author-ize it.

Maxims are written standards from logic and reason. Maxims precede and indeed are the foundations of all of man's legislation, including national codes, state general laws (codes and regulations, too), and even the local ordinances known as town bylaws. All of this man-made legislation can, and should, be checked for accuracy and validity by looking at maxims.

The one maxim that particularly comes to my mind for this part of the process regarding the highway facility is:

*"What is not present does not exist."*

This highway facility was author-ized by the people, as was indicated by the close vote in May, but now the people need to follow up with the other two components from the founding documents. This highway facility can *only* be of the people and for the people *if* we, the people, continue to participate in the process going forward. This means we need to attend the committee meetings and ask questions, give input and suggestions, and truly shape the committee's work.

If we the people do *not* attend the committee meetings and assist

in the process, then the maxim is proven true: what is not present (in this case – we the people) does not exist. If we the people do *not* participate, then we do not exist in the planning, or implementation, of this expensive project.

I have asked the selectboard to put the highway facility on their agenda periodically so that we the people, a.k.a. the public, can hear of the ongoing progress and workings. Despite their initial resistance to my suggestion, there was agreement (without a vote) to do just that.

So now those folks who voted – either yeah or nay – need to step up, and come to committee and/or selectboard meetings to continue to have their voices heard. Voting in the quiet of the polling booth is a great first step, but we must remember that if we wish to have a voice that leads to transparency in our government, we must act!

This is a call for people to participate in the ongoing process for this highway facility. All are welcomed and encouraged to attend the meetings, lest the government think we don't care and continue without us. Our failure to follow up by attending these meetings – if they are held at a time when the general public can easily attend – is tantamount to giving up our right to be heard. It would be like we do not exist!

The first meeting will have already occurred by the publication of this paper, but you can check on the progress of the committee on the town website.

*Jeanne Golrick is a longstanding property-owning inhabitant of the Village of Millers Falls in Montague.*

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Compiled by DON CLEGG

Who needs Shark Tank? Local entrepreneurs live in Franklin County. Come to Greenfield Savings Bank this Saturday morning, June 30, from 10 to 11 a.m., Pierce Bros Coffee Roasters of Greenfield will give a PowerPoint presentation about how it provides its ultra-premium coffee.

Stop by the bank anytime from 9 a.m. to noon for free light, dark, or decaf coffee – bring the whole family, as the bank will also provide juice boxes. On a lazy Saturday morning, there’s not much better than **free coffee** to start your day!

Join the **Playful City’s young artists** from Montague Parks and Recreation’s Summer Camp 2018 in an opening reception on Tuesday, July 3, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Discovery Center.

The creative works by these young artists, featuring interpretations of pollinators such as fireflies,

hummingbirds and bats, will be on display from the opening through July 30.

At 11 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday, July 4, **50 immigrants will be sworn in as US citizens** in an intimate naturalization ceremony organized by the Center for New Americans and US Citizenship and Immigration Services on the grounds of the Hampshire County Courthouse in Northampton.

The event is free and open to the public. US magistrate Katherine Robertson will preside, Northampton mayor David Narkewicz will welcome the new citizens, well-known local vocal artist Evelyn Harris will sing the national anthem, and Girl Scout Troop 12926 of Greenfield will serve as color guard.

This year marks the tenth year the Center for New Americans is organizing the ceremony. Traditionally, the event is attended by about 300 local residents, who cheer heartily

after citizenship is conferred. Light refreshments will be available.

The **Greenfield 4th of July Celebration** will be held Friday, July 6, from 4 to 10:30 p.m. at Beacon Field. The day is full of festivities and music. For a complete schedule, visit [www.greenfieldrecreation.com/fireworks](http://www.greenfieldrecreation.com/fireworks).

If you are looking to view the fireworks display and don’t wish to deal with traffic in Greenfield there are very good viewing locations in Turners Falls. The lawn at the Carnegie Library and Soldiers Memorial is popular, as are the parking area just before the 11th Street Bridge and many sections of the bike trail along the canal. Fireworks should start just after 9 p.m.

The rain date for the fireworks is Saturday, July 7.

Come learn about wildlife neighbors who share their home in the Connecticut River Watershed with us humans! The **Kidleidoscope Story Hour** returns to the Great Falls Discovery Center on Fridays in July.

Each program includes a story, interactive games, and a craft to introduce young children to wildlife along the river. Meet in the Great Hall from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The program is for children ages 3 to 6, accompanied by an adult. Siblings and friends are welcome.

The schedule includes Bees and

Flowers, July 6; Bats, July 13; Rabbits, July 20; and Coyotes, July 27.

**Bingo** returns to the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls on Saturday, July 7, starting at 10 a.m. sharp. Deb Fritz will be the caller. Reservations are required as seating is limited; call (413) 863-4316.

The Friends of the **New Salem Public Library** are very pleased to announce that they have been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Community Foundation for North Central Massachusetts to be used towards funding needs in “Reimagining Our Library.”

The project will “reimagine the library” by creating an accessible, multi-function community space where none presently exists. Money from the grant will be used to purchase movable tables and stacking chairs, and to install a kitchenette with a sink, counter, and storage cabinets. The reimagined space will allow the library to provide for diverse activities such as educational programming, workshops, book groups, film screenings, cookbook clubs, yoga, and more.

The next issue of the *Montague Reporter* will be published Thursday, July 12.

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

## GMRSD from page A1

contribute to social alienation.

“How much of a connection do families get through school, aside from their kids being friends?” asked Mike Langknecht of Montague. “There just isn’t a strong bond between the community and the schools.”

“Staff and administrators of public schools have not traditionally thought about part of their work being to bring families together,” Sullivan said. “Maybe this is an area that we should be thinking about directly trying to promote.”

“Populations are more transient than they used to be,” observed Gill’s Jane Oakes.

“I love technology, but I do see how it hampers some true connectedness and communication,” Katsoulis said about social media. She suggested the use of phone trees.

Committeemembersbrainstormed events that would bring parents into contact with each other. Montague member April Reipold suggested dances for parents.

Christine Limoges, assistant principal at Sheffield and the district’s new director of curriculum, said she suspected a 2018 survey of Sheffield parents would show an improvement on this point. “I think we’ve done a very good job at connecting family and school this year,” she said.

A separate survey from June 2017 asked 64 parents who either choice their children into another district, or send them to a charter or private school, to share their perceptions of Gill-Montague. “[T]he quality of student to student interactions” was the strongest factor cited by respondents, followed by curricular and instructional rigor.

The majority of those anonymous respondents also filled in narrative answers, which were included in the meeting’s agenda packet on the district website.

“Fire all left-wing radicals, bring back traditional subjects (civics), serve the people who send their

kids to your schools and not outside cry-bullies, and stop indoctrinating people’s kids with political views that are wholly un-American,” one parent suggested.

“I cannot imagine sending my kids to a school where the majority of families think it’s OK to have their mascot be an ‘Indian,’” wrote another.

No action was taken on the issue, but committee members agreed they would be interested in continuing to review the topic.

## Meal Aid

Business director Joanne Blier discussed several steps the district is taking to offer students more affordable food next year. She explained that, based on Montague’s demographic profile, the state would reimburse the district 81% of the price of meals if the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), already implemented at Sheffield and Hillcrest elementary schools, were authorized for the middle and high school.

The district had determined that implementing CEP at Gill Elementary would result in a net loss, as that town’s demographics would result in a lower reimbursement rate.

The committee voted unanimously, 7-0, to implement CEP at the secondary level. (Cassie Damkoehler and Shawn Hubert were not in attendance.)

Blier said that CEP, in conjunction with an Action for Healthy Kids grant the district has received, will allow the school to offer “grab and go” breakfast food, as well as lunch options on the patio for seniors. This is all expected to increase both breakfast and lunch participation among students next year.

April Reipold commented that these changes would help with the problem of collecting money owed for school lunches. “Since we have free lunch at elementary schools, it can be hard for parents to remember, when the kids switch over to middle school, that they have to start paying for it,” she said.

“We’re hopeful that we’ll help our revenues, and not hurt our expense side,” Blier told her. She said the increase in sales volume should more than offset the district’s 19% share of the bill.

“Any program that provides meals for students without the families having to pay, and certainly without all the paperwork that made it cumbersome, is a huge improvement,” Oakes said.

The summer free breakfast and lunch program, which is available to any child under the age of 18, begins this week at the schools, Unity Park, and the Brick House. Information will soon be available on the school website.

## The Big Picture

Langknecht proposed the school committee and administration host a training workshop for prospective members of school councils about the role and responsibility of council membership. “I’m picturing this being a benefit to principals in recruiting members to the council,” he said. “Anything we can do to make it easier for people to get involved is a good thing.”

Many parents are recruited to the councils at open houses in the fall. Langknecht recommended filming the workshop to use as a resource in the future, and he volunteered to help with the training. He said the Massachusetts Association of School Committees would be able to assist.

“I tend to think that a lot of the issues parents have with the school are actually school council issues, not school committee issues,” said Reipold, “so maybe if the school committee worked with the school councils, parents would understand where things fall – who’s responsible for what.”

In a similar vein, the committee discussed the idea of visiting each building. Sullivan told them he would help them, individually, visit and observe the various schools, but discouraged them from visiting as a

large delegation, since that could be disruptive. “I would like you to just be able to sit in the back of a couple classrooms,” he said.

The committee reviewed parent feedback about a proposal to replace February and April vacations with a week in March. About half favored the idea – more than teachers had – but many worried about securing daycare in March, or expressed that it would be difficult to move the schedule out of alignment with other local districts.

“What rises to the surface is the idea of [keeping] April and [reducing] February,” Sullivan said, and recommended surveying teachers and parents about that idea.

## Other Business

The committee voted unanimously to hire Dianne Ellis as director of pupil services, following the resignation of Nancy Parlakulas, and give her a three-year contract. Ellis has been working in a similar position in the Greenfield public schools, and comes highly recommended. Montague member Cassie Damkoehler, who was unable to attend but served on the search committee, submitted a written statement recommending Ellis.

Six educators are leaving this year, either in the spring or fall: at Great Falls Middle School, sixth-grade teacher and seventh-grade science teachers Maggi Gunnison and Jonathan Begg; Hillcrest school nurse Nina Thayer; technology teacher Sarah Adolph; and Sheffield special education teachers Cathy Coutu and Annmarie Hallowell.

The meeting began with an executive session about a contract negotiated with custodial and maintenance workers. During the public session, the committee approved the settlement, which implemented 1.5% annual raises for FY’17 through FY’20, including retroactively, for workers in the unit.

The school committee’s next meeting will be held July 10 at the high school.

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## NOTES FROM THE MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

# Board Presses On in the Face of Grinding Noise, Public Demands for Greater Transparency

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard meeting on Monday, June 25 featured a low but disconcerting background grinding sound coming from the HVAC system, giving the meeting the feel of David Lynch's iconic 1977 cult film *Eraserhead*.

"We want to apologize in advance for the noise quality this evening," said acting chair Michael Nelson. "That rattling noise that you hear is the air conditioner. Mr. Bergeron from the [department of public works] is aware of it... but it won't be fixed tonight."

So the board, which was lacking chair Rich Kuklewicz, "pressed on" in the face of the noise and persistent requests by several audience members that it be more "transparent." This included a request by Millers Falls resident Jeanne Golrick that the board consider opening up staff meetings to the public.

Town administrator Steve Ellis responded that there was no requirement under the state Open Meeting Law that staff meetings be public, and that he found private conversations "between management and managers valuable." But he promised that "we'll see if the chair wants to put it on the agenda."

Other requests included suggestions that a list of current liquor license, and all procurement documents – such as requests for proposals – be posted on the town website. The board agreed to implement the first idea, but Ellis balked at the second, noting the large number of procurement documents, many of them involving relatively small amounts of money, that would need to be posted.

Near the end of the meeting, audience member John Reynolds complained that the public was not sufficiently involved in or informed about the procurement of an assess-

ment center to organize the hiring of a new police chief.

## Fermenting Apples

The first item on the agenda was a request by Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Director Lisa Davol for a one-day all-alcohol license on November 3. The license would allow the tasting of cider during the annual "Cider Days" event at Unity Park in Turners Falls. Davol said tickets would go on sale September 1, and "they sell out pretty quick."

Reynolds asked if there was a rain date, to which Davol replied, "We have a very large tent." The board approved the request.

Next the board held a public hearing in response to a request from a new cidery, Wild Child Cellars, for an annual "pouring permit." The permit would allow the company to serve cider, in addition to brewing it, in their Canal Road building.

Reynolds asked where people going to the cidery would park. Ellis replied that there would need to be more discussion and planning before the cidery opened as a restaurant, as is currently planned.

After the board approved the request for a pouring permit, there was discussion of the all-liquor license also requested by Wild Child Cellars. This would be additional license above the town limit, requested from the state, which is now before a legislative committee on its "third reading."

Wild Child's Curt Sherrer explained that the license would not be owned by the Wild Child business, but by a company called "42 Canal Road," since, if approved by the state, the license would stay with the building.

After a discussion of the distinction between Canal Street and Canal Road, the board approved changes in the wording of the license.

## Evaluating Evaluations

Meeting as the personnel board, the board voted to accept the resignation of Glenn Batchelder, who was recently appointed as a custodian for the highway department.

"It was a great week," said Nelson, to which his fellow board member Chris Boutwell replied, "I was going to say, he wasn't here that long!"

Also as the personnel board, the board voted to accept changes in the evaluation process for the airport manager proposed by airport commission member Peter Golrick. Golrick said the commission had decided to align the evaluation more closely with the manager's job description.

The board then approved a process for evaluating Steve Ellis. Ellis had requested that the board use the same form used for other managers of town departments, and said that the evaluation would need to be made at a public meeting under the state Open Meeting Law. "Personally I don't mind the feedback or mind that it is a public process," he said.

Jeanne Golrick suggested that the board discuss the airport commission's method of evaluation when chair Rich Kuklewicz is present. Ellis said this could be considered for a future evaluation, but that he had been town administrator for over a year, and wanted the input as soon as possible.

The board voted to submit and collate evaluations for discussion at its July 23 meeting, assuming all board members will be present.

Ellis then read a lengthy response to a complaint filed by Jeanne Golrick with the state attorney general's office, claiming that a number of manager evaluations, including that of Ellis himself, had been performed by the selectboard in violation of the Open Meeting Law. Ellis

stated that most of the evaluations did not need to be made in public, and that he, as town administrator, had not yet been evaluated.

## Other Business

The board approved a request by Roberta Potter of the Council on Aging for the use of public property – the parking lot of the Senior Center – for food distribution by the Western Massachusetts Food Bank. The distribution will take place on the third Wednesday of each month.

Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority requested a disbursement of \$4,600 to the engineering firm Tighe and Bond for the first phase of their design project for demolition of the Strathmore complex. The board approved the request. Hunter explained that there will be public hearings on the project, which is scheduled to be completed in December.

The board approved a long list of appointed town officials and members of various boards and commissions.

They voted to award a \$35,000 annual contract for town "information technology" services to Moody Consulting, and another contract for \$28,500 for construction on the Council on Aging front porch to LaRochelle Construction Inc. of South Hadley.

Ellis also reported on the bidding process to hire a company to implement the assessment for hiring a new police chief. This led to the discussion of whether bidding documents should be posted on the town website.

The board approved a letter to the UMass Clean Energy Extension Program thanking them for free consulting services, after they provided an evaluation of town buildings.

The next Montague selectboard meeting is scheduled for July 9.

## OBITUARY

# Llan Starkweather (1929 – 2018)

By JAN PASSION

Llan Starkweather, 88, of Leverett, MA died peacefully on June 15, 2018. Llan "William" Starkweather, son of Ellen and John Starkweather, made his transition after a full, varied and dynamic life.

He is survived by brother David Starkweather and wife Faye, his two former wives, Emily Bliss Starkweather and Alia Starkweather, three children, Maggie, Robin, and Drew, and four step children, Jon, Angela, Karuna, and Jan. He is also survived by nine grandchildren, and his beloved canary, Birdie.

Llan was a visionary, artist, architect, builder, gardener, and author. As an artist, Llan worked with many mediums. In 1967 he helped form Leverett Crafts and Arts. He designed and built numerous houses, many with cutting-edge designs of efficiency, solar gain, and expressive use of color.

In 1970, Llan and his then-wife Alia bought an old school bus, converted it to a camper called the Painted Turtle, and took their seven children across the country. Llan designed the original temple for the Leverett Peace Pagoda. Llan built life-size awareness raising replica "cruise missiles" as part of the nuclear

freeze movement of the '80s. Llan was part of a men's consciousness-raising group for over three decades.

He loved exploring and uncovering the rich history of Leverett and western Massachusetts. Llan also was a passionate lover of flowers and nature. He has been an activist for the rights of gay, lesbian, and transgender people for over 40 years.

Llan worked for 25 years at UMass, serving as the registrar and other capacities, designing some of the first computer-assisted registration systems in the US for student regis-

tration and classroom scheduling. Llan modeled critical thinking and alternative communal living. He touched the lives of hundreds of people who found shelter in the house he built in Leverett, suitably called "Edge House."

He will be missed, and his memory will live on in the lives of those he touched and in the wide variety of his gifts and contributions.

In lieu of flowers, we are inviting those who wish to make a contribution in Llan's honor to donate to Leverett Crafts & Arts at [leverettcrafts.org](http://leverettcrafts.org).



*A memorial for Llan Starkweather took place at the Peace Pagoda on Sunday, June 17.*

## Tuesday, July 24: State Senate Candidates' Forum

**NEW SALEM** – Voters in the northern region of the Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester Senate District will have an opportunity to meet the Democratic candidates running for the senate seat formerly held by Senator Stan Rosenberg.

On Tuesday, July 24 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the New Salem Town Hall, a regional committee made up of local town Democratic committees will host the candidates.

Write-in candidates Jo Comerford, Steve Connor, David Morin, David Murphy, and Ryan O'Donnell – as well as Chelsea Kline, the only candidate on the ballot – have all confirmed that they will attend.

The evening will open with an hour of comments by audience members alerting the candidates to the particular problems of the north region followed by comments by the candidates and questions.

New Salem Town Democratic Committee chair Sharon Tracy explains, "This is a unique opportunity for voters in the north region of the district to meet the candidates, listen to their views and express their concerns."

The New Salem Town Hall is located at 15 South Main Street in New Salem, and is handicapped accessible.

For additional information or questions, people are encouraged to call or email Mary-Ann Palmieri, secretary of the New Salem Town Democratic Committee, at (978) 544-2611 or [mapalmieri1126@gmail.com](mailto:mapalmieri1126@gmail.com).

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APPLE CORPS from page A1

collaborates with the Montague planter committee, and they maintain several permaculture beds on Avenue A.

The group has also worked to bring the community gardens in Unity Park back to life, and these have never looked better. There are private individual plots as always in addition to some new public plots where they have planted a variety of food that is offered to the community for free. Future plans include free workshops at the gardens on medical uses for everyday herbs and wild foraging.

“There’s a lot of food around that I didn’t even know was food, and once you scratch the surface, you realize it’s everywhere,” says Annie. “Most things are edible whether they are delicious or not – even grass.”

Another ongoing project that the Apple Corps is working on is their own app, which would include a map of downtown Turners for the purpose of foraging.

“The idea is you would have something like a Google Map that would have pins, and if you wanted to put in your location, you could geo-locate a particular tree or plant,” says Annie. “You could then click on it and it would identify the plant with photos and include any warnings, such as look-alike plants that might be poisonous.”

Everyone is welcome to attend the monthly meetings. “You can come for one, or come to all of them. We’re pretty loose regarding that,” Annie says. “During the summer we also offer what is called ‘open garden’ every Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m. It’s a time where someone from our group will be available to show you around the gardens, point out which plots are free for everyone to pick from, or simply answer any questions you might have around gardening or foraging.”

The next event that the Apple Corps will be hosting is a pickling workshop led by Annie on August 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Unity Park garden. She’ll be demonstrating the process of making lacto-fermented pickles. No special equipment is needed, but bring your own veggies and a clean jar, if possible.

Dates and times for the monthly meetings vary, and will be posted on the “Great Falls Apple Corps” page on Facebook.

“If anyone out there has fruit trees laden with fruit that they might need help harvesting, Apple Corps is hoping to raise money to hire fruit pickers and purchase harvesting equipment to harvest the fruit from said trees,” Annie says. “We would then split it up among the owner, the Survival Center, and the Apple Corps group. Basically, we would just like to help redistribute the resources.”

“Donations of gardening equipment of any kind as well as edible perennials are always greatly appreciated,” she adds. “Apple Corps will put your generous donations to very good use.”

To contact the Great Falls Apple Corps, you can go to their Facebook page, or email [greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com](mailto:greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com).



Great Falls Apple Corps founder Annie Levine places plants around the “Rock, Paper, Scissors” sculpture on the corner of Avenue A and Third Street.

NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# Two New Cops On The Force

By GEORGE BRACE

The Gill selectboard made a number of appointments to town positions at its June 25 meeting, including two new part-time police officers. They congratulated highway superintendent Mickey LaClaire for being named a “Roads Scholar” by the Baystate Roads program, and heard from him on several highway department projects and requests. Randy Crochier was delayed and not present during regular business, so the meeting was conducted by chair Greg Snedeker and John Ward.

Police chief Chris Redmond recommended the appointment of two additional part-time officers, Alex Wiltz and James Loynd, to fill vacant positions. The appointments of both officers were approved, bringing the staff of full and part-time officers up to nine.

Wiltz was on hand, and introduced himself. He has been in law enforcement for ten years, and currently serves as the director of public safety and chief of police at Greenfield Community College.

Loynd was unable to attend due to being on duty as an officer in Erving, but Redmond gave a brief biography, reporting that he has served as a part-time police officer since 2005, and has been working for the Erving police department since 2006. Redmond also noted that Loynd is a recent graduate of the full-time police academy, has a bachelor’s degree, and is a member of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

Later in the meeting, the board approved the full annual slate of reappointments, along with three

new appointments: Colleen Lilly as an election worker, and Steve Baskowski and Phil Gilfeather-Girton to the Town Forest Task Force.

**Roads Scholar**

LaClaire began the highway department items by presenting a purchase order request for backhoe implements totaling \$5,910. He compared using the current backhoe implements on certain jobs to using an adjustable wrench to remove a carburetor: “You can do it, but it’s not the best, ideal thing.” He said the department had intended to get the equipment when the backhoe was originally purchased, but the funds were not available at that time.

The new implements include a swiveling coupler and two new buckets, which LaClaire said would allow his staff to accomplish tasks such as grading and cleaning under guardrails faster and more efficiently, and produce better results. The new coupler will also speed things up, according to LaClaire, and improve safety for the operators when swapping buckets.

Ward reported that the machinery advisory committee, to which he is the selectboard representative, had reviewed the request, and there was “not a negative response.” The request was approved.

The board also approved a request from LaClaire to ask the state for approximately \$140,000 Chapter 90 highway construction funds to repave South Cross Road, which is showing cracks and is up for repavement in the normal five-year cycle of road repaving.

A number of the issues involved in repaving the road were discussed.

Ward, referring to a section of the application that described a process of adding more material to the road, asked if residents’ mailboxes were going to end up four inches lower. LaClaire assured him they wouldn’t, and said the description of adding material only made it seem like that might happen due to the way the application had to be worded.

The board and LaClaire spoke of new materials and techniques to be used in the project, which led Ward to bring up the subject of the highway superintendent’s recent “Roads Scholar” award. LaClaire was awarded the rank in recognition of his completing seven six-hour workshops through Baystate Roads, a local technical assistance program offered by the UMass Transportation Center. The program is part of a national initiative of the Federal Highway Administration to improve local agencies’ access to advances in road-related technology, materials, and best practices.

LaClaire spoke highly of the program, saying he has learned a great deal, and noting that other members of the department attend workshops there as well. He said the classes are informative, but the best thing about the program is the interaction with colleagues from other towns, and the opportunity to compare notes and experiences.

As for his new title, LaClaire acknowledged the humor involved in the play on words, and responded to the board with a laugh: “If you’re happy with it, fine. It’s not a big deal to me.”

**Other Business**

Lynda Hodsdon Mayo resigned

# LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was June 26, 2008: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

## Narragansett, Wampanoag Seek Consultative Status on Mariamante Land

Two Native American tribes are seeking consultative status on the archaeological dig underway at the property owned by the town of Gill at the corner of West Gill and Main roads.

The town, acting on the right of first refusal on the 12-acre parcel formerly owned by Mariamante School, purchased the property in the fall of 2004 for \$245,000, and has been paying on the loan since then. The town purchased the property to forestall the construction of a residential subdivision that had been proposed for the site.

In November 2005, a special town meeting approved spending \$15,000 to hire UMass Archaeological Services to conduct a Phase I archaeological survey of the land, as a prudent planning action prior to selling the land for development. Tim Binzen of UMass Archaeological Services told the town meeting that the land lay within the Riverside Archaeological District, where a concentration of Native American artifacts dating back 10,000 years has been found, although the Mariamante parcel lies at the northern extremity of the district.

The town has twice issued Requests for Proposals on the property, which have yielded no bidders. The town recently received a \$100,000 grant from the state Interagency Permitting Board to facilitate preliminary design work for the property, and to pay for the second phase archaeological survey of the site.

On Monday, Narragansett Indian Tribal Deputy Historic Preservation officer Doug Harris, from Wyoming, RI, attended the selectboard meeting with local historian Howard Clark of Greenfield to express their concerns about the study.

Clark brought up a distinctive burial that had been uncovered on a farmer’s field in 1881, where twelve sets of human remains

were found interred in a circle, like the spokes of a wheel, with their heads outward and their feet towards the hub.

“It’s a rich site,” said Clark. “People have picked it over for years. They refer to it as an artifact mine.”

Harris, arriving late to the meeting after driving through thunderstorms from Rhode Island, said, “We have some very serious concerns about the area where the spokes burial may have come from. We’d like to make sure there are no flaws in the study the archaeologist has done.”

The Wampanoag Tribe of Gay-head Aquinnah wrote to the Gill selectboard separately about the site.

## G-M Schools Stand Firm On Budget

On Tuesday, by a vote of 8-1, the Gill-Montague school committee reaffirmed a \$17,018,078 operating budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1; Sandy Brown cast the sole opposing vote.

“We can’t keep building up and up. Sooner or later, choices will have to be made,” Brown said.

But interim superintendent Ken Rocke urged the committee to reaffirm the school budget, at the level that was defeated at town meeting in Montague. “I think it is a good action to take, because it makes it clear the school committee stands on its budget,” Rocke said.

Now that Montague has defeated the GMRSD’s proposed budget for the second time, the next step in the district’s budget process will be taken at a special district wide meeting, tentatively set for July 30th at the high school. All registered voters of Gill and Montague will be invited to that meeting to vote on the GMRSD budget.

If no agreement is reached at that meeting, the towns have until December 1 to come to an agreement with the school committee on an operating budget – or else, by statute, the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will set a budget for the district, which the towns will have to accede to.

from the historical commission.

The board approved the renewal of a 3-year contract for municipal accounting services from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), and the purchase of two new desktops, one for the town clerk and one for the police department, along with some office software.

Administrative assistant Ray Purington notified the board that the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) was adding cyber-liability insurance to the town’s insurance, at no additional charge.

The board also acknowledged a letter from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) approving a cemetery commission request to the DEP.

At 6 p.m., the finance committee joined the proceedings, and a joint meeting was convened to review and approve minutes from budget meetings, and approve FY’18 year-end budget transfers.

Trash and recycling collection will be postponed during the week

of the Independence Day holiday, and will take place on Saturday, July 7. The collection company sent a request and reminder that residents should make sure to have their trash and recycling curbside before 7 a.m.

On July 7, Antenna Cloud Farm will host a Gill 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary event featuring bluegrass musicians Chris Brashear and Jim Watson. A “bring your own” community picnic will begin at 5:30 p.m., with music at 7 p.m.

The second of three “Common People Concerts” will take place on the town common on Tuesday, July 10 at 7 p.m., featuring the Pat & Tex LaMountain Quartet.

The Gillbilly Paddle, another Gill 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, will take place on Saturday, July 21. Boats will launch from the docks at the Northfield Mount Hermon School. Participants should arrive at 8:30 a.m. and will be sent off with a cannon bang at 9 a.m. More information will be posted on the town’s website later this week.

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DAVID HOITT PHOTOS



*Left to right:*

*Taylor Murphy pops up the ball in  
the fourth inning of the state final  
at Worcester State University.*

*Head coach Gary Mullins.*

*Jade Tyler sends the beat to the  
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## THE CLASS OF 2018



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*Seniors Abby Loynd, Peyton Emery, and Sienna  
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**OXBOW** from A1

property, not only to protect for hunting and fishing access, but also to protect rare, threatened, or endangered species, or priority habitat in general.” She added that the state considers all riverfront property a “priority.”

“There’s a lot of migrating ducks that come through that oxbow,” she said. “You can get right up to the Millers River itself on the oxbow, because of the beaver dam – you can walk on it. If you follow the river a little ways, you get to a rock outcropping that hangs over the river.” The northernmost section of the land, Petersen added, also features a “very large and deep” vernal pool.

Before the state could acquire the property, the land agent had to negotiate with Eversource to create a special easement for the town of Montague, which has had recent trouble with drainage threatening the stability of Millers Falls Road along the edge of the parcel. That drainage easement was signed earlier this month.

“It’s just a beautiful piece of property,” town planner Walter

Ramsey said. “They call it the Millers River Oxbow parcel.”

Finding a way to protect the wetlands at the oxbow from development has been a “specific Town priority,” according to the OSRP. The document’s environmental inventory notes that “[r]esidents of Millers Falls have long advocated for permanent protection and public access to this property,” which it calls Beaver Pond or Beaver Hollow.

The town website also touts the “Beaver Hollow Wetland” – the vista overlooking the oxbow from the roadside – as one of the natural attractions of Millers Falls, “particularly scenic during the fall foliage season when red maples are in peak color.”

Petersen said the DFG does not plan to build trails on the property. “There are already a couple of existing cart roads,” she said. One runs north-northeasterly onto the adjacent Waidlich Farm, which is already under conservation restriction with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and considered part of the Connecticut River Greenway state park.

The parcel that includes the ox-

bow was previously sold in June 1974 by Louise Pratt to the Quinnehtuk Company, a subsidiary of Northeast Utilities (NU). At the time, NU had plans to build a nuclear reactor on the Montague Plains, and was assembling a land corridor straight from the Plains to Northfield Mountain.

The utility paid Pratt \$101,000 for the land – which he had purchased three years earlier for \$41,000 – but was never able to develop it, finally scrapping plans for the nuke in 1980.

Quinnehtuk’s successor, Eversource subsidiary Rocky River Realty Company, still owns nearly 650 acres in town, broken up into numerous parcels.

“The plan was they were going to string transmission lines from the nuclear plant, across the Millers River, to hook up to the Northfield Mountain transmission line,” Petersen said.

“That was a long time ago, when it was conceivable not only that you could build a nuclear plant, but also that you could string transmission lines across an oxbow.”



**SOFTBALL** from A1

Both teams were kept off the scoreboard for the rest of the game, and Abington held on to win.

So, Turners Falls isn’t the best softball team in the land. Not this year, anyway: this year, they’ll have to settle for Western Mass Champions. And although Turners lost their last game of the year, to quote Lennon and McCarthy, it’s nothing to get hung about. After all, this season has been a wonderful, bumpy ride, and it would be a shame to let one loss define a very successful season.

Turners began the year with the deck stacked against them, and a big target on their backs. Every opponent they faced had the added incentive of trying to knock off the reigning champs. And although Turners Falls High School is tiny, they were seen as the giants that opponents wanted to slay.

And their ranks were depleted. Turners lost their entire outfield and their all-star catcher to graduation last year, so coach Gary Mullins had to substitute underclasswomen to fill the holes.

Then they lost their pitcher: Peyton Emery, who had helped her team win the States in 2017, suffered an injury, and Jade Tyler had to step up to the circle.

Despite these adversities, the Turners Falls softball team hit the ground running, winning their first four games in 2018 and outscoring Amherst, Easthampton, Belchertown, and Athol by a combined score of 63 to 5.

And then came Greenfield. In a monumental pitchers’ duel, Green eked out a 1-0 win. In the spirit of “What have you done for me lately?,” that loss dropped Turners in the eyes of the record keepers: MassLive dropped them from best to fifth in their Top 20, and Turners slipped to fourth place in the Franklin Conference.

But that loss didn’t dissuade the Blue Ladies. They had to keep their eyes on Frontier, another Top 20 team. Turners was trailing late in that game, but pulled out an 8-4 win. After getting back on track against Frontier, Blue went on another rampage, beating Ludlow (16-3), Mohawk (15-3), and Pioneer (14-1).

By this time, the fans were getting to know the new lineup pretty well. At one game, some of the fathers and alumni were conversing as Hailey Bogosz batted. “I thinks she’s our only left handed batter”, someone said. Then several others pointed out that Tayler Murphy was also a lefty.

The next opponent that Turners faced was Wachusett, who incidentally were playing for the Massachusetts D-I state title a few hours after the Abington game. Against Turners, Wachusett won 10-8 by scoring four runs in the seventh. But in that game, Blue proved they could play against the big girls.

After that second loss of the season, Turners went on a 10-game winning streak. Senior Day came in the midst of that streak. It was a pretty emotional evening as folks said goodbye to Sienna Dillensneider, Peyton Emery, and Abby Loynd but I think it was harder on the younger girls, who will have to play without them in 2019.

Turners’ last regular season game came against defending Western Mass D-I champs Minnechaug. In that game, Powertown was trailing 6-2 in the sixth inning but came back to make it a 6-5 game. Even after Minnechaug added an insurance run to make the score 7-5,

Blue never gave up: Aly Murphy clocked a homer in the seventh, and Minnechaug escaped with a 1-run win.

Then came the break. There was a week-long delay before the postseason began, and Turners had extra days off because they had a bye in the first round. To keep the girls in game mode, a scrimmage was set up with Greenfield. But further adversity was thrown at Turners during that scrimmage: infielder and leadoff batter Cassie Wozniak got injured, forcing her to miss the first two playoff games, and relegating her to courtesy runner for the next two.

Despite this latest bump in the road, Turners skated through the West bracket, beating Ware 16-0, Mount Greylock 12-3, and Mount Everett 8-3. Then they faced Hopedale, the Central Mass champions. They defeated Hopedale 4-1, and returned to the state championship game against Abington.

I didn’t make it to the 2014 state title game against Greater New Bedford, the last time Turners didn’t win the state trophy, but I did go to the final Western Mass game against Mount Everett in 2013. After Turners lost that game, the players were devastated, with several groups of girls crying and hugging each other.

After the Abington loss on Saturday, the mood was sad, but not overtly so. The girls accepted their trophy and their medals, got their pictures taken, and quietly gathered their equipment with just a few tears shed.

In golf, the winner of the Masters is awarded the prestigious green jacket. Most of the girls on the Turners Falls softball team have three blue jackets, signifying the three state titles they won. (Plus a couple of Western Massachusetts championship jackets in the closet!)

So come what may, rest assured that in 2019, the softball team will again travel down this bumpy road, and will face adversity with confidence, good sportsmanship, and probably a few tears.



Olivia Whittier bats during Saturday’s first inning.

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Town Meeting Reluctantly Approves Extra Librarian Hours

By KATIE NOLAN

Approximately 40 Erving residents attended a special town meeting held Monday night, where they voted to approve a 3% excise tax on retail marijuana sales, reluctantly appropriated \$5,500 to increase the assistant librarian’s hours, approved \$10,000 for codifying the town’s bylaws, and funded the capital stabilization account which was created at the annual town meeting with \$150,000 from free cash and \$350,000 from taxation.

At the selectboard meeting that preceded the special town meeting, administrative coordinator Bryan Smith told the board that the town’s department heads estimated that they needed 10 hours per week of support from an information technology specialist.

Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache said that it might be hard to find an IT specialist for those limited hours, and member Jacob Smith said that with only 500 hours per year, the specialist wouldn’t be able to work on all the projects the board is interested in pursuing, such as the town email system.

Bastarache suggested that it might be possible for Erving to share an IT specialist with one or more other towns. The board asked Bryan Smith to investigate what other towns are doing for IT support, and check with Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) about potential regional programs.

The board also approved sending a letter to FRCOG transportation program manager Maureen Mullaney, requesting her to conduct a study of a truck exclusion for Church Street in Erving and Gulf Road in Northfield.

The board declared the highway department’s 2011 John Deere riding mower as surplus. Bryan Smith will place local ads asking for bids on the mower.

The board also accepted a \$32,000 bid from Scherbon Consolidated, Inc. of Amesbury, the only bid received, for work on the float control at the River Street pump station.

**Librarian Hours**

Most of the special town meeting discussion focused on a proposed increase in the assistant librarian’s hours from 19.5 to 26 per week.

Library trustee Mackensy Bailey told the meeting that the extra hours are needed because of the construction of the new library building. She said that library director Barbara Friedman needs more time to manage the state library building grant and consult with the owner’s project manager. In addition, Bailey said that when the new library is built, more staffing will be needed because there will be more programs and more use of the library.

Several citizens said that they had been told at the 2017 annual town meeting, when the building funding was approved, that the new library would not need additional staffing. Bailey said that no trustee would have said that, because additional staffing was written into the grant application, and all the trustees knew that the new library would require more staff.

Asked why the request for the increased hours wasn’t considered at this year’s annual town meeting, Bailey said that the trustees had been notified about the building grant at the end of February, and had trouble scheduling a meeting when they could reach a quorum, so were not able to meet with the finance committee and selectboard before the warrant for that meeting was closed.

One resident noted that, with the hours increased to 26, the position would be eligible for benefits.

Another observed that when the police station and senior center were built, the police chief and the senior center director didn’t ask for extra hours to be involved with the construction. “Why does the library director feel she has to run the construction?” he asked.

Finance committee member and library trustee Daniel Hammock recused himself from his role as a fin com member and moved from the head table to the voter seats to avoid a perceived conflict of interest. “We’re fortunate to have a library director who was previously involved in a building project,” he said. “We are fortunate to have Barbara looking out for our interests.”

Hammock said he had visited the new libraries in Athol, New Salem and Wendell and had found out that “when you build a new library, people come out of the woodwork.”

A resident commented on the length of the discussion about a \$5,500 expense, when “we’ll pay \$250,000 for a fire truck without batting an eye...”

The library assistant hours increase passed by majority vote, and all the other motions were approved unanimously.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Don't Drink Pond Water, Pond Stewards Warn

By ROB SKELTON

“The Leverett Pond has been treated with chemicals again,” announced selectman Tom Hankinson at the close of a short selectboard meeting Tuesday at town hall.

Hankinson, a member of Friends of Leverett Pond, directed inquiries to Mitch Mulholland, who is the group’s “vice president of weed management.” FOLP has issued no prohibition on swimming, but suggests no one drink the water.

“Now we’ve got two bridges out in North Leverett,” said selectboard chair Peter d’Errico, alluding to the recent closure of the Mill Yard Road bridge, deemed unsafe by highway department foreman Ethan Dickinson. The nearby downstream closed Coke Kiln road bridge, scheduled for replacement, is the bridge that works best for everybody, said selectwoman Julie Shively.

The board approved a \$34,500 payment to Regional Resource Group, an outsourcing for the assessing work previously done by Steve Schmidt.

Four dedicated microphones purchased for town meeting purposes are to remain in the town hall, not the school, and are not to

be lent out for any other uses, the board agreed.

A meeting set up by the selectboard between Delta Sand & Gravel and complaining neighbors has been put on hold, because the abutters want “more questions answered by the board” before meeting Curtis Warner of Delta.

“There’s no reason for us to be in the middle of this,” said d’Errico. “What better way than a face-to-face meeting?”

“This needs to be pursued in a meeting,” added Shively.

“They come here, they take time, they ask all these questions,” said d’Errico, referring to the residents’ group headed by Paul Roud. “We don’t have a dog in this game.”

The board agreed to drop the matter until the abutters show a more earnest hand.

Moore’s Corner newcomer Justin Costa, son-in-law of the Amherst merchant and Leverett resident Nick Seamon, was appointed unanimously to a seat on the town’s Affordable Housing Trust.

The recent art auction at the Leverett Crafts & Arts facility raised \$12,000 toward the cost of repairing a dam at the north end of Leverett Pond.



Above: Luella McLaughlin of Kissimmee, Florida, and her daughter, Laurel Facey of Wendell, at her other daughter Beverly's home in Florida. Luella was a resident of Greenfield since 1960 until three years ago, when Beverly invited her to live with her in a more balmy climate. Luella loves the heat and humidity of the South but no longer, at 99 years of age, will go into the pool. The Montague Reporter brought a taste of Massachusetts to her home in vacationland.

At right: Jeffrey Webster and his wife, Susan, visited British Columbia and Washington state this spring. Camera-shy Susan took this shot of Jeff with one of his favorite publications, The Montague Reporter, in Vancouver's Stanley Park.



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ON THE ROAD

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## Milkweed and Monarchs: A Desirable Pair

By JEFF SINGLETON

**TURNERS FALLS** – One morning in May I was weeding my plot in the Turners Falls Community Garden on the corner of Third and L streets. As long as the weed population in the garden is not “out of control,” I find this to be an activity that reduces stress.

Why? Because in, say, thirty minutes you appear to have actually accomplished something significant. The garden looks radically different. You can not say that about most activities that only take half an hour. So while weeding might be considered tedious by some, it can also be empowering.

Weeding has also changed my attitude about weeds themselves. While many of them are unattractive and serve no useful purpose, others, in the right location and with some tender loving care, can give the garden a very natural or “wild” look. And, of course, many weeds flower at some point.

This raises the deep philosophical question of what exactly constitutes a “weed.” Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a weed as “a plant that is not valued where it is growing, and is usually of vigorous growth; especially: one that tends to overgrow or choke out more desirable plants.” Putting aside the creative punctuation, one notices a certain circularity to this definition. The plant becomes a weed because it is “not valued” and undermines “more desirable” plants.

So why is one plant “not valued,” but another “more



*Monarch butterflies raised by Melissa Paige cling to netting.*

desirable”? Merriam-Webster does not say, but this definition creates the distinct impression that a weed is in the eye of the beholder. Or, to put it another way, one person’s weed is another person’s flower.

These thoughts came to mind that morning in May as I observed a woman closely examining a milkweed plant in the front of the Community Garden. I used to consider milkweed a classic weed, as the name implies, but in recent years had noticed that their unique flowers and broad flat leaves added color and texture to my garden. I would advocate eliminating the dead leaves and flowers as the season progresses, but that might be heretical to some milkweed lovers.

The woman inspecting the milkweeds was named Melissa Paige, and she lives in the town of Orange. She told me she was looking for the eggs of monarch butterflies. These famous creatures lay their eggs almost exclusively on milkweed, and the caterpillars that emerge from the eggs voraciously devour the plant.

Many readers of the *Montague Reporter* may already know all this, but it was all news to me. All I knew before meeting Ms. Paige was that monarch butterflies migrate to somewhere in Latin America in the late summer and fall.

Ms. Paige told me she was collecting the eggs to bring back to Orange, where she raises monarchs and

see **MILKWEED** page B5



SINGLETON PHOTO

*Paige shows off some of the milkweed she cultivates in her yard.*

## A Swiss Hike a european travelogue, part 4

By PETE WACKERNAGEL

**SWITZERLAND** – I awoke to the sound of my ears crackling with altitude, and I knew that I was finally in the thin, alpine air of Switzerland. It was completely dark in my berth by the ceiling, but I could feel the rocking and creaking of the train as it slowly wound its way over the precipices and around the peaks of the Alps.

My companion in the sleeper car, a young American expat from Minnesota, had finally fallen asleep after drinking four or five beers and taking a hot shower, while the train flew across the Bohemian plain.

Although I had at first laughed at what I thought was a bad translation, the Czech Rail travel brochure had actually been right on when it wished me a “Safe and Undisturbed Journey.”

### Family Matters

In the middle of the 19th century, my Great-Great-Great-Grandfather Wilhelm had fled to America after being cast out of the city of Basel by his own father. He had stolen a small amount of money, and I was on my way to introduce myself to the rest of the family, and to see if it was time to forgive and forget.

As I stood on the doorstep of the Wackernagel home on Sonneweg, just a stone’s throw from the green glacial meltwater of the Rhine and a short distance from the point where France, Germany, and Switzerland converge, I wondered if old prejudices still held. I soon began to think that either the exile was still binding,



WACKERNAGEL PHOTO

*The cable car at Berghotel Napf.*

or they just didn’t like guests.

First, Herr Walter forbade the use of the stairs that passed through their rooms to reach the third-floor apartment where I stayed. Instead, I was instructed to take the old-fashioned elevator (made by a company actually called Schindler’s Lift). Then Beata explained, “We don’t really like hearing people upstairs.”

While physically it was quite comfortable living in a beautiful townhouse that had been in the family since 1900, on a shady block of 19th-century row houses, after two days of living like Emily Dickinson I knew I had to go. I would go to the Alps, to a *berghotel* atop a peak called the Napf – I would take what the Swiss call a *Wanderweg*.

From Basel SBB, the central train station, it took three trains and one bus to reach the Emmental, a re-

gion in the northern foothills of the Alps and the home of Swiss cheese. (The real Swiss cheese is Emmentaler.) At each transfer, the vehicles seemed to be waiting just for me – the doors would slide shut and they would depart as soon as I’d boarded – but perhaps that is just Swiss public transport.

### Hiking the Wanderweg

When I left the bus in the small village of Wasen-im-Emmental, I was overwhelmed with a certain powerful feeling, a sensation that I always relish when it comes on the rare occasion of being so free. It is the feeling of exuberant urgency, total freedom, and manifold possibility, and I only experience it when I pare my possessions down to the essentials: map, compass, and backpack.

see **SWISS** page B4

### THEATER PREVIEW:

## The Road To Mecca

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

**GREENFIELD** – So many ideas come to mind while listening to the words of playwright Athol Fugard as spoken by the three actors in *The Road to Mecca*, a Silverthorne Theater Company production now in performance at Hawks and Reed Performing Arts Center in Greenfield.

For so many of us who have felt a little different at times – unwelcome, strange – it is easy to relate to much of what is presented here. Especially for those of us who are aging artists, the issues raised and the challenges confronting Miss Helen reflect so much of what people have to consider when facing the future.

Jeannine Haas, who plays Miss Helen, is one of three actors in this thought-provoking drama set in South Africa during the time of Apartheid. Pastor Marius is played

by Chris Devine; Elsa, Miss Helen’s young friend, is played by Mo Mosley. A native of South Africa, Mosley speaks Afrikaans and served as dialect coach for the other actors. Together they show a piece of the small-town lives of Afrikaners in the age of Apartheid.

How many artists throughout our history have struggled to be understood by the people in their community? Within our own time, how many people who are seen as different or strange have suffered cruelty and condemnation because other people fear what they do not understand?

So it has been for Miss Helen, an aging Afrikaner who has followed her own path since her husband died 15 years earlier. Her vision brings her to create statues of owls and camels, and other less recognizable creatures, filling her yard in place of the vegetables her

see **THEATER** page B5



BLANCHETTE PHOTO

*Jeannine Haas, at left, as Miss Helen, and Mo Mosley as Miss Helen’s friend Elsa, performing this week in the Silverthorne Theater Company’s production of ‘The Road to Mecca’ at Hawks and Reed.*



### THE GARDENER’S COMPANION

## The Long and Short of It

estingly, Independence Day, which should be an early producer given its name, has just set small fruits which will in no way be ready for the fourth of July. Well, we’ll enjoy them when they do arrive, along with Stupice, Red Brandywine, and the one plant we kept potted up, Tidy Rose.

Summer crops of winter squash, cucumber, green beans, and corn are all in and growing well. The peas should be ready to eat soon, this crop we call “garden candy” for good reason. It may sweeten the end of the asparagus season in our garden.

The time flies by so quickly, accelerated by our increasing years. The birthdays we so eagerly awaited as children – we remember writing our age in years and fractions, as they came along so slowly – now arrive unanticipated, and sometimes unwished for. The weeks and months zip by. We are halfway through another year at summer solstice time, yet winter feels a long time off since summer has just begun. Time is so very relative.

The swift passage of time blurs memory. Reminiscing over the past we share memories, but may not agree about when something occurred. Ken has faithfully kept a diary for decades. He can look back to confirm a month or year, or just bathe

see **GARDENER’S** page B8

# Pet of the Week

With the thundering hooves and clattering armor comes another clear and piercing sound, the fear-some squeaking of a warrior who brings her own savage sense of honor to the king’s games.

Sugar Cookie is a knight of whom few squires dare speak ill. She is known throughout the greater Leverett area as a valiant but

reclusive rider, who will not cease to righteously defend her kinsfolk until her body is laid to rest, once and for all, on that hallowed bed of cedar shavings.

Bring honor to your family and bring Sugar Cookie home today!. Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at [info@dpvhs.org](mailto:info@dpvhs.org).



## “SUGAR COOKIE”

### Senior Center Activities JULY 2 TO 13

<b>LEVERETT</b> For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or <a href="mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us">coa@leverett.ma.us</a> . Wednesdays 10 a.m.: Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Fridays at noon: Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.	<b>Tuesday 7/10:</b> 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga <b>Wednesday 7/11:</b> 9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach 12:30 p.m. Bingo <b>Thursday 7/12:</b> 9 a.m. Tai Chi 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 1 p.m. Cards & Games <b>Friday 7/13:</b> <i>No Morning Classes</i> 10:30 a.m. to noon: Brown Bag
<b>GILL and MONTAGUE</b> The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs call 863-9357. Messages can be left on our machine when the center is not open. <b>M, W, F:</b> 10:10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise <b>T, W, Th:</b> Noon Lunch <b>Monday 7/2:</b> 1 p.m. Knitting Circle <b>Tuesday 7/3:</b> Noon Lunch <b>Wednesday 7/4: CLOSED</b> <b>Thursday 7/5:</b> 9 a.m. Tai Chi w/Mari 1 p.m. Cards & Games <b>Friday 7/6:</b> 12 noon Pizza Party <b>Monday 7/9:</b> 8 a.m. Foot Clinic (by appt.) 1 p.m. Knitting Circle	<b>WENDELL</b> 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.  <b>ERVING</b> Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 2 days in advance. Call (413) 423-3649 for meal information and reservations. For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic. <b>CLOSED JULY 2, 3, AND 4</b> <b>Thursday 7/5:</b> 8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic 8:45 a.m. Aerobics 10 a.m. Healthy Bones 11:30 a.m. Brown Bag Pick Up <b>Friday 7/6:</b> 9 a.m. Quilting Workshop 9:30 a.m. Fun Bowling

# JULY LIBRARY LISTING

*Weather, etc., sometimes causes changes in library events; you may want to call ahead to confirm.*

**Montague Public Libraries**  
*Turners Falls: Carnegie* (413) 863-3214  
*Montague Center* (413) 367-2852  
*Millers Falls* (413) 659-3801

**Erving Public Library** (413) 423-3348  
**Gill:** Slate Library (413) 863-2591  
**Leverett Public Library** (413) 548-9220  
**Wendell Free Library** (978) 544-3559  
**Northfield:** Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455

## ONGOING EVENTS EVERY TUESDAY

Leverett Library: *Spanish Conversation Group*, 4 to 5 p.m.; *Qigong with Dvora Eisenstein*. 5:15 to 6:15 p.m.

Wendell Free Library: *Adult Watercolor Art Group*. Call Rosie for details. 6 p.m.

**2ND TUESDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *I'd Rather Be Reading Group*. 7 p.m.

**3RD TUESDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Genealogy Group*. 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

Wendell Free Library: *Sylvia's Awesome Play Group*, a sand table and lots of activities for newborn to 5 years old and their guardians, 10 to 11:30 a.m. *Healthy Bones and Balance Class* with Marianne Vinal. Geared to older Wendell residents. Tea afterwards. 10 to 11 a.m.

Carnegie Library: *Story Time with Karen*. Young children with caregivers. 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

Leverett Library: *Tales and Tunes Story Time w/Heleen Cardinaux*. 10:30 a.m. to noon. *Advanced Tai Chi class*. 1:45 to 2:45 p.m.

Dickinson Library: *Knit With Us*. All skill levels welcome. Facilitated by Kathy O'Shea. 6 to 8 p.m.

**1ST WEDNESDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Wednesday Morning Book Group*. Book discussion. 10 a.m. (July 4 is a holiday, so it's on July 11 this month.)

**2ND WEDNESDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Readings with Nick Fleck: Nonfiction, Fiction & Poetry*. 3 p.m.

**EVERY THURSDAY**

Montague Center: *Music & Movement* with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson. For children. 10 to 10:45 a.m.

Leverett Library: *Music on the*

*Patio* series returns with great local music. 7 to 8 p.m.

**1ST THURSDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Environment Awareness Group*. Topic facilitated by Emily Koester. 6:30 p.m.

Carnegie Library: *Genealogy Gathering*. Informal discussion of local family research led by Sarah Campbell. 6 to 7:45 p.m.

**3RD THURSDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Rep. Paul Mark: Office Hours*. 1 to 4 p.m.

**EVERY FRIDAY**

Wendell Free Library: *Explore Yoga with Shay Cooper*. Mixed level. 10 a.m. \$ or barter.

Dickinson Library: *Story Hour*. Stories, crafts, music and movement with Dana Lee. Pre-schoolers and caregivers, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. *Kids' Friday*: When Northfield Elementary gets out early, come to the library. 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Yoga for Stress Reduction* with Nancy Paglia. Sponsored by the Leverett Recreation Department. 5 to 6:15 p.m.

**EVERY SATURDAY**

Wendell Free Library: *Adult Strength Training* is on vacation until September. *AA Open Meeting*, 6 to 7 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Advanced Tai Chi*, 10 a.m. *Beginning Tai Chi*, 11 a.m.

**1ST SATURDAYS**

Carnegie Library: *Book Sale*. Books, dvds, cds, etc. \$1 or less. 10 to 1:30 p.m.

**2ND AND 4TH SATURDAYS**

Dickinson Library: *Food Pantry*. 11:30 to 2:30 p.m.

**EVERY SUNDAY**

*AA Open Meeting*, 6 to 7 p.m.

**EXHIBITS**

*To apply to have a show at these venues, find the application forms on their websites.*

Dickinson Library: *Interesting Ordinary*, photographs by Sara Karz Reid. Through July 18.

**EVENTS**

**THURSDAY, JULY 5**

Leverett Library: *Music on the Patio*, Bruce Colegrove. 7 to 8 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 11**

Dickinson Library: *Wednesday Morning Book Group*. This month: *Years of Wonder*, by Geraldine Brooks. 10 a.m.

Dickinson Library: *To Bee or Not to Bee* with Jon Mirin of Piti Theater. Interactive play about human relationships with bees. Puppetry, live music, dance, etc. Held at the Northfield Elementary School. 1 to 2 p.m.

Dickinson Library: *Readings with Nick Fleck*. This month is *An Odyssey: A Father, A Son, and an Epic*, by Daniel Adam Mendelsohn. 3 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JULY 12**

Dickinson Library: *Environmental Awareness Discussion Group*. Movie to be announced. Contact library for details. 6:30 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Music on the Patio*, Danse Cafe. 7 to 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JULY 14**

Wendell Free Library: Movie, *Slaughterhouse Five*, based on Vonnegut novel. Part of the Science Fiction/Horror Movie Night series. 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JULY 17**

Millers Falls: *Rhythm Circle*. Children and teens join Melinda Georgeson for hands-on exploration of rhythm instruments. 3 to 3:45 p.m.

Dickinson Library: Crankie Performance. Old story-telling art form of unfolding a scroll between two spools. *Riverteeth* will perform. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Woody Allen: The Growth and Decline of an Auteur*. Prof. Jill Franks presents an exploration of the career of Woody Allen. 6.30 to 8 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JULY 19**

Leverett Library: *Music on the Patio*, Other Cats Pyjamas. 7 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JULY 20**

Carnegie Library: *Lego Club*. 11 to 1 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JULY 21**

Dickinson Library: *Ukulele with Julie Stepanek*. 2 to 3:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JULY 24**

Montague Center: *An Act of Kindness*. Launches a year of programs under the theme of Peace and Social Justice. Reading of *Flowers for Sarajevo* by John McCutcheon, local cellist performance, and related craft project. Youth oriented. 11 to noon.

Carnegie Library: *Ukulele Workshop with Julie Stepanek*. Ages 11 to 16. 11 a.m. to noon.

Dickinson Library: *Drumming with Dave Curry*. Active participation for entire family. Drums provided, or bring your own. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 25**

Dickinson Library: *Dismantle Accordions* with Doug Creighton from the Button Box. Please pre-register, as limit is 10. 1 to 2 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JULY 26**

Leverett Library: *Music on the Patio*, Masala. 7 to 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JULY 27**

Dickinson Library: *Movie Sing-along*. Call for details. Snacks from Trader Joe's. 6 to 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JULY 31**

Dickinson Library: *Last Warlord* with UMass professor Brian Williams. Williams will discuss story, from his book, of Afghan warlord and his group on horseback who helped US military. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

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Opening Thursday, June 5:  
John Landino Sculpture

**NORTHAMPTON** – This July, the Anchor House of Artists gallery in Northampton will feature a retrospective exhibit by Montague-based sculptor John Landino, “Sculpture 1985-2018.”

The mission of the nonprofit Anchor House is to “match... outsiders and professionals to a peer foundation, making a place that offers studio life, celebrating art on a human scale, and bringing all our neighbors in to join the big dance.”

The institution has recently expanded into a new, 1,000-foot gallery space known as the New England Visionary Artists’ Museum.

Landino’s sculptures, “works that expose brute force and delicate choreography in their making,” will be on display both in Anchor’s small and large galleries from July 5 through August 2. Well known in the Easthampton, Montague, and Turners Falls arts communities and beyond as “Dada Dino,” Landino was last featured in these pages for his work examining his successful battle against esophageal cancer.

The gallery is located at 518 Pleasant Street in Northampton, and its regular hours are from 1 to 6 p.m., Tuesdays through Thursdays and Saturdays.

An opening reception for Landino’s show will be held next Thursday, July 5 from 5 to 9 p.m. at the gallery. All are welcome.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

The solstice has come and gone, and school’s out for the summer! Check out the latest from MCTV:

- “Abandon Dream – Frank Hurricane 2018”: images of summer, interactive with live acoustic music.
- Turners Falls Softball Parade
- “From Walt, From Me, To You”: an interpretive performance of Walt

MUSIC REVIEW

2018’s First Coop Concert

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – There is a concert series that goes on at Energy Park in Greenfield during the summer, every Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m., called the Coop Concerts. The Franklin County Musicians Cooperative is behind this, and is a “not-for-profit collective of musicians and music lovers who share creativity through live performances, music education, peer networking, and promoting Franklin County as a hub of live music,” according to [www.coopconcerts.org](http://www.coopconcerts.org).

The first official concert for this summer’s series was on May 24. The performers were Jim Eagan and Dennis Avery; Katie Clarke and Larry Leblanc; and Orlen, Gabriel and Avery.

Jim Eagan and Dennis Avery were up first. Jim Eagan sang while the duo both played guitars.

I liked their guitar playing, which was good, but I found it to be better than Jim’s singing. He sang an old Willie Nelson song I know. His singing was okay, but I have heard a combination of singing and guitar playing I liked way better than his – although the people that made up the audience in the Energy Park seem to like him well enough. Their applause continued through more than one song.

Katie Clark and Larry Leblanc were the next duo to perform. Katie played a guitar, and Larry played a mandolin. I actually liked the sound of their instruments playing together very much. They fit into the category of singing and guitar playing I liked way better than others. Their playing together was nicely in sync with each other. It wasn’t badly off key, or anything you might call mu-

sic that isn’t in sync.

I specifically liked Katie’s singing better than Jim’s. Larry’s was alright. He sang one song a little better than alright at one point. But she sounded like she had a perfect country music voice – I just thought of country music when I heard her. Her guitar playing fit well with that thought, too. Both of them played some country music songs.

The last performance was Orlen, Gabriel & Avery, a trio of people which consisted of two men playing guitars and a woman who sang. One of the men sang as well. Their voices were okay. But what I really like the best about the group is their guitar playing. It just stood out for me when they performed. One played a steel guitar.

The level of how well they played guitars just worked well for the folk song they did. But like Eagan, they also played a country song which I recognized. Their rendition of that song, one by Alabama, wasn’t bad. I also heard Avery sing one song, and his voice sounded like Johnny Cash.

All three of them, as performers and a group, were okay when it came to the music they played. The audience seemed to share my opinion; why else would they have applauded them?

I believe all of the performers played either folk songs or country songs during the concert. This was the order I liked them best: Katie Clarke and Larry Leblanc; Orlen, Gabriel & Avery; and last was Jim Eagan and Dennis Avery.

I think these people who show up at the park, in general, must always enjoy the performers who do this series. I say that because the number of them who were there was rather large.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Throwing Eggs; Peeing Off The Porch; Camping Out; Drinking In The Park; Robbing Farmstands: Basic Summer Stuff

Monday, 6/18

1:13 p.m. Caller from J Street received word from a neighbor that two suspicious men are walking in her yard and around her house. Area checked; nothing found.

4:52 p.m. Party into station to report that her daughter was assaulted at the Franklin County Technical School. Investigated.

5:39 p.m. Caller from Montague Street states that two silver cars pulled up by her home and a couple of people got out and started yelling at each other. Both vehicles left abruptly in separate directions.

7:33 p.m. Officer investigating a complaint of public drinking by the gazebo in Peskeomskut Park. MedCare requested for one male who is not responsive to verbal commands. One dose of Narcan administered; party removed to hospital.

11:29 p.m. Caller from K Street states that four or five people in a dark colored hatchback were just throwing eggs at his house. Vehicle last seen going toward Cumberland Farms. Officers checking with Cumberland Farms and F.L. Roberts about any recent egg purchases.

Tuesday, 6/19

12:46 a.m. Caller in the area of Railroad Salvage states that there are several parties on FirstLight properties intoxicated and fighting, and that they had lit a campfire so big that it will light the whole woods on fire. Caller was highly uncooperative in answering questions. Not as reported; caller had a recent falling out with involved parties and is trying to get them into trouble.

3:23 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street complaining of solicitors on the sidewalk; group of five or six people all carrying blue bags. Officer spoke with solicitors and advised them of the town bylaws. Parties instructed to go to Town Hall to obtain proper permits.

3:37 p.m. First of two calls from same caller complaining of basketball hoop in the road at the end of K Street near the bar; caller believes it is impeding parking for local establishments. Officer advises that basketball hoop is not in the road or obstructing parking.

7:04 p.m. Caller from Third Street advising that her next door neighbor is urinating off the back porch into the alley. Caller believes he is intoxicated. Officers *en route*. Summons issued.

Wednesday, 6/20

9:19 a.m. Report of campsite with a sleeping bag and personal effects near the bandshell at Peske Park. Officer located sleeping bag and some debris in the area. Spoke with male who knows who the items belong to and will relay a message about keeping the area clean.

2:32 p.m. Caller reports that while following a vehicle over the General Pierce Bridge, the driver of that vehicle suddenly flipped him off, and the passenger held a machete out the window while both occupants yelled at him. Officer spoke with owner of other vehicle, who was adamant that no one in her vehicle did what the caller stated; advised that caller was tailgating and honking his horn at her while they were on the bridge. Officer spoke to reporting party; advised of options.

11:43 p.m. Officer advises that MPD sergeant is in pursuit of a silver Nissan that almost struck both officers while they were on a paving detail on Route 63, then struck a cone and a construction sign before taking off. Sunderland officer advising that he has located a vehicle in his town that matches the description and has damage that appears to be fresh. Officers off at registered owner’s residence; spoke with owner and husband. Report taken.

Thursday, 6/21

8:09 a.m. Caller from Park Street states that she came home to find that her apartment had been broken into again. Landlord called to say that he has a suspicion as to who may be involved. Report taken.

8 p.m. Officer investigating smoke near Railroad Salvage; made contact with a female party who had a cooking fire. Female was instructed to put fire out and was willing to do so.

8:35 p.m. A 40-year-old Lake Pleasant man was arrested on a straight warrant.

Friday, 6/22

6:35 a.m. Report of dead cat in road near Sunderland town line. DPW not on duty until Monday; day shift will be advised.

9:17 a.m. Dead opossum in road. Message left for DPW. Animal control officer will respond and clean it up.

1:50 p.m. Caller from Thirteenth Street concerned about a dog that has been barking for several hours. Dogs are OK; put outside by owner to dry off after having a bath. No problems.

2:32 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting people drinking alcohol in Peske Park. No drinking observed. Parties advised to clean up after themselves.

4:12 p.m. Report of trailer becoming detached from the Jeep that was towing it over the General Pierce bridge. Trailer removed from roadway. Bumps in bridge had caused damage to tow package, so Jeep can no longer tow trailer. Operator is making arrangements.

5:46 p.m. Caller requesting assistance with an injured eagle or similar type of bird. Number for Environmental Police provided.

Saturday, 6/23

7:40 a.m. Caller from Davis Street advising of two deer in field near his residence; expressing concern that if there is a softball game in that field later today, the deer might attack someone.

8:36 a.m. Report of two deer that just ran across L Street. Caller no longer has deer in sight.

10:23 a.m. Report of theft from a farmstand on Turners Falls Road; white male in his 50s stole approximately \$100 worth of plants. Report taken.

8:31 p.m. Caller from Vernon, VT advising that she found a cat in traffic there while on her way home. Caller requesting assistance with the animal. Provided number to police in jurisdiction where animal was found.

10:24 p.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road complaining of a bear in his backyard who was on his porch, damaged his bird feeders, and is now ripping apart his trash cans. Caller had taken a large bag of birdseed into the house and is concerned that the animal may try to come through the sliding glass door. Conferenced with Environmental Police, who suggested that a unit use the siren of a cruiser to scare the bear away. Officer took bag of birdseed back to station and is storing it in the sally port.

Sunday, 6/24

10:07 a.m. Report of skunk out foraging in the vicinity of Doyle’s Car Wash. Skunk is not exhibiting any signs of being rabid, but caller is concerned that it is out during the daytime.

3:53 p.m. Caller advising of cracking concrete in middle of General Pierce Bridge. Did not notice this spot yesterday; believes it is 8 inches in diameter and could spread if left unattended. Officer on scene requesting MassDOT to respond; advising of 2 foot by 1 foot hole down to the rebar with a nearby bump in the roadway. MassDOT sending engineer to location. Officer placed mid-sized hazard barrel over hole to warn traffic. MassDOT will get a temporary fill bag for tonight and will try to get a crew to this location tomorrow.

8:51 p.m. One party taken into protective custody following a disturbance on Avenue A.

11:37 p.m. Report of erratic operator on Main Street. Officer advises operator was showing no signs of impairment and was struggling to keep her windows from fogging up due to weather conditions. Operator advised of complaint.

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SWISS from page B1

It was sunny and very humid as I proceeded out of town on a tiny paved road and up the first big hill. I passed fields where cows grazed and occasional farmhouses stood, low and mushroom-shaped with their shallow-pitched, tiled roofs and deep gables.

When I became tired, I turned to look back at the village. From this high vantage it looked like a single shiny object, like a colony of strange and skilled insects, placed among steeply rounded hills that rose up around it like balls of well-risen, green dough.

Soon the road turned to dirt, and I walked through cow fences and past warning signs that I could not read. At times, the road would constrict to a skinny path that traversed piney forestland. And when the wind blew in this forest, the air became saturated with the balmy freshness of wild mint, which I did, in fact, try eating.

Walking, to me, is the greatest affirmation of the self. With every step further down the road, my muscles hum “I am; I am; I am.” The act of moving across the land under my own power seems to both materialize my self, and locate me firmly within a living matrix of other beings. “I move, therefore I am,” is the maxim of the trekker. Goethe believed that a plant would transform itself into a beautiful flower only when it had cleaned itself of all toxins – when I am hiking, I undergo that process. Bravely navigating across a new landscape is when I feel most vital, connected, and aware – that is, most alive.

As I proceeded higher and higher up into the mountains, I had a sudden and spiritual feeling that I had arrived at the source. Clear water trickled out of every embankment and dripped from seams in the rocks, forming rivulets that cascaded down the steep terrain and, I imagined, ran together to become the streams that coursed down to the plain to become the great river Rhine, flowing north to the Netherlands and the sea.

These mountains, with their mysterious heights, gather near-permanent rainclouds about them like concealing cloaks. They also, through the mineral mass that I explored the surface of, force the water of the earth aboveground. To get water for their purposes, farmers here just ram a pipe into any earthen bank.

In the woods I encountered a strange fountain made of a broken tree trunk. Crystalline water poured out of a branch and into a hollowed-out log laid on the ground. It appeared to be either a rustic drinking trough or an elven bath. Normally I would not drink un-purified water in the field, but this water I drank deeply of. There are no beavers in Switzerland, I thought.

When I reached the top of the ridge, I could finally make out the larger patterns of the land. Like an enormous green boa constrictor communicating with the planets by contorting its body into an

obscure yet significant glyph, the mountains coil in every direction around the streams that eventually flow into the large river valleys that run south-to-north.

From where I stood on this serpentine crest, I could look across the deep valley and see the trail like a tiny streak on the next undulation, several hours away. The steep pastures that descend from the ridgeline were striped with horizontal lines, running perpendicular to the slope. This corduroy pattern of skinny flattened ledges is drawn onto the hillside by the grazing habits of cows who stand on these terraces and graze the intervening slopes.

In places where livestock have not produced this stepped landform, the terrain is dangerously steep. Cling to the mountain! Brace yourself against the inexorable pull! These are the mountaineering tactics used when stepping off the flattened backbone of the mountain, for gravity seeks to drag you into an abyss that smiles shark-like, its teeth rows of sharp conifers.

After traversing this territory, flat ground comes with the relieving feeling of returning home, and an unmistakable sensation of weightlessness, like taking off ankle weights you did not know you had.

Often I could not see the bottom of the valley whose rim I walked atop. The geography in these mountains inverts the patterns of living that I’m used to. Deep at the base of the valley, usually obscured by dense forest, there is no flat and passable floor. This, then, is the remote wilderness where people do not go.

Roads and settlements are half-way up the slope, or at the peak. The road makes long, horseshoe-shaped runs – straight along the top of the ridge, then curving at the head of the valley where ridges and watersheds meet, then following the next.

From the trail I looked down on circling hawks, and the helicopters that dart by purposefully like waterstriders. I learned later that helicopters are a practical and fairly common form of transport in this territory.

Within the Landscape

For people of the modern, materialist world, the backpacking trip is the quest. For one, this type of journey shares the same basic activity as the high fantasy novel – walking great distances over challenging and possibly hostile terrain, with a lot of equipment. In *The Lord of the Rings*, this kind of journeying is the unwritten action between the chapters. Further, in long distance through-hiking, it’s easy to begin seeing your life through the lens of a simple story arc. Overland marches are readily equipped to be seen as narrative – they have a beginning, middle, and end, and also struggles, emotions, dangers, and summits.

I first glimpsed the Napf from the top of a grassy knoll, just up the hill from an alpine restaurant. People ate sausages outside as I walked past. From this lookout where there was a wood-hewn bench, I gazed at a flat-



The Berghotel Napf, where our correspondent stayed.

tened peak that rose above my current height, across a long saddle. A tiny rectangle appeared in the hazy distance atop it.

A closer inspection revealed that this human-made shape was Berghotel Napf, a tiny window-bejeweled box of hospitality and rustic comfort placed intrepidly upon the flat-topped mount. The orange sign said it was two hours of hiking away, and I was becoming tired.

By the time I summited the Napf and reached the hotel, I knew that I’d had a good day – I no longer wished to walk. My knee was painfully numb, and both of my hips were bleeding from a kind of self-flagellation practiced by backpackers, caused by friction from the backpack’s hip-strap.

But the Napf, because I enjoyed this kind of painful struggle, was worth it. It is a true sky island: steep cliffs surround it on several sides, and there is only one clear way down. The panoramic view is a full 360 degrees.

To the north, there is nothing higher until you reach the Vosges Mountains in France. To the south, the High Alps stood like a crenellated wall of rock and snow, only emerging from their cloud bank as the sun set. One thing I definitely learned is that, when a Swiss guidebook says that a trail is strenuous, it means that it is, really, strenuous.

The Appalachian Trail, typical of long-distance trails in America, is a wilderness trail cut, blazed, and maintained explicitly for hikers. The Swiss Wanderweg is a completely different kind of trail. It is more like an incredibly good way-finding system that is superimposed on a preexisting network of rural roads and woodland footpaths that are part of a working landscape. With its mustard yellow signs and large maps appearing every quarter mile, I would hesitatingly admit that becoming lost is nearly impossible – although I am attached to them, you do not need a map and compass to trek in the Alps.

Wilderness is an American fetish. Perhaps it is because of a tradition of imagery beginning with Yosemite Valley and the 19th-cen-

tury wilderness photographers like Carleton Watkins. And perhaps it is also related to our predilection to consume, exploit, and transform other land beyond recognition, leading people to see any human presence on the land as a blemish.

The Swiss see the landscape and our place in it very differently – they expect their human activities to shape the land in a way that does not alter it completely. In the working landscape of the Emmental, recreation, agriculture, forestry, and residential space form a tapestry of mutually supporting uses.

This relationship between careful human use, and the area’s ecology and physiography, is the heart of its beauty.

Postscript

Returning to Basel, I moved in with a different family of Wackernagels, the Christs. They were incredibly welcoming and also entertaining. For what felt like a very long week-

end, I was penniless, as my bank had deactivated my debit card. (They had deemed my attempt to buy an Italian train ticket suspicious. Why this was a red flag I can only guess.)

To help me out during this travel crisis, Felix Christ generously gave me 50 Swiss francs. For a moment, I felt the cogs and gears of the clock tower of fate returning to midnight as the thought of leaving town with this bounty ran through my mind. But I realized that Felix had initiated a ritual of healing and union between the Swiss and American branches of the family – it was the second chance that my Great-Great-Great-Grandfather Wilhelm never received.

Cognizant of this responsibility, upon leaving I returned the 50 francs, along with a decent bottle of Italian wine. (Felix was a member of a social organization called *Les Honorable Gourmets du Vin*.) I hope to attend the next family reunion in two years.



# Coming Soon: Wendell Reggae Fest

By SIMON WHITE  
with REPORTER STAFF

**WENDELL** – Wendell is a small town best known for its radical concepts and self-sufficient community. It was the first town back in the ‘80s to try and advocate for the recreational use of marijuana, which swiftly got shut down, and it is the home and was the hub of two of the biggest rock and reggae bands yet to come out of the “happy valley”: Loose Caboose and the Outer Space Band.

Since then, Patti Kort Scutari has kept the positive musical movement going when she opened the Deja Brew Cafe and Pub, which many bands have found to be one of the funnest venues to perform around here. With the gazebo and huge lawn out back, it is ideal for outdoor parties as well as


music festivals....

So, once again, this is a complete honor to keep the musical history alive and going, and we hope to see all of your beautiful faces on July 7 for the 2nd Annual Wendell Reggae Fest, with performances by Denroy Morgan & Ianbassa, Simon White & Rhythm Incorporated, Total Collision, ReBelle, The Equalites, DJ Live, Camilo I-ganic.

Tickets for this family-friendly event are \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door, and free for kids under 12. The festival will be held, rain or shine, at the Deja Brew Pub at 57A Lockes Village Road in Wendell starting at 2 p.m. and running into the evening, with bonfires, vendors, Caribbean food, and full bar available. (This is not a BYOB event!)

For more information, contact [wendell.rhythm.inc@gmail.com](mailto:wendell.rhythm.inc@gmail.com).


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THEATER from page B1

neighbors grow. She stopped going to church after her husband died, something she felt was necessary, but in doing so, she left behind her former friends who felt abandoned. She suffered cruel behavior from the children in her small town, who were frightened by the strange statues, and neighbors who thought perhaps she was crazy.

All this was fine while she was busy creating her work, but something changed, and she has become withdrawn and worried. She doesn't work on her art anymore. She doesn't connect with her neighbors. Pastor Marius, who presides at the local church, has been encouraging her to leave her home and move into the small nursing home connected to the church. She doesn't want to, but has a hard time telling him so, as he is an old friend and seems to have her best interest at heart. Yet his manner and attitude are condescending, making it harder for her to find her words and express her feelings.

Miss Helen's one close friend, Elsa, has come to visit after receiving a letter from her that caused her concern. Now they sit and talk in a sometimes loving, sometimes confrontational manner. Elsa is a young woman who admires Miss Helen and finds her creative way of thinking inspiring. She is facing her own challenges as she pursues her career as a teacher in Cape Town and deals with disappointment in her personal life.

The push-pull of their debate pro-



vides powerful drama that holds the audience attention throughout, with Pastor Marius entering just as the first act ends. The playful, joyous moments between the two women lift the spirit and help enhance an understanding of their friendship, providing lighter moments as they discuss more serious matters. Even as the audience listened intently to the more serious moments of drama, laughter served to break the tension and balance the experience.

It is in the second act that we see the powerful push by Pastor Marius to have Miss Helen agree to moving into the nursing home, and how she struggles to explain herself and say what she truly feels. When she does, it is as if a dam has burst, and the stage lights up in magical ways.

The exquisite set design has given this production magic. Light dances

across the stage and brightens Miss Helen's face. She and Elsa are joyous in their display of the beauty of Helen's home. Far from frightening, it is a creation of wonderment.

The fullness of these three characters, as they interact on stage, exists because the actors are so completely immersed in their parts. The audience experiences these conversations as if they are eavesdropping on a real discussion among friends hidden away behind the walls of Miss Helen's magical home.

Haas is riveting in her depiction of the many moods of Miss Helen. Devine inhabits the being of Pastor Marius as he struggles to communicate with passion what he wants to say, and suffers the disappointment when he fails to prevail. Mosley brings youthful energy to this part, displaying a depth of understanding

of the character, and of the various moods the two women go through as their conversation moves from joy to anger and frustration back to loving friendship.

Director Rebecca Daniels has done a superb job of guiding these gifted, professional actors in their presentation of some very complicated characters. Daniels has many years of experience as an actor, director and playwright, and she brings her considerable talent to Silverthorne with dedication and enthusiasm.

Much credit goes to set designer Molly Hall for her imaginative creation that so powerfully supports the production. Producer Lucinda Kidder continues her contribution to the community in bringing unique theatrical experiences to Franklin County, utilizing the vast local talent avail-

able in here in the Pioneer Valley.

The Road to Mecca continues with performances on June 28, 29, 30 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets may be purchased online through Eventbrite.com or by calling the Silverthorne box office at (413) 768-7514.

The fourth floor space at Hawks & Reed at 289 Main Street, Greenfield, is air conditioned and fully handicapped accessible.

Silverthorne Theater Company is a non-profit arts organization founded in 2014. Their mission is to bring excellence of performance to adventurous drama, combining the best of the theatrical repertoire while also promoting unheard voices and underserved populations.

For further information contact silverthornetheater@gmail.com or (413) 768-7514.



MILKWEED from page B1

releases them during the summer. She said she also grew a large variety of milkweed plants. So, several weeks later, I traveled to Orange.

But first I decided to do a bit of quick research on milkweed and monarchs.

Milkweed, it seems, straddles the line between weed and flowering garden plant. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), after noting that milkweed has a "bad reputation," comes to the defense of the plant: "Milkweed is a beneficial wildflower. It may have 'weed' in the name, but there are over 100 species of milkweed native to the United States and none of them are considered 'noxious weeds.'"

The USFWS provides a link to a long list of "Federal and State Noxious Weeds," which appears to have been compiled in response to a 1999 Presidential Executive Order (#13112), which, in turn, extended the federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974. In any case, milkweed (genus Asclepias) is not on the current list. Things seem to have come a long way since 2001, when the *New York Times* reported that 35 states listed milkweed as "noxious."

As a result of what appears to be a milkweed renaissance, you can now buy a wide variety of milkweed seeds on line. For example, a website called American Meadows advertises the seeds of numerous species, and includes a "seed collection" of four varieties: "This collection blooms in all shade of pink, white, orange and green in the mid-summer garden. It offers a fragrant feast of blooms for pollinators, including butterflies, bees and hummingbirds, which will delight both the gardener and the ecosystem."

Speaking of the ecosystem, an organization called Xerces Society has come to the defense of milkweed as part of a campaign to stop the decline of the monarch butterfly population. The organization claims

that the number of monarchs who migrate to Mexico from the midwest and west has declined by as much as 85%, due primarily to the loss of milkweed habitat. The society, based in California, has initiated "Project Milkweed," designed to counter "myths" about the plant, promote its planting, and encourage efforts to manage "pests" that attack it.

One of the society's publications notes that the "bad reputation" of milkweed is partly caused by the fact that the plant contains "cardenolides, steroid plant compounds used as a defense against herbivores. This makes the plants potentially toxic to livestock."

The plant is only dangerous, however, if consumed in large quantities, which can be avoided with "properly managed rangeland and pasture."

Humans also might want to avoid eating milkweed, or rubbing one's eye with hands covered with the plant's sticky sap. The US Department of Agriculture claims that "the sap of showy milkweed was used by some desert tribes to heal sores and cuts and to cure warts and ringworm," but warns that ingestion of the plant can cause "nausea and vomiting in low doses, and death in high doses."

The toxicity of the milkweed plant may be a response to its close evolutionary relationship to the monarch. This is the central thesis of biologist Anurag Agrawal's *Monarchs and Milkweeds: A Migratory Butterfly, A Poisonous Plant, and Their Remarkable Story of Coevolution*. Agrawal argues that the monarch evolved an ability to ingest the toxins in the milkweed, making the insect unpalatable to potential predators. The milkweed, in turn, became more toxic over time, and has used the monarch to protect it from its own predators. Agrawal calls this process "coevolution."

Humans, of course, interact with numerous plant and animal species, a process which can both undermine



Milkweed and Russian sage grow together in front of the sign at the Fourth Street community garden in Turners Falls.

and enhance biodiversity. Take, for example, Melissa Paige. She lives right behind the Athol Credit Union on Route 2A. This is downtown Orange – not the kind of place one might expect a large collection of diverse milkweed and monarch butterflies in various stages of their life cycle.

Paige grows a pretty impressive number of milkweed varieties. These include the common milkweed, probably the best known of the species, with its pink to purple flowers; the butterfly milkweed, which sports spectacular orange blossoms; and the showy milkweed with star-shaped pink flowers. She also grows a species called "hairy balls" milkweed. I will let readers use their imaginations on that one, but a seed catalogue warns that this variety contains "toxic sap, be careful around pets or children."

Paige keeps the butterflies in

small, webbed cage-like cloth structures before releasing them. She also showed me eggs, caterpillars, and *chrysalides* (the plural of *chrysalis*). The latter are the cocoons, made of hardened protein, in which the caterpillars transform into butterflies.

Paige told me that she had collected the eggs which produced this batch of butterflies from milkweed found behind the Orange Innovation Center, down the street on Route 2A. The center started out in the 1890s as a tapioca factory owned by General Foods, became a furniture manufacturer called the Bedroom Factory in the 1960s, and is now used for office space and light manufacturing. The factory experienced a metamorphosis of its own, one might say.

I was curious how Paige, who grew up in Franklin County, had become so immersed in milkweeds and monarchs. "I have a whole lot of medical issues," she responded,

mentioning in particular trigeminal neuralgia, a chronic pain disorder. "I got involved with monarchs to get my mind off the pain."

She joined an online support group for people with the disorder, and each day someone would post something "positive."

"We didn't want to just sit around complaining about our pain," she said, "but wanted to talk about things we enjoyed, hobbies and so forth. One day someone posted that they raised monarch butterflies and told us about a Facebook group called 'The Beautiful Monarch.' That's where I learned everything about monarchs, milkweed – the whole thing."

Paige now has her own Facebook page, called "Melissa's Monarch Meadow." There you can see plenty of pictures of monarchs and milkweed, as well as a video from this past spring of her daughter releasing 54 monarchs.



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

- William Carlos Williams

# June’s Featured Poet: Imogene Pruitt-Spence

## Incantations 1-7

*“Freed from god, the will surrenders, nude, to the passion of  
giving the world an intoxicating meaning”*

– Georges Bataille

I wanted to make some kind of gesture– a soft delicate thing, inextricable from  
my own body– to yours–

an offering,

a spell

a candle lit forever.

i didn’t know how to do it–

i wrote endlessly and it still didn’t feel like enough.

It is hard for me to articulate–

this dull slow ebb of quiet pain.

like someone is cutting out my eyeball, in front of a mirror. the knife is  
curved. i know it is happening but im in such a state of shock that i just witness  
it happening, mouth agape. unsure of what sound to make.

a silent sobbing. but at the same time, i know i don’t really need  
both my eyes. so it’s ok, and i can reconcile this violent act.

thank you for existing- if it wasn’t for you there would be no eyes to gouge.

I feel today like I’m finally getting back into myself

that place I was at a couple months ago.

it disappeared for a little while,

but came back strong.

slo, and simple.

I am trying to re-access

something

but idk what.

i bet  
when i see you again

it will be soft

i think about all the things i have read and read them some more

and everything else  
and everything else

i thought i could go to bed  
in my own sweet warm cocoon,

soft things,  
cradling me, a precious jewel

a secret stashed

a “precious moment”

its not like that at all

## Revelations 1-11

I’m crying because the poem is so beautiful.  
I’m crying because I love you.  
I’m crying because I am happy,  
and it is good.

You were always the most divine thorn in my side  
Oil slick halo  
A barbed wire vision of angels.

Canonize my body into yours  
What supreme joy and terror  
awaits us,  
in our own steady built chapel  
of sweet spit.  
It is you whom my tenderness adorns.

Blood everywhere,  
Exploding in a great triumph  
I could carve your name into my arm and it wouldn’t hurt.  
Swallow me, let me digest in you for a while.  
Forever couldn’t be long enough.

My crush never ended  
The bee sting never cured.  
A sugar rush of blood and body.  
*Feed me with your kiss.*

The air is nauseating.  
A flower newly bloomed.  
Too sweet to land on my tongue but I devour it anyway,

*I am hanging from your mouth.*  
Under the burning bug,  
a slimy and powerful nausea.

*I tried to think of another word  
but it didn’t come.  
You came in waves  
It felt easy,  
and made sense.*

I dream of you  
in ease.  
If only I could touch your skin,  
big eyed bug eyed madness.

I stayed up all night writing poems  
don’t deliver me from evil.


I dreamt I was bleeding  
I bled on you  
red latex  
these things happen and there’s nothing I can do about it

## Contributor’s Notes

We are very pleased this month to feature the work of Imogene Pruitt-Spence. Imogene, who is also a visual artist, grew up mostly in Greenfield. She was a youth winner of the Poet’s Seat Poetry Contest while a student at PVPA. For the last few years she has lived and studied in Olympia, Washington.

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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.

## EVERY FIRST SUNDAY

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

## EVERY THIRD SUNDAY

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Traditional Irish Music* in the Wheelhouse. 7 p.m.

## 2ND AND 4TH MONDAYS

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

## 2ND AND LAST TUESDAYS

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Comedy in the Wheelhouse* with Jon Ross, 8 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: *Tales and Tunes Story Hour*. Ages 0 to 5 and caregivers. 10:30 a.m.

## 1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAYS

The Perch (fourth floor), Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Creacion Latin Big Band* and *Late Night Open Mic Jam*. 8 p.m.

## EVERY 2ND WEDNESDAY

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Hip hop dance night with *Craze-faze*. 7 p.m.

## EVERY THURSDAY

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *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:

Anchor House of Artists, Northampton: *John Landino Sculpture 1985-2018: Strong and Choreographic*. July 5 through August 2.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: Six new summer exhibits: *Best of Springs, Sprockets and Pulleys [contin-*



*"The Eclectic Eye of Jim Gambaro" is a body of work exploring how Gambaro experiences the world around him using the advent of the digital medium to his advantage. See Gambaro's work July 6 through August 26 at Salmon Falls Gallery in Shelburne Falls. Reception for the exhibit is Saturday, July 21, 3 p.m., with music by Chris Eriquezgo.*

*ues]; Roz Chast; David Rios Ferreira; Debra Ramsey; Shona Macdonald*. Through Sept. 24.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Great Hall Art Exhibit: Flora and Fauna Quilts*. Leslie Cook and Anneke Corbett. Through June. *Fireflies, Hummingbirds and Bats*. Artwork by local kids. Reception July 3, 2:30 p.m. Through July.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Magic and Flow: A Collection of Contemporary Paintings*, by Dave Hay. Abstract and "pop portraits," all painted in his bold palette. Reception Friday, June 22, 6 p.m. Through July 21.

Greenfield Community Television Studios: *PRECARIOUS*, paintings by Alice Thomas. Poems, art, and Artist Statement about her research and methods concerning the precariousness of nuclear weapons. Through August 31.

Leverett Crafts and Arts: *Vivian Gay (den) and Genna Crowe*. Prints and Pottery. Reception July 14. Through July.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Rossi and Friends*. Paintings, mosaics, jewelry and *objets d'art* by local artists; metal sculpture by Jon Bander; decorated walking sticks by Ron Edwards.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Water*: paintings by Gayle Kabaker, Ashfield artist. Reception July 21. Through August 26.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *The Eclectic Eye of Jim Gambaro*. Digital photography. Reception July 21. Through August 26.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery, Montague Center: *Life's Too Short to Follow Rules*. Painter Sharon Loehr-Lapan and photographer Roy Mansur. Through August.

ShelburneArts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Go With the Flow*. Moods of the water by member artists and crafters. Through July.

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Call for artists for *PaperJam: A Month-Long Riff on Paper*. Exploded View invites artists to submit artwork on, about, or related to paper, its personal or local significance, or your creative interpretation thereof – use your imagination! Exhibit to be held in September at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Send info, three jpegs to [explodedviewma@gmail.com](mailto:explodedviewma@gmail.com) by August 22.

## EVENTS:

### THURSDAY, JUNE 28

Unitarian Meetinghouse, Bernardston: *The Bork-Tinen-Kahn Trio*. Free concert. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Covers for a Cause*. Local bands playing Tom Petty as a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity. 7:30 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Road to Mecca*. Silverthorne Theater production (see review in this section). 7:30 p.m. Repeats Friday and Saturday. \$

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Kevin Wynd, Mia Friedman, Other Joliah*, and *omeed's blue apple cart*. All ages, substance free space. 8 p.m. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Laika's Orbit, David Vassalotti, David West*, and *Lendl*. 8 p.m. \$

### FRIDAY, JUNE 29

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Mary*

*Lattimore, Wet Tuna*. 7 p.m. \$

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Natraj*. World music/jazz. 7:30 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dub Apocalypse*. I-Ganic Sound System. 9 p.m. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Dancehall, Hip Hop, Reggaeton & Soca*. 10 p.m. \$

### SATURDAY, JUNE 30

Turners Falls Rod & Gun, Millers Falls: *Jeffstock 8* featuring *Tides, Color Blind, Crafter, Bare Ass*, and *Well Suited*. 4 p.m. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: Cajun Dance Night with *Les Taiauts* and *Terrible Mountain String Band*. 7 p.m. \$

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *A Tale of Two Cities*. Quantum Dance Collective. 7:30 p.m. \$

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Zydeco Connection*. 8:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Jimmy Just Quit Summer Bash*. 9 p.m. \$

### SUNDAY, JULY 1

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Stillwater Trio, No Lens*. 7 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Klezperanto!* 7:30 p.m. \$

### MONDAY, JULY 2

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Marisa Anderson, Moonfed*, and *New Parents*. 7 p.m. \$

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 4

St. John's Church, Millers Falls: *Old Wave, Painted Faces, Golden Egg, Lauri McNamara, Bruised Loins, Foam*, and *Creative Healing*. 5:30 p.m. \$

### THURSDAY, JULY 5

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rice, An American Band*. 8:30 p.m. \$

### FRIDAY, JULY 6

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Drew Paton's 1940s Hit Parade*. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dunham Shoe Factory, Gaslight Tinkers*. 8 p.m. \$

### SATURDAY, JULY 7

Deja Brew, Wendell: The 2nd Annual *Wendell Reggae Festival*. With *Denroy Morgan & Ianbassa, Simon White & Rhythm, Inc., Total Collision, Re Belle, The Equalites, DJ Live*, and *Camile I-Ganic*. 2 p.m. \$

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Flaherty-Corsano, Sunburned Hand of the Man, Weeping Bong Band, Tarp, Matt Krefting*. 7 p.m. \$

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Lisa Bastroni and Danielle Miraglia*. 8 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *David Gans with Lobsterz From Mars*. Dead tribute. 9 p.m. \$

### SUNDAY, JULY 8

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quebecois Music Session*. 3 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Joe Belmont Experience*. 6 p.m. \$

### THURSDAY, JULY 12

The Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Horse-Eyed Men, The Van Nstrand Sisters*. 8 p.m. \$

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Seth Glier, The Mary Jane Jones*. 8 p.m. \$

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Endiana*. 8:30 p.m.




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July 12 • August 9  
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# It Was “A Fine Affair” at the Shea

By GEORGE BRACE

**TURNERS FALLS** – Last Sunday night the Montague Historical Society presented the Shea Theater with a donation of an original movie poster from the Colle Opera House which the Society recently re-discovered in its collection. The poster, advertising “The Three Musketeers” starring Douglas Fairbanks, likely dates from the early 1920s, when the film was released.



Above: The 1920s poster from the Colle Opera House.  
At right: Josh Goldman, Monte Belmonte, and Linda Tardif were on hand to accept the poster for the Shea Theater.

Ed Gregory and Mary Melonis of the Montague Historical Society were on hand to present the poster after the closing performance of *Deus Ex Machina*, an immersive theater experience which explored the history of the Shea Theater. The cast was in attendance for the presentation, and many of their costumes dated from the period of the poster, adding a fun atmosphere to the event.

Accepting the poster on behalf of the Shea were Monte Belmonte, president of the board of the Shea Theater Arts Center, Josh Goldman, vice-president, and Linda Tardif, the theater’s managing director.

The Colle Opera House was opened in 1874 by Mary Colle and featured a wide variety of entertainment over its 50-or-so-year history as a theater, including Vaudeville acts and silent movies.

Aside from the physical proximity of the Shea and the Opera House, the two historic buildings share another direct connection: according to Gregory, Denis Shea ran the Colle Opera House for a number of years beginning in 1914, prior to building the Shea Theater next door in 1927.

Currently, the town owns both properties and leases them out to the non-profit theater and to the Center for Responsive Schools, which has offices in the Colle.

(Headline taken from the first sentence of a review written about the very first show at the Colle Opera House when it opened in 1874.)



**GARDENER’S** from page B1 in the past of a particular time.

Of course, this not only revives pleasures but also brings up the burrs of pain. There is a peculiar element of surprise in this. It is often much longer ago that something happened, even though it remains mint fresh in the mind.

We kept a garden log for a number of years. It keeps a more scientific view and confirms many gardener maxims. The song sparrow returns in late March. The bloodroot and the dafodils appear mid-April. There is often one more frost in mid-May. There will be the candy of garden peas to enjoy the last week of June. We will be picking tomatoes by mid-July.

I am not so much in a scientific bent. Entries in the garden log have waned, and we have found other things more pressing to do with our time. We do note planting times and bloomings and pickings on the wall calendar so we can review the year, or follow the progress of a crop. That practice used to result in a translation into the garden log before we hung the calendar of the new year. We don’t take the time any more.

Then there are the boxes and albums of photographs. Used to be, when you picked up your developed films, each photo (clear or not) had a time date on the reverse. How handy that was. How much better, however, to have a disc of snapshots and to

choose to keep only those that please, dated or not. But when was that?

Not only does time blur memory; individual memory is not always the same. My sister and I do not necessarily recall the same things. Stranger than that, we may remember events differently. Is that false memory, or just something viewed through a different lens?

For many of us, memory doesn’t come with a time stamp, but is colored by scent or tint or mood, like Proust’s *madeleine*. While it is fair to say that memories often fade with time, it is also noteworthy that while short-term memory declines with aging, the past is very clear and affords much pleasure in the recalling.

And some things just don’t bear remembering.

Being truly present in the present, painful as it can be, is crucial. It helps to keep our focus on what is truly important and what can be set aside. We don’t have time enough in our lives to linger over the small and petty bits. We need to put our energies towards what really matters.

Then we can make the best use of our time on earth. We can find time to help those in need or speak out about what is not right; to tend our relationships with friends and family; to take care of mother earth.

We may be remembered for what we did, and for who we were.



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