

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 6

also serving Irving, Gill, Everett and Wendell

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EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

NOVEMBER 29, 2018

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Offers Chief Position to Chris Williams

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard has voted to offer the position of permanent police chief to Chris Williams, who is currently serving as the acting chief.

The vote came at the board's November 26 meeting, after town administrator Steve Ellis informed the board that the state Civil Service Commission had ranked Williams first among three internal applicants for the position. The main factor in that ranking was an evaluation process that took place in Montague in October. Ellis informed the board that they would not be able to see the details of the three candidates' evaluations, only

their Civil Service rankings.

"So where do we go from here? Do we have this on our agenda for next week?" selectboard member Michael Nelson asked after Ellis announced the rankings. "I would be willing to entertain a motion to allow the chair and the town administrator to enter into discussions with number-one-ranked candidate Christopher Williams, to work up a potential contract to go to the board next week for a discussion in executive session."

After a very brief discussion, including a review by Ellis of the options open to the selectboard "just for the record," the board voted 3-0 to authorize Ellis and chair Rich

see CHIEF page A7

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

A Montague Seat Opens Up; New High School Logo Approved

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – At its Tuesday night meeting, the Gill-Montague school committee heard final closure on two major controversies that have spanned the last two years: the selection of a high school logo, and the conclusion of a dispute with the company that oversaw the district's decade-long overbilling of the state Medicaid system. It also lost a member.

For the third time in two years, the regional school committee will fill an empty seat until the next election by selecting a volunteer from the community. Montague member April Reipold, who served four and a half years, or a term and a half, announced her resignation prior to the meeting Tuesday.



The committee approved this logo, created by local designer Amy Schmidt Bouse and winner of a popular vote at the high school.

"My health isn't allowing me to attend such lengthy meetings," Reipold wrote. "The taxpayers and students and their families deserve someone who can commit to every meeting. I will find another way to serve the town and district."

Montague residents interested in filling in on the committee until townwide elections in May are asked to send a letter of intent to superintendent Michael Sullivan by January 2. The committee will select one when they meet January 8.

"I really enjoyed working with April," said Montague's Cassie Damkoehler. "Anyone that's interested in this position should know that they have big shoes to fill."

"We will miss April," said committee chair Jane Oakes of Gill.

see GMRSD page A7

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Swallows Montague's Sewage Hike, Dreams Of Pumping to Greenfield

By GEORGE BRACE

Water issues were again in the forefront at the two most recent meetings of the Gill selectboard meetings. Acting as sewer commissioners, the board approved a 70.4% sewer rate increase for residents of Gill's Riverside district, who receive sewer services from the town of Montague. The increase had been anticipated for many months, and mirrors a 71% rate increase recently approved in Montague for its own sewer customers.

The board also approved two warrant articles to be voted on at a special town meeting scheduled for December 10 at 7 p.m. The first asks for a sewer budget increase to account for the recent rate hikes from Montague. The second involves allocating money for the rehabilitation project at the Slate library.

The Library project is primarily

funded through a state Green Communities grant, but the grant requires matching funds from the town. The matching funds were informally budgeted for when the grant application was made; the warrant article will formally allocate those funds. The board scheduled a meeting to review the two articles with the fin com on November 29.

In addition to the sewer rate and the budget article, several other water- and wastewater-related issues were discussed at the two meetings.

Administrative assistant Ray Purington reported on initial research into some ideas brought up in response to the sewer rate hike at previous meetings. Purington said he had spoken with a contact in Greenfield about the possibility of Gill tying in with the Greenfield sewer system, whose rates are much lower than Montague's. Based on that

see GILL page A4

MEMORIAL

Donald R. Clegg (1955-2018)



DAVID DETMOLD PHOTO

Don Clegg was a stalwart volunteer with a number of downtown organizations, and an all-around neighborly guy.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Don Clegg worked hard for eleven years as this newspaper's distribution manager, and even in the last few months, as his health began to fail him, he remained earnestly dedicated to the job. When he died, peacefully, at the hospital in Springfield the Friday before Thanksgiving, the friends who attended were colleagues and volunteers from the paper.

Don came to Franklin County in 2006 at the tail end of a period of personal crisis none of us would

ever learn much about. He landed on his feet in downtown Turners Falls, and made a home here by throwing himself into a life of grassroots community service.

With a knack for creative problem-solving and steady good humor, he rolled up his sleeves and did great "behind the scenes" work.

Don's orderly, cursive script lines thousands of homemade ledger pages, tracking the territories of our different delivery routes, the new subscribers and those who had lapsed, the sales of each edition on each newsstand. Whenever the board of directors needed to

compose thank-you notes to benefactors, he would agree to contribute his time and penmanship.

He would beam with open pride at a difficult job well done, and despite the meagerness of his stipend here, would call me off the clock to report on all the loose ends tied up that day, and share incisive ideas of ways to fuel our growth. If you've read this newspaper in the last decade, it's because Don Clegg made sure you got it.

Don connected genuinely with many of his neighbors, and with many others he met through his

see CLEGG page A5

Interest-Free Loan Program Pitched As Relief For Sewer Bill Anguish

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE – Last spring we reported on a new program that offers local residents experiencing a cash crunch a better alternative to predatory payday loans. The Montague Community Loan Program has been successful so far, its coordinator says, and it might be able to provide assistance to those feeling the sting of Montague's 71% sewer rate hike.

Applicants must be residents of Montague, including Turners and Millers Falls, and must be able to show some form of regular income. If they qualify, they can receive a zero-interest loan, in the form of a payment directly to a vendor – a landlord, dentist's office, power company, or even town hall.

They will receive financial counseling from Community Action's Money Matters program, and must repay the loan within a year before

they can borrow again.

"The maximum we do is \$500," coordinator Shannon Martineau explained. "We don't pull their credit... We're trying to reach a segment of the population that isn't typically familiar with reaching out to social services."

The loan program is a one-year pilot, funded with \$10,000 by Greenfield Savings Bank. In May, Denise Coyne, the bank's chief

see LOANS page A4

DISPATCHES

Getting Ready for Katowice

By ANNA GYORGY

BERLIN – It's not just the climate that is heating up. Around the world, official country delegates, environmental organizations and international energy corporations are gearing up for the next round of international climate meetings – although with differing goals on how fast and how honestly to confront what almost everyone now accepts is an ongoing crisis, with no clear end in sight.

Last November I reported for the Traprock Center for Peace & Justice from Bonn, Germany, where the 23rd "conference of the parties" to the UN Convention on Climate Change took place. A short video report on citizen action and issues there is available at www.traprock.org.

In 2018, the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) will be held in Katowice, Poland, from December

2 to 14. The world will be watching, and I will be reporting from Berlin on citizen action and climate justice work during the summit, there

and internationally. For without strong citizen action and demands for change, entrenched energy and

see DISPATCHES page A4



GYORGY PHOTO

Project Unbearable: Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot made this full-sized copper bear mounted on oil pipe, symbolizing the increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide up to 2015, for the Paris climate summit. Our correspondent took this photo last year at Bonn.

The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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August 2002

Ports of Entry

The desire of people to flee collapsing Central American states and the militarization of the US border have been doing the whole “unstoppable force”/“immovable object” thing all year, so this week’s high-profile clash at the port of entry north of Tijuana was sad, but totally unsurprising.

Many north of the fence view those on its south as more inherently criminal, which explains the talking point that the migrants are failing or refusing to seek asylum the legal or correct way. But law doesn’t exist outside of states, and unless the US wants to support a supranational government capable of protecting stateless people and evaluating their claims, it will have to either allow them to enter at the ports or hire the Mexican state to act as its proxy.

It’s looking more and more like Mexico will be the site for the hemisphere’s big refugee camps.

Entries of Import

We heard this week both in an official Letter to the Editor (see Letters, at right) and online that a segment of our readership is unhappy about Denis Bordeaux’s “*T.Rump*” comics.

For the record, again, we are a nonprofit community newspaper that seeks to provide a platform for any views community members might want to offer. There are lines, of course, but boorishness and incivility aren’t against any policy yet established here.

We do object that the latest strip called the president “fat” – both a line of derogation completely unrelated to political debate, and a phobic slur unfair to plenty of wonderful fat people – but pretending the problem here can be framed wholly in terms of civility is an odd approach in an era in which, for example, the president himself derogates people publicly by calling them, for example, fat.

(It should also be noted that *T.Rump* is tamer than half of the political content online, where most people engage with politics. Are we held to earlier standards by publishing in an older medium?)

And for the record, again, Bordeaux (TFHS ‘67) has been dropping fresh strips off at our office on a nearly weekly basis, unsolicited and unpaid. We would run *T.Rump* alongside, or on alternating weeks with, a strip with a pro-president view. But should the fact that none of those are showing up be grounds for us refusing Mr. Bordeaux?

These are actual tough questions, and until the answers are clear, we offer sympathies to anyone who might squirm at the incivil (or unstrategic) content in the strip. It may make sense to run it biweekly, holding space for an alternate viewpoint in alternate weeks.

There are new developments, anyway, in our comics page (see page B4). Please send your feedback. And we thank Joan Morel for engaging us actively on this issue – after all, the impact of a silent boycott of the *MR* either has not yet been registered by our business office, or has been in effect for years and years already.

Sinkhole Query?

As a long-time resident on Whitman Way, there have been drainage problems for many years (presumably due to the golf course’s misuse of drainage for substances other than storm runoff imho).

At 3 this afternoon we arrived home to find that our entire garage and toolshed are basically underground in a massive hole on our lawn that extends 40 feet up the hill and onto an adjacent property, and approximately 70’ deep!

My husband is trying to photograph the desolation but there isn’t enough light as our power is out – perhaps when the fire department arrives (they said they have more pressing business).

If you could send a reporter immediately we have made a large human-shaped birthday cake with a meticulously crafted gift card and everything for you. We suspect a combination of drainage and rabbit burrows have led to an instability in subsoil...

Sincerely,

Ellen Hoomscatter-Rausch
Turners Falls

The managing ed. would like to thank Ms. H.-R. & all of her associates for their various birthday-themed interventions against our deadline.

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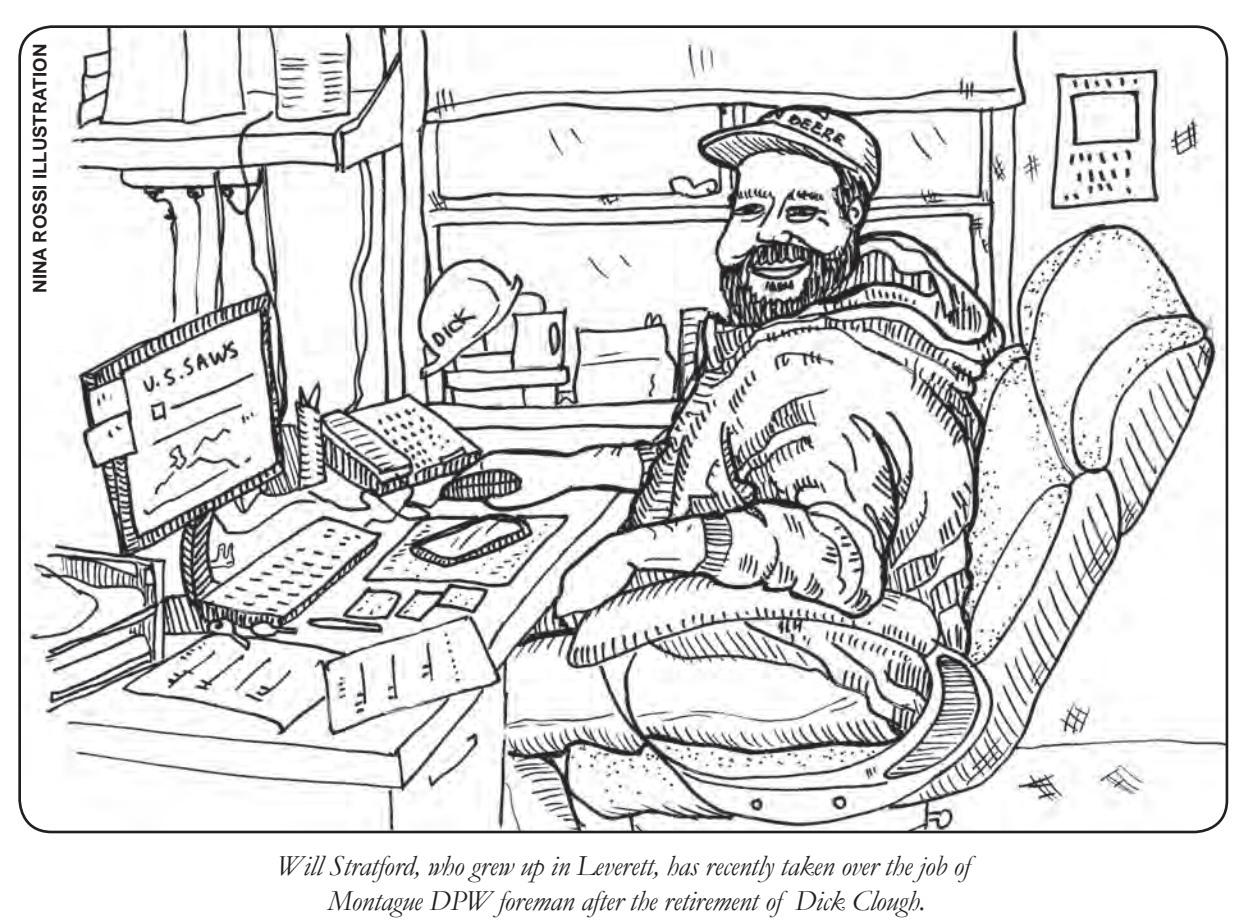
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Letters to the Editors

Bordeaux Cartoon Is Offending Readers

Once again, Denis Bordeaux has written a T-RUMP “cartoon” unworthy of that genre, and of publication. To be fair, some are, but most are not. Today I am writing specifically about the one printed in the November 15 *Montague Reporter*.

While I am not a fan of President Trump, many in the area served by the paper are. This particular “cartoon” depicts these people in a crass, crude, and disrespectful light.

Also, it is difficult to explain these senseless “cartoons” to the nine-year-old I care for. We all deserve better than that.

There is enough division in this country as it is, and Mr. Bordeaux contributes to that on a weekly basis. Perhaps the *Montague Reporter* could be more discriminating in what it publishes from him. Perhaps another resident could produce a cartoon or column that speaks to the conservative point of view.

I want to be clear that, as a volunteer for this paper, I highly regard its personnel, product, and future goals as explained in the capital campaign letter insert in the same issue, and I plan to keep on contributing my time and efforts.

But I know there are residents who will not respond to this campaign specifically because of the “cartoon.” They have told me so during conversations while I was delivering sample newspapers in their neighborhoods during this past year in the hopes of picking up new subscribers.

That is a shame, but they feel strongly about it. I can’t say that I blame them.

Joan Morel
Greenfield

Hey Izzy: Keep Up The Good Work!

As a giant fan of Izzy Vachula-Curtis I just want to let her know that despite not getting an interview with Brandon Mull, her review was – as usual – terrific.

I have no idea why Mr. Mull didn’t respond to Izzy’s request, but I strongly suggest she send a copy of her review to his publisher. She might very well hear from him.

And Izzy should certainly not feel bad: she’s landed incredible interviews with some very major authors. I greatly look forward to the next column.

Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Turners Falls

Broadband and Alienation

In his piece last week about Wendell’s current broadband plan, selectboard chair Dan Keller did a real service warning how this “Rolls Royce” option will affect the town.

Back when service was to be \$49 a month, after vacillating, I signed up our rental property. Now I think the financial strain and likely loss of some poorer residents make this idea a disservice to the community.

Dan indicated he might support a cheaper plan, but let’s re-check the wisdom of *any* broadband project for our rural situation.

Some consider high-speed service a public utility, like rural electrification. Well, the latter program wasn’t paid for locally. Like the broadband movement, it was started to serve human benefit and fairness, but it brought sprawl. It made hardiness obsolete, promoting a dependency on energy everywhere, and a sense of entitlement to the amenities. It lessened cultural diversity. It helped pollute air and water and deplete soil. Ultimately, commodity energy “as a right” decimated wild populations and damaged the ecological function of our locality and the planet as a whole.

Broadband separates us one more layer of powerful technology from Nature, from its guiding, vitalizing, wild wholeness. We seek its power even as we’re being played by the corporations involved – influenced by their Web presence, and cheated by the quick obsolescence of their offerings.

With the current plan Wendell is crawling out onto a limb of high taxes and expendable residents. Where a sort of addiction is at play – one tempting theory – it’s terribly easy to just let go into it. To sober up is the difficult trick.

We have strong mutual support here. We know intellectually to trust in a power higher than our escalating fears and desires – even old-fashioned Nature itself, or old-fashioned God...

We can start by listening to Dan Keller.

Jonathan von Ranson
Wendell

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS!

(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

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Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

The air is growing thick with **craft and vendor fairs and bazaars**. Actually, as I write this, our neighbors are paving the parking lot immediately outside my office window, so the air in here is more growing thick with diesel fumes and deafening scraping sounds. The march of progress!

Downtown businesses in Turners Falls are running a **“Holiday Open Door Promo”** from December 1 through December 22. Participation is free, and two winners will each receive \$150 in gift certificates to be used for goods and services at 23 participating businesses.

To play, pick up a game card at LOOT or Black Cow Burger Bar after December 1 (one game card per household); visit a minimum of 12 participating businesses and get stickers for your card (no purchase required); fill in your contact information; and drop off your game card at LOOT or Black Cow by 1 p.m. on December 22.

Winners will be notified by phone on the 22nd. For a full list of participating businesses, visit www.turnersfallsriverculture.org.

This Saturday, December 1 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Our Lady of Czestochowa Church is holding a **Saint Nicholas Day Bazaar**.

The event features pierogi, baked goods, religious items, gifts from Poland, marvelous arts and crafts,

exciting raffles, and fun and games. Breakfast and lunch will be served.

Our Lady of Czestochowa is located at 84 K Street in Turners Falls.

From 10 to 11 a.m. this Saturday, Bette Sokolowski will teach **Iris Folding** at the Greenfield Savings Bank branch in Turners Falls.

Iris Folding is a paper craft technique that involves folding strips of colored paper to form a design. The center of the design forms an iris – a shape reminiscent of the iris diaphragm of a camera lens.

Bette will provide all the necessary items to make a unique and colorful product, which could be a tree ornament, gift, or package decoration. The event is for adults only, and will start promptly at 10 a.m. Reservations are limited to 10 participants, so call Marcia at (413) 775-8262 to reserve a spot. Refreshments will be provided by the bank.

Greenfield filmmaker Gloria Matlock interviewed elders in a small Ohio community about their lives. The documentary she made, *Just Another Mile*, will be screened at 10:15 a.m. this Saturday, December 1 at the First Congregational Church, 43 Silver Street in Greenfield.

Just Another Mile, a story of racism, resilience, and perseverance, focuses on **two historically Black neighborhoods** in Ravena, Ohio. The event is free and open to the public; email email@racialjusticerising.org for more in-

formation or to reserve childcare.

Interested in starting a career in manufacturing and CNC machining? Come to the Franklin Hampshire Career Center, One Arch Place in Greenfield, from 3 to 4:30 on Monday, December 3 for an information and application session for **advanced manufacturing trainings** that begin in January. The 12-week training session can get you to the front door with enough knowledge to get started as a CNC operator.

Apply early to see if you qualify for available funding – most students pay nothing out of pocket for training. Veterans, women, unemployed workers, and other under-represented groups are especially encouraged to apply. RSVP to the info session itself at www.gcc.mass.edu/manufacturing or (413) 774-4361.

Members of the public are invited to join the Millers River Watershed Council for its annual meeting on Monday, December 3 at 7 p.m. at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street in Athol.

Guest speaker Dr. Harry Sharbaugh will present on the **geological history of the Millers River region**: “From continental collisions to river pirates.” Dr. Sharbaugh, a retired pathologist and Erving resident, is a longtime student of regional geology. A short business meeting will precede the presentation, and light refreshments will be served.

For more information contact the MRWC at council@millersriver.net or (978) 248-9491.

Quabbin Harvest, the food coop market located at 12 North Main Street in Orange, is partnering with the Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust to host monthly arts and crafts workshops this winter. On Tuesday, December 4 from 3 to 5 p.m., Daniel Botkin of Gill’s Laughing Dog Farm will lead a **workshop on making garlic wands**.

Inspired by the folk art practice of garlic braiding, Botkin uses leaves, berries, and recycled materials to create edible pieces of art. The workshop costs hundreds of dollars and Danny is super mean. (Just kidding, it’s free and he’s great.)

The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center won’t be having their monthly Coffeehouse in December, but the Board of Directors of the Friends invites the public to their annual **Holiday Gathering Potluck Dinner** at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 5.

This holiday potluck was one of Don Clegg’s many innovations at the Discovery Center, where he was president of the Board, and he always looked forward to it with great enthusiasm. News of Don’s death spread as plans for the event were underway, but it will still be held.

A memorial for Don will be held at a later date.

There’ll be a **“Holiday Pop-Up Market”** at the Pushkin, 4 Federal Street in Greenfield, on Friday, December 7 (4 to 8 p.m.), Saturday, December 8 (11 a.m. to 6 p.m.), and Sunday, December 9 (11 a.m. to 4 p.m.). The market will feature live music, plenty of local artists and artisans selling their stuff, and plenty of food and drink.

Another real holiday shopping tip: Joe K., a Montague-based geologist and cartographer, has created **beautiful elevation maps** of the stretch of the Connecticut River between

Mount Toby and Mount Tom using LiDAR imagery. He’s selling prints ranging from one foot (\$36) to four feet (\$250) tall; the larger ones are on canvas, stretched on wooden frames.

Check them out at joemaps.com if you have either a map or river enthusiast in your life.

The League of Women Voters of Franklin County will host a “Legislative Coffee” with state legislators senator Adam Hinds, representative-elect Natalie Blais, representative Paul Mark, and senator-elect Jo Comerford at 10 a.m. on Saturday, December 8 in Fellowship Hall at Trinity Church in Shelburne Falls.

This event is handicapped accessible, free, and open to the public, with **complimentary refreshments**.

Chanukah, the Jewish holiday that celebrates resistance and religious freedom and brings warmth, light, and hope during the coldest and darkest time of year, begins this Sunday, December 2 and ends Monday, December 9. We wish our Jewish readers and neighbors a warm and peaceful holiday.

At 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 9, there will be a **Light the Night Chanukah celebration** at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center, 289 Main Street in Greenfield. The event will feature dancing, music, food, candle-making and other crafts, latkes, games, and performances by the Wholesale Klezmer band.

Tickets are \$10, and \$5 for children. A candle lighting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m.; bring your menorahs. The event is co-sponsored by the Roots & Branches family education program of Temple Israel.

And finally, registration is open now for the first annual “Polar Express Pajama Party” at Franklin County Tech School, a family event that begins at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 14.

Attendees are encouraged to wear pajamas and bring pillows, blankets, and sleeping bags. “I want this to be like an old-fashioned Christmas sleepover,” said Daniel Prasol, FCTS science teacher and chief organizer of the Party. The movie *The Polar Express* will screen, followed by Santa Claus delivering “First Gift of Christmas” bells to all children who attend. Christmas trees will line the corridors, and each traveler to the North Pole Train Station will receive a cookie and hot chocolate. There will be games, ornament-making, face painting, a photo op with Santa and Mrs. Claus, and much more.

The cost is \$2 per person, and the event is only open to the first 300 people who register. Call 863-9561 x 233 to register, or email polarexpress@fcts.us.

Well, I’m not sure what’s going to happen with this column.

Don Clegg started compiling Local Briefs in our October 22, 2009 edition, and continued for over 400 installations.

Other groups are always seeking free publicity for events, but we have an Arts & Entertainment calendar rather than a general events listing, and so Briefs grew to fill that vacuum. Now that Don’s gone, we should either find someone to compile the column, or fold the listing together with A&E and use this space for something else.

Let us know your thoughts, or if you want to give it a shot.

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DISPATCHES from page A1

political forces will continue to delay, block needed change, and thus guarantee more and greater disasters ahead.

Goals for this international meeting include: increased action on national climate targets; providing financing for “developing” countries’ efforts to both mitigate and adapt to climate change; and finally, to set up the implementation guidelines of the Paris Climate Agreement (adopted in 2015). These include ways to set and evaluate national climate plans.

This summer’s heat wave created near-unlivable situations in many regions, historic hurricanes and storms, fires and droughts that wreaked great personal and monetary damage. The recently published special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasized that the window on limiting the climate crisis is closing.

The seriousness of the situation is also laid out in the 1,500-page Fourth National Climate Assessment, the report mandated by Congress every four years. This is the one quietly issued by the US government on the Friday after Thanksgiving, perhaps in the hope that people wouldn’t notice, won’t care, or will accept the president’s dismissal of its conclusions, not that he reads them.

And they don’t make for easy reading. Take, for example, the summary findings on “interconnected impacts”:



A graphic from Ende Gelände (Stop Coal) website: Unterlassen? Unten Lassen (Refrain? Leave it Under!)

Climate change affects the natural, built, and social systems we rely on individually and through their connections to one another. These interconnected systems are increasingly vulnerable to cascading impacts that are often difficult to predict, threatening essential services within and beyond the Nation’s borders.

And on health:

Impacts from climate change on extreme weather and climate-related events, air quality, and the transmission of disease through insects and pests, food, and water increasingly threaten the health and well-being of the American people, particularly populations that are already vulnerable.

The US report analyzed predictable results of inaction. Meanwhile, “The Brown to Green Report 2018” issued here in Germany in mid-November detailed climate action – and inaction – in the industrialized G20 countries. These states account for 80% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

According to a co-author from German-watch, one of the 14 research organizations and NGOs from the G20 countries producing the report, “The G20 economies actually need to cut their emissions by half by 2030 to keep warming below 1.5°C,” or 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit. (See the extensive data presented at www.climate-transparency.org/g20-climate-performance/g20report2018.)

To do that will mean dramatic shifts away from fossil fuels, as the report concluded that 82% of the G20’s energy supplies still come from fossil fuels, and that “in Saudi Arabia, Australia and Japan fossil fuels make up even more than 90% of the energy supply, with little or no change in recent years.”

As has been seen in the many years that international delegates have met to discuss climate under the auspices of the United Nations, prog-

ress and action are slow, given the huge economic investments and corporate interests behind fossil fuel development and assets worldwide.

Here in Germany, it is clear that this country’s earlier goals for reducing carbon emissions by 2020 will not be met. A major struggle is on continued reliance on coal power, and when and how to phase it out. Decades of solar and wind development have not been able to displace the entrenched, decades-old development of dirty open-pit brown coal (lignite) mines.

A national “coal commission” charged with planning an exit from coal was supposed to give its final report in December, but opposition from coal regions – especially in economically weak former East German areas – has delayed action, probably for months.

Meanwhile, a major environmental movement in recent years has focused on closing these mines and preventing their expansion through cutting the historic Hambach Forest to dig up the “brown gold” below.

Thousands of people have taken part in well-organized civil disobedience actions to immobilize work at the Garzweiler surface mine complex, a giant scar covering 30 square miles, with more excavation planned. (Shots of this moonscape are in the video mentioned above.) Others have lived for years in “tree houses” to block cutting of the forest. Some of those arrested are in court this week.

Their actions have helped focus public attention on the climate killer energy source that must be rapidly phased out. And many Germans will greet the opening of COP24 in Katowice, itself in a major coal region, with national “Stop Coal – Climate Protection Now!” demonstrations. These will take place on Saturday, December 1, in the capital Berlin and in Cologne, not far from the Garzweiler open pit mine.

My next dispatch will report on the politics and goals of these gatherings, as the focus shifts to Katowice.

GILL from page A1

discussion, he said he believed it was at least a theoretical possibility.

Purington said he had spoken with the engineer who had studied Gill’s inflow and infiltration (I&I) issue five years ago, and asked for a proposal for a feasibility study on connecting with Greenfield, and also on the possibility of Gill operating its own treatment system.

Sniffing Out Infiltrators

Purington also reported on discussions he’d had regarding the town’s I&I issues, “just bouncing around ideas” with several people.

“Inflow and infiltration” refers to clean water getting into the sewer system, which is pumped and processed along with sewage and adds to the cost of sewer services. Additional water can come from a variety of sources, such as unsealed pipes, storm drain runoff, and the illegal practice of pumping water from sump pumps into the sewer system.

One of the ideas Purington came across was a town which periodically sent “no sump pump” letters to realtors in addition to homeowners, asking them to either notify the town, or request buyers and sellers to notify the town, of the existence of illegal pump setups. He also brought up the idea of requiring sewer inspections, similar to smoke detector inspections, when a property changes hands.

“Why not? We require a septic inspection,” responded board member Randy Crochier. Purington and Crochier agreed that such measures are probably often circumvented by homeowners disconnecting illegal systems before inspection, but were worth thinking about.

Selectboard member John Ward asked if Purington had come across any estimates of the economics of another investigation into the source of I&I, similar to the one

done five years ago. Purington said it did not look to him like the earlier study ever got to the point of running numbers, because it had been obvious from initial work that it did not make economic sense to fully investigate and repair the system.

Purington and the selectboard agreed that with sewer rates now twice what they were then, it may be worth a second look.

Flood Mapping

In other water news, Purington notified the board of a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Risk Mapping, Assessment, & Planning Meeting to be held on November 27 at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

Purington said he believed the meeting was an initial step in FEMA seeing if updates were necessary to the flood maps for the middle Connecticut watershed. The board briefly discussed the subject of flooding, but off the tops of their heads, did not come up with any changes they thought might be necessary in Gill’s risk assessment.

Purington noted he’d had recent reassurance that the sewer pump station was safe from any flooding effects. He also said he thought it might be best to fill out a survey provided by FEMA as part of the assessment, after the meeting, when he had a better idea of what they were really looking for.

Quality of Life Policing

Gill resident Jeff Suprenant appeared before the board to complain about what he believes to be unregistered vehicles at a location on South Cross Road, in excess of the two allowed by town bylaw. He also asked that something be done about vehicles parked on the side of the road at a Barney Hale Road location, pointing out that the roadside was town property.

After a discussion, the board decided to send a written notice to the property owner on South Cross Road, potentially triggering penalties and further action.

Chair Greg Snedeker said he had personally spoken to people at the Barney Hale Road location in the past, due to the presence of cars near the road creating a dangerous situation. He also noted the cars have been there for a very long time. “You kinda hope that being neighbors, people would eventually comply, but that’s not happening,” he said. “So I agree, I think it needs to be addressed.”

Suprenant also said he believed there had been a fire at the house on the property, and that people were living there without having filed permits for fixing the property. He said he had spoken with the building inspector, but was unsure where the matter stood.

Crochier said the selectboard would work with the building inspector, health agent, and police department as necessary in dealing with the situation.

Other Business

Purington said there had been a “good inspection” of the new Gill Elementary School drinking water treatment system by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on November 21. He said the installer is hoping to continue work on December 5.

Randy Crochier reported on Gill’s 225th anniversary activities, including the recent showing in the town hall of Free Spirits, the documentary about the Renaissance Community, followed by a discussion with four former members of the community. He said about 40 people showed up, and having the former members on hand to discuss the film and community added greatly to the event, providing different perspectives to those presented in the movie.

Crochier said the next event on the 225 calendar was not finalized yet, but he is hopeful former state senator Stan Rosenberg and current senator Susannah Whipps will be in attendance at the December 10 special town meeting. Snedeker added that it is possible senator-elect Jo Comerford may also attend.

The historical commission was notified that the Gill Center Historic District has been accepted by the National Park Service to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Purington said the historical commission had worked hard on the project for several years, and called it “a job well done.”

Purington informed the board that Gill has been awarded a \$12,000 grant from the DEP for a curbside compost collection pilot program. Jan Ameen of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District had discussed the idea with the board earlier in the year, at which time it seemed like it might not make sense financially, but the board decided to ask her to apply for the grant to further investigate the possibility. Gill does not have to accept the grant.

Purington said Ameen recently pointed out that, since the earlier discussion, the company Gill uses for trash and recycling sold their business to a larger company, which changes the picture. Crochier agreed with her assessment.

The board approved bids the town received on a group of surplus equipment that had been put up for auction, including a bid of \$1,850 for the fire department’s 1986 rescue van, \$200 for a 2008 Crown Victoria police cruiser, and varying amounts for several other items.

The board authorized Snedeker to sign Gill’s Green Communities annual report, which is required by the state for the town to maintain its standing in the program.

LOANS from page A1

operating officer, told the *Reporter* that she hoped its success would prompt other banks to participate.

“We’ve had sort of a slow response in finding eligible community members and getting the word out,” said Martineau, “but the people who have signed up for the program have so far been successful.”

Martineau, a Montague resident herself, said she has reached out to town administrator Steve Ellis and treasurer/tax collector Eileen Seymour to publicize the program to taxpayers struggling to cover this month’s sewer bill.

“I saw on Facebook other residents complaining, and someone said ‘So much for Christmas presents this year,’” she said. “This is something that is available to help these people.”

The town has already reduced the interest rate on overdue bills from 14% to 7%, but Martineau said the zero-interest loan would be much better option.

“There’s a lot of seniors on fixed income who having a 71% increase in one of their main bills is going to have quite an impact,” she said.

“If we can help them to spread out the payments over the next six months, and start to plan for the payment due six months from now, I think it will be good for the community.”

Interested residents can contact Shannon Martineau directly at (413) 376-1179.



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CLEGG from page A1

roles in Turners’ civil society. He’d often lend friends items he thought they would enjoy, which means *Bread and Roses*, Bruce Watson’s history of the 1912 Lawrence strike, and a mid-period Frank Zappa LP will be my lasting souvenirs of my friendship with Don. (Appropriate.)

This world can’t run on volunteer spirit alone, but it also can’t operate

My friendship with Don began many years ago as fellow volunteers in the food pantry of the Survival Center in Turners. I came to know him as one very skilled as an organizer and promoter of causes he felt to be worthwhile. His enthusiasm was infectious, and there was many a time I found myself involved in one of those causes before I knew it.

Don drew me into activities at the Discovery Center, birding programs in particular, and those of the *Montague Reporter*.

When the *Reporter* added Leverett to its coverage, Don set me up at a card table during a Leverett Fall Festival to hand out promotional material and to sell subscriptions to

without a good number of men and women like Don who, for reasons of their own, show up ready to pitch in, year after year. He was a cornerstone of our funny little independent newspaper, for sure. But what I’ll miss most are all the times when he and I would spot each other from down the block on Fourth, each on our own errand, and each simply raise our hand in recognition.



what we dubbed as “the best little newspaper in the US of A!” In my opinion, that remains true.

Don was a reader and we shared that interest. He loved American history and Teddy Roosevelt in particular. He was thrilled when I gave him an old set of Roosevelt’s writings which had been collecting dust on my bookshelves for years.

I will miss his phone calls, as long as drawn out as they sometimes were, to remind of me of upcoming events and programs he thought might be of special interest to me.

It saddens me greatly that he is gone.

Barbara Alfange

I heard the news today, oh boy, about Don Clegg passing. His death adds to the sodden gloom of a chilly November morning, which will not be brightened by his familiar, cheerful presence on 4th Street.

Don was my next door neighbor, and an indefatigable presence in so many of the local community institutions he worked so selflessly to support. He was a friend, a fellow town meeting member, and a tireless worker for the improvement of the town he came to love and live in for the last many years of his life.

I remember meeting Don for the first time at the office of Montague Community Television, where he showed up shortly after moving to Montague from the Worcester area. The first words out of his mouth

were, “Do you need a volunteer?” The staff put him to work immediately.

He introduced himself in much the same way, I believe, at the Franklin Area Survival Center, where he helped stock the food pantry for many years.

When we needed help managing circulation and distribution at the *Montague Reporter*, Don showed up, once again, to offer his services free of charge. He coordinated those roles at the newspaper up until the last days of his life, managing an ever-shifting group of newscarrers, paper routes, and distribution outlets in half a dozen towns, though he himself did not even own a car.

Don walked down countless sidewalks, canvassing the neighborhoods

Don Clegg inspired me and was a joyful being to be around. I first met him right around this time of year at a Franklin County Interfaith Service for Thanksgiving in 2009. Don was an invited speaker and talked about how food insecurity can enter our lives, sometimes unexpectedly amidst health issues or other events that turn our lives upside down for a bit.

I was so moved by Don’s speech

Karen Warner



Don shares a laugh with Karen Werner at the Great Falls Farmers Market.

OBITUARY

Donald R. Clegg (1955 – 2018)

Donald “Don” Ray Clegg, 63, of Turners Falls, died on November 16 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield after a short illness. He was born May 10, 1955, in Lynn, Massachusetts, the son of Raymond and Eleanor (Coyle) Clegg.

Don graduated from Lynn English High School in 1973, and from Boston College in 1977, with majors in teaching and geology. After a stint teaching high school geology, he joined his father working at General Electric in Lynn.

Don was a lifelong fan of BC sports, and of Boston rock’n’roll. He also held an avid interest in wildlife, and enjoyed traveling the United States, particularly its mountains and deserts.

Don will be remembered by his son, Jason, for their frequent trips to see the Celtics at the old Boston Garden, where he was a longtime



season ticket holder. His daughter Shauna best remembers his passion for gardening at their home in Winchendon. His most lasting impressions left were on family vacations, which were always by car: for Shauna, the trips to Disney World, and for Jason, the trip to Yellowstone.

Don moved to Turners Falls in 2006, and became immersed in

community volunteer work. He served as distribution manager of the *Montague Reporter* for eleven years, and as board president of the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center.

He was predeceased by his mother in 2003, and his father in 2007. Survivors include two sisters, Doreen Harnois of Tewksbury and Rae Ann Leahy of Pembroke; his son, Jason Clegg of Fitchburg; and his daughter Shauna, of Winchendon.

Funeral arrangements are being handled privately, and plans are still in the works for a community memorial event in Turners Falls.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Don’s name to the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376, or in memory of his mother, Eleanor, to the Angel Fund for ALS Research, 649 Main St., Wakefield, MA 01880.

of Montague with back issues of the paper and discount offers for introductory subscriptions. I well remember getting lost driving in the unraked woods of Wendell as we tried to hand out free copies of the paper to every household. He remained cheerful and confident that we would find our way forward, somehow.

Over the years, he introduced and edited the Page 3 public service column, Local Briefs, with its signature emblem of freshly laundered underwear dangling from a clothesline. Don also had the inspiration to begin the popular “Take the *Montague Reporter* with you” section, which has given the *Montague Reporter* an unparalleled global reach for a weekly local newspaper that never achieved a circulation of more than 2,000 copies. It has certainly become one of the most popular features of the paper.

Don took over the management of the Great Falls Farmers Market and ran it for years when a new market master was needed. Don, in his reflexive generosity, would forgive the \$5 weekly vendor fees for market farmers who showed up to bad weather or a lack of sales – even though that meant forgoing his own small stipend.

He went on to lead the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center, and was never prouder than when a

standing room-only crowd of participants showed up for a presentation on raptors, or bears, or wolves, or for a weekend coffeehouse to support the Center’s ongoing operations. Another task he took on without remuneration, for the pleasure of filling a necessary post in another important community institution.

The cable TV station, bringing viewers into the halls of town government, the food bank, which struggles to keep hunger from the doors of so many local residents, the weekly newspaper, which works to report on the news and events that affect our towns, the farmers market, bringing fresh produce to the concrete blocks of our urban downtown, the Discovery Center, with its showcase on the wider natural environment – all these institutions that bind our community together and elevate our quality of life – have benefited so much from the countless unpaid, unsung hours that Don Clegg contributed over the last many years of his life. They will survive and thrive thanks in great part to his contribution.

We are as a town so much richer for his having lived among us. And we are so much poorer for his departing from our midst.

For all your hard work and generous friendship, thank you, Don.

David Detmold

About three months ago, when Don Clegg and I were meeting to discuss the upcoming *Montague Reporter* fundraiser that he had organized, I turned to him and asked him if he were OK. He didn’t seem himself. While his enthusiasm for the paper was as strong as ever, he appeared less buoyant than usual.

“No, I’m not doing so well,” he told me. “But let’s just focus on the fundraiser.” I didn’t press.

That was Don. He always put his causes ahead of himself, whether it was the Discovery Center, the paper, the Survival Center, or, for a long while after he first moved to town, MCTV.

I did not expect to receive the news of his death last week. I am deeply saddened and shocked.

I met Don not long after he moved to Turners, and immediately realized that he was eager to become part of the community. He was volunteering his time everywhere, constantly looking for an opportunity to

advance what he saw as the greatness of our town.

He was extremely fond of my wife Patricia Pruitt and she was equally fond of him. He loved it that she had taught at his Alma Mater, Boston College. When she became ill, not a week went by without him calling just to wish us well. After her death, he would ring regularly to see how I was doing.

He was always upbeat, energized by doing good. A wry joke was always on his tongue, as was a kind word.

As the longtime distribution manager at the *Reporter* he was legendary for his ability to get the paper to a thousand households each week, rain or shine, sleet or snow. His “Local Briefs” that appeared each week, was often among the first item read by readers. The paper’s popular “MR On the Road” was Don’s idea.

He thrived on concocting schemes to keep his beloved paper going. At one point during a rocky

financial period for the *Reporter*, he discovered that first-class stamps would soon be rising by three cents, and approached the Board of Directors arguing that the paper should invest part of its limited savings in a significant number. We locked the boxes of stamps in a file cabinet, and used them over the course of the next year and a half, saving hundreds of dollars in the process.

Don could be seen most days walking along Avenue A on his way to or from the Discovery Center or the paper. One cold day last year I spotted him with a big bag picking up trash in the Fourth Street alley. He’d already cleaned up Fifth Street.

Don seemed to know everyone downtown, and everyone knew him. He lived modestly, as those downtown do, but was extravagant in his love for the town and its residents.

I, and Turners Falls, will greatly miss him.

Christopher Sawyer-Laucanno

Amy Donovan
Program Director,
Franklin County Solid
Waste Management District

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The workshop is sponsored by the Cushman Library and by Better Angels (*Better-Angels.org*), a national bi-partisan citizens’ group seeking to create more understanding across political differences. The name comes from Abraham Lincoln’s 1861 inaugural speech in which he appealed to all Americans to “be touched by... the better angels of our nature.”

The workshop is free, and runs

from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on February 5. It will be led by Susan Hackney, a Bernardston resident and an interpersonal communications trainer and conflict coach with the Mediation & Training Collaborative, a program of Community Action Pioneer Valley.

You’ll be introduced to skills for starting the conversation, for listening and for speaking. You’ll also have an opportunity to practice the skills with someone of the same political persuasion (to make it easier to use them for the first time).

This workshop has a limit of 12 participants, and pre-registration is required. Should there be enough interest, it is possible that the Library will host more than one of these workshops.

To register, go to www.tinyurl.com/ybbyp83x, which will redirect you to an Eventbrite site.

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

French King Solar Moves Ahead; Towns Will Try to Redirect Trucks

By **KATIE NOLAN**

On November 19, the Erving selectboard, acting as the town’s water commission, granted a conditional permit for a 28-acre solar project at 129 French King Highway. Two wooded parcels owned by Frank Prondecki will be cleared for installation of ground-mounted solar panels capable of generating 6.45 megawatts of electricity.

The project required the water commissioners’ approval by the water commissioners because the parcels are located in the town’s groundwater protection district. The planning board approved the project in June and the water commission hearing on the project began in July.

The permit conditions require a security bond for decommissioning the array; the use of vegetable oil in transformers; training to the Erving fire department and mutual aid towns; a security fence; a vegetation management plan; approval of the stormwater management plan by the town’s consultant Tighe & Bond; and access to the site for inspections.

Rerouting Trucks

A week later, on November 26, the board reviewed the draft “Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Study: Church Street, North Street, Gulf Road,” prepared by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

According to the study, “There are safety, accessibility, and pavement concerns resulting from the prevalence of heavy vehicles traveling on Church Street and North Street in Erving and on Gulf Road in Northfield.” The study proposed two changes in traffic patterns: prohibiting heavy commercial traffic on Church and North streets and Gulf Road, and establishing Route 2, Forest Street, and Route 63 as a truck route.

Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache recommended that Semb Drive be included as part of the truck route from Route 2 to Route

91. The board also recommended that available traffic data for Mountain Road be included in the report.

Administrative coordinator Bryan Smith said that the next step, after revisions, is to submit the report to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Smith said that, although both Erving and Northfield are affected by the proposed changes, the Northfield selectboard asked Erving to take the lead. However, MassDOT will require a letter of support for the study from Northfield before taking any action.

Special Town Meeting

At both meetings, the board considered potential articles for a special town meeting in January.

These include paying several bills of prior years; appropriating \$500,000 from free cash to build the new public library; appropriating \$25,000 to replace the diesel generator at the police station; re-appropriating \$7,200 from the open space and recreation plan to plan for the development of Erving Center; appropriating \$15,000 from free cash to conduct a wage study of town positions and wage rates; appropriating \$265,000 from retained earnings from the sewer enterprise fund to upgrade the sewer line on Northfield Road and Care Drive, and re-appropriating \$149,000 from the town hall siding account for a design and feasibility study and future renovations to town hall.

Other Business

As the board began review of its FY’20 budget, Bastarache said he was considering changing the title of the “administrative coordinator” to “town administrator,” changing its job classification from Grade 6 to the higher-paid Grade 7. He also suggested adding additional administrative assistant hours. “The needs are growing,” he said.

Selectboard member Jacob Smith agreed that the town needed more administrative support “to chase grants” and administer the

The Bald Eagle: The Natural History, Decline and Rebound of our National Symbol

NORTHFIELD – Join Northfield Mountain and the Northfield Bird Club at the Rec and Conservation Center on Tuesday, December 11 from 5 to 6 p.m. for an illustrated program about bald eagles.

The program will focus on the life history of this magnificent bird with a wingspan of 7 feet and a nest that can weigh 2,000 pounds!

Learn about the decline and rebound of our national symbol, as well as the status of eagle populations in Massachusetts and the Connecticut River Valley.

Find out the best places to look for eagles in winter as well as during the breeding season. Led by naturalist Kim Noyes. Free; all ages welcome.

The next program, on January 8, will focus on crows.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

A Call For State Bond To Cover Broadband

By **JOSH HEINEMANN**

The Wendell selectboard is organizing their meetings into two separate sessions: one for regular town business, and one as the town’s municipal light plant (MLP), to continue the process of getting real internet connections to Wendell households. Their practice has been to conduct regular town business first.

A large part of the board’s November 14 meeting was taken up with a discussion about improving and clarifying personnel policy for town employees. Treasurer Carolyn Manley, representing the personnel policy committee, gave her overall assessment of the process so far: “We have just stirred the pot.”

The discussion centered on complications of how to fairly and reasonably compensate everyone from the town clerk, who works two scheduled hours per month, to the 40-hour highway workers, whose scheduled work is four 10-hour days in summer and five 8-hour days in winter.

The highway employees’ sick, holiday, and vacation time needs to be calculated differently for summer and winter holidays. In winter they get overtime, not comp time, when the long hours of plowing and sanding call for it.

Finance committee chair Doug Tanner said that many companies lump holiday, sick, personal, and vacation time as one single type of “day off.”

Librarian Rosie Heidkamp works an average of 32 hours, some weeks more or less, depending on the time the library is open, including evening events. Most holidays are scheduled for Mondays, a day she is not scheduled to work. Heidkamp accepted the proposal that she would take pro-rated time off during any week that a holiday occurs.

Fire chief Joe Cuneo and town coordinator Nancy Aldrich are both shared with New Salem. Aldrich is employed by New Salem, with Wendell paying that time its share of her salary, but Cuneo has a contract with each town.

The law requires that health insurance be made available for anyone who works 20 hours or more. Wendell has not followed the practice of limiting workers to 19 hours, but there is an ambiguous situation if one worker has several separate part-time positions that total 20 hours or more.

A family plan for health insurance is more expensive than a single person’s plan, and there is some question of whether insurance is a benefit and that difference should be accepted, or a compensation, in which case the difference would go to the worker.

Heidkamp brought up the division of maintenance work at the library. Dennis Hudson has been valuable doing construction-type maintenance, but he is not ready to take on the routine cleaning, dusting bookshelves, vacuuming, or cleaning washrooms. That work is for another position.

She added that Hudson wants to stop being the snowblower operator for clearing town center paths, but is willing to continue that job for now.

Broadband

As the MLP, the selectboard has already paid Shutesbury for an internet connection to a house on Old Egypt Road which is located in Wendell, but whose only road access is through Shutesbury. Selectboard chair Dan Keller brought up the issue that the state will only reimburse towns for broadband connections on public roads. Old Egypt Road may be private; its Wendell end is unmaintained and gated.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato asked for a list of other private roads in Wendell. Other board members came up with Checkersberry Lane, Gate Lane, John Quist Road, and Blueberry Lane. The road commission may have a complete list.

Keller said he spoke with Susannah Whipps about the idea that former fin com chair Michael Idoine voiced: that the state float a bond to pay for creating a broadband network in western Massachusetts hill towns, so as not to saddle the towns with high debt.

Idoine’s rationale was that western Massachusetts residents paid for the Big Dig, which only a few residents use. He has said that the state is floating a bond to extend the Green Line, at a cost of \$15,000 per resident in the towns that will be served, none of which are west of the Quabbin reservoir. A full extension of internet connections to western Massachusetts hill towns would cost \$5,000 per resident.

Keller said that Whipps was enthusiastic about the idea.

Wendell approved a National Grid statement that gave the price for connecting electricity to the broadband hut as \$1,019.84. The actual invoice has not arrived yet. That figure is good for 60 days, and MLP members agreed that it should be paid, and that the broadband committee should see it.

Other Business

The community solar project that was planned to go on town-owned land at 97 Wendell Depot Road has been halted because National Grid has added a \$3.9 million dollar cost for upgrading the Wendell Depot Substation. That cost was added because of a planned 65-acre solar project in Orange that would take all of the substation’s present excess capacity.

The Wendell project is 0.35% the size of the Orange project, but National Grid made their statement, and Wendell’s project consultant Greg Garrison wrote that he would not pursue the project in that location any longer.

The Wendell selectboard is sending a letter to both state representative Susannah Whipps and newly elected state senator Jo Comerford about the matter.

Friends of the Wendell Library donated \$6,000 to the library donation account.

As the meeting was ending, DiDonato said that Volkswagen’s settlement with Massachusetts may be used to pay for heavy-duty electric vehicles, highway trucks, and buses, and the infrastructure to support them and other electric vehicles.

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CHIEF from page A1

Kuklewicz to negotiate a contract with Williams.

Williams, a native of Montague and a graduate of Turners Falls High School and Greenfield Community College, has been serving as acting chief since last July. He joined the department full-time in 1995, after serving for three years as a reserve officer.

In 2004, he was passed over for the position of chief after scoring the highest of three candidates on the Civil Service exam. He also briefly served as acting chief from November 2011 through July 2012.

On Wednesday, Ellis told the *Reporter* that Williams was “enthusiastic about the opportunity,” and the contract negotiation will begin this week.

The board’s decision potentially brings the town close to the end of a drama which has tainted the reputation of the town’s police force. In the spring of 2016, the state police began an investigation of then-police chief Chip Dodge’s handling of

the contents of a prescription drug drop box at the public safety complex. The state investigation ended without charges being filed, but in the fall of 2017 a report highly critical of Dodge by state police investigators was leaked to the *Greenfield Recorder*. The report, and an interview with Dodge in the *Recorder*, revealed that the chief was in recovery from opioid addiction.

Dodge resigned in March 2018, and was replaced by lieutenant Christopher Bonnett as acting chief. But Bonnett was arrested in late June after being accused by a girlfriend of assault and battery during a late-night drunken argument. The charges were dropped several weeks ago when his accuser told prosecutors she had lied about the incident.

At the Monday meeting, the board was asked about the status of Bonnett, who has been on administrative leave since July. “That’s a matter apart from this one,” said Ellis. “This does not speak to the resolution of that, one way or the other.”

The board was also asked if any

thought had been given to “what we learned from all this,” referring to the long public ordeal over the Montague chief.

“Yes,” replied Kuklewicz. “I think we need to take a step at a time, and this is a step toward having a discussion.”

Fenceless and Spinning

The board also held a hearing during the Monday meeting on the design for the rehabilitation of Spinner Park. The park is a small “pocket park,” in the words of town planner Walter Ramsey, on the corner of Avenue A and Fourth Street. It features an Art Nouveau sculpture honoring women textile workers, and is used for events such as the RiverCulture Christmas celebration “It’s a Wonderful Night.”

Constructed in the 1980s, the park has been identified in the town’s community development strategy as being in need of a significant upgrade.

Carlos Neito of the Berkshire Design Group presented the proposed design to the selectboard. A key element of the proposal is closing access to a parking lot behind the park so the space will not be conceived as a walkway. The statue, which is currently located in the center of the park, would be moved to the rear, and the picket fence removed.

Kuklewicz expressed concern that without the fence, the statue might be used as a “climbing object,” or a “selfie opportunity,” according to Nelson. Neito said there could still be a fence in front of the sculpture, but that he did not like the style of the existing picket fence, and there would be an added cost to construct a new one.

Nelson asked about the “time-line” for the project.

“If all goes well,” said Ramsey, “we will have enough money to

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT SERVICES AIRPORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

TURNERS FALLS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT MONTAGUE, MASSACHUSETTS

The Turners Falls Airport Commission will receive Letters of Interest / Statements of Qualifications from qualified consultants to provide airport engineering, architectural and planning services for projects, if and when they occur, at Turners Falls Municipal Airport, Montague, Massachusetts, for a 5-year period. Additional information can be obtained by calling (413)863-0044 or emailing airport@montague-ma.gov.

Requests for Qualifications submissions may be sent to: Bryan Camden, Turners Falls Municipal Airport, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Submissions will be received at the above address, the Turners Falls Town Hall, until December 12, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.

construct this project in 2020.”

Other Business

Ramsey reviewed the town’s FY’18 Green Communities report with the board. Montague was one of the first municipalities to enter the state program in 2010 and he estimated that the designation has brought over \$400,000 in funding for 15 different energy efficiency projects. He also announced that as of 2018, the town had met its goal of reducing municipal energy use by 20% from 2008 levels.

Ariel Elan requested that the board award a \$12,500 contract for energy efficiency design services for the new public works facility project to The Green Engineer, Inc. The Concord-based company will present a range of options for increasing energy efficiency at the new building, which could be integrated into its final design. The board approved the contract, which is funded by a state grant.

The board approved a series of requests for the use of public property, and a one-day liquor license, to Nelson for the October 2019 Great Falls Festival. Kuklewicz com-

plained about “these last-minute requests,” and Nelson replied that he was, in fact, several weeks behind his usual schedule.

Ellis reported on the change in the company providing ambulance service to the town. A large national ambulance company called American Medical Response (AMR) has bought out MedCare, the current service provider in Montague.

Ellis said he and Kuklewicz had attended a meeting the previous week at which officials from both MedCare and AMR made presentations. He said that the new company had taken “very proactive steps” to rehire MedCare’s existing staff, and that “as a matter of continuity, that made me feel better about any potential transition.”

At the end of the meeting the board retired to two non-public executive sessions: one to discuss “complaints and potential disciplinary action against a public officer,” and the other to discuss contract negotiations with several town employee unions.

The board’s next scheduled meeting will be on December 3.



GMRSD from page A1

“She’s been a very, very diligent member.” The committee will elect a new secretary at its next meeting, as Reipold had filled that role.

Cloud Sourced

The committee “rubber stamped” an official logo to represent the Turners Falls Thunder, the nickname it approved last May after eliminating the longtime Turners Falls Indians name in 2017.

The logo, which features an anthropomorphic, muscular thundercloud lurking over a stylized nameplate, was designed by Montague designer Amy Schmidt Bowse. It was one of two chosen from a larger number of submissions by a group comprised of high school students, staff, administrators, and Montague member Heather Katsoulis, who reported that it had been favored by about a 250-30 student vote over the other option, a second Bowse design that featured a bridge.

“It was an easy project to get excited about,” Bowse, the parent of a Turners Falls High School student, told the *Reporter*. “I love living in Montague, and I love the challenge of designing logos – of trying to capture an emotion or meaning in an image – it’s like a fun puzzle to me. And I’m a sucker for contests.”

Bowse added that she saw the cloud as a “strong, resilient, spirited, and kind” character.

The logo was approved by an 8-0 vote on Tuesday. “We don’t require that it be used,” Katsoulis said.

The group also formally recommended the committee adopt one of the other submissions, a monogrammed “TF” encircled by the motto “Dignity Strength Honor Pride,” as an “emblem” used in contexts calling for more solemnity. The committee approved this “concept” by a 7-0-1 vote, with Damkoehler abstaining, but postponed declaring it the school’s emblem over concern that in the submitted artwork, the F appears to hover in front of the T, rather than vice versa.

about the district’s dispute with New England Medical Billing, Inc. (NEMB), read onto the public record by Oakes on Tuesday night.

A 2017 audit discovered the district had, for years, been billing the state Medicaid program for ineligible work by paraprofessionals. The discovery resulted in a \$936,225 liability to the state. In April, under an agreement with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, it was announced the district would not be required to pay interest, and would repay it by having its reimbursement garnished by \$47,000 a year for the next 20 years.

Since then, the district has paid specialty law firm Bulkley, Richardson and Gelinas, LLP over \$50,000 in pursuit of a settlement with NEMB, which oversaw the district’s Medicaid billing during the period in question in exchange for a percentage of reimbursed funds. Oakes did not respond on Wednesday to an inquiry as to whether the district and NEMB had entered into a non-disclosure agreement.

Other Business

The meeting began with a recognition of 12 John and Abigail Adams scholars, Turners Falls High School seniors eligible for tuition waivers at state colleges on the strength of their standardized test scores. The recipients are Samantha Bocon, Cailyn Gobeil, Alexander Houghton-Miles, Jenna Jacobsen, Anna Kochan, Garrett Martel, Tyler Noyes, Mireya Ortiz, John Putala, Will Turn, Victoria Veaudry, Sarah Waldron, and Cassidhe Wozniak.

The committee unanimously approved a field trip for tenth-graders taking US History 1 to visit Manhattan on December 7. “They have been studying and researching 9/11, and the context around 9/11, and in particular varying perspectives on the events of 9/11, and on terrorism,” principal Annie Leonard explained. “The trip is designed to allow them to continue that study at the sites in New York City.”

The trip will be funded by donut sales, private foundation money, and a grant from the Gill-Montague Education Fund. Damkoehler pointed out that all high school students were born after the 2001 attacks.

The committee’s next meeting, and its only December meeting, will be held December 11 at Turners Falls High School.



BY JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS

– The design project to prepare “bid-ready specs” for a nearly complete demolition of the Strathmore Mill complex has hit a snag, according to Bruce Hunter of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Re-development Authority.

The original proposal implemented by the engineering firm Tighe & Bond assumed the demolition of all buildings in the complex except Building 11, which is a standalone structure, and the building which houses an active hydroelectric generation plant, Turners Falls Hydro.

But now the engineers have discovered that the latter building could be compromised by demolishing those which surround it.

The 937-kW Turners Falls Hydro plant was purchased in 2016 from its owner, Swift River LLC, by the New Jersey-based company Eagle Creek Renewable Energy. In August 2018, the Canadian utility Ontario Power Generation signed a deal to purchase Eagle Creek.

“If we are to leave the walls [of the hydro plant] as they are,” Hunter told the Montague selectboard at its November 19 meeting, “they probably would not stand on their own. So we will have to construct a building around three sides of the hydro plant... The adjacent buildings hold

that building up.”

Later, Hunter said a “25-foot wall” would be needed to stabilize the hydro plant.

Hunter also said that he would need to request a “change order” allocating additional funds for the wall’s design, and an extension for the design phase of the demolition until June 30, 2019.

Town administrator Steve Ellis told the *Reporter* that producing a bid-ready design to stabilize the hydro plant might exceed available funds that could be allocated to the project, making it necessary to “re-think” the design of the demolition.

The selectboard subsequently approved a \$22,550 payment to Tighe and Bond, as well as payments to the firm GZA GeoEnvironmental for work on the upgrade of Rutters Park in Lake Pleasant.

Other Business

At the same meeting, the board approved the hiring of Thomas Burden to the position of “Laborer” at the town’s water pollution control facility (WPCF). WPCF superintendent Robert McDonald said his budget funds eight employees, and the hiring of Burden brings the staff at the facility “up to seven, so I would like to bring on another laborer.” He said that the additional laborer would be trained to work in the lab, and potentially replace Tina

Tyler, who could be retiring at the end of the fiscal year.

Ellis noted that the town is still negotiating with the state over the required staffing level at the plant.

The board approved a request from RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto for the use of Spinner Park on the evening of December 14 for its annual Christmas event. The event, called “It’s a Wonderful Life,” features music, Santa, and a mailbox which receives mail for Santa. LoManto said local artist Jack Nelson was working on the mailbox to “make sure it doesn’t hurt anybody, doesn’t fall down.”

Prior to the meeting the board had inspected the lights on Avenue A with members of the Turners Falls Fire District prudential committee to identify areas where more light was needed. The overhead lights on telephone poles have recently been turned off by the Fire District, leaving only the antique-looking sidewalk lights.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said that of the 12 to 15 lights that had recently been turned off, the group identified six poles “where we thought it would be good to turn those lights back on: mostly around intersections, crosswalks that were a little dark.”

The November 19 meeting adjourned after approximately an hour.

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FRCOG Seeks Public Input on Regional Transportation

FRANKLIN COUNTY – What do you think the County’s priorities should be for transportation? Are there roadway improvements needed? Would you like more bus service? What do you think of park and rides?

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is currently updating the Regional Transportation Plan. This plan is updated every four years and examines the current state of the transportation system in the region, including all modes of transportation – such as driving, walking, biking, and riding the bus or train. The plan also identifies the long term transportation needs of the region and prioritizes projects and activities.

When completed in May 2019, the Regional Transportation Plan will provide a foundation for future

transportation planning in the region. As part of the process, the FRCOG wants input from Franklin County residents and employees. They will be hosting four public meetings in December and January to get feedback on transportation needs and priorities. The meetings are free to the public and are ADA accessible. There will be free food and drinks.

Town of Colrain Garage
Tuesday, December 11, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Erving Senior Center
Tuesday, January 8, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

JWO Transit Center, Greenfield
Wednesday, January 9, noon to 1:30 p.m.

Sunderland Library
Wednesday, January 16, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

In the event of snow or icy weather, please call 413-774-3167 x132 to learn if the meeting has been cancelled. The snow date for each is the next day. As the update to the Plan progresses, the FRCOG will be posting updates on its website (www.frcog.org) and Facebook pages along with a survey for people to fill out. The survey can be accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019RTPsurvey.



MARK HUDYMA PHOTO

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SCENE REPORT

Monte’s March: Puddles, Pastries, and Participation

By **IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS**

SUNDERLAND – On Tuesday, November 20, I participated in Monte’s March IX with Turners

Falls High School and Great Falls Middle School. Thirty-two students from our schools in grades seven through twelve walked approximately eight miles, starting at

the Jones Library in Amherst, and ending at the Bridge Side Grille in Sunderland.

It was so fun to participate in this community event with my friends! The Turners Falls High School raised approximately \$1,200, and Great Falls Middle School raised approximately \$1,600. Combined, our schools raised over \$2,800, beating our goal of \$1,000 per school. The money raised goes to the Food Bank of Western Mass.

I wanted to do this march because a lot of kids that I go to school with struggle from not getting enough food. I felt that it was important to help them, and to help families who are having financial difficulties, or have lost their jobs.

We left our school around 8:30 a.m., and started walking around 9. Our first stop was the First Congregational Church in Amherst. We stopped there to visit a man named

see **MARCH** page B5



Left to right: Jillian Reynolds, Izzy Vachula-Curtis, Isabel Garcia, and Emily Young joined Monte’s March with a group from their school.

LIFESTYLE

Following the “Path” to Healthy Eating

By **ELLEN BLANCHETTE**

GREENFIELD – This fall I was offered an opportunity to participate in a workshop on nutrition for senior citizens, sponsored by LifePath (formerly Franklin County Home Care), titled “Healthy Eating for Successful Living.” The workshop began on October 2 at the Greenfield Senior Center, where I joined a group of attendees with varying health issues and goals. Leading the workshop was Andi Waisman, the Healthy Living program coordinator at LifePath, a lovely woman with a big smile and warm personality who graciously led us through the weekly sessions.

She greeted us and asked us to introduce ourselves, then introduced the materials to be used. We were provided with a participant manual, which was our guide

see **EATING** page B4



Volunteer Gale Mason, left, meets with Andi Waisman, Healthy Living program manager, at LifePath in Greenfield.

THE GARDENER’S COMPANION

When the Fridge Has a Hissy Fit

people require three times as many condiments, not to mention the distinctly different tastes in meats and vegetables.

But we both suffer from the rude noises of our bigger GE (with freezer). They may call them “clicks, pops, cracks and chirps” in the manual, but this machine clacks, grunts, snaps and clucks as a reminder that it is always working hard for you. Supposedly it is a great energy-saving device.

Two Christmases ago I received the gift of a tablet. What I really wanted was a mobile device which would play music of my choice in motel rooms, on airplanes, and in comfortable rental bedrooms, without disturbing my partner. The sales-

woman at Staples pooh-poohed MP3 players (they didn’t carry any), and touted the versatility of the tablet, which could not only access radio stations of my choice but also text, send and receive email, answer questions, and take pics.

Diplomatically, no one ever went to the question: is the potential recipient of this miracle able to work with electronics? Give me a break: my tablet criticized my talent for swiping the screen correctly from the get-go.

When we were in school, believe it or not, there were no computers. Teachers made copies on ditto machines. As an English major, I wrote tons of papers on a manual

see **GARDENER’S** page B5



By **LESLIE BROWN**

MONTAGUE CITY – I miss my minimalist Canadian refrigerator with its one silent fan.

OK, it was small and lacked a freezer, but there’s a full-size upright downstairs. It’s good for my aging knees to go down and up for ice cubes or ice cream. OK, so it was small, and there are two of us now, so there’s more stuff. Two

The Week in Sports: Turkey Day Football



Turners Falls quarterback Kyle Dodge hands off to running back Wyatt Keith as John Torres holds the line during the Turkey Day game against Greenfield.

By **MATT ROBINSON**

Greenfield 40 – TFHS 38

I know, I know. When your team loses, it’s hard, especially for a kid. People tend to go on a news blackout. But when your team wins, you search for any mention of the game and joyfully relive the victory.

Fear not, I’ll make this (relatively) painless, with no false-positive banality, no trite statements about life lessons, and above all, no excuses.

On Turkey Day, November 22, 2018, the Green Wave of Greenfield beat Turners Falls 40-38. It was Green’s second consecutive win in Thee Game.

For Turners, it was a loss, but not a devastating loss. There were no hanging of heads and no blame taking. Thee Game was a good olde-fashioned brawl, and Green just happened to land the last punch. That last punch was actually a block when Greenfield denied the tying 2-PAT with a minute and 15 left to play.

It was cold in Greenfield Thursday morning. One source told me it was the coldest Turkey Day on record. But even though it was Arctic-cold on that green field, by the fourth quarter, fans had taken off their layers and allowed their hair to blow in the icy wind. That’s how exciting the game was.

The excitement reached its first crescendo 1:29 into the game when One-One, Wyatt Keith, broke loose and powered 56 yards into the end zone. Tyler Lavin kicked the PAT and Turners took a 7-0 lead. But Green retaliated and scored two passing touchdowns and 2-PATs to go up 16-7.

And that was just the first quarter.

In the second quarter, Reilen Castine banged into the end zone and Lavin split the uprights to pull Turners within 2, 16-14. Green answered with their own TD, but the Blue D stuffed the 2-PAT,

keeping the score within 8 points, 22-14. At the end of the half, One-One scored another TD for Powertown, but the 2-PAT failed and the game was 22-20 Green going into the locker room.

The Green Wave increased their lead 21 seconds into the second half, but another stuffed 2-PAT kept the margin to 28-20. Halfway through the third quarter, Keith answered with another 6-point score.

Now down by 2, Turners had to scrap their kicking game and implemented their short yardage offense. The 2-PAT was denied, and the Wave maintained the lead, 28-26. In the waning minutes of the third, Greenfield scored again, but again, Blue stopped the 2-PAT, and going into the final quarter of the year, Turners was down by a touchdown and a 2-PAT, 34-26.

At 9:05 of the fourth quarter, Wyatt Keith broke through the line, picked up speed, and raced 47 yards to pull Turners back within 2, at 34-32. But Turners was unable to tie the game, and three minutes later, Green scored again.

With 6:16 left in regulation and in their 2018 season, the Blue D stepped up and stopped the 2-PAT. Down 40-32, Turners needed to score again and they did: with 1 minute and 15 seconds to go, Kyle Dodge ran an 8-yard keeper to pull Powertown within 2 points, 40-38.

And that’s how it ended. There was no miracle ending, no Hollywood scripted comeback. And above all, there were no excuses made. The final 2-PAT failed, and Greenfield won the game.

Smith Voc 24 – FCTS 14

What happens when your second-favorite team plays your number 9?

In college sports, I usually favor about 25 or 30 schools, depending on the sport. In the NFL I have my top 7, and for high school, I have about 30 teams I root for. It gives

see **SPORTS** page B4

Pet of the Week

So, you think you want a Bengal? Being a caretaker to a Bengal is not for the faint of heart.

Leo needs constant stimulation to remain sane and happy. Be committed to playing with him several times a day. Harness training and going for walks is a great way to keep him entertained and stimulated.

ed. He would love to go outside.

He should be the only cat (or dog) in the home. Bengal cats like Leo are smart and challenging, and not cats for beginners.

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



PHOTOS COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY / CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE

“LEO”

Senior Center Activities

DECEMBER 3 THROUGH 7

GILL and MONTAGUE

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 machine when the center is not open.

M, W, F: 10:10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise

T, W, Th: 12 p.m. Lunch

Monday 12/3
1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 12/4
10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga
12:45 p.m. COA Meeting

Wednesday 12/5
9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach
9 to 11 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 12/6
NO Tai Chi; NO Chair Yoga
10:30 a.m. to noon. Brown Bag
1 p.m. Cards & Games & Pitch

Friday 12/7
1 p.m. Writers’ Group

WENDELL

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

ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregat-

DECEMBER 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

The Slate Library in Gill is closed until mid-December for renovations. They received a grant from the Green Communities Competitive Grant Program in order to upgrade many of their building’s systems.

ONGOING EVENTS

EVERY TUESDAY

Wendell Free Library: *Strength Training Classes for Adults of all Ages* with Kathy Sward. Must pre-register. Intermediate class, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Beginner class, 9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

Leverett Library: *Spanish Conversation Group*, 4 to 5 p.m.; *Qigong with Dvora Eisenstein*. 5:15 to 6:15 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. (Not on school vacations.) *Healthy Bones and Balance Class* w/ Marianne Vinal. Geared to older Wendell residents. Tea afterward. 10 to 11 a.m.

Carnegie Library: *Story Time with Karen*. Young children with caregivers. 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. *Homeschool Science*. Hands-on STEM activities for home-schoolers of all ages and their caregivers. Pre-registration required. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Tales and Tunes Story Time w/Heleen Cardinaux*, 10:30 a.m. to noon. *Tai Chi*, advanced 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.

2ND WEDNESDAYS

Dickinson Library: *Readings: Non-fiction, Fiction & Poetry*. 3 p.m.

EVERY THURSDAY

Millers Falls Branch: *Music & Movement* with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson. For children. 10 to 10:45 a.m.

Leverett Library: *Yoga for Stress Reduction* with Nancy Paglia. 5 to 6:15 p.m.

1ST THURSDAYS

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

Dickinson Library: *Environment Awareness Group*. Topic facilitated by Emily Koester. 6:30 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 Mengwasser. Pre-schoolers and their caregivers. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. *Friday Afterschool*. Variety of activities for kids after school is out. 2 to 3 p.m.

1ST FRIDAYS

Carnegie Library: *Mystery Activity*. Some possibilities are crafts, science experiments, tech-tools. For ages 8+ and teen. 3:30 to 4:45 p.m.

EVERY SATURDAY

Wendell Free Library: *Adult Strength Training* with Rosie Heidkamp, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. *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 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

EVERY SUNDAY

Wendell Free Library: *Sunday Morning Yoga* will be taught at an advanced beginner/intermediate level. First week in December the instructor is Jackie Howard; the rest of the month, it is Sasha Rivera. 10 a.m. \$ AA *Open Meeting*, 6 to 7 p.m.

EXHIBITS

Leverett Library: *Exhibit by Friends of the Leverett Crafts and Arts*. Through December.

EVENTS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

Dickinson Library: *3D Design and Printing* with Arthur Evans of *Makerspace*. Teens and adults get to learn the basics, and then create a 3D object; total 20 participants. The objects will be printed after the workshop. 10 a.m. to noon.

Carnegie Library: *Cards and Cookies*. Adults and teens are invited to come make holiday cards and enjoy home-baked cookies. Consider making cards

for residents of local nursing homes. They will be distributed and greatly appreciated! Cookies and supplies provided by the Friends of the Montague Public Libraries. 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4

Leverett Library: Library Book Club. December’s selection is *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes. All welcome. 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

Dickinson Library: *Kids’ Friday: Letter Writing*. 2 to 3 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

Carnegie Library: *Gingerbread Party*. Children of all ages and their caregivers are invited to come make easy gingerbread houses. Candy, graham crackers, and icing will be provided for this fun, free program. 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Wendell Library: Movie night: *Bewitched*, with Nicole Kidman and Will Ferrell. Last of the *Science Fiction/Fantasy and Horror/Monster Movie Series* for the year. A new series will start in January. 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

Leverett Library: *Electronics Take-Apart* with Seth Seeger. Seth will have assorted items. Come take apart, tinker, and learn! All welcome. 3 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14

Dickinson Library: *Science is Everywhere: Light Up the Winter Night*. Bring those broken strings of holiday lights and make full circuits, and keep more things out of the landfill. Limited to 15 students in grades 3-5. Pre-register please. 2:15 to 3:30 p.m.

Leverett Library: Movie night: *Snow Falling on Cedars*. PG-13. 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

Leverett Library: *Women’s Health Over 40*, presented by the *Leverett Board of Health*. Library community room. 2 to 3 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

Leverett Public Library: *Ukulele Strum-along* with Julie Stepanek. 6:45 to 7:45 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

Dickinson Library: *Kid’s Friday: Make a Crossword Puzzle*. 2 to 3 p.m.

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Handcrafts in Shutesbury

SHUTESBURY – The 7th annual Shutesbury Holiday Shop will be held next Friday, December 7, from 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturday, December 8, from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; and Sunday, December 9, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

This fabulously magical three-day event transforms the Shutesbury Athletic Club Function Room into a veritable wonderland of gift-giving options for all celebrations! This year the shop features an affordable array of handcrafted work from 40 local artisans, artists, crafters, authors and musicians. Admission is free.

The Shutesbury Holiday Shop is known for its incredible inventory of extraordinary and affordable handmade gifts.

There will be something for everyone: beautiful jewelry, quilts, ornaments, food – fudge, jams and jellies, maple syrup – handmade bags, tie dyes, soap, wind chimes, baskets, books by local authors, health and wellness products, CDs, woodcrafts, fiber art (knit, crochet, woven, sewn, organic, plant-dyed),

therapy pillows, photography, fine art cards and prints, stuffed animals, wonderful pottery, and more. The participating artisans and authors are all from Shutesbury, or one of the towns nearby.

The Holiday Shop was founded in 2011 to provide a welcoming venue for local artists, artisans, crafters, authors, and musicians of all ages to show and sell their work, and to create a one-stop shopping experience for people who enjoy buying handmade for the holidays. Started by Melinda LeLacheur of Dragonfly Designs, it is now run by a volunteer committee of local artisans who work hard to create a warm, wonderful gift shop for the community to enjoy.

The Shutesbury Athletic Club is a non-profit community organization located at 282 Wendell Road in Shutesbury.

For a complete list of participating artists, artisans, crafters, authors and musicians, see www.shutesburyshops.wixsite.com/holidayshop or www.facebook.com/Shutesbury-HolidayShop.

MOVIE FRANCHISE REVIEW

The Signed, Sealed, Delivered Movies (Hallmark)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I have gotten into watching a series of movies which basically came out of something that was made into a TV show and then became movies instead. The TV show *Signed, Sealed, Delivered* had a pilot and a total of 10 episodes. The plot was about a group of postal workers called the Postables who try to return a letter or package each week.

That way of storytelling continues with the movies. I saw most of the TV episodes, and I liked the last one, which starred Carol Burnett, the best.

The first of the movie series, a Christmas movie called *Signed, Sealed, Delivered for Christmas*, I liked very much. It involved the Postables putting on a Christmas pageant for a little girl whose mother is in the hospital. *Signed, Sealed, Delivered: From Paris With Love* was next, and involved a leftover thread from the TV series about a Postable named Oliver’s missing wife. It wasn’t a bad movie.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered: Truth be Told introduced Gregory Harrison as Oliver’s father, and set up the plot for the next movie. *Signed, Sealed, Delivered: The Impossible Dream* had them being involved with the rescue of a soldier in Afghanistan through a letter. They had already met this woman’s family the same way in the last movie; that’s how each movie’s plot is set up.

The next, *From the Heart*, was more or less a movie for Valentine’s Day, and explored the romance between Oliver and one of his fellow Postables, named Shane. One in

a Million was a romance story as well, which I didn’t get into.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered: Lost Without You is my favorite one among all of them. Let’s just say the Postables answering a letter comes in very handy for Oliver and his father when they get lost in the woods. *Higher Ground* featured them telling someone that a man she thought was lost during Hurricane Katrina is alive, which made for a nice movie.

Home Again focused a little on the two other Postables, Norman and Rita, becoming engaged, and we met Rita’s parents as well. *The Road Less Traveled*, my third favorite in the series (my second favorite was the Christmas one), was like a road trip / scavenger hunt. It held my attention far better than some of the other movies.

The 11th and latest one was called *Signed, Sealed and Delivered: To The Altar*. It featured the Postables returning a wedding dress, which was rather appropriate because it also featured Norman and Rita’s wedding. There is always a story behind what they are returning, and the one this time around I found to not be a boring story. Along with that there was also a present, a nice surprise from the other two Postables.

I don’t know if I would say whether this was better as a TV series, or a series of movies. I have been following the movies pretty well when they air on the Hallmark Movies channel and then watching them, but I also did about the same thing when it was a TV series. The movies must be doing something right, because this network keeps making them.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Several Deer Tragedies; Stray Arrow; Beggars Banished; Plow And Stairs; Speedy Dry; Six Separate 911 Misdials

Monday, 11/12

6:25 a.m. 911 caller reporting car vs. deer at Turnpike Road and Walnut Street. No injuries. Deer gone on arrival. Report taken.

6:40 a.m. Caller reports that she hit a deer this morning on Turners Falls Road. Advised of options.

7:38 a.m. Caller states that his trailer was parked in the road on Denton Street when a tree came down and damaged it on Saturday afternoon. Advised of options.

3:36 p.m. Caller complaining of a Jeep parked in an area off of L Street; states that vehicle owner died four or five months ago, and the woman driving the vehicle now is doing it illegally. Referred to an officer.

4:11 p.m. A 29-year-old Turners Falls woman was arrested on a straight warrant.

Tuesday, 11/13

12:16 a.m. Officer out checking on two vehicles in Sheffield Elementary School parking lot. Clear; just a couple meeting after work. Sent on their way.

6:04 a.m. 911 caller reports that while delivering newspapers, he can see an injured deer on the lawn of a Montague Street house. Deer appears to be unable to get up. Responding officer advising he will have to put animal down. Three shots fired; deer dispatched. Officer made arrangements to have deer removed.

9:13 a.m. Caller states that the truck he is driving has taken down some power lines on Greenfield Road; lines are on the truck with him and his work partner inside. PD and FD responding. Officer advising secondary power lines on top of truck. Occupants advised to remain in truck. Greenfield Road shut down; Eversource on scene; road reopened.

Wednesday, 11/14

12:21 a.m. First of several reports of trees and wires down around town.

5:13 p.m. 911 hangup call; on callback, caller stated that his son was roughhousing with the dog with the phone in his pocket and accidentally dialed 911. Officer confirmed misdial.

5:30 p.m. Caller received an email today begging her to send money to an unknown man. Caller advised to delete email and not to engage with anyone on the Internet that she does not know personally.

6:34 p.m. Party into station requesting to speak with an officer re: an arrow that she just found after it had been shot into her horse pasture. Officer spoke to mother of two involved children and advised her of the complaint.

9:23 p.m. Caller from Montague Street complaining of an opossum that is still sitting next to his house after being dumped out of a trash can full of water at 3 p.m. today. Animal is not aggressive at this time. Caller advised to leave animal, allow it to move freely, and call back should it become aggressive. Copy of call left for animal control officer.

Thursday, 11/15

5:45 a.m. Shelburne Control received a 911 misdial from a male party in Montague who stated he must have dialed the phone in his sleep and that there is currently no problem. Confirmed misdial.

4:02 p.m. Caller from New Street complaining of two neighborhood dogs who are loose and defecating in her yard. Dogs are headed home at this time. Call printed and left for ACO.

Friday, 11/16

7:26 a.m. Officer checking on vehicle with its hazards on that is obstructing northbound lane on Turners Falls Road. Attempting to locate owner, checked area and sounded airhorn; negative contact. Officer located vehicle owner further down the road feeding horses.

8:37 a.m. Report of resident blowing snow into the road on Crescent Street. Referred to an officer.

6:25 p.m. Officer flagged down about some people panhandling in front of Connecticut River Liquor and Wine on Avenue A. Male party moved along.

Saturday, 11/17

12:25 a.m. Caller complaining of a group of people being loud behind the Cutlery Block near the Shea Theatre. Officers report a group from the theatre is moving props and items out onto a truck; will speak to them and ask them to keep noise level down.

5:30 p.m. Walk-in reporting that on the night of November 15 or the following morning, a town DPW plow clipped a set of cement stairs that connect to her mother’s front porch on Greenfield Cross Road. Stairs were pushed several feet away from the home. Homeowner is elderly and cannot get off the porch

without the steps. Officer will have patrol unit respond during daylight hours to take photos of damage. Message left with DPW supervisor.

Sunday, 11/18

9:56 a.m. 911 caller reporting that the vehicle in front of her struck a deer on Turners Falls Road. Deer is injured. Responding officer reports that deer was dead on arrival; minor damage to vehicle.

8:03 p.m. Caller from Federal Street complaining of neighbor working on junk cars creating a disturbance; also reporting that fumes from a fuel spill are reaching caller’s property. TFFD determined that a few gallons of fuel likely spilled and put down some Speedy Dry. All units clear.

Monday, 11/19

12:01 p.m. Party into station reporting that a man threatened his dogs with a knife while he was out walking them on Greenfield Road. Advised of options.

3:52 p.m. Caller reporting that a golden retriever is eating out of a dumpster behind the post office. Officer advises that dog owner lives behind this location. Animal is not aggressive.

Tuesday, 11/20

7:49 p.m. 911 caller advising of an overturned car leaning on a telephone pole between Franklin County Technical School and the old Hallmark building. TFFD and MPD officers advised; conference with MedCare. Dispatch alerting DPW of ice on road. Report taken.

9:21 p.m. 911 caller advising that a truck has hit the side of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge and bounced to the other side of the road, almost hitting her vehicle. Officers, MedCare, and TFFD advised and en route. Officer requesting that Gill or Erving PD respond to close Gill side of bridge. Rau’s requested for tow. Bridge remaining closed while MassDOT treats for ice.

Wednesday, 11/21

12:57 a.m. 911 caller requesting officers to parking lot behind Cutlery Block; states that a male he knows is chasing him and has put his hands on him. Officers clear; verbal disagreement over one male’s sister’s car.

11:34 a.m. Caller complaining of panhandler outside of Food City. Officer spoke with subject.

2:24 p.m. 911 misdial; could hear mild background

noise and what sounded like a child cooing in the background. The number 1 was pressed repeatedly during the call. No answer on callback; officer advises no answer at door.

2:39 p.m. Report of suspicious person who came to caller’s door on K Street looking for someone and appeared to be looking over caller’s shoulder into her apartment. Unable to locate.

4:30 p.m. 911 caller advising that he made a mistake and called 911 while trying to call information.

7:40 p.m. School resource officer requesting marked unit to patrol the area of the athletic fields due to rumors of students starting a bonfire there. Officer advises everyone has left area. TFFD advises pile of fuel has been locked in the school.

Thursday, 11/22

9:59 a.m. Vehicle rollover on Millers Falls Road. Single occupant out of vehicle. MedCare transporting.

10:20 a.m. 911 misdial. Caller states that he accidentally dialed while making a repair on his daughter’s car. Confirmed misdial.

Friday, 11/23

9:12 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street requesting assistance with neighbor who accumulates shopping carts and puts some of them on the caller’s property; advises this has been an ongoing issue. Officer advised subject of complaint.

8:06 p.m. A 44-year-old Montague man was arrested on a straight warrant.

Saturday, 11/24

11:23 a.m. 911 misdial received from an address that used to be a health center but is currently vacant. Area checked; no problems found.

12:04 p.m. Caller states that there are two kids walking around Sheffield Elementary School “checking doors and windows.” Officer located two kids matching description on the play structure behind the school. Spoke to boys and checked building. No damage done.

3:59 p.m. A 45-year-old Montague man was arrested on a default warrant.

8:37 p.m. Caller advising of deer on the ground in the middle of West Chestnut Hill Road; believes animal is breathing but that it is hurt and cannot move. Deer dispatched upon officer’s arrival. A local will be returning for the animal.

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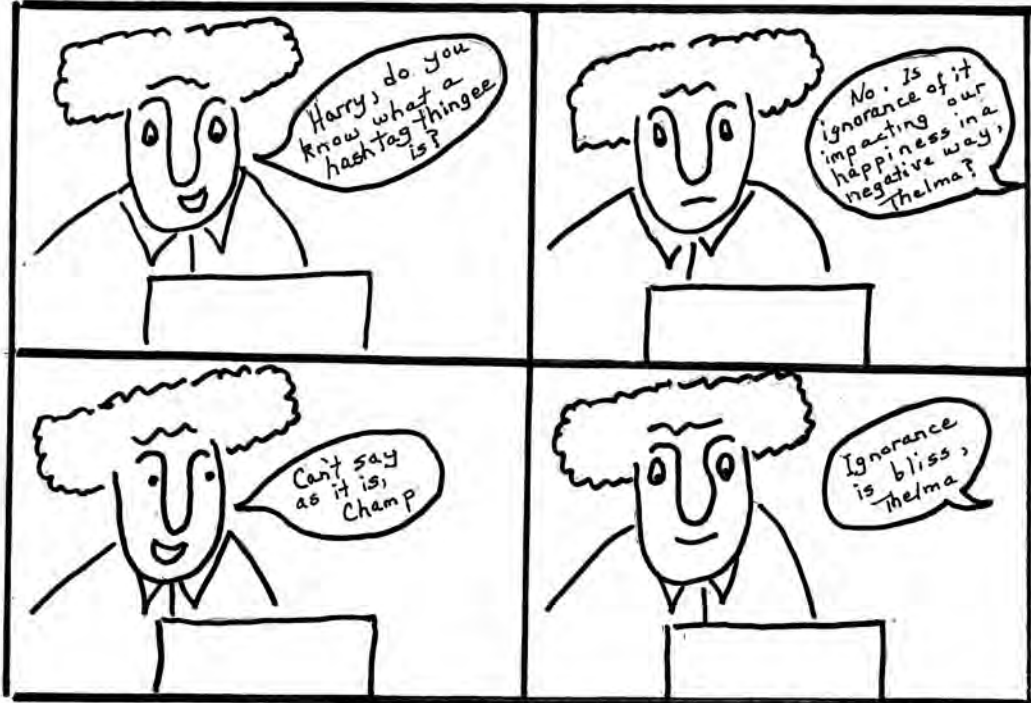
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OVER THE HILL



by Ann O. Nymous

SPORTS from page B1
me a horse in every race.

It's no secret that my three favorite schools are Turners, Franklin Tech, and Brockton, with East Bridgewater and Winthrop in the top 10. The Smith Voc Vikings have been climbing in the ranks of late, but when they play number 2, I have to root for the Franks.

The Franks and the Vikings have been battling since before Charlemagne gave them Normandy so they

would stop attacking Paris. But this rivalry is brand new, or renewed, as it were. 2018 was the first annual Turkey Day game between the Franklin Tech Eagles and the Smith Voc Vikings. And the Vikes won the battle, 24-14.

It was dark, cold and windy at Franklin Tech on Thanksgiving Eve, Wednesday, November 21. It was so cold that advisories were posted, and so windy that the Turners Falls bonfire was canceled.

But seeing all the toddlers and tweens on the sidelines trying to stay warm I was reminded of my own childhood, wrapped up in blankets in the bleachers or playing tag football nearby.

The Vikings drew first blood in the opening quarter and scored another TD in the second, but both their 2-point attempts failed, so the damage was limited to 12 points.

Seconds before the half ended, Tech's Kayani Rodriguez scored on an Owen Bashaw pass. Jared Bergmann added the 2-PAT, and suddenly it was a 4-point game, 12-8.

In the third quarter, Voc scored again, but when they couldn't get the extra 2 points, the margin remained 10 points, 18-8.

Late in the fourth, with 2:51 to play, Tech made it interesting. Bashaw completed a 20-yard TD pass to Bailey Young. The Franks' extra point attempt failed. With the margin again at 4 points, 18-14, Tech tried an onside kick but Smith retained possession and went on to score, making the final score 24-14.



DAVID HOITI PHOTO

Turners' Kyle Dodge reaches for the TD late in the 4th quarter as Greefield's RJ Byrd tries to knock him out of bounds.

Next week: the season in review.

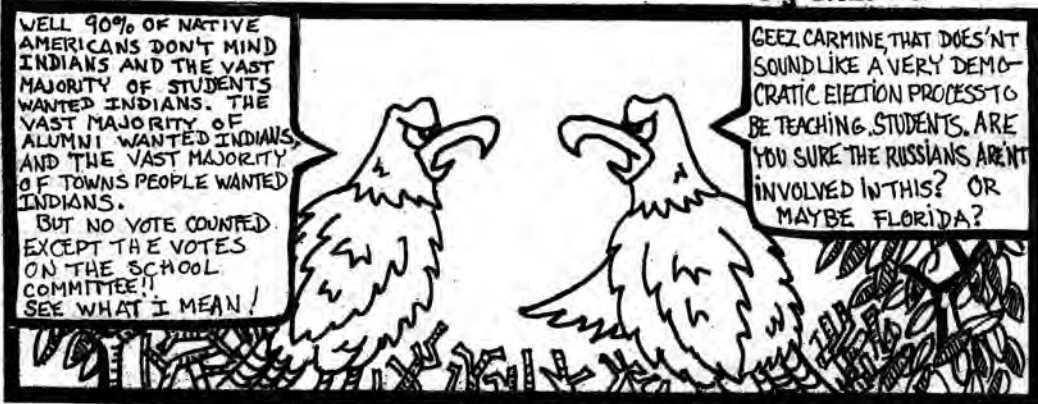


BUBBA and CARMINE

sages of Barton Cove



by denis bordeaux



EATING from page B1

for the six-week program. It introduced the main food groups, and how to make healthy eating choices. Andi and her assistant Patricia Johnson walked us through the manual over the next several weeks with goal setting, action plans, and discussions of the issues each of us was facing in our lives.

We began with a review of what is called My Plate, an example of what the USDA recommends for eating a healthy balanced meal (information at myplate.gov). It divides what we eat into five food groups: protein, grains, vegetables, fruits, and dairy. Based on an individual's age and level of activity, they provide a recommendation of how many calories each person should consume on a daily basis.

The workshop leaders gave us a guide of how much food in each category we should eat each day, based on the levels of caloric intake we had selected. At the end of each session, we set goals for ourselves to achieve during the next week, along with action plans for success.

In the next week's session, we would go around the room and speak about how successful we had been. Andi always found a way to make our efforts sound like a success, however frustrated we might have been with the outcome.

Making this a group effort was very helpful. One of the things Andi and Patricia did was encourage us to consider the obstacles we faced in changing our habits or improving our food choices. She also would select one person's problem and include the group in "brainstorming" solutions of how to overcome those obstacles, asking the person to wait until the end and listen to the suggestions the group offered, then comment after they considered what they'd heard. This was done in a kind and loving way, so no one ever felt attacked or criticized.

We were also encouraged to team up with a partner to contact each other during the week, to see how we were doing with our goals. Along the way we learned a lot about the many kinds of food choices available in each category, and about the importance of exercise and drinking enough water. Dehydration in older adults has become of great concern within the medical community.

When I began the workshop, I was concerned about the quality of my diet, but also my inclination to frequently skip lunch, which left me too tired to cook dinner when I got home from various activities in the late afternoon. I thought I ate a generally healthy diet when I joined the workshop, since I emphasize eating fresh fruits and vegetables, limiting my intake of meat. I try to eat some fish every week, and otherwise eat chicken and eggs as my main source of protein.

Still, since I'd met with a nutritionist earlier in the year, I had not made much change to my diet, and still had an issue of when and what to eat for lunch.

The value of lunch was really not evident to me, frankly, so I just tried to snack in the middle of the day if I got hungry. My favorite snack – just between you and me – was a small bag of M&Ms with peanuts. I had added dried apricots and pecans as a little snack for when I got home after seeing the chiropractor or the allergist and going food shopping and was then ready to fall over from a sugar crash when I walked in the door.

I often ate dinner late, after skipping lunch, because I would sit and stare for an hour waiting to be inspired to cook.

The only meal I was sure of was breakfast. That was always oatmeal, with raisins and apples. Mornings were slow, if I had the time, which meant I often didn't eat breakfast until 10 a.m. although I usually got up at eight o'clock. Underlying all of this is my disdain for schedules and habits, imaginary since my daily routine, though clearly not working, was generally the same every day. Differences were minor, and rarely included my doing things I really wanted to do: those fun things people talk about.

When we got to the part where we focused on obstacles, many that were similar among us: over-scheduling; difficulty in saying "no"; taking on too much. We discussed time management and setting clear priorities for ourselves.

Towards the end of the six-week session, we took time to plan our meals for one day, and saw the difference in how we chose what to eat. Setting goals and developing an action plan helped us move ahead in improving how we approached what we ate, and how we spent our time.

The ultimate goal is to be both healthier and happier in our lives. I'm hopeful that this helped me and others in our group. We will have an opportunity to get together in the spring, and see how we've done.

LifePath will also be offering several more Healthy Living Workshops including: "My Life, My Health – Chronic Disease Self-Management"; "Chronic Pain Self-Management"; "Diabetes Self-Management"; "A Matter of Balance – Managing Concerns About Falls"; and "Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults."

To learn more about these programs, call Andi Waisman, the program coordinator, at (413) 773-5555 x. 2297, or email her at awaisman@LifePathMA.org.

I will be posting some of my recipes that fit the Healthy Eating concepts from the workshop on my blog. Check them out, and even add some of your own recipes to share, at ellensgoodeats.blogspot.com.



FACES & PLACES



MIKE JACKSON PHOTO

World heavyweight champion boxer and New York City schoolteacher Sonya Lamonakis returned to her hometown of Turners Falls last Saturday to "cut the ribbon" on a plaque dedicated to her honor at Unity Park. Lamonakis announced a \$1,000 college scholarship for Turners Falls seniors and a summer camp fund for the park. "That's a way for me to give back to the town, which makes me really happy," Lamonakis said.

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MARCH from page B1

Lucio Perez who has been living there in sanctuary for a year. This church was also cool because Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. actually spoke there at a church supper in 1961!

Congressman Jim McGovern, who walked the entire two-day March with Monte, was celebrating his birthday on the second day, so everywhere we stopped, they had a birthday cake for him. I didn't really get to interact with Mr. McGovern too much, but it was cool even just having him in the march, since he was a celebrity.

About three or four miles along our route, we also stopped at the Amherst Survival Center, where they had really delicious and chocolate-y pastries and hot drinks for the marchers.

I met a couple people from The River radio station, which was very cool. They were all really friendly, and had fun costumes on. I mostly stuck with my friends from school, though, because schools participating were required to stay with their chaperones or teachers.

Monte was dressed as a shiny disco ball on Day Two of the march,

but most people were wearing coats, leggings, and lots of layers to keep warm. I'd recommend wearing sneakers like I did, because boots are really uncomfortable to walk eight (or more) miles in.

There were many puddles, so if our school does the March again, I will make sure not to jump in all of them, since my shoes were soaked by the end! You should also bring an extra pair of socks, and maybe some hand warmers.

You may be thinking that it's too long of a distance, but as long as you have proper footwear and are bundled up, you shouldn't be too tired. We stopped a lot along the March, and at the end, the Bridge Side Grille in Sunderland provided the marchers with free, hot food, which was delicious!

We probably got to the Grille around 1:15 p.m., because we spent a good amount of time eating there, and we got back around 2.

Next year, maybe you can do Monte's March, even if you just walk part of it. I loved doing the March with my friends and teachers, and it is for a great cause!



GARDENER'S from page B1

typewriter – later a borrowed electric – and grappled with the mess of carbon paper in order to make copies.

In the late '80s, I went to work at a technical school, and entered the world of computers for the first time. They provided courses in computer technology and I struggled with my non-mechanical brain to take advantage.

Later on, while taking classes for a master's degree, I was into writing papers again. Learning to use the computer was absolutely necessary, so out of necessity, I did. I even memorized the steps necessary to write a document, save it, and send it to the professor by email.

Then all of the school documentation went to computers: scheduling, attendance, and other student records, and of course, all communications with the Department of Education. I was so far behind in technological skills it hurt.

Happily, the school's technology wizard was but a phone extension away, and he would nip into the office and set things right in a flash. He even assumed I had absorbed his efficient footprints in a brief glance as he put things to right. Nope. We all learn by doing, and just watching or listening isn't enough for me.

Furthermore, one might expect

that there was a transfer in learning from experience with one type of electronic device to another. Apparently, I don't generalize that well, and then there's the size of my phobia for these things.

The other day I was on the phone with friends, and accidentally hit some button or other which cut off the call and put it on the upstairs line. After an initial panic incited by my electronic idiocy, I calmed myself and went on a search for the phone's manual. More panic: not to be found. More deep breaths. I finally remembered that, of course, neither tablet nor phone came with a paper manual; they're all online. So handy.

I turned on my computer and waited. But someone or something has messed with my home page. I had bookmarked the manual the third time I needed to reset the "you have mail" light when indeed there were no messages. But now I couldn't find the bookmarks icon, and resorted to stabbing random buttons on the phone. Right-and-might won out, and we have a dial tone on the first floor line.

Just don't get me started on the tire pressure light on the dashboard of my car. I want a car that doesn't think.

Leave that to me, I'm the human intelligence here.



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week at MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Have you ever wondered about the full scope of what the school committee does? After all, the last meeting was over two hours long, and these meetings are biweekly.

Two hours means a lot of material is being covered! What resources are available to those of us with a stake in its activities?

School committee agendas, minutes, and reports can be found on the sidebar at www.gmrtd.org/welcome-gmrtd/school-committee. Filmed school committee meetings can be viewed on our website at montaguerv.org/p/76/Latest-Videos.

Here's a tip: look through the agenda packet on the school commit-

tee webpage to navigate the meeting if you are watching online. If you're watching on TV, catch it on channel 17 at 2 p.m. this Thursday.

We hope that by highlighting these resources, we're connecting you to an opportunity to engage with your community. After all, local government structures are here to serve the interests of all of us!

Something going on you think others would like to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200, info-montaguerv@gmail.com, or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to work with you!

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was November 20 and 26, 2008: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

GMRSD Rejects District Budget

After a marathon four-hour meeting marked by contentious and impassioned arguments, the Gill-Montague school committee rejected the 1.5% operating budget increase approved just one week earlier at the district-wide meeting.

At that earlier meeting, the town needed to come up with an option, or face a 3.5% budget increase imposed by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. To summarize what great numbers of speakers said in a great many words: town finances are stretched, money is tight in the overall economy, and people are worried about the future.

Yesterday, with a dwindling crowd of town officials in the audience as 10:30 p.m. rolled around, the school committee turned down the budget which was approved by the majority of district voters by a vote of seven to one.

A second proposal, an advisory

motion to approve a 3% budget increase with a 2.3% assessment also failed to carry, with five against and three in favor.

Finally an option that proposed a 3% budget with a 3.3% assessment for the towns – essentially the same budget voted down by the district meeting last week – passed the committee by a vote of six to two.

School board member Kristin Boyle voiced the consensus of the majority, commenting, "I'm willing to take a chance and see what the state has to say."

The towns and school have run out of time to reach an agreement on the '09 GMRSD budget, and the state will take the reins of district finances on December 1.

Montague Reporter Receives Federal Non-Profit Status

A year ago the *Montague Reporter* put on a fundraiser at the Night Kitchen to raise the \$750 needed for the paper to apply for federal non-profit 501(c)(3) status.

In the middle of an ice storm, the community came out in droves to support the paper, and generously contributed over and above the

needed amount. *Montague Reporter* board members Patricia Crosby, Lyn Clark, and Nan Riebschlaeger had already spent countless hours preparing the complicated application; all we needed was the money for the filing fee.

Before the cash from our fundraiser even had a chance to cool down in our bank account, it made its way to the IRS, along with our application.

After months without an update, the paper learned that the IRS was concerned about how we would qualify for non-profit status on the grounds that we accept advertising dollars. We made the case that the advertisers were supporting the community in its effort to establish a community-owned newspaper.

Several calls with helpful tax official Becky McMurrey later, and a few additional clarifying documents, we modified our application to become a 501(c)(4), which was finally accepted.

While this tax status means that individual donations to the *Reporter* will not be tax-deductible, it does finally allow us to apply for grants to support our work serving you, our readers, and our community.

OBITUARY

Shirley Brule (1927 – 2018)

Shirley Eleanor (Smith) Brule of Turners Falls passed away in the early morning hours of November 24, just a few weeks shy of her 91st birthday. She was born in Montague on December 18, 1927, the next to the youngest child of Alan "Abe" and Hannah (Heffernan) Smith.

Shirley grew up on the family homestead where her father had been born and raised on the Erving side of Millers Falls near the bend in the Millers River in the part of town called "the Flat." The family struggled during the Depression, as most did, but they were a tight knit clan and got through it together. She often recalled summer afternoons when she, her siblings, and the neighborhood kids would take the path down through the Smith pasture, hay meadow, and apple orchard to pass the day swimming in the river.

Although the historic flood of 1936 washed away all the low-lying farmland, leaving rocks and gravel in place of the meadows and apple trees, in her mind's eye Shirley still recalled it as it had been and remembered those early days fondly. She played a major role in keeping the homestead on the Flat in the family, where now the fifth generation of the Smith descendants resides.

Shirley attended Turners Falls High School during the War Years in the early 1940s, and it was during that time that she met Art Brule of Turners Falls, who had left high school early to join the Civilian Conservation Corps, then moving on to the Navy. When she was 16, Art gave her a "promise ring": a silver band of carved hearts which her daughter Susan now wears. Art then left for the fighting in the Pacific.

The next few years were anxious times as she followed the war news on the radio and kept newspaper clippings in her scrapbooks. Almost all the young men in her and Art's circle of friends went into the service, and she never forgot those that



did not return.

Shirley graduated from high school in 1945. On March 2, 1946, she and Art were married, and would celebrate 58 years together before he passed in 2004. Soon after they were married they bought a house in Turners Falls overlooking the Connecticut River, where they raised their family and spent the rest of their lives. Their son David was born on Christmas Eve of 1946, and four years later they welcomed their daughter Susan.

Home and family were the most important things to Shirley. For as long as they lived, she spoke with or visited her parents and sisters every day.

After her children started school, Shirley took a position as a teller in the Crocker Bank in Turners Falls, which became the Greenfield Savings Bank. She worked there for 35 years, retiring in 1993 as Assistant Manager. Shirley was a familiar presence at her desk just inside the main entrance of the bank located next to St. Kaziemerz's on Avenue A, where she was always available to help customers with banking questions.

People of a certain age might also remember her as the "ticket lady" at the old Park Villa Drive-in Movies where she worked on weekends for decades, watching the teenagers who tried to sneak in by hiding in the trunks of cars

grow up and return to the movies with their own children.

After retiring, Shirley spent her time reading, playing cards, watching the Patriots, and twice toured Ireland with her good friend Netta Aldrich. She greatly enjoyed time with her family, especially doting on her two grandsons and, eventually, her great-granddaughters.

She was predeceased by her husband Art, her brothers "Rusty" and "Eddie", and her sisters Elizabeth "Pete" Gessing and June O'Riley. She leaves behind her son David and his wife Monique of Millers Falls, her daughter Susan Bellemare and husband Bob of West Whately, her grandson Kevin Brule of Millers Falls, her grandson Jesse Bellemare and his wife Sarah, and her great-granddaughters Ada and Lucy Bellemare, all of Greenfield. She also leaves several nieces and nephews, as well as her dearest friend for more than 60 years, Marion Ryan of Turners Falls.

Shirley will be remembered by those who knew her as a strong-willed woman, proud, private, and feisty.

Her family would like to thank the nurses, CNAs, and staff at Buckley Healthcare Center who cared for Shirley in her last years. We also thank New England Hospice for their support in recent weeks.

Services will be held on Saturday, December 1, 2018 at 11 a.m. at Kostanski Funeral Home, 1 Kostanski Square, Turners Falls. A calling hour will be held from 10 a.m. until time of services.

Committal services will be at Highland Cemetery in Millers Falls in the spring. Because Shirley knew well what it was like to live through hard times, her family suggests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts or a favorite local charitable organization.

For condolences, please visit www.kostanskifuneralhome.com.

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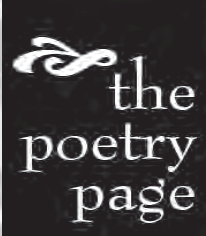
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It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

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

November Poetry Page

Armistice, November 1918

The “Great War” was finally over
In November the guns fell mute
While armies took stock of the carnage
Now there was no-one to shoot

Many millions had died in the conflict
Millions more then would die from the flu
In Germany the Weimar Republic
Said the Kaiser’s Empire was through

Foch said “this is just a cease fire”
Expected to last 20 years
In this he was sadly prophetic
World War II brought many tears

But first there was worldwide depression
And the rise of a national state
While Hitler brought back pride to the people
To once more make Germany great

At first people thought him pathetic
A buffoon and bombastic joke
With Brown Shirts and then the Gestapo
One nation, one people, one folk

The mass of the people indifferent
And not too concerned by the news
While Journalists, gypsies, trade-unions
Were hated along with the Jews

We wonder today how it happened
How a people could so lose their way
And be part of the killing and madness
While under the demagogue’s sway

A number were following orders
And others perhaps didn’t care
But most were swept up in the madness
And followed the crowds that were there

It’s sad to relate we’re no different
When under a nationalist spell
I hope that we see we have choices
Before we descend into hell.

John Haigis
Turners Falls and Darby, PA

Alongside

As a gentle,
I cannot know
the terror that Jews feel,
but must face my own
so that I can stand
alongside them.
Without the small
human acts
of reaching out
and standing up,
we gentiles may end up
watching
as the trains run again.
Figuratively, sure.
But literally?
God forbid!
It’s sickening.
At that stage,
I’m not actually sure
what I would do.
How does one stop a train?

But the tracks are being laid.
Can you see them?
Log by log.
Rail by rail.
Greased by hateful tweets.
Bombarded
on unimaginable fronts,
they’re conditioning us
to go numb and silent.

Connections among us *all* are the antidote.
Which anti-Semitism undermines.

For centuries,
Jews have been put
in between
working people
and the ruling class
to absorb the rage
of working people
so that it never reaches
those in power.
The system remains.
The cycle repeats.
As long as we
allow ourselves
the luxury of blame,
this mechanism
blocks our power;
the real conditions
of working people
will never change.
Remove blame,
(but not accountability),
and so many other outcomes
are possible.
No blame.
Try it and see.

There’s still time
to stop the tracks
before the trains come.
Alongside.
Together.
Jews and allies united,
we might just steer history
towards liberation.
This gives me hope

Betsy L. Ames
Northampton

Trump’s America

Infected head
on the Reagan zit;
squeezed squalid, a drained swamp
where vultures dine.
Make America grate again.
Make America grate again.
Noisome cosmic joke;
Robespierre’s fantasy pariah;
non-Christian Jesus
to the faithfully comatose.
The plutocrats are creaming their grey flannel.
Trickle down is now hot lava,
the ejaculatory revelry
of pecuniary pissants,
an aristocracy of crab lice.
Ancient Rome called.
They want their ill-fated empire back.
Unctuous liberals
in limousine chariots
sing progressive paeans
through trendy nasal helmets,
and salivate as the lions gorge.
Bellicose social media Spartans
flail blame bludgeons,
bicker to the banal death.
A circus with green bread,
its ringmaster a nuclear orange fetish
for a spectacle of dazzling mediocrity,
guts of Old Glory,
pulverized possum on the pavement.

Kevin Smith
Turners Falls

Does it Matter?

Crawling toward me his beard like smudges of dirt his glasses like my grand-
mother’s magnifying lenses his eyes scanning my face for the rise and fall of a
breath. I winked at him, he rolled to his side unclipped a baseball size grenade
made a motion like throwing toward the gun we had been moving toward,
nodding his head again but away from the gun’s position. Asking I thought
could I move on my own. I winked again. Three days before I had slapped
him when he dropped his end of a bamboo pole, a young soldier wrapped in
a poncho tied to it. Said he couldn’t carry anymore and I couldn’t make him,
leveled his rifle at my belly flipped the safety off. I slapped him twice. We
picked up the young soldier went on through the night. I never learned either
of their names. Just now I am wondering if it matters who is that lying there,
next to you.

Al Miller
Montague Center

Contributors’ Notes:

John Haigis is a singer, songwriter, poet,
historian and storyteller who divides his time
between Pennsylvania and Turners Falls.
Armistice, November 1918 is the third part of a
three-part series on World War I.
Betsy L. Ames leads groups to help people free

themselves from the effects of oppression. She is
an ally in the work on ending anti-Semitism.
Kevin Smith lives in Turners Falls, with
his wonderful and inspirational girlfriend,
Stephanie, along with a dog and two cats.
Al Miller, who lives in Montague Center, is a

long-time contributor to the poetry page. Two
of his recent poems were published in *War and
Moral Injury: A Reader*, edited by Robert Emmet
Meagher and Douglas A. Pryer (Cascade Books,
2018).

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kaia Kater, Lily Sexton. Bluegrass.* \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Stoner Will & The Narks, and Laundry Day.* \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Wendell Library: *Chalice of Crones Reading.* Reading of memoirs by nine women writers who have been writing together for two years. 7 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Learn to Contradance.* Free lesson from 7 to 8 p.m., regular dance starts at 8. Sliding scale. \$. 7 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Home Body, Patsy Clone, and Deep Seize.* Hot dang show! \$. 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Phantom Erratic #16.* Electronic sounds and performances by *Cube, Jen Kutler, Miatta Kawinzi, HFSB,* and *Yvette Janine Jackson.* \$. 8 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Consider the Source.* Progressive, electro-funk, fusion rock jam band. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass and Beyond.* 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *LCA Holiday Sale.* Featuring the work of many LCA studio artists and crafters. 10 a.m.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Book Sale and Cards and Cookies.* Used book sale, plus making holiday cards and enjoying home baked goodies. Cards will go to residents of local nursing homes. 10 a.m.

Blue Heron Restaurant, Sunderland: *What Am I Doing Here?* Sigourney Cook, vocalist from Chicago, shares her life story in music. \$. Reservations. 5:30 p.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: *UMass Percussion Ensemble.* 17-piece ensemble directed by *Ayano Katoaka* creating dynamic music in the galleries. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *She Said CD Release Party.* Rock with the women of *She Said* as they roll out their first CD. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Willie Lane, More Klementines, and Donkey No No.* \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Modifieds.* 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *LCA Holiday Sale.* Featuring the work of many LCA studio artists and crafters. 10 a.m.

McCusker's Market, Shelburne Falls: *Celtic Sessions.* Musicians, all levels welcome. 10:30 a.m.

Green Fields Market, Greenfield: *Co-Op Straight Ahead Jazz.* Balcony in the afternoon. 12 p.m.

Polish American Club, South Deerfield: *Festibal-Danse Cafe.* French and Breton music and dance party. Potluck. \$. 4 p.m.

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *New Unnamed Quintet* (Eisenberg,

Young, Allen, Shaw, and Garbus), *Bernice, Close Body Talent,* and *Zach Phillips.* \$. 8 p.m.

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Re-birth Brass Band.* Heavy funk New Orleans music. \$. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5

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

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

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Homeschool Science.* Hands-on STEM learning. Call to register. No class December 26. 1 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Salsa Wednesday. With McCoy and DJ Roger Jr.* \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield:

Creacion Latin Big Band Jam. On the fourth floor. 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *The Nite Caps, Dez Roy.* \$. 9 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

Millers Falls Library: *Music and Movement.* For children and caregivers, with Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson. 10 a.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Mark Nomad.* With *Harmonic Steve,* playing "100 Years of Blues" concert. \$. 7 p.m.

Gill Tavern, Gill: *Trivia Night.* Come with a team or by yourself, \$5 to play. Winning team receives \$25 gift certificate to the tavern, and all proceeds go towards a monthly good cause. 8:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Chronophobia 5000, Lucy, New Parents,* and *Owen Manure.* \$. 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

GCC Main Lobby, Greenfield: *GCC Chorus Informal Holiday Concert.* Fun informal holiday concert with the school chorus. 12 p.m.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *First Friday Mystery Activity.* Children 8+ and teens are invited to join us for a mystery activity: crafts, science experiments, tech-tools, etc.! 3:30 p.m.

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: *Holiday Pop Up at the Pushkin.* Popup of local crafters. Repeats Sat., Sun. 4 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule: A Midwinter Celebration.* Family favorite holiday show for all ages. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Julie and Julia.* Pothole Pictures presents this story of two cooks, centering on Julia Child's contribution to cooking. Preceded by piano rags by Dick Moulding at 7 p.m. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Shokazoba.* Funk, jazz, reggae fusion. \$. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *LCA Holiday Sale.* Featuring the work of many LCA studio artists and crafters. 10 a.m.

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Gingerbread House Party.* Make a gingerbread house; for children of all ages and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m.

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: *Holiday Pop Up at the Pushkin.* Popup featuring local crafters. 11 a.m.

Montague Common Hall: *Open Mic #28.* Featured performer is the local ensemble *Exploded View,* presenting their piece *DeadLines,* which incorporates sound, poetry, and art. Followed by open mic. Donation. \$.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Julie and Julia.* Pothole Pictures presents this story of two cooks, centering on Julia Child's contribution to cooking. Preceded by Irish music by *Michael & Al* at 7 p.m. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Welcome Yule: A Midwinter Celebration.* Family favorite for all ages. \$. 7:30 p.m.



Mark Nomad and "Harmonica" Steve Retchin create "100 Years of Blues" on guitar, slide guitar, vocals, and harmonica - including the bass harp and the 24 inch, 48 chord harmonica, played by only a few. They are on stage at 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 6 at Hawks & Reed in Greenfield.

EXHIBITS

Artspace, Greenfield: *Projected Impressions.* Artwork by Greenfield Community College students. Through December 18.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro, VT: Five new exhibits include a six-decade survey of the work of abstract artist *Emily Mason,* photographs by Michael Poster of people in recovery from addiction, and artwork by *Orly Cogan, Robert Perkins,* and *Elizabeth Turk.* Most exhibits through January and February.

Flourish, Turners Falls: *Luminous Explorations.* Paintings by Jody Payne and Tracey Physioc Brockett. November 15 through December 16.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Junior Duck Stamps. Top Massachusetts youth entries for the 2018 Junior Duck Stamp competition. Through December 22.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Paul Hoffman.* Bold narrative paintings. Reception December 7, 5 p.m. Through January.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Library: *Throne.* Paintings

by Anan Zorba, influenced by the bright, geometric pop art of the 1950s. Works are available by silent auction, with a drawing to be held December 21. Through December.

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center, Leverett: *Oh Beautiful Glass!* An eclectic and exciting glass art show with pieces from over 22 artists. Through November.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *No Rules,* small sculpture by Mary Hakkinen, from November 23 through December 24. Meet and Greet with the artist, Sunday December 2, 1 to 4 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *One Size Fits All.* Banners and altered cabinet cards by Amy Johnquest. November 2 through December 31. Meet the artist: Saturday, December 1, 3 p.m. Also on view, Amanda Quinby's *Leaves to Landscapes,* abstracts in precious metal leaf.

Sawmill River Gallery, Montague Center: *Pushing the Boundaries.* Recent works by Sawmill member artists. Closing reception, December 2, 1 p.m.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Winter's Tale.* Members' exhibit. Through January.

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By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – I became a single mother when my child was 3 months old. And even though my child's father and I have worked hard to transition to harmonious co-parenting, those first few months were hard. The safety I felt being part of a nuclear family dissipated, and I was left to navigate the world of single parenthood without much guidance.

It was around that time that I came across a passage from Meggan Waterson's inspiring book *Reveal: A Guide to Getting Spiritually Naked*, where she wrote about her own transition into single motherhood and the one simple thing she did to empower herself. In her eyes, even calling herself a "single mother" felt somewhat depressing. These combined words evoked an image of a depleted woman in sweatpants. In that moment, she decided she would instead call herself an "indie mama." Indie as in "independent and rocking it."

These days, Meggan is a successful writer who travels the world following her heart and her work; a shining example of what is possible when we deliberately choose how we see ourselves – including the words we use to describe ourselves.

Becoming An Indie Mama

The idea of being an indie mama rubbed off on me. And though I stumbled through my first year of parenthood, disheveled, mostly in sweatpants, I savored the words "indie mama" and little by little began to define what that meant for me.

For starters, being willing to hustle is of key importance. Relying on myself has been both terrifying and empowering. With so much at stake, I am forced to step outside my comfort zones and think creatively and therefore, resourcefully. Over the summer, I became a full-time freelancer, and this leap has taught me to be discerning about who I work with, how I value myself, and most importantly, how to hold myself accountable so I am in integrity with my words and actions.

I hit financial rock bottom several years ago, and that experience taught me for the first time in my adult life how to care for my money. And though I still live month-to-month, it feels good to know that I've made it this far with a toddler in tow.

Indie mamahood has also shown me how to be discerning. How I spend my time, who I spend it with. How I spend my money, how efficient I am with budgeting, and how resourceful these teach me to be. Things, people, and experiences either fill my cup or empty it. Being loved and appreciated is vital to my core relationships, and I make sure the free time I have goes to nourishing the relationships where I feel these the most.

And speaking of nourishment, I make sure to carve out some time every day for self care. When I fail

to do so, it's only a matter of time before the absolute worst sides of myself come out. Side effects include having less patience for everyone, especially my child. I feel blessed to have a co-parent who supports me in this (likely because of all people, he's seen firsthand the terrifying woman I turn into when I haven't had time for myself).

When all else seems to fail, and I start to sink down a slippery slope of hopelessness, I pray.

I've learned how to be careful with the words I use when describing myself or others. How to bless all situations, even when they seem like a curse. How to bless all people, especially the ones that challenge me the most, remembering that everyone is my teacher. Whenever I engage in this way, I feel the connection I deeply yearn for, knowing that even in those most lonely of nights, I am ever co-creating with something far bigger than any of us.

Stumbling upon the term "indie mama" and the woman who coined it has given me the inspiration I sorely needed. It beckoned me to follow in her footsteps, to redefine single momhood, to light the path for others. We may not have it all right, but if we can wake up every morning feeling good about ourselves and owning our experience, there's no way we can feel alone in this.

Ecuadorian-born and New York City-bred, Mishel Ixchel currently resides in Turners Falls where she practices and teaches the art of sacred self-care. She's the founder of roots+embers, a company that helps people create harmony, beauty and flow in their home, studio, business or office space. You can find her on Instagram @rootsandembers.

"No Rules" at The Nook

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – Tiny gallery Nina's Nook is featuring the eclectic work of Mary Hakkinen during the month of December. Hakkinen, who hails from Orange, has made a living for twenty years making fairies, elves, and mermaids which she sells at fairs and parties. Now, the artist spends a lot of time these days searching for old objects to put together into mixed-media boxes and her works on canvas, and has a lot of fun creating these unique constructions.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Hakkinen with her artwork inside Nina's Nook in Turners Falls.

"I guess I have decided to be the proverbial starving artist for the rest of my life," she said with a laugh. "It is what I love to do most, although it is rare that I finish a piece and completely love it. I always love the process of creating, whether it is sculpting, silly craft projects, or mixed media work, it never gets old for me."

Included in her show, called "No Rules," are constructions based inside of vintage boxes or drawers that feature an arrangement of objects that Hakkinen says are inspired by the work of Joseph Cornell, a pioneer of assemblage and collage art. Vividly colored and textured canvases are also glowing on the walls of the Nook this month, incorporating collage elements of paper and other materials.

"Weirdness and Whimsy" might be another good name for my show," suggested Hakkinen. "I spend an awful lot of time searching for unusual old objects to put together, and it is just the funnest thing ever!" Some readers will remember Hakkinen as the proprietor of the former Bohemian Kitchen in Orange, a popular lunch and dinner place serving healthy food and fun times that closed up about two years ago.

Meet Mary Hakkinen at the gallery on Sunday afternoon, December 2, from 1 to 4 p.m. Nina's Nook is next to the Black Cow Burger Bar at 125A Avenue A, Turners Falls. Gallery Hours in December are Thursdays and Fridays, 12 to 6, Saturdays 12 to 5, and Sundays 1 to 4. Call for an appointment to get in on other days: (413) 834-8800. Online at ninasnook.com.

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