

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 8

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 13, 2018

G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Administration Accused of Inaction Over Racist Bullying

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – Tuesday’s regional school committee meeting began with a highly charged public participation period, as Great Falls Middle School parent Thomasina Hall read a statement, on behalf of “minority students and parents,” that described a “continued racially hostile climate perpetuated under the current leadership” of district schools.

Hall and her husband have spoken out recently about ongoing racist harassment one of their sons has received at the middle school, and what they feel has been an inadequate response by school administrators. She described recent events as “not just recent isolated incidents, and not just students calling others the N-word.”

“Parents have been reporting the rampant hate speech and civil rights violations to the principal and superintendent for years,” Hall, until recently an administrative assistant at the middle and high school, continued.

The statement accused the administration of “pamper[ing]” the “aggressors,” and alleged that its inaction was contributing to an ongoing loss of students of color from the district.

“On a personal note,” Hall said, addressing superintendent Michael Sullivan, “a lot of you know me. I’ve worked in this district for seven years. And what was most hurtful is that I worked for you for five years and I didn’t even get a phone call – from you or the principal – to say ‘we know this has been happening.’ And you did nothing.”

“I grew up being called that name,” her mother-in-law, Jeanne Hall, told the committee. “My husband and my sons grew up being called that name. This is 2018, and it seems like it is getting worse. But if it is tolerated, it will continue to get worse.”

“I’m very disturbed to hear the reports that I’ve been hearing,” Montague member Haley Anderson told the Halls. “I really feel motivated to act.”

As part of his scheduled report, superintendent Sullivan listed steps

see **GMRSD** page A7

Parents Pushed Too Far



Thomasina and Rich Hall say the district has failed to stop racist student behavior.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Thomasina and Rich Hall tell me they didn’t want it to come to this.

“Our kids have been in the district for 11 years now, since they were in Hillcrest in the preschool program,” Thomasina says. “And we’ve been very involved.”

“They’ve had some great teachers over the years,” Rich adds. “Up until the middle school, we thought we had made all the right choices.”

“And then,” Thomasina says, “the wheels sort of came off.”

Since last fall, the Central Street couple says, their two sons at Great Falls Middle School have experienced an environment in which a handful of their white peers feel free to use overtly racist language.

“Sexist comments, too,” says Rich. “They’re going around being complete assholes.”

The Halls say that despite their sons’ ongoing reporting of the incidents, and despite multiple meetings with school administrators promising to address the issue, no serious or effective steps have been taken to correct it.

Following a locker-room confrontation in late November in which a fellow student reportedly taunted one of their sons to his face with a racial slur, the couple has decided to press the administration in the public arena – and to reach out to other parents of students of color in the district, present and former.

“We know of at least six other students who have left the middle school and high school within the past year or two because of these issues,” says Thomasina. “And we’re speaking with their parents.”

“The outreach we’ve done with the other parents has really strengthened our resolve to make something happen,” Rich says. “As bad as we thought our situation was, there are parents who have gone through much worse than we have.”

When I ask district superintendent Michael Sullivan, who has been studying the reasons many families in Montague and Gill opt to send their children out of district, whether such racial hostility has been evident as a reason, his answer is “historically, no.”

“People are claiming that’s a big reason right now, and I don’t want to dismiss that,” Sullivan says, “and so we need to take a look at that. That’s something that we will be doing now.”

According to the superintendent, however, the outflow “has been going on for well over a decade, and the reasons for leaving the district are complex and multiple.... Kids leave across the K-12 spectrum.”

Sullivan is currently collecting data – as of Wednesday afternoon, he said he had heard from 108 parents and 65 faculty members – on attitudes related to “social and emotion learning, diversity/equity education, and learning for citizenship,” though respondents were not asked to identify their race or ethnicity, so it will not be a way to find out whether families of different identities have different experiences in the schools. When I ask, he tells me that the number of staff members of color at the middle school and high school is “very low.”

“I don’t have an exact number,” he says.

see **PUSHED** page A3

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Town Backs Off Total Demolition of Strathmore

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – The Town of Montague may be reconsidering the near-total demolition of the historic Strathmore mill complex, located on the strip of land that separates the power canal in Turners Falls from the Connecticut River.

A plan to produce “bid-ready specs” for such a demolition has encountered a major obstacle – the fact that a number of buildings in the complex slated to be torn down appear to be holding up a structure not owned by the town of Montague. That building is officially owned by an entity called Turners Falls Hydro LLC, based in Palmer.

The latest turn of events in the saga of the Strathmore, one of the last remnants of the town’s late-nineteenth-century industrial history, came to light at Monday’s meeting

of the Montague selectboard. Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority had asked the board for an extension of the federal Community Development Block Grant funding the Strathmore demolition design.

The board approved the extension, which is also needed to complete several housing rehabilitation projects, when town administrator Steve Ellis announced that the town may need to “retreat to a more selective demolition of the Strathmore” in order to create an “envelope” around the power plant. Ellis said that a full demolition “would not be feasible without a significant additional appropriation” to stabilize the hydro plant.

Ellis went on to say that the town and engineering firm Tighe & Bond are looking at several different

see **STRATHMORE** page A7

Gill Patches Sewer Budget, Bids Rosenberg Farewell

By GEORGE BRACE

The town of Gill held a special town meeting on December 10 to consider two motions, both of which were unanimously approved.

The first was a motion to appropriate \$60,000 to the town’s FY’19 sewer budget. This was made necessary due to Montague’s recent sewer rate hike, which affected 113 households in Gill’s Riverside district who get their sewer service from Montague.

The second measure was to approve a total of \$16,000 to fund the town’s matching fund commitment associated with Green Communities Competitive Grants awarded to Gill by the state earlier this year. The



Retired state senator Stan Rosenberg (center) and representative Susannah Whipps (right) present town clerk Lynda Hodsdon Mayo with a framed copy of the legislation that created Gill.

town received a total of \$68,465 for insulation projects in the Slate Memorial Library and town hall, and

see **GILL** page A5

DISPATCHES

Is Change Coming? (The Climate Won’t Wait)

This is the fourth in a series of dispatches to the Montague Reporter and Traprock Center for Peace & Justice by Wendell resident Anna Gyorgy, reporting from Germany on the COP24 climate conference in Katowice, Poland.

By ANNA GYORGY

BERLIN – The fear that restrictive legislation passed by Poland’s right-wing government in early 2018 would be used to stifle climate activism at this year’s UN climate conference has been realized.

On December 7, the Climate Ac-

tion Network (CAN) of 1,300 environmental non-governmental organizations at the conference being held in Katowice from December 2 to 14, objected that Polish authorities had prevented at least 12 civil society group members from attending.

May Boeve, executive director of 350.org, one of the CAN groups, said: “From what we understand the reasons for refusing entry are due to allegations that they are a ‘threat to national security’.” The German daily newspaper *taz* reported that three leading members of the Ukrainian environmental group Ecoaktion,

see **DISPATCHES** page A4



Climate Action Network (CAN) gave Austria, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency, the “Fossil of the Day Award” on Monday for failing to end subsidies for coal power plants in this week’s EU electricity market negotiations.

The Week in Turners Falls Sports



Turners Falls’ Karissa Fleming (left) and Sabis International’s Saffaire Bryant (right) compete for a rebound during the Thunder’s home season opener.

By MATT ROBINSON

The high school winter sports season officially tipped off this week, as Franklin Tech hosted the Eagle Holiday Classic on December 6 and 7. I went to seven of the eight games, the most I’ve watched since March Madness. It was fun, though, and nice seeing so many families attend the two-day event.

By the way, Ware beat Tech for the boys’ trophy, and Hopkins beat Mohawk in the girls’ finals.

On Friday, December 7, Turners began their winter season with a double swim meet. On Wednesday the 12th, the boys’ basketball team had their home opener against the Drury Blue Devils of North Adams. I’ll have a recap of that game next week. Also this week, Turners welcomed a new(ish) coach.

Girls Basketball

Sabis 62 – TFHS 28

This year the Turners Falls girls’ basketball team welcomed a new coach, Eddy Marvell, who replaced longtime coach Ted Wilcox. Coach Marvell has coached several other sports through the years, and grew up playing Turners Falls sports.

On Monday, December 12, his team played the Sabis Bulldogs in the home opener. Because many of the varsity players graduated last year and with veteran Taylor Murphy out with an injury, this year’s team is a whole new crop of players.

see **TFHS SPORTS** page A5

The Montague Reporter

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GUEST EDITORIAL

No Sacrificial Lambs

The following statement was delivered to the Gill-Montague school committee on Tuesday night by Thomasina Hall, on behalf of a group of parents of present and former district students. According to Hall, it was written collaboratively. We are reprinting it here in full, not necessarily as an endorsement of every point, but because we think the issues raised here deserve the careful thought and attention of the entire community. See page A1 of this issue for more reporting on the matter. — Ed.

We are here on behalf of the minority students and parents who are either part of the Gill-Montague Regional School District or have left because of the continued racially hostile climate perpetuated under the current leadership.

This past week, a series of Facebook posts were generated from the district. They were in response to a public social media posting by furious parents who were fed up with the persistent non-action of the administration. The district's statement stated that "incidents of students calling peers the N-word in three different schools have drawn attention to the need to do more now."

We are here to tell you they are not just recent isolated incidents, and not just students calling others the N-word. It is also not the first time that the Administration is hearing about this.

Parents have been reporting the rampant hate speech and civil rights violations to the principal and superintendent for years. If you wonder why the district is experiencing a steady outflow of students, why students of color are jumping ship like passengers on the Titanic, look no further than these individuals who have failed at the jobs in which they were hired to do.

In his public post, the Superintendent referenced "teachable moments." We strongly believe that our children are not lab rats to be used as "teachable moments." They are just as important as the aggressors that the administration continually pampers and protects by excusing these toxic behaviors at the expense of our children — No more. Our children mean everything to us! We refuse to allow them to be used as "sacrificial lambs."

We find it very telling that after all this time, families of students of color are just now being solicited to come forward to try and resolve these longstanding issues. Administration wants you to believe that we haven't been reporting these incidents all along, which is simply not the case. We have been reporting this to administration for years and years, and

they've done nothing!

In the face of countless complaints and mountains of evidence, they *still* ignored their responsibility for protecting all students. In addition, we know of cases that have occurred, but have not been reported.

You want to know how to begin to repair the damage? It starts with the school committee, through transparency, effectuating compelling changes in the system. This will, in turn, lead to an administration that will act on behalf of all parties! We as parents have zero confidence in the current administration's willingness or ability to follow through with the changes needed.

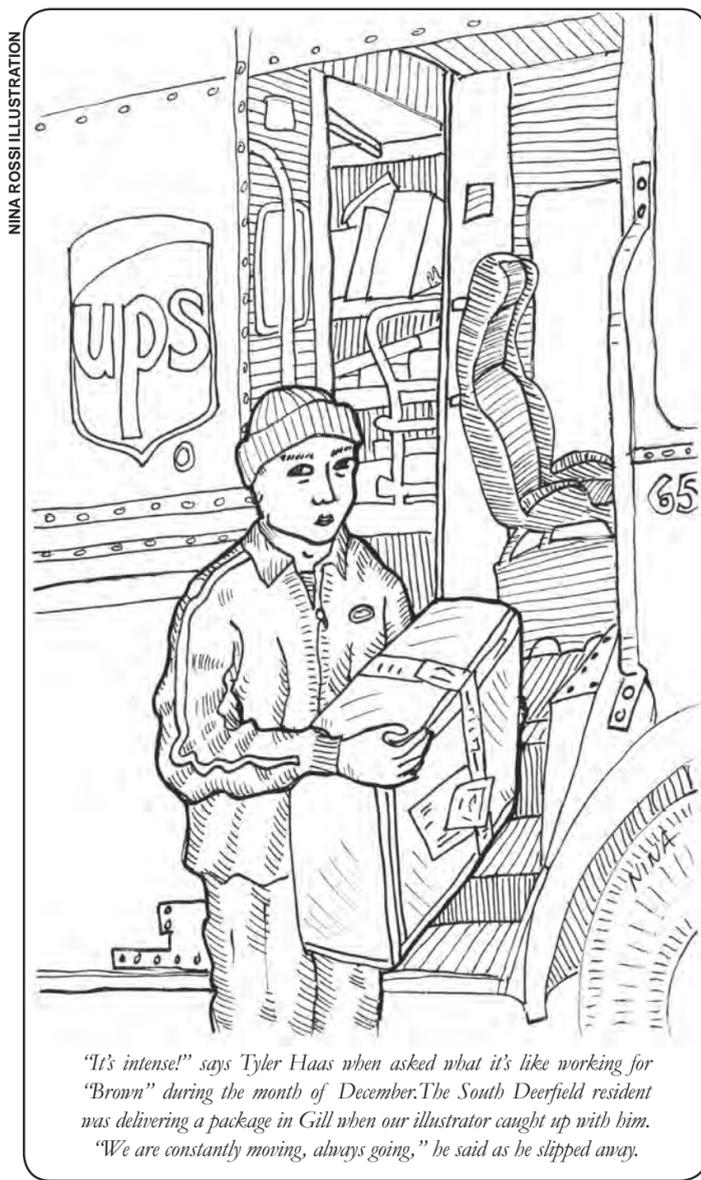
Something that is missing from all the flowery words put forth are real consequences. In the words of James Baldwin — *I can't believe what you say, because I see what you do.*

The administration has failed at protecting students of color. That is a proven fact. They are responsible for emboldening the toxic, racist culture by not addressing it with the seriousness it requires.

It is not just a matter of staff training. We will no longer accept shoddy promises from administration which continue to allow our children to be harmed. The Superintendent will introduce to you tonight a "plan" to address these issues, but what it is, is just more of the same. We have heard it time and time again, and the reality is, the administration has failed students of color time and time again.

So, in conclusion, should we continue to go down this slippery slope that's rife with contention, then we regrettably, but nevertheless with tenacity, shall move forward and fight with everything we've got!

Now, we are here in front of the School Committee because we elected *you* to represent *everyone*. So what are you going to do to resolve this? Facebook posts don't count. Who will evaluate whether these stale empty promises have been kept? And how can you, in good conscience, continue to allow our children to suffer?



"It's intense!" says Tyler Haas when asked what it's like working for "Brown" during the month of December. The South Deerfield resident was delivering a package in Gill when our illustrator caught up with him. "We are constantly moving, always going," he said as he slipped away.

Letter to



the Editors

Parks and Rec Praise

I ran into Jon Dobosz, Montague's director of parks and recreation, recently, and was able to thank him for his part in making constant improvements to our parks and recreation programs.

I'm grateful and feel lucky to have landed in Turners Falls. Lots of people came together and we built a skatepark.

Greenfield just kicked any skatepark effort in the teeth again! Brattleboro has been fundraising going on 20+ years, but still no site. Yay for us, and bonus points, because I know we share with the surrounding communities.

Happy holidays,

A grateful
Ellen Spring
Turners Falls

GUEST EDITORIAL

Montague's Zoning Bylaws Are Changing — Now Is Your Chance to Weigh In!

By JEN AUDLEY

The window of opportunity for you to weigh in on revisions to Montague's zoning bylaw will close at the planning board's meeting on December 18.

I hope this isn't the first you're hearing of it — the planning board and the town planner have been diligently seeking public comment on their proposal for a "once-in-a-generation" overhaul of this important document for several months now. But just in case it hasn't been on your radar, I want to encourage you to check it out before the closing of the public hearing on Tuesday.

Why? Because zoning affects us all! Municipal zoning bylaws are a set of rules that regulate diverse aspects of how land within a town's boundaries can be used.

Zoning is what determines whether your neighbor can turn their garage into an apartment, where a new business can set up shop, and what sorts of animals a person can keep in their yard. While zoning bylaws are not the only rules that might apply in a particular situation (for example, property owners and developers are required to adhere to state building and health codes), zoning has unique significance be-

cause it's locally defined and locally controlled.

The decisions communities make about zoning bylaws reflect their values at the present time and their hopes for the future. Since they were first adopted in 1970, Montague's zoning bylaws have accrued layers upon layers of amendments, which makes them a revealing record of how our collective preoccupations and prospects have changed over five decades.

For instance, a significant number of the town's earliest bylaws were focused on banning campgrounds, live-in trailers, mobile homes, and campers — a strategy that several Franklin County municipalities employed at the time, presumably at least in part to discourage lower income people from establishing residency.

Later amendments show different concerns rising to the fore: preservation of farmland and open space, support for efforts to generate personal and municipal wealth, an interest in ensuring that suitable housing will be available for current and future residents.

The revised zoning bylaws retain much of this legacy, although there are numerous improvements and changes. The planning department has posted information about

what's changing and why, a draft of a new Zoning Map, and a draft of the revised Zoning Bylaws in a special "Zoning Bylaw Update Project" section on the town website (www.montague-ma.gov).

The planning board has been collecting input from residents, town employees, and experts on this project, and town planner Walter Ramsey tells me that the new draft of the bylaws he'll present to the planning board next week will reflect their input and be better as a result.

Once the proposal is finalized, the planning board will present it to town meeting for approval, most likely at a February 2019 special town meeting. No significant changes can be made at that stage, so town meeting members should not hold off on weighing in — now is the time to make suggestions!

Anyone can send comments to the Planning Board before Tuesday's meeting by emailing Walter Ramsey at planner@montague-ma.gov. And everyone is welcome to attend the hearing at 7 p.m. on December 18 at Montague Town Hall.

Jen Audley lives in Turners Falls and is a Montague town meeting member for Precinct 4.

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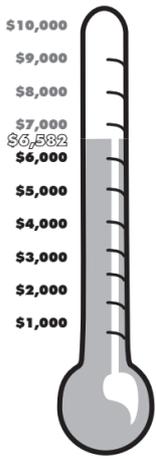
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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by MIKE JACKSON

The garments will be returning to that clothesline next week! A reader has stepped forward to offer to **compile these Local Briefs**, at least for the time being. Don Clegg is missed immensely around our office, but he would be glad to know his column will be passed along.



More good news: The **capital campaign** our Board of Directors launched on November 15 has been successful thus far! 95 donors have contributed, for a total of \$6,582.

The target is \$10,000, and the drive will continue until we hit it. If you are a subscriber who missed or misplaced the return envelope, just let us know, and we'll drop another one off! You can also send your contribution via PayPal to montaguereporter@gmail.com. Make sure you indicate it's for the capital campaign!

And since it's the end of the year, we should add that if you're interested in making your donation tax-deductible, call us at 863-8666 or email info@montaguereporter.org for instructions.

Don't forget – this Friday, December 14 is "It's A Wonderful Night in Turners Falls." We discussed it last week, but the gist is that downtown shops stay open late, Santa shows up for a mail call and cocoa, musicians roam, kids make crafts, etc.

Check out turnersfallsriverculture.org for the full schedule.

From 4 to 8 p.m., there's a **youth**

art show and sale at the Brick House, 24 Third Street. Check out what the kids at the teen center have been up to, and consider purchasing a piece – you may be funding further gift-giving!

There's a whole ton of stuff to do this **Saturday, December 15:**

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., a **Winter Farmers Market** will be held at the Discovery School at Four Corners, 21 Ferrante Avenue in Greenfield.

Credit, debit, SNAP, and HIP are all accepted. Stock up on produce, baked goods, preserves, local meat, and gifts. Two dozen vendors signed up for the winter market this year, and this one is billed as a "holiday market."

From 10 a.m. to noon, local historian James Gildea will offer his intriguing new theory about the **origin of asteroids** in the community room at Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls. Could the asteroids have contributed to life on Earth, starting about 540 million years ago?

Mr. Gildea dropped a copy of his paper off at the *Reporter* office, and while we don't have anyone here qualified to evaluate his research, we can confirm that it is something to think about. Bring a friend: the bank will provide light refreshments.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., **Leverett Crafts and Arts** (13 Montague Road in Leverett) is hosting their third and final Holiday Sale. There'll be all sorts of teapots, sponge holders, yarn bowls, quilts, earrings, cards, paintings, and mittens on hand to buy or browse. Check out the exhibits, too. And if you can't make it Saturday, it repeats Sunday!

If you're on more of a do-it-yourself kick, consider going to Green-

Fields Market, 144 Main Street in Greenfield, from noon to 2 p.m. for an **aromatherapy gift-making workshop** hosted by DIY With EASE.

They'll provide roll-on applicators, sprays, bath salts, essential oils, recipes, and instructors who can show you how to make gifts to take home for only \$5 each. Hey!

We mentioned this last week too, but from noon to 5 p.m. just around the corner at **Looky Here** (28 Chapman Street), Mrs. Claus and her elves can show you how to make wrapping paper, gift bags, holiday cards, pom-poms, and more. They'll have cocoa, a movie, and an ongoing raffle.

And then! From 5 to 8 p.m. at Blue Dragon Apothecary, 158 Main Street in Greenfield, there's an **Herbalism on the Border**-themed holiday party with refreshments including Golden Dragon Milk, live music by Turners Falls' own Hung Trucker, and a photography show.

All donations, and 30% of store sales, will go toward pop-up herbal clinics on the San Diego-Tijuana border.

Lastly, if you want to stay on that side of the river for one more event, at 7 p.m. the **Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra, Chorus, Chamber Choir, and Youth Orchestra** will give their holiday concert in the Greenfield High School Auditorium.

The theme this year is "A Harry Potter Holiday." Weird, right? Tickets are \$25, \$5 for students and youth, and \$20 for seniors, but I bet if you dress up as someone from the Harry Potter universe and carry a clarinet, they'll let you walk right in.

Do you know someone who could use a little extra help with food this month? Tell them to bring an empty bag to the parking lot of the Gill-Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street in Turners Falls, between 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. next Wednesday, December 19 so volunteers from the Food Bank of Western MA can fill it up with free, nutritious ingredients.

The **Mobile Food Bank** is actually touching down at the location on the third Wednesday of every month, so mark your calendars. In Novem-

ber there were gigantic carrots.

Head to the People's Pint, 24 Federal Street in Greenfield, next Wednesday, December 19 from 5 to 9 p.m. to "**Raise Your Glass for FCCMP**," the Franklin County Community Meals Program.

The fundraiser event includes a raffle with prizes from a number of area businesses. The FCCMP works to alleviate hunger in the county by offering five meals a week at various sites, feeding between 50 and 100 people at each meal, and runs food pantries at GCC and in Orange. Visit fccmp.org for more information.

Throughout 2018, volunteers with Friends of Leverett Pond have been making baked goods for the coffee shed at the transfer station. Their cookies, muffins, scones, cakes, and quick breads have been welcome treats as neighbors chat over cups of Dean's Beans coffee.

Now the recipes are gathered in an attractive volume, **Confections from the Coffee Shed**, compiled and edited by Claire Hopley. Goodies range from traditional Apple Muffins and Ginger Snaps to contemporary Aquafaba Macarons and gluten-free Cornbread with Masa Harina. The season's theme is addressed with Whiskey Cake and several Christmas cookie recipes.

Ms. Hopley has suggested that copies will make great gifts, and we believe the claim enough to reprint it. Get it for \$12 at the transfer station, weekends from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Leverett Crafts and Arts; the Leverett Library; or by contacting claireannhopley@gmail.com. All profits support the Friends' fund for repairing the pond's ailing dam.

Today, December 13, marks the first anniversary of the loss of **Danny Monster Cruz**, a truly one-of-a-kind young visionary artist, musician, and friend of the paper, to complications of Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

It takes courage to be open with our love, but none of us are here for very long.

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Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week
Week ending Dec. 7:
Grade 6
Pamela Gomez
Grade 7
Derek Wissman
Grade 8
Levin Prondecki
Related Arts
Lindsay Davenport

PUSHED from page A1

Thomasina Hall thinks she knows the number: "Two." Until recently, she would have counted herself: first in the central office and then as an administrative assistant at the middle school, she spent seven years working for the district. This fall she started a new job as a science teacher in Holyoke.

The Halls say they had perceived another recently departed staff member, assistant principal Dr. Ervin Santiago, as their "only ally" in the administration on the harassment issue, "and the only one that did anything."

"Back in the fall of 2017 we started having issues where the kids were reporting this racist language was being used," Thomasina recalls. "Dr. Santiago would pull in those parties and say, 'Listen: Nope, it's not happening, you're going to be disciplined.' But they would go to [principal Annie] Leonard, and I would see the students still in the school, still being able to do all these things again and again."

Hall describes the unique position she occupied as a parent who was also aware of other students' disciplinary consequences, but says that as advocacy for her sons began to bring her into conflict with Leonard, she also felt "precarious." "That was my boss," she explains.

She remembers a meeting in April with Leonard, Sullivan, and Dr. Santiago to address a statement made by one of her sons complaining that three white students' racist commentary was making him uncomfortable.

"That meeting was the first time Annie Leonard had told us, when we're talking

about this hostile environment, 'Well, they didn't say it to him!' Which, to me, was just the height of ignorance," she says.

"She tried to throw Ervin under the bus by saying 'I was unaware of this – Dr. Santiago was taking care of this.' He flips open his folder, with all his documentation – 'on this date, this right here, and this is the date when you told me to hand everything off to you, and I did,' and he closes his folder!"

"So, at the end of the year, who would you think would get fired?" Rich asks.

After a year, the conflict among the adults has come to a head, and both Thomasina Hall and Michael Sullivan arrived at Tuesday night's Gill-Montague school committee meeting with prepared statements. With Rich's mother Jeanne at her side, Thomasina read a statement – prepared collaboratively with other parents who remain as of yet anonymous – calling the administration "responsible for emboldening the toxic, racist culture by not addressing it with the seriousness it requires."

Sullivan's report, which focused on steps toward education, professional development, and cultural change, sparked several testy exchanges with committee members more immediately interested in how the system had failed the Halls and, potentially, other families.

"There's two tracks," the superintendent explained when asked about "day-to-day safety": "preventive, long-term understanding and learning, and 'let's make sure we're real clear on how we're responding in the moment.'"

A day later, Sullivan defends his big-picture focus to me. "I don't wanna lose that, because I've seen when you don't do that work, the putting out the fires work is never sufficient," he says. He and Leonard will bring in consultants from the Collaborative for Educational Services to facilitate focus groups of parents, students, and possibly faculty in January to investigate the deeper issues at play in the district.

As for dropped balls, Sullivan says he is conducting an "internal review" with staff. "I'm pretty confident that our procedures and our policies are clear and appropriate," he tells me, "but, based on what people have been bringing to us, we are starting to review with our administrative team what our implementation of those practices has been."

Ultimately, Sullivan explains, it is the principal who is responsible for devising the school's response to each infraction. This could include "traditional consequence – suspensions, for example," but also a variety of restorative practices, "depending on the situation, and whether or not the victim feels comfortable sitting down and meeting with the bully."

Rich Hall is not impressed with the restorative approach to justice at Great Falls Middle School. "When our kid got called 'n---r,'" he says, "the second time – our other son! – and we got upset about it, they said, 'What do you want to do?' We said, 'nothing. Don't make our kid feel like a victim, because he's not.' They sent us an email, still trying to do damage control, stating 'we had the student write your son

an apology letter."

"This kid is a repeat offender," Rich tells me. "Writing a letter? He doesn't care about that!"

"If you're in a restorative conversation regarding race, and you have no [adult] of color sitting there saying 'do you really understand what's happened here?,' it's useless," adds Thomasina. "It's toothless."

She says she sees restorative justice as "a tool in your toolbox that you can use. But you have restorative practices, and you also have logical consequence, which that piece they don't use – they're using this restorative justice as a be-all and end-all, and the majority of their staff have no idea how to utilize it, including the dean of students."

"They're treating these kids like they're in grad school," says Rich. "They're not – they're still in their formative years. And some kids are going to test you, and you're going to have to give them real consequences for what they're going to do, or they're going to clown you."

"And they are clowning the administration, because they know there's no real consequences to anything they do."

As for their next step, the Halls inform me they are "exploring all options at this point, and staying in contact with other parents."

"Having heard the stories from so many other families," Thomasina says, "it's sad – but I'm almost glad that we're getting together and saying this is *real*, this happened, and it's not something the administration can push under the rug anymore."

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DISPATCHES from page A1

a partner of leading German environmental organizations, were also denied entry at the border.

The annual demonstration for climate action was quite different from the peaceful, spirited event last November in Bonn, which attracted some 30,000 people. On Saturday, December 8, around 4,000 people marched through city streets, surrounded by a contingent of 1,500 police in "robo-cop" attire with water cannons at the ready.

Meanwhile, inside the UN conference, delegates sparred for almost three hours Saturday, over wording on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) recent findings on the dangers of global warming above 1.5° Celsius (2.7° F). Should the conference report "welcome" the scientific conclusions, or just "note" their report?

The bombshell report had been requested by the UN conference in 2015. Its conclusions were that to keep average planetary warming under 2.7° F, CO₂ emissions would have to be cut at least in half by 2030. So how it was received meant a lot to both fossil fuel supporters and opponents.

Saudi Arabia, the USA (still legally part of the COP process until 2020, despite Trump's withdrawal), Russia, and Kuwait supported just

"noting" the report, while a broad coalition of other countries thought it should be "welcomed," and thus taken seriously. The result, recorded by the *taz*, was: "no agreement; the subject was postponed to the next conference." This kind of argumentation and blocking reflect why the UN climate conference process has been so slow and ineffective for more than two decades.

In Katowice, a city in a major coal area that is slowly weaning itself from open coal heaters and power plants, the ongoing struggle between the fossil past and the solar transition is clearer than ever. But the fight over what green energy will look like goes beyond opposing coal.

There is also opposition to a new generation of major international European gas pipelines and infrastructure, as well as a movement against accepting burning of wood as a source of "green energy."

More on that can be found in CAN's "One Week Down" digital newsletter (eco.climatenetwork.org/cop24-eco6), which also announced the arrival of the Climate Pilgrims to COP24. The group, which started its pilgrimage at the Vatican on October 4, walked some 950 miles through seven countries, holding climate-related workshops and meetings in local communities.

In Katowice, they are calling on the COP24 delegates "to respond to the recent IPCC report and take ambitious action to keep global warming to 1.5° C (2.7° F)."

After researching and writing this article, based in Berlin, I watched *Democracy Now!*'s first day of reporting from Katowice. Amy Goodman and colleagues are there for the second week of the COP, as in years past, and as before their coverage is impressive. For daily reports from Katowice and COP24, do check their December 10-14 programs at www.democracynow.org.

"Yellow Vest" Protests Continue

While the sky may be clouded by smoke from coal fires in Katowice, tear gas spread over parts of central Paris on past weekends, as police struck against blockades and demonstrations spreading across the country.

These concern climate policies too. For the mass protests, with violence from the "forces of order" as well as some among the demonstrating crowds, began in reaction to an increased tax on diesel fuel. This was part of a series of reforms from French President Emmanuel Macron to encourage people to drive less, buy more efficient cars, and submit to more rigorous emissions tests: in other words, part of his plan

for an energy transition away from fossil fuels.

The yellow vests worn by protesters are required in all French cars in case of emergency. For many living outside the urban centers, with their relatively good public transportation, this tax and price increase was an emergency, seen as a dictate from above by a government of and favoring the rich. The well-off had received tax breaks, while those struggling to get by had to bear yet another tax imposed from above. As the Brussels-based author of a long analysis on the movement put it, "President Macron's climate policy is only apparently ecological, but is above all anti-social."

Opposition to what was seen as an unfair tax has broadened into a major social movement against economic injustice and lack of democracy, with political groups from both the right and left supporting and trying to define the goals of the movement.

The situation in France will continue to develop, but, parallel to the international climate convention going on in Poland, it sends a message to all national leaders that solving or even addressing the climate crisis cannot be done through heavy-handed, undemocratic actions from above.

**NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD**

Officer Commended for Role in Chase and Arrest; State Stalls for Four Years; Library Bids Out Soon

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, all three Erving selectboard members echoed police chief Christopher Blair's praise for officer James Loynd. In a letter of commendation to the board, Blair recounted Loynd's "heroic actions" on October 19 when he pursued the operator of a stolen car and subdued the man when he attacked a state trooper.

According to Blair, Loynd heard on his radio that state police were pursuing a stolen car that exited from Route 91 to Route 2. Loynd followed the car in Erving, but discontinued the chase through the center of Erving "due to the extremely erratic operation of the suspect vehicle and the heavy flow of traffic."

At the Erving town line, Loynd noticed that a state trooper had resumed the pursuit alone and decided to follow behind. The suspect subsequently crashed the car, and the trooper and Loynd stopped at the scene of the crash. The operator ran from the car, and according to Blair, Loynd "observed the trooper being savagely stabbed by the suspect." Loynd rushed at the suspect and ultimately shot and incapacitated him. After the suspect was taken into custody, Loynd used his emergency medical kit to aid the severely wounded trooper.

"I commend Officer Loynd with showing professionalism and restraint during the incident," Blair concluded. "I commend Officer Loynd with his overall performance during the incident, following Department policy and procedures as well as training guidelines. Most importantly, I commend Officer Loynd for his bravery engaging the suspect, undeniably saving the trooper's life."

Award for Town Report

The Erving town report was selected as one of the top three for towns with populations under 5,000 in the Massachusetts Municipal Association's annual town report contest. Report editor Betsy Sicard said, "I'm surprised, but happy."

The MMA lists these criteria for winning town reports: visual appeal; material arrangement; presentation of statistics and data; summary of the year's achievements; evidence of local planning for the future; and the report's practical utility. Whether Erving's report placed first, second, or third will be announced January 18.

As editor, Sicard collects reports from town departments, selects a theme for the cover, and organizes the dedication. Sicard said, "I used a different format than last year." This year, she took photos of staff from each town department to include in the departmental reports.

Recall Bylaw Still in Legislature

The November 3, 2014 Erving special town meeting passed a bylaw specifying how an elected town official could be recalled. Two weeks after that STM, the town asked then state senator Stan Rosenberg to introduce special legislation allowing the town to adopt the bylaw.

Bylaws regarding election procedures must be approved by the legislature before they become effective. At the October 2, 2017 selectboard meeting, administrative coordinator Bryan Smith told the board that the legislation had been introduced into the state senate and had had two committee hearings, but no further action. The bill was not considered in any house of representatives committee, and died with the end of that legislative session.

The board then asked Smith

to send the bylaw back to senator Rosenberg, to be submitted again as a special act of the legislature. The measure was re-introduced before Rosenberg resigned. It was ready for its third and final vote this fall so that it could be finalized before this legislative session ends at the end of December.

However, this week, Smith received notice that the Secretary of State's legal counsel had recommended a last-minute change in the bylaw's wording, changing the phrase "a recall election to be held not less than sixty nor more than ninety days after..." to "a recall election to be held not less than sixty-four nor more than ninety days after..."

Rolling their eyes, the selectboard members unanimously approved the change. The board asked Smith to send their approval back to the legislature in hopes that the legislation will pass before the end of the session and will not need to be re-introduced again.

Fiscal Year 2020

The selectboard and finance committee met jointly to consider the "general government" portion of the proposed budget for FY'20. The town treasurer, accountant, tax collector, assistant assessor/IT coordinator, and town clerk attended the meeting to present their proposed budgets. Highway foreman Glenn McCrory presented the town building maintenance budget

Many of the proposed budgets are level funded with FY'19. The accounting budget is increased for an annual audit expense, and the board of assessors proposes a 2.5% raise for the assistant assessor. The town building maintenance line item is increased, because maintenance staff expenses will be trans-

ferred from the highway budget to the maintenance budget. The town clerk budget is decreased for FY'20, because there are fewer elections scheduled than in FY'19.

The fin com proposed budget is level funded, but the selectboard is proposing an assistant for the administrative coordinator to help in applying for and administering grants. The board and fin com will continue reviewing the FY'20 budget requests at a December 17 joint meeting, to be held at the senior and community center on Care Drive.

Other Business

The board approved transferring the 2010 Ford F550 truck from the highway department to the fire department. According to McCrory and fire chief Philip Wonkka, the truck is no longer suitable for heavy use plowing snow, but could be outfitted to be used as a second brush truck for the fire department.

The board plans to schedule a special town meeting for January 28, 2019, with warrant articles including a request for \$25,000 for replacing the police station generator and a request to use some of the funds originally voted to re-side the town hall for a feasibility and design study for renovations to the interior and exterior of the same building.

Bids for subcontractors for building the new library on Northfield Road were opened on December 5 by Erving's owner project manager Daniel Pallotta, his assistant Robert Todisco, and principal architect Philip O'Brien. The bids are currently under review. Bids for general contractors are due December 19.

Library director Barbara Friedman said a number of major contractors had shown interest in the general contractor work.

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GILL from page A1

the installation of air source heat pumps in the library. Receipt of these grants was contingent on the town committing to the matching funds approved in this motion.

Retired state senator Stan Rosenberg and current state representative Susannah Whipps, attended the meeting to present the town with a gift in celebration of Gill's 225th anniversary. Rosenberg and Whipps presented the town with a framed, high-resolution facsimile of the

original legislation officially incorporating the community in 1793.

Both Whipps and Rosenberg expressed their esteem, respect, and appreciation for the town of Gill. Rosenberg also thanked the community for its support over the years, and said it was an honor representing the town.

Selectboard chair Greg Snedeker thanked them both on behalf of the town, and presented them with 225th anniversary shopping bags.



NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Board Holds Firm on Plow Repair Mandate

By **GEORGE BRACE**

At their December 10 meeting, the Gill selectboard had a lengthy discussion on the subject of the highway department's snow plow situation.

Highway superintendent Mickey LaClaire was in attendance to ask about the possibility of acquiring a used power-angle plow that had recently become available. He cited the improved efficiency of this type of plow over fixed-blade plows as the reason for the request.

The department currently has one power-angle plow, and two fixed plows on their trucks, as well as two spare plows. LeClaire wondered if it might be possible to shift money which had been authorized at town meeting last May for plow repair towards the purchase of the used power-angle plow instead.

The board was not in favor of the idea, and it did not go forward.

Chair Greg Snedeker summarized his view of the situation by saying that the capital improvements committee had studied the matter prior to town meeting in May, and recommended against purchasing another plow at that time. They had instead recommended to town meeting that it authorize \$10,000 for the repair of the department's current plows. Town meeting accepted the recommendation, and authorized the money.

Snedeker spoke on Monday of the need to respect the process involved in these matters, and abide by the decisions made at town meeting. "Ultimately, it's the townspeople that decide this, and when they do, we need to respect that," he said.

LaClaire said he understood the principle involved: "I get it."

Snedeker also asked LaClaire why the authorized repairs had not yet been made, and pointed out that the same principle was involved. The town had made a decision, he said, and it was up to LaClaire to carry it out. "There was something that needed to be fixed by now, and it's not fixed," he said.

LaClaire replied that his recollection was that the machinery committee was to determine which plows were to be fixed, but he was unclear on what their recommendation was.

John Ward, the selectboard's representative to the machinery committee, said his recollection was that that the committee actually had made recommendations last summer.

Snedeker interjected that the machinery committee did indeed need to be involved, but the responsibility of making sure the issue was dealt with still rested with the highway department. LaClaire accepted this idea, and asked for clarification

on the repair authorization so he could proceed with the repairs. Clarification was given, and he said he would proceed.

General plowing questions were also discussed, and Ward made some inquiries as to the overall status of the available plows. LaClaire said the three-man department can have their entire fleet of three trucks, plus the backhoe, out plowing. He said all four vehicles are necessary during big storms, and the availability of backup drivers makes the use of all four vehicles possible.

"So," Ward joked, "we end up using all four of the three drivers that we've got?"

"Government math," administrative assistant Ray Purington replied.

LaClaire also brought up the idea of possibly acquiring a bucket truck, which the department could use instead of renting one when necessary. He said a nearby town has one they would like to get rid of.

Board member Randy Crochier said he would need to compare the costs involved with each scenario, and the board agreed they needed to see some numbers before considering the idea.

The board approved LaClaire's request for the highway department to close for the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, including December 24 because it falls on a Monday. The department will therefore be closed for normal business between December 22 and January 1.

Fire Department

Fire chief Gene Beaubien appeared before the board to request a purchase order authorization for approximately \$1,800 for two gas meters. The request was granted.

The department had sent in one of their current meters for repair and was told it was beyond the end of its service life. The cost difference between getting them online and getting them from a local dealer who would also provide service was discussed, with all present agreeing it was worth paying a little more to deal with a local company which provided support for the sensors.

Purington notified the board and Beaubien that the town had received a Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) grant for \$575 to buy a back up camera for Engine 2.

Other Business

Crochier reported that the town's 225th anniversary committee is pretty committed to continuing to meet beyond the Quasquibicentennial year in order to keep their community-building work going. He said they will probably change the name of the committee, but haven't

TFHS SPORTS from page A1

Although Powertown lost the game, they played pretty aggressively and never quit. The scoring was pretty balanced, with eight different girls scoring points for Blue. Karissa Fleming, Aly Murphy, Dabney Rollins and Lana Spera each scored 5 points, with Fleming and Spera hitting 3's.

Sarah Waldron also banked a 3, while Vanessa Moreno (2), Lily Spera (2), and Lucy Spera (1) also scored points for Turners. Eliza Johnson, Kate Garcia, and Hailey Bogosz also saw playing time for the team.

Boys Swimming

South Hadley 44 – TFHS 31

The Turners Falls swim teams also lost a coach. Kelly Liimatainen stepped down this year, but her mother Nancy Barry-Yankowski coaches on.

On Friday, December 7, the swim teams hosted the Tigers of South Hadley. In the boys' meet, Turners won four individual races, but the Cats took six, including the two relays.

For Turners, Cam Bradley took home two wins, the 200-yard freestyle (2:16.20) and the 100-yard fly (1:05.40).

Nik Martin won the 200-yard IM (2:48.32), while Jack Putala took the 50-yard freestyle in 33.11.

Girls Swimming

South Hadley 51 – TFHS 38

In the girls' meet, Blue won six of the 10 contests, but Hadley won the meet with second and third finishes.

Blue swept the relays with Lillian Poirier, Olivia Whittier, Jade Tyler, and Allison Wheeler winning the 200-yard medley in 2:14.31 and the 20-yard freestyle in 2:04.73.

Tyler went on to win two individual races, the 200-yard freestyle (2:15.87) and the 100-yard butterfly (1:10.72). Wheeler swam the grueling 500-yard freestyle in 7:06.80, and Whittier won the 100-yard breaststroke (1:19.54).

Next week: A look at the season ahead!



NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

War On Ice a "Constant Battle"

By **ROB SKELTON**

The highway department attended the Tuesday meeting of the Leverett selectboard *en masse*, with road boss David Finn presenting his six-month project projection. Topping his list was the "constant battle" of maintaining waterways and culverts to mitigate winter ice. Faded and ill-reflective road signage is slated for replacement. Tree work continues.

Of the nine bridges in town, four have timber decking and railings, and require continual maintenance. The Coke Kiln Road bridge is slated to go to bid in the spring, Finn said, and will be combined with the paving of "Hemenway Hill," which is failing in places. Engineering of the Mill Yard Road bridge continues, and while some of the lumber contracted with sawyer Verne Williams has been delivered, the town awaits the rest.

Foreman Ethan Dickinson hobbled in with a broken arm which will require surgery; workers comp will pay his salary so the town won't have to pay for two people. Ethan in his current condition is unemployable, Finn said, even for traffic signaling.

Finn asked the board to approve a one-dollar-an-hour increase for one of his crew, for parity's sake, and to forestall poaching by another town. The board approved the \$1,100 cost cumulative through July, with wisps of reluctance.

Finn praised his crew and underscored its vast winter purview: clearing all roads, parking lots, bus pull-outs, conservation areas....

Finn notified the board that he'd like to start a Facebook page for purposes of outreach, which the fire department has done and which the police is considering. Selectboard

chair Peter d'Errico urged that notices be cc'd to the town website – the official town records document cache – concurrently with social media posts to provide an official record.

Enduring Leachate

Four residents affected by the South Leverett "plume," whose groundwater has been contaminated by leachate from the former landfill, came to remind the board that they are still waiting for mitigation. The company which supplies them with drinking water was sold and deliveries were delayed around Thanksgiving, causing concern.

Mark Doubleday, whose family farm was seized for the Quabbin project in the 1930s, lost his cool and yelled at the selectboard, and left the meeting, though d'Errico went out later to smooth things over.

Selectwoman Julie Shively defended her board, saying "if we had \$2 million, we would spend it." Meanwhile the extension of the Amherst water line, whose engineering costs are slated at \$230,000, continues as a targeted solution. Town administrator Margie McGinnis scored a \$100,000 design grant to get things started, with the hopes Amherst can kick in also on plans. Construction would probably involve a combination of grants and bond funding.

Pat Duffy of Cushman Road and the citizens group asked if there was a memorandum of understanding signed by Amherst. The selectboard has no MOU, and is relying thus far on informal communications with Amherst, which at one time resisted infrastructural improvements at that end of town to stymie development. Times have changed, projected water shortages are no longer on the table, and now Amherst sees value

in an extended line.

The selectboard urged the group to do outreach and gain political support for town meeting approval for the water line extension, as the broadband committee did for town-wide broadband, even though universal internet and brownfields clean-up are like comparing apples with rotten eggs.

Another possible solution, according to resident Jim Field, who was not at the meeting, involves a prominent property currently for sale at the bottom of Shutesbury Road, which according to lore has an abundance of clean water. The town could buy the property and build a municipal water plant to serve that part of town, including the handful of houses affected by contamination.

Other Business

Due to a management and board shake-up at the Village Cooperative, the selectboard was asked by coop trustee Susan Lynton to approve its reorganization prior to submitting updated paperwork to the state's Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission.

The selectboard did so without scrutinizing individual board members (eleven), and Shively, once the coop manager, thanked Lynton for her efforts.

The selectboard approved an extension of a four-town housing rehabilitation loan program, which is not getting many bites from aspiring homeowners, until next June.

Brian McHugh of the county housing program explained the various reasons people might not want to participate in a process designed to help bring houses up to code: hoop-jumping, accrued debt, no insurance, state clawback of repair loans.

decided on a new one yet.

Purington provided an update on the Gill Elementary School well water treatment project, saying that all the equipment had been installed and was up and running. He said adjustments were being made, and with any luck, he would be receiving a "good news phone call" in the very near future.

Crochier reported on the continuing investigation of the town hall basement wetness issue. Camera inspections had been made, but no obvious problems with the drains were seen. "Unfortunately, there was nothing that stood out and said, 'this is the problem.'"

Purington added that further in-

vestigation was scheduled with local contractors.

The board approved liquor license renewals for the following businesses: Turners Falls Schuetzen Verein, 23 French King Highway LLC, The Gill Tavern, Wagon Wheel Restaurant, The Spirit Shop, and Oak Ridge Golf Club. Crochier recused himself from voting on Schuetzen Verein, as he is a member of that organization.

The board also renewed auto dealer licenses, contingent upon receipt of all paperwork and payments, for A-J Cycle Shop, Green River Powersports, Atlantic Wholesale, Chapell's Auto Service, Doug's Auto Body, Riverside Radiator, Town Line

Auto Repair, and TEK Cycle.

The board denied a sewer abatement request from a town resident due to its not being postmarked by the filing deadline. Snedeker commented that the board has been consistent in applying the rule, and should not make an exception.

Announcements

Details were still being worked out, but the board expects there to be a 225th anniversary free community skate event at the Northfield Mount Hermon School rink on Sunday, December 30, from 2 to 4 p.m.

There will be a community sing event on Tuesday, January 1, from 2 to 3 p.m. at the town hall.

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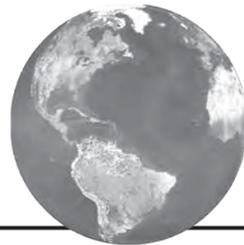
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Angelina Aspuac y el Movimiento Nacional de Tejedoras Mayas: Parte I

Por **MARÍA VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA**

En un mundo globalizado como el nuestro las ideas fluyen de un continente a otro. Por ello no es difícil ver ahora mismo estampados y dibujos propios de diseños indígenas en blusas, vestidos, zapatos y bolsos de diseñares famosos. El problema aparece cuando las ideas de las comunidades indígenas son copiadas por estas empresas internacionales sin obtener ningún reconocimiento, ni pago en ningún sentido.

El famoso diseñador francés de zapatos carísimos de suela roja, Lo-boutin, diseñó su colección Mexicaba, alegando que era un homenaje a las tradiciones mexicanas aunque pagaba a los artesanos menos de 12 dólares cuando los zapatos los vendía a más de 2.500 dólares.

Nike patentó algunos diseños indígenas y los está utilizando en sus zapatos deportivos. Los diseños conocidos como "ojos de dios", los venados azules y otros personajes muy relevantes para la cultura maya, están ahora en sus zapatillas. Teóricamente, no pueden ser utilizados por los herederos de esta tradición cultural, porque ahora son propiedad intelectual de la marca

internacional.

La firma de moda española, Mango, también fue acusada del plagio de unos diseños autóctonos de Hidalgo (México) conocidos como *tenangos* en un jersey de su colección.

Lo mismo ocurrió con la diseñadora francesa Isabel Marant que copió el diseño de un huipil en una de sus blusas. Finalmente la tuvo que retirar de su página web debido a la acusación de plagio. Otro caso es el de la empresa Intropia, otra marca de moda española, que había robado un diseño huipil y lo vendía como si fuera azteca.

Los huipiles o *guipiles* son parte de una cultura ancestral y son usados por las mujeres indígenas de todas las clases sociales. Actualmente el huipil se usa en algunas partes de México y Guatemala. Están hechos de algodón o lana y algunas veces combinan los dos materiales. Las telas son hechas artesanalmente en telares y los dibujos pueden ser geométricos o figuras humanas o animales. Todos tienen un significado que va desde la procedencia de la tejedora hasta su visión comunitaria del cosmos.

Cada pieza es única y lleva parte del alma del autor en ella. Por eso mismo, es imposible calcular su

valor, lo que hace todavía más injusto el que empresas extranjeras de moda los usen tras ser plagiados y luego sean vendidos a precios escandalosos sin remunerar a los artesanos, o ni siquiera darles algún tipo de reconocimiento.

Las tejedoras en muchas ocasiones eran ajenas a esta explotación y no registraban sus diseños al ser diseños comunitarios y no individuales.

Hace unos meses tuve la oportunidad de hablar con Angelina Aspuac, una mujer abogada maya cachiquel, de una familia agricultora que forma parte de Afedes¹. Es una organización de mujeres mayas que ha conformado el movimiento nacional de tejedoras, reivindicando los derechos de las tejedoras mayas.

En Afedes se organizan desde el año 1980 y desde el año 2005 tratan de comercializar sus tejidos, hacer proyectos de emprendimiento, dar formación en temas económicos y contar con herramientas e instrumentos para poder seguir avanzando en el tema económico y diversificar sus ingresos.

Angelina me cuenta que en la organización empezaron a trabajar con los costes de producción de la parte textil, y vieron que el precio de venta estaba por debajo del precio de producción y debido a la desigualdad económica y el hambre que se sufre en Guatemala, las mujeres terminan vendiendo el textil al precio que les dan, a precios muy bajos. Por ejemplo un tejido que debería valer 2.000 quetzales (260 dólares), se vende en 500 quetzales (64 dólares).

Esto no ocurre solamente porque haya bastante oferta, sino porque hay concepto racista que desprecia a los pueblos indígenas. No se tiene en cuenta todo lo que hay detrás de los tejidos. Hay un desprecio de las manos que los elaboran, pero si estos mismos diseños pasan a manos de un diseñador famoso, entonces ya tienen un valor.

Esto es injusto para los pueblos indígenas puesto que hay un conocimiento ancestral en esos tejidos, no solamente es el arte y la técnica de estos tejidos que llevan siendo utilizados por las mujeres indígenas desde antes de la llegada de los españoles.

El gobierno de Guatemala desde la Reforma Liberal y a través de los decretos de San Marcos en 1876 en

que se declaraba por decreto a todos los indígenas como ladinos. La intención del estado era negar los derechos de los pueblos indígenas para que se olvidasen de su historia y adoptasen nuevas formas de vida. Prohibían a los pueblos indígenas seguir manteniendo su propia identidad, debían dejar de utilizar su indumentaria, cambiar su alimentación, etc. pero al mismo tiempo no tenían los mismos derechos que los ladinos o mestizos.

En Guatemala – me dice Angelina – cada día hay menos mujeres que usan esta indumentaria. Las mujeres indígenas la usamos porque está enraizada en nuestra historia, pero desde hace unos 10 años las mujeres adolescentes jóvenes que emigran a la ciudad dejan de usarla para poder pasar desapercibidas, para no ser insultadas.

El insulto más generalizado es llamarlas Marías para tratar de ridiculizarlas cuando van vestidas con su indumentaria maya. Llamarlas Marías de forma peyorativa tiene la intención de homogeneizar y no conservar en las mujeres su parte individual y por lo tanto, deshumanizar a los indígenas. Las chicas jóvenes tienen miedo de pasar por eso y no tienen ganas de pelear usando la indumentaria típica para ir a la universidad o al trabajo.

El racismo, según Angelina, es endémico en Guatemala, y principalmente se origina desde las escuelas. Allí les enseñan a los niños acerca de un héroe indígena tonto, para ridiculizar a los indígenas. Los niños no quieren ser indígenas sino ladinos o mestizos.

La educación en las escuelas trata de convencerles de que lo bueno es ser ladino, sin valorar lo indígena. Y parte de ello consiste en no llevar la indumentaria indígena.

A los niños desde pequeños les enseñan que llegó un tal Pedro de Alvarado, el conquistador español, un hombre blanco y alto que llevaba una armadura que brillaba e iba encima de un caballo. Les dicen también que Tecun Uman (el líder cachiquel) llevaba una lanza y que se la clavó al caballo pensando que así podría matar a Pedro de Alvarado.

Así pues, lo que recibían los niños a través de esta leyenda en la que se hacía chanza de Tecun Uman es que el héroe indígena no era listo,



Muestra de tejido maya para huipil.

era inferior al hombre blanco.

Angelina prosigue diciéndome que al vivir en comunidad no te das cuenta del racismo, pero al llegar a la capital o a zonas urbanas todo cambia. Y eso es lo que le pasó a ella.

Un día estaba esperando el bus para ir a la universidad y el conductor le dijo que cómo era posible que una María estuviera estudiando, riéndose de ella al decirle que estudiaba matemáticas. Así Angelina se dio cuenta de la forma en que trataban a las mujeres indígenas y de cómo las tratan cuando están tratando de exigir derechos.

Volviendo al tema de las tejedoras, Aspuac añade que algunos de los diseños textiles vienen de antes de la llegada de los españoles, otros diseños son centenarios y otros actuales. Hay una gran diversidad de diseños.

El movimiento AFEDES trata de retomar la historia, de saber de dónde vienen, de conocer y amar la cultura maya. Me dice orgullosa que sus ancestros mayas ya tenían grandes conceptos cosmológicos que habían desarrollado mediante la observación al no disponer de instrumentos como los que tenemos ahora. Poder entender y conocer eso hace que los mayas se sientan orgullosos de sus ancestros indígenas.

La organización AFEDES aboga por un consumo responsable, especialmente en estas fechas de grandes compras, en el que el consumidor se asegure que cuando compra un producto artesanal, los beneficios van a llegar al artesano y no a grandes empresas de moda internacionales que han copiado los diseños.

Igualmente AFEDES aconseja no consumir productos de imitación, ya que con ellos solamente se logra que personas y comunidades vulnerables económicamente se vean afectadas. El plagio y el robo de los textiles llevan consigo una pérdida económica para las comunidades indígenas.

(Continuará...)



Angelina Aspuac, abogada maya, líder de las tejedoras.

¹ AFEDES es la Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez y lucha para salvaguardar los derechos, la identidad y la herencia de las mujeres mayas. Página web: <https://mujeresdefedes.wordpress.com>

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GMRS from page A1

his office was taking to address “incidents of civil rights harassment, particularly race based micro-aggressions” in the schools.

Educators will be reminded, he said, that any incident of harassment “of a civil rights nature” must be addressed immediately, and he promised that parents or guardians will be notified “the same day in which the incident occurs or is reported.”

At upcoming assemblies, Sullivan said, students will be reminded that “uncivil conduct will not be tolerated.”

The superintendent added that he and high school principal Annie Leonard had met Tuesday morning with trainers at the Collaborative for Educational Services, who would be setting up a facilitated “series of stakeholder discussions” on the issue.

“There seem to be some concern about day-to-day safety,” Montague member Michael Langknecht told him. “I want to be able to tell people that work is not going to wait for studies or classes.”

Sullivan replied that the solution required “two tracks: preventive, long-term understanding and learning,” and “let’s make sure we’re real clear on how we’re responding in the moment...”

“Are we sure that that’s happening now?” Langknecht replied. “They’re not allowed, these sorts of things – they’re violations.”

“I’ve asked everyone to drop the other things [they’re] doing with kids, and to re-emphasize that, straight away,” Sullivan said.

“I have a really big problem with the fact that it had to get to this point,” Montague’s Cassie Damkoehler told Sullivan, raising her voice. “Budget and policy is what we should deal with. We should not have to deal with a child being called a racial slur, and parents not satisfied that it’s not being taken care of – I don’t want to hear that.”

**“I have a really big problem with the fact that it had to get to this point.”
Cassie Damkoehler
Montague**

“Where, in all this, is the accountability?” Teresa Kolodziej, the committee’s representative from Erving, asked Sullivan of his report.

“This is not a review of our policies and practices,” he replied, and suggested that such a review should be put on a future agenda: “I need to sit down with the administrators and say, here’s where things are good, here’s where we’re dropping the ball, and come to you with them and say, this is good, this is bad, here’s what we’re doing.”

“It needs responding,” said school committee chair Jane Oakes of Gill. “We have things in place that obviously need work. Communicating what’s being done about issues sound like something that needs to be examined – the communication of what are consequences, how are they meted out.”

Oakes said that, due to privacy guidelines, parents cannot be informed of consequences received by another child, but “there ought to be a way... without being specific about a child.”

“We can’t say, like people used to, ‘it has to happen at home,’” she said. “It sounds like there are

real concerns, and we need to hear them.” Oakes added that she had not been informed of any of the specific incidents in question.

“One of the inherent sicknesses, to all of this, is what’s going on in our adult community these days,” said Gill member Bill Tomb. “There’s been too much said that emboldens this kind of action.”

**“They’re not allowed, these sorts of things – they’re violations.”
Mike Langknecht
Montague**

No More Duct Tape

Later in the meeting, information technology director Tina Mahaney shared with the committee her three-year plan to upgrade the district’s technology with “an emphasis on enhancing student-centered, as opposed to teacher-centered, learning.”

This includes a continuation of the “1:1” program to supply every middle and high school student with a Chromebook, upgrades to the two main servers, upgrading desktop computers, and replacing classroom projectors and sound systems.

Many of the existing projectors, Mahaney explained, are failing, and she plans to gradually replace them with high-definition LED screens that receive wireless projections.

Mahaney said her plan would call for an FY’20 expenditure of around \$110,000, about a \$15,000 increase from her current year’s budget.

Kolodziej asked whether there were security risks involved with dependence on wireless networks, and Mahaney answered that the network upgrades of the past three years set the stage to allow for secure use of wireless devices.

“The life I’ve been living is duct tape,” Mahaney said. “Right now, the secretaries are barely making it with the devices they have... I’ve run out of duct tape.”

Habitat Creation

Montague town planner Walter Ramsey reported to the committee that a proposed overhaul of his town’s zoning bylaws would rezone schools from “recreation-education” to “residential.” “It’s not a common practice to have schools zoned for schools only,” he said.

Ramsey described this as an “administrative change,” but added that rezoning could be important given that “zoning has a 20-, 30-year outlook.”

Ramsey also shared a proposal that had arisen in the context of the town’s renegotiation of the schools’ leases. Montague’s housing plan has identified a shortage of affordable owner-occupied housing, and so the town is suggesting carving three half-acre lots from the Hillcrest parcel along Davis Street.

“Habitat for Humanity is eager to do projects in Montague,” he said. The land is currently an open field.

“If you think about [Hillcrest and Sheffield] schools as a big block, there’s actually 17 small house lots that encroach into that block along frontage,” he explained.

Montague member Michael Langknecht said that the capital improvement committee, which he sits on, has been eying the field as a site for a wood-burning power plant and heat pump. “I’m not sure what the likelihood of that is,” he said.

Other Business

Director of pupil services Dianne Ellis brought a proposal to add a second special education teacher at Sheffield Elementary. Ellis argued that “the current model overextends” the one teacher in the therapeutic program, who along with one interventionist and four paraprofessionals provides services to between 16 and 21 students.

“I have firsthand knowledge of the therapeutic program at Sheffield,” Anderson said. “We have really great people who are being spread very, very thin.”

The committee voted unanimously in favor of creating the position.

Business manager Joanne Blier discussed the district’s major capital improvement needs, including new roofs at Gill and Hillcrest elementaries, sidewalk replacement at the high school, electrical upgrades at Gill, pillars at Sheffield, facade improvements at Hillcrest, and a dump truck.

The administration will confer with the capital improvement committees of Gill and Montague and rank the needs by priority. On January 8, the school committee will be asked to approve an official capital plan to forward to the towns.

Expenses at the high school would be assessed to the towns based on their current share of in-district enrollment, which stands at 6.5% for Gill and 93.5% for Montague.

At the January 8 meeting, the school committee will see a preliminary FY’20 budget. Departments have already submitted their requests.

In the wake of the resignation of April Reipold, the committee is seeking a volunteer from Montague to fill her seat until spring elections. Her position on the warrant subcommittee was filled on Monday by Anderson after she said she would “do it if nobody else will.”

A new statewide precedent has been set requiring warrant committees to post meetings publicly and take minutes, in accordance with open meeting law. The committee discussed revising the warrant workflow so those meetings would correspond with full school committee nights. Any updates will require an official change in policy.

Sullivan informed the committee that state senator-elect Jo Comerford has shared plans to push to add a “Low Enrollment Adjustment Factor” to the state’s formula for calculating Chapter 70 aid to districts.

Such districts, including Gill-Montague, have “significantly higher per-pupil costs,” he explained, adding that he was advising Comerford’s office in advance of a bill she intends to introduce.

Principal Annie Leonard gave the committee a presentation about steps the district is taking to encourage Great Falls Middle School eighth-graders to remain in district for high school.

She also sought the committee’s approval for a field trip to Brattleboro High School by students in the high school’s conflict resolution class. “They have a particular strength in student-led restorative panels,” she said. “The field trip is for students who want to base their final project around experiencing one of those panels.”

The field trip was approved unanimously. “How fast can you get it done?” Langknecht quipped.

The school committee will next meet on January 8 at the high school.



MEETING NOTICE
FY 2019 CDBG PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING
TOWN OF MONTAGUE

The Town of Montague will hold a public informational meeting on **December 17, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.** in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room at the Montague Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA in order to solicit public response to the activities that the town should apply for in the **FY 2019 Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** application to the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the application process and activities that the town should apply for. Representatives from the Town, Social Service Agencies, and the Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will be present at the hearing to discuss potential activities. Any other activities that the town should consider for the FY 2019 CDBG application will be discussed.

Eligible Activities include Housing assistance, Public facilities, Infrastructure, Public Social Services, and Planning Projects. All projects must meet the national objective to benefit low/moderate income people or eliminate slum/blight.

The Town of Montague will contract with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to administer the FY 2019 Community Development Block Grant Program.

The Town of Montague encourages residents to attend the meeting where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity.

The Town of Montague is an equal opportunity provider.
Town of Montague Selectboard

STRATHMORE from page A1

options for a less ambitious partial demolition of the Strathmore. “We’ll get a progress report on that, I believe, next week,” he said.

Eagle Creek, the parent company of Turners Falls Hydro, owns 63 small hydropower facilities in 13 states. According to its website, the company was purchased in late November by Ontario Power Generation, which bills itself as “Ontario’s largest electricity generator.” Turners Falls Hydro has been participating in the federal relicensing process that includes the Turners Falls Dam, the power canal, and Cabot Station at the southwestern end of the Canal.

According to records at the Montague Assessors’ office, the building, known as Building #9, was sold to Turners Falls Hydro by the Strathmore Paper Company for \$750,000. The structure and land it sits on are assessed at \$1,268,100.

In a related development, town planner Walter Ramsey requested that the board apply to the state Brownfields Redevelopment Grant program for \$250,000 for asbestos and hazardous materials removal at the Strathmore complex. “Specifically this would abate the buildings that are proposed to remain,” he said. “The town has the match in hand, through the bond approval that town meeting did a couple of years ago, so I think that having that is going to make it a very strong application.”

Ellis noted that the proposal needed to be flexible in terms of which buildings would remain, since “we may have to pivot” after the grant was awarded.

“We’re not locked in,” Ramsey told the board.

Ramsey also asked the board to approve another grant request to the state for “due diligence and master planning for infrastructure improvements” to the Canal District, the town’s designation for the former industrial area between the canal and river.

Ramsey said the planning process would “prioritize bridges and utilities that serve the [former] mills.” He estimated that there are currently seven bridges over the canal that serve the six sites in the area, but “only one bridge is functioning to its design capacity. That’s the Fifth Street bridge, the one with the hump in it... We know it’s a mess there, but this study would assess what’s there, and prioritize what improvements to make.”

Promotions

The main event of the evening was the official pinning of the police chief badge on former acting chief Chris Williams. The selectboard office was filled with uniformed of-

icers, families, and friends for the event.

Town clerk Deb Bourbeau administered the oath to Williams, after which selectboard chair Rich Kulke-wicz pinned on the chief’s badge.

A similar ceremony then was held to elevate Leon Laster to the position of staff sergeant, although in his case, Williams was responsible for pinning the badge.

After the room cleared out, Williams came to the front table to request that the board initiate a Civil Service process for filling the sergeant vacancy created by Laster’s appointment. The board approved the request.

Other Business

Ramsey reviewed the progress of the zoning bylaw revisions being proposed by the planning board. He said the board had received over forty written comments on the proposed changes and would continue its hearing on the revisions on December 18. The new bylaws will be considered by a winter special town meeting.

The selectboard approved a letter drafted by the cable advisory committee objecting to a new rule being considered by the Federal Communications Commission that could subtract certain “in kind” benefits towns can receive from cable providers from their allowed revenues for local access stations. The letter also objected to the potential federal rule that local governments cannot regulate non-cable services on public “rights of way.”

Department of public works superintendent Tom Bergeron reported that there was “no news” on the two bridges in Montague Center (South Street and Center Street) closed to two-way traffic. He estimated that it would take approximately two years of Chapter 90 state road aid to fix just one of the bridges. There was a brief discussion of which bridge of the two bridges should be prioritized.

Bergeron announced that the DPW had removed the one-hour parking signs from Avenue A in Turners Falls. Selectboard member Michael Nelson handed Bergeron a list of what he believed were outdated signs in Montague.

Ellis announced that the town would purchase safety equipment and a thermal imaging camera with grant funds received from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be on December 17 at the Montague town hall. The meeting will be preceded at 6:30 p.m. by a non-public executive session to discuss collective bargaining strategy.



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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was December 11, 2008: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Gill Prepares for Override Vote

In their meeting this week, the Gill selectboard reviewed options for a Proposition 2½ override, which voters will choose between at a special election on January 6. The board decided to give voters a choice of two override amounts, and stressed that cuts to town departments would be required should voters choose the lower amount.

Initially three options had been considered for a so-called "pyramid" override, but the board decided not to include the lowest override amount on the warrant, for fear the cuts it would entail would be too severe.

The higher figure – an override of \$157,600.34 – would add \$1.00 to the tax rate, an increase of \$212.50 a year to the average household. If this amount were approved by the

voters, it would basically fund departments at the level town meeting agreed to support in May, before the town discovered a \$154,000 accounting error.

The lower option will call for a \$35,679.33 override. This would reduce the fire department budget by \$5,000, eliminate the animal control position, provide no funds to repair a faulty fire truck pump, reduce highway expenditures by \$43,200, and devote all the town's free cash toward reducing the tax rate.

A third option for an override, at the \$16,000 level, was rejected as requiring cuts in departmental budgets that would be too severe.

Unity Park to Be Redesigned

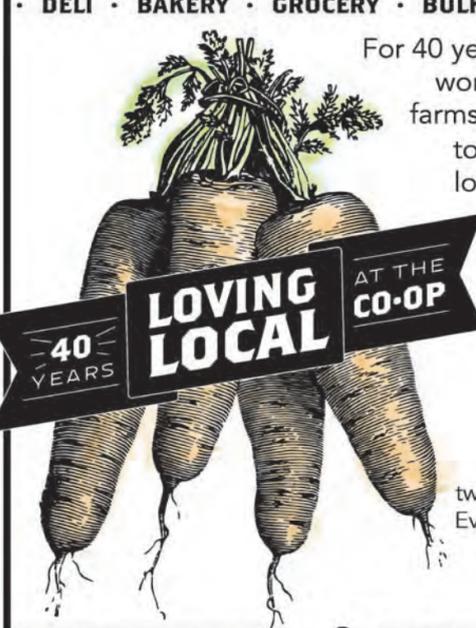
The town of Montague prepared for the next cycles of Community Development Block Grant funding by holding a hearing on the 2009 community development strategy prepared by town planner Dan La-

roche, and by advancing a design process for renovations at Unity Park in preparation for a quarter million dollar redesign expected to be the centerpiece of a CDBG application in 2010.

Laroche told the selectboard some items had moved off the overview of pending community development projects since last year, such as the police station building project (under construction) and redevelopment of the Montague Rod Shop (sold to the highest bidder).

On the list for the 2009 CDBG application are two \$50,000 projects for downtown social service agencies, the Brick House's "Community Green Jobs" and the Montague Catholic Social Ministries "Bridge to Success" training program, along with \$45,000 to prepare bid-ready plans for a severe extension for the planned expansion of the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority on the power canal in Turners Falls.

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DECEMBER 13, 2018

Above: Materials disassembled by water, fire, gravity, labor, and the passing of time at Turners Falls' Railroad Salvage building.

Fine Dining With a Laid-Back, Local Flair at the Gill Tavern

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

GILL – Warning: experiencing Walker Widner's vision of how to provide dinner guests with meals that will remain in their consciousness, long after he and his staff have bid them goodbye, will forever change your expectations of dining out. Get ready.

A visit to the Gill Tavern will leave you asking, *What just happened here?* Because nothing about Walker's Modern American cuisine resembles what we have come to understand as a typical evening out to dine.

When I asked what makes the Gill Tavern atypical – as if I couldn't answer the question myself – Walker offered, "What has been great about what we have been able to do here is that the footprint of the restaurant, with its open kitchen, allows guests to practically participate in the preparation of each meal. In a typical restaurant there is a disconnect. That doesn't happen here. They're right there with me, and you know, every night I feel like I am just having a bunch of friends over for dinner."

"Our open kitchen gives me the opportunity to greet my guests at the front door and look them in the eye on their way out," he continued. "That creates a sort of responsibility to the guest. You can't hide behind anything. Everything has to be really great. And that has really for-



Owner/chef Walker Widner (left) and sous-chef Larry Catterton (right) at work in the Gill Tavern kitchen.

tified what we do here, even as we take an extra three or five seconds to make sure everything is just the way I think it should be, or Larry wants it to be. We really take a lot of ownership in the food we put out."

The Gill Tavern is small; it is intimate; it portrays this sense of responsibility to its guests from the back of the house with the food preparation, to the front of the house where people are being taken care of. "Of course we make mistakes, everybody does," Walker humbly admitted. "But the layout of the restaurant has helped all of us to develop a real sense of responsibility as to what make our

meals memorable and what brings people back again and again."

Walker and his sous-chef, Larry Catterton, seem to have two words on their minds and on their lips when speaking about their commitment to the Gill Tavern's success: responsibility and capability.

They talked of having responsibility to food purveyors, who are "innovative and hyperlocal"; to the environment, that needs proper and mindful stewarding for sustainability; to their guests, who travel to the Tavern from Vermont, Maine, Connecticut, New York and as far away as Georgia, and expect

see **TAVERN** page B4

BOOK REVIEW

Reihana Robinson, *The Killing Nation: New Zealand's State-Sponsored Addiction to Poison 1080* (Off the Common Books, 2018)

By JERI MORAN

MONTAGUE CENTER – Reihana Robinson is both an American and a New Zealand citizen. She is a poet, as well as a teacher and environmentalist. Living in Montague part-time for more than 20 years, she has heard from lots of people here about how they would love to go visit New Zealand, and what a beautiful, environmentally responsible place it seems to be. And she knows that New Zealand promotes its number-one industry, international tourism, with a carefully crafted and burnished "Clean Green" image.

But, like other tourist destinations, there is more to this story. Robinson explores in her latest book, *The Killing Nation*, her native country's "dirty little envi-

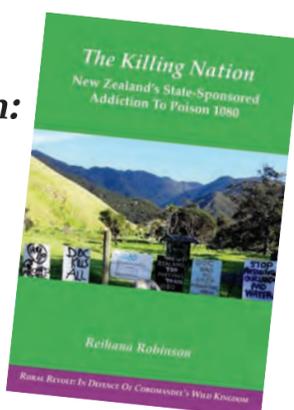
ronmental secret": New Zealand's highly controversial use of a super-toxin banned in most of the world, yet spread by helicopter over hundreds of thousands of acres of forest annually in an attempt by the government to control rats and several other "pest" animals.

Robinson tells the history of how "Poison 1080" (*sodium fluoroacetate*), first developed in the UK as a powerful insecticide, has become the backbone of a billion-dollar aerial pest control industry today in New Zealand, despite widespread opposition and known risks to a range of native and introduced species, as well as to human health.

Originally used for control of the introduced Australian brush-tail possum in steep, remote, and inaccessible terrain, Robinson reports that the poison is now routinely

dropped over open rolling pasture, into public drinking water catchments, directly into streams and rivers, and even within the limits of small towns and settlements. The poison is fatal to all oxygen-breathing organisms, from deer and wild boar to eels, bats, and birds. There is no antidote. Toxicologists confirm that it deals a particularly cruel and gruesome death.

As Robinson documents, New Zealand's outlier use of Poison 1080 is increasingly earning the country the reputation of the "toxic dump of the South Pacific." There have been international visitors and social media who have reported on collateral



see **BOOK REVIEW** page B3



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

The Value of Ritual

By LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – The morning starts when the cat jumps on the bed somewhere around six or six-thirty. The wake-up call means she's ready for breakfast. We go downstairs and fill one of her dishes. Then I wash my face, brush my teeth and turn the burner on under the teakettle. Amiga follows me downstairs and watches eagerly while I make a new fire on the old ashes in the wood stove. Once it's started, we return to the kitchen and make a nice, big carafe of drip coffee. Mug in hand and followed by cat, I return to the cellar and stoke up the fire. Then, ensconced in my rocker with a lap cat, we enjoy the first fire of the new day along with a hot cup of Joe.

The sunrise is streaking the sky through the cellar window; the first of the morning birds are at the feeder. It is quiet and peaceful; a lovely start to the day. Perhaps, best of all, these morning rituals are all accomplished with a minimum of wakefulness, on autopilot as we fully waken gently.

When I was still working in the schools, we had regular teacher training opportunities. A favorite topic for many was managing adolescent behavior in the classroom.

Turns out these students are often impulsive in behavior, and don't appear to understand consequences. They often have difficulty reading social cues. These behaviors are not designed to be annoying or resistant to the requests of adults. Rather, these behaviors are due to the continuing development of the frontal cortex in the brain which controls reasoning and helps us think before we act, as does the rapid increase in the connections between brain cells which promote coordinated thought, action and behavior. (As a side note, we all know adults who remain perpetually in an arrested phase of adolescence.)

Clearly adolescence is a challenging time for kids. They lack that brain map which allows for safe traveling on autopilot, and don't even know it. They act before thinking, and must rely on adults to guide, rather than chastise, them through these tough years, developing each at an individual rate. Rituals do not support them yet, but they seek independence and resent adult intervention at the same time.

As we grow, rituals frame our lives: birthdays, holidays, graduations, anniversaries, births, and

the end of lives of friends and family. They exist in all cultures and define us. One of my earliest dictionaries, a gift from my maternal grandmother, is inscribed with my name and age: 11 and $\frac{3}{4}$. How we mark the passage of time!

We are bemused by the way we adopt new rituals as we travel. We thrill to the excitement of new places, yet also ground ourselves in ritual as we make the place our own.

Two years in a row, we spent a month of winter in a charming casita surrounded by mountains and on the shore of a beautiful lake in Mexico. On the second floor, outside the bedroom, was a roomy screened-in porch. It gave us a splendid view of the town and the scenery which surrounded us. When we were not out and about, we were there on that porch admiring foreign bird life and flowers, reading and making plans for the day.

Every day in the midday heat, when most sane folks enjoyed *siesta*, we walked to the Mercado to pick up provisions, stopped at the burrito stand for some lunch, then returned to our home away from home to refresh ourselves with food and drink. In the early evening, we regularly walked to the lakeside to watch the sunsets which were always varied and always spectacular against the surrounding mountains.

Last, we chose a restaurant for our main meal of the day before walking in the growing darkness to the main square, where there was almost always dancing or singing. We also adopted the Sunday ritual of a parade or fiesta heralded by drums and horns. Like everyone else we assembled to the sounds to wait and cheer for the passing parade.

Now we travel closer to home, but whether in Maine or on the water in Gloucester, each place has its own rituals which mark the day and make each spot our own. Now, as we approach the season of many rituals characterized by many differing cultures, we think we enjoy the rituals that lead up to the major celebration as much, if not more, than the big day itself.

We look forward each season to choosing a tree, cutting it and bringing it home; to decorating the yard with solar lights; to hosting our annual Solstice party for old friends.

We love attending the local celebrations: *Welcome Yule*; the symphony Christmas concert; and for the first time this year, the Silverthorne radio drama of *A Christmas* see **GARDENER'S** page B2

Pet of the Week

Hi there, my name is Polly. I came to Dakin from another shelter in Scituate, MA. Not too much is known about my past, but here at Dakin I have been a bit shy and will need a patient person to help me settle into my new home.

I am all right living with other cats, and could perhaps live with a dog or

children but the folks here could talk to you more about that. I am looking for a warm and safe place to park my paws for the holidays...

Could that place be with you? If you think it might be, contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE

"POLLY"

Senior Center Activities

DECEMBER 17 THROUGH 21

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 12/17

8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot Clinic (by appt)

12 p.m. Pot Luck & Bingo

Tuesday 12/18

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Wednesday 12/19

9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach

9 to 11 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic

11:30 a.m. Friends' Meeting

12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 12/20

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Friday 12/21

12 p.m. Roast Beast Dinner

with TRIAD

12 p.m. Melinda Georgeson, Harp

1 p.m. Writers' Group

LEVERETT

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

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

Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednes-

day for a reservation.

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 congregating meals. Lunch is at 11:30 a.m., with reservations required 2 days in advance. Call (413) 423-3649 for meal information and reservations.

For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity.

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

Monday 12/17

8:45 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance

11:30 a.m. Breakfast Brunch

1 p.m. Pitch/Bridge Game

Tuesday 12/18

8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

11:30 a.m. Home Made Lunch

12:30 p.m. Friends Meeting

Wednesday 12/19

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

12:15 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

Thursday 12/20

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

Christmas Movie

Friday 12/21

9 a.m. Quilting Workshop

9:15 a.m. Flex & Stretch

9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun

10:15 a.m. M3 Exercise Games

12 p.m. Lunch

GARDENER'S from page B1

Carol. Now the "kids" are all grown and have their own lives, so there will be family gatherings not necessarily on Christmas Day, but perhaps the day before or a few after, and perhaps because of other commitments or the weather, at the new year.

We will all look forward to the return to this country of our older niece and her Taiwanese wife. This wished-for event has taught us much about the current constraints against entering the country as a non-citizen. They have been grinding their way through the legal processes re-

quired, as they do want to achieve their goal of coming home.

Japan has not been a gay-friendly society, and it has not been easy for Grace to be there with our niece, who has a teaching job. She has had to leave the country multiple times in order to continue to receive visas in order to return. It has been a daunting and expensive business consuming, so far, over two years. At last, she has arrived at the last step: an interview in Tokyo at the American embassy. If that goes well, they can make plans for traveling to the United States.

May we all at this season of gratitude remember those in greater need, and share all the rituals we all depend on to carry us through the hard times as they come, and to create memories of the good times as we enjoy them. Whatever your beliefs, light a candle against the darkness as another winter begins, and hope for a fresh start in the new year.

May the rituals you love sustain you through the coming long nights and short days, and may the New Year bring us all stronger light for the future.



FACES & PLACES



ROVATTI-LEONARD PHOTO

Angela Rovatti-Leonard, youth services librarian at the Montague Public Libraries, sent in this photo. "We recently invited Courtney and Kacie from Apex Dental, here in Turners, to visit our Homeschool Science group. For three weeks in December, the group is learning about different parts of the body," she writes.

"Wednesday, December 5 the theme was Teeth and Tongue. Courtney and Kacie brought activities for the children and spoke to them about oral hygiene. I've attached two pictures of one of the activities: Children were invited to brush the teeth of a stuffed animal. Children and parents thoroughly enjoyed their time and had fun learning from the friendly and knowledgeable dental hygienists at Apex!"

OUT OF THE PARK: December 2018

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello and Happy Holidays, everyone! It's that wonderful time of year to spend with family and friends, and to reflect on what's most important in our lives.

One thing that should most definitely be at the top of the list is participating in activities that keep us healthy and physically active. As we enter the winter season, it's very easy to eat that extra piece of candy and hibernate in the warm confines of our homes. Instead, give yourself the gift of staying healthy. Meet winter head-on! Your mind, body, and spirit will thank you come spring.

Speaking of staying active, we start off the New Year with our **Annual Sawmill River 10k Run**. The Sawmill Run will be held on Tuesday, January 1 in Montague Center at 10 a.m. We typically host approximately 200 runners who embark on a route that brings them through the sleepy back roads of this beautifully picturesque village. When the runners are finished, they are treated to our famous baked potatoes with all the fixings.

If you are a runner, or know of one, what better way to start off your



year. Pre-registration is available online at RunReg.com/sawmill-river-10k-run, or download a registration form on our webpage at montague.net. The Sawmill Run is a digitally-timed race that is sanctioned by the USA Track & Field Association.

If swimming is more your thing, then take note that our **Open Swim Program** at the Turners Falls High School pool will be starting up soon after the New Year. Open Swim will be held on Tuesday and Friday evenings starting January 4, and will go to March 8. **Family Swim** is held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., with **Adult Lap Swim** from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. For rates, please visit our website or give us a call.

We'll also be having our annual **American Red Cross Babysitting**

Course on Tuesday, February 5 and Wednesday, February 6. Those participating will obtain the knowledge and resources to become a great babysitter. This is a fun, interactive course that teaches students first aid and safety skills, as well as helpful tips on how to prevent and respond to emergencies. The course is open to youths ages 11 to 15, and fees are \$40 for Montague residents and \$45 for non-residents.

New Event Alert... New Event Alert! This winter we'll be bringing **Night Sledding** down to Unity Park on Saturday, February 16 from 4 to 9 p.m. We're going to illuminate the hill with light towers, get a campfire going, and enjoy some refreshments to keep us warm. This is going to be a pretty cool event, so let's hope we have the needed snow to have some quality sledding.

That's about it from here. Enjoy the holidays, and if you wish to get additional information on all of our programs, check out our webpage on montague.net. We'll talk to you in 2019!

Jon Dobosz is the director of parks & recreation for the town of Montague.

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BOOK REVIEW from page B1 ecological damage, accidental deaths of farm animals, secondary poisoning of protected species, and tainting of water sources with this supertoxin.

The Killing Nation is a cautionary, step-by-step study of how apparently well-intentioned conservation policy can drift, eventually going off the rails, captured by industry and beset by conflicts of interest. Environmentalists in the USA will find parallel stories to their own fears here.

For those lucky enough to consider a trip someday to this "land of happy sheep and green living,"

Robinson recounts several recent cases of the poison being accidentally dropped onto unsuspecting tourists tramping on public reserve trails. It's the story of New Zealand you won't read in a Lonely Planet travel guide, so read the book and plan your trip carefully.

The Killing Nation: New Zealand's State-Sponsored Addiction to Poison 1080 by Reihana Robinson is available at the Montague Center Library and on Amazon. Robinson's latest book of poetry, *Her Limitless Her*, is in the *Hoopla Series of Poetry* by Makaro Press.



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV

By **ABIGAIL TATARIAN**

We hope your December is sailing smoothly! Please check out the following new videos on our website and on our TV schedule:

- Avenue of Flowers 2018
- Turkey Day Football Game 2018
- Proposed Zoning Bylaw changes 2018
- Sonya Lamonakis Day 2018
- Power Canal Draw Down 2017
- Giving Tuesday for Root Yoga Studio

Next week in our news column, we will conclude our feature on our recent video, "Beaver Moon Gathering 2018." Stay tuned!

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, infomontaguetelevision@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!

CONCERT REVIEW

The Montague Community Band At the Holidays

By **MELISSA WLOSTOSKI**

TURNERS FALLS – From what I saw on their Facebook page, the Montague Community Band consists of middle-aged and elderly members who play instruments like the saxophone, clarinet and trumpet. As for their latest concert at the Shea Theater, I learned that through an article in the *Recorder*, the band is celebrating their 127 years with this holiday concert.

I also learned that the band was started in 1892 by six musicians calling themselves the Germania Cornet band. Then later, when another band called the Papermaker Band came around, that merged with the Cornet band leading to the Turner Falls military band being born.

The Montague Community Band is its current form. Their holiday concert was on December 1 at 2 p.m. at the theater.

The band performed the first song I heard at the concert, which I believe was called "A Christmas Brass Christmas Suite," very well, and were very well organized. The individual conducting the song did a good job too. In fact, I know the individual who was doing it. She was Hannah Smeltz, the wife of one of my neighbors. Her husband was there as well to support her.

They performed several medleys in the show. The songs in them I recognized were "Winter Wonderland," "I'll Be Home for Christmas," "We Wish you a Merry Christmas," and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer."

They didn't just do medleys of Christmas songs. One was done of Hanukkah songs. I knew one of them. It was called "I Had a Little Dreidel."

They did a medley of Christmas

songs with a jazz twist to it. "Santa Claus Coming to Town" was part of it. When they were doing that, a couple of them occasionally spoke the words "Santa Claus is coming to town." Another song done was "Joy to the World."

When they had an intermission, the audience was treated to a performance by a special guest, the Connecticut River Flute Choir. They played nicely together. Hannah herself played a flute with them.

The start of the second set featured something called "Christmas Festival." I think that had "Deck the Halls" and "Jingle Bells" as part of it, along with "Hallelujah (The Lord Has Come)."

It was mentioned that one of the medleys had a couple of songs with Santa Claus in it. Again, "Santa Claus Coming to Town" was one, the next was "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," and a third was "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

They did a *Nutcracker* medley, which is very appropriate because a lot of people associate that with Christmas. A couple of exotic songs were played which Hannah called "Israel hope songs." The song before that featured a saxophone player who was good. I enjoyed it a lot.

At the end of the show, the band played a medley called "Christmas Pop" that people could sing along with. The four songs done were "Santa Claus Comes to Town" for a third time, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" for a second time, "Silver Bells," and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." Some of the audience did the sing along.

They also gave them a standing ovation. The concert was good and these individuals should be proud of their musical abilities.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Shoplifted Blunts; Cold Barking Dog; High-Resolution Vest; Squirrels In Wall

Friday, 11/30

1 p.m. Caller would like to speak to an officer about a kayak he found that he believes was stolen.

5:05 p.m. 911 caller from L Street reporting a thin white male in her driveway and near her back door. When caller asked male what he was doing, he responded that he was looking for someone. Caller concerned because her driveway only services her house and the suspicious male would have no reason to be so close. Male no longer on scene; unknown direction of travel. Advised of options.

Sunday, 12/2

5:01 p.m. Officer conducting motor vehicle stop. Operator found to have several aliases. Dispatch researched all and found no active warrants. Citation issued for operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license.

5:27 p.m. Officer copied direct from control that two people are lost in the woods on the Mount Toby hiking trails. Officers en route to assist. Parties located; officers clear.

Monday, 12/3

3:57 p.m. Caller requesting to speak with an officer after being told by her friend whose name is on the lease that she has to be out of this apartment for good in half an hour. Caller concerned that if she is not out in that time then her belongings will be damaged. Officer spoke to everyone in the house and they all agreed to not mess with other people's things while they are moving out.

4:14 p.m. Caller calling back to request an officer return to this location after some name calling that had taken place after the officer left. Caller stated that she is still in her bedroom packing her things and will remain in that room until the officer arrives due to her high level of anxiety. Caller declined medical attention; will continue to move out her belongings. MPD units clear.

8:17 p.m. Caller from Federal Street complaining of motor vehicle parked across the street shining its lights into his home. Caller states that this happens every day between 6 and 8 p.m. Caller believes that this is suspicious activity and could be linked to the four or five hang-up calls he receives each day. Officers advised and en route. Officer advising that vehicle belongs to owner of the automotive shop across the street. MPD clear.

Wednesday, 12/5

11:23 a.m. Motor vehicle accident at Hatchery and

that a male party just shoplifted a pack of blunts from the store; states that party was hanging around in the store for a while, waited until the clerk was distracted at the counter, and grabbed them and ran. Last seen taking a right onto Montague City Road on foot.

Tuesday, 12/4

1:56 a.m. Officer checking on possibly intoxicated party on Newton Street. Courtesy transport provided.

9:35 a.m. Passing motorist advised detail officer that there is a steel beam in the road at State and Old State roads in Erving. Shelburne Control advised.

11:38 a.m. Report of minor trespassing on property on Hatchery Road. Area search negative.

1:27 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street requesting that an officer speak with her neighbor about putting rocks in the road. Caller expressed concern that when it snows and the plows come through, the rocks will be mixed into the snowbank at the end of her driveway and break her snowblower. Caller advises this has been an annual issue. Officer spoke with resident, who will be removing the rocks and replacing them with an orange cone to mark the drain.

3:54 p.m. Caller from Grove Street states that a German shepherd dog has been outside most of the day and is barking constantly. Animal control officer notified re: ongoing complaint.

5:11 p.m. Another neighbor complaining about dog barking on Grove Street; has been going on all day. Caller advised that we are working on a solution with the ACO.

5:34 p.m. Caller calling back to put it on record that the dog on Grove Street is still outside barking and the temperature is 30 degrees.

Thursday, 12/6

3:58 p.m. Caller from Avenue A would like to speak to an officer after a male stole money from her on December 3. Male is no longer at this address.

Greenfield roads; one car off road in ditch; no apparent injuries/smoke/fluids. Occupant out of vehicle. No visible damage to vehicle. Courtesy transport to Sunderland line provided; operator will make arrangements to have vehicle pulled out of ditch.

2:30 p.m. Walk-in reports that his wallet was stolen approximately an hour ago. He had placed the wallet on the service counter at Food City and walked away. A few minutes later, he realized he had forgotten his wallet and returned, but it was no longer there. Officer en route to Food City to review surveillance footage. A summons was issued to a 26-year-old Turners Falls man for larceny under \$1,200.

3:48 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a man dressed in black clothing was walking through an area on Plains Road where he is trying to hunt. He feels that this is an illegal action. Officer spoke to man in black, who was also wearing a high-resolution vest; no problems found. Male was walking on a public road and was not deliberately trying to interfere.

3:56 p.m. Caller wants it on record that the German shepherd on Grove Street has been outside and barking pretty consistently for most of the day.

4:36 p.m. Caller from Grove Street states that there was a confrontation between her and a neighbor after she went over and asked for her to put the dogs inside. Investigated.

10:51 p.m. Officer advising he spoke with a male party outside of First Congregational Church, near the manger. Male claimed he was looking for his wallet.

Friday, 12/7

9:30 p.m. Caller advising that the plant at Cabot Station behind her house is making a strange sound, like a large fan running. Northfield Control Room advised; stated that things seem fine from that vantage point, but they would continue to monitor the issue.

Subject has two active warrants. Report taken.

11:49 a.m. Library director advising that they have found a hypodermic needle in the bathroom. They also found a firearm ID belonging to a resident in Erving in the parking lot. Officer will pass ID along to an Erving officer.

4:22 p.m. Caller from Family Dollar requesting that officer respond after a shoplifting event that took place 40 minutes ago; male came into the store and ran out with a wireless speaker. Report taken.

Saturday, 12/8
11:20 a.m. Caller from Third Street reports that someone just opened her screen door and checked her main doorknob; same left when they couldn't open the door. Investigated.

4:15 p.m. Caller from Second Street complaining of squirrels in his walls, requesting to speak to the Triad Officer. Caller states that he brought concern to landlord, who filled his walls with bug spray and foam. Now, when he turns on his bathroom light, he can see sparks. Caller believes that sparks are from wires in walls damaged by squirrels. TFFD advised and en route to check house; advise that complaint is legitimate and will be following up with owner of building.

11:10 p.m. Dispute over parking outside Power-town building on Fourth Street. Advised of options.

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TAVERN from page B1

affordability; to their staff, who are constantly being encouraged to live, learn and love good food and drink; and above all else, to their well-conceived mission statement: *Make every meal great!*

Having been a server myself for several years, I wanted to ask the question I ask every chef I meet: "Walker, what do you do about 'high maintenance' foodies?"

The thirty-eight-year-old seasoned chef chuckled at my question. "Who am I to judge?" he offered, a "pope-ish" response that I appreciated.

"I think when people want to come and eat, I feel it's my love in life to feed them," he continued. "I want them to enjoy themselves. I want them to be comfortable eating here, and if we have the capability and the product to put some really tasty food together we are going to do it! We try really hard to accommodate guests."

Walker noted, "We will do almost anything for anyone: vegan or vegetarian, anyone who has special dietary needs or who is 'eating in fashion,' we will create a satisfying meal as long as we have the capability to do so."

"Even when you're preparing over 100 meals on a Saturday night when you're turning people away?" I interjected.

"Yes. Even when we're busy," Walker said confidently.

My conversation with Walker and Larry meandered around, relaxed and casual, much in the same way he and his staff portray their expectations of hospitality. We discussed locally sourced meats, poultry and produce (with ramps and mushrooms often being foraged from area woodlands), and Walker's exceptional skill in marrying

his unique plates filled with house prepared charcuterie, in-house smoked brisket, mussels with sausage flavored garlic wine sauce, or Butter Poached Monkfish, with the various libations that are offered.

Walker had collaborated with his good friend, chef and colleague Ken Scarboni, on the art of wine and food when he first took over the Gill Tavern four years ago. Ken assisted Walker in creating a wine and beer menu that would satisfy any guest's palate with delicious and hard-to-forget offerings.

I complimented his waitstaff by saying, "I felt like I wanted to invite the convivial waiter to join my friend and I, she was just that open, engaging and well versed in the menu."

Walker remarked, "I know what you mean! Our staff has been able to navigate a very careful balance of not being there, but being there, so our guests feel like they are being taken care of, but not being intruded upon."

As with the making of most talented chefs, Walker told me that he owes his love of cooking and his penchant for not just feeding people, but offering them the kinds of nourishment and nurturing that makes the Gill Tavern an atypical dining experience, to his mom.

"We've cooked together all my life," he said. "I have never really been fortunate enough to have a mentor, so throughout my culinary career I tried to push myself by always choosing to get in over my head. I have always sought out restaurants and kitchens that were above my skill level. But if I were to choose the one person who had influenced me most, it would be my mother. We're best friends."

"Let's talk about skill level," I said to Walker. "When I was last here, it was clear to me that you and Larry have the 'perfect marriage in the kitchen.'"

"Yes. We sort of do! And it's been a great boost," Walker replied. "Larry has a ton of experience. He is much more detailed-oriented than I am, as far as charcuterie and baking. There's a lot to do here. We make everything in-house except for our hamburger rolls and French bread. And then I have the business of running the Gill Tavern, and it goes beyond the cooking. Larry has really picked up the slack."

Walker assured me as we finished the interview that "our goal has always been to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable eating food that feels like 'fine dining' but is not stuffy. I think we did it."

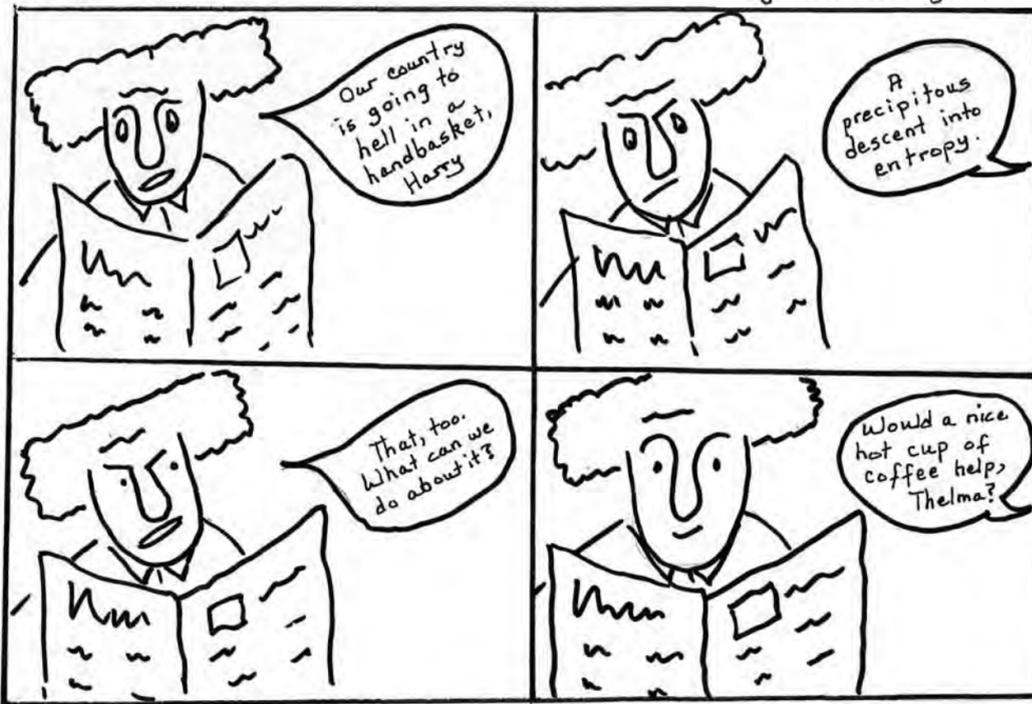
I will be returning in January for a culinary carnival of sorts at the Gill Tavern. Walker and Larry will be hosting a locally sourced Tasting Menu. Guests will enjoy a five- to eight-course meal consisting of small portions, multiply coursed. The point, I am told, is to sample a variety of dishes, their textures and savory flavor combinations, within a couple of bites.

I hope to see you there!



OVER THE HILL

by Ann O. Nymous



T-RUMP

by denis f. bordeaux



RECIPE

The Tavern Monkfish

for the soup:

- 1 knob of ginger
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 stick of lemon grass
- 1/2 white onion
- 1 tablespoon of yellow curry paste

Small dice all of the above, and saute until it "sweats" in 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil. After onions are translucent, add 4 ounces of Mirin (a rice wine similar to Sake) and reduce by half.

Add 2 cans of unsweetened coconut milk and 2 cups of chicken stock. After soup has simmered for 30 minutes, add the zest of 3 limes, 1 ounce of fish sauce, and 4 ounces of brown sugar.

Add half a bunch of cilantro, washed and whole, and let steep for 30 mins. Pass it all through a fine mesh strainer, and add salt to taste.

for the sticky rice:

Put 2 cups of sushi rice in a heavy-bottomed pot with 1 1/2 cups of water. Bring to a simmer and turn heat down and cover for 20 minutes. When rice is done, stir in 1/4 cup of rice wine vinegar and 1/4 cup of white sugar.

the fish:

Pan sear approximately 1 1/2 pounds monkfish filets or enough for four or five servings. Monkfish may have a membrane attached to one side of the filet; remove this first if so. Sear on high heat for 4 minutes, and finish in the oven for 7 minutes.

Assemble rice, soup, and fish on plates.

"We serve it with baby bok choy and wild mushrooms, but many other vegetables will work," the Gill Tavern writes. "We also use our house smoked and dehydrated scallops, called 'conpoy,' for seasoning; hydrating them and then running them over a microplane. Cilantro is also a good garnish.

"Currently, we have retired this popular dish to serve scallops, which are in season right now."

**December 21:
Solstice Skywatching
At UMass Sunwheel**

AMHERST – The public is invited to witness sunrise and sunset among the tall standing stones of the UMass Amherst Sunwheel on the day of the winter solstice, Friday, December 21, at 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Heavy rain or snow will cancel the gatherings.

At the hour-long events, UMass astronomer Stephen Schneider will explain why the sun rises and sets at its most southerly position on this day. He will also explain the design of the Sunwheel and other archaeological sites built to mark this day.

The sun reaches its southernmost position at 5:23 p.m. local time, marking the astronomical change of seasons. If it is clear at sunrise there will be an opportunity to view the "morning star" Venus and at sunset the rising of the nearly full moon. At the evening session, a solar telescope will be set up to safely observe the surface of the sun.

The UMass Amherst Sunwheel is located south of McGuirk Alumni Stadium, just off Rocky Hill Road about one-quarter mile south of University Drive. Visitors to the Sunwheel should be prepared for freezing temperatures and wet footing. Donations are welcome to help with the cost of additional site work and future events.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Top: The restaurant's current scallop dish. Bottom: Fresh figs.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

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

Brattleboro Museum, Brattleboro VT: *Addiction Panel at BMAC*. Panel discussion on the state of addiction and recovery in the greater Brattleboro area, with area experts and officials. 7 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Rose and the Bros*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14

First Mountain Design, 142 Depot Road, Leverett: *Studio Sale*. Art to wear, locally designed and sewn. 3 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Holiday Youth Art Show and Sale and Green Screen*. Part of It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls; original art and crafts for sale made by community youth. Also, get a shot in your favorite winter scene, free!. 4 p.m.

FAB, Turners Falls: *It's a Wonderful Life Video Installation*. Second street boutique will have video installation of the iconic Christmas movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*. 4:30 p.m.

Family Center, Turners Falls: *Pop-Up Shop*. Handmade gifts by local artists, and hot cider. Part of It's a Wonderful Night in Turners Falls holiday event. 5 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Kath Bloom, Aisha Burns*. \$. 6 p.m.

Arms Library, Shelburne Falls: *A Christmas Carol Read-a-thon*. Everyone is welcome to come read or just listen to the classic tale by Dickens. 6:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band*. 6:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Gibson Brothers*. Bluegrass. \$. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Holiday Spectacular*. Mr Drag and Karl (aka Joe Dulude II and Katherine Adler) are your hosts for the evening. Join them as they invite your neighbors, friends and special guests for an evening of song, dance, spoken word and comedic skits. It's like a Judy Garland holiday special but with Eggtooth's signature

nature Valley twist! \$. 7:30 p.m.
Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Zebu!, Bong Wish, Taxidermists*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

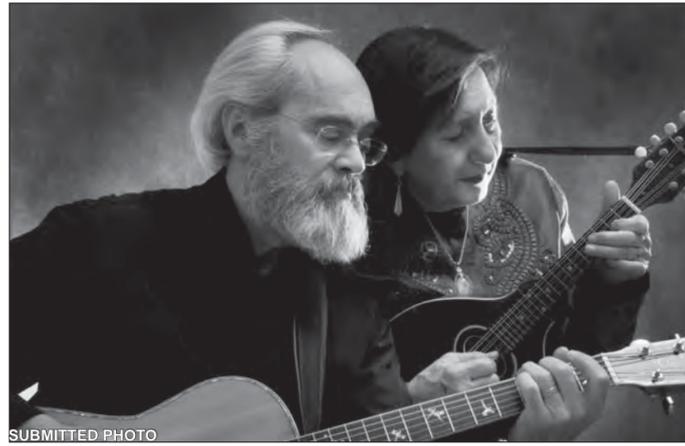
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jim Eagan & Dennis Avery*. 9 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

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

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Mrs Claus Takeover*. Make wrapping paper, gift bags, cards, pom-poms and more. Donation and raffle and fun. \$. 12 p.m.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

With a career that has spanned forty years, Magpie has traveled the globe, bringing its unique sound to audiences everywhere. Magpie performs various folk music styles and their songs touch on historical, cultural and social interests, in two-part harmony with guitar, harmonica, mandolin and dulcimer. Saturday, December 15 at 7:30 p.m. at Mt. Toby Concerts, Leverett. Donation \$10 to \$30; for more information call (413) 336-2589.

Blue Dragon Apothecary, Greenfield: *Herbalism on the Border*. Fundraiser with music by *Hung Trucker* and art by *Dauida Carta*. Refreshments featuring tastings and Golden Dragon Milk. Donation. 5 p.m.

Mt. Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Magpie*. *Greg Artzner* and *Terry Leonino* perform various folk music styles. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Wendell Town Hall: *Green Sisters*. Full Moon Coffeehouse series presents these four sisters rocking bluegrass tunes in a merry benefit performance for the Community Network for Children. Open mic at 7:30, concert at 8. Dessert-o-rama. Donation. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls:

Holiday Spectacular. Mr Drag and Karl (aka Joe Dulude II and Katherine Adler) are your hosts for the evening. Join them as they invite your neighbors, friends and special guests for an evening of song, dance, spoken word and comedic skits. It's like a Judy Garland holiday special but with Eggtooth's signature Valley twist! \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lobsterz from Mars*. Grateful Dead tribute band. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Masala, Ch-Chunk*. Jazz fusion. \$. 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Black Pyramid, Escuela, Dust Witch*. \$. 8 p.m.

Winter annual dance concert. \$. 2:30 p.m.
Wesley Methodist Church, Hadley: *Greenfield Harmony Concert*. Multi-generational, 60-voice ensemble led by *Mary Cay Brass*. Benefit for a scholarship for Bosnian teens. \$. 5 p.m.
Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Traditional Irish Music in the Wheelhouse*. 7 p.m.
Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. 9 p.m.

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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.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *Season of Light Holiday show* with fine art and craft by member artists. Through December 23.

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. 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. See story in this section.

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center, Leverett: *Holiday Shop*. Weekends in December.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *No Rules, small sculpture by Mary Hakkinen*, from November 23 through December 24.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *One Size Fits All*. Banners and altered cabinet cards by *Amy Johnquest*. November 2 through December 31. 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.

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

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WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

Anan Zorba Paintings at the Herrick Gallery

By NINA ROSSI

WENDELL – Paintings in the Herrick Gallery at the Wendell library by Anan Zorba provoke longings for more simplicity and boldness. Realized with carefully placed knife strokes, his hard-edged graphic designs are reminiscent of geometric pop art of the 1950s.

This collection of Zorba's paintings is called "Thrones." Writes the artist in his show statement, "Our homes are our castles. Thinking about the importance of furniture in our daily lives, the chair takes center stage in these paintings."

Zorba studied upholstery in high school, and received a degree in interior design and taught graphic arts for four years. "These paintings are intended to have the feel of print advertising," the statement says.

I met Zorba recently at the Whistle Stop Cafe in Millers Falls to find out more about him. The New Salem resident was born in Nablus, Palestine and has been in Massachusetts for seven or eight years.

His first artistic experience was when he had surgery in the third grade and stayed home for an extended convalescence. His mother gave him waxed paper to trace pictures with, "so when you are little, you can feel like you are drawing something great," he explained.

After completing his studies in the graphic design field, he com-

pleted an artist residency in Paris, France. His work was in an open studio in the city's 19th *arrondissement*, or district. "We taught people,

ing for craft store super-giant A.C. Moore in the framing department. The couple moved to western Massachusetts about three years ago.

Zorba now has two sons, 8 and 3 years old, and is renovating his house in New Salem to add a wood shop to it, and taking English classes at GCC while spending time with his sons and making art. "When I was a student it was difficult for me to buy the materials," recalled Zorba. "When I started teaching, one of my goals was for the students to not spend much money on materials. They are training on the use of the brush, their eye, and we didn't use high quality acrylic, just the house paint, and fabric on stretchers, extra fabric that we had around us, and we used house primer and stuff. I use the house paint for my kids; they see me painting and they want to do the same thing as well. It's

fun; I let them pour the paint, and see what happens."

Teaching would be his first choice of occupation, but the artist realizes that in this area those positions are very competitive. "I hear there are a lot of highly educated people in this area, they have master degrees or PhD's. I have a bachelor's degree from a different country, so I have to work more on that, and then – I have no time, especially with the kids," confided Zorba. He aims to make wood products such as cutting

boards and toys in his home workspace, and to hold workshops there using recycled materials and pin-hole cameras to create art.

In his paintings, he tries to control himself, using few colors, and sometimes he plays with the scale of things, making things wider or narrower in novel ways. A series of thin, parallel lines running across some of the pieces in "Thrones" have a unique origin: "When I first came here, I came to a little town, and because of the time change of seven hours between here and where we came from, we had more energy at night. We used to go walk around the block, and it was Christmas time in 2010, and I saw a couple houses the people sitting in their living room, with the light on through their windows."

This is much different from Pal-

estine, he says, where most people live in higher buildings and are more private. "It was nice to see the people sitting in their house across from you, with the windows open, while we were walking," he said. "The lines make the blinds on the windows."

The paintings in Wendell are for sale, but Zorba has designed a unique method for pricing them. "I don't like to sell art, but, sometimes you have to. Pricing is a hard topic," he admitted. However, he is willing to sell them using a silent auction, which he hopes will still make some money and allow people to take his art home. People can submit their bids at the library up to December 21. Winners will be notified by December 23, and the exhibit will remain up until the end of December.



ROSSI PHOTO

The paintings in Anan Zorba's Thrones exhibit are meant to look like prints, but they are made using a palette knife.

and would have weekly openings where people could come see how we were working from start to finish and talk with us," he said. "We used painting, lights, art projections and sounds. My work was a lot different, it was mostly political, about checkpoints and stuff."

He went back to teaching in Palestine for a while and then visited the US with his American-born wife, eventually moving here to the Worcester area. He honed his English-speaking skills while work-



Library hours are Tuesdays, 12 to 7 p.m., Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursdays 3 to 7 p.m., Saturdays 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and Sundays 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Call (978) 544-3559 for information. Coming next in the Herrick Gallery for January and February will be Phyllis Lawrence, showing her hooked rugs and textile arts; March and April highlights the illustrations of Gary Lippincott.

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