

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 11

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 10, 2019

## Shea Rolls Out Red Carpet As *Bigfoot* Hits Big Screen



The town-owned theater is newly equipped with a projector and screen.

By NINA ROSSI

**TURNERS FALLS** – Three years after the reorganization of the town-owned Shea Theater into a new nonprofit with a fresh board of directors, a state-of-the-art movie screen and projector have been installed, greatly expanding the possibilities for the 92-year-old theater's use.

More thrilling even than the idea of going to see movies and documentaries right in downtown Turners Falls is the fact that the inaugural film to be shown on the big screen will be one written and directed by Montague native Robert D. Krzykowski: *The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then the Bigfoot* will have its western Massachusetts premiere at the Shea on Saturday, January 26.

News of the big event crashed the Shea's website on Tuesday afternoon shortly after the announcement, according to Shea board of directors president Monte Belmonte. The film has garnered much

positive attention and rave reviews when shown at various national and international film festivals; it premiered in the Boston area in November, but the Shea is hosting the only western Mass screening before it sees wide release in theaters on February 8.

"We are getting permission from the DPW and the town to close down the block in front of the theater and do a red carpet and photo wall, with the big Hollywood spotlight, all that sort of stuff," says Belmonte. "It will only play the one day. We anticipate it will sell out."

Dean's Beans is sponsoring the premiere event at the 300-plus seat theater, which will also feature a post-film conversation and question-and-answer session with writer/producer/director Krzykowski, composer Joe Kraemer (*Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*, *Jack Reacher*), producer Lucky McKee (*May*, *The Woods*), and host Belmonte.

Sam Elliott, who stars in the see **BIGFOOT** page A7

### MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Big Sidewalk Grant; Small Response to Parking Pilot

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague town planner Walter Ramsey announced at the January 7 selectboard meeting that the town has been awarded \$311,369 from the state for sidewalk and street crossing upgrades. He said that more than half of the money, \$167,000, will be earmarked for addressing a dangerous curve on Main Street in Montague Center that has been a source of anxiety among local residents for years.

The street turns sharply to the north at the intersection of Main and School streets, and then heads down to the Montague Bookmill. Last October the town, following a meeting packed with Montague Center residents, placed orange cones along the curve between the street and the mostly-degraded sidewalk. Town officials portrayed this as a temporary solution pending the state grant.

Some local residents have called for a stoplight near the curve, but this option does not appear to be part of the project at this time. The award letter from the state says the grant will be used to "add curb extensions, install crosswalks, ADA ramps, reconstruct sidewalk."

Three other projects were fund-

ed, according to the letter. One would add bike racks, crosswalk stripes, ADA ramps, and a speed radar at the intersection of Unity and High streets and Millers Falls Road for \$54,158.

A second project upgrades the crosswalk on Avenue A between town hall and the Discovery Center (\$66,737). The price tag would finance sidewalk improvements, curb extensions, ADA ramps, and a speed radar sign.

A third project (\$23,350) would improve the bike lane along Avenue A and Montague City Road.

Ramsey said that the town must pay for project design and engineering, which could be completed by the "construction season" this summer. He would not commit to a time frame for particular projects, but noted that they must be completed by June 30, 2020.

Two projects in the original grant proposal will not be funded in this round – crosswalk upgrades near the Montague Center post office and the construction of a sidewalk on Keith Street between Scotty's convenience store and Hillcrest School. Ramsey said the latter project could possibly be funded under the state Safe Routes to School program, to see **MONTAGUE** page A5

### G-M SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## Gill Elementary Flood Relocates Classes; Sullivan Calls for Second Dean of Students

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – The long-awaited well water treatment system has finally been installed at Gill Elementary School, and this weekend, according to district facilities manager Heath Cummings, "some of the new equipment ended up spraying into the entire building, and since there's no water sensors in the building, it went undetected all weekend long." Early Monday morning, a member of maintenance staff discovered the building's basement was flooded with three feet of water.

Gill's 121 students were given the day off on Monday, and on Tuesday were transported to makeshift classes

at Hillcrest and Sheffield Elementary schools in Turners Falls. "It was an awesome day," superintendent Michael Sullivan told the school committee Tuesday night. "I mean, it wasn't great in terms of the amount of learning that occurred... [but] people really rose to the occasion, and it was great to see."

Cummings called the flood a "major calamity." "The damage was pretty extensive – the entire heating system was knocked out of service," he told the committee. Though some of the building's electrical wiring was affected, he said, the water "luckily" stopped mere inches from the main line into the building. The building's hot-water heater was replaced and the boiler repaired, he

reported, and as of the Tuesday meeting he said there was a "very good" chance students would be able to return to their school on Thursday.

"This will be an insurance claim," said business manager Joanne Blier. "We have contacted the insurance company."

Cummings and Blier said that fans were running, and the basement was emptied of old furniture and other wood and cardboard material so as to prevent mold.

The two were already scheduled to meet with the school committee to seek a priority ranking of the district's capital improvement requests to the towns of Gill and Montague. After some discussion, the committee

see **GMRSD** page A5

## Opponents of Sheffield Subdivision Challenge School Rezoning Proposal

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE** – On Tuesday, January 15 the Montague planning board will hold a hearing on the final draft of a long-awaited town zoning bylaw overhaul. If the board approves the draft, the new bylaws are expected to go to a special town meeting scheduled for February 19.

The planning board will also hear a proposal to break off three small parcels of land along Davis Street for the development of three "affordable" housing units. This land sits on the east end of a large field that separates three connected Gill-Montague school district buildings on the north end of the property – Sheffield Elementary, the Sheffield auditorium and gym, and the district administration building – from the Hillcrest Elementary School on the south end.

All this is town land, leased to the school district, and the lease is up for renewal. The proposal before the planning board would separate three 0.4-acre parcels on the east side of the field from the land currently leased to the district and designate them for residential use.

The January 15 meeting could be



Town officials briefly floated a plan to designate this strip of land on Davis Street for three owner-occupied affordable homes. An unrelated effort by the planning board to eliminate single-use zoning for schools has come under fire as a consequence.

a lively one.

The issue has generated a good deal of discussion, on the Hill and on Facebook. "Sooo, they expect kids to just stay inside all day and not expend energy? That is insane..." posted one resident. Wrote another: "I think you would lose many family's to move out of district and what if a sex offender moves in there."

Several residents said that the

houses would be built on land currently used for cheerleader practice, while others suggested using the land currently occupied by the remnants of the Railroad Salvage building as an alternative for affordable housing. Selectboard member Michael Nelson responded by pointing out that the latter property is not owned by the town.

At last Monday's selectboard see **OPPONENTS** page A3

### ERVING SELECTBOARD

## Library Construction Costs Come In High

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday, the Erving selectboard awarded the contract for building the new library on Northfield Road to Marois Construction Inc. of South Hadley, with building construction costs of \$3.837 million. The town received bids from seven other companies, with the highest bid at \$4.73 million. The board also awarded Marois the contract for an emergency generator at a cost of \$65,000.

All eight bids came in higher than the pre-bid cost estimate of \$3.173 million. In addition, owner's project manager Daniel Pallotta admitted he had made a math error by including the appropriation for purchasing the property in the money available for construction costs. Therefore, according to Pallotta, "We are short money for FF&E [fixtures, furniture and equipment], the photovoltaic array, and generator... I recommend that the town and trustees award the project with the knowledge that we will have to find a way to fund those three items."

In order to bring the total project costs in line with the \$4.73 million total approved by town meeting, Pallotta presented a spreadsheet where he separated out approximately \$600,000 in costs for the solar array, emergency generator, and FF&E.

He also presented revised budget line items, reducing the amounts for non-construction items including completed tasks such as demolition of the see **ERVING** page A7



Stacy Collins captured this rare sight on Sunday: a moose on the French King Bridge! Thanks to Stacy, and also to our Erving reader Marty Garcia for bringing her photo to our attention.

# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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## Don Clegg Memorial

Many readers and neighbors have asked about a memorial event for Don Clegg, the longtime distribution manager of this newspaper, who passed away in November after a brief illness. The date has been set for Sunday, January 27 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls.

Don was also president of the board of the Friends of the Discovery Center, and over the years there were many times he would share updates in our newsroom about increased public use of the hall for programming, events, and the benefit coffeehouse series he helped establish. We are sure he would find it an appropriate venue for the community to gather and reflect in celebration of his life.

If you have photos of Don, or any other items to share at the me-

morial, including refreshments, please get in touch with this paper. And pass word along to any friends who might not always get a chance to read it.

A snow date is set for February 10, same time and place. Thanks to the Discovery Center staff for their help.

Don was an essential member of our small team, and besides missing his gregarious, good-natured company, we're still struggling to fill his shoes.

(If you have a bit of free time, once a week or once a month, there are all sorts of ways you can help pitch in and keep the local news flowing. Contact [volunteer@montague-reporter.org](mailto:volunteer@montague-reporter.org) and we'll figure out how to plug you in.)

In the meantime, we look forward to seeing many of you at Don's memorial later this month!

## Student Criticism

My name is Madison McCassie. I am a junior at Turners Falls High School. I have been a student in the Gill-Montague Regional School District since 2014, and graduated from Great Falls Middle School in 2016. I am writing this letter on the behalf of my fellow students, who are concerned about the present TFHS and GFMS leadership under Principal Annie Leonard.

It is important for members of this community to know this is a student-led effort to improve our climate. TFHS is our school. And we have been concerned about low morale among staff, high turnover, students choosing out, and the recent reports of civil rights violations – all of which became more and more noticeable in 2015, when Ms. Leonard became our principal.

We have had limited opportunity to express our concerns, so I initiated a student survey. I have received comments from a large number of TFHS students, sophomores to seniors, who describe Ms. Leonard as:

- Not involved, or interested, in the regular day-to-day routine of school life;
- Failing to place student academic interests over class schedule convenience;
- Unapproachable and aloof;
- Overlooking racist remarks and actions towards minority students;
- Targeting minority students for unnecessary searches;
- Dismissing student-to-student sexual harassment claims with remarks such as "try to avoid them as best as you can, and you'll be OK";
- Unorganized and easily confused

when addressing the student body;

- Removed from the general community;
- Rarely making eye contact when she does look up from her handheld computer;
- Not assertive while disciplining repeat student offenders; and
- So protected by the superintendent that many fear retaliation for expressing these thoughts.

All of these have resulted in a negative school atmosphere. And that is impacting our education. Most students feel Principal Leonard is not an appropriate fit for our school, or needs to reconsider her approach to education at TFHS and GFMS.

My survey is still active. I welcome additional thoughts and concerns from all students and parents. Please email me at [mccassiemadison@yahoo.com](mailto:mccassiemadison@yahoo.com).

I want to thank the *Reporter* for giving me the opportunity to let our community adults and parents know what is happening to us as kids in the school run by Ms. Leonard.

We do notice unfairness. I was told I could not use specific names during my attempt to get help from the school committee, obviously because it was critical. But the superintendent and the school committee can then praise Ms. Leonard publicly, and use her name without investigating the truth of her comments.

I also feel we are not listened to or taken seriously because we are kids. Maybe the adults can help us. Thank you for reading, and caring.

**Madison McCassie**  
TFHS Class of 2020



Bridgette Chaffee and Chris Menegoni get ready for a Saturday night in the kitchen of their restaurant, Great Falls Harvest. The couple plans to expand the kitchen and open a market in an adjoining space.

## Letters to the Editors

### Thanks Safety First Reminding

### May Not Be The Answer

On Tuesday, January 1, Montague Parks & Recreation held our Annual Sawmill River 10K Run in Montague Center. Approximately 140 runners from throughout the entire region participated in this major fundraising event, which supports our Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program. The race would not have been possible without the investment of time, energy, resources, and funding from many within our fine community.

We would like to thank A.H. Rist Insurance Co., Marathon Sports, Greenfield Savings Bank, Judd Wire, Turn It Up Music, Renaissance Builders, and Brick & Feather Brewery for their generous financial support, as well as the Montague Common Hall, Sugarloaf Mountain Athletic Club, and First Congregational Church of Montague Center for their services.

As many of you know, volunteer assistance is essential to the success of an event of this magnitude. Therefore, considerable appreciation goes out to the Montague Parks & Recreation Commissioners, the Franklin County Amateur Radio Club, the Montague Highway Department, and the countless number of volunteers who spent a good portion of their New Year's Day helping us out during registration and at the finish line.

Finally, we would like to thank the runners who participated in the Sawmill Run. We appreciate your support of MPRD programs, and look forward to seeing you again on January 1st of 2020!

**Jon Dobosz, CPRP**  
Director of Parks & Recreation  
Town of Montague

My question for the Greenfield town council, respectfully:

While downtown has a lot of great stores, a movie theater and library, etc., I and others do support both small businesses and big businesses, etc., in town. We believe they both help each other out in a great way, and also create jobs and help boost the tax base and the economy.

That makes a balance of the best of both worlds, making it more business-friendly and safer in a city or town. It will make a better quality of life so we don't lose population.

Also, think of great ways for things to stay in town so we have balance and compromise. Are you aware of the problem of trying to safely cross the crosswalks? One, in particular, on Main Street, between the library and the All Souls' Church by the Garden Theater. There have been many times cars have refused to stop and kept on going when I am halfway across the walk.

I am always very careful when crossing. State and federal law says that crossing the cars are supposed to stop when you're crossing, but they don't. 22 News-WWLP interviewed me and a town official about crosswalk safety. What can be done by you, as council members to make the crosswalks safer?

Also, make the parking less confusing, and easier to prevent getting a ticket out of the blue at random times. The situation with the meters and parking, where people have tickets for parking every month, makes you not want to park downtown anymore.

**Joe R. Parzych**  
Greenfield and Gill

## Diagnosis Offered

Racism is a mental illness. Anger may be healthy, but hate is mental illness. Any child found exhibiting racist attitudes should be put with a psychologist for mandatory screening. And so should that student's parents.

It is time for racism to be called out for what it is, aberrant and unhealthy mentally ill behavior.

**John Walter**  
Shutesbury

**Mike Naughton**  
Millers Falls

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# LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

Be sure to bring a lunch!

My husband would think I was crazy if he knew I was wishing for snow right now. Growing up in central New Hampshire, I had a lifetime's worth of cold and snow and everyone who knows me knows that I'm not a big fan of winter, but even I am getting tired of the rain, mud, and general lack of cold and snow so far this winter.

Granted, the dearth of snow and ice has made traveling and getting out of the house easier, but we're missing out on so many fun winter activities!

Speaking of fun winter activities, **Wendell State Forest** will host all kinds of different snow sports, including some I've never heard of, every Saturday from January 12 through February 23, weather permitting.

Between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. each of those Saturdays, there will be outdoor ice skating, gentle sled hockey, cross-country skiing, sit-skiing, snowshoeing, kicksledding, and snowmobile rides! The activities are free, but you need to register in advance by calling (413) 577-3840 or e-mailing [Jackie.brown@mass.gov](mailto:Jackie.brown@mass.gov).

The Winter Trails Day event at Northfield Mountain last Saturday was cancelled due to the lack of snow, but you will have another chance to try snowshoeing at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center on Saturday, January 19 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

January's full moon has often been called the Wolf Moon or Snow Moon. Join other nighttime adventurers for a snowshoe hike under the light of the moon. Natural history of the night, quotes, and moon lore will be shared during this two-mile adventure. A hot drink and snacks by the wood stove make the perfect ending to this invigorating winter evening.

Wear wind pants or gaiters if you have them, dress in warm layers, and bring a water bottle to take on the trail. Warm, waterproof footwear is essential. All levels of experience are welcome for this moderately strenuous outdoor adventure.

The event is suitable for adults and teens age 13 and older and is free with your own snowshoes and \$16 with snowshoe rental. Pre-registration is required by calling (800) 859-2960.

The Great Falls Discovery Center's Kiddleoscope program is not happening on Friday, January 11, but will resume on Friday, January 18. It will feature a story, craft, and games based on the theme of Winter Bugs.

The program is geared toward tykes 3 to 6 years old and their caregivers, and meets in the Great Hall from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank at 282 Avenue A wants you to relax and unplug on Saturday, January 12 for their "No Computers Allowed Games" event between 10 and 11:30 a.m.

Stop by with family and friends to play one of several old-fashioned board games such as checkers, chess and tic tac toe. They even have Candy Land for the kids. The Community Room has ample table space for several games to be going on at the same time. Reservations are not required. The bank provides all materials and light refreshments. Sounds like fun for the whole family!

I've recently joined the Deerfield Valley Art Association, and I found out that they are going to be holding a tag sale fundraiser at the DVAA Center for the Arts Gallery and Gift Shop at 105 Main Street, Northfield on January 18 through 20 and January 25 through 27 - Fridays through Sundays - from noon to 4 p.m. each of those days.

They are looking for donations of art and craft supplies, art display items such as frames and ea-

sels, and art books and magazines to sell. You can drop off your donations at the gallery on Monday, January 14 between 10:30 a.m. and 12 noon. Call (413) 225-3132 for more information.

Winter hours for the gallery and gift shop are Fridays and Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m. It's a friendly, unpretentious gallery that I enjoy visiting. The association is open to all artists for an annual fee of \$40 to help cover expenses.

Beginning Thursday, January 17 and continuing each consecutive Thursday through February 14, local professional musician and educator Marcy Gregoire's Under the Tree Music Company will present a children's music series, "Music in the Morning."

This is a 5-week series for children ages 0 to 8 at Hawks and Reed Performing Arts Center, 289 Main Street, Greenfield, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The program comprises interactive music, movement with Hilary Lake, puppets, costumes, and more!

The series is \$20 per child age 1 and up, or \$5 for each class, and free for adults and infants. Tickets can be purchased through Under the Tree Music Company's Facebook page, or at [hawksandreed.ticketfly.com](http://hawksandreed.ticketfly.com). For questions, contact Hawks and Reed at (413) 774-0150 or [marketing@hawksandreed.com](mailto:marketing@hawksandreed.com).

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

## OPPONENTS from page A1

meeting, a small but vocal contingent of neighborhood residents came before that board to oppose both the subdivision proposal and the portion of the proposed bylaw revision that would allow it. The issue was not on the board's agenda, but chair Rich Kuklewicz allowed at least fifteen minutes of "public comment" - and responses from town officials - at the beginning of the meeting.

"I am totally against the rezoning of all of the school fields from recreational-educational to residential," said Arlene Jigarjian, who identified herself as an abutter of the town property.

"It totally takes away the fields that have been used by everybody in the neighborhood, young and old. I want those fields preserved for future generations. It is the only open space that we have, and I find it very odd that [town planner] Walter Ramsey is the conservation agent, and the mission is to acquire open space."

"It's a small portion of that land," Kuklewicz responded. "And it will be discussed at the planning board."

Allen Cloutier, speaking from the back of the meeting room, said that Ramsey had told him that he would withdraw the subdivision proposal. Ramsey confirmed that he was not going to recommend moving for-

ward on the idea, due to the feedback received from the local community, but added that "the proper venue to discuss that is going to be at the planning board."

"I really started this," said town administrator Steve Ellis. "We were in the process of renegotiating the school lease... and I looked at a parcel the schools haven't done anything with in a long time, and I looked at the town's housing plans. I clearly identified an interest in residential infill in these areas that had sewer, et cetera. I asked the school district whether they had an active and expected use for the land, and whether they would be open to the town potentially splitting that space off. They were not hostile to it. So, we moved to present the idea to the community, so you could think about it."

Ellis went on to say that the subdivision proposal "did not have anything to do with the larger rezoning. The larger rezoning has been in process for over a year, in numerous public forums, and never was the goal of any of it to make sure we had houses and infill there. So, I don't want people to conflate this as conspiratorial in nature."

Jigarjian suggested that the town was "doing this very quick." Later she called for the planning board to postpone its decision for "at least a month," to allow more time for community input.

"There's a hearing announced," said Kuklewicz. "Let's let the planning board have their hearing. I just want to point out something: It's not Walter Ramsey's decision. Walter was asked, and tasked, to do a job. He's done that job by looking at that land and presenting that information to the board. The board ultimately makes the decision. The planning board is a very thoughtful group of folks in town."

According to Ramsey, Montague adopted its current zoning regulations in 1973, and they have been modified incrementally since then. In 2016 the planning board directed him to undertake a "comprehensive zoning review," and produce a bylaw revision document.

In 2017, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments was subcontracted to develop provisions relating to open space residential design, planned unit development, and special permit procedures. That year a public hearing was held on those issues.

In July 2018, public information sessions were held on the impending bylaw revisions. Formal public hearings were held on the proposed revisions on November 27 and December 18. The goal of combining all "educational/recreational" districts into "residential" zones was raised at all these hearings and informational sessions. Ramsey has argued that state law allows both

educational and religious institutions in residential zones, and that is common practice in the region.

The idea of carving up a portion of the property currently leased to the school district for residential use was first broached publicly by Ramsey at a regional school committee meeting on December 11. Ramsey said that before he placed the idea before the planning board, he wanted input from the school district to see if any "red flags" were raised. He also noted that neighbors would be informed for "public input" later in the month.

Both Ramsey and Ellis stressed at Monday's selectboard meeting that the zoning bylaw changes preceded, and were not directly linked to, the affordable housing proposal. However, they have indicated that the housing construction would not be allowed if the parcels' zoning remains under "educational/recreational."

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## NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL HEARING

Tuesday January 15, 6:45 PM  
Montague Town Hall, One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

The Montague Planning Board will hold an informational hearing on a proposal from the Montague Planning Department to subdivide three 0.4-acre parcels from **municipal land along Davis Street** that are leased to the Gill-Montague School District for the purpose of developing up to three **affordable owner-occupied single-family homes**. Following public feedback, the Planning Board will make an advisory recommendation to the Selectboard. The property to be subdivided is identified as Assessors Map 6 Lot 325.

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## NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

# School Cellar Floods; Sewer Revolt Postponed

By GEORGE BRACE

In addition to scheduled business at their January 7 meeting, the Gill selectboard heard a report from administrative assistant Ray Purington on the flooding discovered at Gill Elementary School that morning.

The amount of information was limited, but Purington reported on what was known. He said that he received a call at 6:45 a.m. from fire chief Gene Beaubien informing him that a district maintenance worker had found a substantial amount of water in the lowest level of the school building.

Purington said the fire department responded and pumped out the basement, and that workers from Lynde Well Drilling had replaced the pressure relief valves the water had come from. He said an electrician was on hand to check electrical components. Purington had not yet heard a full damage report, but said it appeared the flooding came within inches of reaching critical electrical equipment.

The board discussed the lack of alarms notifying anyone of the weekend flooding, among other topics of concern. Bill Tomb said he had been told that an oil burner had shut down due to the flood, but a system to notify someone when the burner shut down had apparently failed.

The board, Purington, and Tomb discussed the need to improve the building's safety features, but agreed that more information and recommendations from professionals would be needed before going further.

## Fire Department

The board approved a \$4,695 purchase order request from Beaubien for work needed to repair and modify the exhaust systems on department vehicles, to bring them into compliance with current and forthcoming exhaust gas standards

for fire vehicles.

The chief reported that there would be a free class on cancer awareness in the fire service, put on by the Department of Fire Services (DFS), tentatively scheduled for 6 p.m. on February 7 at the fire station. The class is one of a series of free classes offered by the DFS. The chief said he had chosen eight different classes from the program, which are to be held once per month at the department.

The board sought the chief's opinion on whether to support the state Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) recommendation for protective screening to reduce suicides on the French King Bridge. MassDOT recommended a particular nine-foot-tall screen among several options it considered.

Board member Randy Crochier reported that Erving had already sent a letter of support agreeing with MassDOT's choice. After a discussion, the chief said he also agreed with the recommendation, and the board decided to submit written support for the design.

## Sewer Study

Purington presented a proposal the town had requested from Tighe & Bond engineers for a wastewater disposal feasibility study. Purington said Tighe & Bond recommended against considering the idea of Gill getting its own treatment plant in the proposal, and focused on the possibility of hooking up with Greenfield's sewer system.

Crochier said he doesn't like kicking things down the road, but had heard Montague is projecting lower costs in the future, and argued that it makes sense to wait in this case.

Purington said there is not enough money in this year's sewer budget to cover the \$6,800 cost of the study anyway, though all agreed the cost was reasonable. The board decided to table the proposal for now, and take it up again during the next fiscal year's budget process.

## Tax Classification

The board of assessors held their FY'19 tax rate classification hearing during the selectboard meeting. Bill Tomb, chair of the board of assessors, presented the board's recommendation that there be no change from the town's current residential factor of "1," which amounts to a single tax rate for both residential and commercial property.

The board of assessors also recommended an increase from \$17.18 to \$17.26 per \$1,000 in valuation. Tomb said the average residential value in town was currently \$209,983, and the new rate would result in a \$200 annual tax increase for that average home.

The selectboard approved the board of assessors' recommendations.

After the vote, selectboard chair

John Ward said he had heard that FirstLight Power Resources had applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to split into two limited liability companies, one of which would own the Northfield Mountain pumped storage facility, and another which would own their dam and river facilities.

The board discussed potential ramifications to the town's income if the restructuring goes through. Greg Snedeker and Purington said that it seemed unlikely that the split could result in lower tax income to Gill, but the board did not come to any conclusions on the matter.

Tomb added that the board of assessors was "... trying to have as much discussion with FirstLight as they allow us to have," and would keep the selectboard informed of any developments.

## Regional Council

The board discussed several items from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

The organization requested Gill apply for state Community Compact funding so it can create an accountant training program. Purington said he would have to see if Gill was eligible to do so, due to having recently received Community Compact funding for other projects.

Snedeker and the board discussed the difficulties in recruiting and retaining accountants: few people who have incurred the large expense of acquiring an accounting degree want to take what are often lower-paying, part-time, un-benefited positions in small towns.

Purington wondered if people would receive the training and then move on to greener pastures. Questions were also raised about what happens when trainers move along, or state funding for training program dries up.

Snedeker said the state may be thinking about certifying municipal accountants in a similar way that certified public accountants (CPAs) are certified.

Crochier suggested taking up an offer from Bob Dean, director of regional services for FRCOG, to come to a meeting and answer questions.

The board also took a "first look" at this year's slate of suggested District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) planning projects from FRCOG. Purington said the subject will come back up at the board's next meeting, when the town will need to put together its response.

Purington suggested a project that was not on the form, but which had been suggested to him by another town: an ambulance regionalization study. He said he was led to believe that Northfield, Erving, and Bernardston are going to support such a study, but he had no further information at present.

Crochier said a new planner at FRCOG had spoken to him recently

and requested the board give some thought to the "Pollinator Habitat Corridor" planning project. Crochier said he suggested to the planner that he reach out to certain parties in Gill and see if he could get them excited about it, which would help the board get excited about it.

A brief discussion on the importance of bees and pollination took place. Snedeker remarked that he was glad the project was on the list.

## Obituary

The board expressed their condolences on the death of Paul Seamans. Crochier said he was "one of the smartest people I've ever met," and was important to the town of Gill and the surrounding area.

Snedeker said he hadn't known Seamans well, but always enjoyed reading his articles in the paper. Purington said when he was an assessor, he and another assessor went to assess Seamans's house and had a 20-minute discussion on everything but the valuation. Seamans told them he needed to leave for an appointment, and said, "you two just look around, and let yourself out." Purington said that level of personal trust gave him a warm feeling.

## Other Business

The board received notification that Comcast has completed the cable buildout in Gill, resulting in over 96% broadband coverage. Snedeker called this "nice," but said Gill still wants 100% coverage. He added that the cable committee is still active, and the issue is still on their radar.

The board decided not to apply to take part in year two of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Small Town Environmental Partnership initiative. The initiative allows small towns to voluntarily partner with the DEP to review environmental compliance and come up with strategies to address shortcomings.

Purington commented that he and the board had reviewed the initiative last year, and decided that "it would be much like volunteering for a colonoscopy." He said he had brought the subject up in a small-town administrator group he is a member of, and suggested they might make it a topic of discussion and see what some of the eight towns that took part last year had to say about it.

A sewer abatement request of \$345 for the filling of a swimming pool last summer was approved, and the board extended its apologies for a delay in responding to the request, though it had been received in a timely manner.

The board scheduled their next meeting for Tuesday, January 22 at 5:30 p.m., moved from Monday due to the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. The quarterly small town summit is meeting Thursday, January 10, at 7 p.m. in the town hall to discuss rural school finance.

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## Speaking for Trees

**WENDELL**—The Wendell State Forest Alliance invites the public to join a "The People Have Spoken: Save Our Oaks" Rally on Saturday, January 12 at 1 p.m. at the Ranger Station, Wendell State Forest, 392 Wendell Road, Millers Falls.

The state Department of Conservation (DCR) is moving forward with a contract to harvest from 80 acres of 100-year-old oak trees in the state forest. The rally will be followed by a walk of "Love for the Forest" to the oaks.

The Forest Alliance argues that the oaks are more valuable to the citizens and the ecosystem for carbon sequestration than they are as commercial products. Nationwide, 21% of current carbon emissions can be sequestered by keeping public forests unlogged.

Micheal Kellett, executive director of Restore the North Woods, has pointed out that "Emerging science shows older trees sequester carbon at a higher rate than younger trees, and the rate increases as the trees grow older. The simplest and cheapest way to get the biggest forest carbon benefit would be to dramatically reduce logging of federal, state, and municipal forests."

In Massachusetts, the gains could be even greater, says Laura Marx, forest ecologist for the Nature Conservancy's Massachusetts chapter. Our forests and lands offset about 15 percent of the carbon we emit each year. We could easily double that by stopping logging projects in our state forests.

For more information, contact Erik at (413) 262-1587.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1

which he is currently developing a grant proposal.

**Spots Available**

While at the front table, Ramsey announced that only two people had applied for parking permits under the experimental “pilot” program to allow on-street parking in downtown Turners Falls over the winter. The program would allow 15 vehicles to park on the south side of L Street and north side of Prospect Street with a sticker costing \$25.

Ramsey said town hall had not issued the two permits, but was waiting to see if more applications were forthcoming.

Selectboard member Mike Nelson said that if residents saw two people with parking stickers, others might follow. “We might be just waiting for the dominoes to fall,” he said.

Turners Falls resident Betty Tegel said she thought the \$25 price tag could be a barrier for some residents considering buying a permit. “\$25 may not seem like a lot to you folks, but it can be,” she told the board.

Jim Martineau of Millers Falls, who owns a building on L Street, said he is willing to pay for his tenants to park, and had left permit applications in their mailboxes. But he said the process for applying for the permit was “cumbersome,” and that his tenants would not go down to town hall to apply.

“It doesn’t sound like a hard thing to do, but they’re working people – they’ve got busy lives,” Martineau told the board.

Ramsey said the \$25 parking permit was below the cost of the program to the town, but that he had heard from some landlords that the cost was a “barrier” for some of the tenants.

“I guess I’ll be the hard one here,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz. “If folks want a place to park where they won’t get a ticket, this is an opportunity, but they need to do just a small bit of work. If they choose to park in an area where parking is not permitted and their vehicle is towed, it’s going to cost them far more than the \$25.”

Ramsey asked the board whether the town should accept parking fees from landlords. All the selectboard members supported this, although they did not take a vote. Individual board members also voiced support for issuing permits to the two applicants.

**Change in Scenery**

Christopher Savinski, manager of Bob’s Auto Body on Avenue A, came before the board to discuss the renewal of the business’s Class III license. The board had recently voted to renew the license for only three months, pending a discussion of the numerous large trucks on his property, which some neighbors and town officials reportedly consider an eyesore.

Savinski had sent a letter to the board stating that many of the vehicles on the property were waiting for the value of recycled metals to increase due to the economic upturn and tariffs on imported metals.

“I understand the need to make incremental improvements, and ask the town to bear with us while we wait until this time,” wrote Savinski. He said that during the coming year, the company would “level the existing trailers... to make them subtler to the passing eye,” and remove trailers from the bank at the south end of the property.

“It’s going to be a long-term project: not a couple of months, but a couple of years,” said Nelson, who had originally proposed the shorter lease. “But just the fact that we were able to have the conversation and come up with a plan is significant. I really appreciate the work you put into this.”

The board voted to issue a Class III license to Bob’s Auto Body through December 31, 2019.

**Other Business**

Treasurer Eileen Seymour requested that the selectboard approve and sign a formidable stack of documents for a \$4.656 million bond sale. She was joined at the front table by Clark Rowell, vice president of the firm Unibank Fiscal Advisory Services Incorporated, who assisted in the bond sale.

Seymour said the bonds would finance the initial work on the new Department of Public Works building on Turnpike Road, as well as upgrades to the sewer system. She also stressed that Montague’s bond rating had recently been upgraded by Standard and Poor’s from AA- to AA. The board approved and signed the bond documents.

The board discussed a request by newly-elected state representative Natalie Blais to use space in the Montague town hall to “engage constituents and engage the community,” in the words of town administrator Steve Ellis. Ellis said that under state law, the town would have to adopt a policy on the use of the building by elected officials, and that this “would not be a lease agreement.”

The space might potentially be made available to other state officials, or even federal legislators.

The board voted to approve the policy presented by Ellis, and to “reach out to the appropriate legislators” to invite them to use the town hall space, which will probably be the office of the former town nurse.

The board voted to execute an agreement with Harold Eaton and Associates for land survey services for the planned Department of Public Works building.


The board approved a variety of documents related to Americans with Disabilities Act sidewalk improvements between Third and Fourth streets on Avenue A in Turners Falls.

It also approved a contract with Veolia Water North American-Northeast LLC for sludge hauling from the Water Pollution Control Facility.

Ellis was designated by the board as a voting representative to the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association.

Near the end of the meeting, the board set February 19 as the date for a special town meeting, pending the availability of the high school audi-

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torium. The closing date for the warrant, when all articles need to be submitted, will be January 17 at noon.

The board also set the date of the annual town meeting as May 4, with the warrant closing at 4 p.m. on March 21.

At the end of the meeting an “un-anticipated” Monte Belmonte, of the Shea Theater Arts Center board of directors, came to request that a section of Avenue A be closed for several hours on January 26. On that night, the Shea will feature a showing of the movie *The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then Bigfoot*, which was partly filmed in Turners Falls and released last July.

Belmonte said he was hoping “to get the whole big Hollywood-style searchlights, and do a red carpet premiere” of the film at the Shea.

After an inconclusive discussion of whether the Shea should provide “a few” tickets for town officials and staff, the board approved the request.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be on January 14.



**GMRSD** from page A1

unanimously endorsed the administrators’ recommendations.

From Gill, this meant replacement of the Gill Elementary roof – rejected for reimbursement last year by the Massachusetts School Building Authority – followed by Gill’s share of the replacement of the Turners Falls High School sidewalk, followed by an electrical upgrade at Gill Elementary, which might now be funded by insurers in any case, followed by the replacement of one of the district’s trucks.

And from Montague, the ranking was the sidewalk funding, then the completion of the job to replace the outdoor pillars at Hillcrest Elementary, followed by further upgrades to that school’s electrical system to allow for air conditioning, then the truck contribution, and finally facade work at Hillcrest.

There was some discussion of the 20-year commitment entailed by replacing the Gill Elementary roof with state funding, but Gill representatives Timmie Smith and Bill Tomb said their town understood the risk of having to pay the money back were the school to close.

“Even if the school disappears, that building is still there,” Tomb said, pointing to reuse of former schools in Millers Falls and Montague Center. “Those buildings are used... Without a roof, we don’t have much of a building, over time.”

**Racism and Harassment**

Tuesday’s meeting was the committee’s first since a group of current and former district parents publicly alleged the administration at Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School was not sufficiently addressing a climate of racism among students. The first of several forums on the topic, this one for parents and guardians, will be held Monday, January 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the high school.

During public comment period, junior Madison McCassie told the committee she had circulated a survey of fellow students, and that many of her peers felt one administrator’s job performance was lacking.

“I’m not sure if we can discuss a particular person in open session,” chair Jane Oakes interrupted her. “It can come to executive session,” she clarified.

McCassie asked to continue without nam-

ing names, and then said students felt “the leadership of the high school and middle school” was “removed from the general community” and “not very assertive when disciplining repeat offenders.”

Later, superintendent Michael Sullivan discussed a report he had compiled. “It should not have been necessary for them to motivate us to closely examine our practices and set in motion plans to do better,” he said. “We need to do better.”

Sullivan said that between the last school year and the current one, 65 of 349 secondary students (19%) left, including 10 of 62 students of color (16%). “Four of these 10 students indicated that the school’s racist climate was a factor in their leaving,” he said.

He also presented some figures on reported incidents of civil rights violations at the district schools, and how many suspensions resulted from them. Committee members expressed surprise at one particularly high number: 43 incidents at the middle school involving gender or sexual orientation.

“The number of reported and recorded civil rights violations is large and indicative of systemic issues that have yet to be satisfactorily addressed,” Sullivan wrote. “The staff responsible for taking action are often stretched too thin, responding to perpetual in-the-moment incidents.”

Principal Annie Leonard also read from a statement she had written on the subject. “I am deeply sorry that students are experiencing racism and other forms of harassment,” she said, acknowledging that measures to address it are “ongoing, but not effective... we need to work harder, and do better.”

“[M]y own way of speaking, being restrained and calm even when emotions are running high, may have left some people wondering whether I share their outrage,” she wrote, and declared her “unwavering commitment to our responsibility to protect students from bias and harassment.”

Leonard said she intended to focus on staff training and improving communication with families.

Sullivan recommended hiring a second dean of students at the high school and middle school, and gave a strong-worded defense of Leonard, who he said has a “strong personal

and professional commitment to diversity, equity, and social justice education.”

“We need to also be thinking about the role of the principal,” he said. “The principal has other responsibilities.... it cannot be a large part of the principal’s work to be responding to individual incidents of misbehavior.”

While some staff are well-trained in alternative justice practices, he said, “we have too many people running around putting out fires. Some of those alternatives are pretty time-intensive.”

“I’ve heard enough that I’m concerned that, right now, we’re not protecting every student’s opportunity to learn,” Montague’s Langknecht told him. “There’s discomfort in the power structure. People don’t know who it’s safe to talk to.”

Langknecht described confusion over where to bring up issues, and suggested the schools could use a “community ombudsman” or “human rights commission-style thing.”

Haley Anderson pointed to the policy that staff bring issues to the superintendent before the school committee. “I’m concerned that it could have the effect of gagging staff,” she said.

“The chain of authority is pretty important,” said Heather Katsoulis. “It’s for legal reasons; it’s to protect our district, our educators.... and that can be super frustrating for our community.”

Montague’s Jen Lively said many community members had shared stories with her “off the record,” which she said indicated a “real fear of what repercussions would be.” She said she was curious what students’ perceptions were of consequences for infractions, and pointed to a recent survey in which the majority of students indicated they did not have any staff member to confide in when they felt sad or angry.

Lively also said the forthcoming forums may not get a full sense of the problem. “There’s definitely students that will speak up, but there’s also students that may not,” she said, calling for an anonymous way for students to report issues.

Smith said she felt long-term budget trends eliminating positions had overburdened administrators. “Here we have two of our top leaders who, as the budget gets squeezed and squeezed, take on more and more,” she said of

Sullivan and Leonard. “There’s only so many ways you can split your own time.”

**Other Business**

The committee heard the first presentation on the preliminary budget for FY’20. It would assess \$10,110,049 to the town of Montague and \$1,685,307 to Gill.

“Growth of expenses continues to outpace the growth of revenues,” Sullivan said, but the budget allowed for growth in elementary reading, writing, and math programming, as well as continuing the “1:1” Chromebook program at the secondary level. It also provided for the second dean of students at the secondary level, while eliminating one of Hillcrest’s four first-grade teachers.

The committee will meet on January 15 for a line-by-line reading, and hold a regular meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The governor’s office is likely to publish its budget in the last week of January, so a meeting was scheduled on the 29<sup>th</sup> to approve the preliminary budget, which will be presented to town leaders the next day.

Five updates to official district policy, recommended by the policy subcommittee, were unanimously approved. The policies pertained to pregnancy, concussion, student health services, physical exams of students, and photos of students. In every case the new policy conforms with the language recommended by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees.

The committee was scheduled to vote on an interim replacement for April Reipold, the Montague member who resigned in November, but no one from that town had offered to fill her seat by the January 2 deadline for letters of intent.

Sullivan said town counsel recommended simply trying again, and so the committee agreed to extend the window until Tuesday, February 5, and hoped to fill the seat at their February 12 meeting.

The committee unanimously approved raising the pay rate for substitute teachers from \$11 to \$12 an hour, and adjusting the lowest rungs on two pay scales – paraprofessionals and cafeteria assistants – up to \$12 an hour as well, effective retroactive to January 1, in celebration of the new statewide minimum wage of \$12 an hour.



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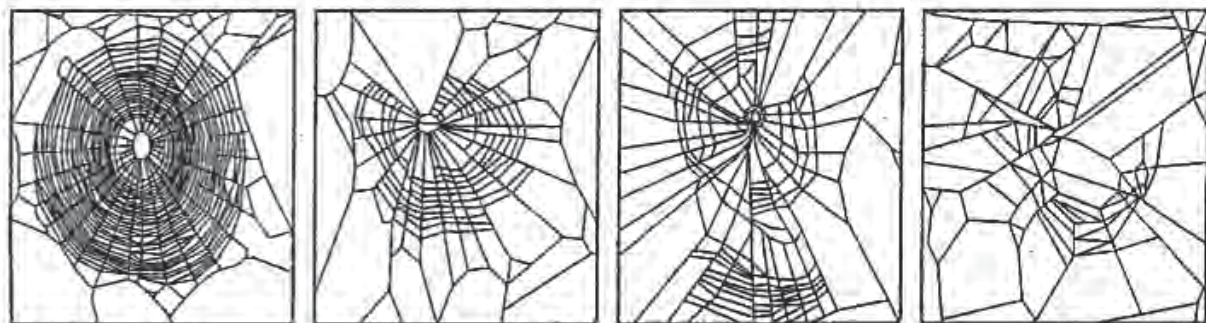




# NatureCulture: The Science Page

WARREN ONDRAS PHOTO

## Caffeine and Its Discontents



Spiders under the influence: A 1995 NASA study found caffeine affects spiders' web-building prowess. Left to right, a standard web, and webs affected by marijuana, benzedrine, and caffeine. (NASA Tech Briefs, Life Sciences, April 1995.)

By LISA MCLOUGHLIN

**NORTHFIELD** – Caffeine is currently considered the most widely used psychoactive substance in the world, with 85% of the US population regularly consuming it. In their book *A Brief History of Drugs: From the Stone Age to the Stoned Age*, Antonio Escohotado and Ken Symington write that humans have used caffeine since the Stone Age by chewing various parts of plants in order to take advantage of its stimulating properties.

Extracted as a chemical, caffeine is an odorless white crystalline powder with a bitter taste. Its molecular formula is  $C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$ , and its chemical name is *3,7-dihydro-1,3,7-trimethyl-1H-purine-2,6-dione*. It can be found naturally in plants, or as a water-soluble chemical, added to food and drink.

Plants make caffeine to fight off pests: it is toxic to insects. Plants containing caffeine predominantly grow in the tropic or sub-tropic regions.

Worldwide, caffeine mostly comes from coffee, where its strength varies depending on the kind of bean, although you can also find it in tea, cacao pods, kola nuts, the ilex plant, and guarana seeds.

It ends up in drinks like coffee and tea, where it occurs naturally, but also in cola or energy drinks, where it's added. It's also in some prescription and non-prescription medications, and in some foods such as chocolate.

The Arabic root of the word "coffee" is *qahwah*, and the term "caffeine" is taken from the German word for coffee by its discoverer, the chemist F.F. Runge (1795-1867). European coffee plantations were established in Indonesia and the West Indies in the 18th century, but coffee has been cultivated in Africa since the 6th century.

Canada's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health offers the following list of typical caffeine levels in products you may use regularly. (A cup is 8 ounces.)

Cup of brewed coffee: 135 mg

Cup of instant coffee: 76 to 106 mg

Cup of decaf coffee: about 3 mg

Cup of tea: 43 mg

Can of regular cola soft drink (355 ml): 36 to 50 mg

Can of energy drink (250 ml): 80 mg

Dark chocolate (28 g): 19 mg

Milk chocolate (28 g): 7 mg

Packet of hot chocolate mix: 7 mg

Stay-awake pills: 100 mg

### Effects on Humans: Benefits and Drawbacks

According to caffeineinformer.com, "Caffeine is metabolized by the liver and broken down into theophylline, theobromine, and paraxanthine. A 200 mg dose of caffeine would take about 40 hours to be completely metabolized, based on the average caffeine half-life of 5 to 6 hours. However, the greatest perceived effects from the caffeine are experienced during the first 4-6 hours after consumption."

The same source says that factors which influence caffeine's effect on you are: your metabolism, your tolerance, and interactions with other drugs such as nicotine.

Many cultures consider caffeine to be beneficial, in small doses. It increases alertness and mental acuity, reduces drowsiness, and has other physical effects, such as better muscular coordination and timing.

While not – yet? – considered a medical fact, coffee and caffeine have been shown in some epidemiological studies to be inversely related to risk of

Parkinson's disease.

The effects of caffeine seem to be highly dependent on how much you consume, and can include those you would normally associate with an increase in neurological activity: jitters, nerves, restlessness, insomnia, and tremors. It also irritates your stomach.

At higher doses, negative changes to breathing, plus vomiting, nausea, and negative circulatory system effects may occur, as well as an increased risk of osteoporosis among post-menopausal women.

Caffeine gives off toxic fumes if you burn it.

Negative effects are also determined by when caffeine is used, and by whom. For example, if you drink coffee just before bed, insomnia and sleeping less deeply are negative side effects; if you drink it first thing in the morning to wake up, it could be seen as a benefit.

As to who should drink it, as with most drugs, the recommended dosages are for a standard male adult. Pregnant and nursing women might want to avoid caffeine, or limit their intake, as it can be passed on to infants through breast milk, making it hard for babies to sleep, too. Large amounts of caffeine increase the risk of low birth weight and miscarriage. Also note that children's smaller body size increases caffeine's effect on them.

If you use caffeine regularly, Canada's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health warns that you become physically dependent upon it. WebMD states that this dependence is so mild that regular use of caffeine is not considered a harmful addiction.

Having quit caffeine once for a month, I can attest to feeling more calm and more lethargic in the long run, and I experienced withdrawal symptoms of headaches for a few days.

Finally, note that drinking coffee does not help your body metabolize alcohol. It may make you feel more awake and less impaired, but this is an illusion that can do more harm than good. Drinking coffee or energy drinks does not offset alcohol use.

### Should We Regulate It?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has expressed concerns about the use of caffeine as a food additive. In a 2013 advisory, the department warned in particular about the dangers of such food – including gum, jellybeans and marshmallows – being accessible and attractive to children.

Regulatory issues have been addressed extensively in a 2014 *Nutrition Reviews* paper by Leah Rosenfeld et al. Their paper emphasizes that caffeine is regulated only in the case of its use in soda. For the newer applications, and in foods and medications, caffeine gets a free pass called a "GRAS" status – "generally recognized as safe." That means that the FDA grants, without independent scientific proof, that a substance is safe for these uses.

This same article elaborates that in 1980, there was a brief and unsuccessful attempt to regulate caffeine. Because it is not regulated, caffeine is not always listed on the ingredients list of food or medicine, because sometimes it falls below the 2% threshold by weight, making it hard for us to know how much caffeine we're really taking in.

The consensus seems to be that healthy adults can use moderate amounts of caffeine daily without any long- or short-term adverse effects, but you should research more about this powerful and ubiquitous substance before determining how much, when, and in what form to consume it.

## Rays of Inspiration

By LISA MCLOUGHLIN

There is widespread confusion about what to call rays of various sizes with *cephalic fins*, or fins on their head which look like horns. The fins are usually held curled in, but can be unfurled to funnel food into their mouths.

Non-scientists seem comfortable calling all rays with these horns devil ray or devil fish; Project Manta makes the point that devil rays are smaller versions of the majestic manta ray. Rays of this type come in various sizes and are *elasmobranchs*, or cartilaginous fish like skates and sharks, rather than a true fish which has bones.

Giant devil rays are endangered due to limited habitat, low rate of reproduction (only one to two pups a year), becoming entangled in fishing nets, and overfishing. Manta rays live 50 to 100 years, swim either alone or in schools, and can leap two meters out of the water.

Manta rays travel hundreds of kilometers a day, feeding close to the surface. They eat plankton; this helps keep water clean and cuts down excessive plankton blooming. This blooming is harmful because it blocks needed sunlight, and when the plankton dies it takes up dissolved oxygen which other life forms need.

In an October 2018 *Science News* article, Laurel Hamers reports that manta rays' filtration system of feeding on plankton through cartilaginous fibers is being studied for its resistance to clogging. Instead of straining plankton out of seawater, the arrangement of the cartilage in manta rays deflects the particles into their throats. This means that they don't have to close their mouths to clean out their filters like other filter feeders do.



ELIAS LEVY CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO

A manta ray in the ocean.

Besides being studied for technological adaptation, manta rays are under economic pressure. One manta ray provides one million dollars of tourist income over its lifetime, as opposed to \$40 to \$500 for its body parts or meat, according to a 2014 article in *Conservation*. Their body parts also contain high levels of arsenic and heavy metals. Yet, there is a huge market for their gill plates for use in Chinese medicine, a \$30 million industry that kills 147,000 rays a year, according to a *WildAid* 2011 report.

From a purely economic perspective, it makes sense to protect these unique species. Besides innovations from the rays' filtration system, not long ago the manta ray was studied for its aerodynamic shape that inspired various aircraft, presumably including the Boeing X-48. Manta rays do essential work balancing the oceans' ecosystems.

But more than that, rays are worthy of our attention and protection because they are wild creatures that are endangered due to our actions. They are not dangerous to us, and they currently need our help. Some nonprofits that work on behalf of manta rays are: The Manta Trust; Project Manta; WildAid: Manta Ray of Hope; and, in Spanish, Planeta Oceano.

## January 2019 Moon Calendar

Saturday, January 5

**New Moon**

Monday, January 21

**Full Moon and Total Lunar Eclipse**

NASA/JPL IMAGE



Monday, January 14

**First Quarter**

Sunday, January 27

Moon North Pole mosaic assembled from 18 images taken from the Galileo spacecraft.

## Lunar Eclipse Viewing Party

**ATHOL** – Witness a spectacular lunar eclipse at Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust headquarters in Athol on Sunday, January 20. The viewing will take place at the Skyfields Arboretum at 1461 Old Keene Road. Join in for a night filled with all things moon-related: we will gather at 6 p.m. and stay well into the night (Monday is a holiday) to view the full eclipse.

Feel free to stay for all, or only part of the event as you wish. See what's in store for the night below:

**6 to 6:30 p.m.** *What is a Lunar Eclipse?* Introductory presentation by Lisa McLoughlin.

**6:30 to 7:30 p.m.** *Not That Kind of Moon Walk.* Nighttime stroll around our trails with moon myths and legends.

**7:30 to 8:30 p.m.** *Potluck Dinner.*

Bring your own or a dish to share.

**8:30 to 10:30 p.m.** *Movie Showing.* Lunar movie! Bring your own popcorn!

**10:30 to 11:30 p.m.** *Bonfire, smores, story time.* Gear up for the full eclipse next to a warm fire and treats.

**11:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. and later:** Full eclipse on!

The eclipse will occur from 9:36 p.m. until 2:48 a.m. The full eclipse starts at 11:41 p.m., and the maximum is at 12:12 a.m. We'd love to have you join us for any part of the night.

Please be advised that warm clothing will be needed for the walk. We will provide some flashlights, but do bring your own if you have one. Direct any questions or concerns to [duquet@moutgrace.org](mailto:duquet@moutgrace.org).

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**ERVING** from page A1

former house at the property, testing, and geotechnical study and surveying. In the spreadsheet, the “contingency and cost escalation” item was reduced from \$639,971 to \$146,688. Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache noted that the preliminary estimate of \$3.173 million was 20% too low.

“Costs are going through the roof,” Pallotta replied. In addition, he said, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, which awarded Erving a \$2.7 million library construction grant, had required an increase in the size of the building.

Selectboard member Jacob Smith said that in May, after construction has begun, the board could determine which funds could be transferred between line items. In addition, the library trustees will be conducting fundraising to defray a portion of the costs for FF&E.

“We will need to go back to the community and ask for \$600,000,” said Debra Smith, a member of the finance and library building committees. “The solar was a commitment to the residents. I have concerns about going back for hundreds of thousands of dollars. What if this wasn’t awarded tonight?”

Pallotta said that redesigning the building would likely result in a smaller building, while costs would increase further. “There’s a tremendous labor shortage,” he said. “It’s tough out there.”

Building committee co-chair Jacquelyn Boyden said she was “not happy we’re in this position” of needing to ask for additional funding. However, she said, “I don’t see any good in pausing, redesigning.” Boyden said if the project were redesigned, the money already spent on the current design would be “wasted money that we’ll never get back.”

Board and building committee members questioned Pallotta and principal architect Philip O’Brien about changes made to the bid specifications for interior paneling without informing the building committee. Boyden said she had only found out about the change “well after bids were opened,” and called it “a disconnect with the committee.”

O’Brien said the paneling preferred by the committee was not available from suppliers, and mentioned an “addenda scramble” as bidders asked for definitive information before the bid deadline. Jacob Smith said he understood that the timeline was tight, but that the selectboard chair and building committee should know about changes within 24 hours.

Pallotta apologized. “We’ll set up a process going forward,” he said. Bastarache told him that administrative coordinator Bryan Smith should be the contact.

Barbara Friedman said she hoped to schedule the groundbreaking for the library construction on Friday, March 29.

**FY’20 Budget**

The selectboard and finance committee also met jointly on Monday to consider initial Fiscal Year 2020

budget requests from the library trustees, recreation commission, historic commission, board of health, and senior center.

**Library** trustee Mackensy Bailey said the trustees had prepared a “crossover budget” to fund the current library on Moore Street until the fall, then fund the newly-built library on Northfield Road.

Library director Friedman intends to retire once the new library is up and running, and the trustees proposed hiring a new library director before she retires. Under the trustees’ budget request, the new building would open with Friedman as the director for a month or more. Then the new director would be hired, and the two directors would overlap for a month.

Bastarache recommended a longer overlap period, including two months before opening the new library and two months after opening.

The trustees also proposed raising the library director’s wage from \$25.60 per hour to \$35. Bailey cited Friedman’s experience, her work on the building project and in obtaining grants, and the unpaid hours she works. Friedman said the trustees had looked at the Erving Elementary School budget, and considered equity with the salaries for school staff with similar education.

Jacob Smith said, “No one condones working unpaid,” and observed that teachers’ salaries are set by union contracts. He said that most of the towns in Franklin County pay their library directors wages “in the mid-20s.”

Bastarache said that the board has asked departments to “hold wages in abeyance” until after the selectboard gets the results of a wage study. Funding for that study will be considered at a special town meeting on January 28, and once it is complete, the board plans to adjust wages in all town departments.

The board recommended that the trustees revise the budget request to include four months of library director overlap, and use the current director’s wage to estimate future wages.

Alison Rollins presented the **recreation commission** request, which included increases for extending the brick walkway at Riverfront Park and for a 19-hour-per-week clerk.

“It’s very difficult not having a clerk,” said Rollins, herself the commission’s former 12-hour-per-week clerk. “There’s plenty of work to do. We need one person who knows everything that’s going on.”

**Historical commission** member Cyd Scott noted that the commission’s request was level-funded with FY’19.

Scott, also the **board of health** (BOH) chair, reported that the BOH was requesting \$1,000 more than in FY’19 to participate in the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN). Scott said the money would pay for the nurse who conducts wellness and foot clinics at the senior center to set up the MAVEN program. Scott said the fee for the district health agent from Franklin Regional Council of Gov-

**BIGFOOT** from page A1

film along with Aidan Turner, Caitlin Fitzgerald, Larry Miller, and Ron Livingston, will not be able to attend. “He is likely to get nominated for an Oscar that week, so he is probably going to be busy,” Belmonte informs us, “but you never know, maybe at the last minute a special guest will appear. No promises.”

**Movie Details**

Informally known as “the Bigfoot movie,” the uniquely titled *The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then the Bigfoot* was shot almost entirely in and around Turners Falls during the summer of 2017.

The plot describes an alternate history of the world we live in: Elliott’s character, Calvin Barr (a younger version of him is played by Aidan Turner), assassinates Hitler early in the story and is sworn to secrecy about his deed. The later part of the story is set in 1987, when Barr is approached by Canadian and American officials to kill off the Bigfoot, who is responsible for spreading a plague-like disease. It has garnered rave reviews and been called “an American Classic,” “a wise, odd, and unforgettable ballad,” and more.

Engaging big name Sam Elliott for his screenwriting and directorial debut was a key factor in making Krzykowski’s twelve-year-long project come to fruition.

Krzykowski already drew some attention from independent film director John Sayles for his short film *Elsie Hooper*, based on a comic series he drew for the *Collegian* while studying journalism at UMass. There was buzz about making a Hollywood feature film based on *Elsie Hooper* which never happened; Krzykowski became a screenwriter because of it, though.

**Screen Dreams**

The Shea is not heading in the direction of becoming a movie house showing a lot of first-run movies, exactly, and the silver screen is not going to fill up the whole stage. A screen that size would require a projector costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. The projector they have acquired, though, will allow more possibili-



After much fundraising, the Shea’s operating company has purchased and installed this movie projector, along with a silver screen, which will debut on the 26th.

ties for multimedia presentations, such as images projected onto musical acts and other delights.

“We want the screen to be there for people who are producing their own events where the screen would be part of an installation or concert, and to do things on off nights – to find creative ways to have stuff going on inside the Shea on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays when there is currently nothing going on there,” says Belmonte. “It’s quite an investment, but it’s something we always wanted to do when we formed the nonprofit.”

The board is hoping to spread the word for people who may want to curate a film festival, or hold a screening if they have a documentary they have produced. They are especially hoping to find the right person or persons to regularly host free educational movie nights.

Another piece of the rejuvenation going on at the theater is the addition of a private restroom to the green room downstairs so that performers do not have to use the public facilities. The lack of a private restroom for actors has hurt the Shea, which cannot engage equity theater groups without it.

This improvement, according to Belmonte, will be completed within the first half of 2019.

**Ticket Sales**

Krzykowski and the film company are donating the entire proceeds of the ticket sales to the theater.

“It is part of their way of giving back to the town, who graciously hosted them for the filming, and we are really grateful to them for that,” says Belmonte. “All the money is 100% for the Shea, an incredible gift to us and the community.”

Hopeful theatergoers will have to wait until 2 p.m. on January 18 to purchase tickets to the January 26 premiere. Shea Theater Arts Center members will have first crack at the tickets when they will be emailed a link to purchase them at noon that day. (You may become a member anytime up to 10 a.m. on the 18th; membership also entitles you to various other perks and discounts, information is on the theater website at [sheatheater.org](http://sheatheater.org).)

This premiere will be the perfect time to sew some sequins on those Carharts and shine up the barn boots; rent, buy or make something out-of-this-world or vintage; and strut your stuff as best you can for a January red-carpet event in New England.

While you might possibly win extra points with the film crew if you come dressed as the Bigfoot, “don’t come dressed as Hitler,” Belmonte warns.

ernments had increased.

Scott told the selectboard that the BOH has been busy demolishing or cleaning up abandoned derelict properties and hoarders’ accumulations. He proposed a fund to loan money to low-income property owners who needed help cleaning up properties. The loan would be secured by a lien on the property.

Administrative coordinator Bryan Smith said several towns in Massachusetts had a similar fund. He agreed to help the BOH work on guidelines for the program.

**Senior center** director Paula Betters began her presentation by saying, “Something isn’t right here.”

Betters was referring to energy use at the center. She said that pro-

pane use was increasing, but she didn’t know why. She said that the geothermal system had been using a lot of electricity, so the backup boiler was used to heat water before it entered the geothermal circulation. However, the electricity use had not decreased.

Betters said that seniors complained that the building was cold, but when she came in on weekends, when the building was closed, the rooms were hot. She said she was still investigating the increased energy use.

“What about getting rid of the geothermal system?” asked Debra Smith.

Bryan Smith mentioned that other towns were decommission-

ing the geothermal systems in their buildings.

Bastarache said that it would be necessary to increase the operating budget to pay for the increased energy use while looking for a way to decrease energy use.

Betters reported that, as a result of a US Department of Health and Human Services audit, the center was asked to remove wood chip mulch from around the building foundation. She said she had received an estimate of \$15,000 to remove the mulch and replace it with stone mulch. Instead, the center handyman had been pulling the mulch out when he had time, and would put in the crushed stone for about \$1,500.

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

# Elementary School Principal Gives Notice; Few Applications Received for Police Job

By ROB SKELTON

Fire chief John Ingram briefed the Leverett leadership on his plan for improved radio communications – which come with some “improved” price tags – at the year’s first selectboard meeting Tuesday evening.

Working with a company he’s familiar with, Ingram’s plan calls for dispatching by the town of Amherst, his previous employer, and ranges in cost from \$10 to \$20,000 per year, which didn’t sit well with the board. Selectman Tom Hankinson asked Ingram to quantify “better coverage.”

The ongoing “managed services” clause caught the attention of board chair Peter d’Errico, who stated that if Leverett bought all the proposed radio equipment there would be no need of “managed services,” which at around \$2,500 per month “is a lot of dough.”

Ingram also described his plan to reconfigure the officer corps of his department by adding two captain positions to the already existing two lieutenants, with no impact on budget. He informed the board that he has surgery scheduled for February 4 and that Brian Cook would serve as acting chief in his absence.

**Slim Pickings**

Police chief Scott Minckler re-

ported that of five applicants for a recent police job posting, only one had a resume worth following up. That candidate will be interviewed by Minckler and Ingram, and if all goes right, there won’t be a need for another search.

Members of the selectboard asked Minckler why so few applicants applied; he replied that a couple were people with other careers, one was from Saudi Arabia, and one was a cop with a bad rep. The one promising candidate currently works full-time for another local department.

Money, Minckler said, is also a factor, explaining that the amount of responsibility undertaken by any cop is barely matched by the pay scale.

Minckler said that when he compares Leverett with other towns, he uses Gill and Buckland, both of which are akin to Leverett in population and departmental structure. He invited the selectboard to peruse the recently-issued county statistics to see where Leverett falls on police pay scales.

**Political Guidance?**

Selectman Hankinson got on the agenda to criticize the joint selectboard/fin com process which the town uses to provide “guidance” during annual budgeting.

Two years running, Hankinson

said, he has had a “bee in his bonnet” around school budgeting specifically. He feels that fin com has strayed from being purely an “analytical” body to one which has become “politicized,” evidenced by the committee’s reference to “a generous school budget” in last year’s paperwork.

Hankinson said he felt that fin com leadership is speaking out of turn and not representing the agreements of the group, which was challenged by longtime fin com member Ann Delano. Selectwoman Julie Shively noted that the Leverett code cedes budgetary power to the selectboard, whereas in many towns the fin com runs the money show.

In the past, d’Errico said, the fin com was a rubber stamp; not so anymore now that the boards work together.

Hankinson’s perspective did not receive much in the way of support from anyone at Tuesday’s meeting.

**Other Business**

Shively briefed the board on the ongoing negotiations around middle school funding formulas; she was thanked by Ann Delano for taking on this monthly, thankless task.

Leverett Elementary school principal Margot Lacey has tendered her resignation and will finish off the year, according to an email sent out

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Job description and Employment Application is available by calling Highway Superintendent, David Finn, (413) 548-9400 or Town Hall, (413) 548-9150. Applications are due to the Highway Superintendent, 95 Montague Road, Leverett, MA 01054, by January 18 at 3 p.m.

Leverett is an AA/EEO.

to the school community.

Tom Hankinson, on behalf of his brother Denzel, asked the board to write a letter to Eversource underscoring the town conservation commission’s recommendation regarding highline repairs in swampy areas owned by the Hankinsons.

Eversource is not required to abide by Leverett’s laws, being a federal entity like the railroads. His brother was trying to preserve and protect his rights, Hankinson said, but no letter was issued.

For Leverett taxpayers who want to pay more, an account has been set up to direct local monies to the school, as an opt-in on the bi-yearly tax billing.

For Leverett ratepayers who want to pay more, an upcoming electrical information session will be held at the library, where consumers can

peruse an array of “green energy” options.

The bottled water the town supplies regularly to residents afflicted by the contaminated “plume” near the old dump in South Leverett has experienced a glitch in the supply line, as one company was absorbed into another. The board agreed to give the contracting company one more chance to do its job or it’ll switch suppliers.

Also, the volume of water bought and used has been growing exponentially, prompting scrutiny as to why. Town administrator Margie McGinnis agreed to look into the matter.

A meeting with the Amherst town manager and road boss regarding the extension of a water line to Leverett went well, d’Errico noted. While no official paperwork has been signed, the project is looking like a go.

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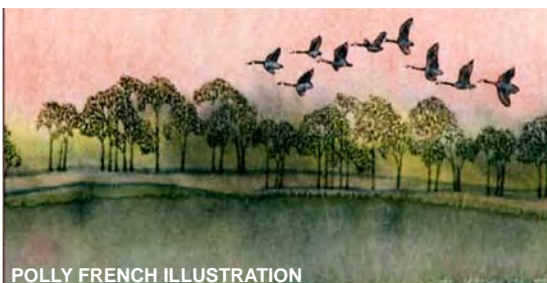
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JANUARY 10, 2019

Above: The smokestack of the former Keith Paper mill in Turners Falls, framed by the Bailey bridge to the Patch.



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

## WEST ALONG THE RIVER ON THE TRAIL OF CAPTAIN BEERS

By DAVID BRULE

**HADLEY TO NORTHFIELD**— Captain Richard Beers awoke from a fitful sleep on the early morning of September 3, 1675. He had been assigned to Hadley for the last few months, along with other officers such as Captains Lathrop and Moseley to disarm the local Indigenous population, and to make the valley safe for colonial settlers.

Orders had come from the Massachusetts Bay Colony government to proceed with all due haste to

Northfield, to evacuate that town under siege by the Pocumtuck and Nipmuck forces.

Of course, Beers couldn't know that morning that in two days he would be dead.

A few days before, on August 25, Beers and Lathrop had led an expedition out of Hatfield to disarm the heretofore peaceful Norwottocks. That tribe did not wish to be disarmed, and fought back. The colonial officers led their men into an ambush at the foot of Wequamps (Mount Sugarloaf), which came to be known

as the Hopewell Swamp incident.

In addition, the village of Pocumtuck (Deerfield) had been attacked on September 1, two days before the attack on Northfield. Now Captain Beers was to lead 36 mounted men to save the Northfield settlers and bring them back to Hadley.

They set out on September 3, expecting to cover the thirty miles from Hadley to Northfield in a day. They followed the Indian trail that led up through modern-day Sunderland, past the massive sycamore tree, smaller then, but still growing there today, keeping the Connecticut River to their left.

They reached the edge of the pitchpine forest, now known as the Montague Plains, and rode on by the future site of the Lake Pleasant community. They started down the trail gap between East and West Mineral Mountains, down past the future Waidlich property to arrive at the ford at the mouth of the Millers River, then known by its Nipmuck name, the *Paguag*.

The mounted troops rode up the embankment on the east side of the river, crossing through the pine forests now known as the French King property. This part of Beers' approach is the future site of a

see WEST ALONG page B6



This 1851 engraving, now at Brown University's Hafenreffer Museum, is believed to depict the ambush of Captain Beers and his men at present-day Northfield.

## The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – This week, the Turners Falls boys' basketball team played three games, the swim teams went a combined 5-1, and the girls' basketball team traveled to Northfield.

Also this week, 14 schools wrestled at Franklin Tech, and a Turners Falls school record was broken.

### Wrestling

The Franklin Tech Wrestling Team has done pretty well these last three seasons, winning the Suburban division two years in a row, and they're on track to 3-peat this year.

On Saturday, January 5, Franklin Tech hosted the Eagles Duals Wrestling Event. It was an all-day affair, with 14 schools competing, and as always, the culinary offerings were plentiful and delicious.

Tech finished 5-0 on the day, defeating Chicopee Comp 57-6, Sabis 45-36, Monument Mountain 48-13, Smith Vocational 66-6, and Monty Tech 42-30.

Several wrestlers had solid days on the mat for Franklin Tech. Josh



Turners' junior Cam Bradley surges through the pool to a new school record of 1:00.84 in the 100-yard butterfly during the Senior Night meet against Springfield's Sci-Tech. The previous record of 1:01.28 was set in the 1987-88 season by Wes Conger.

Brunelle (120-126 weight class), Kyle Brunelle (138-145), Brody Wood (170-182), and Walker Picard (220) all finished 5-0 on the day as individuals. Meanwhile, Noah Fuess (145-152), Tim Fritz (160-170), Ayden Stacy (195), and Matthew Jordan (285) all went 4-1.

Franklin Tech is now 7-1 overall, and 1-0 in the Suburban League. They hosted Mahar on Wednesday at 7 p.m.

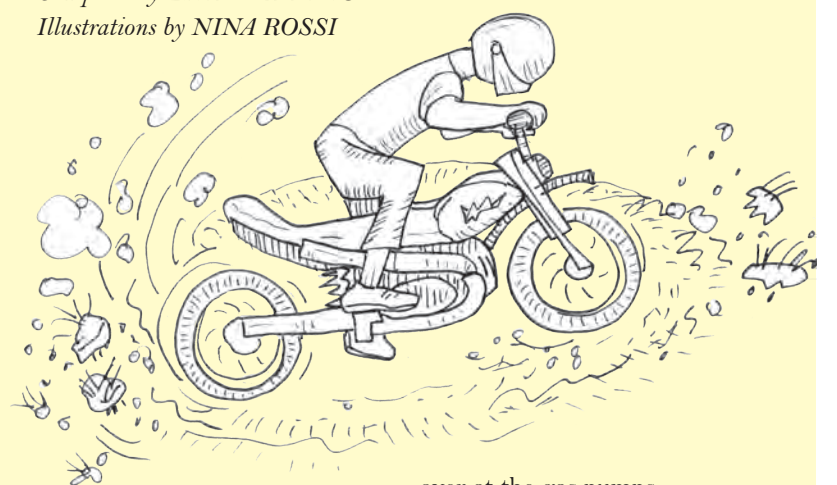
### Boys Swimming

TFHS 49 – Easthampton 8  
TFHS 51 – Holyoke 10  
TFHS 49 – Sci-Tech 36

The Turners boys' swim team has crushed it in 2019. They outscored their opponents 100-19 in their first two meets and then beat Sci-Tech 49-63. In the process, Cam Bradley broke the TFHS record in the 100-yard fly, a record set in the '87-'88 season. see TFHS SPORTS page B4

## The Donuts of Montague: A Police Log Retrospective

Compiled by EMILY ALLING  
Illustrations by NINA ROSSI



### Tuesday, 8/13/13

12:52 pm. Report of subjects on a dirt bike and four-wheelers doing donuts in the practice field at Turners Falls High School, resulting in damage to field.

### Saturday, 9/14/13

10:13 pm. Ongoing problem with vehicle doing donuts and disturbing the peace on Bridge Street in Millers Falls in the evenings between 9:30 and 10 p.m.

### Sunday, 2/9/14

1:11 a.m. Vehicle doing donuts in Unity Field lot. Occupants identified and sent on way.

### Thursday, 4/24/14

3 p.m. Report of red Firebird doing donuts in the field behind Sheffield Elementary School. Officer checked area; damage to field minimal.

### Friday, 8/1/14

6:05 p.m. Report that four vehicles are doing donuts on the fields at Franklin County Technical School. Officer spoke to one party, who admitted to causing damage on the field.

### Saturday, 8/23/14

9:43 p.m. Caller reported a silver Infinity doing donuts and burning out in the area of Bridge Street. Vehicle located, but no one inside.

### Wednesday, 8/27/14

12:32 p.m. 911 call from employees at Red Fire Farm reporting that a former employee came to the farm, apparently intoxicated, and was acting aggressively: driving as if he was trying to hit people at the farm, confronting employees, and smashing one or more beer bottles. Last seen driving southbound on Meadow Road in a red car with Vermont plates. Sunderland police advised to be on lookout.

Two additional 911 calls received; employees reporting that after the officer left the scene, the subject returned and began doing donuts at the farm. Subject has since left, again heading toward Sunderland. Report received that someone matching subject's description was spotted at the Whately Diner, drunk and falling

over at the gas pumps.

### Thursday, 12/18/14

8:03 a.m. Report that someone did donuts in the parking lot of an auto shop overnight, kicking up rocks and possibly damaging a customer's vehicle. Responding officer found no damage to vehicle, just mud; will attempt to contact suspect.

### Saturday, 1/10/15

12:22 p.m. Caller reports that approximately one hour ago, two vehicles were doing donuts at the four corners near East Taylor Hill Road.

### Monday, 9/14/15

2:00 p.m. Caller from Old Sunderland Road requesting options for an illegal dumping and trespassing issue. Groups of teenagers have been partying in a field, leaving their trash behind, and doing donuts in the field.

### Wednesday, 2/24/16

1:59 p.m. Caller reports that a couple of minutes ago the attached vehicle was doing donuts on Third Street hill, almost hitting her and flipping the vehicle in the process.

### Thursday, 3/3/16

5:05 p.m. Caller from Hillside Road reporting three kids with a 4-wheeler and dirt bike riding in the area of the hill by the baseball fields. Caller stated kids all have helmets on; however, he is concerned due to the way they are riding (blowing donuts) that the school will not allow the snowmobilers to use this property.

### Tuesday, 6/28/16

5:49 p.m. Caller advising that a small yellow car pulled into the parking lot of Sheffield Elementary School

see DONUTS page B2



# Pets of the Week

Can you guess what other pet is most similar to rabbits like us?

Indeed, we are most similar to horses, with similar eyes, teeth, and ears, as well as similar diet and behavior, although we are smaller and tidier.

Rabbits like us are very smart – we can be taught to come to our name! We can also be litter box trained. When we are happy we practice a cute behavior known as a “binky”: we run and jump up in the

air and twist and spin around!

We are very social animals, so we need to stay together. We can live with other well-mannered pets.

Please speak with an adoption counselor for more information or to inquire about adoption!

Check Dakin’s cage requirements and adoption fees for your new pet at [www.dakinhumane.org](http://www.dakinhumane.org). To adopt, contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or [info@dpvhs.org](mailto:info@dpvhs.org).



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY/COLLAGES

## “BUN BUN & BLACKIE”

### Senior Center Activities JANUARY 14 THROUGH 18

#### 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 1/14**

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

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

**Tuesday 1/15**

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Movie: “Victoria & Abdul”

**Wednesday 1/16**

9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach

12:30 p.m. Bingo

1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Mobile

Food Pantry

**Thursday 1/17**

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

**Friday 1/18**

12 p.m. Breakfast at Noon

1 p.m. Writers’ Group

#### WENDELL

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

#### LEVERETT

For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022,

ext. 5, or [coa@leverett.ma.us](mailto: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 Wednesday for a reservation.

#### ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregational 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 1/14**

8:45 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt

9:30 a.m. COA Meeting

10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance

11:30 a.m. Breakfast Brunch

1 p.m. Pitch Card Game

**Tuesday 1/15**

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

10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

11:30 a.m. Homemade Lunch

**Wednesday 1/16**

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

12:15 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

*Relax by the Fireplace!*

**Thursday 1/17**

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

**Friday 1/18**

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

#### DONUTS from page B1

and was blowing donuts, then drove all the way around the school. Caller advises that same vehicle did this a few days ago.

**Saturday, 12/17/16**

9:06 p.m. Officer advising a vehicle to stop doing donuts in the Unity Park lot. Subjects moved along.

**Friday, 7/28/17**

10:34 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting vehicle that has done donuts at the bottom of Turnpike Road x 2.

**Wednesday, 12/13/17**

9:50 a.m. Report that someone drove on the fields at Unity Park last night; tire tracks in snow show that vehicle was doing donuts.

10:50 a.m. Caller reporting a vehicle parked in country club lot, may be disabled; caller thinks vehicle was doing donuts in the lot. Caller advises he was plowing around 3 a.m. and the car was there. Dispatch advises that owner of vehicle called earlier, advising he was having the

car towed today due to a bad CV shaft. Tried to call vehicle owner; number disconnected. Officer spoke with caller. No damage to greens; donuts were only done in the parking lot, which has since been cleared.

**Sunday, 2/11/18**

10:42 a.m. Caller reports that a vehicle has been driving erratically on Kimberly Lane on a regular basis (speeding, doing donuts, etc.). Caller advises that today the vehicle crashed into a snowbank; when caller attempted to speak with driver, he left the area.

**Saturday, 12/1/18**

4:18 p.m. Caller reports that someone cut the lock to the gate by the dog park/old bridge abutment and drove a vehicle beyond the gate, causing ruts in the grass. Responding officer advises lock does not appear to have been cut but is broken; requests call to FirstLight to advise. Ruts do not appear to have been caused by anyone doing donuts but rather by a vehicle that drove on the soft ground, possibly a FirstLight vehicle.



## Something Wicked This Way Comes

**TURNERS FALLS** – Why do people commit evil? Are things really as they seem? Who can be trusted? Will there ever be peace?

These are just some of the questions the actors of The Young Shakespeare Players East are asking as they journey through the landscape of *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare for their fall/winter production at the Shea Theater.

*Macbeth* is Shakespeare’s shortest, most well-known tragedy and contains exquisite language and imagery. It is the story of how one of Shakespeare’s greatest heroes, when influenced by three witches, encouraged by his wife, and driven by his own ambition, sets out on the path to murder. *Macbeth’s* and *Lady Macbeth’s* lives then spiral into nightmarish darkness and despair.

YSP East believes in open casting – unlocking opportunities for actors to play roles that are typically off limits by virtue not of skill, or interest, but because of gender, race, age, or body type. The ensemble’s twenty-two actors between the ages of 7 and 18 make up two full casts of *Macbeth*. Each cast is the tech crew for the other.

In YSP East’s *Macbeth*, there is a 17-year-old and a 7-year-old playing Lennox; there are male actors playing the roles of Lady Macbeth, the Waiting Gentlewoman, and the Witches; and female actors playing *Macbeth*, *Macduff*, *Malcolm*, and many other male characters.

The YSP East is a volunteer-run nonprofit theater program founded in 2012, inviting young people ages 8 to 18 to perform full-length works of

Shakespeare. It is the first YSP chapter outside Madison, WI and proud recipient of the Bardie People’s Choice Award: Best Shakespeare Educational Program (K-12). YSP East’s motto, from Hamlet, is “the readiness is all.” At YSP East there are no auditions: all participants receive substantial speaking roles.

The performances are free, with suggested sliding scale donations appreciated, at the Shea Theater on Friday, January 18 at 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, January 19 at noon and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, January 20 at 1 p.m.

All ages are welcome and encouraged to attend. Doors open 20 minutes prior to each show. Delicious concessions and Bard-inspired merchandise for sale, all proceeds go to support YSP East’s Scholarship fund.



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MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

# This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Here at Montague Community TV, we believe that the tools for art, video production, and video journalism should be accessible to the public. That's why at our station, we lend out equipment to folks in our community and also teach you how to use these tools. Yes, that means YOU!

Check out what people are creating locally – and then come to our station on Second Street in Turners Falls to try it yourself:

*Avenue of Flowers*, an artistic-ly rendered video montage of flowers set to music by “Steve, Kevin,

Joel, and the bells!”

*It's a Wonderful Night for the Birds 2018*, a creative lens on the downtown Turners holiday festivities.

*Abandon Dream featuring Lauri McNamara*, a video collage set to McNamara's live music performance.

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, [infomontaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetv@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!

## Calling All Poets!

**GREENFIELD** – The Friends of the Greenfield Public Library are seeking poems for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Poet's Seat Poetry Contest, open to all Franklin County residents and students. Submit up to three poems postmarked by March 4 to enter.

This contest has been sponsored by the Friends since 1991. The competition is held in honor of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, who lived in Greenfield from 1847 until his death in 1873 and was considered by his contemporaries – such as Emerson, Thoreau, and Tennyson – to be a gifted poet. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he shunned law in favor of botany and poetry. Although he never achieved wide acclaim, his poems are included in anthologies of noted American poets.

Awards will be given in three categories: first, second, and third place in the adult division, and the four top poems in the youth division, divided into 12 to 14 year olds and 15 to 18 year olds for judging.

The Poet's Seat awards ceremony and poetry reading will take place in April in honor of National Poetry Month. The adult first prize winner will receive stewardship of the Poet's Seat chair, with their name on a plaque listing all the previous winners, as well as a handcrafted

Poet's Platter and a gift certificate to a local bookstore. All other winners will receive a handcrafted mug and local bookstore gift certificate.

Here are the submission rules:

Submit up to three poems. Number pages of multi-page poems. Indicate “Adult” or “Young Poet” category. Young Poets should write their age on the front of the sheet where the poem appears, in the lower right-hand corner, circled. No identifying information on front of sheet, and no staples please.

On the reverse side of their poems, poets are to write their name, address, telephone number and email address. Poems will not be returned. Submit on white paper, printed clearly in ink or typed in plain typeface. Include SASE for notification of receipt; notification will be via email otherwise.

Only unpublished poems may be submitted. Previous first-place winners may not submit, though top-placing youth poets may re-submit when they enter a new age category. Deadline March 4 (postmarked). Mail to: Poet's Seat Poetry Contest, Greenfield Public Library, 402 Main St., Greenfield, MA 01301.

For more information, contact Hope Schneider at 772-0257 or [hopeschneider395@comcast.net](mailto:hopeschneider395@comcast.net).

## A People's Chorus

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – The Amandla Chorus was founded in 1988 by Eveline MacDougall as “a way to support the then-growing campaign to end apartheid in South Africa.” That is what it says on the group's official website.

They are based in Greenfield, and Eveline is their music director. Places in Massachusetts they have performed recently have been Northampton a couple of times, one time at a church in Greenfield, at GCC for a Women of Power event they did, and the Shea Theater in Turners Falls, where they raised money for the Center for New Americans. According to their website ([amandlachorus.org](http://amandlachorus.org)), the types of events they have sung at have included schools and universities, community concerts, benefits, political events, prisons, soup kitchens and shelters, and weddings, and they have collaborated with “other artists at special events.”

I went to one of three rehearsals Amandla Chorus held before they started performing this year. Two

of them were at the same place (Temple Israel at 27 Pierce Street in Greenfield), and the third was at the Four Rivers charter school in Greenfield. I went to the school.

I was told there were “about 30 people” there to sing. The people mostly consisted of women. This group appears to be an informal, semi-professional group. I say that because someone asked me if I was there to sing, so it would seem that anybody could come in and sing as part of the group.

But, for being a semi-professional group, they harmonized well together! The notes didn't sound flat or off-key to me. They sounded like a reasonably even harmony. I was surprised at how well they did with sounding that way, partly because they weren't exactly professional singers – they just looked to me like ordinary people who came to sing at the rehearsal. Some of which might help explain why they were able to go on performing since 1988 – you know that's why they are still well liked by people.

At one point, a small section of the group sang for the rest of them. I

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Sixty-Foot Flames; Indoor Owl; Unleashed Dogs; Fireworks On Bangs Street, Just Like It Says

**Monday, 12/31/18**

11:20 a.m. 911 open line; talking and music could be heard in the background; sounded like a pocket dial. Officer spoke with Park Street residents; all seems to be in order.

12:55 p.m. Party from Federal Street into station reporting ongoing town bylaw violations (unregistered vehicles) on his neighbor's property. Party dropped off several photos of the vehicles and conditions of the property. Referred to an officer.

2:14 p.m. Caller found an opened piece of mail in a bush on Bridge Street. Caller is about to board a bus to Greenfield; advised he will bring the mail to the Greenfield post office. Caller called back advising that he located a mail carrier and gave them the piece of mail.

2:28 p.m. Party from K Street into station to request options re: a subject who allowed his dog to defecate on party's rental property earlier this afternoon. Subject was wearing a bathrobe and slippers and walking his dog in the neighborhood. Advised party that either an MPD officer or the animal control officer would contact him.

6:14 p.m. Caller advising that a large fire can be seen from her home in Erving; believes that fire is sixty feet high and close to a building. Second caller, an Erving firefighter, advising that flames are coming from the location of a past structure fire and are 100 feet from a home. TFFD striking alarm and responding to area of Grand Avenue. MPD officer advising that the fire is on Lyman Street behind the ballfield. TFFD on scene; requesting Engine 2 respond. Officer made contact with homeowner, who stated that the fire is larger than normal.

7:02 p.m. Greenfield PD advising of open 911 call from area of Montague Street; stated that it sounded like an adult talking to a child in the background about us-

ing the bathroom. Area checked; unable to locate. 7:17 p.m. Warning issued by TFFD to parties on Crocker Avenue who were setting off fireworks.

**Tuesday, 1/1/19**

5:30 a.m. 911 open line silent call from Fosters Road. Officers advise no one answering door. Busy signal on callback. Contact made with male. Phone line issue; male will contact provider.

1:30 p.m. Caller from Grove Street complaining of barking dog. Caller advises that the owners have been making an effort lately, but today the dog has been barking for the better part of the day. Advised of options.

1:41 p.m. Report of uncapped needle behind St. Kaz.

3:27 p.m. Caller was walking his dog past a house on Fourth Street and noticed that the front door was wide open. Caller stated that the building is under construction and that the construction crew is not on scene. Responding officers advise building is clear and secured.

3:38 p.m. 911 open line in area of Unity Park dog park. Shelburne Control advising that they made contact with the calling party, who is in Riverside, Gill. All is well.

8:59 p.m. Officer conducting motor vehicle stop in front of Greenfield Savings Bank. Officer advising that operator was removed from vehicle for officer's safety and that the K9 performed a sniff of the vehicle. Citation issued.

**Wednesday, 1/2**

2 p.m. Caller from K Street reporting solicitors at door who could not produce a Montague solicitation permit. Male and female had paperwork from Eversource but no other info; they are waiting with caller until police arrive. Dispatch kept caller on phone should the situation change. Officer advises that the two parties are packing up for the day and that the supervisor would be coming to MPD to submit paperwork.

4:41 p.m. Family Dollar employee reporting unauthorized use of company's dumpster. Caller believes she knows who it is and would like to know what her options are. Officer spoke with caller and will be calling a number on one of the discarded boxes to advise of the complaint.

5:01 p.m. Caller advising that he just hit a deer on Sunderland Road. Vehicle and animal are off road; no smoke, fluid, or flame coming from car. Deer seems to be deceased. Responding officer requesting accident number; advises that vehicle is able to operate safely under its own power.

**Thursday, 1/3**

5:16 p.m. Caller from Eleventh Street is concerned about a neighbor who has dogs that he keeps off leash. There was a confrontation between the caller and her dog and the neighbor and his dogs a few minutes ago. Caller given contact information for ACO and told that an officer would contact her as well.

6:56 p.m. Caller states that earlier this afternoon, a vehicle that was in front of her on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge threw some garbage out of the window. Plate number provided. Referred to an officer.

**Friday, 1/4**

8:46 a.m. Report of injured deer in a field at Main Street and Sunderland Road. Referred to environmental police.

10:53 a.m. 911 abandoned call from Franklin County Technical School. Confirmed misdial by school resource officer.

11:50 a.m. Officer checked on occupants in a vehicle that had been parked in the F.L. Roberts lot for over an hour. Occupants were actively scratching lottery tickets.

12:50 p.m. Walk-in party reports that earlier today a vehicle (information provided) was tailgating her and passed her in an unsafe manner. Party declined to speak with an officer.

2:02 p.m. Caller reports that his laundry was stolen earlier today from the Third

Street Laundry. Caller already contacted laundromat owner, who will review surveillance footage. Caller unsure if the person took his laundry intentionally or accidentally.

5:08 p.m. 911 misdial. Confirmed. Caller's phone dialed while caller was trying to power it off.

6:58 p.m. Caller states that an employee from Farren Care Center told him that there is a strong odor, possibly sewer gas, all along Montague City Road. TFFD notified. Area checked; nothing out of the ordinary.

**Saturday, 1/5**

7:25 a.m. 911 abandoned call; no answer on callback. Confirmed misdial. Apparent phone programming issue.

2:31 p.m. Walk-in party reporting that an owl flew into a building on Industrial Boulevard and is now sitting on the ground, possibly injured. Area checked; no bird found.

2:53 p.m. Parking violation appeal form submitted.

5:29 p.m. Caller reporting vehicle moving down Avenue A from the area of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge to Food City. Vehicle was reportedly passing other cars and driving erratically before pulling into Cumberland Farms. Officer advised driver of complaint and did not notice any impairment at this time.

8:31 p.m. Officer requesting DPW send crews out to treat the roads due to slick conditions. DPW advised and en route. MassDOT advised of same re: Route 63.

8:55 p.m. Caller complaining of intermittent fireworks being set off from the end of Bangs Street near the church parking lot. TFFD and officer advised. Delayed response due to high call volume.

11:01 p.m. Male caller reporting that the bass in the music at the Rendezvous is too loud. Officer advised. Response will be delayed due to arrest from previous shift. Officer clear from area; all quiet.

assumed those individuals were a bit more experienced when it came to singing, because they sounded very professional. The rest of the group backed them up nicely when they did a song; that time as well they sounded reasonably harmonized. The group's singing was organized enough for them to continue to sound good during a song, which I believe was called “Freedom is Coming,” while moving around.

I know the name of another song that was sung. It was “This Little Light of Mine.” They did an all right job with this particular song.

Despite my thinking of them as a semi-professional group, they sang other songs just as well. So perhaps go to see them this year!

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**TFHS SPORTS** from page B1

The first of the three home meets was played against the Easthampton Eagles on Wednesday, January 2. Turners has a very small team this season, but some schools have even fewer players. Easthampton, for example, only fielded one swimmer, so Turners swept every event.

In the 200-yard medley relay Nik Martin, Dom Carme, Cameron Bradley, and Jack Putala finished in 2:11.56. In the 200-yard freestyle relay, Will Turn joined Bradley, Carme, and Putala for a time of 2:05.82.

Carme won two events, the 200-yard freestyle (2:45.74) and 100-yard breaststroke (1:30.42), and Bradley won both of his, the 100-yard butterfly (1:02.80) and 100-yard backstroke (1:08.58).

Martin won the 200-yard medley (2:41.34) and finished second in the 500 freestyle (6:58.80); Turn took first in the 100-yard freestyle (1:16.19) and second in the 200 freestyle; Putala won the 50-yard freestyle (29.20) and finished third in the 500 (7:14.83); and Griffen Reigle finished second in the 50-yard freestyle (47.12).

Then on Friday, January 4, Blue defeated the Holyoke Purple Knights 51-10. Holyoke is another small team, and Powertown likewise dominated in the lanes. The relay teams swept, finishing the 200-yard medley relay in 2:17.43 and the 200 freestyle relay in 2:27.02.

Bradley again won the 100-yard butterfly (1:01.86) and backstroke (1:06.92). Martin also won two, the 200-yard freestyle (2:27.71) and 500 freestyle (6:53.91). Putala took the 100-yard freestyle in 1:08.34, and Carme won the 200 IM in 3:12.37.

The Boys completed the trifecta on Tuesday, January 8, when they beat the Sci-Tech Cybercats 49-36. Because it was their last home meet of the season, Turners celebrated Senior Night. And what a night!

Cam Bradley finished the 100-yard butterfly with an amazing time of 1:00.84, shattering the school record that has stood for 30 years. Incidentally, he also won the 100-yard backstroke in 1:06.29.

Putala won his two races, the 200-yard freestyle (2:35.18) and the 50 freestyle (29.18). Turn won the 100 freestyle (1:14.98), Martin took first in the 500 freestyle in 6:55.84, and Powertown's two relay teams swept.

The Turners swim teams only have away meets for the rest of the season, and then go on to the MIAA Individual competition.

**Girls Swimming**

Easthampton 65 – TFHS 28

TFHS 49 – Holyoke 28

TFHS 43 – Sci-Tech 22

The Turners Falls ladies likewise had a good start to 2019, going 2-1 in the first three meets of the year.

On Wednesday, January 2, Easthampton outswam the Powertown Ladies in the first meet of the calendar year. Blue took first place in two races against Eastie. Jade Tyler won the 100-yard butterfly in 1:09.25, and Olivia Whittier completed the 100 breaststroke in 1:18.63, beating her opponent by half a hand.

Tyler finished second in the 500 freestyle (1:09.75) while Whittier took second in the 200 IM, 2:35.29. Allison Wheeler also finished second in two races, the 100 backstroke (1:19.95) and 100 freestyle (1:07.49), while Abigail Johnson finished third in both the 200-yard (2:57.69) and 50-yard freestyles (35.32).

The relay team of Wheeler, Whittier, Tyler, and Johnson took second in both races, the 200 medley (2:15.24) and the 200 freestyle relay (2:03.14).

Then on Friday, January 4, the ladies got back to their winning ways and beat the Holyoke Purple Knights 49-28. In this meet, Turners swept the relay races, winning the 200 medley with a time of 2:19.82 and the 200 freestyle in 2:08.18.

Whittier took the 100-yard backstroke (1:14.38) and 100 freestyle (1:04.94); Tyler the 100-yard breaststroke (1:20.21) and 200 freestyle (2:15.71); Wheeler the 100-yard butterfly (1:28.16) and 200 IM (2:53.08); and Johnson the 50-yard

freestyle in 34.34.

Then on Tuesday, January 8, the girls outswam the Cybercats of Sci-Tech. The relay teams split, with Turners winning the 200 medley relay in 2:25.08.

But Turners won every individual race; as Wheeler (2:53.82 in the 200 IM and 1:00.71 in the 100-yard freestyle), Whittier (29.18 in the 50 freestyle and 1:19.45 in the 100 breaststroke), Tyler (100 butterfly, 1:11.69), Johnson (200 freestyle, 2:56.04) and Poirier (100 backstroke, 1:27.55) all took home gold.

**Boys Basketball**

Pioneer 72 – TFHS 57

TFHS 65 – FCTS 43

TFHS 71 – Hampshire 59

The Turners boys' basketball team went 2-1 this week, losing at home to Pioneer on January 3 and then winning two away games against Franklin Tech and Hopkins Academy.

On January 3, the Pioneer Panthers came to town and beat Blue 72-57. In this game, Turners displayed a unique defense. I won't go into detail, but it was fun to watch.

Early in the game, Turners owned the boards. Blue was grabbing rebounds on both ends of the court, and halfway through the first period was up 13-8.

Then Pioneer stopped missing. For the next 3 minutes 59 seconds, Pioneer chipped away, and they led 16-15 at the buzzer. The second quarter was almost identical. In the first four minutes, Blue outplayed

Black and nosed ahead to 23-20; but Pioneer stole back the lead in the final four, 28-26.

The third was all Panthers. To add insult to injury, the Cats sunk a basket at the buzzer to go up by 12 points, 51-39. Turners kept pace for half of the fourth, but then Pioneer hit consecutive 3-pointers to increase their lead to 19 with under four minutes to play. Turners made a final push, but could only shave 4 points off the lead, and Pioneer came away with a 72-57 victory.

Chase Novak led Turners with 18 points off three 3-pointers, three 2-pointers, and three foul shots. Ryan Campbell and Anthony Peterson got 11 points each, Tyler Lavin added 9, Ryan Kucenski netted 7 points, and Jovanni Ruggiano hit a free throw.

Then on Friday, January 4, Turners beat Franklin Tech on Tech's home court. In this game, Coach Mullins switched up his starting lineup, designating Anthony Peterson as the sixth man.

This worked pretty well. Peterson plays pretty physical, and racks up fouls, but coming in late he was free to play his game without foul trouble. The first quarter was even and Tech was up by a point, 14-13, when the buzzer sounded.

In the second, efficient passes and accurate shooting helped Turners pull away 40-31. Turners went up by 14 points in the third, and held the Eagles in check in the fourth to take the game 65-43.

Then on Monday, January 7,

Turners traveled to Hadley to take on the Hopkins Golden Hawks.

Hopkins Academy has a jazz band which plays throughout the game. This music pumps up the crowd, and gives Hopkins the home-court advantage. In the last few years, several Golden Hawks Cagers have hit the 1,000-point mark, and Hopkins has always been a Western Mass powerhouse. But this is not their season.

Turners came out hot in Monday's game, outscoring the Birds 22-9 in the first quarter *en route* to a 35-18 halftime lead. That lead increased to 22 points early in the third, but then they went cold.

This incited the home crowd, and the visiting Blue Nation began to squirm in their bleachers. With 3 minutes and 20 to play and Powertown desperately holding onto a 60-56 lead, Lavin was fouled. He hit both shots to give Blue some breathing room. A fast break, timely rebounds, and a few more foul shots helped Turners pull away, and when the buzzer sounded, Turners found themselves on top, 71-59.

Lavin had a monster night, putting up 27 points. Novak scored 16, and Peterson added 14. Other Powertown scorers include Dodge (5), Campbell (4), Russell (3), and Kucenski (2).

**Girls Basketball**

Pioneer 47 – TFHS 22

On Tuesday, January 8, the Turners Falls girls basketball team traveled to Northfield and lost to the

Pioneer Panthers, 41-22.

The game was pretty festive, with a DJ playing music, free giveaways, contests, and a Black Panther mascot riling up the crowd. With all this noise and confusion, Pioneer came out of the gates with a shot.

It took the Panthers 16 seconds to score two baskets. They won the jump and scored four seconds later. Then Turners lost the ball, and they scored again.

Coach Eddy Marvell was forced to call a timeout to try to settle his girls down. Aly Murphy scored a couple of hoops to tie it up, but then the Pioneers went on another run to take a 12-4 lead. Lindsay Whiteman hit from the outside at the end of the period to make it 12-7, but the officials ruled she was inside the arc, and took away a point.

After a quarter, the score was 12-6 Black. In the second, Pioneer scored another 12 points to Turners' 5, and was up 24-11 at the half. It wasn't that Pioneer was particularly accurate. They missed their share of shots, but they had the height advantage, and frequently had two or three chances to put the ball in the hoop.

In the fourth, Pioneer went up by 30 points, 45-15, and finally won by 25, 47-22. Whiteman was Blue's top scorer, with 9 points off a 3-pointer, two 2's, and two foul shots. Murphy and Dabney Rollins got 4 points each, Karissa Fleming hit a 3-pointer, Lucy Spera got 2 points, and Lana Spera hit a foul shot.



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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## EVENTS

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 10

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *John Lentz Trio*. Jazz. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Drag Queen Bingo*. 8 p.m.

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

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 11

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

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Ragged Blue*. This trio has an engaging combination of bluegrass, celtic, old-time, originals, and popular songs with three-part harmony from Corki Demers, John Rough, and Terry Atkinson. The monthly Coffeehouse series is a benefit for the Friends of the GFDC who support free nature programming at the Center. Suggested donation \$6 to \$12; baked goods for sale. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Danny Pease and the Regulators, The Medicinal Purpose*. Style of Old Dirty Punk Reggae. 18 and over. \$ 9 p.m.

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

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Creative Movement Open House*. Free creative dance lessons for young children and families. 5 and 6 year olds from 10 to 11; 3 and 4 year olds from 11:15 to noon. 10 a.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: *Brunch Reception for Open Call NXNE 2019*. Annual juried art exhibit opening with a brunch reception. Over 300 artists from New England and New York submitted works, from which 13 were chosen. Variety of media and styles included. 11 a.m.

Warwick Town Hall: *She Said*. All-female band playing blues, rock inspired originals. Wooden Fender concert series, with a Souper Supper at 6 p.m. Donation. \$ 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Montague Common Hall Open Mic #30*. Featured performer: *Ralph Carson*. Big-town performance art in a small village. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Country Night with Wild Leek River and The Old Fashioneds*. Be ready to dance and cry. \$ 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Deep C Divers*. Original funky pop rock and reggae from the heart. 9 p.m.

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls:

*Fortified Blues Band*. Burgers, blues, and booze. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Owsley's Owls*. 9:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 13

DVAA Center for the Arts, Northfield: *Donate Art Supplies*. Bring your new or gently used art supplies and/or art for this tag sale fundraiser to benefit the Center. Repeats Monday morning. 10:30 a.m.

SUBMITTED IMAGE



An example of one of the hooked rugs by Phyllis Lawrence that are on display in the Herrick Gallery at the Wendell Library through February. An opening reception and demonstration will be held on Sunday, January 13 from 3 to 5 p.m. Other textile and fiber arts by Lawrence fill the gallery with warm color and texture during this winter show.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Two-Step Festival. The Nite Caps and Empty Bottle Ramblers* presenting country and Cajun music with dance lessons from Emily Fox. \$ 2 p.m.

Wendell Library: *Rug Hooking Demonstration*. With Phyllis Lawrence, whose textile art is on display in the Herrick Gallery through February. (See photo this page.) 3 p.m.

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

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

### MONDAY, JANUARY 14

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

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 15

Leverett Library: *Andrew Forsthoefel* book talk. 6:30 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16

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

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

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Homeschool Science*. Hands-on STEM learning. Call to register. 1 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Creacion Latin Big Band Jam* on the fourth floor. 8 p.m.

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

Shakespeare Players production of *Macbeth* in a free performance for all ages. Repeats Saturday and Sunday. 6 p.m.

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

Hawks & Reed Greenfield: *Butterfly Swing Band*. Classic swing groove of 1920s and 30s, dance lessons at 7 p.m. with 8 p.m. concert. \$ 7 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *The Makers, Myk Freedman*, and more TBA. Blistering psych and a Beatles cover; Freedman is improv lap steel guitar. \$ 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. Andy Davis calling with David Kaynor on fiddle leading the *Back Row Band*. Sliding scale. \$ 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sunny Lowdown Roots Music Jam*. 9:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 19

Carnegie Library, Turners Falls: *Pirate Party*. Play like pirates with games, activities, and grub. Children of all ages and their caregivers. 10 a.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: *Orly Cogan: Artist's Talk*. Talk on art and feminism in connection with Cogan's exhibit at the museum, *Don't Call Me Princess*, which features vintage textiles embroidered with scenes from women's lives. 2 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Macbeth with YSP*. Young Shakespeare Players production of *Macbeth* in a free performance for all ages. 6 p.m.

Mt Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *Windborne Singers*. Polyphonic vocal group singing working class songs from past 400 years of struggle, recast for contemporary relevance. Their protest song performance outside the Trump tower went viral. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Animal Piss is Everywhere, Anthony Pasquarosa, Huevos II*. 9:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 20

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Macbeth with YSP*. Young Shakespeare Players production of *Macbeth* in a free performance.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo Night*. 8 p.m.

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## EXHIBITS

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro, VT: Five new exhibits include a six-decade survey of the work of abstract artist *Emily Mason*, Open Call NXNE, and artwork by *Orly Cogan*, and *Elizabeth Turk*. Open Call NXNE featuring 13 juried New England and New York artists, will hold an opening brunch reception on January 12 at 11 a.m. This is free to all.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: Two weekends of *Art Finds* in January: January 18, 19, 25 and 26. Art and art materials for sale as a fundraiser for the Center. Got stuff to donate? Email [buckyredsox@yahoo.com](mailto:buckyredsox@yahoo.com). Followed by member's exhibit in February: *Farms*.

Flourish, Turners Falls: *A Good Year for the Roses*. Paintings by *Alison Williams* and collaborative mixed media work with *Glen Scheffer*. Through January.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *East African Textiles: Talking Kanga Cloth* in January and February.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Paul Hoffman*. Bold narrative paintings. Through January.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Andrew Nighswander: Automatic Landscapes*. See picture and caption this page. Through January.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Library: *Phyllis Lawrence*: Textile arts and hooked rugs. Through February.

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center, Leverett: *Resident Artists' Show*. Informal exhibit of work from artists who have studios at the Center. Through February.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: Gallery closed through January, opening again in February.

Sawmill River Gallery, Montague Center: *Member's Show* of recent works by gallery artists.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Winter's Tale*. Members' exhibit through January. Gallery closed week of January 22 for renovations. Opening in February with *Red Hot theme*.

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WEST ALONG from page B1

63-acre solar farm.

More about that later.

The rescue force camped along the banks of Four-Mile Brook, about three miles south of Northfield, on the night of September 3.

The next day, inexplicably, Beers began his final approach to Northfield by making a number of strategic blunders. According to Deerfield historian George Sheldon, "Forgetful of the surprise ambush of Hutchinson at Brookfield, or of his own at Wequamps, he led directly into an ambush..."

Beers decided to advance to Northfield on foot; he put out no scouts, no flankers. He took the usual approach to Northfield following the Indian trail along the high plain, pretty much parallel to the Route 63 of today. This was the common route of travel at the time.

Nipmucks and Pocumtucks, under the command of the infamous Sagamore Sam and One-Eyed John, had set the ambush along this path, knowing the English would march right into the ravine, close to Roaring Brook.

Gunfire erupted from both sides of the hollow; most of the English fell on the spot. A few survivors retreated to the foot of what is now known as Beers Hill, where Captain Beers was killed. Two days later he was buried at a site that can be found today near one of the buildings of the Linden Hill School, not far from the intersection of South Mountain Road and Lyman Hill Road.

That day, 21 men were killed. The 13 men who were left guarding the horses at Four-Mile Brook returned to Hadley by dark. Three more men made it back days later, half-crazed and starving.

On September 6, Major Robert Treat, who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Connecticut forces, had just arrived in Northampton when he was ordered up to Northfield to evacuate the beleaguered stockade there. He left Hadley with about 100 men.

In addition, the Hartford Council had sent another hundred Mohegans and Pequots to accompany Treat, according to Sheldon.

According to a contemporary colonial historian, Rev William Hubbard in 1677, Treat's men "were much daunted to see the heads of Capt. Beers' soldiers upon poles by the wayside...by which means they thought to daunt and discourage any that might come...and to terrifie those that should be spectators with the beholding so sad an object..."

Treat's men made haste in reaching the Northfield stockade, and evacuated the survivors, "but feared to wait the slow moving ox teams... everything was left behind but their horses."

As was typical of the colonials, who were almost completely unfamiliar with the lands north of the lower valley settlements, they followed the same paths. Beers had approached the settlement at Northfield by a well-known route, and the survivors of the ambush followed the same route of retreat.

Again, Major Treat followed the same path to evacuate the settlement, and they followed the same route back to Hadley. This pattern of the English enemy consistently served the Tribes strategic successes during this war: they knew the terrain, the paths, they could predict the routes the English would follow, and ambush them at specific choke-points. This only changed as colonial forces began using Indigenous scouts like the Mohegans and Pequots to guide and advise them.

Sheldon writes, "We are left to imagine the long cavalcade, a line of strange, black looking specters, threading its way the live-long night through the gloomy woods, and the panic stricken riders peering fearfully right and left into the thickets, or crowding together in terror at the hoot of the owl or bark of fox or wolf, sure that each was the war-whoop of a pursuing foe."

So the forces of Treat, along with the

survivors, made their way back through the lofty pines where soon a solar farm will sit, crossed the river, back up East Mineral Road, through the Plains, past Kunkwachu (Mount Toby), and on down to Hadley. There "the demoralized soldiers of Treat seemed to infect all classes at Hadley with despondency and gloom." (Sheldon)

Today, if you are heading north on Route 63, you will see a marker that reads:

Indian Council Fires

Two Hundred and Fifty Yards Eastward Are the sites of three large Indian Council Fires

The Beers Massacre of Sept 4, 1675 Took Place in a gorge one-quarter mile to the Northeast

Why mention all this now? Why bring up the foolish and arrogant defeat of a colonial officer who led his men to certain death at the hands of Indigenous people protecting their homeland and communities, much as would Gen. George Armstrong Custer two hundred years later?

Partly this has to do with the in-depth study being undertaken these past four years of the local events of King Philip's War (1675-76), under the American Battlefield Protection Program. We also are rapidly approaching the 400th anniversary of the arrival of English settlers in Plymouth in 1620. The Beers' ambush, along with a similar ambush in Brookfield, and the colonial disaster at Bloody Brook all are part of the local impacts of 1620.

But even more importantly, studying the Beers expedition is also a major consideration in the development of a local solar project. The approach and retreat route of Beers and Treat likely passes through the middle of the proposed French King Solar Project, which would clear-cut and forever alter the terrain of that route.



Map from Douglas Edward Leach's "Flintlock & Tomahawk" (1957).

The Erving Historical Commission, of which I am a member, has secured promises of cooperation with the solar developer to carefully survey and assess the site, prior to construction. Two federally-recognized tribes and an independent consulting firm are already on board with the need for a survey.

The fateful route taken by Beers to meet his destiny will be followed once again, perhaps for the last time, before the bulldozers do their work. Will we find any lingering artifacts of that day in 1675?

Not likely, but we owe it to the history of this region to take one last good look.



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