

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 12

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 17, 2019

## Quiet Transition at Regional Housing Authority Retired Springfield Official Tapped as Interim Chief

By MIKE JACKSON

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – Fran Pheeney, executive director of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCRHRA), resigned from her position in early December, and on January 2 an interim executive director, William H. Abrashkin, assumed the office on a part-time basis.

Pheeney led the housing authority for three years, and reportedly left to pursue other employment. No public announcement was made of her departure, but according to posted meeting agendas, a search committee for an interim director met five times in October and November, and made a recommendation to the FCRHRA's board of commissioners on November 27.

On December 3, the board accepted Pheeney's resignation and



William H. Abrashkin

agreed to hire Abrashkin, who is now working on a part-time basis.

Abrashkin served as a judge on the Western Division Housing Court from 1986 until 2008, when he became executive director of the Springfield Housing Authority. He officially retired in August 2017, but continued in that role part-time until last year.

"There I was, sitting in my house, working on my projects,

and the phone rang," Abrashkin told the *Reporter* on Wednesday. "And here I am!"

A late attempt to reach members of the board of commissioners for comment on the transition was unsuccessful as of press time.

The eleven-member board is supposed to be comprised of two commissioners appointed by the state governor and nine by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, though only five FRCOG appointees are currently seated.

According to its most recent annual report, the agency oversees about 580 Section 8 rental assistance vouchers, runs various emergency housing aid and mortgage counseling programs, manages 265 units of affordable rental housing, including the Crocker, Cutlery, and Moltenbrey buildings in Turners Falls, and

see **HOUSING** page A7

## Davis Street Project Nixed, Special Zoning for Schools Preserved: Planning Board

By JEFF SINGLETON

**MONTAGUE** – At its January 15 meeting, the Montague planning board unanimously voted not to recommend a subdivision proposal that would have set aside three lots for affordable housing on a small portion of town land on Davis Street currently leased to the Gill-Montague school district. At the same meeting, the board approved major revisions of town zoning bylaws, but did not eliminate "recreational-educational" zoning entirely, as originally planned.

The outcome of the meeting seemed to be a foregone conclusion, as town planner Walter Ramsey indicated at a January 7 selectboard meeting that he would withdraw the subdivision proposal, and reconsider the broader zoning change that would have allowed it, in the face of community opposition.

Still, Tuesday's hearing was packed with residents, some standing against the walls of the upstairs meeting room for lack of seating. A show of hands requested by an audience member indicated that nearly

see **ZONING** page A6



About 45 residents attended the packed hearing in Town Hall on Tuesday.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Board Approves Changes to Strathmore Demo Design

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard, at its January 14 meeting, allocated \$7,100 to help fund a "change order" in the project to design and create bid-ready plans for what is again planned to be a "partial demolition" of the former Strathmore factory on Canal Street in Turners Falls. Thus the project has returned to the original proposal contained in the 2017 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) which is funding the project.

Bruce Hunter of Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which administers CDBG grants for the town, reviewed the history of the proposal. The original plan was to finance a "partial demolition" of the historic complex, focusing on the buildings on the north side.

However, in March 2018 the selectboard shifted gears and issued a request for proposals for a total demolition of the complex. This would leave only Building 9, which is owned by a small hydro-electric company named Turners Falls Hydro LLC, and the freestanding Building 11.

However, when engineering firm Tighe & Bond evaluated the complex, they found that a total demo-

lition would endanger the hydro plant's stability, and estimated that a plan to stabilize Building 9 would require an additional \$50,000 in design costs alone. The selectboard shifted its focus back to partial demolition.

The total amount required for the change order was \$12,500. \$4,500 will come from funds set aside for permitting that, according to Hunter, the town is now exempt from. Another \$900 can be covered by unspent grants from the project to improve Rutters Park in Lake Pleasant, leaving \$7,100 to be transferred from the unspent "housing rehabilitation" portion of the block grant. This was the amount approved by the selectboard on Monday.

The board also directed the chair to sign a letter to Mark Southard of the state Department of Housing and Community Development requesting approval of the transfer.

**Brick Smokestack**

Building inspector Chris Rice reported on the status of the chimney at the Strathmore, which had been recently inspected by an outside firm due to concerns that it was in danger of collapsing. Rice said he had had a "great meeting with the gentleman, who is one of those crazy people

see **MONTAGUE** page A5

## FAREWELL, OLD HUMP



A Massachusetts Department of Transportation work crew removes the notorious "bump" section of the Fifth Street bridge over the power canal in Turners Falls, called by some the Green Bridge, last Thursday morning. The project is scheduled to be completed by late January. ("Weather providing," photographer and local historical Ed Gregory adds!)

## The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – This week in sports, the Turners Falls boys' basketball team evened up their record, the girls' basketball team kept their heads up, and the cheer squad got ready to compete. Also this week, a visiting team displayed some wonderful sportsmanship.

**Boys Basketball**  
TFHS 64 – Belchertown 54  
Monson 76 – TFHS 66

Turners opened the week with a 10-point home win, and then lost by 10 points down in Monson.

On Thursday, January 10, the boys beat the Belchertown Orioles 64-54. First: a shout out to the Belchertown junior varsity. In the

early game, the Belchertown JV were way ahead with only seconds left to play.

Usually, the winning team freezes the ball, passing it around until time runs out. Occasionally, a team will pile on the points but on Thursday, Belchertown voluntarily gave up the rock and allowed a Turners player a chance to score.

Then at halftime of the varsity game, the Turners middle school played a scrimmage. The home crowd dutifully cheered on the younger kids, and the Belchertown JV joined in. Every time one of the younger kids scored, the Belchertown JV clapped and cheered. It's nice to see such good sportsmanship!

In the varsity game, Blue used crisp passing and downtown accuracy to build and maintain a double-digit lead. They took an 11-point lead early, 19-8. The margin stayed around 10 points until the end of game, when the Birds pulled within 6 with two minutes left to play. Coach Mullins called a TO and Chace Novak, Tyler Lavin, and Ryan Kucenski hit subsequent field goals to put the game into the win column for Turners.

Novak led Thunder with 27

see **SPORTS** page A5



DAVID HOULT PHOTO

And in wrestling: Franklin Tech's Tim Fritz (right) gains advantage over Mahar's Jayden Carey (left) during their match last Wednesday, January 9. Fritz won the 170-lb. match with a pin at 1:15. The Franklin Tech Eagles won the home meet 42-30, taking 8 out of 10 matches.

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# The Montague Reporter

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# Prudent Preparation

As this issue goes to press, there are few signs that is now the longest so-called “shutdown” of the US federal government will end any time soon.

We could be wrong, but there have been no top-level negotiations in over a week. The Democrats, with their newly minted House majority, have no reason to cave, much less set the precedent of caving. And the president, having already thrown a border-wall-funding wrench into the budgetary gears during the lame-duck session in response to pressure from his own base, has no way to extract it now and save face.

The shutdown is only partial: the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, Energy, Labor, Education, and others are operating at full steam. And thus far, despite an ardent PR war, few Americans have been materially affected. But that will change over time.

42 million Americans rely on SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, to put food on the table and make ends meet. 7 million receive aid through WIC, targeted to Women, Infants, and Children. Those two programs are funded through February, with next month’s SNAP funding set to be released early next week.

“Through February” is also the prevailing wisdom as to how long funding for Section 8 rental assistance will hold out, though that is only the largest stream of aid ensuring shelter: the USDA is reportedly already faltering in its various rural housing loan programs, for example.

If economic catastrophe and social upheaval are just around the corner, most seem to be ignoring it. Markets are up – the Dow Jones Industrial Average has recovered over 2,000 points, over half its December plunge. (Goldman Sachs just posted its best day in ten years!)

But we’re in uncharted waters – perhaps even in a parallel situation to the morass the United Kingdom is wading through following the Brexit vote.

In both countries, there are enough hardline nationalists to cre-

ate a irreconcilable break from the previous orderly political consensus, but not enough to form a coalition capable of leading government action to carry out their vision.

And in both countries, a long-marginalized left wing has been able to gather strength and visibility in response, yet not enough to put their politics into action, either.

Is this all the calm before the storm? Maybe that’s not even a relevant question. The shutdown could end tomorrow, or it could soften, if enough Republican senators begin to cross the aisle and approve one or more of the four “standalone” appropriations bills passed by the House.

Or it could wear on, and take a toll. Many of the most vulnerable Americans will be hit first. If that happens, we should all stop looking toward Washington for a resolution to the crisis, and start figuring out how to provide essentials – food, shelter, clothing, clean water, even electricity –for each other, directly.

After the 2008 crash, the word “resilience” was on everyone’s tongue – or at least, the idea was on everyone’s mind, liberal and conservative alike. The shocking reminder that the money we are so dependent on for survival could disappear virtually overnight prompted a wave of home food production, generator sales, and do-it-yourself workshops in rural, suburban, and urban communities alike.

But just a few years later, the community aspect of this movement had evaporated, even as doomsday prepping became a popular individual hobby – and booming industry. Why was that?

We see civilian-led mutual aid networks form in response to natural disasters such as hurricanes. Right now, the political class is playing chicken with an unnatural disaster. The storm may hit, or it may not. So now’s the time to look around.

On our street, where will people find shelter if they are evicted? Where will they gather to eat if they are hungry? Who will be welcomed to the table?

And what will we have on hand to put in the soup?

# Disappointed

I was surprised and disappointed to see this paper’s decision to print a list of mean, unsubstantiated, character assassinating allegations against Secondary Principal Annie Leonard.

Adults should know better. This little paper is a treasure and is at its best when it sheds light, not slings mud. Facebook does that well enough for all of us. You are better than this.

Sincerely,

**Michael Sullivan, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools,**  
**Gill-Montague Regional School District**

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# Letters to the Editors

## Greenfield Cross Road

Last September 17 the Montague Selectboard voted to close Greenfield Cross Road, without conditions. This was in response to a reported “road rage” incident, and because some drivers are known to speed on that section of road and therefore it is a dangerous road.

Based on my own past experience and a conversation I had with Town Counsel before the last Special Town Meeting, the Selectboard *does not have the authority* to close Town roads, at least not the way that it did in September.

They can close roads in the short term, due to construction or specific short-term safety issues such as flooding or fallen trees. At the September meeting, they simply voted to close the road.

Therefore, Greenfield Cross Road needs to be reopened immediately and kept open until such time as the law can be researched and the Board, if it so chooses, moves forward according to the law.

In itself, Greenfield Cross Road is no more unsafe than many other roads in the town, and probably safer than some. Some people choose to drive and/or behave badly there, and this should be dealt with as it would be dealt with anywhere else: by dealing with the drivers, not the road.

In choosing to close GCR, the Board applied a long-term solution to a short-term problem. If people are speeding on that road, as I’m sure some do, let the police do what they do on any number of other roads and deploy radar, write some tickets, and let the word get around. There are and have been accidents, minor and serious, on numerous other roads and intersections in Town, and as far as I know, all these other roads are still open.

And judging by the number of times people have moved the barricades or driven around them, it appears a lot of people agree.

**Mark Fairbrother**  
**Montague Center**

## Open Letter: Response to Madison McCassie

## Derogatory Rationale

I am writing the first part of my response to your letter, as citizen of Montague and a parent of three children in the district.

I wanted to let you know that I thought your survey, your letter, and you sharing it with the community in the newspaper and at the School Committee meeting shows a great amount of intelligence and courage. Your letter was well-written, organized, and thoughtful.

I am the mother of an eighth grader at Great Falls Middle School. He has two younger brothers trailing behind him at Sheffield Elementary.

I am a firm believer that our schools have the potential to be amazing. It saddens me when I recognize that they are not. I think the problems cannot necessarily be put on one single person, even if it may appear to some to be that way. A school is run by many people, and it is important that every single person in our schools do all they can to fix the issues.

Switching hats now, as a School Committee Member, I also wanted to let you know that there is a lot of work being done behind the scenes. Now this isn’t where solutions are found, but a lot of brainstorming occurs.

It’s illegal to have a meeting with a quorum that is not publicly posted, but I make it a point to sit down with Superintendent Sullivan and ask him these questions. I want to know what we can do to fix these issues. Out of respect for Ms. Leonard, there were things I didn’t want to ask during a public meeting.

I want you to feel heard, and I want you to feel like your time and energy can accomplish things. Major changes aren’t made overnight, but just know that I personally want to work on these things, just as many other people involved do as well. I appreciate what you did, and I am proud to know we have such bright students in our district.

Sincerely,

**Cassie Damkoehler**  
**Turners Falls**

Have you ever noticed that only those who are in favor of Trump’s wall use the word “illegal” in noun form?

An apologist for this behavior told me the noun form is, in fact, in the Oxford online dictionary, so any accusations on my behalf were spurious. In so doing, he conveniently overlooked the caveat in that same definition:

*North American derogatory*

In other words, one could say that “illegal” as a noun is in the same league as the n-word, and at some point, our country as a whole decided that the latter is completely unacceptable.

And as far as any such apologists are concerned – the only thing uglier than their fundamental attitude is the attempt to cloak it in some sort of “rational” explanation.

**Kevin Smith**  
**Turners Falls**

**WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS!**

*(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)*

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## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

I’ve really been enjoying the sunshine after the long period of rain and cloudy weather. It’s great to see the number of kilowatt-hours of solar production pick up again on our backyard array.

As farmers, we make note of the weather, the temperature, and the return of the light in the afternoon, and shift our routines and schedules accordingly. We check the forecast regularly to see if we need to plug in water heaters for the animals or feed extra hay.

Looks like we’re in for a slight warm-up, followed by an **increasing possibility of snow** by Sunday.

However, this snowfall may be too late for the Wolf Moon **snow-**

**shoe hike** at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center on Saturday, January 19 that I featured in last week’s column. If you registered for that event, you should make sure it’s happening by calling (800) 859-2960. I double-checked with Beth Pelton, and she said that it would be cancelled if there isn’t enough snow for snowshoeing.

Northfield Mountain has another event scheduled for the coming week. On Wednesday, January 23 from 7 until 8:30 p.m., join author and expert tracker Dave Brown for an illustrated indoor presentation on **wildlife tracking in winter** at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center. Learn about the tracks, trails, and sign of mammals and birds found in New England during the coldest season. Many spe-

cies will be covered including bears, bobcats, foxes, and coyotes.

Brown is the director of Quabbin Trails Programs, a teacher and naturalist with over 30 years’ experience interpreting the trails and sign of mammals in New England. He is the author of *Trackards for North American Mammals*, *The Companion Guide to Trackards for North American Mammals* and *The Next Step: Interpreting Animal Tracks, Trails and Sign*. This free event is suitable for adults and teens ages 13 and older.

The Great Falls Discovery Center’s Kidleidoscope program is back 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 three to six years old and their caregivers, and meets in the Great Hall from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

There is also a special program on Saturday, January 19 for kids ages three to six and their families called “**Animal Homes in Winter: Where Are All the Animals Hiding?**” (I think I have an opossum living under my barn!!) The program will investigate the secret animal homes through stories, crafts, and activities. If weather permits, they will explore outside, so be sure to bundle up.

The Discovery Center will be open on Monday, January 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday.

The Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank at 282 Avenue A is hosting their wildly popular **BINGO games** on Saturday, January 19 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. This family-friendly event will take place in GSB’s warm and cozy Community Room.

The bank will provide all the cards, wacky prizes, and light refreshments, and Bette Sokoloski will be the guest caller. Don’t delay, call now to reserve your seat! Due to limited space, no one will be allowed to play unless they have called 863-4316 to get their names on the list.

No worries, though – this is a regular event at the bank, so you will be able to try another time if you can’t get a seat on Saturday.

January 19 is Tin Can Day, and GSB will be celebrating by accepting donations of non-perishable canned food items all this week. They will bring all donations to a local food pantry to help feed our hungry neighbors.

The bank will also be celebrating **National Penguin Awareness Day** on Tuesday, January 22 – the special day is actually on January 20, but the bank is closed Sunday and Monday. If you go to the bank on Tuesday, you will learn interesting tidbits about

those cute black-and-white birds that live and walk on the frozen ground with their bare feet! Thanks to Kristin, owner of Topper the Penguin, you too can use these worthless facts in a trivia game. Information will be on display at the teller stations.

On Sunday, January 20, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Gregory Maichack will present “**Sail Away on the Craft of Pastel**,” a hands-on pastel art workshop for adults, at the 1739 Bernardston Unitarian Meetinghouse.

The workshop is funded by the Bernardston Local Cultural Council and the church’s Arts & Activism Program, and all materials are included. Space is limited and you must sign up by calling Annette at (413) 330-0807; older teens will be allowed if room remains. Check for weather postponement at [bernardstonunitarian.org](http://bernardstonunitarian.org) or by calling the same number.

Greenfield Community College is hosting a **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration** on Monday, January 21 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with activities for children ages two to 12. It will take place in the lobby of the Main Building. Call Judy Raper, associate dean of student development, with any questions at (413) 775-1819.

Looking ahead, Montague Parks and Recreation will host an American Red Cross babysitting course on Tuesday, February 5 and Wednesday, February 6. Youths ages 11 to 15 will learn first aid and safety skills, as well as how to prevent and respond to emergencies.

The classes will be held in the community room of the Montague Public Safety Building on Turnpike Road from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. both nights. There is a \$40 fee for Montague residents (\$45 for non-residents), and because there is a maximum class size of 12, students must pre-register by January 25. Call 863-3216 for more information.

I’m told that **Isaac Damon** and **Meena Relyea-Strawn**, two teenage musicians from Gill, will perform with the Honors Band of Castleton University on January 25. Both students play in the band at Pioneer Valley Regional School, conducted by Tim Burns. The students play French horn and alto saxophone, respectively. The trip is sponsored by A Natural Music School.

Congratulations, Isaac and Meena! For more information about the concert or A Natural Music School, contact founder, director, and lead educator Steve Damon at 863-2850.

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

## Montague: Nomination Papers Now Available

Nomination papers for the annual town election, Monday, May 20, are now available at the Town Clerk’s office until Thursday, March 28. They must be returned no later than Monday, April 1 by 5 p.m.

Seats are as follows: Selectboard, Assessor, Town Clerk, Treasurer/Tax Collector, Board of Health, Parks & Recreation, and Tree Warden, each for a 3-year term.

Library Trustees has four seats available, three for 3-year terms and one for a 1-year term; the Montague Housing Authority has one seat for

a 5-year term; and Soldier’s Memorial Trustees has a Veteran’s seat for a 3-year term.

Town Meeting members are strongly needed, representing each precinct in Town.

The annual town election will be held on Monday, May 20, 2019. The deadline to register to vote is, Tuesday, April 30.

Nomination papers regarding school committee seats are provided by the Gill-Montague Superintendent of Schools at 35 Crocker Avenue, 863-9324.



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GUEST EDITORIAL

# Truth Itself

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

January 14, 2019. I ask you this: What are we to do now that Truth has lost its meaning? Who do we hold responsible for it going MIA in 21 Century? The pope? The president? Ourselves?

Sadly, the word *truth* is as meaningless as the words “not acceptable.” Both have been overused, abused and misused. The *Father of all Untruths*, President Trump, averages thirty lies a day (according to a number of fact checking organizations), and yet he claims: “When I can, I tell the truth.”

Trump discussing truth troubles me. It leaves me wondering: What happens when liars speak of truth? Is it like a flamingo describing life below zero? Is it like a stone telling what it is like to float?

We live in a society that is *truth-blind*, the way men are color-blind. We live in a time where people’s sensibilities around the concept of truth have grossly deteriorated, show no sign of improving, and we have elected as president, a man who has no right to hold the five-lettered word in his mouth.

What is “truth”? In Roman mythology, *she* was a goddess named Veritas. In the Bible, *Its* name is Jesus. To Plato, there was nothing so delightful than truth to the ear or on the tongue. But that was another time – another reality.

I think of the famed *Twilight Zone* episode, “Time Enough at

Last,” when I imagine what it will be like when we, finally, stop lying to each other. I see men and women walking around inside a sepia landscape, seeking salvation in the rubble of a ruined world, drained of color... drained of truth.

For me, truth ought to be an *inalienable right*, as being created equal or possessing the right to be happy or free is. But then again, *truthfully*, without an ability to identify, recognize or value truth, these *inalienable rights*: equality, happiness and freedom, ultimately, will cease to exist anyway; the way we would cease to exist if God stopped thinking us into being.

A life without truth is disturbing and makes one feel unsafe, un-tethered and under-valued. Just ask a child of an alcoholic. Listen to the personal testimony in “The Rooms” where people hold onto the *Big Book* the way a man drowning grasps a life jacket. The most significant damage caused by living in an alcoholic home, is that the measure of what is true develops out of whack.

And life without being able to gauge what is true is a life of doubt, anxiety and instability. Is that what we want the norm to be?

*Evelyn Augusto is an anti-gun advocate, poet, survivor of gun violence, and the author of the zine YOUR GUN IS TALKING: Words to Thaw the Tongue. She splits her time between Westchester County, New York and Turners Falls.*

GUEST EDITORIAL

# Preparing Our Students for Leadership

By YVES SALOMON-FERNÁNDEZ

**GREENFIELD** – In a week, we welcome students back to campus. The vivacity that they bring when they return is palpable. What we treasure the most, however, is their leadership.

Last fall, a false emergency exposed vulnerabilities that we had in terms of our systems for emergency alerts. While the leadership and the rest of GCC went through the process of systematically identifying holes in our systems and checking off our list with a deep sense of urgency, as a newcomer, the leadership that our students showed was the single most surprising outcome of that event for me.

Our GenY students grew up participating in drills in their K-12 schools from an early age. Many of our Millennial students also have experience with drills. While it was a false emergency, our students showed leadership in the moment.

Their continued leadership, unique insights, and perspectives in helping strengthen our systems

was, in many ways, a manifestation of the competencies that are core to our classroom and experiential curricula. We emerge a stronger and safer college with significantly improved communication and processes because of the engagement and leadership of our entire community.

At GCC, we take leadership very seriously. Our mission is to prepare our young students and returning mature students for a world where their leadership is influencing our present and our future trajectories. The environmental challenges reflected in the rise of natural disasters precipitated by climate change; inter-racial discord; water, food, and housing insecurity; cost of and accessibility to healthcare; the opioids crisis, and other challenges – domestically and internationally – call for the best in our student leaders.

The opportunities in the visual and performing arts and humanities, technology, science and engineering, social science, education, business and entrepreneurship with a social conscience are some of the areas of leadership for which we are preparing our students. We are im-

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# New Phone Service, Same Town Clerk

By KATIE NOLAN

Richard Newton resigned as Erving town clerk on January 11, and was appointed temporary town clerk at the January 14 selectboard meeting.

Newton resigned as town clerk because Massachusetts Retirement System rules required him to retire from his elected position when he retired as network manager for the UMass president’s office. However, after Newton had submitted the resignation, the retirement board emailed administrative coordinator Bryan Smith that the rules had changed and that Newton did not need to resign his part-time elected position.

The selectboard members decided that, since the resignation had been submitted, the most transparent action would be to appoint Newton as temporary clerk until after the next town election in May.

The board voted unanimously to contract with Comcast Business for the town’s official telephone service.

According to IT coordinator Jacquelyn Boyden, for \$24,447, Comcast Business will provide more services than the current contractor, and will include telephone service for the library and senior center, which are not currently integrated into the town system. She said that there will be no maintenance costs, because the telephones will remain the property of Comcast Business.

Boyden noted that the town had required costly repair visits from the current contractor.

In a joint meeting with the finance committee, the selectboard reviewed budgets for benefits,

insurance, and assessments, such as the one from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG).

There was “a higher increase than anticipated” in the retirement board costs, according to Smith. He said that based on Erving’s well-funded “Other Post-Employment Benefits” (OPEB) fund, the town might be able to self-fund retirement benefits in the future.

Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache asked Smith to investigate the town’s options before the next selectboard meeting.

The town’s liability insurance from Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association will be level-funded for FY’20. However, Smith said that there is still a question as to whether the town will need construction insurance during the construction of the new library building.

According to Smith, the FRCOG assessment would be decided at a FRCOG council meeting later in the week.

Selectboard member Jacob Smith observed that the board needed to find out how the return rate for stabilization funds compared to the costs of borrowing to pay for constructing the new library building.

Depending on the comparative costs, the town could decide to pay its share of the construction costs outright instead of borrowing.

Administrative coordinator Smith was asked to contact the treasurer for more information.

Sarah Vega-Liros was appointed to a vacant position on the Cultural Council until June 30, 2022, and Arthur Johnson was re-appointed as animal control officer until December 31, 2019.

mensely proud of them!

Our students transition seamlessly to local institutions like Smith College, Mount Holyoke, UMass, Westfield State, Emerson, Tufts, Boston College, and Boston University, other institutions in and out of state. They and their parents realize not only the financial benefits of starting their undergraduate journey at GCC, but treasure our idyllic college that provides deep individual attention from faculty and staff.

GCC’s high caliber of accomplished educators who excel at teaching, research with students, and are engaged in their communities is a draw for prospective students. Our international internships provide opportunities for cultural immersion, language proficiency development, inter-disciplinary learning, adventure and self-discovery.

Our classrooms are a microcosm of the proverbial real world because our students are culturally, linguisti-

cally, ideologically, and socioeconomically diverse, and represent virtually every dimension of diversity. We appreciate them for their differences and uniqueness. GCC welcomes students who have always been academically high-performing, and others who are discovering their full potential academically, as well as their passions, while with us.

As we welcome our students for another semester, we remain steadfast in our commitment to prepare them for leadership. We take pride in preparing our students to be exceptional local and global citizens, stewards of our talents and resources, leaders in business and across a range of industries. They fill us with pride.

On to another semester!

*Yves Salomon-Fernández is President of Greenfield Community College. Her Twitter handle is @prezyves.*

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MONTAGUE from page A1

who climbs up and down chimneys...”

He said that while he did not get “a ton” of analysis in writing, “I feel comfortable that its not in that bad shape.” He said town planner Walter Ramsey had pictures of the chimney from eight years ago, which he compared to current pictures, and “there’s very little change.”

Kuklewicz said that the chimney had been hit by lightning in the 1980s, but “it’s kind of good news it’s not in imminent danger of just toppling over.”

“We’re going to keep an eye on it,” said Rice. “[Turners Falls Fire] Chief Zellman has a drone that gets us very good pictures.”

Rice also presented the board with a revised fee schedule for building permits. He said that a number of Montague’s fees, including the one for demolition, were below those of other area towns.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said the new fees seemed “reasonable,” but questioned why the guidelines for building permits were not applied to others. He suggested the document should have “general guidelines” for all permits.

“That makes sense,” said Rice. The board decided not to vote on the new fees, since they would not go into effect until July 1.

Steel Mesh

Town administrator Steve Ellis announced he had received a communication from the state to Montague “as an abutter,” concerning its plan to build “protective screening” on the French King Bridge to dissuade suicide attempts.

The state had provided a number of pictures of potential designs, which Ellis and the board perused at the meeting. He said that the state’s “preferred option” would be “steel mesh... nine feet above the sidewalk,” at a cost of \$3 million.

Selectboard member Chris Bout-

well asked about a time frame for the project, to which Ellis responded that the state did not say, “but I would guess that it is within the next five years to be within the capital improvement plan.”

Kuklewicz proposed a motion to thank the state for the communication and express the town’s support.

“I better keep my mouth shut,” said member Michael Nelson. “It’s unfortunate, as a society, that we have to do this.”

“It’s going on everywhere,” said Boutwell, as the board unanimously approved the motion.

Pinball and Beer

Ellis announced that the state had approved an additional wine and malt beverage license for the Mystic Pinball arcade on Avenue A.

“It’s an opportunity, I think, to say ‘thank you’ to [retiring state representative] Steve Kulik and his staff,” Ellis told the board. “At the eleventh hour, as the session was closing, they made sure that this was one of the requests that the town had pending that might get pushed to a later session.”

Ellis said the state’s decision would allow the arcade’s owners to come before the selectboard and formally request a license. “They have been apprised of this,” he said.

Other Business

Police chief Chris Williams requested, and received, approval of a contract with the firm Integrity Testing LLC to organize the civil service assessment to fill a vacant sergeant position in the police department. Kuklewicz noted this is the same company that conducted the recent police chief examination.

Williams said the process, including civil service review, “could be done in eight weeks.”

Treasurer/collector Eileen Seymour came before the board to seek approval of a contract with VADAR Systems for tax software services. “We’ll be going from a DOS pro-

gram to a windows-based program,” she told the board.

“Windows 3.0?” asked Kuklewicz.

“Windows anything,” replied Seymour. She said the new software would change “the look of the bills,” but that she would put information on the website to explain the changes.

The board approved the contract, which is being paid for by a state technology grant.

The board appointed Kristi Bodin and Richard Widmer to the cable advisory committee. The committee now has four members and one vacant seat.

Monte Belmonte of the Shea Theater Arts Center came before the board to seek final approval of a request to close Avenue A for at least two hours on the evening of January 26 for the screening of the movie *The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then the Bigfoot*. In the end, the board voted to close Avenue A between Second and Third streets from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The board executed a contract with Helene-Karl Associates for architectural and design services for the proposed new highway garage on Turners Falls Road. The total value of the contract is \$669,860. Steve Ellis noted that the contract was significantly below the estimate in the original draft proposal used to secure town meeting and voter approval of the project.

The head of the Turners Falls planter committee, Owen Wormser, presented a report on the status of the planters along Avenue A, and read a letter thanking various volunteers who had maintained them during the past planting season. He also thanked various businesses who had donated to planter maintenance. He said the planter committee would be working with the town tree committee to coordinate the planting of new trees.

The next selectboard meeting will be on January 28.



the first half and at the break, they led 19-18. Turners increased the lead to 31-25 halfway through the third, but then they got into foul trouble and Purple chipped away. The Falcons tied it at 32 and then went on an 8-0 run to take the lead 40-32 after three. The Birds won the fourth quarter 15-11, and took the game 55-43.

Dabney Rollins had a monster night for Blue. She worked the boards and put in six baskets from underneath for a total of 13 points. Lucy Spera also had a good night inside, putting in three jump shots and a free throw for 8. Karissa Fleming had 7, Lindsay Whiteman and Hailey Bogosz each netted 6, and Lily Spera added 3 points.

Then on Monday, January 14, as Hailey Bogosz and Dabney Rollins were celebrating birthdays, the Lady Senators of Mahar came to town.

Early in Monday’s game, the Blue D forced Mahar to shoot from the outside, forcing an early 10-10 tie with two minutes to play in the first quarter. But then Mahar began hitting the long shots and scored the last two buckets of the period to go up by 5. In the second, the Senators kept hitting from the outside. They built a 41-12 lead and coasted to 47-17 at halftime.

During halftime, the girls’ middle school team played a scrimmage, and again the Mahar fans cheered them on enthusiastically. In the third quarter, Turners kept pace, scoring 11 points to Mahar’s 13, but the Senators were too far ahead and took the game 76-36.

Rollins again led Turners with 18 points, Whiteman scored 9, and Eliza Johnson, Karissa Fleming and Aly Murphy all hit 3s.

The ladies travel to Lee this Thursday, January 17, and then host Pope Francis on Friday.

Leaders of the Cheer

The Turners Falls cheer team gets ready to show off their school spirit. On consecutive Sundays in February, they’ll take part in three competitions. On February 10, they travel to Chicopee High. On February 17, they cheer in South Hadley, and on February 23, they bring their pep to Holyoke High.



LEGAL NOTICE  
FY 2019 CDBG APPLICATION – PUBLIC HEARING  
TOWN OF MONTAGUE

The Town of Montague will hold a public hearing on **January 28, 2019** at 7:30 p.m. in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room at the Montague Town Hall, 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA to solicit public response to the Town’s submission of an FY 2019 Massachusetts **Community Development Block Grant** (CDBG) application to the Department of Housing and Community Development. The snow date for the public hearing is February 4, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. at the same location.

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the contents of this application. The town will be applying for the following activities: social service programs provided by Life Path Inc., The Brick House, Montague Catholic Social Ministries (MCSM) and Western Massachusetts Training Consortium and a construction project for the Spinner Park Restoration Project. The Town of Montague will contract with Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) to administer the CDBG Program.

The Town encourages residents to attend the meeting where any person or organization wishing to be heard will be afforded the opportunity. HRA will be available to discuss the application and update the status of the Town’s FY 2017 and FY 2018 CDBG programs. The Town of Montague Planner, HRA, Life Path, MCSM, The Brick House and Western Massachusetts Training Consortium representatives will be available to discuss the FY 2019 CDBG application’s activities.

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

LOOKING BACK:  
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here’s the way it was January 8 and 15, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.*

The Strathmore Mill

Better late than never, if ever.

That appeared to be John Anctil’s tax plan for the Swift River Strathmore Development project, as he failed on Tuesday to meet in executive session with members of the selectboard to discuss Swift River’s overdue tax commitment of nearly a quarter million dollars. That meeting was postponed until next week.

Anctil, founder and principal of the Swift River Strathmore Development Group, LLC, initialed a five-page agreement with the town of Montague on August 26, 2008, and thereby committed himself to pay the majority of the back taxes owed on the property by January 1 of this year.

Anctil is developing an application to qualify the redevelopment of the Strathmore Mill, which is listed as one of the ten most endangered properties in the Commonwealth by Preservation Massachusetts, for state and federal historic tax credits, along with other public tax credits that could attract the requisite private investment needed to realize his vision of establishing a film and video production facility and school at the site of the 250,000 square foot, 1871-vintage paper mill.

Tax collector Patti Dion said the principal and interest on the taxes due on the Strathmore has reached \$227,000, not counting attorneys’ fees.

Interest is accruing daily at 16% (because the property is technically still in tax taking proceedings, which were stayed by the signed contract between Anctil and the town).

“Nothing has been paid to date,” Dion said.

Besides the back taxes owed on the Strathmore, there is also the matter of a \$300,000 lien against the property – the sum expended by the town to repair roofs on two main buildings following the May 2007 arson fire, and to retrofit the sprinkler system to a dry-release system to avoid the prospect of freezing pipes in the unheated portions of the complex.

The agreement states that if Anctil upholds his end of the contract, in its entirety, the town will slowly forgive that \$300,000 over the course of the next ten years, provided Anctil’s group retains ownership of the prop-

erty for that length of time.

Anctil made other promises in that carefully worded contract. Among them, he agreed to:

- “clean-up all of the debris left by the fire that destroyed Building #10... including all of the asbestos and hazardous material that is mixed into the debris”;
- remove “all asbestos throughout the entire complex (with the exception of the boiler, boiler venting, and boiler room)”;
- remove “approximately 4,200 gallons of #6 oil... currently stored in two large above ground tanks”;
- “secure the property with a locked gate by Building #11 on Canal Road”;
- “keep the buildings secure and locked at all times, excepting allowed activities”; and
- “provide a locally available person to respond to emergencies on a 24-hour per day basis.”

Town officials say none of these promises have been met.

Fire at Ste. Anne’s Rectory

A fire that apparently started in a 12-year-old boy’s bedroom quickly spread to adjoining hallways in the former St. Anne’s Rectory on Sixth Street in Turners Falls on Monday afternoon, before firefighters from Turners Falls arrived to put out the blaze.

The fire started as the present owner of St. Anne’s – John Anctil – was meeting in the office of the former church next door to prepare a submission to the state of Massachusetts for historic tax credits to renovate the church into a folk music hall.

Aidan Connelly, 12, who has lived at the rectory for the past six months with his brother, his mother, Jordan Quinn, and Anctil, who is married to Quinn, said he was the only one in the rectory at the time the fire started around 3 p.m. He said he did not know the cause of the fire on Monday, as he shivered in the cold and watched firefighters work.

On Tuesday, after further interviews, Turners Falls fire chief Ray Godin said the cause of the fire was “officially being ruled an accident, due to improper use of matches.”

Quinn said she had just spent \$30,000 on renovating the rectory, redoing a lot of the electrical wiring, as well as sanding the floors and painting. Now, the repairs needed will be far more extensive.

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# Climate Presentation

**GREENFIELD** – What exactly does the UN’s recent report on climate change say? What does it mean when they say we have 12 years to take drastic action? What should we be doing?

Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution (FCCPR) will host local expert Shaina Rogstad for a 1-hour presentation and discussion at the Guiding Star Grange, 30 Chapman Street in Greenfield, at 2 p.m. next Sunday, January 27.

Rogstad, a climate scientist at the Climate System Research Center at UMass, uses global climate models to predict how a collapse of the West

Antarctic ice sheet could impact future climate conditions. She has degrees in applied mathematics, physics, and astrophysics. She worked on Bernie Sanders’ campaign for president, and is active in organizing with Jewish Voice for Peace.

The presentation will be followed by FCCPR’s General Assembly. FCCPR, a grassroots organization with roots in the 2016 Sanders campaign, works in the electoral arena and organizes around issues such as healthcare, education, the climate crisis, labor, civil rights, peace, and more. All are invited to stay for the whole meeting.

**ZONING** from page A1

all those in attendance opposed the affordable housing proposal.

After the board heard and approved a proposal to divide a lot in the airport industrial park to allow for new construction, the hearing on the Davis Street subdivision began with a brief statement by Ramsey, who reviewed the project’s history and rationale.

He noted that increasing the amount of affordable, owner-occupied housing was a key goal in the town’s 2015 housing plan, and that the town had fallen below the 10% threshold for such housing mandated by state law.

Underutilized land on the edge

of the much larger property leased to the school district seemed an ideal location for three units of housing, he said.

Then numerous speakers rose to voice the concerns about the project that had been raised in a neighborhood petition, in written “public comments” to the planning board, and at the January 7 selectboard meeting. Speakers noted that cheerleaders and Pop Warner football players practiced on the eastern section of the field. Many noted that the proposed houses would block their view of the only open space in the neighborhood.

Virtually all speakers voiced support for affordable housing, but said Davis Street was not the place to put it.

eliminated. The idea to change deem these zones “residential” was originally made because educational and religious institutions are allowed in residential districts by state law, and this was the practice in most communities in the region. The town was attempting to eliminate “single use” districts.

But community input caused Ramsey to recommend that the original designation remain unchanged for public properties. These would include land leased or owned by the Gill-Montague school district, as well as town parks and commons. A few privately owned parcels, including the Thomas Memorial Golf and Country Club, will still be changed to “residential.”

- All land owned by the First-Light power company at the southwest end of the power canal will be zoned “industrial.” The area is currently under a number of zoning designations, including “agriculture/forestry” and “unrestricted.”

## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Joint Meetings with New Salem

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Normally, when the Wendell selectboard needs an executive session, they schedule it at the end of their open session, and allow the clerk and interested members of the public to go home early. But on January 9, the executive session was held before the open session.

Reason 1, “to discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual,” was the justification given.

asked for library use of technical assistance. The application is due January 25, so there is time for town coordinator Nancy Aldrich to consult with other departments about their needs before the selectboard’s next meeting on January 23.

Keller said that the shingles there now were special ordered. Ted Lewis, former selectboard member, chose the color.

Some Green Communities money was approved to replace the nearly 50-year-old fluorescent lights in the town hall with more efficient LEDs. Energy committee member Anna Gyorgy said she thinks it would be reasonable to replace the fixtures at the same time with something more attractive, and less like a bus station.

The highway commission opened the public meeting with a request to either create a new position of assistant superintendent on the road crew, or give road crew workers longevity raises.

New Salem is the lead town on a grant of up to \$10,000 to hire a consultant to work with both Wendell’s and New Salem’s police chief succession planning.

### Water Damage

On the subject of the town hall, Heard said its exterior needs painting, and on the subject of paint, she added that the bottom foot of the office building also needs paint, where water off the roof splashes up onto the building. The situation is most noticeable near the paved entryway.

The board will contact Tom Chaisson to estimate the cost of gutters.

As the pay schedule now stands, a worker starting out gets the same hourly pay as someone who has worked several years, has all the necessary training, experience, and licenses, and can run a job alone and supervise another worker without oversight.

Bob Dean, regional services director at the FRCOG, is trying to get towns to take part in and fully fund a full-time regional accountant for FY’20. New Salem is one of five or six towns that support the idea, and the Wendell selectboard agreed to support it as well.

Citizen Ray DiDonato reported that the dam that holds McAvoy’s Pond is rated “fair,” which means good enough, by the state Office of Dam Safety, and that there is little downstream that would be destroyed if it gave way. It can use resurfacing.

Highway commissioner Phil Delorey said the finance committee was enthusiastic about rewarding experience and knowledge, and fin com member Al McIntire, who was in the room, did not protest.

Keller suggested that the Wendell and New Salem selectboards meet together regularly, possibly every month, as more and more of the two towns’ concerns mesh. Shared town coordinator Aldrich said that the New Salem board meets on alternate Mondays, and that she would set up a tentative schedule, possibly starting in February in Wendell.

Engineer Dave Leonart said that in the event of a hundred-year storm, assuming 7.29” of rain per hour, the culvert under Locke Pond Road, rather than the dam, would create the first problem – 3.5” of water over the road for 90 minutes, which would not damage the road. The watershed for McAvoy’s Pond is 3 acres.

Selectboard member Christine Heard said that a new position can be posted internally to allow a qualified person on the road crew the first chance for a new position. A \$2 an hour increase in pay for one worker would cost the town \$1,170 for the remainder of FY’19. Winter plowing has been inexpensive so far.

Fire chief Joe Cuneo is planning to attend a forum on the future of public safety communications at 7 p.m. on January 31 at Greenfield Community College. Keller suggested that a fin com member and a selectboard member should attend.

### Broadband Effort

When the selectboard turned to its function as the town’s municipal light plant (MLP), Ray DiDonato, as MLP manager, stayed.

Delorey suggested that cost of living adjustments (COLA) be extended to the town’s few salaried employees. He said the town has not granted COLA raises for salaried positions, and selectboard chair Dan Keller added that it is true for the salaried selectboard, and other elected officials.

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said she was interested, and Keller said, “One is enough.”

### Green Energy

The attempt to build a cooperatively owned solar farm in Wendell was halted by National Grid’s determination that, despite its relatively small capacity, it would overload the Wendell Depot power substation after much larger proposed projects (still in the permitting process) are connected.

Citizen Don Stone, who conceived of and pursued planning and permitting of the cooperative in Wendell, has not given up entirely, and is pushing back with newspaper articles and letters to promote a more accommodating approach by National Grid.

The town is dividing custodial work into a cleaning position, a snow removal position, and a maintenance and repair position. One person has applied for the cleaning job, and three have applied for repair and maintenance. Board members agreed to conduct 20-minute interviews with each of those three on January 16 if the applicants could come then.

### Regional Cooperation

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) offers District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grants every year, and this year librarian Rosie Heidkamp

Energy committee chair Nan Riebschlaeger is still working to get an estimate on the cost of replacing shingles on the office building roof so that solar panels can be installed. Citizens have approved adding Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money to the Green Communities grant to pay for the panels, but Green Communities money may not be used to replace the roof.

Katherine Burgin said she walked by the field three or four times daily, walking her daughter to school. “Calling it ‘open space’ does not really say what’s there,” she said. “I’m someone who has spent a lot of my life gathering wild foods, and I have to say that what’s growing on that field is unlike anything I’ve seen anywhere in this bioregion.”

Ramsey argued that making the area, which includes Cabot Woods, “industrial” would not necessarily encourage industrial development. Any change in use will still require an environmental and habitat review and permitting.

Ramsey asked for speakers to focus on what they would like to see on that section of land. Some recommended planting trees and placing park benches in the proposed subdivision area, but most emphasized that they wanted to leave the edge of the field open.

Ramsey said the rules governing “accessory apartments” had generated a good deal of public input and discussion with town counsel. The new bylaws would remove restrictions on the number of bedrooms and occupants in such apartments, instead relying on their restricted floor area of 900 square feet to limit use.

One of the few speakers to dissent from the consensus that the land remain open space was Andrea Chesnes, who said she had purchased and now lives in an affordable home constructed by Habitat For Humanity. Chesnes said the experience of homeownership has “changed my life.”

The utilities and water supply of an accessory apartment must be integrated with those of the single-family dwelling which contains it or to which it is attached. The building inspector can issue a permit for the construction and use of an apartment within an existing home, but an attached or detached apartment will require a special permit from the zoning board of appeals.

“I want you to re-imagine what this is,” she told the board and the audience. “[Affordable housing] gives opportunity to families like mine. I got a chance to be in this home and live there with my kids, be able to afford it, and not stress, and it’s such a gift.”

- Regarding solar, the new bylaws state that it is their purpose “to encourage solar energy collection on roofs, over parking lots, and on degraded areas, and to minimize the environmental impact when that is not otherwise practical.” Ground-mounted solar installations would require a special permit in “neighborhood business,” “central business,” and “recreational-educational” districts. In dense “residential” districts (RS-1), they would require a special permit if they have over 150 square feet of panel surface; in all other districts, if they have over 500 square feet of surface.

Jen Audley, coalition manager of the Gill-Montague School Community Partnership, said that if the housing plan was rejected and the property was leased to the school district again, the lease should ensure that the property remain in public use.

- Boarding of animals: After Ramsey reviewed the bylaws in other towns in the region – which, he said, were “all over the place” – he proposed Montague eliminate the limit on the number of chickens that may be kept on a property, but prohibit the keeping of roosters, “which seem to be the main problem.”

“One of the things that interests me is that the neighborhood really does use it,” she said. “The school leases it, and depending on the terms, they may have the right to dictate how it gets used and what access there is to it.”

Roosters would still be permitted in “agricultural-forestry” or “rural business” districts. Other regulations about the size and location of structures to house poultry would be retained.

After nearly an hour, the board voted not to recommend the subdivision plan. The motion did recommend that the selectboard negotiate a lease that retains public use of the property.

### Bylaw Overhaul Overhaul

As most of the crowd filed out of the room, the board began a lengthy discussion, which included public input, of the broader bylaw revisions that will go before a special town meeting in February.

The board voted unanimously to approve the revised zoning regulations and map, send them to the selectboard, and recommend them to the special town meeting planned for Tuesday, February 19.

According to chair Ronald Sicard, the revisions have been in the works for two years. Yet Ramsey presented the board with a list of nearly 40 revisions based on recent public input and discussion with present and former town officials.

The new bylaws and zoning map have been posted on the planning board section of the town website.

Key revisions which produced the most discussion included:

- The bylaws will retain the “recreational-education” zone, which previous drafts would have



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# THFS Senior Wins McGraw Uplift Award

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – “I had no idea I was going to be winning anything,” Turners Falls High School senior Andy Craver said of Tuesday’s morning meeting. “It’s probably the most important thing I’ve ever really been recognized for.”

Craver was surprised by the announcement at the weekly all-school assembly that he was the recipient of the McGraw Uplift Award, an honor given to students or staff judged to exemplify ideals espoused by Earl McGraw, the school’s vice principal who died in October 2016 after a battle with cancer. Craver was singled out for his work as an intern in the school’s Transitions life skills classroom.

“This is someone who is described as unfailingly positive, polite, empathetic, patient, accepting and kind,” principal Annie Leonard told the student body before announcing Craver’s award. “This is a student who has high social standing in our school, and uses this power to make positive change in the school community.”

Since the beginning of his junior year, Craver has spent the last hour and a half of each school day with

the Transitions students, helping them learn basic fitness, social, and life skills. “It’s awesome,” he said of the internship. “It’s been very eye-opening, truthfully.”

The Millers Falls resident says he plans to go to college after graduation to study finance or business administration, though he is currently “waiting to hear back, acceptance-letters-wise.”

“I’d like whoever sees this to look into their school’s program and see if they’re holding any internship opportunities, because I learned a lot from it, and it’s something I think a lot more people should be doing,” Craver told the *Reporter* on Wednesday. “It’s helped me appreciate a lot of things more.”

According to Leonard, the Uplift Awards were conceived of after McGraw’s death through conversations with students about what the loss meant to them, and to the school as a whole. “This was an especially great idea,” she said, “because it’s something that tries to sustain the qualities of the person we lost, by recognizing them in other people.”

Twice a year, nominations are accepted for members of the school community who embody three principles promoted by McGraw,

who served as an administrator at both Turners Falls and the Franklin County Technical School: “treating everyone with respect and without judgment,” “seeing someone who is down and lifting them up with love and laughter,” and “going after their own goals with all of their heart, and helping others go after their goals.”

Roxanne McGraw, Earl’s widow, attended the award ceremony.

Craver’s award was accompanied by another presentation honoring the legacy of the popular administrator. Family members of Sky Thompson (TFHS ‘19) donated to the school a plaque bearing another quote attributed to McGraw, which will join his portrait in the school lobby.

“My request to the students, is that you put down your cell phones for one day a week and have a face to face conversation or a meal with your families,” it reads. “Sit and talk about what you’re thankful for. Tell your loved ones that you love them.”

Leonard said she had included this quote in her addresses at both the 8<sup>th</sup> grade celebration and high school graduation last spring. “It’s a great message, not just for young people, about the importance of family and connection,” she said.



MELISSA RUSHFORD PHOTO

*Andy Craver (left), recognized Tuesday for his work over the last two years as an intern in the school’s Transitions classroom, poses in the school lobby in front of a portrait of Earl McGraw with the late administrator’s wife, Roxanne McGraw. She holds a newly donated plaque which will join the portrait.*

## HOUSING from page A1

administers Community Development Block Grants for the majority of towns in the county. It also engages in housing development through its nonprofit arm, Rural Development Inc.

“This is not just one organization,” Abrashkin observed. “It’s a number of integrated, overlapping organizations, and it’s quite complex.”

The Northampton resident is no stranger to Franklin County, having spent one day a week presiding over the housing court in Greenfield throughout his second decade on the bench.

“Even though every county has its own history, culture, people, and issues, I think the similarities are a lot greater than the differences,” he said. “The principal ones are quite easy to state: not enough affordable housing to meet the needs of the people who live in the area, and a labor market that, for many people, either doesn’t pay enough to pay the rent, or a very large percentage of their income goes toward keeping a roof over their head. 50% is not unusual.”

Executive administrative assistant Jill Carey reported that the housing authority’s recent move from downtown Turners Falls to a former Hallmark Institute building near the airport industrial park had gone smoothly, and that she had not heard any complaints about the new location.

“We made sure, before we got here, that there was a bus stop here, because there wasn’t one originally, and that was a concern,” Carey said. “All I’ve heard – whether it’s from the tenants or the staff – is how beautiful it is.”

Abrashkin said that hiring a long-term executive director for a housing authority is “not a fast process,” as it requires state oversight and approval at several stages.

“I hope it’ll be within six months,” he said, when asked how soon he expects the commissioners to make a hire. “But I don’t think anyone can really say that.... Finding the right fit for this organization is going to take time, and a very careful process.”

## In His Words: Interim FCRHRA Director William Abrashkin

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Reaching out for information on how the federal government shutdown affects local rental aid, I was surprised to find the corner office at the housing authority occupied, on an interim basis, by a new director. But William H. Abrashkin, who sometimes goes by “Hank,” had an open door, and was happy to introduce himself to our readers. Here’s some of what we discussed.

**On the federal shutdown:** “That mostly affects our Section 8 program. We have received information from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials that HUD has enough money committed to carry our funding for the Section 8 program through February. I hate to be quoted on this, but I think I understand correctly that this organization has enough in reserves to fund one additional month.

“After that, the solid waste hits the air circulation system... There are well over a million Section 8 vouchers out there around the country, and I don’t think anybody knows what would happen if the shutdown continues past that point.”

**On growing up:** “I was born in the West Village of New York City, and then I went back there when I went to college, and graduate school, too. And then I came up to Hawley, and then Northampton.

“I love this area. I’m one of the people who moved to Northampton when you could still afford it!”

**On his early law practice:** “I was working for an organization called the Mass. Law Reform Institute, a public advocacy organization in Boston. I represented statewide groups – interestingly, one of my clients was the Mas-

sachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants – and I did both litigation and administrative advocacy in the state housing bureaucracy....

“There were enormous changes in housing law in the state back then. Most of what we think of as landlord/tenant law was developed, in this state, in the ‘70s, through court decisions by the Supreme Judicial Court and the legislature.”

**On low-income tenants in Springfield:** “The largest proportion of people who got assisted housing were either elderly or disabled – a lot of times both. Many of them had worked all their lives, paid taxes, and then were affected by medical problems, and now they need some help.

“On the family side, most of our residents were working poor: OK, I’m going to work in a laundromat, or be an aide in a hospital, or flip burgers, or be a maid in the Hilton Hotel.

“What really happens is that – people often say that the taxpayers are subsidizing the individuals who are doing that kind of work. Okay, but what they are also doing is subsidizing the large businesses, like McDonald’s or any big hotel chain, that are very wealthy and don’t pay enough money for their employees to pay the rent....

“So we’re subsidizing the businesses who are making decisions to pay low pay, and making it possible for people to work there and still keep body and soul together. How about paying people a living wage?”

**On the rural difference:** “In a place like Franklin County, transportation is a much bigger issue.

“The communities in this area had a very good solution that problem a century ago: light rail. All these bike paths used to be trolley right-of-ways: people would walk or get a carriage ride to the trolley, and then they

would get to work. I wish we had those days back again! In a place like Springfield, there are buses that will get you to work.”

“Transportation is a housing issue, in a lot of different ways. There’s a lot of talk about high-speed rail from here to Boston, which is a really good thing, but is something of a two-edged sword: the housing prices will come up, and you get the potential for the communities in Franklin County – the technical capacity is there to make them bedroom communities of Boston....

“The concern is that if that were to come in, not only would it have an inflationary effect on housing prices, but the fear is you get people who are not so invested in the community.”

**On social services:** “We always have enough money for addressing the problems after the fact. We’ve got money for DCF, and DYS, and cops and prosecutors and judges and jails and probation officers: the whole array.

“But to avoid the problems in the first place, by bringing children up right and giving them an avenue to a decent life? You’ve gotta run a bake sale! At the Springfield Housing Authority we ran a golf tournament to try to raise money for education programs.”

**On his predecessor:** “I know she worked like a dog here, did a good job, and left the institution significantly stronger than when she found it. And then employment opportunities took her elsewhere... People don’t work in a job forever.... The board and the staff gave her a lovely little going-away celebration.”

**On his successor:** “You can’t rush it, because in any organization, everything is in the people.... We have a very good board, and the [executive director search] is going to be one of their central responsibilities over the next months.”

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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER JANUARY 17, 2019

**Talking Cloths:  
Kangas from East Africa**

By JERI MORAN  
and NINA ROSSI

**TURNERS FALLS** – On a recent Saturday afternoon when it was decidedly dreary and cold outside, the Great Falls Discovery Center hosted a wonderful, explosively colorful event: the opening of an exhibit of printed fabrics from East Africa, combined with a stimulating discussion by curators Peggy Hart and Nell Koenings. Both women have lived in East Africa and have separately amassed collections of this colorful, traditional cloth that is delightful to see and, as they explained, also has another social function in those East African countries of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Hart, of Buckland, is a professional weaver – you can read our feature about how she weaves blankets on old industrial looms in the *Reporter* archives from July 9, 2015 – and was in the Peace Corps in Kenya in the late 1970s. Koenings, a Turners Falls resident, was raised in several of the coastal East African countries, and returns there regularly to continue her fieldwork in anthropology. Their presentation about kanga cloths reflected their individual professional interests.

Hart explained some of the history of kanga; it has existed since late 19th century as a wrap for women, and has since become used in many other ways. It is a rectangle, 4’ by 6’, made of a thin cotton traditionally, although there have been some recent attempts to make them out of polyester.

It was originally woven and printed in Europe and India, but now there are factories in East African countries that produce it, using traditional as well as modern designs, with printed “sayings” in Swahili. After slavery was outlawed in late 19th century, the women wanted to dress in a Muslim way again, and wearing these kangas that reflected their



*This photo taken by Peggy Hart in Kenya shows a woman wearing a kanga cloth while weaving a basket.*

Islamic faith in the designs was a way to do that.

Some elements of the cloth are standardized: there will be a brightly colored decorative border on all four sides, with a contrasting design in the middle area (referred to as “the town”), and a saying in Swahili (“the name”). In looking around the exhibit, one can see that most of the designs are non-figurative, in line with Islamic tradition of non-representational art. Some more modern ones do have fruits, telephones and even political figures in the center design (including one with Barack Obama).

Kangas are purchased as a paired length of cloth, with two identical designs that need to be cut into two pieces before being worn. Usually one piece is used as a wrap, tied in some fashion around the waist, and the other can be made into a shawl which would cover the head and shoulders, or tied just to cover the upper half of the body.

Hart saw women in up-country  
see **KANGAS** page B4



*Nell Koenings (left) and Peggy Hart (right), with some of the kanga cloths they have collected and curated into an exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center.*

**A Delightful Way to Donate:  
Dunk Your Donuts at the Dump**

By DINA STANDER

**LEVERETT** – The mercury lingered near the 12-degree mark as I wrapped a scarf around my face, heading off to the Leverett Transfer Station for a second lively morning of chatting at the Friends of Leverett Pond Coffee Shed.

The Shed volunteers are getting used to reporters coming by for treats and conversation, because the success of their recent cookbook, a fundraising project for improving the Leverett Pond dam, has garnered a lot of attention from local media.

And for good reason! Some of the recipes are old family stand-bys, like Mary Hankinson’s mother’s recipe for Oven Donuts. Some are more modern: Claire Hopley’s Aquafaba Macaroons use the liquid from a can of chickpeas to replace egg whites; she says she was skeptical at first, but it works really well.

There are savory treats too, like the Mulhollands’ Broccoli Muffins or Cheddar and Chive Scones. I’m not quite sure how to categorize the recipe for Sauerkraut Cake; Tom Hankinson says it is moist and, somewhat magically, not ‘krauty tasting.

Now in its second printing, the conveniently spiral-bound *Confections from the Coffee Shed* is just one of the fundraising efforts supporting the Friends of Leverett



*A January morning at the Coffee Shed with Claire Hopley, Mitchell Mulholland, and a lady rockin’ shades.*

Pond (FLP) preservation fund. Designated as a “great pond”, the state owns the pond itself, establishing the right of public access for fishing and boating. FLP volunteer Mitchell Mulholland’s eyes light up while he describes the Friends’ long term plans: trail

improvements and extensions, to include access to the pond and eventually, raised wetland bridges to an island with old stonework. Perhaps even a primitive camping spot accessible only by water. The dam, located at the northeast corner  
see **DONUTS** page B5

**THE AUTHORS’ CORNER: BECKY ALBERTALLI**

By IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS

**TURNERS FALLS** – Happy New Year!

I recently read *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*, by Becky Albertalli. This book is really different from the books I usually read. I really enjoyed it though!

In today’s article, I am going to be comparing the novel, *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*, to the movie version, which is called *Love, Simon*. Enjoy!

*Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda* is a novel about a teenager named Simon Spier. Simon has a pretty normal life. He’s in the school musical, he has two sisters, and he has a group of friends who he is constantly hanging out with. Except he has one big secret. Simon is gay, but hasn’t come out yet to his friends or family.

Then one day, a classmate finds out Simon’s secret. Martin Addison is that one slightly awkward classmate that Simon has most of his classes with. Simon forgets to log out of his email in the school library one day, and Martin reads his emails. Not only does Martin find out that Simon is gay, but also that he has a secret online penpal/secret crush, who goes by the name Blue. (Simon’s secret online name is Jacques.)

Martin has a crush on one of Simon’s best friends, Abby, and blackmails Simon into helping him with Abby. And if Simon doesn’t follow through with Martin’s scheme, Martin will let everyone in on Simon’s big secret.

This book is really funny, and amazing. The whole story is trying to figure out who Simon’s secret penpal is, and about him falling in love over email.

Part of what made this story enjoyable for me was Si-



*Our correspondent writes that she prefers the book over the movie, confirming she has what it takes to be a book reviewer,*

mon’s funny group of friends. There is Leah, who Simon has known forever, and is one of his best friends; Nick, who plays on the school soccer team, and has known Simon and Leah since they were kids; and Abby, who does  
see **AUTHOR’S** page B3



# Pet of the Week

I was abandoned by my guardian when he moved, but a neighbor brought me here to find a home. I'm shy, quiet and withdrawn.

The neighbor said I got along well with her cat but I avoided the children. I have feline leukemia, so the person who adopts me has to be really special. Despite my being abandoned, I have faith that someone will love me.

FeLV is a virus which does shorten a cat's lifespan significantly - but Feline Leukemia cats are generally healthy up until the very end of their lives, so we believe they deserve a chance at a real home. If you have no FeLV- cats, please consider adopting an FeLV+ cat today!

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“FLUFFY”

## Senior Center Activities JANUARY 21 THROUGH 25

### 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 1/21

8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot Clinic by appt.  
12 p.m. Pot Luck & Bingo

### Tuesday 1/22

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

### Wednesday 1/23

9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach

12:30 p.m. Bingo

### Thursday 1/24

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

### Friday 1/25

1 p.m. Writers' Group

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

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

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

### Monday 1/21

Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday

### Tuesday 1/22

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

10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

11:30 a.m. Homemade Lunch

12:30 p.m. Friends Meeting

### Wednesday 1/23

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

12:15 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

### Thursday 1/24

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

11:30 a.m. Congregate Lunch

### Friday 1/25

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

### 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.

# FACES & PLACES



Leverett's Officer Mike Gralenski shared with us this photo of him "community policing."

If you have a photo you'd like to share with the community, send it to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org)!

SUBMITTED PHOTO



JODI RODAR PHOTO

Wendell energy committee member Anna Gyorgy writes: "After reporting back home from Germany recently in these pages, it was great to see a symbol of international solidarity at the January 12 rally to prevent logging in the Brook Road part of the Wendell State Forest.

"During the rally, protesters held the green-and-black banner of the German grassroots movement against clear-cutting the last of an ancient forest stand owned by the large utility RWE. The logging in the Hambacher Forest – currently blocked by a court order – would expose more dirty lignite coal for open-pit mining.

"I hope the flag will reappear at our energy committee's third annual Groundhog Day community potluck and 'energy eve,' where we can present, exchange, and discuss climate change action and 'What can a small town do?' All are welcome on Saturday, February 2 to Wendell Town Hall: 6 p.m. potluck, 7 p.m. program."

## Mutton and Mead Medieval Festival Shire Cast Auditions

### MONTAGUE CENTER

When was the last opportunity you had to tell someone that they would make a perfect Robin Hood, or a valorous Merry Man? A perfectly evil Sheriff of Nottingham, or an Enchanting Damsel? A Distinguished Noble, a Vivacious Tavern Wench, or even a proverbial Village Idiot?

Tell them today! Mutton and Mead Medieval Festival, which will be held this year on June 15 and 16, is holding auditions for its cast on the weekends of February 2 and 3 and February 9 and 10 at the Montague Common Hall.

The Shire Cast is at the heart of Mutton and Mead's interactive experience. Each cast member plays a character or role from the story of Robin Hood, and/or the shire of Nottingham. Together these characters bring the shire, the fictitious tavern, and the story of Robin Hood to life, through coordinated street and stage shows and semi-scripted and improvised interaction with festival patrons. Shire cast members also can join a number of other singing and dancing ensembles to bring further cheer to the day.

Check out [muttonandmead.org](http://muttonandmead.org) for details. Auditions will be sched-



GEORGE BRACE PHOTO

Do you have what it takes? Armored and armed actors from 2017's festival.

uled for 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. slots on each day at the Common Hall, formerly the Montague Grange, at 35 Main Street in Montague Center. Callbacks (and snow date) are scheduled for February 16.

Not interested in joining the shire cast but interested in getting involved? Mutton and Mead is also

seeking stage and street acts, demonstrators and educators, support crews (such as set designers, artists and painters, carpenters and skilled builders, and costuming helpers); vendors (artisans, crafters, and food vendors); and general administrative help. Check out the website for more information.

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AUTHOR’S from page B1

the school play with Simon, and is very caring.

My favorite part of the book is either when Simon finally meets Blue, or when Abby goes to one of their classmates’ Halloween parties dressed as Wonder Woman!

I would recommend this book to people who like romance novels, or just funny stories. It is definitely more of a pre-teen to young adult kind of book, and not a kids’ one, though!

Next, I will be reviewing the movie, *Love, Simon*. I really loved this movie! I thought that the director, Greg Berlanti, did an amazing job with the cast.

Some of my favorite actors in *Love, Simon* included Keiynan Lonsdale, who played Simon’s friend Bram. He was just very smiley, and good at his part. I also liked Jorge Lendeborg, Jr., who played Simon’s best friend Nick. He was kind of the happy-go-lucky person in Simon’s group of friends, and was just really funny.

Although I loved Bram and Nick, I thought the funniest character was the vice principal, Mr. Worth. Tony Hale did a great job of playing him. Hale was always trying to connect with the students by saying stuff like, “brother” or “dude!” He would always take kids’ phones away and then say something like, “How’s it feel going unplugged?” and then do these funny gestures showing the difference between using your phone, and being off it.

I think what made this especially funny was it seemed very real. My friends and I are always on our phones, and then our parents will take them away and make some comment about being off devices, just as Hale had!

One of my favorite parts of the movie is when Simon is trying to help Martin impress Abby, and Simon goes through Martin’s wardrobe and finds all these ridiculous shirts. (My one reads “I don’t give a duck,” with a giant picture of a rubber duck on it!)

As good as this movie was, I enjoyed the book more than the movie. I feel like they had such a great cast, but little things, like changing Simon’s secret email to “*throughmywindow@gmail.com*” instead of “*hourtohournotetonote@gmail.com*” made me kind of confused. I just loved the book so much, that changing even little things in the movie made me frustrated.

In conclusion, I did think the movie was really amazing, and funny, but I liked the book more!

I emailed the author, Becky Albertalli, and she hasn’t responded as of now. I am going to be reading the accompaniment to *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*, called *Leah on the Off Beat*, so hopefully next month Becky Albertalli will have written back and I can interview her for the *Leah on the Off Beat* review.

Thank you so much for reading, and I will see you next month!



TV REVIEW

Project Blue Book (History)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – The History Channel seems to have gotten into having films and TV series on their network based on real-life history. The latest thing is a TV series called *Project Blue Book*, which is based on real-life cases that were investigated by the people behind the actual Project Blue Book that went on from 1947 to the ‘70s. It premiered on the channel on January 8 at 10 p.m.

The character named Dr. Hynek, who investigates these cases in the TV series along with an Air Force captain, was a real-life person who was involved with UFO investigations at the time.

The opening scene features an Air Force pilot apparently getting into a dogfight with a UFO. When I saw the scene, I immediately wondered whether this would turn into one of the Project Blue Book cases investigated by Hynek and his Air Force partner, named Captain Michael Quinn.

I got my answer to that when the next scene was of Air Force people trying to figure out what to do with the public believing that there are UFOs, when the Air Force would rather they not believe that at all. They mention this pilot’s encounter when they talk.

The Air Force captain convinces Hynek to join him in investigating this UFO dogfight as a way to gain recognition when it comes to UFOs being real. He sees the whole thing as a new science.

Again, this man was a real person that did this. In the TV series, they make him seem like a very interesting guy. One tidbit about the

dogfight with the UFO is that the encounter left a great deal of radiation on the plane. For his part, Quinn proves his view about the case by actually taking Hynek up in a plane to show him that the UFOs moves were impossible. Let’s just say they have a little bad luck.

One more very interesting thing about this case, if it is really based on a real-life case, is that the pilot had an encounter with a UFO that was showing off for him. So not a bad real-life to focus on for the first episode of the TV series.

Hynek wants the truth about whether or not the cases really have to do with UFOs. Quinn is just following the way the Air Force wants to approach this phenomenon, more or less, but the Air Force is also shown to have a problem with him doing this. It would be interesting to see how his approach to the project will bring him into conflict with them.

Watch until the end of the episode, and you will find out whether this is a real-life case from the Project. Also, the preview for the next several episodes gives you a pretty good clue as to how well this truth-seeker and the Air Force will get along, in terms of him wanting the truth.

I didn’t find myself bored by the first episode, but it could have used a bit more of something. What I liked best about the TV series is that it’s based on real-life Project Blue Book cases, and they reveal about whether the one in the episode was one of them. If that is how it’s going to be for the rest of the series, then that might help them pull off a second season very well.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Incredible Journey; Injured Hawk; Stuck Truck; Rude Caller; Sewage; Syringes; Pokemon Go

Sunday, 1/6

9:01 a.m. 911 abandoned call received; no answer on callback. Misdialed; no issues, but caller did have a complaint about a truck blocking the sidewalk.

3:24 p.m. Caller from Highland Street advising that she has found a dog with no collar near her home. Caller stated that it could belong to a neighbor, but wanted it on record that she has the animal. Caller was instructed to call back after speaking to her neighbor. Caller advising that dog does not belong to neighbors and she is transporting it to the shelter. Officer advised and *en route*.

3:44 p.m. Dog’s owner calling to report animal missing. Owner gave permission to share his name with the original caller, who agreed to deliver the dog back to him. Dog returned to family.

Monday, 1/7

12:18 p.m. A 28-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a revoked license and speeding in violation of a special regulation.

7:22 p.m. A 31-year-old Montague Center woman was arrested on a straight warrant.

Tuesday, 1/8

8:54 a.m. DPW received a citizen complaint re: a Randall Wood Drive resident shoveling their snow into the road. Ongoing issue. Officer spoke with resident, who agreed to clean up the snow.

10 a.m. Caller complaining of slippery sidewalk in Millers; advising that DPW sanded, but the sidewalk needs more sand. Referred to DPW.

10:44 a.m. Report of a dog running in and out of traffic at Federal and Highland streets; either a yellow Lab or golden retriever/Lab mix. Animal control officer advised.

11:02 a.m. Officer out with single-vehicle accident at Greenfield and Randall roads. No injuries; operator declined medical attention. Vehicle winched out and operable.

1:50 p.m. Report of injured hawk behind or in the vicinity of Highland School Apartments. Referred to Environmental Police dispatch.

5:09 p.m. Caller from Grove Street complaining of barking dog; advised dog has been barking on and off since she returned home around 4 p.m. today. All units tied up. Copy of call left for ACO.

5:43 p.m. Caller from Grove Street complain-

ing of barking dog; states dog has been barking for approximately two hours. All units tied up. Copy of call left for ACO.

11 p.m. Officer requesting dispatch contact DPW; advises roads are getting icy. DPW foreman advised.

Wednesday, 1/9

6:32 a.m. Caller reports what appears to be a baby owl in the roadway on Montague City Road, after the Farren but before the high-tension lines on the left headed into town. Area search negative.

7:49 a.m. Report of syringe in a courtyard on Fourth Street. Item retrieved for disposal.

8:21 a.m. Report of mattress dumped on Fourth Street. Caller advises that he heard someone unloading the mattress a few days ago at approximately 2 or 3 a.m., but did not see the person or vehicle involved. DPW advised.

8:42 a.m. Caller from Seventh Street requesting that an officer dispose of a syringe she found in her residence that was left behind by a former tenant. Item retrieved for disposal.

9:19 a.m. Report of a small tree down in the north-bound lane of Meadow Road. DPW advised and *en route*.

5:31 p.m. 911 caller reporting that while walking his dog on Old Northfield Road, a white van sped past him and startled him. He felt as if the van were going to hit him. No plate information; vehicle was heading toward Lake Pleasant. Unable to locate.

5:53 p.m. 911 caller reporting minor vehicle damage after striking a deer. Report taken.

Thursday, 1/10

6:57 a.m. Female party in Town Hall elevator states that she hit the emergency button by accident.

11:41 a.m. Passing motorist reporting a tractor-trailer unit that is hung up on a low-hanging wire near the former Yelena’s Creemee on Turners Falls Road. Deter-

mined to be a telephone wire. Officer requesting TFFD with ladder to assist driver down from the box portion of the truck. Box portion had some damage to it. Photos taken by officer. Operator advising that he had just come from the Cheapside underpass in Greenfield. Operator advised to contact Greenfield PD.

11:57 a.m. Abandoned 911 call from Franklin County Technical School. Main office called advising accidental dial. School resource officer advised.

1:44 p.m. Caller reports that a named party’s dogs are loose in the area of Highland School Apartments. Caller expressed concern that the disabled residents of his apartment building may get injured by the dogs when they run up to them. ACO advised and *en route*.

4:02 p.m. Shelburne Control advising that they received a call about a gold-colored truck operating very erratically on Route 47. Vehicle turned onto Whitney Way and into a driveway. Plate number comes back to resident of Whitney Way. Officer advised.

5:24 p.m. A 46-year-old Greenfield man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, subsequent offense.

9:16 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road states that when he came home, he found a large black Lab sitting on his porch. Orange collar; no tags. Officer transporting dog to shelter on Sandy Lane.

Friday, 1/11

1:26 a.m. Vehicle check in Discovery Center lot. Upon clearing stop, officer advises that operator was playing Pokemon Go; that was the reason for slow driving.

3:23 a.m. 911 caller reporting fire alarm sounding on Third Street; unknown cause. TFFD found faulty detector in hallway; contacting regional housing authority

to advise of problem and fix in morning.

2:41 p.m. Caller from Vladish Avenue states that there is a sewage backup at his home and he believes it is blocked in the street. DPW foreman notified and responding.

5:09 p.m. Caller from Oakman Street requesting extra patrols around his residence after discovering footprints around his vehicle.

8:52 p.m. Operator of vehicle on Avenue A pulled out his phone and appeared as though he was going to start taking video but became aware of officer presence and pulled into Couture Brothers.

9:49 p.m. Assisted motorist changing a tire at Scotty’s Convenience Store. Services rendered; motorist is on her way.

Saturday, 1/12

8:02 a.m. Caller states that there is a red car with no plates on it sitting in the road at Seventh Avenue and Park Street. Contact made with vehicle owner, who stated that the vehicle is being picked up today and going to a junkyard. He was advised that if the vehicle is still there tomorrow, it would be towed at his expense.

8:19 a.m. Caller from Highland School Apartments states that there are two loose dogs in the parking lot, a black Lab and a brown Lab. Unable to locate.

2:51 p.m. Walk-in party would like it on record that she received a call last night from someone asking about consolidating credit cards. When she said she wasn’t interested, the man on the phone swore at her and called her a bad name.

3:21 p.m. Shelburne Control advising that MCFD is responding to Meadow Road for a brush fire. Command advising that fire is under control.

10:52 p.m. Report of loose German shepherd that was on Route 63 but ran toward a backyard on Federal Street. Caller lost sight of dog.

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MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week on MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Local policy meetings – including selectboard meetings, school committee meetings, and finance committee meetings – can be found on the “Latest Videos” page of our website.

To navigate these videos, you can visit the town websites to view meeting agendas and minutes. Gill selectboard agendas can be viewed at [gillmass.org/f/31/Selectboard-Meetings](http://gillmass.org/f/31/Selectboard-Meetings), and Montague selectboard agendas can at [montague-ma.gov/f/25/Board-of-Selectmen-Meetings](http://montague-ma.gov/f/25/Board-of-Selectmen-Meetings).

KANGAS from page B1

Kenya using them mostly as we would use an apron: worn over clothes when working or cooking to keep the clothing underneath clean. However, women have used them for many other purposes, such as folded up to make a cushion on their head to carry things more easily; fashioned into baby carrier slings; draped for modesty during prayer; or used to wrap up and carry things to or from the market.

A Printed Language

Koenings’ presentation was more about the social context of kangas and how they are used for what she calls “coded communications”: the significance of the choice and display of the Swahili sayings that are printed on them. She talked mostly about the usage of kangas among women of the Swahili Coast of East Africa, which includes the countries of Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, and the islands off the coast of these countries.

Koenings wanted to emphasize that the Swahili language is not just a “trading language,” as it is sometimes called, but rather is a sophisticated language which has existed for centuries, and is capable of conveying complicated ideas with many shades of meaning.

According to Koenings, although these kanga names are often said to be proverbs, like our “a stitch in time saves nine,” research

Looking for something to do in your community? Check out Talking Cloth: Kangas from East Africa, an exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center, on display through February 8. (See article, page B1.)

Something going on you’d like others to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment.

Contact us at (413) 863-9200, [info@montaguetv@gmail.com](mailto:info@montaguetv@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We’re excited to work with you!

indicates that only 10% are actual proverbs. They are more often sayings that use metaphors, analogies, pieces of poetry, or allusions to suggest a variety of meanings. They can say one thing literally, but can be interpreted quite differently, as a comment about something happening with a person, or in the family unit, or perhaps the village.

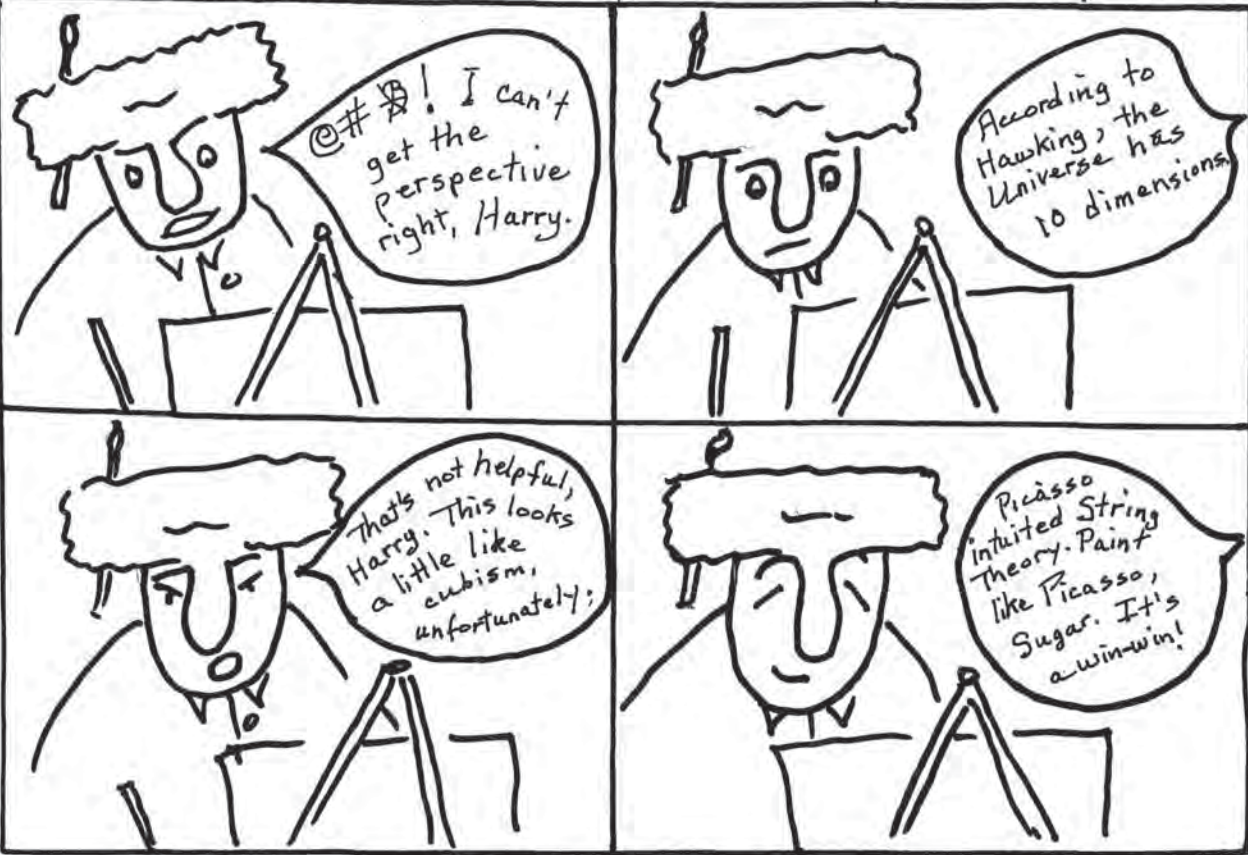
Since the women are Islamic, their ability to speak out and have their feelings known to others is constrained by societal rules that value harmony and the need to avoid open conflict at all costs. The kangas can be used to make comments obliquely: a kanga with a specific “name” worn by a woman at a particular time or event can be used to make her feeling known without being directly aggressive.

They are commonly used as gifts with a message, like a postcard is used in our society. A chief value is that the wearer or giver can always deny there was any particular reason for giving or wearing it; it is socially unacceptable to ask the giver or the wearer what they “mean” by giving or wearing a particular kanga.

So vital are these cloths in the daily lives of East African women that a husband may be divorced on the grounds of not providing her with enough of them. The kangas are often given as gifts for birthdays and weddings, either among the women or by a husband to his wife, or bought by the woman for herself,

OVER THE HILL

by Ann O. Nymous



T-RUMP

by denis f. bordeaux



chosen specifically for the saying that is on it. So a person receiving it (and perhaps other family/village members) may try and figure out if there is another meaning.

For example, there is a kanga whose name is *Wawili askipendana, adui hana nafasi*. The literal translation: “When two love each other, an enemy has no entry point.” It could be interpreted as a warning to a competitor – “our marriage has no room for any woman but me” – or, in a different context, as a very positive message to a new bride. Or, the wife might buy it and wear in her husband’s presence as a “reminder.”

Thus the notion of kangas as “talking cloth” that gives the wom-

an a voice without directly challenging the social order and rules.

Koenings is fluent in Swahili, and has translated all the sayings on the kangas in the exhibit, and the related text she prepared for each piece explains some of the common coded messages that might be associated with each of these “names.” The exhibit spans many decades between their two collections, and the great variety of patterns, printed in up to five colors, makes a stunning display com-

pletely filling the walls of the hall.

Because of the bad weather on the day of this event, and the great interest in hearing about the history and use of kangas, the introductory lecture by Peggy Hart and Nell Koenings will be repeated this Sunday, January 20 at 3 p.m. at the Great Falls Discovery Center exhibit hall. If there is time and interest, participants can try their hand at designing a kanga, or even try one on.



ROSSI PHOTOS

Some kanga cloths commemorate political figures and events, such as this one depicting Barack Obama.



Koenings (left) and Hart (right) pore over kangas in the collection at the Discovery Center. They will reprise their presentation this Sunday, January 20 at 3 p.m.

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DONUTS from page B1

of the pond, is in danger of failing. A new dam equipped with a water level control valve will help maintain ecological balance and assist in control of invasive weed species.

FLP estimates they are roughly two-thirds of the way to their goal. Other 2018 events included a white elephant sale, a wine tasting, and an art auction. State Reps Rosenberg and Kulik were successful in establishing a 100K budget earmark for the project, bringing funds raised close to 200K all told. Fundraising will continue in order to realize their plans for rebuilding the dam, improving pond ecosystems, and establishing ecologically sound public access.

The FLP hopes that the cookbook, in addition to sparking joy from ovens near and far, will also spark the curiosity of people unfamiliar with this ecologically diverse gem. One idea floated by the Friends, building off the success of a 2018 pond regatta, is to host pontoon-boat tours to encourage public outreach. (*I dunno, but*, on a cold January morning, the idea of a picnic on a water patio floating at the far end of the pond where we can watch great blue herons cavorting on a summer afternoon sounds kind of lovely to me.)

At the Coffee Shed, Tom Hankinson fills me in on names and places and directs me to others, including FLP volunteers Mitchell Mulholland and Jim Field.

Jim fondly describes Leverett Pond as a “living body of water

and dynamic critter habitat.” For added historical perspective, he explains that the goal to improve public access began back in the 1970s when his parents, David and Mary Field, donated land for the existing right of way. He also mentioned that “back in the day,” the pond was a source of block ice which was harvested, packed in saw dust, and stored in an ice house.

Jim says that “the Coffee Shed has contributed highly to community outreach to let people know what the Friends’ goals are.”

I had a surprisingly good time hanging out at the Coffee Shed on my first Saturday morning visit to the transfer station. I’ve been hearing from Leverett friends for years that the dump run is the social highlight of their week. The first day I went, the temperature was just above freezing, and though the sky hung low with an intermittent drizzle, the mood wasn’t damp at all. Quite the contrary, the mood was buoyant.

I went home wanting to go back. To the dump. What was this really all about? I kept mulling it over, and was still pondering when I returned on the next, much colder, Saturday.

I sat in my car for a bit, watching the steady flow of motion. What was unusual about what I was seeing? It’s a place with a lot going on: people pulling in, appropriately depositing trash bags, boxes, returnables and recyclables, reusables and renewables, and stopping to chat with neighbors. It’s very cold, but not windy. Pour some coffee and, oh yes, have a treat or two;

throw a few dollars into the fundraising jar. Conversations, hugs, friendly nods, hands waving out the window. Adventuresome children being called and running back with little steam clouds of breath floating off behind them.

I was mesmerized by the syncopated creak and thump as car doors, trunks, and hatches opened and closed, understanding that for hours, there was this audible ebb and flow of people coming to express the civic and civil task of being responsible for their own waste and trash. Amidst all the coming and going, this civic activity appears to evoke a palpable collective cheerfulness.

The FLP’s Coffee Shed is not the only local conservation project receiving significant support through residents’ donations. Over the years the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust has raised \$50K by collecting and sorting over a million donated cans and bottles at the Returnables Shed – enough to stretch from Lowell to Leverett if laid end to end.

There’s a book shed too, another for clothing in decent shape – there was a wedding dress waiting to be upcycled the morning I peered in – and a “take it or leave it” shed for household goods.

To get your own cookbook (or a t-shirt), drop by the Leverett transfer station on Cemetery Road from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. any Saturday or Sunday. Stay for a cup of coffee, and pick up your own copy of *Confections from the Coffee Shed*. If you’re lucky, the ever-cheerful compiler and editor, Claire Hopley, will sign

## Sauerkraut Cake Recipe

Tom Hankinson writes: “I honestly do not remember where I found this cake, but it does not have any family origins.” Sauerkraut in a cake sounds odd, but it keeps it moist without any sauerkrauty taste.

1 ½ cups sugar  
3 eggs  
1/2 cup butter, softened  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ cup cocoa  
1 can sauerkraut, drained, rinsed with water, drained again and chopped.  
1 cup water

Preheat oven to 350° F and grease a 9x13” baking pan. In a large bowl, beat the sugar and eggs one at a time, beating together until light. Beat in the softened butter, and vanilla.

In a second bowl add the flour, baking powder and baking soda and cocoa. Mix well. Add to the creamed mixture and stir in the sauerkraut. Add the water, mix together, and put in the pan. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until a skewer or toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean. Let cool on a rack. If you wish, sprinkle the cooled cake with powdered sugar.

your book and let you know which recipes she has tried herself. Your \$12 investment will support continued work on behalf of the pond.

You can also pick up a copy at the Leverett town library, but I highly recommend going to the Coffee Shed in person. Dean’s Beans provides the brew, and matches the donations left in the jar. The treats are marvelous and you can enjoy a chat with Tom, Claire, Mitch, and whoever else drops by.

To learn more about the Friends of Leverett Pond’s preservation project, visit their website at [friendsofleverettpond.org](http://friendsofleverettpond.org).

# Around Town: Beloved Bakery Continues, Decorator at the Helm

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

**TURNERS FALLS** – A few months ago, I dropped into the magic of Turners Falls, not unlike the way Dorothy landed in Oz, and I found myself, that first morning, wandering into the 2nd Street Baking Company on Fourth Street.

There on the corner of L and Fourth streets in downtown Turners Falls, I found my new life in the bottom of a coffee cup filled with a blend of java from Indigo Coffee Roasters; I found it in the freshly baked Oatmeal Breakfast Biscuits that I didn’t feel guilty consuming because they were good for me; and I recognized it in the folks – both staff and customers – who had certainly found their kindness and were filling the bakery with its sweetness in the same way that “prima baker and owner” Daniela Speas’ cakes fill the bakery with the scent of vanilla, cinnamon and almond.

Here, I thought, was an easy place where I could inch into a productive morning of writing, undisturbed and yet very comfortable. I knew I had arrived!

Not long after that day, I started visiting 2nd Street Bakery regularly, and I later met with the owner, Daniela – confection artist, award-

winning cake baker/decorator – to discuss the challenge of baking and of running a successful small business in the town of Montague.

Daniela graduated from Lincoln Culinary Institute in Shelton, Connecticut, where she rose, like yeasted bread, to the top of her class, winning multiple awards in the whimsical area of cake decorating. As Daniela described some of the awards granted to her for her prowess in “sugar art” I couldn’t help but think of Willie Wonka and his chocolate factory.

“Sugar art is like glass blowing,” Daniela explained, “or like sculpting, but instead of using clay, I work with sugarpaste to create something that is both decorative and edible.”

So, what does this mean to those folks in Turners Falls who have an undeniable sweet tooth – or to the bride planning her wedding this year? It means that Daniela has brought a sense of sophistication and convenience to Turners Falls that is a win for the consumer, a win for the community, and a win for this 27-year-old entrepreneur.

I asked the cake maker more about the running of her bakery and what advice she might offer a “newbie” starting a business, and her answer was, “You have to gain a ‘never give up’ attitude. Always stay determined to pursue your dreams and achieve success.” Daniela leaned closer and confidently added, “There will be plenty of times that you want to give up and crawl under a rock, but take a deep breath and refocus your mind on your dreams...”

Daniela didn’t miss a step as she took the helm last month from the previous owner, Laura Puchalski, who opened the original 2nd Street Bakery in 2007.

“I haven’t changed a thing,” said Daniela. “If it isn’t broken, I say, why fix it? I did paint the inside of the bakery, but I haven’t made any other major changes. I decided that the bakery that everyone knows and loves will remain the same.

“And with Ethan, Ruth, Bree, Bella, Devin, Lynne and Richard, my 2nd Street Bakery staff, all that can be possible! They know what they are doing; they were trained well by Laura, and this transition has been relatively easy. With their support, I can give

the people in the area a great place to go and grab a bite to eat.”

What does “grabbing a bite to eat” mean at the 2nd Street Bakery? It means Daniela and her team making sandwiches, soup, salads, wraps, and exciting, healthy meals like their Buddha Bowl (quinoa, mixed greens, curried cauliflower, steamed kale, marinated chickpeas, sunflower seeds, yum-yum sauce) or Thai Bowl (quinoa, shredded Napa cabbage, grilled chicken, chopped egg, red peppers, green onions, peanuts and peanut sauce).

It means that seven days a week Daniela provides an assortment of braided breads, macaroons, shortbreads, muffins, cakes, brownies, cupcakes, gluten-free and vegan baked goods for customers throughout the day.

But what Daniela Speas is most proud of are her wedding cakes! When I asked her about her wedding cake creations, her face lit up and her dark eyes glimmered when she said, “I am really good at baking cakes. I won the American Culinary Federation’s gold medal for my wedding cakes.”

As I studied the joy in this young woman’s face, I recalled what she had shared with me: she was born in Romania, was adopted and emigrated to Northfield, and now is an important part of Montague’s future.

She reminded me of Dorothy. She reminded me of myself.

## 2nd Street Bakery Chocolate Chip Cookies

½ cup (2 sticks) butter, softened  
¾ cup sugar  
¾ cup brown sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
2 large eggs  
2 ¼ cups flour  
2 ¼ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

Cream butter and sugars together; add next three ingredients, then beat in eggs one at a time. Add flour slowly until combined, then stir in chocolate chips. Drop as rounded teaspoonfuls on a cookie sheet and bake at 350° F for twelve minutes.

Hours at the bakery are Mondays, 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Tuesdays through Fridays, 6:30 a.m. through 4 p.m.; Saturdays, 6:30 a.m. through 3 p.m.; and Sundays, 8 a.m. to noon. Pre-orders are encouraged: view the menu at [facebook.com/2ndstreetbakingco/](http://facebook.com/2ndstreetbakingco/) and call (413) 863-4455.



2nd Street’s new owner is an award-winning decorator of wedding cakes. Here is one of her creations.



The old crew at 2nd Street Baking Co. will be continuing under Speas’ ownership.

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# Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página en español del periódico *Montague Reporter*. Aquí podrá encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana en el área, eventos de interés, curiosidades, artículos y noticias mundiales en español. Si quiere participar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a: [spanish@montaguereporter.org](mailto:spanish@montaguereporter.org). Esperamos su participación



## Angelina Aspuac y el Movimiento Nacional de Tejedoras Mayas: *Parte II*

Por **MARÍA VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA**

Continuando la conversación iniciada en esta página el año pasado con Angelina Aspuac, una mujer abogado maya cachiquel, que forma parte de Afedes<sup>1</sup> que es una organización de mujeres mayas que ha conformado el movimiento nacional de tejedoras que reivindican los derechos de las tejedoras mayas.

Angelina me cuenta que en la organización empezaron a trabajar con los costes de producción de la parte textil, y vieron que el precio de venta estaba por debajo del precio de producción y debido a la desigualdad económica y el hambre que se sufre en Guatemala, las mujeres terminan vendiendo el textil al precio que les daban, a precios muy bajos. Cada día hay menos tejedoras porque hay menos gente que lleve la indumentaria indígena.

Añade que otra amenaza es la industrialización. La gente compra sin saberlo diseños imprimidos en lugar de tejidos en prendas que parecen huipiles hechos a mano. Tanto las telas como los tintes que se utilizan no son naturales y tienen riesgo de ser cancerígenos.

Angelina me explica que esto sucede en parte porque existe un desprecio por los pueblos indígenas, y así mismo por los tejidos elaborados por ellos. Es un desprecio por las manos indígenas que los elaboran, pero si estos mismos textiles pasan a manos de diseñadores famosos, son vendidos a precios de oro. Es un desprecio no solamente a los tejidos, sino también al conocimiento

ancestral de los pueblos indígenas que está detrás de ellos.

Angelina me dice que hay un intento del estado guatemalteco por negar a los pueblos indígenas, por olvidar su historia. Les obligan a olvidar su identidad, su espiritualidad, pero al mismo tiempo no les ofrecen las mismas oportunidades. Los documentos pertenecientes a los pueblos indígenas se quemaron, y no existe ninguna información para conocer su propia identidad. Lo ladino es lo que es valorado por el gobierno, sin valorar la cultura indígena. Así pues, los pueblos indígenas cambian su forma de vestir, ya que en su mente está que es la blancura lo que hay que perseguir.

Me dice Angelina que están tan colonizados que piensan que siempre el ladino es superior, no solamente por la historia que les cuentan, sino también por el trato que reciben cada día en la vida cotidiana y con respecto a las diferencias materiales y de oportunidades. Por ejemplo, las autoridades de cada pueblo y ciudad siempre son ladinos porque parecen superiores y los indígenas creen que ellos mismos son inferiores.

Angelina dice que es hora de creer en ellos mismos y recuperar los conocimientos de sus ancestros.

El movimiento Afedes trata de fortalecer la identidad de los pueblos indígenas y ayudarles a recuperar su autoestima. Ella se siente orgullosa de representar a la cultura maya, una cultura en la que hace más de 500 años ya habían descubierto conceptos matemáticos y físicos muy avanzados.



*Detalle de un telar.*

Ahora, las mujeres indígenas a través de Afedes se están organizando, están llevando a cabo asuntos jurídicos ante el gobierno y la corte de justicia. Angelina me confiesa que a los jueces les parece raro que las mujeres indígenas exijan sus derechos.

La defensa de la indumentaria de y de los tejidos no es solamente la defensa de la ropa, sino que está conectado con la lucha contra el racismo. Las mujeres indígenas se han informado de sus propios derechos y sobre la explotación laboral de las mujeres. Las estadísticas demuestran que las mujeres tejedoras son tres veces más explotadas. No solamente llevan las tareas de la casa, cuidan de los niños, se ocupan del huerto y de vender los productos y además tejen.

Los cultivos también han cambiado estos años al estar dedicados a productos de exportación y no a productos para el consumo propio. Esto llevó a que las familias pobres pasaran a ser más pobres todavía. Cultivaban algo que no iban a consumir como por ejemplo la arveja china, y si no podían exportarla, ni siquiera tenía alimentos para su propia despensa. Además al no ser un producto agrícola autóctono debían usar químicos para su crecimiento.

Las niñas eran sacadas de la escuela cuando tenían 8 años para trabajar en el campo y a eso es lo que el gobierno llamaba desarrollo en la comunidad. En la casa las niñas trabajaban y no recibían un salario, ni podían estudiar. A los niños sí se les decía que estudiaran. Esta diferencia por sexos no existía en los pueblos indígenas sino que es producto de la colonización que ha llevado consigo el machismo y el patriarcado.

Y a todo esto hay que añadir el racismo cuando las mujeres salen de su comunidad.

Con respecto a los tejidos, las tejedoras veían que estaban regalando los tejidos o la exclusividad de los güipiles por poco dinero y se sentían engañadas. Es conocido el caso de la diseñadora italiana que

pago por la patente y con ello por su propiedad por lo que las tejedoras no podían repetirlo.

Eso significa que los pueblos indígenas no tenían derecho a su propia propiedad intelectual y no podían ser reconocidos como autores de sus tejidos. Hay un riesgo evidente de que las tejedoras puedan ser encarceladas puesto que los diseñadores están patentando los diseños y disponen de maquinaria judicial.

Las tejedoras no disponen de fondos para divulgar que esas creaciones son patrimonio de los pueblos que han venidos conservándolas y resistiéndose a perderlas. Por el contrario, hay iniciativas llevadas por los pueblos indígenas ante el congreso que llevan allí más de veinte años sin haber sido aprobadas ya que muchas veces no consiguen siquiera llegar a la agenda del día.

Angelina Aspuac considera que informar a las empresas del concepto ético puede ser una solución para que respeten ese conocimiento ancestral. Ella misma ha visitado varias veces los Estados Unidos para hablar en universidades como Harvard o Princeton, o ante las Naciones Unidas. Cree firmemente en el valor de las redes sociales y de la prensa para divulgar las injusticias que se cometen respecto a las leyes de propiedad intelectual de los pueblos indígenas.

Las tejedoras trabajan codo a codo con Juan Castro, un abogado indígena maya que les asesora en los asuntos políticos y judiciales. Se enfrentan en cada lucha con que todo lo relacionado con los pueblos indígenas tiene problemas para pasar las barreras de la burocracia y del gobierno.

Las autoridades tienen miedo de que los pueblos se empoderen. En este momento están pendientes de una decisión del congreso que debe dar respaldo a una ley elaborada por ellas para proteger la propiedad intelectual de los propios indígenas. Las tejedoras tienen miedo que la ley no les ayude si no está redactada en los términos que ellas han decidido.

<sup>1</sup> AFEDES es la Asociación Femenina para el Desarrollo de Sacatepéquez y lucha para salvaguardar los derechos, la identidad y la herencia de las mujeres mayas. Página web: [mujeresdeafedes.wordpress.com](http://mujeresdeafedes.wordpress.com).

### Tablón de anuncios:

- El Departamento de policía de Montague ha recibido fondos para comprar sillas de carro para infantes y bebés que serán donadas a familias que las necesiten. Si este es su caso, haga una cita con MPD o con los bomberos de Turners Falls que se las instalarán en sus vehículos.
- NELCWIT está buscando candidatos bilingües para diversos puestos de trabajo. Los candidatos seleccionados trabajarán con clientes que hablan inglés y/o español. Los interesados pueden consultar la página web [www.nelcwit.org](http://www.nelcwit.org).
- FRTA ha añadido nuevas frecuencias a la ruta número 23 que va desde Greenfield a través de Turners Falls, Montague Center y Millers Falls y llega hasta Sunderland.
- El Centro de Mujeres de Montague Catholic Social Ministries va a empezar sus clases de costura a finales de enero. Si necesita más información puede ponerse en contacto con Andrea llamando al (413) 863-4804 ext. 1003 o por correo electrónico a [WomensCenter@mcsmcommunity.org](mailto:WomensCenter@mcsmcommunity.org).
- Los talleres de inglés como lengua extranjera empiezan el 28 de enero en Greenfield Community College. Pueden obtener más información en [www.gcc.mass.edu/esol](http://www.gcc.mass.edu/esol).
- Mobile Food Bank continuará con la entrega de alimentos gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el Senior Center de Turners Falls en 5th St de 1:30 a 2:30. Por favor, traigan su propia bolsa. Si necesitan más información pueden leerla en [gmpartnership.org/what-is-a-mobile-food-bank-how-does-it-work/](http://gmpartnership.org/what-is-a-mobile-food-bank-how-does-it-work/).

El 26 de febrero pasado presentaron ese caso y la Comisión Iberoamericana de Derechos Humanos en Colombia e la CIDH instó al gobierno de Guatemala a que hiciese la ley.

El estado de Guatemala prometió que iba a iniciar las gestiones para que los tejidos y los diseños fueran declarados patrimonio de la humanidad, algo con lo que las tejedoras no están de acuerdo porque esto simplemente sería parte del despojo que se sigue haciendo al no considerarlos patrimonio de los pueblos indígenas.

### Feliz Año Nuevo!

¡Adiós, 2018! ¡Hola, 2019! ¡Feliz Año Nuevo a todos nuestros lectores!

Desde *Aquí se habla español* queremos desearles un 2019 lleno de salud, amor y felicidad. Les damos las gracias por leernos cada mes y esperamos que en este año que comienza se cumplan todos sus propósitos. Brindemos por un año en que se construyan menos muros y se tiendan más puentes.



*Tejedora maya en su taller.*

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## EVENTS

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 17

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kids' Music Series with Under the Tree Music Company*. A five-week music series for young children combining music, laughter, song and movement. Adults and infants under 1 year are free; small fee per child per session, or \$20 for five weeks per kid. 10:30 a.m.

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

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Gina Coleman's Misty Blues*. Berkshire County blues band led by Gina Coleman. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*. 8 p.m.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 18

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Macbeth with YSP*. Young Shakespeare Players production of Macbeth in a free performance for all ages. Repeats Saturday and Sunday. 6:30 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 plays 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.

Hawks & Reed Greenfield: *Pas-to Chris, Mello\$av, Petey from Filthtown, Dominos Ex & Young DTK, Buttageekin, LuluThePrince, ZeroTenYola, Teddy*. In the Wheelhouse. \$. 10 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 Shake-

SUBMITTED IMAGE



*The Young Shakespeare Players East will journey through the landscape of Macbeth by William Shakespeare this weekend 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. Donations appreciated, everyone welcome. See our calendar listings for exact times.*

speare Players production of Macbeth in a free performance for all ages. 12 and 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Montague Square Dance*. Bob Livingstone calling, with Phil Watson House Band. No experience necessary. Sliding scale fee \$. 7 p.m.

Mount 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.

Wendell Town Hall: *Shokazoba Funkestra*. Shokazoba brings funkestra to the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse to benefit Orange Launchspace. They are a nine piece horn-driven fusion funk band. LaunchSpace is a maker-space non-profit providing tools and education for innovators with equipment for woodworking, metalworking, blacksmithing, robotics, pottery and textiles. Donation, plus Dessert-O-Rama benefit bake sales. Open Mic before the set. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Reprobate Blues Band*. Featuring Charlie Scott, Jan and Bo Henderson and Doug Plavin. Blues blues blues. 9 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Chambers* (Berlin), *NANA Visitor*, and more TBA. \$. 9 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dead Prez, The Problemaddicts, SoulTree*. Hip hop with political and socially conscious lyrics and unique style. \$. 9 p.m.

*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.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Meditation Group*. Self-led meditation group. Bring a cushion to sit on. 7 p.m.

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

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 24

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kid's Music Series with Under the Tree Music Company*. A five-week music series for young children combining music, laughter, song and movement. Adults and infants under 1 year are free; small fee per child or \$20 for five weeks per kid. 10:30 a.m.

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *FACS, Strange Fate*, more. Abstract, modern art rock; punk music. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Heath Lewis*. 9 p.m.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

Artspace, Greenfield: *Open Music Jam*. New monthly jam. This month led by guitar teacher Kevin Dee, centered on the blues. Piano available. All welcome; donation suggested. 12 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Josie's Magical Flute* presents *Comedy at the Shea*. Improv comedy. Cash or check at the door only. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Dave Kontak, PussyVision, First Children, Fred Cracklin', Corrode*. Experimental, electronic, brutal noise, ripping solos and more. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Vundabar with The Nude Party, Carinae*. Sludgy, jangly pop, rock 'n roll boner pop, and psych rock. \$. 8:30 p.m.

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

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

### SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Independent Label Mixer*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Immortal Jellyfish*. 9:30 p.m.

## EXHIBITS

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Annual Teen Art Exhibit*. Opening Reception Friday, January 25, 5:15 p.m.

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 features 13 juried New England and New York artists.

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*. 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 with In the Vicinity, featuring *Nina Rossi's* mixed media works depicting Turners Falls, through March 9.

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

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Winter's Tale*. Members' exhibit through January 21. Gallery closed week of January 22 for renovations. Opening in February with Red Hot theme.

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## THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

# Mending Walls



By **LESLIE BROWN**

*Something there is that doesn't love a wall...  
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
What I was walling in or walling out  
And to whom I was like to give offence.*

**MONTAGUE CITY** – *Mending Wall* by Robert Frost was published in 1914 at the start of the first World War. It is as relevant now as it was then.

The poet writes about the lumpy, ever-changing stone wall so typical of the farm, which set out the property lines all over New England. He and his neighbor meet on opposite sides of their wall every spring to reset the stones moved by that something-which-does-not-love-a-wall; frost heaves, or perhaps elves. As they work, they lift stones “like loaves and some so nearly balls / We have to use a spell to make them balance.”

This annual job makes the poet begin to ponder the “why” of this wall:

*There where it is we do not need the wall.  
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, “Good fences make good neighbors.”  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:  
“Why do they make good neighbors?  
Isn't it where there are cows?  
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
what I was walling in or walling out  
And to whom I was like to give offence.*

At the end of the poem, his neighbor has no better

answer. The poet describes him this way:

*I see him there  
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed,  
He moves in darkness as it seems to me  
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.*

Big Daddy has walled himself in by insisting that there will be a wall between Texas and Mexico. He has convinced himself that this gap through which would-be immigrants wish to pass is a danger to national security; that all those who want to enter are criminals, drug dealers, and murderers, despite the fact that many are small children.

Further, he is quite content to induce a government shutdown, stonewalling many critical services, and leaving thousands without pay.

He has never been a negotiator; it's as if he's the owner of a massive company and it's his way or the highway. He has nowhere to go from here. No money for the wall equals government shutdown until something changes.

We do not believe he will remain in this corner. He has a long history of weaseling out of untenable positions and finding others to blame, usually those annoying Democrats, always the spoilers.

He cannot accept losses or make a compromise, the prime tool of politicians all over the world. He tweets from the hip and downright lies to cover what he sees as failure.

Like Frost's neighbor, he hides behind stock phrases. This cannot go on forever. The emperor's new clothes are all too transparent. And the wall is only an allegory for fending off those things we fear, because we do not know them for what they are.

# MONTAGUE REPORTER



*Gail Hornstein and Carole DeSanti read the Reporter in Costa Rica, in the Bosque Eterno de los Niños, or “Children's Eternal Rainforest,” a biodiversity reserve founded by donations from children in 44 countries.*

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