

The Montague Reporter

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 14, 2019

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Selectboard Weighs School Regionalization: “Things Can’t Continue to Stay the Same”

By JEFF SINGLETON

At the short February 11 Montague Selectboard meeting, the longest agenda item was a report by town administrator Steve Ellis and selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz on a meeting with officials from the Gill-Montague regional school district about an “efficiency and regional study” funded by a grant to the district. The meeting was also at-

tended by officials from the Pioneer Valley regional district, which has experienced a major budget crisis over the past year.

Ellis said the study, which was funded by a state grant, had found opportunities for greater efficiencies in the areas of “purchasing, leadership and supervision,” in Ellis’s words, but Pioneer officials had “expressed an interest in studying regionalization on a grander scale... potentially

forming a larger district.” He went on to say that “the towns are going to have an opportunity to weigh and consider whether we would like to enter into a formal study of the opportunities and/or costs [regional consolidation] may engender.”

Kuklewicz said he thought the scenario of the two school districts combining is “not the way it would happen,” but rather “the communities,

see MONTAGUE page A3

NEWS ANALYSIS

Governor’s Budget Sets The Table

By JEFF SINGLETON

BOSTON – The state’s annual budget process has begun, with significant consequences for cities and towns in our region. In late January, Governor Baker filed “House 1,” his proposal for state spending, which sets the table for the legislature. The proposal will proceed through committee hearings in both branches, be reconciled in a conference committee of the House and Senate, and then, presumably before the fiscal year begins on July 1, be signed by the governor.

The total state budget Baker proposes is \$43.2 billion. The largest expenditure is for “health and human services” (\$23.8 billion), of which over \$16 billion is accounted for by the MassHealth program for low-income residents – more than half of which is reimbursed by the federal government.

Another \$7.7 billion is allocated to education, of which \$5.1 billion funds the Chapter 70 program of aid to cities, towns and regional school districts. Higher education, which includes the University of Massachusetts as well as the state and community college system, accounts for approximately \$1.13 billion.

For cities, towns, and regional see **BUDGET** page A8

Spreading Winter Fun: Programs Make Outdoor Recreation More Accessible

By ANNABEL LEVINE

WENDELL – With winter’s harsh conditions, we sometimes require a little incentive to leave the warmth of our homes. Many choose to bust the winter blues by participating in some kind of outdoor sport, be it skiing, sledging, or skating. To those with disabilities, winter’s icy touch can present extra obstacles to enjoying the season’s offerings of outdoor recreation.

Rising out of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) took on the issue of access to outdoor recreation opportunities for people with disabilities by creating the Universal Access Program (UAP). Since 1995, the UAP has been working out of Amherst to provide adaptive recreation opportunities to residents of all abilities across the state, year-round.

One of the UAP’s longest-running programs is the Accessible Outdoor Winter Recreation program at Wendell State Forest, in operation since 2001. The Wendell program is put on as a collaboration with local non-profit All Out Adventures, and offers a multitude of adaptive outdoor winter recreation such as



Ginny Graves uses a sit-ski on the groomed trails at Wendell State Forest.

snowshoeing, kick-sledding, sit-skiing, gentle sled hockey, cross-country skiing, and snowmobile rides if the weather permits.

The last two dates for the Wendell program’s 2019 season are this Saturday, February 16, and next Saturday, February 23. The program is free, but participants are asked to register beforehand by getting in touch with Jackie Brown at jackie.brown@mass.gov or by calling (413) 577-3840.

Leila Soleimani, outreach coordinator with the UAP, stresses the see **RECREATION** page A4

INTERVIEW

The Man Behind the Panels



Denis Bordeaux contributes the “T.Rump” comic strip to the Montague Reporter.

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – This week, before the snowstorm, I had the pleasure of sitting down for an interview with Denis Bordeaux, one of our more controversial contributors.

Denis has been drawing for the *Reporter* since its first year, and *T.Rump*, which has appeared regularly since July 2017, is his third comic strip in our pages. The satirical strip strongly implies that the current president of the United States is underqualified for the position.

T.Rump has come under criticism from some of our readers. No local artist has yet offered a rival comic, and we have received several suggestions that we should print syndicated content by conservative political cartoonists in order to correct an impression of unfair bias.

As managing editor of the paper, I decided it might help to introduce more of our readers to the man behind all the controversy. Denis lives in Greenfield these days, but he has been connected to Montague his whole life. Our chat touched on growing up in town, his longtime artistic passion, his time in the service, the wild and woolly Turners Falls of the 1970s, and his thoughts on the current political climate. (The transcript has been abridged and edited for clarity.)

MR: So, you grew up here –
DB: Lake Pleasant.

MR: What was that like?

DB: Best place in the world to grow up. Are you kidding? It was unbelievable. To this day, people over there call it the “hidden gem,” they don’t want anyone moving in because it’s just the way they like it – about 400 people.

And back then, it was considered the ghetto of the town of Montague: you know, it was where low-income people lived. And it was true – I mean, it was

working class people and whatnot. Kids everywhere. Back in the ‘50s, if you had five kids, that was a small family. I had six sisters and two brothers.

Any time of the day or night, you could find 22 kids for a football game, or 18 kids for a baseball game. You could have a baseball game going on at Sazama’s field and a football game going down at Scalpers at the same time, with substitutes on each side – that’s how many kids there were! And dogs, every house had a dog or two.

Of course, we had the lake, and we had the woods, the Plains, the sand bank, a couple-three streams there that were fun to play in. And we had the swamp, and we were walking distance to the fish hatchery and to the Sawmill River in Montague, and those were all places we swam and fished in.

MR: Did you go walk up onto the Plains all the time?

DB: Oh, we built forts up there – of course the Plains back then were all sectioned off into names... We had three official baseball fields with backstops over there, we had skating rinks in the wintertime: they would open the hydrant up and flood the parks...

MR: And social clubs, too?

DB: I was a member of the Ramblers and the Scalpers both, in my adulthood. And they’re both going strong.

MR: Where’d you go to elementary school?

DB: Highland Elementary over in Millers. It’s the old age home now. And then junior high in Turners, up on the hill on Crocker Ave.... I went 12 years of school with all those kids from Millers.

You know how Lake Pleasant is split into two halves? The other side of the lake, they went to Montague, and we went to Millers; we didn’t know kids from Montague except from the summertime.

see **BORDEAUX** page A6

The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – This week, two Franklin Tech wrestlers earned belts, Turners Falls swimmers broke personal records in the Natatorium, the Powertown cheer team performed in Chicopee, the Turners Falls boys’ basketball team qualified for the playoffs, and the girls’ basketball team – well, their game against Palmer was snowed out, and now they pin their hopes on Athol.

Also this week, the Red Sox reported for spring training as another blizzard hit the Northeast.

Wrestling

This season, the Franklin Tech wrestling team won their third consecutive league title, had two athletes reach 100-career-win milestones, and had their best showing ever at the Western Mass D3 wrestling tournament. The Western Mass tournament was held on Sunday at Franklin Tech. The Franks finished in second place overall as a team, and entered 10 wrestlers out of a possible 14 weight classes.

The tournament was like the Warriors movie. It was a pageant of multicolored apparel and color splash uniforms. The fans and competitors donned tees and sweatshirts with all sorts of variant mascots.

Tomahawks and spears replaced school letters, the South Hadley paw print was replaced by a snarling tiger, the Sabis Bull Dog was dug in and growling, and the birds of prey were aggressively showing their muscles.

see **SPORTS** page A5

Turners’ Ryan Campbell goes up for a shot as Mahar’s Noaha Chabot defends. The Thunder punched a ticket to the WMass D4 Tournament with the win over the Senators.



“Hobbit Shower,” which Bordeaux painted in the woods off Meadow Road.

The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

Over The River

For some time now, the *Reporter* has been hearing discouraging reports from our mailed subscribers in Greenfield about slow delivery to that town.

We affix first class postage to the wrapper, and deliver all our mailed issues to the Turners Falls post office, helpfully pre-sorted by order of zip code, early Thursday afternoons.

Why it should take five days – or a week – or, as we hear in some cas-

es, more than a week – to accomplish home delivery to neighboring Greenfield is completely beyond us.

If you receive a mailed subscription in Greenfield, please do us a favor over the next few weeks, and drop us a line at subscriptions@montaguereporter.org to let us know when your papers arrive. It seems we have some people to speak with.

Hopefully the problem will be sorted out soon enough.

Under The Weather

Multiple *Montague Reporter* writers called out sick this week – the monthly feature page we had slated for this issue had to be cancelled – and it’s worth mentioning that two more submitted stories despite reporting sickness.

To add insult to injury, Tuesday’s snowstorm postponed the Gill-Montague regional school committee meeting scheduled for that evening. The meeting will

take place Thursday, the evening after we have gone to press, and our coverage of it will appear in next week’s edition.

It was entirely fortuitous that Denis Bordeaux had agreed to come by for an interview on Monday. If anyone is wondering why we published over 3,600 words of it, much more than any other feature interview in memory... consider it an artifact of the season!

No, But Really

Speaking of which: Flu shots are available at most area pharmacies. We’re now at what is considered peak flu season – the Center For Disease Control’s handy map reports the flu is now “widespread” in 47 states and “regional” in Alaska and West Virginia – but it’s not too late to do your part.

You may still get the flu in a season in which you have received a flu shot. Most vaccines cover either three or four strains predicted to be the most widespread, but there are hundreds of mutations in circulation.

This year the government recommended targeting strains of Influenza A first reported in Michigan and Singapore, and strains of

Influenza B first seen in Colorado and Phuket, Thailand. Last month, scientists announced that these were a “good match” for the bugs in circulation.

If you haven’t yet, please do your part to contain their spread through the population by immunizing yourself. Even if it’s not for yourself, you’ll be helping reduce the overall risk to babies, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems.

It’s a perfect example of ethical social behavior – and a form of caretaking every bit as important and real as shoveling out a housebound neighbor’s sidewalk, or bringing a thermos of soup to a friend already suffering the brunt of a virus.

Push Comes To Shove

On Monday a BBC cameraman was assaulted, shoved hard from behind, by a uniformed supporter of the president as he covered a closed-borders rally in El Paso, Teexas. Fortunately, he was not hurt, and another audience member intervened.

This behavior is by no means representative of all supporters of

the president, but he has done little to discourage such militancy, and it is not difficult to see it as a consequence of his description of the press as “the true Enemy of the People.”

This is worrisome, and a dynamic worth keeping an eye on as the nation heads grimly into another major election cycle.

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Letters to the Editors

Likes Intent of Community Solar – Questions Its Physics

In a quote from me in the *Reporter* last week, my position on the Wendell community solar project sounded harsh. I appreciate the carbon-reducing intentions behind the project... while questioning the eco-physics of any energy commodity.

Here’s the actual response I made to reporter David Detmold’s request for a pithy statement of my feelings: “By energy physics, I’m afraid

a solar farm is thermally regressive on a warming planet. It reduces the albedo of the area it covers (albedo: solar energy normally reflected back into space). For unwanted heat, both locally and in the electricity at point of use.

“Meanwhile displacing Nature – for lost photosynthesis and transpiration... and carbon storage in trees if the tract was forest, or in soil if it was grassland. For more warming.

“And imagine how long before the energy payback, including its share of the industrial infrastructure that this technology keeps us depending on...! If we don’t thoroughly calculate its supposed carbon benefit, net energy production and thermal contribution, we’re really shooting in the dark.”

Jonathan von Ranson
Wendell

CORRECTION

Last week, we wrote about the “Rumble” event at the Shea Theater next Friday the 22nd, featuring a screening of the documentary of the same name, which highlights the role played by Native Americans in the development of rock ‘n’ roll. We wrote that after the screening there would be “a panel discussion on legislative efforts to change the Massachusetts state flag.”

Whoops! While the campaign to change the flag *is* one of two beneficiaries of the event, the panel will be about the movie.

Never Too Late To Say Thank You

On behalf of the local Salvation Army Service Unit, Mary Conway, and the staff at the Montague Catholic Social Ministries, thank you to all those folks volunteering to ring the bell for the 2018 Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive. The money raised stays in our community and helps local residents year-round.

Thank you to the Montague Police Department and Chief Williams who helped staff the kettle. Thank you to the Turners Falls Fire Department and Captain Cogswell

who coordinated that department’s staff. Special thanks to Jon Steiner and Food City, who graciously allowed all the bell ringers to be warm and dry in the store foyer.

And, last but not least, many thanks to all those who so generously put their coins or folding bills into the kettle. The Montague Community is better because of YOU!

Linda Ackerman
Montague
Salvation Army Volunteer

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(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

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Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

Black History Month is being celebrated at Greenfield Savings Bank at 282 Avenue A in Turners Falls. Greenfield Savings Bank is proud to have two powerful, talented women artists display a small portion of their collection here.

My friend Louise Minks brings a wood carving titled “Going Home” by John Lollar, Jr. Louise collaborated with Mr. Lollar on several works of art in the past. Louise has brought in her painting of John Lollar, Jr., as well as several books to check out.

Belinda Lyons Zucker offers a sampling of her West African doll collection. These dolls are truly unique and far transcend the normal concept of a doll into works of art, meditation and ritual. The dolls become “characters” to Belinda, each one taking on a persona that determines the final result.

The displays will remain in the lobby until the end of the month.

The Great Falls Discovery Center’s Kidleidoscope program on Friday, February 15 will feature a story, craft, and games based on the **theme of Porcupines**. 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.

This Saturday, February 16, the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank will serve **Cocoa with Chief Chris!** Stop in anytime between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. to chat with Chief Chris Williams of the Montague Police Department in the

cozy, comfy and friendly community room. This is a family-friendly event, so you can bring youngsters to meet and greet the Chief. There will be hot cocoa, hot coffee, and light munchies.

Downtown Turners Falls is hosting a **village-wide winter event** on Saturday, February 16. Art exhibits, store-wide sales, restaurant specials, live music and shows are planned from 11 a.m. to midnight on Avenue A and Third Street. For a schedule of events and more information, visit www.turnersfallsriverculture.org.

Here’s a fun, family-friendly nighttime event hosted by Montague Parks and Recreation: **sledding at Unity Park** from 4 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, February 16! The Franklin County Sheriff’s Office is providing light towers to illuminate the hill, and there will be a campfire and warm refreshments available.

This Saturday, February 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Brick House in Turners Falls, Great Falls Books Through Bars will host a free screening of **508 Pedal Bike Life**. The short film is about a crew of young bike riders in Worcester who insist they are a positive movement, though police have called them a gang; their slogan is “bikes up, guns down.”

Afterwards, there will be a chance to write cards and letters to a member who was incarcerated following run-ins with city police. A donation of \$3 to \$10 is suggested, but no one will be turned away due to lack of funds.

The Great Falls Discovery Center will have special open hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during school vacation week, February 16 through 24. Stop by for a variety of Investigation Stations all week at the front entrance to the center to learn about **how wildlife adapt to winter**. For all ages, especially children, accompanied by an adult.

On Tuesday, February 19, Department of Conservation and Recreation environmental educator Gini Traub will be conducting experiments and demonstrations of how animals get through the winter. This hands-on family program begins at 10:30 a.m. in the Great Hall. Weather permitting, participants may also investigate outdoors, so be sure to dress appropriately.

On Thursday, February 21, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Student Conservation Association service members will facilitate a program on “Discovering Trees.” This program is for school-age children and their adult caregivers. Meet in the Great Hall, but be prepared to go outdoors with weatherproof clothing and footwear.

Learn “**Guerrilla Gardening Tactics**” on Saturday, February 16 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Laughing Dog Farm, 398 Main Road, Gill. Inspired by permaculture principles, dumpster diving and gleaning, and 20 years of organic gardening, grower Danny Botkin will demonstrate his uniquely low-tech, opportunistic gardening practices, including “low-till” soil building, intensive “bunch” propagation, and a variety of other non-traditional, season-extension methods.

The introductory-level workshop includes a walking greenhouse tour, Q and A, plus farm snacks. \$25 suggested donation or barter. Contact Daniel Botkin, farm manager, at (413) 863-8696. Find out more about the farm at www.laughing-dogfarm.com.

Rawn Fulton of Searchlight Films presents his award-winning docu-

mentary, “Root Hog or Die” at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19 (snow date February 20) in the Greenfield Savings Bank Community Room. Filmed in 1973, then completed and shown on PBS in 1978, it is a portrait of **the vanishing life of New England dairy farmers**. Come watch and be part of the heritage that makes New England special.

Whose tracks are these? How do wild animals survive the winter? **Discover what animals are active in Northfield’s fields and forests**. On Saturday, February 23 from 1 until 3 p.m., join educator Kathy Richards for a fun outdoor adventure exploring wildlife in winter at Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center.

Using detective skills, learn how to read the stories written upon the forest floor. Games, activities and outdoor exploration will ensure a fun time for all ages. If the trails are open for skiing, snowshoes are required. If snow is insufficient for snowshoeing, the program will take place on foot.

The event is suitable for anyone age six and older, and free with your own snowshoes. Snowshoes are available to rent for \$10 (\$30 maximum per family). Pre-registration is required by calling (800) 859-2960.

To learn more about the current work of **Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution**, a public open house will be held at the Deja Brew Pub, 57 Lockes Village Road in Wendell, on Saturday, February 23, from 6 to 8 p.m.

Hear about two “hot-button issues” – changing the MA state flag and single-payer healthcare – while enjoying the pub’s bar, pizza by the slice, or food you bring yourself. It will be an opportunity for “East County” folks to learn more about FCCPR and its various projects.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

the towns that are in the two districts, would work together to form a new district.”

“The one thing clear in my mind,” he said, “is that things can’t continue to stay the same.”

“We will always have an initial conversation that frames it in terms of the economics,” Ellis added, “but ultimately, it is the ability to sustain programs. And that relies not only on having enough money, but having enough student bodies, so to speak, to fill out that AP Physics course.”

The board was asked how the current regionalization discussions differ from those that took place a decade ago. In 2009 a discussion of regional consolidation and collaboration involved a number of Franklin County districts, including Gill-Montague and Greenfield. A study produced by the New England School Development Council then predicted relatively small savings from consolidation of school districts in the county, although proposals to collaborate in specific areas, such as purchasing and transportation, received a favorable response from district leaders.

“In this instance, there is a district in the county that is making some extremely difficult decisions right now, and looking at the potential loss of viability. And we’ve been

reflecting on the enrollment side,” said Ellis. “This isn’t externally suggested – there are districts in more difficult circumstances, with much smaller student populations, than they had ten years ago. That can sometimes catalyze collaboration in ways that studies – that are going to present options that nobody in individual communities is ready for – sometimes can’t.

“This is being driven at the local level,” agreed Kuklewicz. “Not from some higher [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education] state group, or senator’s office. There’s a real [local] interest.”

The board did not take a vote on the issue.

Other Business

Parks and recreation director John Dobosz announced a night sledding event at Unity Park from 4 to 9 p.m. this Saturday, February 16. He said he would inform neighbors about special lighting for the event.

Dobosz said the Turners Falls Fire Department was aware there was going to be a campfire at the event, and “if it turns into a bonfire, I will give them a call.” The brief discussion then turned in the direction of fond memories of past sledding at Unity Park.

Ellis announced that the process

for discussing changes in town employee healthcare benefits obtained through the Hampshire County Insurance Trust, which had been on hold for over a year, would begin again. He said proposed changes to the plans were “less onerous” than when previously discussed. The board voted to recommence the process.

Department of public works superintendent Tom Bergeron came before the board to discuss the inspection of the town’s transfer station and “corrective action” required by the report. The inspection, conducted by the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, found that the facility was in need of a porta-potty for the staff, since bathroom facilities at the adjacent regional dog kennel could no longer be used.

Bergeron said he would purchase the porta-potty, and had a contract to clean it out “once or twice a year.” The board voted to sign the plan for corrective action.

Ellis announced that the Turners Falls Power Canal was scheduled for its annual emptying and inspection next October 7 through 12. He noted that “we had someone who was interested in the former Sixth Street bridge,” and the selectboard had urged him to “have patience”

and wait until the canal was drained to do an assessment.

Ellis said he would “share this information with” the interested party – referring to Curt Sherrer, owner of Wild Child Cidery, who has purchased the former Housing Authority building across the power canal on Fifth Street to house his businesses. Sherrer came before the board in early December to suggest that the town donate the disused Sixth Street, or Power Street, bridge to an as-yet-to-be created private nonprofit corporation for development.

Businesses on the river side of the power canal lack a connection to the town sewer; Wild Child relies on a small septic system, which limits the scope of its planned operations.

Ellis also informed the board that the town had been awarded a \$15,000 grant to hire consultant services to develop an “economic and cultural revitalization strategy” for Millers Falls. He said town planner Walter Ramsey and RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto would probably present more information to the board at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The selectboard then retired into two executive sessions to discuss collective bargaining. Their next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 25.

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Grade 7
Ricky Pareja

Grade 8
Lillian Poirier

Related Arts
Mason Lehtomaki

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RECREATION from page A1

importance of being outside for our health. “If you read studies you can hear how being outside in nature for 30 minutes a day dramatically improves our mood,” she says. “It decreases anxiety, it decreases blood pressure, it helps folks who have depression... And so, I think it’s really important for anybody to be able to spend time outdoors and have those health benefits.”

Soleimani grew up with an uncle who had sustained a brain injury, and she didn’t know back then about the recreational opportunities available to people with disabilities. She says she enjoys going out into the community and connecting with people who would benefit from the UAP’s offerings.

For some, the program is a chance to participate in an activity that they may have enjoyed before their disability, and thought they’d never enjoy again. For others, it’s the prospect of trying something new that draws them in.

One participant told Soleimani during an event in Wendell that this was the first time she had been outside in nature in six years.

Wendell may be the closest program, but it is not the only location in the western part of the state that offers adaptive programming. There are two upcoming events in our area in March. On March 7, there will be adaptive cross-country skiing and snowshoeing at the DAR State Forest in Goshen, and a few days later on March 10, there will be adaptive ice skating and ice games at the Fitzgerald Memorial Rink in Holyoke. All Out Adventures runs other adaptive recreation programs, like senior shoeshoeing – a more sedate version of

snowshoeing – also in Wendell. Both the UAP and All Out Adventures have event calendars on their website.

People with disabilities may find it more difficult to participate in outdoor recreation, either due to lack of equipment, resources, or both. The Universal Access Program is trying to bridge that gap with programs like the one in Wendell by providing their programming for free, or at low cost, and providing transportation assistance to events.

To provide accessibility outside of scheduled programming, the program purchases adaptive equipment for state parks and skating rinks for independent use. The Collins-Moylan Arena in Greenfield has two adult sleds and one stroller handle, while the DAR in Goshen has two beach wheelchairs for summertime use along the waterfront.

Although Soleimani says that cycling is one of the more popular activities that the UAP runs, there are currently no outdoor adaptive recreation activities scheduled for the Canalside Rail Trail here in Turners Falls. The Rail Trail is DCR property, and the UAP could potentially run cycling programs along the canal. According to US Census data, between 2013 and 2017, 14.2% of the population of Montague is listed as having a disability.

If you or someone you know would benefit from having adaptive recreation opportunities in Turners, reach out to the UAP office: Soleimani says that although programming along the canal does not exist yet, her office tries to meet the needs of the community, and encourages feedback.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Lots Of Houses Currently In Tax Title Process

By JOSH HEINEMANN

In the drawn-out process of securing an internet connection for Wendell households, the selectboard has been acting as the town’s municipal light plant (MLP), and since October their regular meeting agendas have been followed by a separate MLP agenda. On February 6 the MLP meeting was scheduled before other town business, with one agenda item: a discussion of broadband cash flow with town treasurer Carolyn Manley and MLP manager Ray DiDonato.

The cost of stringing fiber-optic cable is dependent on miles and the number of households that will be connected, and can be estimated with relative precision. However, “make-ready” costs depend on whether poles need to be replaced, where they need to be added, how many wires need to be moved, and other considerations, and so estimates for the make-ready stage are difficult to predict.

Massachusetts authorized Wendell \$730,000 in grant money for the fiber-optic project, and later, with the understanding that make-ready costs cannot be predicted accurately, authorized paying an overage beyond that.

DiDonato reported that Wendell has received about half the make-ready estimates, and will begin paying for the work. The town is using state notes to borrow the rest of the network cost, and that loan is structured so the town will only pay interest for three years.

Warchest Replenished

Manley said she had run into a new problem in overseeing the town’s taking property for delinquent taxes. The fund she uses for land court expenses is \$800 short, at least in part due to the number of

properties currently under tax title.

Al McIntire, who comes to selectboard meetings as a liaison from the finance committee, said that money would come back, and so would be well spent. The town’s FY’19 reserve account of \$15,000 has not been used, and so board members agreed to transfer \$800 from that to the tax taking account.

Snow removal costs have been low so far this season, and with some luck the winter maintenance budget will not need a transfer from the reserve fund.

Rehab Loans

Glen Ohlund of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Re-development Authority ran a public hearing as required for the town’s community development block grant (CDBG) process. Ohlund was substituting for Brian McHugh, who was sick with the flu.

Only one Wendell resident not at the selectboard meeting for other purposes attended the hearing, and he asked no questions. The original use of CDBG grants was to bring substandard homes up to code, including weatherization and insulation, and that is still a central use of CDBG money. Loans of up to \$40,000 per household are now offered. Repayment is not due until the property changes hands, and when repayments are made the money goes into a revolving fund for more loans. Ohlund said over \$200 million has been spent in Franklin County over 25 or 30 years.

The severity of code shortcomings may determine priorities in awarding loans. Internet drops may be considered for these loans, but not until after the fiber-optic network is built. To qualify, a single individual must have a gross income

of \$45,200 or less, and a family of four, \$64,500 or less. Wendell and Shutesbury are applying together, with Wendell as the lead town.

Hot House

Adrian Montagano came to the meeting with news about the family that built the house at 97 Wendell Depot Road in the early 1800s. The family has roots that go back to the Salem witch trials, and heirs living in Maine are interested in the house, currently owned by the town. He said a letter from them is on its way to town.

Board members told him of the interest that National Grid has buying or leasing the property while it upgrades the electrical grid. Selectboard member Christine Heard said that the building is definitely not something the town wants to continue to own, but that the town is open to hear any suggestion for its use. The house is reported to be structurally sound, and board chair Dan Keller said it has 40’ long chestnut beams.

Montagano got permission to go inside with building inspector Phil Delorey and take documentary photographs. He was told that a representative from National Grid will speak about the company’s interest in the property at the next scheduled selectboard meeting on February 20.

Bee Lines

Katie Nolan and Maggie Houghton spoke to the board about a recent sustainable land care symposium held at Smith College by the Western Massachusetts Pollinators’ Network, which five Wendell residents attended. Insect populations are down worldwide, and insects are major pollinators.

The Wendell group has not

Leverett Alliance Will Host Known Nuclear War Critic

LEVERETT – The February meeting of the Leverett Alliance will feature Ira Helfand, MD, discussing “The Growing Danger of Nuclear War and What We Can Do About It.”

Dr. Helfand is a member of the International Steering Group of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which was the recipient of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. He is co-president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), the founding partner of ICAN, itself recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. He is also co-founder and past president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, IPPNW’s US affiliate.

The meeting, which is co-sponsored by Traprock Center for Peace and Justice, will take place at 7 p.m. next Thursday, February 21, at Leverett Town Hall. All are welcome.

Gill-Montague Regional School Committee Openings

Nomination papers for the annual town election to be held on Monday, May 20, 2019 for school committee seats are available at the Gill-Montague Regional School superintendent’s office, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA. Completed nomination papers are due in the superintendent’s office no later than 4 p.m. on Monday, April 1, 2019.

Please note that all papers must be picked up and returned to the superintendent’s office, and not the town clerk’s offices.

The open seats are one 3-year Gill school committee seat, one 1-year Gill school committee seat, two 3-year Montague school committee seats, and one 1-year Montague school committee seat.

For more information or questions, please contact Sabrina Blanchard at (413) 863-9324.


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SPORTS from page A1

Even the Gateway Gator had its mouth gaped open and its teeth bared. One man wore a shirt with a biting, scratching badger. And on the mats, competitors wrestled in lime green, sky blue and maroon uniforms.

Kyle Brunelle (138 lb.) went 3–0 and won the Western Mass title, and Brody Wood (170 lb.) went 4–0 and was also crowned Western Mass Champion.

Other Tech wrestlers included Walker Picard (220 lb., second place, 3–1 on the day); Joshua Brunelle (120 lb., third place, 4–1); Colin Pettis (132 lb., third place, 4–1); Ayden Stacy (195 lb., fifth place, 3–2); Cameron Tuttle (285 lb., fifth place, 3–2); Noah Fuess (152 lb., sixth place, 2–3); and Tim Fritz (160 lb., sixth place, 2–3).

The top four wrestlers in each weight class go on to wrestle in the States, with the fifth place wrestler attending as an alternate.

Swimming

On Sunday, February 10, three Turners Falls swimmers competed in the Central/West Swimming and Diving sectionals held at the Art Linkletter Natatorium at Springfield College.

Unlike many sports, swimming has only two divisions, which means that they competed against some pretty big schools, some with 1,300 kids in grades 9 through 12.

Cam Bradley swam the 100-yard butterfly in 59.31 seconds, beating his best time of 59.52. He finished in tenth place and scored 7 points. He also completed the 100-yard backstroke in 1:04.27, and took 20th place.

Jade Tyler took 17th in the 200-yard IM (2:28.52), and 22nd in the 100-yard butterfly (1:08.44).

Olivia Whittier finished 7th in the 100-yard breaststroke. She smashed her personal record by completing the race in 1:13.05. The finish

earned her 12 points, and a spot in the State Meet this weekend at BU. Whittier also finished 17th in the 50-yard freestyle (26.93).

As a team, the season is over. But with so many underclassmen on the team, coach Colin Machat is looking forward to next year.



TFHS swimmers Olivia Whittier (top), Jade Tyler (middle), and Cam Bradley (bottom) competed at the West-Central Swimming and Diving Championship on Sunday at Springfield College. (Photos from a previous meet.)

Cheerleading

The Turners Falls Cheer squad competed in Chicopee on Sunday, February 10.

Cheerleading is the polar opposite of most sports. Every other sport keeps meticulous stats, but in Cheer, they only announce the runner-up

and then the winner.

Coach Sarah Underwood couldn’t even tell me what the final score was, but she said they did well, and with one of her Leaders coming back from a concussion, they hope to do even better in the next two contests.

Boys Basketball

TFHS 61 – Mahar 53

The Turners Falls boys’ basketball team needed to win one game out of their last three to make the playoffs. With previous losses against Mahar and Pioneer, all bets were on Hopkins. But on Monday, Powertown beat the visiting Mahar Senators, and qualified for the playoffs.

In the JV game, there was a scary moment when one of the refs landed hard on his head and neck. The game was stopped, and when he finally got to his feet, the crowd respectfully applauded.

The varsity win wasn’t pretty. There were at least 10 unforced giveaways, but Blue stayed focused and instituted wonderful under-the-hoop assists. This kept the game even, and after a quarter, Powertown was up 12-11.

Mahar never pulled away. In fact, halfway through the second, with the score knotted at 19, Turners caught fire. They outscored the Politicians 10-2 and went into the locker room leading 29-21.

But Mahar went on a run in the third to tie it up at 36, and going into the fourth, it was anybody’s game. Mahar took a 47-45 lead with 4 minutes and 17 seconds left on the clock. But they began to commit fouls, and Turners pulled ahead to 49-47 with three minutes to go.

From there, it was all Blue. Turners won 61-53 for the victory and a playoff bid.

Scoring points for Blue were Tyler Lavin (17), Chase Novak (14), Anthony Peterson (13), Ryan Campbell (6), Jaden Whiting (5), Kyle Dodge (4), and Jeremy Russell (2).

Girls Basketball

Ware 50 – TFHS 21
Putnam 53 – TFHS 25

The Turners Falls girls’ basketball team has two games left in the season. With the game against Palmer snowed out, the Blue Ladies hope to beat Athol to prevent a winless season.

Last Thursday, February 7, Lady Thunder lost to the visiting Ware Indians, 50-21. Like so many other games this season, Turners kept pace in the opening period against Ware. Also, like so many other games this season, the Powertown JV won their game against the Indians.

In the varsity game, Powertown was leading 6-5 with less than a minute to go in the first quarter. But Ware pulled ahead in the second, and leading 21-10 at the half and increasing their lead to 41-15 after three.

Turners went on a mini-run in the fourth, scoring the first four points of the quarter, but could only put up two more as Ware won 50-21.

By the way, if Ware ever decides to drop the Indians, I would suggest the Wolves. The Warewolves.

Dabney Rollins led Turners in scoring with 7 points, followed by Karissa Fleming (5), Lindsay Whiteman (4), Hailey Bogosz (3), and Vanessa Moreno (2).

Then on Monday, the Thunder Ladies traveled to Springfield to take on the Putnam Beavers. Turners had difficulty getting started in this game and could only score 4, 4, and 3 points in the first three periods.

They finally began sinking baskets in the fourth, putting up 14 points, but it was too little too late, and the Beavers took the contest 53-25. Rollins had another good outing, scoring 11 points off four field goals and three from the line. Fleming and Lucy Spera (4), Lily Spera, Sarah Waldron, and Whiteman (2) also put up points for Powertown.

Next Week: Athol or bust!



NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Teacher Salaries, Bus Costs Drive Elementary School Budget Increases

By KATIE NOLAN

At Monday’s joint Erving selectboard, finance committee and school committee meeting, Union 28 administrators presented a \$3.2 million budget for Erving Elementary School (EES) and a \$685,000 projected budget for secondary education tuition in FY’20. Superintendent Richard Martin of Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) also presented a draft \$11.6 million budget, with an estimated cost to Erving of \$562,000 for thirty students.

Noting that the proposed budget showed an increase of 6.1% over last year, superintendent Jennifer Haggerty said that the budget included a new teacher of English as a second language, teaching 70% of full-time, and the promotion of a paraprofessional to co-teacher.

Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache asked why these personnel costs were shown as increases when the staffing changes had already been instituted, and had been incorporated into the FY’19 operating budget. Principal James Trill explained that the administration had been “clipping a few corners in the current budget” to meet the costs.

“My only concern is that we will grow ourselves out of efficiency,” Bastarache said.

Discussing other increases, Haggerty noted that FY’20 is a contract negotiation year with the teachers’

union and potential salary increases were budgeted for, and that a new five-year contract for transportation is also expected to result in increased costs. Asked whether increased focus on, and increased costs for, special education at the elementary school resulted in decreased costs at the secondary level, Haggerty said that EES was “exceeding targets for high-needs students.”

Selectboard member Jacob Smith asked for help from Union 28 to justify the special education expenses. Bastarache suggested tracking special-needs students after they left EES to determine their success in secondary school, and Haggerty agreed that it would be possible to track their progress.

Because the town pays tuition for Erving’s middle and high school students, future costs are estimated by predicting the number of grade 7 through 12 students. Union 28 financial officer Bruce Turner presented an estimate of 60 regular education students and nine special education students attending Gill-Montague regional schools, and used an estimated 4% increase in costs over FY’19 to calculate a total tuition cost of \$1.1 million.

Tech Growing

FCTS superintendent Martin began his presentation with an overview of the technical school’s accomplishments this year. He report-

ed that since last year the building trades shops had completed building one house in Erving, and were working on a second, to be finished in June. He also said he had changed the duties of the cooperative education coordinator because 56% of the students had coop assignments.

Martin noted that many FCTS graduates get a job quickly after graduation, settle in the area, and pay taxes. He said that the FCTS was one of 18 schools in Massachusetts cited for improvement in Advanced Placement exams, and told the board that beginning next year, FCTS will offer a veterinary science program.

Martin said that special education enrollment at FCTS “has shot up,” and he had added staff for FY’20 to accommodate the increase. The budget is based on the assumption that 26 Erving students will attend, but he cautioned that the actual number won’t be known until the fall.

Next Steps

Bastarache told the administrators that the selectboard was not yet ready to approve any budgets. “Our real deliberation comes after the meeting tonight,” he said. The board and finance committee plan to discuss the entire FY’20 budget on February 25, and recommend a final budget on March 11.

This final budget will then be printed and sent to every household in Erving before the May 1 annual

town meeting.

According to a memo prepared by administrative coordinator Bryan Smith, the decisions that must still be made before the FY’20 budget is finalized are: any adjustments to the education budgets; a decision on a cost-of-living adjustment for town employees; compensation adjustments, based on the study being conducted by the UMass Collins Center; whether to fund any for capital projects; and whether to place any money in the town’s stabilization account.

Northfield Road Development

The board approved a \$41,000 contract with Tighe & Bond for engineering and design services for the Northfield Road sewer project. The existing sewer line is reportedly sufficient for the senior and community center and the new library, but would not have enough capacity for a planned senior housing development off Care Drive.

The January 28 special town meeting approved spending \$225,000 overall for the sewer project.

Bryan Smith said that the engineers for the three concurrent projects (the sewer project, the state Department of Transportation sidewalk project on Northfield Road, and the construction of the new library) “are aware of each other” and will coordinate.

Only one developer attended the site walk required for companies

submitting a proposal to build the senior housing. Hoping to attract additional developers, the board decided to schedule a second site walk and extend the deadline to submit proposals to April 26.

Other Business

Bastarache recommended that the town conduct financial audits annually, rather than on the current schedule of once every three years. He said that based on the size of the town’s budget, “to wait every three years seems negligent,” and added that some grants the town applies for require a current audit.

Each audit costs \$15,000, and Bastarache proposed including that amount as an annual operating expense in the budget.

Finance committee members Ben Fellows and Debra Smith, responding informally, were positive about the proposal.

Police chief Christopher Blair presented draft police department policies for use of force, vehicular pursuits, preliminary investigations, interviewing complainants, victims and witnesses, and threshold inquiries. The board will review the protocols and vote on February 25 on whether to adopt them.

The board approved a contract with Roberts Energy, LLC locking in gasoline, diesel, and fuel oil prices for the next fiscal year.

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BORDEAUX from page A1
Montague had horses, and the Saw-mill and stuff.

MR: Would you go down to the Meadows?
DB: Our families used to go down there. It used to be called Pike’s farms – they owned the cows that roamed all through there, and they used to let families go down there and swim. The whole family, we’d go down there and picnic and barbecue all day long. That was good swimming down there, man, there was always good holes.

For years after we grew up, me and my brothers would go down there to the old clay bank that was near where we used to take a picnic, and we’d get clay to do my father’s horse pits for him, redo his horseshoe pits.
My father was a real pro when it came to horseshoes, he was unbeatable when he wanted to be. Ting, ting, ting... you’d be ahead of him 15-2, and he’d put six ringers on in a row and just walk away. Lionel Bordeaux, Lee was what they called him. He was a machinist at the Millers Falls Tool for like 40 years....

I’ve never not done art in my life. I’ve always done art. The first time I ever got my art recognized I was in second grade, they took and put my picture on the bulletin board up in the main part of the school, and the whole school they all flipped. It was a manger scene at Christmastime. All the rest of the time I had somebody over my shoulder, watching what I drew.

And I was talented, I had good hand-eye coordination, and I really liked it.... And then in high school, I was the class artist. This was back when you had traveling art teachers, and gym teachers... The art teacher was Miss DesOrmeaux, she’d come around once a week.

When they came it was one of the best days of the week for everybody – just putting colors on the paintings. Eventually, especially once you get up to 7th and 8th grade, they start encouraging the ones who were good and discouraging the one who weren’t, and so people who painted and drew in elementary school just stopped! And never did it again for the rest of their lives!

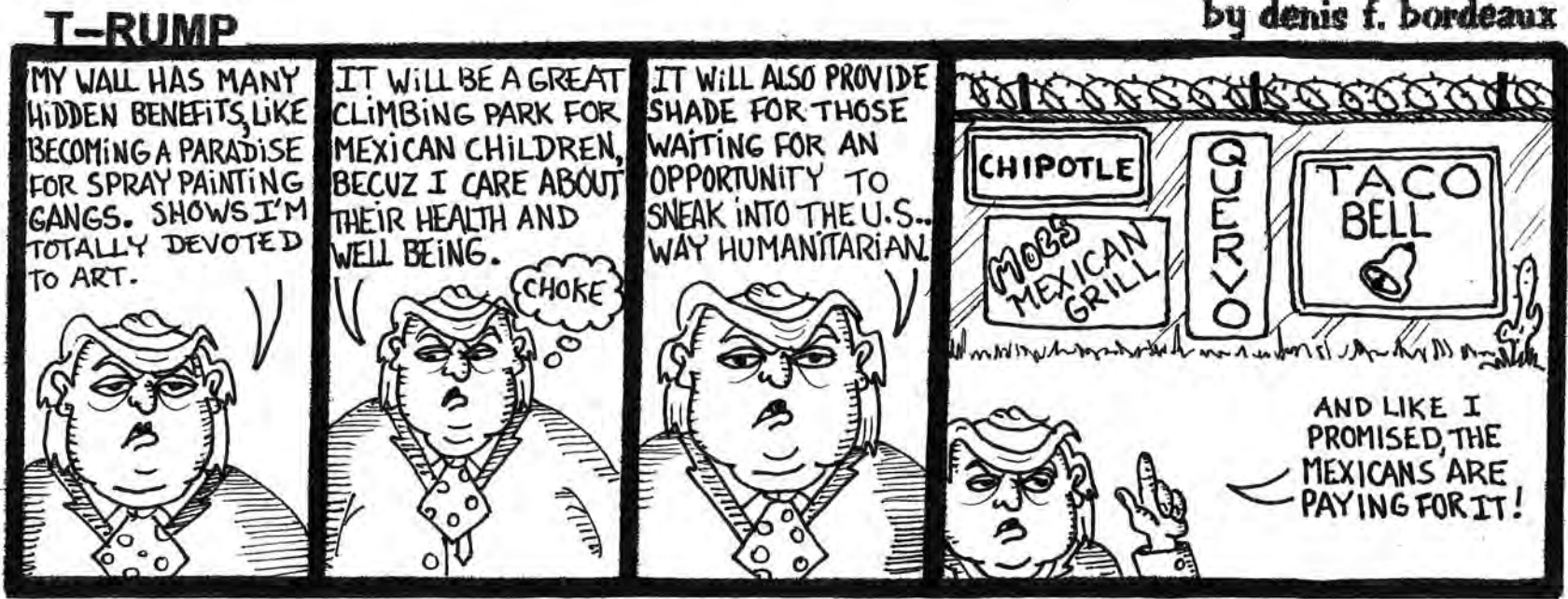
That just ticks me off to no end.... They lost their interest, lost a beautiful part of their life! Just that pure joy of putting shit on a paper, not putting a price tag on it. Most everybody I know just doesn’t do it anymore. It’s just lack of encouragement.

MR: When did you start cartooning?

DB: In high school – I did cartoons for the school newspaper, *Netop* was the name of it....

I was Class of ‘67. We had 150 kids in our class – now there’s like 150 kids in the high school [Laughs.] It’s not that bad, but it’s pretty bad. I was a three-letterman: I played football, basketball, and I got hooked on track when I was in 7th and 8th grade....

When I was a senior in high school, I won an award. Every year



they would award 20 kids throughout New England a scholarship to go to the Museum of Fine Arts school in Boston for their last semester in high school – you could go get credits for your first semester in art school.

My father would drive me down to the Museum School and then come pick me up – two hours down, two hours back. My first taste of college was the Museum of Fine Arts school and it was frickin’ amazing, it just encouraged me so much – I can actually stand here, head to head with anyone that’s in there....

Our sculpting class was right on top of the actual museum itself. I wish I could get up there and see some of the old classrooms, I’m not sure they use ‘em anymore.

MR: Did you go straight from school into the service?

DB: Straight from high school into the Air Force, yeah. I went in on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7.

I had one great duty site, and one shitty duty site: I went from Colorado Springs, Colorado, which was aces, to a radar site at Goose Bay, Labrador, on top of the world.

When I was in the service, my job was an illustrator – all I did was art! When I was in Colorado Springs, I was stationed at the largest graphics art department in the military, any branch. Anything that had to do with art we did, for all the military, even the Coast Guard: their recruitment posters, any kind of briefings, zero defects posters, training manuals that needed artwork. We did all that stuff.

There were 28 artists and we all worked on all these different projects. And the building they used to call the Little Pentagon, because it had more brass than any place in the military besides the Pentagon. On my hallway alone there was like five four-star generals. Captains and lieutenants were just aides....

And it was during the Vietnam War, so everything was Top Secret.... We all had Top Secret clearances, the whole nine yards: “If you see anything, don’t say anything.” The FBI went to my father and mother’s house and did a whole background check....

It was 84 degrees when I left Colorado. 48 hours later, I landed at Goose Bay, and it was 40 degrees below zero.

MR: Jesus. How long were you up there?

DB: Fifteen months. What a shock, eh? Well, I shouldn’t say fifteen, because everybody up there, you used all your vacation: every three months, *lemme out of here*.

It’s an Air Force base, Canadian and American, on top of a huge cliff overlooking the North Atlantic ocean. You can’t get there except once a year the icebreaker would come with supplies, or you have to fly in. It’s remote.

It was night when I got there, and it was just the freakiest scene. The snow banks, literally, Mike, are 25 to 30 feet of snow, and on every telephone pole there was a Canadian raven, the national bird – they looked like giant vultures. And it’s just *white*.

Every single building on the base was connected by tunnels, so you wake up in the morning above ground in your barracks and you’d walk down into the tunnels, catch a bus. They had sidewalks, two-lane traffic, movie theaters, bowling alleys, gymnasiums: everything was all connected underground....

That starkness and that beauty was immense, but after a long period of time it just gets to you....

It was a hell of an operation, but I learned a lot. When I went to college afterwards, I was so far ahead of everybody in our photography class because [I had learned] so much of the basics.

MR: You came back here 1969, ‘70?

DB: Yup. Went to GCC. I was a fine arts major – just straight art classes, drawing, painting. I took photography just as a side course. Every semester I would sign up for six courses, and drop the two I didn’t like – I didn’t even care about a degree, all I wanted was to take arts courses....

After four semesters I took a sabbatical. I had met somebody who was from Brazil who could turn me onto some people down there, “these people can take you in,” so I took off and went down there. She gave me a letter to give them and whatnot, and they took me in.

I didn’t speak any Portuguese and they didn’t speak any English.... but by the time I left I could go out and handle my own in the city. It was right in Sao Paulo, which I didn’t

think was going to be anything like that! It was like, 11, 13 million people at the time, in the early ‘70s; at the time it was the second- or third-largest city in the world.

I lived down there, and I’ve lived in California, Florida, Vermont... But most of the time, around here.

MR: So the ‘70s in Turners – this was when the commune was here.

DB: Miguel, My Pal. Me and Michael Rapunzel go way back. I miss that guy. He was a crazy son of a bitch, hey.

MR: Did you know him before they came to Turners?

DB: Oh, Jesus, I’d known Michael since eighth grade. And of course I knew about the commune – a lot of people I knew, people from Greenfield and Turners, were in it back when it was *really* big, when it was like a thousand people and they were living up in Warwick.

They had a really good thing going. They took in people no one else wanted – à la Jim Jones. [Laughs.] And of course, they were legitimized by Elwood Babbitt, the great psychic Elwood. He was fantastic.

And they had church every Sunday at the Wheatfield Recording Studio – the Shea Theater, now – and they had, Christ, a dozen businesses downtown here: they had Record Rap, and the bookstore, Zapmia Piza, Noble Feast, the church itself.

Once they built that gigantic house up there in Warwick, they started buying properties: the brick building halfway up the hill, the old castle there just above Kostanski’s Funeral Home, that was a commune house, they had a couple houses in Northfield....

I remember one time, where they had crops, they had failed. And they ended up eating nothing but lentil beans and butternut squash for a whole winter – not Michael, of course, but everybody else.

I never joined, but Michael was a friend of mine. Every time I went somewhere and came back and needed a place to stay I’d go up there, and he’d fix me up. Me and Hopper were bad influences on him – back then “no alcohol, no drugs, no tobacco” and everything, of course except for Michael....

Places to boogie in, in this town, in the ‘70s, it was like, oh my God. It was five, six live bands down-

town every weekend. You could start at St. Kaz – once a month Kaz had a band – and then you could go right next door here and watch Daddy Longlegs play the Turners Falls Inn, before they turned it into Powertown Apartments....

You’d go across the street and there was the Fireside, which if they weren’t having strippers they had a live band, and then go next door to Al’s Place, later on it was Tucson East, where they had a band every weekend. You could go over to Third Street to the Noble Feast, that’s where I lived, above the Noble Feast –

MR: That’s the parking lot now?

DB: That’s the parking lot. Of course, Rapunzel owned that. The Rendezvous was the Vous, but they didn’t have live bands back then.

Noble Feast had the best entertainment in town, because Michael was connected to the music industry on the East Coast. He had a Rolodex, and he’d call in bands from Boston and New York and they’d come in and tear the place up – bands like nobody had ever seen in Turners Falls. We had Clean Living, you know, and he’d call up and have Aerosmith come out....

There were so many people up there, so many artisans – talented people, talented musicians and artists and mechanics. They had a vast resource, a workforce up there: they had lawyers and doctors, basically just believing in the afterlife and spiritualness and stuff, and reincarnation, to a degree.

MR: How much of a divide was there between the commune and the town?

DB: They were always around downtown here, all the stores and shops; they were intermingling with the people, and of course a lot of them were locals anyway – they weren’t like foreigners to us, you know? So it became really good, the relationship. People loved it.

Of course, the businesses downtown were thriving. It was a hopping place. You’d come down here on a Saturday or a Sunday, the streets were packed! All young people and stuff, playing music, playing guitars.

MR: The last heyday in town? see BORDEAUX next page

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BORDEAUX from prev. page

DB: Yeah, well, it’s making a comeback, I think, compared to where, you know.

But back then, that was something then! Just the music and the culture, in such a small area. You could have one drink in six places and then buzz across the bridge to the barbecue on Route 2 for last call, and they had music too! Those were good days.... We had jobs and everything, but we were party guys.

Like I said, I was friends with Michael, and he was a wicked partier. *Wicked* partier. He just got sick of the responsibility – and the thing is, he never asked to take and start a commune....

MR: *Where’d you usually work?*

DB: Well, I was going to college, but I worked at [Greenfield Tap and Die]. I worked as a house painter for 20 years. Every job I’ve had has always been just to supplement art – as long as I’ve got tons of art material I’m a happy guy.

MR: *Did you used to make murals around here?*

DB: I still do. As a matter of fact, I did two murals in a guy’s apartment right over – you know where the weaver is, the sculpture? George Olson used to live right there, before it became Powertown, and I did two murals in his house, right on the walls, which was kind of dumb.

And when Dave Cadran owned the Tucson East – it was a bar, now it’s part of the Powertown Apartments – he had a stage there for the band, and a dance floor, and there was a wall there with sheetrock, and he wanted to see what was behind it. What was underneath it used to be the outside of a building.

So we’re all sitting there in the afternoon, watching the workmen tear down the wall, and I said “wouldn’t it be cool if there was an old wall advertisement on there?” Well, there wasn’t, but I said “Dave, why don’t you let me paint one on there?” A friend of mine had an encyclopedia of collectibles, and one of them was old advertisements, ephemera. One was for a meatpacking company in Chicago, it was from 1890. I made a nine-foot circle – painting on brick, especially dry brick, is impossible, I actually literally painted the painting four times before it’d take up and sit on top of the brick.

Inside the circle was a rectangle, and inside that was a lady, and she had this big black feather hat on and she had these big giant – you could see everything but her nipples, she was laying on this velvet cushion, so

that made it legit, tasteful. *[Laughs.]* She’s smiling, with her tits up on this big velvet pillow: “Chicago Meatpacking Company – Sausages and Fine Meats.” It was so funny, hey.

When they did Powertown, they just put back the studs and the sheetrock that were there.... otherwise, it’s still intact under there. So years from now, when they do take it down, what we wanted will actually be there!

MR: *How’d you end up drawing for the Reporter?*

DB: At first there was just an advertisement in the paper: “Wanted: Writers and Artists.” This was [David] Detmold’s idea.... We were just trying to do one-frame cartoons. I said to myself, I’m going to start sending in my own stuff.

Bubba & Carmine I used for local events, mostly: the fish ladder, the controversy over dropping the Indians name.... Then I started doing national politics, and that’s when I started *Bordeaux Whine*.

I did those two, basically, for the next 10, 12 years – until Trump started running, and then I started *T.Rump*.

He was just so outrageously ridiculous. I always wait right ‘til the last minute to do the cartoon, because you may miss something he says that morning. You know, he’s giving that rally tonight on the wall there, and he’s going to be down there with all his supporters, so you know he’s going to be going nuts, hey.

MR: *Does it make you pay more attention to what he’s doing over the course of the week?*

DB: Oh, absolutely! I’ve always been political, ever since high school, and always railed against most of it.

I’ll listen to the news, read the papers – I read three papers every day, I get *Time* magazine, I get *The Nation*. I write in my notebook all week long, little reminders: “Here’s a good angle on this...”

And then watching CNN, and I’ll even turn it to Fox and listen to those bozos over there for a while. They are just unlistenable – what a bunch of – I can’t believe they actually think that way. Are we watching the same movie here? They’re just blinded by this Republican, you know, white is right bullshit.

But I’m way more political than I’ve ever been, as far as keeping up on it, because I want fresh ideas. Tuesday’s my day: “Hope he wakes up crazy today,” you know?

MR: *So do you think he’s a one-termer?*

DB: I don’t think he’ll make it the rest of this term. I think the Mueller investigation is way deeper than people think. I just read something this morning that made me believe that more, hey.

Once he’s out of office, they’re going to take and audit his ass so bad – he is just going to be in big, big doodoo.

2020? I just cannot see it. I can see him self-implosing before I see him take a win in 2020. Even if his base all go to the polling booth he still should be beaten – and don’t ask me by who. The Democrats have got, what, 20 people running already?

Nobody in politics – where are the Thomas Jeffersons and the real thinkers? They’re in the colleges! They’re professors in the colleges who don’t want any part in running for office because of the scrutiny that’s put on their personal life. So we end up with B-rate people running our country – B- and C-rate people. The B students who are rich.

Or, you have all that multi-billion-dollar Koch Brothers taking and backing you, so you’re somebody else’s puppet. The people they throw out at you are just the two richest people – “let’s run nephew Billy this year.” They throw the money behind ‘em and give ‘em a good storyline, and you get some asshole up there who’d rather be drinking in a frathouse than running the goddamn country.

It’s all the way down the line, right down to all the states and all the reps: they’re all just rich people who have rich backers, and they have no business being there, no smarts for the job, and no creativity whatsoever. No free thinkers....

You keep running around with this phony patriotism – “we’re the greatest, we’re the greatest,” blah blah – but we’re *not* great. We’re *semi-great*. There’s so many other things we can do....

I’m going to be 70 years old, so I look at the younger generation, and I don’t know how involved they are; I don’t know what they know. When we were young, in the ‘60s, we knew every friggin’ thing that was going on in our country, whether it was social or music-wise or poligical. And everybody knew.

I mean Christ, everybody I knew was in college. You couldn’t meet anybody in Greenfield here that was between the ages of 18 and 30 that wasn’t at GCC – the whole town was in college. Everybody....

The disparity between the wealthy and the poor is just so obnoxious now that you wonder if you can ever take and get it back. They just really control the whole narrative, you know?

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was February 12, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

Ross Will Not Run Again

It’s a demanding job, the pay is bad, people call you at home at all hours to complain, and just when you think you have things reasonably under control, the governor comes along and pulls the rug out from under your budget.

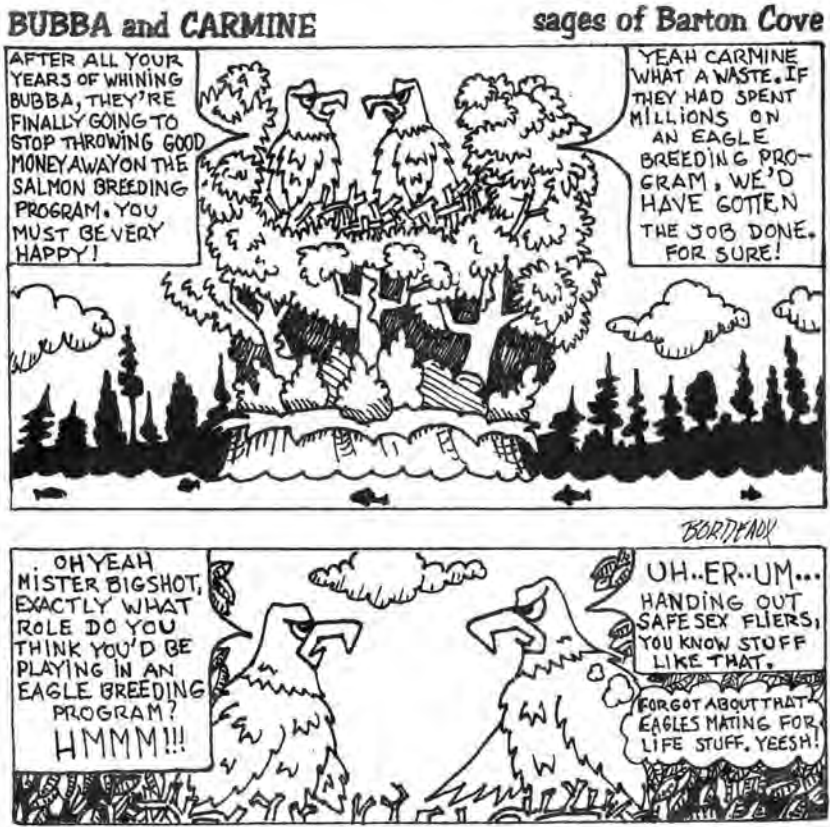
After six years in office, Montague selectboard chair Allen Ross is laying down the gavel and heading back to private life. But he has no regrets. “I think it’s a real important job. I’m very happy that I’ve done it,” said Ross.

Ross has been identified with efforts to improve the prospects for economic development in Montague, particularly regarding the potential for establishing a landfill at the Department of Environmental Protection-approved, town-owned land off Turnpike Road, or finding an alternate productive use for that 17-acre site.

He has been a centrist on budget matters, seeking solutions that could potentially satisfy both the school committee and most town departments, pushing for the eventual closure of the elementary school in his own village, Montague Center, as being in the best interest of the town and district, and suggesting Montague may no longer be able to afford branch libraries, among other services that find vocal supporters at budget hearings.

Rocke Pitches Programs To Reduce TFHS Dropouts

Superintendent Kenneth Rocke introduced some bold new ideas to the school committee on Tuesday evening. At a time when the schools are feeling great pressure to tighten their budgets, Rocke suggested, rather than cutting educational programs, that growing the educational value of the school district through innovative programming would benefit the district financially and provide the greatest reward – an education that provides students with the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century.



A Bubba and Carmine strip from May 2014.

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BUDGET from page A1

school districts, the largest forms of local aid are Chapter 70; “unrestricted general government aid,” money raised primarily by the state lottery and allocated directly to localities; and Chapter 90 highway aid. The totals for these three forms of local aid in the governor’s budget are shown in the table on this page.

The governor has increased Chapter 70 aid statewide by \$200 million, or 4.3%. This is a relatively large increase, caused by the state’s effort to upgrade the so-called “foundation budget,” a key element of formula used to calculate Chapter 70 aid to towns, in line with recommendations of a recent Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC). However, this policy has produced wide variations in the aid received by local communities, with over 100 school districts in the state receiving no increases beyond a nominal \$20 per student, and others

receiving very large increases.

Preliminary totals of education aid in this region show this tendency. The Gill-Montague regional school district, for example, has been allocated a Chapter 70 increase of nearly 3.6%, the largest increase in its state aid in more than a decade. Greenfield could receive Chapter 70 increase of nearly 9%.

On the other hand, Mahar Regional, Amherst-Pelham Regional, Pioneer Regional, as well as Wendell-New Salem (Swift River) and Leverett Elementary would receive no increases under the FBRC’s recommendation.

These variations are partly the result of the larger numbers of low-income students in Gill-Montague and Greenfield, but they primarily reflect a combination of enrollment declines and local wealth increases over the past decade. This dynamic is not limited to rural schools: both Boston and Somerville also received

no Chapter 70 increases this year as a result of the foundation budget adjustments.

Unrestricted general government aid (UGGA), primarily funded by the state lottery, is provided directly to cities and towns with few strings attached. The governor is proposing a 2.7% statewide increase in UGGA, which matches overall growth in state revenues. In sharp contrast to Chapter 70, this increase, which is somewhat lower than the past fiscal year’s, does not vary at all from locality to locality in the region.

Chapter 90 is a form of local aid to help cities and towns repair highways, bridges, and sidewalks. It is actually not part of the governor’s House 1 budget, but rather appears in a separate state “bond bill” financed by borrowing. The governor has proposed a statewide appropriation of \$200 million, which means that unless the state tweaks the funding formula, the numbers for cities and towns will be virtually identical to the current year.

Since the FY’20 Chapter distributions are not yet available, the accompanying chart reflects this fiscal year’s allocations.

This summary of local aid does not include state funding for all the programs that affect residents in Franklin County. These also include regional transit, housing, health-care, and, of course, the state and community college system. But it does show the potential impact of the governor’s proposed budget on those of cities and towns in the region, as they head into their own budget seasons.



MONTAGUE REPORTER



Janet Masucci of Gill reads the Reporter in Tinamaste, San José Province, Costa Rica. Janet, owner of Riverside Healing and Bodywork and super-volunteer for the Gill cable committee, said she was “relaxing with friends in Nicaragua” when we last heard from her this week. Too bad, she’s missing out on some really great shoveling!

Going somewhere? Take us with you! Send pictures to editor@montaguereporter.org.

ON THE ROAD

FY’20 Local Aid Estimates

	Chapter 70	Increase	UGGA	Increase	Chapter 90
Gill			\$258,287	2.6%	\$148,221
Montague			\$1,521,832	2.7%	\$492,363
Gill-Montague	\$6,441,443	3.59%			
Leverett	\$294,391	0.77%*	\$189,541	2.7%	\$149,899
Amherst Reg.	\$9,547,467	0.29%*			
Wendell			\$185,063	2.7%	\$188,668
Swift River	\$687,021	0.32%			
Erving	\$469,335	0.93%	\$71,370	2.7%	\$85,702
Mahar	\$5,425,950	0.22%*			
Greenfield	\$13,353,838	8.95%	\$3,371,242	2.7%	\$634,623
Pioneer	\$4,163,701	0.33%*			

* Received only \$20/student increase in Chapter 70. No increase under FBRC. “Swift River” is the New Salem-Wendell elementary district. Wendell middle and high school students attend Mahar. Chapter 90 estimates are FY’19 figures.

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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER FEBRUARY 14, 2019



By LESLIE BROWN

EN ROUTE to FLORIDA – January 28. We leave bright and early, as the weatherman is already bragging on the potential severity of a new storm called Jayden.

We climb to the top of the Mass Pike and step out into a fierce wind, take a quick break, and resume our journey down the other side of the mountains to New York, where we pick up the Taconic highway for a leisurely amble through the repetitive woodlands and the occasional openings to vast, mountainous views. We have little sense of direction and begin to wonder if we are headed the right way, when at last we stop at a toll booth and learn that we are close to the junction with Route 84.

Later on, we indulge in another ramble through the Delaware Water Gap, significantly slowing our journey. It is scenic but slow, with regular signs warning of crossing deer. We return to the main route at last and stop at a friendly local diner for some lunch. These are the best stops we find: local folks and home cooking, each one defining its area with its specialty. This one featured old-fashioned floats, malts, and shakes.

We drive on what seems like endless flat roads, with massive eighteen-wheelers and no rest stops in sight as the road spools ahead. It's hard to stay awake. Crossing the forever road in Pennsylvania, we are beset every few miles with flashing signs warning of the impending storm. These whip everyone into a frenzied effort to leave the state, and we see many cars pulled over by state police, flashing their lights. At last, as we near the West Virginian border, there is the friendly warning of a rest area just ahead. We stagger out stiffly, eager to use the

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION

Leaving Winter Behind

restroom and stretch out our legs. For the next half hour or so, we are treated to the kind of extended, ever-changing sunset usually featured on the cover of *Arizona Highways*. It's hard to believe in this mythical storm, heralded as it is by clear skies and bright colors. Just the same, we decide to press on to Virginia, which is not expecting snowy weather.

We run out of energy in Winchester, Virginia and stop at a Red Roof Inn. The less said about that night, the better. We were wound up and overtired. The room heater was exceptionally loud, as were our neighbors. Hardly a restful night.

Still, in the morning there was coffee, continental breakfast, and a temperature just above freezing as we headed further south.

January 29. Virginia is breathtaking, with the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Appalachians. It is above freezing, but still feels like winter. The air is frisky and when we stop for a break, the south-bound snowbirds are still wearing their woolen caps and parkas.

Ah, but then North Carolina, a hefty breakfast at the Huddle House, of all things; always grits and more fried anything and everything. We extend our break with the rest of the good old boys before moving southward.

The water table is very high. Where it has not been clear cut, Route 95 is edged with swamp land of yucca, red pine and a tree resembling our soft maple, which is showing red leaves of spring.

We stop just short of the South Carolina line, having promised ourselves a shorter day of driving.

We are in nowhere-small-townland, where most everything is closed or being torn down. There is one working motel: The Economy Inn. We soon learn why, but choose not to care that the smoke detector is waiting for batteries, see **GARDENER'S B3**



Above: Every day, ecologist Ben Letcher of Montague Center takes a photograph of this bend of the Sawmill River and posts it to fpe.ecosheds.org, to help visualize flow. These two details were from the photo he took on February 2.

ONA CANOA:
A NEW GROUP WITH A TIMELESS SOUND

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

SHELBURNE – I have this wish for every stranger that I will never meet: May you wander into a pub one night and find the three sirens of Ona Canoa making music together, so that you too, may know the pure joy that comes from listening to their harmonies.

May you experience them in the same way I and Steve Sutherland did when we were in the audience at their first performance at the Root Cellar in Greenfield, the night I first discovered them. Later he offered "... clearly the precision of their harmonies and use of a variety of instruments is superb! They produce some very sophisticated arrangements...."

May your curiosity about the mythical-like members of this local band keep you journeying along with them, until you find that you can no longer tolerate the joy with which they have infused your heart, as their music pushes out all that troubles you about our modern day America!

Who is Ona Canoa? The band describe themselves as a "new folk trio of three best friends," composed of Chelsie Field on baritone ukulele, Eliza Hollister on flute, and Tess



The three young women of Ona Canoa.

Burdick on guitar. All three sing, creating tight three-piece harmonies which they describe as blending together "like the hilltowns from which we were born."

My own curiosity about these three young women, with personalities and music as lovely as their faces, caused me to travel one bitterly cold January night to Shelburne Falls, where I found band-members Eliza, Chelsie, and Tess holed up in the cozy kitchen of a renovated barn making tea.

Eliza and Tess are roommates. Chelsie, who lives in Northampton, is their favorite guest. To get to know more about the girls, I ask

them about their musical influences: Joni Mitchell, Aldous Harding, Feist, and Big Thief. I ask about how the band got started. They came together to sing as a favor for a friend who was having a party.

Then I learned the little-known fact that up until their first paid performance at the Root Cellar, the night I had listened to them sing George H. Allen's "Down to the River to Pray" (popularized by Alison Krauss), the three young women had never been plugged in on a public stage to perform in front of an audience before! This was essentially their first "gig," a fact that no

see **CANOA** page B6



By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – Anyone out there reading Eckhart Tolle's *A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose*, alongside Oprah and millions of other people around the world? Since mid-January, they've been doing a chapter a week, and discussing it on O's "Supersoul" podcast.

I gotta admit – I've never been part of Oprah's book club. But I have been an avid listener of her podcast over the last six months, and it's been life-changing. Plus, I'd been gifted that book by a friend, and it sat unread for over a year. So

bring our conscious awareness, our full presence. Otherwise, our energy is diverted by the ego: the ever-incessant train of thought that we confuse to be our true selves.

In Chapter 4, Tolle talks about the many faces of the ego; essentially, how we play different roles depending on who we are interacting with. Either measuring ourselves up or down based on who we think we're in the presence of.

My attention peaked when I read about Conscious Parenting: how Doing our best as parents is not enough if we neglect Being. Children have a deep longing for the

Feeling Your Way to the Present

I dusted it off and dived in.

The overall message of the book, according to O, is "[a] wake-up call for the entire planet... It helps us to stop creating our own suffering and obsessing over the past and what the future might be, and to put ourselves in the now." Because the now, the present, is the only moment where we can

parent to be there as a human being, not as a role. So how do we bring more Being into parenthood? Being "alert, still, completely present, not wanting anything other than the moment as it is... You are the alertness, the stillness, the Presence that is listening, looking, touching, even speaking. You are the Being behind the doing."

The Being behind the doing.

I can think back to countless times when I've been with my child, more focused on *doing*, my thoughts elsewhere, hardly being. It's hard not to get lost elsewhere as the adult, when there are bills to pay, responsibilities to worry about, things to think through.

And I don't know about you all, but January sucked big time. I recently laughed it off when a friend showed me a meme: "January was a tough year but we made it." But joking aside, it was a stressful month, and I found it really challenging to just Be when I was engaging with my child.

see **INDIE MAMA** page B4

Pet of the Week

We are three tiny sisters looking for a home to stay together. We like to explore, run and snuggle together in our tiny mouse house. Before coming to Dakin, we weren't handled much,

so an experienced adopter would be best. Think you've got what it takes to take on the triplets? Talk to an adoption counselor about taking us home! For more information or to inquire about adoption, contact the



WAMPELLA, WAMPINA, and VANILLA

Senior Center Activities FEBRUARY 18 THROUGH 22

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; 10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise T, W, Th: 12 p.m. Lunch Monday 2/18 12 p.m. Pot Luck & Bingo 1 p.m. NO Knitting Circle Tuesday 2/19 10:15 a.m. NO Chair Yoga 1 p.m. Healthy Eating Session 1 Wednesday 2/20 9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach 12:30 p.m. Bingo 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Mobile Food Pantry Thursday 2/21 9 a.m. Tai Chi 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 1 p.m. Cards & Games 4 p.m. Mat Yoga Friday 2/22 AARP Tax Prep (by appt.) No scheduled programming	(413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation. WENDELL Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center for a ride. ERVING Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and 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 2/18 <i>Closed – Presidents' Day</i> Tuesday 2/19 8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise 10 a.m. Stretch & Balance 11:30 a.m. Home Made Lunch; Friends' Business Meeting Wednesday 2/20 8:45 a.m. Line Dancing 10 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. Congregate Lunch 1 to 6 p.m. Blood Drive Thursday 2/21 8:45 a.m. Aerobics 10 a.m. Healthy Bones 12 p.m. Congregate Lunch Friday 2/22 9 a.m. Quilting Workshop 9:15 a.m. Flex & Stretch 9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun 10:30 a.m. M3 Exercise Games 12 p.m. Lunch
LEVERETT For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us . Wednesday 10 a.m. Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call	

Great Falls Middle School/ Turners Falls High School 2nd Quarter Honor Roll

Grade 6 FIRST HONORS Starli Bell, Cail Brown, Gianna Disciullo, Ripley Dresser, Ruby Henry, Madison Liimatainen, Jailyn Martinez, Matthew Richards, Alexander Sabin, Gary Smith SECOND HONORS Marilyn Abarua, Corona, Rayne Bonfiglio, Tatiana Carr-Williams, Zoey Denbow, Julia Dickinson, Jacob Guillemette, Khia Huertas Hernandez, Kailey James-Putnam, Logan Ladner, Josiah Little, Julian Mayo, Shiann Merrill-English, Shelby O'Leary, Sheni Ovalle Roblero, Anthony Prizio, Elizabeth Reipold, Zachary Zilinski THIRD HONORS Isabella Decker, Caleb Thomas	Grade 7 FIRST HONORS Michael Boyle, Trevor Brunette, Hugh Cyhowski, Taylor Greene, Fiona Hutchison, Syna Katsoulis, Anne Kolodziej, Ella Kolodziej, Audrey Lapinski, Regan Marshall, Joseph Mosca, Holly Myers, Ricky Pareja, Oliver Postera, Jillian Reynolds, Avery Tela, Jack Trombi, Isabell Vachula-Curtis, Charlotte Valle SECOND HONORS Alan Bastarache, Isabel Garcia, Logan Johnson, Alexander Knapp, Jasmine McNamara, Shan-Tong Widmer THIRD HONORS Aiden Bailey, Jack Doyle, Devin Emond, Serena Fess, Logan Franklin, Jeremy Kovalsick, Owen LaValley, Ella O'Keefe, Raygan Pendriss, Jacob Reich, Carly Whitney, Derek Wissmann
Grade 8 FIRST HONORS Kendra Campbell, Lilliana Cheveyo, David Damkoehler, Lindsay Davenport, Morgan Dobias, Shealyn Garvin, Abigail Holloway, Samuel Hoynoski, Alexander Johnson, Silas Koyama, Maria Labelle, Madison LeBorgne, Nikolas Martin, Brayden McCord, Lillian Poirier, Levin Prondecki, Kitana Rodriguez, David Stowe, Brooke Thayer, Sophia Wolbach, Cadence Wozniak SECOND HONORS Alexander Bloom, Alina Bocharnikova, Drew Bullard, Ian Farrick, Natalia Guzman, Thomas Hall, Derek Helms, Thomas Lombombard, Samuel Lashtur, Aisha Pruitt Gonzalez, Adeline Riley, Kimberlyn Semb, Alex Sulda THIRD HONORS Noah Ausikaitis, Kaylee Moore, Stephanie Peterson, Sabrina Raymond, Keira Stevens, Jocelyn Wyman	Grade 9 FIRST HONORS Dylan Burnett, Emily Fess, Jada Jurek, Jacob Norwood, Kiley Palmquist, Blake Pollard, Maria Romashka, Dyllyn Russell, Melany Sanchez Abarua, Abigail Sanders, Olivia Stafford, Paige Sulda, Enmanuel Villafana Abarua, Leidy Villafana Abarua, Hannah Warnock SECOND HONORS Olivia Delisle, Brendan Driscoll, Lorelei Farrington, Amos Koyama, Britney Lambert, Odalis Ramirez-Martin, Ivan Sankov, Devin Willor, Emily Young THIRD HONORS Bryce Finn, Isaiah Thompson, Christa Turner
Grade 10 FIRST HONORS Mercedes Bailey, Haley Bastarache, Xavier Chagnon, Jacob Dodge, Isabelle Farrick, Isabella Johnson, Natalie Kells, Audrey O'Keefe, Karissa Olson, Dalver Perez, Catherine Reynolds, Madison Sanders, Amber Taylor, Brynn Tela, Leah Timberlake, Jade Tyler, Olivia Whittier, Cecilya Wood SECOND HONORS Kate Boulanger, Vincent Carme, Emily Cobb, Sophia Gobeil, Kate Graves, Haleigh Greene, Mackenzie Martel, Mercedes Morales, Taylor Murphy, Shelby Terounzo, Kaylin Voudren, Hailey Wheeler, Maralee Wiles THIRD HONORS Emily Denison, Alexander Gleason, Storm Nye, Jamie Thayer, Kolby Watroba, Luke Wisniewski	Grade 11 FIRST HONORS Josy Hunter, Joseph Kochan, Alyson Murphy, Abigail Waite, Kamara Woodard SECOND HONORS Hailey Bogusz, Liam Driscoll, Karissa Fleming, Alexandra Francis, Joshua Gaulin, Eliza Johnson, Maya Johnston, Mason Kucenski, Korey Martineau, Chantelle Monaghan, Anthony Peterson, Anastasia Romashka, Jocelyn Silverlight, Vy Sok, Jaclyn Thibeault, Thao Vo, Lindsay Whiteman, Jaden Whiting-Martinez, Lorie Wood THIRD HONORS Dylan Allen, Dominic CDominic Carme, Summer Rain, John Torres-Benvenutty, Victoria Veaudry
Grade 12 FIRST HONORS Lindsey Bourbeau, Kyle Dodge, John Putala, Hunter Sanders SECOND HONORS Samantha Bocon, Ryan Cambell, Reilan Castine, Cailyn Gobeil, Anna Kochan, Mireya Ortiz, Nestor Rodriguez, Isaac Savage, Holly Tetreault, Sarah Waldron, Hannah Welles, Cassidhe Wozniak THIRD HONORS Dylan Allen, Dominic CDominic Carme, Summer Rain, John Torres-Benvenutty, Victoria Veaudry	

Local Cultural Council Grants Awarded for Montague

State representative Natalie M. Blais and Kate Martineau, chair of the Montague Cultural Council (MCC), have announced the award of 31 grants totaling \$6,578 for cultural programs in Montague.

Grants have been awarded to: Eggtooth Productions, Nila Patterson, Angela Rovatti-Leona, Jason Trotta, Richard Widmer, Roger Tincknell, Jessika Nadeau, Karen Werner, Racial Justice Rising, Cindi Oldham, Lyn Clark, Jacqueline Cappuccio, Young Shakespeare Players, Antenna Cloud Farm, Steven Henderson, Musica Franklin, Beverly Ketch, Diane Dix, Gretchen Krull, Edite Cunha, Mike Jackson, Exploded View, Gillian Budine, Annabel Levine, Kathleen Lynch, Matthew Duncan, Great Falls Books Through Bars, and Piti Theater.

The MCC is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences, and humanities every year.

The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community. The grants were supplemented with additional funding from the town through the recently created RiverCulture department. Grant amounts awarded this year ranged from \$75 to \$300, with the average grant receiving around \$200.

Grant applicants are encouraged to provide programming which reaches varied audiences and are hosted in accessible locations. Awards are given to those projects which can demonstrate strong public benefit. This year's grantees include instrumental concerts, visual arts exhibitions, theatrical productions, discussion series, and cooking workshops. We hope that Montague residents will partake in this wide variety of cultural opportunities throughout the year, and that the events will draw visitors as well.

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers. The members of the MCC are: Kate Martineau, chair; Rachel Teumim, vice chair; Pam Allan; Jennifer Audley; Jan Atamian; Daniel Brandon; John Furbish; Anne Harding; Cindi Oldham; and Shannon Coakley Ramsey. The council is always looking for new members. Please feel free to contact them if you are interested.

The Montague Cultural Council will seek applications again in the fall, deadline October 15. Guidelines and complete information are available online at www.mass-culture.org. Additional questions can be directed to montaguelcc@gmail.com.

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THE SPIRIT SHOPPE

GARDENER’S from page B1

and the overhead light in the bathroom is in search of a new bulb. The room is clean, our few neighbors are spread out, and we are directed to local cooking for a nice salad bar, roasted chicken and grilled shrimp. We pick up beer and wine as well, and gratefully head back to our new digs. Very economical. No refrigerator or microwave.

But we fall asleep early, and sleep like the dead.

At seven the promised coffee is nowhere in sight, so we get on the road and drive into South Carolina, where there are motels of all description and price.

And hot, fresh coffee.

At the official welcome center, we are greeted with palm trees and pansy plants on the front lawn. It is breezy, near sixty degrees. Many of the southbound snow birds are still huddling in their parkas and wool caps, but we shed our fleece and put on lightweight vests to cut the wind, and are very content. We take an extended break at noon-time and enjoy a seafood meal. It is downright hot out.

We seem to fly through Georgia, and are soon in Florida, endlessly escaping Jacksonville on a bypass. We have made it south in three days, and have two nights on the road before we can move in at St. Augustine Beach.

We take the leisurely Route 17 to Palatka and sign up for two nights at the Cove Inn on the Saint John River. Sheer luxury with a river view, after our prior accommodations. We settle in, happily planning over the next day to revisit the spots where Ken’s mom and her sisters- and brothers-in-law have wintered for many seasons.

Once we have slowed down and stopped, we realize how tired we really are, on short sleep and chased from home by another potential storm. But we are lucky to have 28 days of unscheduled and untimed existence to relax and acquire the why-hurry attitude of the southland while we adjust to warm temperatures and high humidity.

At our oceanside spot we always have refreshing breezes, and we can shut off the alarm clock.



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week at MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Want some smooth sounds to make the transition from work to bedtime softer? You can always count on your local Channel 17 for its musical programs – from open mic nights to musician features, to concert series and even spanning special events like Northern Roots: an annual traditional music festival in Brattleboro.

This year’s Northern Roots Festival was held on January 26, 2019 – and now it’s here to stay, archived

on our Vimeo page. Find it by visiting our Latest Videos page at montaguetv.org/latestvideos, or check our online guide.

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

MOVIE REVIEW

Bumblebee (2018)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – It seems these days, a lot of people want to try their hands at making prequels connected to other films that have been done. I think sometimes they are good and sometimes they are not. The people behind one prequel I have seen decided to tell the origin story of the Autobot we have come to know in *Transformers* as Bumblebee.

Bumblebee starts in 1987, which is when Bumblebee arrives on Earth. His first encounter with human beings doesn’t go smoothly. He runs into some military guys during an exercise. Among them is one played by John Cena, a former wrestler who has made himself a nice acting career out of being an action film star.

During this encounter we learn exactly how Bumblebee lost his original voice. In *Transformers*, it was mentioned that he lost it during battle, but not much more was said about it.

The second encounter he has with humans goes much better. While looking like a VW bug, he is taken home by a depressed teen named Charlie (played by Hailee Steinfeld) who wants a car to drive. She gives him the name Bumblebee. She’s a very good friend to him, and he is to

her as well. She repairs what she can of him with her mechanical skills.

This leads to him having a working radio he can talk with. He can be seen learning how to do that with the radio in the film. He has Charlie’s back when a couple of Decepticons come to Earth, and John Cena’s character comes after him with the military.

The timing of these two meetings is very fortunate. Charlie is dealing with a new family situation, missing her Dad and just not really being happy. Bumblebee has memory loss, the damage that cost him his voice, and no one to turn to.

Other things come into play in the film. One is “Section 7,” which was part of the first *Transformers* movie. Charlie’s ability to dive comes up, and is very handy to have on hand.

I enjoyed seeing a Transformer dog briefly on the movie screen, and Bumblebee as a yellow Jeep. Also, the humor that is a product of some of Bumblebee’s action is very good.

Of course, this being a prequel, Bumblebee will eventually meet up with Optimus Prime and end up with the other Autobots like he is in the first *Transformers* movie. But we do get to see these two together on Earth during the movie.

Bumblebee has become one of my favorite movies I have seen lately in theaters!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Whipped Cream And Strawberries; Bridge Hole; Stolen TV And Playstation; Crashes; Noise

Thursday, 1/31

8:14 a.m. Report of water gushing in front of caller’s residence on H Street; suspects there is a broken water main. DPW advised, will assess the area and call TF Water Department if needed.
9:53 a.m. Report from Old Sunderland Road of a skunk that appears to be lethargic, likely due to the sub-zero temperatures. Animal control officer advised; he will check on the animal.
2:20 p.m. TFFD requesting DPW to sand Montague City Road; they are pumping out a flooded basement, and some of the water will be in the roadway.
2:33 p.m. Report of several houses with unshoveled sidewalks in area of Montague City Road and Masonic Avenue.
4:47 p.m. A 32-year-old Greenfield woman was arrested on a default warrant.

8:22 p.m. Officer received word of a motor vehicle accident in front of Hubie’s Tavern; advises that both vehicles will be leaving the scene under their own power. No injuries and no fluids.
Sunday, 2/3
10:41 a.m. Officer flagged down by subject advising of an ATM trouble alarm going off at Greenfield Savings Bank. Officer advises it is not the ATM, but the security/fire box. Called bank manager; she will be calling her maintenance man. TFFD also advised and will be taking a look.

Monday, 2/4
2:20 a.m. Resident from Millers Falls Road reporting a male party who has been standing in front of his house for the past 10-15 minutes. Party is unknown to the caller, who could not get a description. Investigated; male party was standing in road to avoid violating a harassment order while people he was with were visiting someone in a residence in which he is not allowed.
8:03 a.m. School resource officer advising that a vehicle struck and damaged another vehicle in the parking lot of Franklin County Technical School, then left. He will try to review video footage to identify vehicle that left.
12:16 p.m. Caller states that she came home from vacation and her TV has been stolen. Caller called back to say that she was following a black SUV with the girl she thinks stole her TV in it. The girl said she would take her to the TV. They are now stopped on Lake Pleasant Road and are arguing. Officers are following the

male and female to a house in Lake Pleasant to retrieve the TV. Caller is coming to station to wait for the TV. Officer now has possession of TV.

4:10 p.m. Received two reports of a FedEx truck stuck at Greenfield and Montague City roads. Officer checked area; gone on arrival.
11:15 p.m. Caller from G Street reporting loud noises from second floor apartment. Caller is trying to sleep and believes the noise is unreasonable. Officers clear; they advise the noise was apparently from some adult activities taking place in the bedroom involving whipped cream and strawberries.

Tuesday, 2/5

2:26 a.m. 911 caller reporting he was just involved in a single car crash, car vs. pole. Positive injury, no smoke, flame, or fluids reporting. MPD units, Shelburne Control for MCFD, and AMR were advised. All units en route. Party is conscious and alert, bleeding from face. Officer advises damage to Eversource pole: cracked, no lines involved. Eversource advised and en route. Caller transported to hospital. Rau’s en route for tow.
7:29 a.m. Officer checking on a vehicle off the road into a snowbank at Millers Falls Road and Grand Avenue. DPW advised of the slippery conditions. They are responding.
4:11 p.m. Caller from Coolidge Avenue requesting an officer after his ex-girlfriend has stolen his Playstation while he was at work. Caller stated that he knows it was his ex after he spoke to her on the phone and she stated that she has the game system. Officer advised and will be en route to caller’s home. Caller later called back to provide new information to the officer, who was advised and stated that he would call back when he is able.
4:13 p.m. Caller advising of a scam call he is getting multiple times a day from

Watertown, MA from a person claiming to be from a veterans’ group asking for money. Caller did not give any info but would like to have MPD post about this scam on Facebook to help save other people in town. Caller declined the number for the US Treasury at this time.
4:45 p.m. Caller from Lightlife Foods requesting officer to establishment to collect a packet of white powder that she believes to be drugs. Caller stated that she picked up the baggie and now has it stored safely in her office. Officer advising that he has packet and is clear.
5:22 p.m. Caller requesting TFFD respond to Coolidge Avenue because her oven is on fire. TFFD and MPD officer advised and en route. Officer later advising that fire is out and TFFD is airing the building out.

Wednesday, 2/6

1:02 a.m. Officer checking on two suspicious vehicles, both parked in the TFHS lot. Both appear to be occupied. Upon clearing, officer advises that the two occupants were the varsity and junior varsity basketball coaches. One party was dropping the other off at their vehicle after attending a dinner together. No police services needed.
7:01 a.m. Report of injured owl on the side of the road on Federal Street. Conferenced with Environmental Police.
7:13 a.m. School resource officer requesting DPW with sand to treat an icy area on Industrial Boulevard caused by runoff that froze overnight. DPW advised.
4:59 p.m. Following reports of erratic operation, a 44-year-old Montague Center man was issued a summons for operating a motor vehicle with a license revoked as a habitual traffic offender.
10:03 p.m. Caller transferred from Shelburne Control advising of a vehicle vs. tree accident on Turners Falls Road. One

male occupant appears to be unconscious. Shelburne Control dispatching AMR and MCFD. While still on the phone, the operator woke and got out of the vehicle. Report taken.

Thursday, 2/7

8:56 p.m. Officer got word from athletic director at FCTS that a fight has just broken out in the gymnasium; requesting that an officer respond in case the conflict continues. MPD units *en route*.

Friday, 2/8

12:14 p.m. Report of 2’ x 2’ hole in the General Pierce Bridge with rebar sticking up. Closer to Greenfield side, in lane coming into Turners Falls. MA DOT, TFFD, Greenfield PD, AMR, and Shelburne Control advised.
12:33 p.m. Multiple calls for vehicle vs. traffic signs in front of Farren Care Center. Officer requesting DPW to respond due to large amount of debris in roadway.

5:50 p.m. 911 caller reporting that he struck a deer. Deer appears to have run away, but caller has heavy damage to front end of vehicle. Report taken.

10:36 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street reporting that some kids just banged on the window to the apartment he is hanging out at and woke up his son. Area checked; nothing found.

Saturday, 2/9

5:50 a.m. Caller from Turners Falls Road reporting that all his tires were slashed either during the night or early this morning; he believes he knows who did it.
9:06 a.m. Multiple calls reporting sick-looking fox on Montague City Road. Services rendered.
10:32 p.m. Caller from G Street requesting officer respond to ask upstairs neighbors to quiet down.

Sunday, 2/10

12:05 a.m. Caller from G Street reporting neighbors on second floor are being extremely loud. PD had reported to this location earlier. Tenants on second floor advised of complaint.

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MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

FEBRUARY 2019: HUEVOS II

By J. BURKETT

TURNERS FALLS – “Huevos II” are a band from the Montague area, a three-piece who push the boundaries of “rock music” while tapping into its history as well.

Ma Turner, the guitarist/singer, has a deep history in bands and solo, with many releases both here and in Kentucky. Patrick plays drums, and is known for running “Autonomous Battleship” and for many other reasons in the music community here. John (not interviewed) plays bass and is a music promoter around the area.

MMM: *When did you start playing in bands? What are your first band memories? What inspired you the most to do music?*

Ma: My first band with actual people was called Bloated Chipmunks. This was in 1991 (14 years old). I was the singer, but ended up leaving because they were gonna “sign” to Bisexual Christ Records, and I just knew my conservative-leaning mom wouldn’t be down with that. Bisexual Christ unfortunately never became a label.

I played air guitar in the mirror along to the radio as far back as I can remember. Music feels great, although reading is my favorite activity these days. But it’s funny because I read lots of books *about* music.

Patrick: I feel like we were just talking about this amongst ourselves. Similar to Ma, I was in a mostly theoretical band with school friends called The Easter Tapeworm. We played covers of Interstellar Overdrive and Stepping Stone in my garage, and broke up two weeks later. My musical activities have followed that template exactly ever since – Huevos being the exception!

MMM: *What do you like about the Western Mass scene? Huevos II have been playing at the Rendezvous... Is that a fun venue?*

Ma: This place is littered with magic. So many underground culture

heads around, it’s dizzying. My favorite local bands are New Parents and Animal Piss, It’s Everywhere.

Yeah, I dig the Rendezvous. John, our bass player, books there. Perfect venue as the shows are free *and* the bands get paid, *guaranteed*. You get a spectrum of Turners locals in that place for karaoke. It’s a bit crazy.

Although, I’ve been a massive homebody the past few months. At first I thought it was winter, but I think it’s turning into a lifestyle. So maybe I’m not the best to ask about the scene.

Patrick: The Rendezvous is my favorite social spot in the Valley. I’ve had a lot of good times there, the food is good, and the people that run it are good eggs and supportive of music, etc.

I like the Valley because it feels like anything could happen here, and when it does it’s always on a very approachable scale. That is, everyone is more or less on a first name basis with everybody else.

MMM: *Can you talk about your different music projects? Have you been recording lately?*

Ma: I have Huevos II happening, of course. I did a number of records on my own under the “Mazozma”/“Ma Turner” moniker, but it got boring. I’m not closed off to the idea or anything, but it’s almost like someone turned a light off inside me to play by myself. I’ve been starting to play guitars with my partner as well.

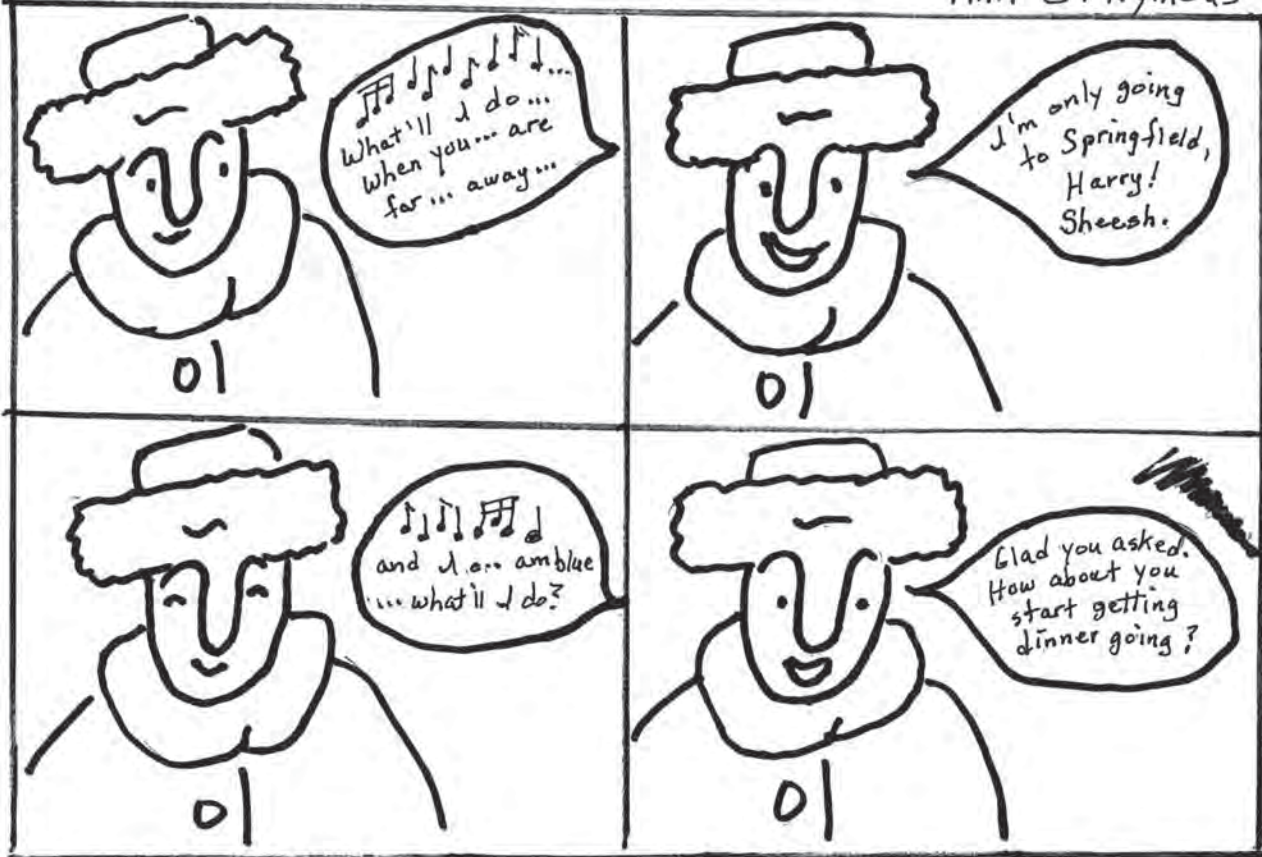
Huevos are currently mixing songs with Adam Langellotti that are coming out at some point on LP.

Patrick: Before Huevos II got going, I was doing lo-fi pop recordings under the name Late Model and hoping to turn that into a live unit, but Huevos is kind of scratching the live itch. Meanwhile I’m still recording in the basement.

Mikey’s the Lennon and McCartney of Huevos, but I’m hoping to get a song in edgewise as the George Harrison of the drums. I like to think John is the Ringo of bass guitar.

OVER THE HILL

Ann O. Nymous



JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION



INDIE MAMA from B1

Reading this book has been a lifeline, no doubt. Understanding that it is up to me to make the time and space to plan, to think about the things that need to be thought about, rather than allow myself to be pulled by these thoughts all the time.

I’ve also noticed my son calling me out on this, when I pull away from or delay playing with him “to do something.” He will insist: “Mama, come play with me,” at which point, I snap back into Being. When I am with him, it is up to me to prioritize being with him. It is up to me to model what Being looks and feels like.

This certainly adds a new twist to that “walk your talk” adage. I realize I must practice being present, particularly around my son, so I can show him what being with someone who is truly present feels like. In this era of technology, when children his age are losing connection to themselves through increasing use of computers of all sorts, this work feels all the more important.

But the work starts with us. Our children are watching, listening, and learning from us. Doing has its place, but Being feels like something we need to really practice. They say that people may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.

This is fertile ground when it comes to living the life

we want to live. If we are able to tap into how we want to feel, we automatically vibrate on that level, which then helps us attract more of what we vibrate. So, are we doing the things that make us feel how we want to feel? Do we even know how we want to feel?

As we shake off the beginning of the new year, and the resolutions and goals that come with it, perhaps we can tune into what Danielle Laporte calls “core desire feelings.” Rather than going for specific goals, we can become more interested in how we want to feel, and find ways to generate those feelings day to day. Chances are, if we are feeling the way we want to feel, we will have an easier time dwelling in the present, and for those of us who are parents, it will translate into Being present with our children.

Ecuadorian-born and New York City bred, Mishel Ixchel is mama to a toddler, and currently resides in Turners Falls where she practices and teaches the art of sacred self-care. You can find her on Instagram @rootsandembers.

For readers wishing to explore these ideas further, Mishel is leading a workshop this Saturday, February 16 at Great Falls Yoga in Turners Falls called “Vision Board + Yoga Workshop.” Details are available at greatfallsyoga.com.



Huevos II, last month at the Voo.

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EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14

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 or \$20 for five weeks per kid. 10:30 a.m.

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Heartbreak Ball*. With *DJ George Myers*. Valentines drink specials. Part of three day Heartbreak event with Looky Here. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15

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

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Sugar Ray and the Bluetones*. With opening act *Wildcat O’Halloran Band*. *Bluetones* are a five-piece, Chicago style blues band. \$. 7 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. Cammy Kaynor calls with Tracy Scott Lucky, Al MacIntire, and the *Back Row Band*. All are welcome, with or without a partner. No experience necessary. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Heartbreak Karaoke*. Part of a 3-day series of events between the Root Cellar and Looky Here named “The Heartbreak Cafe.” Take your heartbreak out to dance, sing karaoke, and down some Valentines day drink specials. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Unknown Cowboy Band, Unholy Basil*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16

St James and Andrew Church, Greenfield: *Love Letters*. Arena Civic Theater presents this play based on a correspondence between two dear friends. \$. 2 p.m.

Shea Theater Lobby, Turners Falls: *Erotica Neurotica Pop Up*. Pop-Up erotic art show with Edite Cunha, Nina Rossi and other regional artists. Jewelry, underthings, art, cards, more. Explicit art and craft. Open before, during

and after the *Phallic Valentines* show at the theater. 6 p.m.

St James and Andrew Church: *Love Letters II*. Second performance. Arena Civic Theater presents this play based on a correspondence between two dear friends. \$. 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Curtis Rich Revue, Uncle Hal’s Crabgrass Band*. Rock, pop, blues, bluegrass and country. \$. 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Montague Square Dance*. Bob Livingstone calling, with *Phil Watson House Band*. No experience necessary. Slid-



Sugar Ray and the Bluetones are a five-piece Chicago-style blues band performing internationally at clubs and festivals. Not limited to one style, they have been playing Chicago Blues as well as Kansas City Swing and swampy Louisiana blues for almost forty years. Accolades include multiple Blues Music Award nominations, including Band of the Year, Album of the Year, and Song of the Year. At Hawks & Reed in Greenfield this Friday, February 15. Wildcat O’Halloran opens the night.

ing scale fee \$. 7 p.m.

Mt. Toby Meetinghouse, Leverett: *The Whispering Tree*. Singer/songwriter Eleanor Kleiner and multi-instrumentalist Elie Brangbour craft richly immersive folk-rock brimming with evocative lyrics, nature imagery, perspectives from travel, and a panoramic musicality that encompasses traditional folk, indie rock, classic rock, and 1960s pop and rock ‘n’ roll. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Phallic Valentines Show*. What good is sitting alone in your room? Join Mr. Drag, Karl and their cohort of characters as they transport you to a seedy little spot, where the gin is cold and the piano is hot! If you’re a happy couple, a flirting single or falling into endless love, get ready for a night of fun, frolic and flirtation as they sing, dance, and lap dance. For adults only.

Erotica Neurotica Pop-up Shop in the Shea Lobby before during and after the show featuring genital jewelry, kinetic cocks, yoni soaps, artsy bras, “oo la la lingerie,” and more. Just across the street, Loot will be open late, so you may shop and listen to some fun tunes as the DJ spins the early night away before the show. \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Barrett Anderson*, hypno-boogie blues. 9 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Sabbath Tribute*. Local musicians Nate Martel, Brother Sal, Chris Ball, and Monte Arnstam per-

form the legendary Black Sabbath album *Paranoid* in its entirety. \$. 9 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dwisenhower, Rebel Base*, and *SG*. Indie metal and hip hop with *God’s Wisdom* and *Davy-boy413*. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *New Parents, Weeping Bong Band, Saint Slobber*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17

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

Artspace, Greenfield: *Photography Workshop*. Free workshop with Tim Trelease and Deerfield Academy students for ages 8 to 12. Contact Artspace to register. (413) 772-6811. 1 p.m.

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

Through February.

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

Leverett Library: *Jackie Pueschel: Adventures Around the World*, a collection of paintings featuring landscapes from the Grand Canyon, China, Canada, and French Polynesia. Through February.

Nina’s Nook, Turners Falls: *In the Vicinity*, featuring *Nina Rossi’s* mixed media works depicting Turners Falls, including new textiles printed with streetscape paintings. Through March 9.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls:

Women of Power. Fabric Figures by *Belinda Lyons Zucker*. February 8 through April 28. Reception March 9, 3 p.m.

Sawmill River Gallery, Montague Center: Small Works Exhibit and Sale. 10” x 10” and smaller works by the community. Through February 25.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Seeing Red*, a member’s show with a red theme, on view through February.

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton: *Plastic Entanglements: Ecology, Aesthetics, Materials*. The story of plastic in sixty works by thirty contemporary artists exploring our entangled love affair with this miraculous and malevolent material.



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EXHIBITS

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Annual Teen Art Exhibit*. Through February 15.

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.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *The Time of My Life: Vintage Views of Western Massachusetts*. Enlarged postcard scenes take visitors on an imaginary road trip, with stops at Mount Tom, Mount Holyoke Summit House, Sugar-

loaf, Turners Falls, Greenfield, Shelburne Falls, and the Mohawk Trail. Sit down and relax with reproduction postal souvenir albums, a hands-on stereoscope, and a Viewmaster with other area scenes. Sponsored by Memorial Hall Museum. February 16 through April 21. Opening Reception, February 16, 1 p.m.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Marjorie Morgan’s The Long View*. Dream landscapes. Through March 15. Opening Reception: Friday, February 22, 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rodney Madison and Friends*. Paintings and mixed media.

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

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CANOA from page B1

one I have spoken to can believe.

The night Ona Canoa opened for Patsy Clone and Sister Jawbone at the Root Cellar, the audience was a bit unruly as they waited in anticipation for this never-before-heard band to play. There was standing room only; guests were stacked on top of each other as they perched on their heels like squatters insisting on their claim of the stage. The room was filled with laughter, and the din of a hundred voices reverberated in the relatively small space.

But as soon as the first few notes left the purse of Chelsie's mouth, a reverent silence fell upon the group as if they were hypnotized or had witnessed a miracle. It was amazing and unforgettable.

Unforgettable and amazing. Like the songs they write. Take Tess' original, "Molasses." Written in January 2018, the song commemorates the 99th year anniversary of the Great Molasses Flood in Boston.

Tess shared the story with her audience and me: "Twenty-one people died, and over 150 people were injured, after a molasses storage tank burst and flooded the North End. I was really intrigued by the sadness and absurdity of the accident and I tried to imagine what it would be like to lose a loved one in such a strange way ... thus, 'Molasses' was born."

Chelsie, working off what Tess had offered about their songwriting capabilities, continued: "Both Tess and I have an extensive list of originals that we have performed solo, a few of which Ona Canoa has adapted into our repertoire. We all plan on flexing our songwriting muscles going forward with Ona Canoa."

"Yes," Tess chimed in. "I'm so excited to collaborate with Eliza and Chelsie to write material for our band. Historically, songwriting has always been something I do alone. So I'm really looking forward to the challenge."

Eliza added, "Our plan is to focus on playing more shows, making more music and one day recording our songs."

I mused about the name Ona Canoa. The sirens in perfect harmony told me the tale: They had met to enjoy a summer afternoon together on the farm. There was a pond across the road. In mid-summer the grass was high around the pond. They discovered an abandoned canoe. They searched for the paddles and all climbed in. It was the perfect kind of summer day that filled the heart with joy and so they did what came naturally: they started to sing.

Together, their voices mingled with that of the cicadas and rose high above the tree line, and there by the pond, their unique bonds of friendship were forged: Ona Canoa means "on a canoe," using the Spanish word for "canoe" to catch the rhyme.

I wondered out loud what it was like for Eliza, Tess, and Chelsie to perform that very first time at the Root Cellar; how they managed to exude such confidence and professionalism at such a young age, and if they understood just how good they were?

Chelsie's reply to my query surprised me. "Sometimes," she said, "sometimes, I feel like an impostor. You know, I am self-taught, and I don't read music. So, when people are telling us how much they enjoy our music or how excited they are about a song, I feel a bit of that 'Impostor Syndrome'. You know, when you 'fake it till you make it.'" We all laughed.

Look for Ona Canoa on Youtube to hear them perform two original songs, "Molasses" and "River Rock."

The band will also be playing as part of "Lilith of the Valley: Power Forward," on Saturday, March 9 at 9 p.m. at Bishop's Lounge in Northampton. And I will be there listening!



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