

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 22

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MARCH 28, 2019

GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Blue Graduation Robes Standard, White Optional, Committee Rules



JACKSON PHOTO

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The regional school committee found themselves in the hot seat Tuesday night when two Turners Falls High School students came before them to request they declare an end to a cultural tradition at the school: the assignment, at graduation, of blue robes to male students and white robes to females.

“Last year, three young ladies requested to wear blue rather than the traditional white,” Chantelle Monaghan, a junior at the school, told them. “The response by the administration was that it was tradition for girls to wear white, and that they looked better in white. The assignment of color to a gender is both sexist and discriminatory to our female and LGBTQ community.”

Mercedes Morales, a sophomore, said that the group discussed making the choice between blue and white optional, but that solution “subjects students to bullying for nonconforming” and puts the onus on students “at a very vulnerable

see GMRSD page A2

Turners Falls High School students Chantelle Monaghan and Mercedes Morales convinced the school committee Tuesday night to end the practice of mandating blue graduation robes for boys and white robes for girls.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard meeting of March 26 was dominated by the issue of signage, old and new. The board received a report by town administrator Steve Ellis on a plan to rehabilitate a historic marker in Montague Center, and continued its review of the numerous town signs that are either out of date or need to be refurbished.

The historic marker sits on a three-way intersection just south of Montague Center, and purports to show how to get to Deerfield, Amherst, Barre, Petersham, Worcester, and Boston, among other destinations. The directional hands point up Old Sunderland Road, which is certainly not the way one would get to most of these places today, but this presumably adds to the appeal of the marker.



STEVE ELLIS PHOTO

Westward to Worcester.

Nobody quite knows when the marker – or “kiosk,” as Montague historical commission member Ed Gregory calls it – was originally constructed. Local legend dates it to the 1700s, but Gregory, who did not attend Monday’s meeting, expressed his doubts to the Reporter.

Montague broke off from Sunderland in 1754, and one theory is that Sunderland gifted the marker to Montague at some point.

In any case, the marker is in bad repair. The town Historical Society, a private organization, has taken the lead in refurbishing it.

“It’s got some oyster damage; it’s got some insect damage. It is, overall, not in good condition,” Ellis told the board. He reported that Paul Interland, a local carpenter, would be

see SIGNS page A4

The Week In TFHS Sports: Practice!



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Eliza Johnson works on her swing as the Turners Falls High School softball team starts the season.

By MATT ROBINSON

Before I get into the spring sports season preview, I’d like to give a shout out to Tyler Lavin. At the Western Mass D-II/D-IV All-Star Game last Friday at the Basketball Hall of Fame, Mr. Lavin scored 34 points, sunk ten 3-pointers, helped his team win 107-93, and was named MVP. Good job, Tyler!

For small schools like Turners Falls and Franklin Tech, graduating seniors leave significant holes in their sports ranks. We saw this phenomenon in Turners Falls girls’ basketball this winter. The team had lost many varsity players, and went from a playoff contender to a team struggling to get a single win. But conversely, girls’ volleyball, who had lost most of their starters, stayed on their feet, and made the playoffs with a record of 17-5.

The spring sports teams are see SPORTS page A5

Are Electricity Scammers Afoot?

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – Since 1998, Massachusetts residents have been free to choose the company that supplies their electricity. The utilities we generally call “the electric company” – in our area, either Eversource or National Grid – are technically distribution companies, while the electricity they supply to each consumer comes from a “supplier” that appears on their bill.

Nearly 50 companies work as “competitive suppliers” that provide electricity to

Eversource’s customers. Advocates of deregulation argue that it helps deliver lower-cost energy to consumers. And in some cases, it provides customers with an opportunity to pay a premium to purchase energy from renewable sources. A 2017 study found that 14% of Montague’s households opted for competitive supply.

But many competitive suppliers have come under criticism for their marketing practices that produce unwanted higher electric bills. Local residents may find them at their door.

see ELECTRICITY page A6

THE BIG PICTURE

The Mass Transit Expander

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS -- Last week one of our staff had to punch out for meetings on both Thursday and Friday related to a volunteer role he occupies. Considering our public mission and environmental and economic focuses, this newspaper probably under-reports on Franklin County’s mass transportation system, because one of our main reporters, Jeff Singleton, is directly involved in it.

Rather than work around it, I figured the easiest thing to do to help catch us up would be to talk with Jeff about what he’s up to in that role. Readers can be assured that Mr. Singleton was not paid for this interview, which has been edited slightly for clarity.

MR: Jeff Singleton! You find yourself on the other side of the interview table today.

JS: Yes. I like it.

MR: You’ve been banned from all reporting on the Franklin Regional Transit Authority...

JS: Somebody or other thinks I might have a bias. [Laughs.] I think it’s a good policy – I think I should be banned.

MR: We all wear a lot of hats in town. But not only are you a reporter for the Montague Reporter, but you’re also the town’s ... “alternate” representative?

JS: Yeah, I’m Montague’s “alternate” representative on the FRTA advisory board, which in a sense hires the administration and votes on almost all the crucial issues we face.



JACKSON PHOTO

Jeff waits for the bus from Turners to UMass.

The advisory board has a weighted voted system: Montague has 14 votes, which is the second-largest number of votes on the advisory board; Greenfield has 27 or 28.

MR: Is that weighted by population, or by number of routes?

JS: Good question. It’s weighted, I believe, the same way the assessments to the towns are weighted. It’s a complicated system that I don’t entirely understand, but the timing – the number of minutes and hours that the buses go through your town – plays a major

see TRANSIT page A7

Canalside Venture Draws on the Past

By K. CAMARA

TURNERS FALLS – I call to schedule a meeting with Alexandra McGuigan about the new vintage shop she is opening in Turners Falls, and during our introduction there comes an interruption: I hear a quick exchange with a child, and I hear other children in the background. Smoothly transitioning back to our conversation, Alexandra apologizes for her torn attention: “We’re having a playgroup here,” she says.

We return to our words and speedily set up a time for a visit and chat about her Buckingham Rabbits Vintage venue, scheduled to open April 6. We agree to meet at the shop on the next day, and for directions I’m informed that it’s located at 42 Canal Road, just past “the bridge with the bump” on the left.

Buckingham Rabbits Vintage (BRV) is located in the old Franklin County Regional Housing Authority office, alongside the canal and across from

the now-defunct Southworth paper factory. My reason for being here is different than previous visits to the Housing Authority, but so far, all remains the same as it was, excluding the sign above the door... until I open that door.

In the entryway I am for a second disoriented, because nothing is as it was. Thankful for the photos from Facebook and Instagram that I’ve seen before arriving, I quickly find a center of recognition before knocking on the paneled sliding door made from repurposed fluorescent light fixture shields. I know that Alexandra has created this herself.

see VENTURE page A6

Right: Vintage duds get racked up.

Far right: Alexandra McGuigan is hard at work converting the former Housing Authority space into a store.



CAMARA PHOTOS

The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

Editorial Group

Mike Jackson, *Managing Editor*
Nina Rossi, *Features Editor*
Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, *Poetry Page*
Victoria Maillo, *Spanish Page*
Beverly Ketch, *Children's Page*
Lisa McLoughlin, *Science Page*
Gloria Kegeles, *Editorial Assistant*

Production Group

Lyn Clark, *Interim Distribution Manager*
Charlotte Kohlmann, *Layout Assistant*
Christopher Carmody, *Layout Assistant*

Technical Administration

About Face Computing

Founded by

Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002

GMRSD from page A1

age to make such a public statement." Instead, they recommended all gowns be blue, with white stoles.

Morales and Monaghan are members of Bridges for Social Justice, a group that has been attending trainings and meetings on questions of equity and inclusion at the school. They said their group presented on the proposal to the graduating senior class, but while they received some support, their presentation was not supported by the majority.

"They were laughing about it, and they shut us down," Morales said. "Coming to you guys, as a bigger step, we want the school to do something more about it."

Though the five members of the committee in attendance Tuesday all expressed sympathy with the request, some expressed concern over its timing. Some students, they learned, may already have picked out dresses to match white robes. They discussed the issue at length. "I'd love to see this change," said Heather Katsoulis, acting as chair in Jane Oakes' absence. "In the name of democracy, I really feel that I need to hear from both sides."

Superintendent Michael Sullivan said that final decisions about ordering graduation gowns needed to be made before the next scheduled school committee meeting.

"I'm almost like Heather, where I'm sitting and I'm uncomfortable changing this without thoughtful process," Thomasina Hall said. "However, you're talking about a protected class, at the heart of it. I'm sorry if you feel uncomfortable about wearing a different color gown, but at the heart of it, you're talking about someone's identity."

"It seems like you guys have gone through a thoughtful process," Michael Langknecht told the students. "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it respond responsibly."

"I worry about a few people in the school being blamed for a change that other people don't want, in view of what happened with the mascot," Theresa Kolodziej, a non-voting representative from Erving, weighed in. "You have to be careful about changing the traditions."

"It's extremely important to get community feedback on many of our decisions," said Jen Lively. "But we're also elected to protect, and do the best things for, the students, and make them safe at school."

"I hope that we don't have things sprung on us like this in the future," she added later.

"I don't think sexism, or gender identity, are anything being sprung on anyone," said Bill Tomb. "I think it's been very much in the public at-

tention for quite a while. And I also don't think that wearing a different color gown is necessarily going to put you out."

"This is almost the norm in Franklin County," math teacher Donna Fowler, the students' faculty advisor, pointed out, saying that several other local high schools including Pioneer and Mahar have phased out gender-coded robes. "We are one of the last to recognize that gender is not a color."

Langknecht suggested a compromise solution for this year's graduation: to declare blue the "standard" robe color, and allow students to opt instead for white, if they choose, and then work on a gender-neutral solution for next year. Conferring briefly, Morales, Monaghan, and Fowler agreed that the proposal was an acceptable compromise.

The school committee voted 5 to 0 in favor of Langknecht's proposal, which was seconded by Hall.

Lease Can Kicked Again

Another lengthy discussion at Tuesday's meeting concerned the lease of the Sheffield and Hillcrest schools, which are owned by the town of Montague. The lease is up for renewal, and the school district has asked the town to find a new location for Precincts 3 and 4 to vote during elections, after principal Sarah Burstein convinced the school committee last fall that voting at Hillcrest was disruptive to education and posed safety and security risks, including in the parking lot.

Business manager Joanne Blier said that the town was investigating the use of the Great Falls Discovery Center in downtown Turners Falls as a polling station, but had asked the district to split the cost of its use. Between the rental price and the cost of a police detail – state environmental police have first dibs on the gig, followed by state police – each election could cost between \$1,000 and \$1,400, and nine are planned between 2019 and 2022.

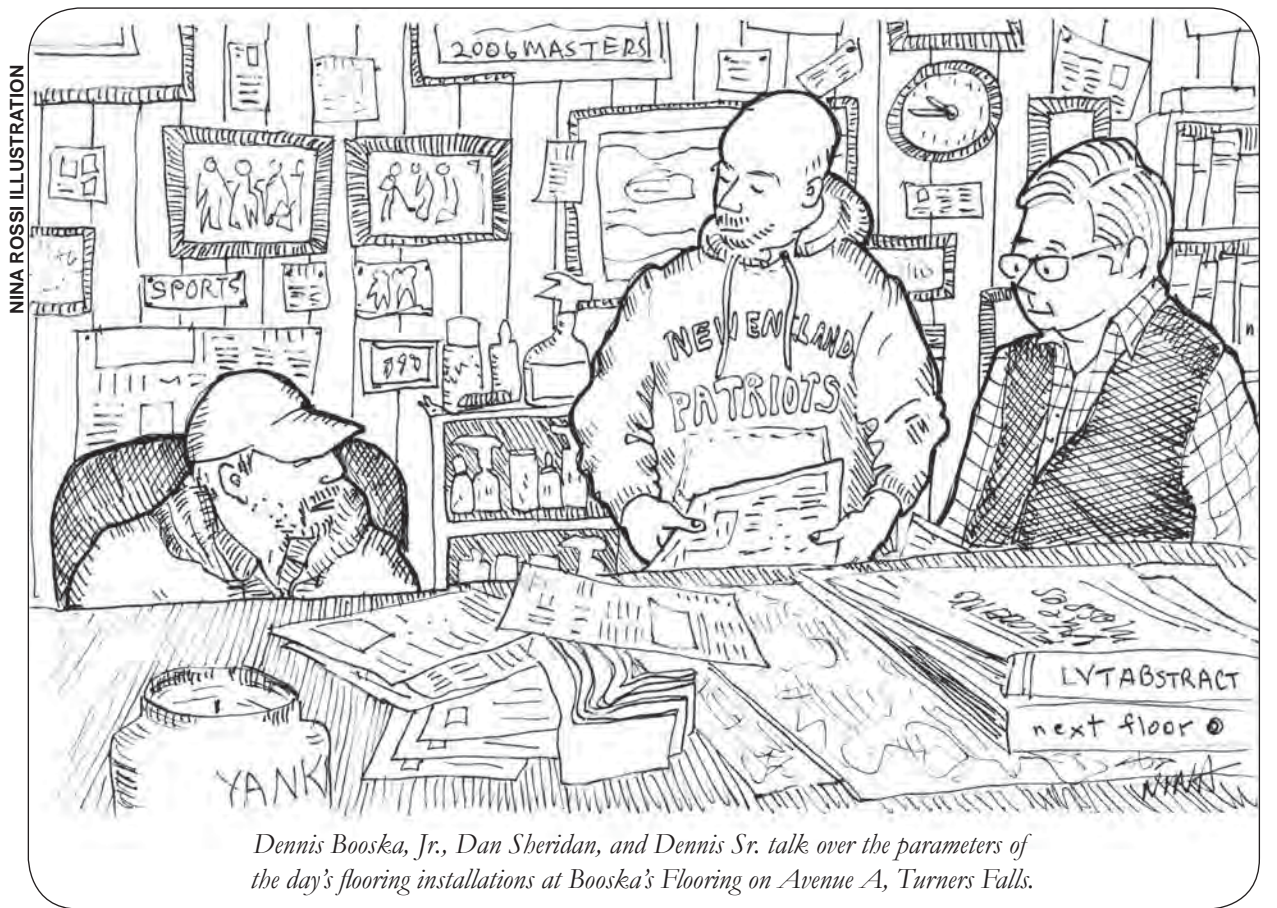
"What is it in Montague's politics that prevents them from having everyone who votes at Hillcrest walk 300 feet to Sheffield?" Bill Tomb, who represents Gill, asked.

Sullivan told him that Sheffield was his own "first choice" as an alternative site, but that a walk-through had determined that the distance between accessible parking and the polling booths would be prohibitive.

"I don't think it's the district's responsibility to pay for elections," Lively said.

"My first thought is, whatever it takes to get it out of the building," said Hall.

"I'd be willing to talk about a one-time payment," Langknecht said. "But beyond that? For the



Dennis Booska, Jr., Dan Sberidan, and Dennis Sr. talk over the parameters of the day's flooring installations at Booska's Flooring on Avenue A, Turners Falls.

next three years?"

The committee members were unsatisfied with several other minor points in the lease's language, and voted unanimously in favor of another 60-day extension of the lease while details are ironed out.

Blier said that town clerk Deb Bourbeau had mentioned that after the next census, she would again propose to town meeting that Montague be redistricted into three voting precincts.

Six-Town Talks Plod On

The committee checked in on the ongoing discussion about the prospect of Gill and Montague forming a six-town regional district with Leyden, Bernardston, Northfield, and Warwick, which currently form the struggling Pioneer Valley district.

Members had heard a presentation by consultants at their March 12 meeting on the possible costs and benefits of forming a larger region. Back-of-envelope calculations showed that overall, slight fiscal savings might be realized, though it could be difficult to reach a method of assessing costs to the towns that all six would find both equitable and preferable to their current costs.

Superintendent Sullivan argued at that meeting, however, that the plan's true benefit would be in restoring a more "robust" set of educational offerings at combined middle and high schools; both districts have had to pare back on electives and advanced courses as their secondary schools have withered over the years.

At Tuesday's meeting, Sullivan reminded the committee that the next possible step for Gill and Montague would be approving the formation of a "regional school district planning committee."

"My only concern is that Jane [Oakes], Haley [Anderson], Cassie [Damkoehler], and Timmie [Smith] aren't here," Katsoulis said.

"Do we know where Pioneer is at?" asked Kolodziej.

Sullivan said he believed that while the ad-hoc Honest Education and Retaining Trust (HEART) committee was following the process, he didn't think the Pioneer Valley school committee had yet been able to schedule a time to hear the consultants' presentation.

The Gill-Montague committee took no action. The conversation is

Letter to the Editors

Piggy-Banking It

Hey! This is my first letter to the *Montague Reporter*! (I should be getting some chores done, but, being as lazy as I am, I'd rather sit around drinking, and reading and writing, and yes, smoking; so here goes:)

My friend John I. has been sharing his *Reporter* papers with me, and I just read the article by K. Camara on the Society to Benefit Everyone's business arm, Common Good.

What are these "democratic so-

cialists" up to now? An economy based on direct democracy? Hah!

Have Merry and Pippin convinced Treebeard to rouse the Ents and remember that they are strong?

One thing though. What about all us few remaining flat-tops? No bank account, no phone, how could I participate? Well, I guess I'll just piggy-bank it for now...

Michael D. Joyce
Wendell

expected to continue on the evening of Tuesday, April 2 at the Gill-Montague Senior Center, when the next summit of the six towns' "civic leaders" is scheduled.

Changing the Culture

Sullivan announced that the district had been awarded a Leading Educational Access Project (LEAP) grant from the state's Developing Cultural Proficiency Institute totaling \$10,000. He said the administration plans to spend it on a professional development day for staff in social justice standards, as well as funding a "district equity committee," the major recommendation of consultants brought in to review complaints of a culture of racist and sexist hostility at the middle and high schools.

That committee, he said, would be facilitated by the same consulting group, the Northampton-based Collaborative for Educational Services. It would consist of "parents, students, staff and other stakeholders" and be tasked with long-term work of assessing and changing the culture at the schools.

"Their desire is that it's an application process to be on this committee," he said. "It would be problematic for someone from the district to decide." Participants would receive stipends.

Though Sullivan asked for feedback from the school committee,

little was offered, beyond a few clarifying questions. No votes were taken.

Other Business

Sullivan reported that Annie Leonard planned to return this week from her medical leave, and was "in good health." He said that 15 or 16 applicants had been received for her replacement, and that the hiring committee hoped to make a recommendation before April vacation.

An annual audit of district finances found no deficiencies this year. Committee members praised Blier for her work in improving record-keeping, and decided it would not be necessary to invite the auditors to make a presentation.

A budget transfer of \$750 was approved for the school police officer to pack emergency "go bags" for classrooms at the middle and high school. It was noted that more money would likely be allocated toward the project in the future.

A statewide Safe Routes to School grant proved too competitive for Gill-Montague's application to be rewarded this year.

The committee voted unanimously to continue to retain the Dupere Law Firm, despite a 7% hike in the monthly rate it will charge.

The next school committee meeting will be held April 9 at Turners Falls High School. 

Published weekly on Thursdays.

Every other week in July and August.
No paper fourth week of November,
or the Thursday closest to 12/25.

PHONE: (413) 863-8666

Please note new email addresses:
editor@montaguereporter.org
features@montaguereporter.org
ads@montaguereporter.org
bills@montaguereporter.org
circulation@montaguereporter.org
events@montaguereporter.org
poetry@montaguereporter.org
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org

Send address changes to:

The Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

Advertising and copy deadline is
MONDAY at NOON.

This newspaper shall not be liable for errors in advertisements, but will print without charge that part of the advertisement in which an error occurred. The publishers reserve the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter copy or graphics to conform to standards of the newspaper, such as they are.

Annual Subscription Rate:

\$30 for walking subscriptions;
\$40 for driving route subscriptions;
\$60 for mailed subscriptions.

Call us or contact
subscriptions@montaguereporter.org
with any questions.

**WE WELCOME
YOUR LETTERS!**

(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376

editor@
montaguereporter.org

Sign Me Up!

\$20 { 8 months (31 issues) for our walking routes
6 months (23 issues) for our driving routes
4 months (15 issues) for mailed subscriptions

The Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email (optional): _____



LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by **CHRIS PELLERIN**

Over the weekend I had the pleasure of slogging through the mud to celebrate spring at Undergrowth Farm in Gill as my nephews **boiled sap into syrup**. The day was cold and windy, but the strength of the sun made it clear that before too long we'll be complaining about the heat.

Artspace Community Arts Center is forming a teen advisory board to help develop programs, design classes, and make sure young people who are interested in the arts have a voice and a vehicle for involvement in their community arts center. Young people and parents are invited to come meet executive director Samantha Wood to learn more and share hot tea and cookies.

This is an information session; there is no obligation to join. It will take place on Friday, March 29 from 6 to 7 p.m. RSVP at info@artspace-greenfield.com, or call (413) 772-6811. Artspace is located at 15 Mill Street, Greenfield.

Come and learn about **Harmon Personnel Services** on Saturday, March 30 from 10 to 11 a.m. at Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A in Turners Falls. Harmon Personnel Services, located at 326 Deerfield Street, Greenfield is an amazing resource for the county. The company is a division of Community Action Pioneer Valley.

Harmon combines high-quality commercial staffing services with the social mission of helping people with low incomes and employment barriers to move out of poverty. New to Harmon is participation in a program called the Second Chance Employment and Training Initiative. Handouts will be made available by Harmon staffers, and light refreshments shared courtesy of GSB.

On Sunday, March 31 from 12 to 4 p.m., there will be a **repair event** at Element Brewing Company in Millers Falls. A group of dedicated Montague locals will provide delicious food, delectable brews, and a chance to fix your broken stuff. What more could you ask for on a Sunday afternoon?

Don't forget to check out the "What to Bring" page at www.repairpublic.org if you have any questions about the type of stuff they can fix.

Gill-Montague school students get a half day on Wednesday, April 3. The Department of Conservation and Recreation staff will present a program on **animal migration** at the Great Falls Discovery Center from 1 to 2 p.m. For ages 6 to 12, accompanied by an adult, but all are welcome for stories, activities, and crafts.

Allen Young of Royalston, author of "**Left, Gay & Green: A Writer's Life**," will be the guest

of the Moore-Leland Library, 172 Athol Road, Orange on Thursday, April 4. Starting at 7 p.m., he will read excerpts from his autobiography which will be for sale during the event.

This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Orange Public Libraries. To register, please call the Wheeler Memorial Library, (978) 544-2495 during the library's open hours, or email Todd Ladeau at tladeau@orangelib.org.

Time to sharpen your pencils and dust off your thinking caps. The **Gill Tavern is hosting a trivia night** to support the work of Artspace Community Arts Center. Gather with friends old and new for good cheer and a good cause. The fun starts at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 4 at the Gill Tavern, 326 Main Road, Gill.

Come with a team or by yourself – it's \$5 to play, with all proceeds going to Artspace, a multidisciplinary arts center and gallery in Greenfield. Or make an evening of it – reserve a table for dinner and drinks before getting your game on!

For reservations, call the Gill Tavern at (413) 863-9006.

Looking ahead...

"**Immigrant Voices: A Celebration of Arts**" will be performed at the Shea Theater on Sunday, April 7 beginning at 3 p.m. It will feature upbeat and high-energy music, songs, and dances from around the world. Dance classes will be offered after the performances. Purchase tickets in advance for \$10 through the Center for New Americans at www.cnam.org/immigrant-voices.

At 6:30 p.m. on Monday, April 8, the Sunderland Public Library

will host a discussion: "**Talking About Race: Staying Curious, Moving Forward, and Being Part of the Solution**." The workshop will explore how we can learn to appreciate and understand experiences and perspectives different from our own.

It will be led by three local African American residents, Grace Aldrich, Jim Guy, and Doug Sutherland. The program is free and open to the public. Register in advance by calling the library at (413) 665-2642. The library is located at 20 School Street in Sunderland.

With the melting of the snow, we see a season's worth of litter left behind along the roadsides. The **Millers Falls Community Improvement Association** will sponsor a cleanup day on Sunday, April 14 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Meet at the Whistle Stop Café, 29 East Main Street, Millers Falls to coordinate. Free Whistle Stop pizza afterwards to everyone who registers in advance and helps with the cleanup courtesy of the MFCIA.

Register by going to "Events" on their Facebook page and marking "attending" under Town Trash Clean Up Day, or by sending an email to millersfalls.improvement@gmail.com by April 7.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

**TURNERS FALLS
WATER
DEPARTMENT
METER READING
BEGINS MONDAY
APRIL 1**

Great Falls Farmers Market Community Forum

Discussion about the 2019 season and beyond

**Thursday, April 4
7 to 8 p.m.**

**Town Hall, One Avenue A
Second Floor Meeting Room**

Facilitated by the
**Montague Planning
Department and
Agriculture Commission**

Nina's Nook
Uniquities,
Frivolities,
Un-necessariums
~ Creative items ~
bringing joy to life

Open 12 to 5 p.m.
Thursdays through Saturdays
125A Avenue A Turners Falls
413.834.8800
www.ninasnook.com

WE HEAT FRANKLIN COUNTY

- System 2000 (Energy Kinetics)
- Thermo Pride
- Weil-McLain
- Other Major Brands
- Expert Burner Service

MACKIN FUEL TRUCKING SAND & GRAVEL
(413) 773-3622

Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week
Week ending Mar. 22:

Grade 6
Ripley Dresser

Grade 7
Andre Widmer

Grade 8
Abigail Holloway

Related Arts
Nyasiah Maynard

GUEST EDITORIAL

Local Aid for Climate Change

By **JACK CLARKE**

BOSTON – There are three proposals before Beacon Hill lawmakers that could help pay for how we cope with the impacts of climate change. All should be considered.

Climate change is the existential threat of our lifetime. It affects everyone, everywhere, and everything. And because certain Washington politicians are unwilling to deal with it, and President Trump still calls it a "hoax," state and local governments are forced to face climate change on their own.

In Massachusetts, we're not only fighting the causes of climate change, but also figuring out how to live with them.

While we've reduced the Commonwealth's carbon emissions by 21.4%, based on 1990 levels, and need to aggressively push to achieve zero emissions, we also must learn to adapt to the effects of climate change – including hotter days, accelerated sea-level rise, and stronger storms – all significant in a place we call the Bay State. And they come at great cost.

As a member of the state's Coastal Erosion Commission, we found that the replacement cost for the buildings and contents exposed to our quickly eroding shoreline was more than \$7 billion – and that was

four years ago!

According to estimates from the Cambridge-based Union of Concerned Scientists, during the next 26 years, over half the amount of property the \$7 billion represents will be chronically flooded, affecting 14,000 Massachusetts residents.

Between 2005 and 2017, increased flood risks eroded \$273.4 million worth of Massachusetts home values, according to the First Street Foundation, a nonprofit that researches the effects of rising seas.

Most vulnerable, however, are people – on whom we can never apply a price tag.

Presently, 85% of Massachusetts' 6.9 million residents live within 50 miles of the coast.

As a Chelsea native who grew up learning to swim at nearby Revere Beach, and whose neighbors "worked down the docks," I can attest that coastal residents aren't all rich or living in second homes.

So what do we do, and how do we pay for it?

Today, 160 Massachusetts cities and towns are painstakingly drafting Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness plans, documenting their exposure to climate change and considering how they'll defend themselves. The local blueprints are funded by a climate change bond

signed by Governor Charlie Baker last summer. This bond assigns \$501 million to adaptation measures that also include repairs to dams and seawalls, restoration of wetlands, and the Commonwealth's own adaptation road map.

Eventually, all 351 cities and towns will outline their adaptation strategies.

After the plans are written, the expensive work of implementation begins. We'll need to pay to protect, strengthen, and in some instances relocate threatened people and their homes, their streets, culverts, utilities, water supplies, and waste water treatment plants – many of which lie at sea level.

And that's where the legislature comes in as it considers this enormous expense.

Two proposals come from Governor Baker, and one from Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo.

Baker's choices include changing how the state spends \$40 million it receives each year through membership in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, a market-based compact of nine states that prices carbon emissions from power plants and sends the proceeds back to the participating states.

Under state requirements, that money is mostly used for energy conservation and efficiency. But

Baker wants the Legislature to give him the option of also spending some RGGI money on climate change adaptation – not a bad idea, but not at the expense of existing energy efficiency programs.

Baker's other bill imposes a fee on some real estate transactions that could bring in \$1 billion for adaptation work – that too is a good idea.

DeLeo also wants to spend \$1 billion to improve the state's resiliency to climate change. His idea is realized through a 10-year borrowing plan – the Legislature should take it up.

These are not "either-or" notions. There needs to be a sense of urgency on Beacon Hill when it comes to funding climate change work, especially as recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and the National Climate Assessment say we have about 12 years to figure this stuff out before things start to fall apart.

Although the Baker and DeLeo propositions seem expensive, the cost of delay and inaction is greater – and that's not an option we can afford.

Jack Clarke is the director of public policy and government relations at Mass Audubon.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

REAL PICKLES
Locally grown vegetables
Fermented & raw
100% organic

A worker co-op in Greenfield, MA
www.realpickles.com | (413) 774-2600

BUCKINGHAM RABBITS VINTAGE
VINTAGE & SECONDHAND CLOTHING FOR ALL

GRAND OPENING WEEKEND APRIL 6TH & 7TH
Join us for some family friendly fun down by the canal-cookies! bubbles! dancing! raffles! live music! #selfiebooth!

saturday 11-6 sunday 12-5
forty two canal turners falls ma
find us on facebook & instagram for more info @buckinghamrabbits


Overwhelmed by stuff? Try Franklin County's Most Convenient
IN-TOWN SELF STORAGE
UPPER END OF WELLS STREET, GREENFIELD
413-883-7323

Easy in-town location
Secure 24-hour access

OFFICE AT 50 CHAPMAN STREET, GREENFIELD, MA
Contractors, Flea Marketers, Tradeshow Vendors and Artists encouraged to inquire


RECYCLE

PAPER
Week of April 1
in Montague



more info? call: 863-2054

NANCY L. DOLE
BOOKS & EPHEMERA



20 State Street,
Bucklandside
Shelburne Falls
413-625-9850
ndole@crocker.com
closed Mondays and Fridays

GREENFIELD
FARMERS COOPERATIVE EXCHANGE
Locally Owned Since 1918

269 High Street - Greenfield
(413) 773-9639

**Local
Farmer-Owned**

Products for the home,
farm, pets, yard & garden

If you
Feed it - Seed it - Weed it
We GOT it!

www.greenfieldfarmerscoop.com

**Riverside
Laundromat**
131 West Main St. Orange
Behind OIC

&

**Village
Laundromat**
63 French King Hwy
Greenfield

Tired of quarters?
\$1 coins & quarters accepted

Big 40 & 60
Pound Washers!

PZ

**Partridge-Zschau
Insurance**

With a Future
as Great as Our Past
Since 1891

25 Millers Falls Road
Turners Falls, MA 01376
tel: 413-863-4331
www.pzinc.com

SIGNS from page A1

doing the restoration, and that RiverCulture director Suzanne Lomanto has engaged a "professional hand letterer."

Ellis noted that the three-sided kiosk had lettering on two sides, and "very general directions to various points."

"This way to Hong Kong," said chair Rich Kuklewicz. Ellis said the current roads to the south and east might not have existed when the sign was first constructed. Kuklewicz said he remembered riding his bicycle past the sign when he went fishing in his youth.

Ellis suggested, since there was only lettering on two sides of the sign and "there's no contemplation of anything north of Montague Center," adding the villages of Turners Falls, Lake Pleasant, and Millers Falls to the blank side. Kuklewicz even mentioned the town of Gill.

Ellis said the Historical Society was "favorable" to adding Turners, but that the lettering would not be done until the kiosk's reconstruction was finished. This part of the project, he said, was scheduled to begin in April.

The two board members at the meeting – Chris Boutwell was absent – said they favored adding other villages, and even Gill, to the kiosk, but they did not take a vote on the issue. Gregory told the *Reporter* the Historical Society was strongly opposed to adding names other than Turners Falls to the marker's blank

side. "We want to keep it as historically correct as you can," he said.

Selectboard member Michael Nelson came to the meeting armed with a stack of pictures of signs that he thought were either dated or unattractive. Nelson has taken the lead on this issue, and he noted that this was the second meeting at which signage has been reviewed by the board.

Signs in Nelson's list included a No Parking sign on Avenue A that, according to Nelson, "is 25 years obsolete"; a business district sign that "just looks depressing"; a sign across from the town hall that needs "a little love"; and a directional sign to Route 91 pointed in the wrong direction.

"Well, we don't want to make it easy," Kuklewicz said.

The board handed off the sign pictures to public works superintendent Tom Bergeron.

Town planner Walter Ramsey actually initiated the signage theme earlier in the meeting when he asked the board to request that the state Department of Transportation place two signs on Route 91 directing motorists toward Turners Falls. The first would be a smaller sign announcing, among other "tourist attractions," the Turners Falls Cultural District. The second would be a larger stand-alone sign directing motorists to Turners Falls.

The board authorized the chair to sign the letter and "appropriate forms" to request the signs.

Ramsey also announced that the sign in front of the planned cannabis

retail facility on Millers Falls Road would, reflecting the company's new name, be changed from "253 Organic" to "253 Pharmacy." He also said the planning board would meet the next day to review the company's revised site plan, which included more parking.

Road Work

In other news, Ramsey presented the board with an update on a state Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) planning grant the town has received to address the frequent flooding on Turners Falls Road.

He said the engineering firm Wright-Pierce had determined that the best solution to the problem was to dredge the thousand feet of stream next to Montague City Road. This part of the project would also involve creating a "floodplain" next to the stream. The second part of the project, to address a "100-year storm," would involve putting "catch basin structures" along the road.

Ramsey estimated the combined cost for both projects at \$180,000 to \$260,000. He reviewed a number of potential grants that would pay for a significant portion of this. The board authorized Ramsey to submit an MVP Action Grant.

The board also voted to accept a different state grant – and approve a contract with the firm Stantec – to implement the design and engineering of a bridge repair on Chestnut Hill Loop. Montague has received a \$450,000 grant to repair the bridge,

but Ramsey said he and Bergeron wanted to see if the needed work could be done with those funds.

Famous Drain

Ryan Graham of the engineering firm CDM Smith gave an updated PowerPoint presentation on the "Turners Falls Main Drain and Siphon Cleaning Project." Although a similar presentation had been given to the selectboard in December 2016 (and covered by the *Reporter*), the firm wanted to highlight the recent publication of an article on the project in the *New England Water Environmental Association Journal*. This followed a very successful presentation before the North American Society for Trenchless Technology.

"So you folks have become notorious," said CDM Smith's Paul Gilbert.

"When do we start collecting royalties?" asked Nelson.

Other Business

Ellis gave the board an update on the new DPW facility construction project.

The board approved a request by Lauren Stafford for a fundraiser for Relay For Life on Seventh Street and Avenue A, and one by librarian Linda Hickman for a puppet show at Peskeompskut Park on August 2.

The board reviewed the warrant for the May 5 annual town meeting, but did not vote on individual articles.

The selectboard's next meeting will be on April 1 at the town hall.

NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Closed-Door Discussion of National Grid Offer

By JOSH HEINEMANN

As the March 20 selectboard meeting began, board chair Dan Keller suggested the advisability of going into executive session, to avoid "a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the governmental body," considering negotiations about the property at 97 Wendell Depot Road, which National Grid has asked to buy or lease.

Three members of the finance committee – Doug Tanner, Al McIntire, and Robin Heubel – came in, and both boards began the meeting in executive session.

Later, in the open meeting, Keller said, "National Grid has not been kind."

In the open discussion about the property, it was mentioned that citizen Adrian Montagano had received a letter that expressed interest in the house from descendants of the family that built it.

The community solar project planned for the same site – which went through Wendell's permitting process, only to be told by National Grid that the Wendell Depot substation did not have the capacity to allow a connection – had a deadline with its contracted installer.

Though National Grid's actions have put the project on hold until upgrades to the power grid are complete, the coop paid the \$250 fee to get back in the line for permission to connect to the grid.

Long Mud Season

Highway commission chair Mike Gifford, member Wayne Leonard, and road boss Rich Wilder met the board for the longest discussion of the evening. It was about mud –

complaints about mud roads that some residents have called "impassible" (impossible).

Wilder had asked police chief Ed Chase to post a request on the email list for residents to avoid dirt roads as much as possible. Heavy traffic only makes the mud ruts deeper. Cars with low clearance have the most difficult time.

Leonard said he had driven his truck in two-wheel drive on New Salem Road and had no problem, but he admitted his truck has a fair amount of clearance. He said that the rainy summer and the late snow made the frost go deep, and that until the frost is gone, rain and melting snow have no place to go except to make more mud.

Fire chief Joe Cuneo told them the brush truck and the ambulance are four-wheel drive, and that emergency vehicles, with the possible exception of the tanker, can get through.

In Wilder's memory, the town closed Jennison Road and neither plowed nor maintained it through the winter and spring. Residents then were fewer, and they parked their cars at one end or the other. Recent years have been gentle with their mud, but mud seasons like this were the rule years ago.

Wilder said he spent \$5,000 between Monday and Tuesday putting stones down and spreading them. Unlike with the snow and ice budget, he may not spend from that account until money has been allocated.

Gifford said that a good warm rain could melt the frost layer, and then the standing water could drain from the roads. When they are dry enough, grading will start.

Wendell Scholarships: Help Minds Grow!

WENDELL – It's time to apply for scholarships from Dollars for Wendell Scholars!

All students who live in Wendell and will be pursuing any kind of accredited post-secondary education next year can apply by completing a short and easy application. Applications for the scholarship are available at local high schools and the Wendell Free Library. They must be returned to the address below by April 15.

Our fifth annual fundraiser was initiated with a mailing to all Wendell residents in February. Dona-

tions are now tax deductible, and may be made to Dollars for Wendell Scholars, PO Box 232, Wendell, MA 01379, with checks payable to Dollars for Wendell Scholars. Help support Wendell residents seeking post-secondary education (college, university, or technical school).

For more information call or email Carolyn Manley at (978) 544-7028 (dollarsforwendellscholars@gmail.com) or Christine Heard at (978) 544-2282 (cheard59c@aol.com). You may also speak with Joy Brenneman at the Wendell Free Library.

Other Business

The board tentatively set Saturday, June 15 as the date for the annual town meeting, depending on availability of town moderator Katie Nolan and clerk Gretchen Smith. Tanner said that later is better, but that June 21 is too close to the end of the fiscal year.

The selectboard authorized \$10,441 in holiday pay that was overlooked when librarian Rosie Heidkamp became a 30-hour-per-week worker and was entitled to benefits.

Florrie Blackbird accepted an appointment to the board of registrars until the 2020 election, when she will face election to a three-year term.

While there in the selectboard office, Blackbird reserved the town hall for a family reunion, with 100 people expected. She hoped for a reduced rental rate as a resident of several generations, but town coordinator Nancy Aldrich brought up the shadow of former selectboard member Ted Lewis, saying, "If we do it for her, we have to do it for everyone."

Wendell's assessment for am-

balance service from the Orange Fire Department is up to \$21,898 in 2020 from \$21,795 in 2019. That assessment will stay the same through 2022.

Maintenance on the Wendell website has proved elusive, and updates of some pages have lagged. Aldrich suggested asking Wendell's IT consultant, Peter Golrick, to take on that responsibility. He has not used all the hours that his budget allows. The town website committee needs new members.

Town counsel David Doneski advised that the next step to get cleanup at 131 Lockes Village Road is a court injunction. Town orders have been ignored and appealed, and it is likely that the court order will be ignored or appealed. Board members voted to pursue a court injunction, with member Christine Heard abstaining because she has family next door.

As the town's municipal light plant, and at the broadband committee meeting, board members signed a contract with the state allowing the state to pay overage on Wendell's make-ready work for its upcoming fiber-optic internet system.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Bringing Peace to Tired Muscles
Start the year right!

Let me help


Gretchen Wetherby LMT

Massage Offices in Shelburne Falls and Millers Falls
www.gretchenwetherby.massagetherapy.com

gretchenwlm@gmail.com 413-824-7063

French King

Restaurant & Motel



OPEN BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER
WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY 7 A.M.

 **OrigamiUSA**

Origami is for anyone, anywhere, anytime!

Join us at: **OrigamiUSA.org**
Email: **admin@origamiusa.org**
Tel: **212.769.5635**

- Find a local community origami group
- Fold from diagrams in our publications
- Shop for origami paper and books
- And much more!

NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Erving Preps for Climate Change

By KATIE NOLAN

Kimberly Noake MacPhee, land use/natural resources program manager at Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), presented Erving's draft Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plan to the selectboard Monday night.

The state-funded MVP program provides support for towns to plan for climate change resiliency and implement priority projects. State grants are available to pay for both vulnerability assessments and for implementation of resiliency projects. MacPhee noted that, with climate change, towns will need to respond to higher temperatures, increased precipitation, more frequent and more intense storms, and more frequent droughts.

Last fall, a community meeting that included representatives from town departments, such as the highway department, water department and fire department, and boards such as the conservation commission and planning board, identified locations in town that might be at risk and selected priority projects.

The railroads in town, which could be subject to derailments or affected by flooding, dam failure, or ice jams, were selected as the highest priority.

Other high priorities included the highway garage fuel storage, located in the floodplain; assessing and repairing culverts; exploring flood-proofing options for the town's wastewater treatment plants; and creating redundancy and digital backup of important town documents, public records, and Geographical Information Systems information.

The meeting also identified Erving's areas of strength for resiliency, including that most of the

town's infrastructure is on high ground, out of the floodplain; that the roads and culverts are well-maintained; that backup generators are available in most of the public buildings; that the town has a good relationship with FirstLight regarding the Northfield Mountain pumped storage station; that an alternate drinking water source is available in Millers Falls; and that the Council on Aging owns a van.

Since last fall's meeting, the town had already started working on some of the priority projects, such as obtaining a generator for the wastewater pump house and identifying culverts. MacPhee said she would revise the draft MVP plan based on the selectboard's comments. Once the selectboard endorses the final plan, the town is eligible to apply to the state for MVP grants for detailed planning, public education and implementation of projects.

The public comment period for the MVP plan lasts until April 1. The draft plan and an online comment form are available on the town website, and paper comment forms are available at town hall.

The board also voted to amend a contract with FRCOG to update the town's Environmental Hazard Mitigation Plan, with a cost of \$5,025, and to approve a \$20,000 contract with FRCOG for bridge and culvert evaluation.

Town Meeting Warrant

The 23-article warrant for the annual town meeting, which the board has discussed over several meetings, is still a draft.

At Monday night's meeting, the selectboard considered the article regarding Wheelock Street layout. According to selectboard chair Scott Bastarache, the purpose of the arti-

cle is to solidify the street's layout, which was initiated in the 1800s but never went through a formal layout process. Lee Street, which extends from Wheelock, was never recognized by the state as a town road.

Although the article uses the word "relocate" for the layout, Bastarache said there will not be a physical change in the road, simply a clerical change at the registry of deeds.

The board accepted a citizen's petition for a warrant article supporting changing the state flag and seal of Massachusetts. According to the resolution, the images and symbols on the seal and flag represent the history of wars against Native Americans and cultural destruction of native nations. The resolution asks the state to create a special commission to review the seal and flag and support the findings of the special commission.

The board made editorial changes to a proposed bylaw that would prohibit commercial vehicles having a carrying capacity of more than 2 1/2 tons from Church and North streets.

Police Policies

The board gave a third reading to new draft police department policies written by police chief Christopher Blair. The subjects of the policies include: domestic violence, sexual assault, protective custody, public records, arrest, eyewitness identification, interrogating suspects and arrestees, testifying in court, searches and seizures, motor vehicle inventory, and interactions with transgender individuals.

The board had several questions for Blair, who was not at the meeting. They asked administrative coordinator Bryan Smith to forward him the questions. The board expects to approve the policies on April 1.

SPORTS from page A1

not immune to this graduation exodus. The six teams we'll be focusing on this season are the Turners Falls softball, baseball, girls' and boys' tennis teams, and the Franklin Tech/TFHS hybrid track and field teams. All six teams lost experienced athletes last year. Added to this burden are a number of injuries which further deplete their ranks.

Also, in the case of the track teams, Turners Falls and Franklin Tech are just not big enough. According to girls' coach Ron Hebert, every opponent has a winter track program. This is not meant as an excuse, but rather to give insight into the challenges the teams face.

Baseball and Softball

Last season, the Turners Falls baseball team finished 4-13. They lost two key players to graduation, pitcher Hayden Patenaude and infielder Riley Watroba.

This year, their season begins with a road game against Athol on Thursday, April 4, with their home opener on Tuesday, April 9 against Mohawk.

The 2018 Turners Falls softball team made it to the state championship before losing 5-0 against Abington. This season will be another rebuilding year for Coach Mullins' team. With pitcher Peyton Emery, outfielder Sienna Dillensneider, and third basewoman Abby Loynd out of the lineup, he'll have to rely on the younger girls to step up.

But as opening day approaches,



Tyler Lavin set the court on fire with ten 3-pointers, 34 total game points, and MVP pick during the Western Mass Senior All-Star Games at the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Coach Mullins has a lot of unanswered questions. Replacing a third basewoman is no small feat. She has to have a good arm, think on her feet, and above all, be fearless.

According to Mullins, he has a number of potential lineups ready to try. He may pull Olivia Whittier in from the outfield, but that would

erase her long throws from the fence; he might move Aly Murphy from catcher to the infield. But it all depends on the ability of the younger ladies filling their spots.

Things should be a little clearer by mid-April, when Cassie Wozniak and Taylor Murphy are expected to return from injury.

Town of Leverett
Notice of Liquor License Hearing

The Select Board will hold a hearing on Tuesday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Leverett Town Hall at the request of the **Village Cooperative Corporation** (Village Coop) for a restaurant (pouwer's) license to serve wine and malt beverages. All interested persons may ask questions or give testimony at this time. Written comments will be received by the Select Board at PO Box 300, Leverett, MA until April 15, 2019 at 5 p.m. and will be opened, publicly read, and incorporated into the minutes of the hearing.

Town of Leverett
Hearing Notice - Proposed Bylaw Changes

A public hearing will be held at the Town Hall on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 7 p.m. to discuss proposed changes to the "Code of Leverett" as outlined below:

Chapter 8: Finances / 8-2. Finance Committee provisions

From: A. Members of the Finance Committee shall serve without compensation, and members may not hold any other elective or appointive town position during his or her term of office other than on the Personnel Board, the Capital Planning Committee, the Financial Advisory Committee and any other unpaid, temporary, ad hoc committee that has no budget.

To: A. Members of the Finance Committee shall serve without compensation, and members may not hold any other elective or appointive town position during his or her term of office other than on the Personnel Board, the Capital Planning Committee, the Financial Advisory Committee, Municipal Light Plant and any other unpaid, temporary, ad hoc committee that has no tax funded budget.

Chapter 16: Capital Planning / 16-2. Powers and duties

From: The Committee shall study proposed capital outlays including the acquisition of land or other property requiring and expenditure of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) or more and having a useful life of at least five (5) years. All officers, boards, departments and committees, including the Select Board and the School Committee, shall, by September 1 each year, give to the Capital Planning Committee information concerning all such capital projects anticipated by them to require Town Meeting action during the ensuing six (6) years. The Committee shall consider the relative need, timing and cost of these expenditures and the effect each will have on the financial position of the town. Any request for a capital outlay which did not appear in the information provided in prior years' reports of projected needs will not be recommended by the Capital Planning Committee to the Select Board or to the Town Meeting, unless a report shall have first been submitted by the requesting agency explaining the omission.

To: The Capital Planning Committee shall compile data (the "Capital Inventory") concerning proposed capital outlays - including the acquisition of land, equipment or other property and repair or replacement of structures - when such expenditures exceed spending and useful life limits established by the Selectboard. The Selectboard shall consult with the Capital Planning Committee and the Finance Committee in establishing such limits. All officers, boards, departments and committees, including the Selectboard and the School Committee, shall, by September 1 each year, give to the Capital Planning Committee information concerning all such capital outlays anticipated by them to require Town Meeting action during the ensuing 10 years (minimum) or more depending on the useful life of an item; such information shall include: item description, location, cost when purchased, current replacement cost, expected useful life, fiscal year in which item was purchased, fiscal year in which it is anticipated that the item will need to be replaced, funding options available (e.g. grants, leasing, renting, state/federal funding, CPA funds, etc.) and justification (i.e. need, risk, impact & priority). The Capital Planning Committee shall compile data concerning the timing and cost of these expenditures and provide this information to the Selectboard and Finance Committee by March 1. Any request for a capital outlay that did not appear in information provided in prior years' reports of projected needs will not be added to the current fiscal year inventory or recommended for funding, unless a report submitted by the requesting agency, explaining the omission, is accepted by the Capital Planning Committee and Selectboard.

Chapter 16: Capital Planning / 16.3 Annual report; investigations and hearings

From: A. The Committee shall prepare a report containing the Committee's recommendations for capital budget items for the next fiscal year for presentation to Annual Town Meeting. Also, a capital program plan for the following five (5) fiscal years shall be prepared and included in the report.

B. The Committee may undertake such investigations and hold such hearings as it may deem necessary.

To: A. The Capital Planning Committee shall prepare a report containing the Capital Inventory that highlights potential budget items for the next fiscal year for consideration by the Selectboard and for presentation at Annual Town Meeting.

B. The Capital Planning Committee may undertake such investigations and hold such hearings as it may deem necessary.

A copy of the complete Code of Leverett is on file at the Town Clerk's office.

They begin their long road to defend their Western Mass title on Saturday, April 6 with scrimmages against Wachusett, Keene, and Quabbin Regional, with their home opener on Monday, April 15.

Tennis

The Turners Falls boys' tennis team did pretty well last year, going 8-5 and making the playoffs. This season, they'll have to do without #1 singles player, Jimmy Vaughn. Mr. Vaughn has not been replaced as of yet. Brian Porier told me he is slated to play first singles, but said they'll have challenge matches later this week, so his spot is not guaranteed.

According to coach Steve Toulountzis, Will Turn and Brody Trott are currently #2 and #3 singles players. There are six returning players, but the other four competitors are beginners, so the second doubles duo is a development in progress.

The boys open their season in Blunt Park in Springfield against Sci Tech on Friday, April 5. Their first home match is against Pioneer on Monday, April 8.

"Seven girls, seven spots," girls' tennis coach Victor Gonzalez told me at a recent practice. Not only is Coach Vic down to the minimum allowable number of players, he lost his top two singles players, Carlie Kretchmar and Amber Taylor.

To start the season, he plans to start Isobelle Farrick, Haleigh Greene, and Steph Peterson as his

top three singles players. The ladies travel to Springfield to take on Pope Francis on Wednesday, April 3 before opening at home against Saint Mary's on Friday, April 5.

Track and Field

Ron Hebert is back. Coach Hebert has been coaching various track and cross-country teams for five decades. His Franklin Tech/Turners hybrid girls' team may be small in numbers, but Hebert tells me they are a small group of hard workers. As mentioned earlier, all of his opponents have winter track programs, so his athletes will start out a couple of months behind the other teams. But he feels his team will improve as the season moves along.

The girls' track team has seven meets this year, six of which are at home. They open their season at home on Tuesday, April 2 against Pioneer.

I met with boys' track coaches Roman Tsipenyuk and Jeff Whitney at a recent practice. Because their team is also so small, the focus this year will be on individual athletes rather than team wins.

According to the coaches, the boys' strengths are hurdles and short dashes, with a couple of their athletes expected to make the post-season individuals meet. Their first home meet is scheduled for Friday, April 5 against Pioneer.

Next week:

The new season begins!



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Renaissance Excavating, Inc.

COMPLETE SITE WORK

Septic & Drainage Systems | Sand, Gravel & Loam

Main Road, Gill
Douglas Edson 413.863.4462
renexc@gmail.com cell 413.834.2201

Fred Holmgren
Piano Tuning & Repair

Stay tuned!

(978)544-5494
fredholmgren@gmail.com

Bryan Hobbs
Remodeling LLC

Blown Cellulose Insulation • Spray Foam Insulation
Airsealing • Energy Audits • Replacement Doors & Windows

Email: bryanhobbsremodeling@gmail.com
Now Accepting Credit Cards

Office: (413)775-9006
Lic # 083982
Reg # 139564

mass save PARTNER

Bryan G. Hobbs
PO Box 1535
Greenfield, MA 01302

VENTURE from page A1

The door is ajar and sparkles with the shop's logo, a string of lights that are little hands in the shape of peace signs. I am warmly welcomed and called into the space, as much by my hostess as by the boldly striped path painted on the floor. It draws me into the store before continuing on its way up the wall, ending in an arrow. It's a path, I notice, that distinctly follows the flow of the very full canal outside the row of windows that line one wall.

Grand opening for the shop is two weeks away, and the interior is still "under construction" when I visit. I am grateful that Alex has taken the time to allow a glimpse inside and to talk. We make our acquaintance and find our place of ease.

There are no children tugging at her sweater today, nor mine for that matter. In fact, as we begin to share stories, I realize that I recognize this young woman. She speaks glowingly of her husband and includes her mother, "a real hippie," early on in her story. We speak of children, and find that we are both mothers of two boys. Her boys are two and six years old, and when I relate the ages of my own grown children, she asks with all sincerity and deeply curious dark eyes, "What's that like?"

I'm touched, and I want to tell her that really, it's the same, it doesn't change, but I don't; so many memories and current realities flash through my mind that I say simply, in true "hippie" fashion, "It's a trip." In an effort to gain some composure, I pause, take a breath, look down and note my feet in clogs and hers, as well — though hers are a stylized version, ankle high and with zippers on the side.

Creative Retail Experience

Hailing from Boston and the child of immigrant parents, an Italian mother and an Indonesian father, style follows Alex to western Massachusetts in a career story that includes adventure in the glitz and glamour of Boston high-end retail, as well as a background of creative "making" at MassArt, with a focus in metalsmithing.

A retail background that began in Waltham as a bridal consultant was soon followed by retail stints at various Newbury Street boutiques, and then she took a turn as a display artist: she dressed the windows and created interior displays for Barneys New York, and eventually finished up in the position of personal shopper and stylist to some of Boston's most fashionable.

Through it all was her love of vintage, a love her husband also shares with her.

We talk of vintage as we peruse the finished racks of clothing. She's making the racks herself: we talk of just what that might mean. Her love, she says, is of the '60s, and those dresses are well represented on the racks, but she also speaks of the eclectic nature of vintage, and of the "kids" who these days are really drawn to '90s stuff.

"I intend to meet the needs of a wide variety of shoppers," she tells me, as I comment on piles of clothing of another variety altogether, and note the boxes yet to be unpacked, tagged, and racked or displayed.

I question her about what she has warehoused, and where, since she has mentioned this to me in her writing. She tells me that both she and her husband have been collectors of vintage for years, and she pays homage to a well-known man from the Boston garment world of vintage who has just recently passed: a friend of hers, and highly respected in his field.

She quickly pulls up an article on her phone, while speaking of his Lynn warehouse, and the location of their own warehouse within it. She promises to forward me a link, and I later learn the story of Bobby Barnett, of Bobby's of Boston, and the unique story of a man who for decades dressed the stars of many feature films in truly authentic vintage wear.

We move away from the racks and through the back door to a hall with restrooms and a kitchen, then into a space that serves as a temporary workshop, filled with



A section of the shop is dedicated to a children's play space.

tools and projects in process. Alex shows me a sign with tiny lights that she is working on, and I note more racks. Here the floor is covered with fresh wood shavings.

We return to the shop through the rear door and at our feet is a tot-sized car perched on the top of a ramp, what appears to be a tiny slide for the vehicle and an extension of the children's play space. Located here, the car "port" allows for a long, straight shot to the play space: a children's nook containing a table and chairs, cushions, toys, and a floor mat, as well as a large, hand-painted free-form wall mural.

A Family Transition

This circular tour has brought us back to the front of the store, where Alex shares more of her story, including some of the challenges that have brought her this far since her family "escaped" Boston. Having reached a crossroads after the birth of her second child, she was confronted not only with a demanding career but also an ailing mother, and a new discomfort with the world of "conspicuous consumption" that she found herself a part of. She and her husband made the decision that it was time to make a move. Having some familiarity with western Massachusetts, they began their search for a location here.

What awaited Alex and her family was a time of transition and challenges. They searched Shelburne Falls, Greenfield, and finally settled in Turners Falls in July 2017. Once they found a home to house them all, they began the search for a location for their dream. They could find no home for their project, however, and shelved it for awhile as they settled in.

Alex expresses gratitude for all the amazing people who helped them through the almost two years of transition, and said that in the spring of 2018 their business plan was presented to their current landlord, Curt Scherrer, at 42 Canal Road, who accepted it and gave them the go ahead.

Next they had to confront some of the financial realities. I ask if she had sought help at the Franklin County Community Development Corporation in Greenfield, and she sighs, saying, "Yes, and that was perhaps the most difficult aspect of our journey." It had become a long, drawn-out process, she said, without a longed for result — and so, in January, they just decided to go ahead with it themselves.

Alex can no longer imagine spending nearly \$3,000 per month for childcare, as they would have had to shell out in Boston, but what she can imagine is the evolution of the shop and what she hopes to offer. First and foremost, it is to be a place for parents with young children to gather and visit and shop. She plans workshops, through which she can offer support to local makers of handmade products and skill sharing.

"I've met so many people who have small businesses creating interesting products. I want to support them as well," she says. "It's not just going to be about the vintage clothing — I want to meet the needs of the community. I want to do more than cater to tourists."

Her face lights up like a child as we talk of the grand opening, and I find her excitement contagious. "We'll have face painting and kids crafts, maybe a selfie photo booth. There will be cookies — I love to bake!" she enthuses. "And balloons, I love balloons! And prizes, live music, and a bubble dance party!"

It's taken courage, perseverance, and fortitude to come this far to a location in the new "Canalside" district of Turners Falls, and as the words of this young woman echo in my mind — "I just can't wait to share with everyone" — I urge you to come out and welcome her to our community.

Find Buckingham Rabbits on Facebook and buckinghamrabbits.com. Stop by Buckingham Rabbits Vintage on opening weekend from 12 to 6 on Saturday and 12 to 5 on Sunday, April 6 and 7. And while there, catch a glimpse of the high sun sparkling on the water of that captive river called the canal.

ELECTRICITY from page A1

Bill Franklin walked into the *Montague Reporter* office on Tuesday with a letter he had received from an unfamiliar company called Indra Energy. Indra thanked Franklin for choosing the company as "your energy supplier," and provided a brief "summary of service" the Turners Falls man had purchased.

The summary included a promise that 100% of the energy supplied would be "matched by credits generated by renewable or alternative energy sources." The letter also provided information on the cost of the electricity he was purchasing: 10.2 cents per kilowatt-hour the first month, and then 14.9 cents/kWh for "the remaining 13 months."

Attached to the letter was a very dense two-page statement of the plan's "terms of service." Franklin said he had never heard of Indra Energy.

He did, however, recall someone knocking on his door the previous month saying he was from "the electric company," and offering to help him save money on his electric bill. Franklin said he felt the man was an honest and friendly young entrepreneur, and agreed to sign up for the service, through a telephone conversation with someone from his company. No documents were exchanged at the time.

Indra Energy, it turns out, is one of the dozens of companies licensed by the state Department of Public Utilities to sell electricity in the competitive market.

Eversource, which does not market its product door to door, was Franklin's default supplier, and he assumed the man who solicited the agreement was an Eversource employee. He said he did not recall any discussion of the rate structure Indra claims he verbally agreed to — only the promise that it would save him money.

A comparison of Indra's rates with those of Eversource suggests Franklin was, at best, misled. For the first month of Indra service, the cost of electricity is approximately 15% below what he was paying Eversource. But for the next thirteen months, the cost would be approximately 40% higher than Eversource's current rate.

State regulations pertaining to the marketing of electricity issued by the Attorney General's office prohibit a variety of "misrepresentations" by competitive suppliers.

These include "deceiving or misleading a reasonable customer" about "the business relationship between a retail seller of electricity," such as Indra, "and a distribution company" such as Eversource. They also prohibit misrepresentation of "the amount of money to be saved by a consumer, expressed in any manner, if a consumer chooses one retail seller of electricity... over any other entity selling electricity."

The regulations also prohibit misleading information about "the time period during which any offered price would be available," and prohibit making comparisons with another electricity supplier "without stating the relevant material facts on which that comparison is based." The supplier also cannot simply fail to mention "vital information about its products, services or business."

Although the letter Indra Energy sent to Franklin suggested that the electricity was supplied from "100% renewable" sources, this claim cannot be verified. Indra's website markets "100% Green Nat-

ural Gas" as an option for heating customers, raising questions about the company's definition of renewable or green energy in the electricity supply market.

The Indra website lists no contact information for staff qualified to respond to media requests for information. Multiple employees reached at its "customer service" number said they could not talk about marketing policies, and that they were not allowed to provide contact information for any company officials.

The Philadelphia address listed on Indra's website appears to belong to a coworking office space. Pennsylvania state records show that Indra Energy is registered as a "fictitious name" — what we know as a "does business as" name (dba), adopted by a New York-headquartered company called Palmco Power, whose managing member is a man named Robert Palmese.

According to the *Hartford Courant*, Palmco was accused by the Connecticut state attorney general in 2017 of "deceptive and abusive marketing tactics," including sending its agents "door to door pretending to be from Eversource." The company was not convicted of a crime, but agreed to pay the state a \$5 million settlement, and is barred from operating there in Connecticut until 2020.

Palmco previously paid \$4.5 million to settle a class action lawsuit in New Jersey after that state's Division of Consumer Affairs alleged it "engaged in deceptive and aggressive marketing practices and failed to deliver on promised energy rates that were lower than utility companies' prices," according to the *Asbury Park Press*.

In Massachusetts, Palmco was listed as one of the companies in the competitive energy supply market that has engaged in "predatory practices," according to a report released last summer by Attorney General Margaret Healey.

The report studied customers' bills from the summer of 2017, and concluded that most of those who choose "competitive suppliers" like Palmco/Indra actually lost money. For example, customers who opted into the competitive market in Springfield lost an average of \$17.74 per month, while those in Worcester lost \$14.42. Healey blamed the higher costs on companies that go "door to door," particularly in low-income neighborhoods, making misleading claims about electric rates.

A section on the web forum Reddit contains numerous complaints about Indra's competitive marketing practices, particularly to college students. According to one post, "they knock on your door and say some crap about switching to 100% renewable, show you a nice low teaser rate to get you to sign up and then jack it up after the trial period ends to like 3x what [E]versource... charges."

The town of Montague requires that all solicitors going door to door apply for a permit approved by the police department. There is no evidence in department records that any representative of either Indra or Palmco applied for a permit.

When questioned, police chief Chris Williams rolled his eyes and told the *Reporter* that his small department was periodically barraged with complaints about solicitation.

The department's registration form informs solicitors that they may not violate local, state, or federal laws. Williams said his department see **ELECTRICITY** page A7



McGuigan and her family moved to Turners Falls three years ago from the eastern part of the state.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Edward J. Terault
(413) 223-5494
www.REILCLEAN.com

Reil
CLEANING
SERVICES LLC

• Complete Custodial Services •
• Bonded and Insured •

"We Don't Cut Corners, We Clean Them!"

Cleaning Franklin & Hampshire Counties since 1972

Dudek Tax Service
10 Masonic Ave
Turners Falls
MA 01376
Frank J. Dudek

413.863.5394 - Office
413.775.3327 - Cell
frankd_74@yahoo.com

Brian R. San Soucie
LOCKSMITH - CRL
certified - bonded - insured

863-2471
28 MONTAGUE ST
TURNERS FALLS, MA

Trusted for over 25 years, installing all types of
locks & entry devices for business & homes

- Dead Bolts
- Household Lock Sets
- Master Keys & Re-keys
- Safe Combinations Changed

TRANSIT from page A1

role, as does the number of demand-response trips, which are individual buses called out for elderly or disabled people. Those, together, play a role in determining both the assessments and the weight on the board.

MR: *If you're the "alternate," who's the official rep?*

JS: By statute, the chairman of the selectboard, or the mayor of Greenfield.

It's kind of been handed off to me because the selectboard has a lot to do, and I'm interested in it... I try to go before them every time we have an advisory board meeting, just to run down the agenda, so they have my back, or tell me they don't want me to say something.

MR: *What originally got you involved?*

JS: Several things. I lived in Montague Center, and they were going to eliminate a route that goes through Montague Center down to the University of Massachusetts. I thought that was a crucial route – I thought we should be serving more students and people who worked at UMass, it's the largest employer in the region, and quite frankly, I took that route quite often, even though I had a car.

That was the specific thing, but there were a couple other things. It's an energy issue, an environmental issue: getting more people out of their cars, and taking the bus.

ELECTRICITY from pg A6

responds to local complaints about solicitation, but cannot realistically enforce state and federal solicitation regulations.

The Montague town bylaws contain a section on "solicitors and canvassers." They state that "anyone failing to register under this chapter, or anyone who solicits after his registration has been revoked, as herein provided shall be subject to arrest, prosecution, and fines not to exceed fifty dollars for the first offense, one hundred dollars for the second offense, and two hundred dollars for each subsequent offense."

Priscilla Ress, Eversource's spokesperson for western Massachusetts, said using the company's name to solicit in the competitive market would be "a breach," but that solicitors "may sometimes use it to get their foot in the door."

Ress said the company sometimes responds to complaints about suppliers with an "internal investigation," but that the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU) was responsible for licensing and monitoring companies in the competitive market.

The DPU did not respond to requests for comment by publication time.

Bill Franklin says he canceled his Indra contract after reading in the fine print of his terms of service agreement that this was allowed at any time. He also made a complaint on the Indra customer service line, and was asked for the name of the solicitor who knocked on his door, but he did not have it.

"I don't want to assume it's the solicitor's fault," he told the Reporter. "They could have been encouraged by Indra, or some other company, to use these tactics. I don't know who to blame, but it's a scam."



When I lived in Somerville, my partner and I shared one car, and we alternated taking public transportation to work. The incentives there to take public transportation and not have two cars are really high, compared to out here, but when I moved out here it just seemed like everybody had two or three cars, and I was kind of shocked about it. People said they supported public transportation, and wanted more of it, but they still had two cars.

Part of advocating for Route 23 to Amherst was trying to get more people out of their cars. I had a rental unit, and it was hard to rent to people who went to school there unless they had cars.

MR: *But it's hard to give up a second car, because there aren't very extensive bus routes in the county.*

JS: Yup, and this is one of the issues I'm trying to raise. We're in the process of looking at regional transit authorities all over the state, and trying to set up criteria for evaluating what they're doing in the context of trying to get more money from Governor Baker. In my experience, there's an interaction between the ridership and the routes.

What often happens – and this is what happened with Route 23, it didn't run very much, and it didn't work for most people, so the ridership was real low. So they wanted to cut it out, because the ridership was low, instead of expanding it to create a viable system for more ridership!

There's kind of a back-and-forth loop there, a circular system, which is a point I tried to make at the RTA meeting for their report a few days ago.

MR: *It's like when they had karaoke one night a month at the Rendezvous, and it looked like hardly anyone came, and then they changed it to every Sunday and it became one of their biggest events.*

JS: Absolutely. Although now that you mention it, one of the big concerns, in addition to making access viable to everybody, is to have some sort of weekend service. It's a huge demand of everybody that takes the system.

We are the only RTA in the state that doesn't have some form of weekend service, which I think is absurd and unfair.

MR: *Where has the conversation been about that?*

JS: We have been trying to lobby. Paul Mark, who represents Greenfield, tried to get it into the state budget last year, and it got taken out.

This year we're working with our representatives. Natalie Blais, who's our new state rep, is on the transit committee and it's one of her major issues.

It's a long-term thing. I believe we can do it – I have a little bit of a different perspective on how to lobby for that than some other people.

When I got up at the RTA meeting, I said, "People are getting up here explaining why we need weekend service. I kind of feel we shouldn't even need to do that, because it is state RTA policy to have weekend service. Everyone else has it! So what's going on here? Why do we have to make this argument?"

MR: *How often does the advisory board meet?*

JS: Four times a year – they're called "quarterly" meetings, but they don't quite time like that. We had one last week.

MR: *What was on the agenda?*

JS: We had a personnel policy that we went through, which was interesting. A little bit odd, because the FRTA actually doesn't run the buses – a separate, private corporation runs the buses, which we contract to, by state law – so the personnel policies don't affect the drivers, they affect the ten people who work in the office.

We also had a discussion on the status of the maintenance facility which is supposed to be located in Montague, off of Sandy Lane. It's a big issue for the selectboard, a big issue for the town.

MR: *We heard that news in last week's paper – they didn't get as much money from the federal government as they expected to.*

JS: They were hoping for \$18 to \$20 million. They wanted the whole thing to be in the low \$20 million [range] – they're basically looking at an \$8.4 million facility, did massive cutbacks in the proposal, and now they're trying to get a little more money from the state to make up for some of it so it can be a viable facility.

It's a concern. FRTA is in the midst of pretty heavy negotiations with the state Department of Transportation – they got \$6 million from the feds, and they need \$2.4 from the state.

MR: *When do they build that if they get it?*

JS: They'd like to start moving on it next year. They want to do the design phase soon.

There's going to be a purchase and sale with the town of Montague; they're going to buy that property from us to put that on. But there isn't going to be any tax revenue from it because the FRTA, as a public entity, doesn't pay taxes, and there's no "payment in lieu of taxes" which we get from the state. The trade was they're going to build some infrastructure on Sandy Lane. We shall see.

If this thing doesn't go through – this issue of a new maintenance facility has been talked about for three or four years. It's been one thing after another, one thing after another, and the current maintenance facility is just a complete disaster. There was a fire down there. It's just not a viable facility.

I think it'll be very frustrating if we have to start searching around for another location yet again.

MR: *You told me they're planning to put the buses outside now? Maybe someone can put some solar canopies over them.*

JS: There you go...

So, summing up: It's a great board to be on. I have some credibility, because I ride the buses – due to a change in state law, we now have an official ridership representative, but for a long time I was the only person who regularly rode the buses who was on the advisory board.

It gives you a little clout, if you do your homework and actually ride the buses.

MR: *Who do you tend to see riding?*

JS: That's an interesting issue! It's a pretty diverse population, but there's a large segment of people that just are low-income and can't afford cars. That's a huge constituency for any form of public transportation; it is in Boston, it is anywhere else.

But I think it's a little imbalanced on that side. I'm one of those peo-

ple – I'm not attacking anyone – but when I was in Boston, poor people rode the bus, middle-class people rode the bus, rich people even rode the bus, and I think public transportation had more support because there was a much broader political and economic base for it.

I think what sometimes happens around here is it gets stigmatized. Kids grow up here and go to high school and think you have to be an underprivileged person or something to ride the bus, and everybody agrees with that.

I think it's important to expand the base of public transit, as with most other public things that we do. You want to have a broad base – You're smiling.

MR: *No, I agree! I'm just thinking about the schools.*

JS: Absolutely. That's maybe even a more extreme example, actually.

So, a lot of GCC students ride the bus, it's really important for them. There's a lot of access to GCC. There are issues about the connections and the timing that we still need to resolve, but it's a really crucial constituency.

MR: *What's the state of Route 23 now?*

JS: The state of 23 right now is that we fought to save it a few years ago, and the ridership got a little higher, and we decided to add two more round-trips. So now we're approaching an almost viable, normal route: we have one trip that leaves the transit center at about 6:45 in the morning, and it gets people to UMass for an 8 o'clock work time, and another one at 10:45.

It goes from the Olver Transit Center, by the hospital, Stop & Shop, and over the Gill bridge and into Turners, and then down through Millers Falls and Montague Center into Sunderland. You can get a free bus from Sunderland, which is very well-connected, right into UMass.

Now we have six of those – we've added two more on an experimental basis. My big concern is that it takes a while for people to decide they can move to Turners and still get the bus to UMass. I think it's going to take more than the six-month pilot to prove that that's going to be viable.

But I hope and think that it'll work, and we now have Route 23 normalized. It's very similar to the longer routes: we have one that goes from Greenfield to Orange, one that goes from Greenfield down to Northampton. Those all run several times a day. We have one that goes to the west, Shelburne, that runs five or six times a day. My goal was to normalize Route 23 and make it like those other routes, but we have to get people on the bus.

I plan to spend April walking around putting out good publicity about it.

MR: *So if someone has a choice, and decides to take a bus, what you're saying is they're actually helping get more state money out here to build the system up?*

JS: Totally. I mean, we can't rely on people to do it out of the good of their hearts; it has to be competitive. Right now, you can get to UMass and back, and not wait around for six hours for the next bus, and it's a \$3 round trip. It's not fabulous, but it's moving into being competitive with driving your car and having to park at UMass and getting a parking ticket and all that stuff. It's a relatively good option.

MR: *Is there still a ridership committee, or ridership caucus, on that advisory group?*

JS: There is a transportation advisory committee that's separate from the overall advisory board. It's not exactly a ridership group, but it's a little more heavy on the ridership – the Greenfield energy people, whatever they're called. But there is no ridership caucus.

MR: *So besides filling seats more successfully – and then you said Representative Blais is on the committee – what else is happening statewide to try to get more money, either to Franklin County or to public transportation generally?*

JS: Well, so they established this RTA committee that has representatives from a number of the different transit authorities. They have a report that they just put out, and they're in the public comment period.

That report calls for \$90 million for the 15 regional transit authorities. Baker is proposing \$86. So they're really pushing to increase the money for the RTAs.

That process has been given a boost by the fact that the MBTA, the Boston regional one, which is not part of the RTAs – it has separate governance, and separate policies – raised its fares significantly over the past month. There was a huge outcry, and that led to a broader conversation around the state about expanding money for all mass transit.

Now, people out here feel the money always goes to Boston, and I think there is a danger that the MBTA will get that money and we won't. But at the moment, it has created pressure for Baker to increase public transportation funds for everyone.

It's an interesting time, with trying to reorganize our own system so it works better for people, pay more attention to the energy issues, and take a look at the RTAs and trying to increase funding for them.

MR: *It's amazing to think that 100 years ago, you could hop on the electric trolley down at the very same bus barn, and ride up through Montague City, Turners, and then go up to Millers Falls, down to Lake Pleasant and even down to Montague Center, all on the same system.*

JS: You could go to Lake Pleasant and swim! I know you're not supposed to do that now – you could get on a trolley and go and swim. It's remarkable.

And some of these smaller towns, that right now the transit authority feels it can't afford to serve at all, we had trolleys going out to these places. In the 1920s, there was a huge, huge trolley transportation system. It's amazing to think about it.

And then the car came in, and public transit became expensive, and the balance shifted. Pretty quick.

MR: *And who knows what the next era brings?*

JS: I don't think we'll get back to the good old days, but I do think we can make this a more viable system.

One thing else I would say is for people who theoretically like public trans but never take the bus: I would urge them to give it a shot.

Because it's actually fun. There's a good weird little bus culture that exists on these buses. People actually kind of get along, and talk to the bus driver – they spend a lot of time complaining, but that's always fun, too. I actually kind of like it. It's an odd thing, and I kinda dig it.



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

DOLAN & DOLAN
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

174 AVENUE A
TURNERS FALLS MASSACHUSETTS
01376
413-863-3133

PERSONAL INJURY, WILLS & ESTATES, WORKER'S COMP

Call 413.549.3766
LEGAL SOLUTIONS IN PLAIN ENGLISH, PC

Business Law, Liquor Licenses, Special Permits,
Zoning & Land Use, Civil Litigation. (And More.)

KRISTI A. BODIN, ESQ.

150 Fearing Street, Suite 23, Amherst, MA 01002
Tel 413.549.3766 · fax 800.760.1225 · cell 413.695.9848
KAB@LAWYERAMHERSTMA.COM · WWW.KABESQ.COM

Open every day, 10 to 6

BOOK MILL
440 Greenfield Rd.
Montague, MA 01351

413-367-9206 www.montaguebookmill.com
Books you don't need in a place you can't find.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Groundbreaking for \$5.5 Million New Erving Library Set for Friday, March 29

ERVING – The groundbreaking ceremony for Erving’s new library will take place this Friday, March 29. The outdoor event will begin at 10 a.m. at the site of the project on Care Drive.

The new library will be one half mile north of the current library on Route 63N, located between the Erving Elementary School on Northfield Road and the Erving senior/community center at 2 Care Drive.

The schoolchildren of Erving will witness the groundbreaking as state dignitaries and town officials break ground for one of Erving’s biggest municipal projects.

Participating in the ceremony will be:

- Senator Jo Comerford, *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*
- Representative Susannah Whipps, *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*
- Commissioner N. Janeen Resnick, *Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners*
- Selectboard chair Scott Bastarache, *Town of Erving*
- Library trustee Peter (Rupert) Roy-Clark, *Town of Erving*
- Friends president Rebecca Hubbard, *Erving Public Library*
- Director Barbara Friedman, *Erving Public Library*
- Project manager Dan Pallotta or Rob Todisco, *P3, Inc.*
- Architect Phil O’Brien, *Johnson Roberts, Associates*
- Construction supervisor Jeff Bouyea (or other representative), *Marois Construction*
- Library building consultant Lauren Stara, *Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners*

- Erving town administrative coordinator Bryan Smith
- Building committee co-chair Jacqueline Boyden
- Building committee co-chair Sara Campbell
- Building fundraising committee chair Rob Fletcher
- Other town officials, staff, and committee members*

Townpeople and the Erving library director Barbara Friedman began planning for this project in 2010. In February 2018, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners announced a \$2.7 million grant to help fund the project.

Erving residents approved the project at their annual town meeting in 2017, agreeing to pay the remainder of project costs.

At a January selectboard meeting, a joint meeting with the board of library trustees and the library building committee, Marois Construction Company, Inc. of South Hadley was chosen as the general contractor for the \$5.5 million dollar project designed by Johnson Roberts Associates, Inc. of Somerville. The lead architect is Philip O’Brien. Project managers are Daniel Pallotta and Robert Todisco of P3, Inc.

The project will be completed in early 2020.

MONTAGUE REPORTER



Jeri Moran of Montague Center took a month-long break from her busy newspaper delivery route to visit a tanning booth and then stand in front of this beautiful, high-resolution, wall-sized photographic printout of the Taj Mahal mausoleum in Agra, India. Nice try, Jeri – we’re onto you!

ON THE ROAD

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

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE! (12 WEEK MINIMUM.) CALL 863-8666.

BLUE DRAGON APOTHECARY

CUSTOM CRAFTED HERBAL PRODUCTS
TRADITIONAL MEDICINES & HOLISTIC HEALTH
OFFERING BODYWORK AND CONSULTATIONS

RETAIL HOURS: TUE-FRI 10-6; SAT 10-4
413-773-3730, INFO@BLUEDRAGONAPOTHECARY.COM
158 MAIN ST, SUITE 10 GREENFIELD, MA 01301
BLUEDRAGONAPOTHECARY.COM

Roundabout Books
a bookstore for book people

Wed - Sun: 12 to 5 pm
26 Kenwood St. Greenfield
(413) 773-0820
roundaboutbookstore.com

SHANAHAN CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY CO. INC.
SCSC "Rock solid service with level advice"

Complete Masonry Supply
Offering a complete line of pavers, wall stone, retaining wall block and more. **Ideal**

298 Avenue A., Turners Falls 413-863-4322
and at our new location 529 S. Main St, Brattleboro or 802-579-1800
www.shanahansupply.com

TURN'S LAWN CARE
Landscape Design & Maintenance
For Owners Seeking Recurring Service
Now Scheduling Spring Clean-Ups
413.522.2563
www.TurnLawnCare.com

10% off Parts & Labor
We service all makes & models of outdoor equipment!
Offer expires March 31st

SIRUM
FARM - TURF - INDUSTRIAL
413-367-2481
sirumequipment.com

Ask about pick-up & delivery options!
Rte 63, Montague 413-367-2481

A BEAUTIFUL Smile Starts With Healthy Teeth

GEETU SHOKEEN, DMD

Montague Dental Arts
General Dentistry
300 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376 • 413-863-2288

Peter Waters Painting Services

Interior/Exterior
Custom Residential
Fully Insured

Office: 978-544-6534
Cell: 413-461-5172
Wendell, MA
peterjwaters88@gmail.com

DIEMAND FARM

Take the Chill Off!
Homestyle meals available to heat & eat year-round

Come see what's cooking in our farm store!
126 Mormon Hollow Road, Wendell, MA 01379
www.thediemandfarm.com

Savings & protection for your WHOLE FAMILY!

A.H. Rist
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

Competitive rates & discounts for all of your insurance needs!
159 Avenue A | Turners Falls MA | 413.863.4373 | ahris.com

Totally FREE Checking ADVANTAGE #7

Up to **\$25 Buy Back** of your unused checks and debit card from your old bank when you open a GSB checking account.

View ALL the advantages of GSB Checking on our website.

(413) 774-3191 • (413) 584-4441
greenfieldsavings.com

Greenfield Savings Bank

*All items over \$10.00 may be subject to 1099 reporting.
Member FDIC/Member DIF • Equal Housing Lender

Bob's HOME PROS

413-221-3837 WWW.BOBSHOMEPROS.COM

25 Years Experience in Commercial and Residential Building & Remodeling

Serving Home Grown Farm-inspired Food & Drink

H & O

44 Hope Street, Greenfield, MA 01301
Ph 413 774 3150 | hopeandolive.com

Follow the Sun into the Future

allEarth SOLAR
PREMIER DEALER

GREENFIELD SOLAR STORE
2 Fiske Avenue, Greenfield
solarstoreofgreenfield.com
413.772.3122

Local, residential and small commercial Solar PV Installers for 14+ years in Franklin, Hampshire and Hamden counties.

Panasonic Solar
AUTHORIZED INSTALLER

Call for free site assessment.
Artist: Christine Pellerin

MoRe

MIKE WALLITIS PHOTO



FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER MARCH 28, 2019



By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – Similar to running around an oval, quarter-mile track, I was back where I started – had returned to the source that introduced me to a new concept challenging Western bedrock beliefs about forest-management... among other things more esoteric.

It all started with a trip to my roadside mailbox, from which I pulled the latest *Orion* magazine. Once indoors, reading a story teased on the cover as “What Trees Know,” I knew I had come full circle. Yet, still, many more laps to go. An old saying quoted in the essay about oak trees really stuck. It read: “Three hundred years growing, 300 years living, 300 years dying.” Hmmmm? Profound. Where has that kind of thinking gone? Many times since, on my daily walk with the dogs, I have pondered that same question while passing two majestic, maybe 200-year-old, red oaks reaching high and wide to the heavens from an escarpment overlooking a secluded Green River floodplain I call Sunken Meadow. What’s the chance those two giants will stand 700 more years? I would guess slim indeed. Their lumber is valuable.

Now, I don’t claim to be an expert on the new 21st century paradigm aimed toward promoting old forests. Far from it, in fact. But I am aware of it, have spoken to and exchanged electronic mail with experts and activists, even had the good fortune to tour the old-growth Mohawk Trail State Forest with a group of respected forestry doctors. So, yes, I’m learning. That is reading, chatting, listening, absorbing, processing. Keeping an open mind, the wheels at times humming to a shrill scream.

The previously mentioned article from the most recent *Orion* is written by forward-thinking New York City arborist William Bryant Logan. Titled “The Things Trees Know: A Look Inside Their Secret Lives,” it’s another treatise accepting trees as intelligent members of Mother Earth’s family, not a profitable resource to be economically exploited.

Huh? Trees as sentient beings? You must be kidding. Trees as intelligent communicators? What are you smoking in that Catline bowl? Well, bear with me. This is new. Exciting. Cutting edge. Driven by doctors of science; one a Nobel Prize winner, no less. So, how can we not take notice, even if we accept the model of forest as crop cut in 80-year, income-generating cycles?

We’re led to believe that the en-

trenched Western concept of forest management for profit actually promotes health of the ecosystem and the critters within. Not so, says a growing fraternity of botanists and foresters and environmental scientists who warn that forest management as we know it is good for neither. They say forest management as we know it is bad for forests and, most importantly, the planet – that left to their own wild devices and allowed to grow old, forests can manage themselves just fine, thank you.

Yes, they say, forests allowed to mature to old age are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves, of fighting off plagues and pests without human intervention. Better still, forests of wise, old trees are healthier, more dynamic and better for the health of the ecosystem and our planet. Why the planet? Because large trees are crucial players in a natural carbon-sequestration process now needed to combat global warming fueled by human burning of fossil fuels.

So how do we convince the timber industry to back off? How can we reshape attitudes of investors and heirs who own forests and pay property taxes on them? It’s a vexing dilemma. Maybe there’s a way to offer incentives for those allowing forest stands to grow old and filter harmful carbon from the atmosphere. Perhaps there’s a way to shift public opinion, which seems now to favor our commercial forest-management model. Maybe the policy shift should begin on publicly owned land, as proposed right here in the Bay State to a chorus of boos.

The first time I read about wise, old trees communicating and mobilizing against pestilence and plague was several years ago. Robin Wall Kimmerer introduced the concept in “The Council of Pecans,” an *Orion* excerpt from the Potawatomi botanist’s acclaimed 2013 book of essays *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*. Check the SUNY Buffalo professor on YouTube if you want to be introduced to a refreshing new way of thinking about man’s relationship to nature.

Myself, despite being versed in Native American and Far Eastern spirituality that gives plants, animals, and even inanimate objects like stones, cliffs, waterfalls or spring holes a living spirit and even a soul, I was at first hesitant to write about it in the local newspaper for fear of ridicule. Yet Kimmerer constructed a solid argument that trees and plants can

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B5

Above: Mike Wallitis shared this photo of the former Millers Falls Tool Company buildings in Ervingside. Check out more of his remarkable aerial drone photography on Facebook at “Eyes Above Franklin County – MA!”



“Strange Radio” Elicits Deep Listening

By TRISH CRAPO

AMHERST – Can a mic pick up memories that aren’t your own?

This might not be something you’d expect a radio producer to ask, but it’s just one of many unusual and provocative questions Montague radio producer and sociologist Karen Werner posed during a talk held on Monday at Frost Library at Amherst College. Speaking quietly but with infectious curiosity, Werner told the audience gathered in the Center for Humanistic Inquiry about *Strange Radio*, her seven-episode radio series that explores the effect of the trauma of the Holocaust across time and through four generations of her family.

In Zen Buddhism, Werner told the audience, practitioners are giv-

en a koan: “A story you can’t make sense of, and you work with it until you become it.”

Meditating on a paradoxical koan is meant to loosen a practitioner’s dependence on logical reasoning and open the way towards intuition, hopefully enlightenment. Werner likened working with koans to the process she’s immersed herself in while creating *Strange Radio*.

Both of her parents are from Vienna, and Werner says she grew up in a “strange, phantom Vienna” based on their stories – both the ones they told, and the ones they didn’t. Werner carries the Hebrew name of her great-grandmother, Sheva, who was murdered at Auschwitz. But the family never talked about that. Like many families that have experienced trauma, her fami-



Karen Werner listens to a recording she made in the “second basement” of a medical school in Vienna where her father hid from the Nazis during World War II, during a talk at Amherst College on Monday.

ly was focused on moving forward, Werner said, leaving her with a void of information about the past.

“It’s interesting what gets transmitted,” Werner said, one of many times her use of language made me think more deeply about the vocabulary of radio production. Her use of the word “receiver” to mean a person listening was another.

Werner became obsessed with the one photograph the family had of her great-grandmother, in which Sheva looks into the camera lens with a defiant expression. “My early radio experiments were just trying to listen for her,” Werner said, putting a hand to one ear. She paused long enough that I began to listen, too.

see **RADIO** page B2



Werner gave a presentation on her *Strange Radio* project at Amherst’s Frost Library.

THE GARDENER’S COMPANION

A Breath of Spring

By LESLIE BROWN

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.

You know how it is on an April day. When the sun is out and the wind is still,

You’re one month on in the month of May.

But if you so much dare to speak, A cloud comes over the sunlit arch, And wind comes off a frozen peak, And you’re two months back in the middle of March.

– Robert Frost, from *Two Tramps in Mudtime*

MONTAGUE CITY – The vernal equinox brought all the loving warmth a spring day can bring: sixty degrees, soft breezes, blue skies, and gentle air. The spring bulbs popped up, showing tiny green tips, and the cat tore around the yard and

up a tree, shadow boxing with last year’s brown leaves, and in one Olympic moment, leaping onto the garden gate and into the tomato bed. Nothing there but crusty snow, yet she was possessed by the need to make sure.

We hauled in the last of the cordwood to fill two wooden carts in the cellar, enough for another month of fires, then set out a couple of lawn chairs to have a cup of tea, and just sit for the sheer pleasure of the unexpected sun. It is the opposite of the sun in Florida, which is expected every day: this brief respite of heat and softness on the first day of New England spring.

At night the full worm moon, the last super moon of this year, rises huge and luminous in the eastern sky. It is so bright later in the darkness that we and the cat are wide awake in the middle of the night, as



if a huge spotlight were turned on in the side yard. What a gift to see the super moon in Florida rise over the ocean, and then a mere month later, the same splendid orb over the remaining snow in our yard.

In the true form of spring in New England, the next day is cloudy and chilly. Cold rain is to follow. But that first blush of spring has only whetted the palate, and we are ready to plant the tomatoes.

In an optimistic spirit on our return, we have purchased a bag of seed-starting soil containing sphagnum peat moss and perlite, as well as a wetting agent. This formula

see **GARDENER’S** page B3

Pets of the Week



CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE

“COOKIE & S'MORE”

Cookie and S'More are paired guinea pigs who wish to remain together as a family.

If you think you might have a

good home for them, please contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities

APRIL 1 THROUGH 5

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 a.m. Aerobics; 10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise

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

Monday 4/1

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 4/2

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

Wednesday 4/3

9 a.m. Veterans' Outreach
12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 4/4

9 a.m. NO Tai Chi
10:15 a.m. NO Chair Yoga

10:30 a.m. to noon: Brown Bag
1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Friday 4/5

12 p.m. Pizza Party
1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregating meals. Lunch is at 12 p.m., with reservations required two days in advance. Call (413) 423-3649 for meal information and reservations.

For information, call Paula

Bettors, 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 4/1

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance
11:30 a.m. Breakfast Brunch

1 p.m. Pitch/Bridge Game

Tuesday 4/2

8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise
10 a.m. Stretch & Balance
12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich

Wednesday 4/3

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 p.m. Homemade Lunch
1 p.m. Drumming Class

Thursday 4/4

8 a.m. Foot Clinic
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
12:30 p.m. Brown Bag Pickup

Friday 4/5

9 a.m. Quilting Workshop
9:15 a.m. Flex & Stretch
9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun
10:30 a.m. M3 Exercise Games

LEVERETT

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

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

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

RADIO from page B1

Werner hadn't seen the neighborhood in which her parents had grown up until about ten or twelve years ago, when she and her parents traveled to Vienna. They stood outside the apartment building where her mother's family had lived since the 1920s until they were evicted during the war. They didn't even ring any buzzers that time, Werner said, because it just didn't seem possible that they would ever be able to enter.

“What is a stranger?” Werner asked the audience. “Am I the stranger?”

She told us, “I'm going back to Vienna; I don't look like a stranger, yet I don't speak the language.”

She felt so many conflicting layers of belonging and not belonging, being both insider and outsider, that, somehow, it felt right to just stand outside the building that first time.

Healing a Wound

Then in 2016, while on an artist's residency in Vienna, Werner and her mother found the house again, and Werner made some of the first recordings of the *Strange Radio* project.

As her familiarity with her family's apartment building grew, Werner learned that during the war, it had been converted into a deportation house, where Jews who had been evicted from other parts of Vienna were packed in while awaiting deportation and, eventually, murder. Two hundred and twenty-one people from the house, including some of her family members, were deported and murdered. The work of *Strange Radio* began to seem to Werner a way to heal the historical wound inflicted on her family and others.

Werner played an excerpt from the third episode, “Postcards from the Second Basement,” in which she reads postcards to family members, and to one stranger, as she's writing them from a basement below a Vienna medical school's pharmacology department – the same basement

in which her father hid from Nazis during the Second World War.

In bits of conversation with a man leading her through the basement, Werner divulges that her father survived by eating lab animals. At first she says “mice,” and it's oddly riveting to listen to her guide kindly and logically explain that it couldn't have been mice, because there wouldn't have been any in the lab at that time. It might have been rats or rabbits, he tells her.

Leaning against the wall, eyes closed, Werner listened to the conversation along with us, emotion drifting across her face.

In 2017, Werner was commissioned to create a sound installation in a public passageway at MuseumsQuartier Wien, one of the largest cultural complexes in the world. For the first time, Werner made field recordings inside her family's apartment building, and got to know current occupants. She did most of the recording in the hallways, which seemed to perfectly represent that threshold, the “betwixt and between” place she'd experienced in past visits.

The Mystery of Radio

In what became Episode 6 of *Strange Radio*, “Haus: Part 1, Covenant of the Tongue,” Werner recites the 22 letters from the Sefer Yetzirah, a book of Jewish spiritual practice, as offerings to heal the ghosts of the house. The audio layering as she experiments with uttering the unfamiliar sounds is hypnotic to listen to, and had a physical effect on Werner as she chanted.

“That's what I did to create myself out of the wound of this house,” she said. “My whole body would vibrate.”

In what became Episode 7: “Haus: Part 2, Zirkus,” the house's proximity to Zirkusgasse, a road famous for being the home of Viennese circuses, sparked the idea to have occupants perform small “acts” as if circus acts. These acts, which include the ambi-

ent sounds picked up by an aerial antenna, a spoken choir of residents reading the apartment numbers and their occupants, a housing scientist defining a house, are nothing like circus acts you've ever seen.

In fact, this is the mystery of radio – nothing is seen. Radio creates an imaginative space that listeners fill with their own visual information.

Unlike podcasts, which Werner described as “highly privatized listening,” radio is “the space where you mingle with other selves.”

The “liveness” of radio, says Werner, “is increasingly thrilling.”


She finds its accidental quality compelling.

“The signal is fragile and interruptible. ... You can never really tell or tally who's listening to you,” she said.

Werner will be presenting *Strange Radio 3: Strange Radio as Live Performance* during Eggtooth Productions' Radical Interconnectedness Festival, Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27, 7 p.m. at Church of Pod, Turners Falls (the former St. Andrew's Episcopal Church).

Werner said she'll be basing the performance on Episode 5 of *Strange Radio*, entitled, “Strange Time(s),” and is excited to explore how to allow the “space of the piece to resonate in Turners Falls.”

She responded to an audience member's question about the nature of that upcoming performance with some questions of her own: “What is the purpose of *Strange Radio* if it's not in Vienna anymore? What if history is not linear, but happens all at once? What if time is a koan?”

For more information on the *Radical Interconnectedness Festival*, see eggtooth.org. For more on *Karen Werner's work, including audio recordings of episodes of Strange Radio*: karenwerner.net. Listen to *Werner's local bi-weekly radio show, Sketchpad*, Mondays from noon to 2 p.m. on WMCB 107.9 FM. 

OUT OF THE PARK: March 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello everyone! Spring has arrived, and I'm sure you're all thrilled. In no time we'll be able to run through the green grass, hear the birds chirping, and watch the flowers bloom.

Spring is certainly a busy time of year for us, and almost as busy as our summer! One of the first events we host in the spring is our annual **Peter Cottontail's EGGstravaganza**. This year will be our 14th EGGstravaganza, and it will be held at Unity Park on Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m., rain or shine. Children ages 4 to 12 are invited to take part in this great community tradition, which will include pictures with Peter Cottontail, raffles, a bake sale, and of course our egg hunt that includes 5,000 candy and toy-filled eggs. Participants must bring their own basket or bag for the eggs. We would like to thank our event sponsors: the Montague Elks, Letourneau Plumbing, and Greenfield Savings Bank.

We also still have some spots available in our **Tee Ball and Rookie Baseball** programs. Both programs are held from April 20 through June 1 on Saturday mornings. Tee Ball is for kids aged 4 to 6, with Rookie Baseball for 7- to 9-year-olds.



Rookie Baseball is a coaches-pitch program, and we recommend kindergarten players start with Tee Ball before playing Rookie ball. Hurry up and register your little one now before all the spots are taken.

Switching to girls softball: this year we are offering a **Nipper League** program (the Purple Panthers) for girls ages 7 to 9. The Purple Panthers is also a coach-pitch program, and we participate in the Greenfield Girls Softball League. All games are played at Murphy Park, and the season goes from early April to mid-June.

Not being “just for kids,” MPRD also manages the **Montague Adult Co-Ed “B” Softball League**. This league is sanctioned by the American Softball Association, and has been in existence for approximately twenty years. If you are interested in joining a team, call us ASAP.

Keep in mind that we cannot guarantee placement, and that the league is for those ages 18 and up. The season goes from mid-May through mid-August, with games being held Monday and Thursday evenings.

Looking beyond our spring programs, we'll be starting **Summer Camp registration** for Montague residents on Monday, April 1. This summer, camp will go from Monday, June 24 to Friday, August 16. Summer Camp is held Mondays thru Fridays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We offer theme weeks, field trips, special events, and trips to Laurel Lake. The camp is designated as a Licensed Day Camp through the MA Dept. of Public Health. Non-residents may start to register on Monday, April 29.

That's about it from here. If you wish to obtain information on some of our other programs and events like Summer Bluefish Swim Team, Unity Park Community Garden events, and The Montague Warrior Dash Adventure Race, feel free to contact us at 863-3216, log onto montague.net, or view our Facebook page. Other than that, enjoy the start of spring!

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

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

Free Mobile App
with **Mobile Check Deposit!**

GREENFIELD  **NORTHAMPTON**
Cooperative Bank Cooperative Bank
A Division of Greenfield Cooperative Bank

Avenue A, Turners Falls | 413-512-5012

 BestLocalBank.com  MEMBER FDIC
MEMBER SIF

THE PEOPLES


OPEN DAILY
LUNCH and DINNER
24 Federal St., Greenfield
773-0333 / thepeoplespint.com

The Pint Says: TURN THE KEY!
When you idle your car's engine for more than 10-20 seconds, you're wasting fuel.
Save on Gas - Save our Climate

SPIRITS, BREWS & FINE WINES

53C S. Main St. South Deerfield, MA
295 Amherst Rd. Sunderland, MA

New Location Now Open:
6 Main Road, in Gill
(formerly Jan's Package Store)
Come check us out!

Deerfield: (413) 665-2456
Sunderland: (413) 665-5030
Gill: (413) 863-5730



GARDENER'S from page B1

is designed for soil aeration and is much lighter than traditional potting soil. This combination assures space for root development and water retention so essential for seed germination.

We mix seed starter with water and fill the cells of the mini greenhouse, press down the soil, and then, using a sharp pencil, make a hole for each seed, which is barely covered with dirt.

The chosen varieties this year are: Sungold, a prolific flavorful cherry; Independence Day, an early yet tasty mid-sized fruit; Brandywine, an old-fashioned beefsteak subject to cracking but immensely flavorful; Jet Star, a mid-sized tasty hybrid; Celebrity, an old-fashioned large late season tomato perfect for making the ultimate BLT; and Tidy Rose, a compact plant which nonetheless produces a large tasty tomato mid-season.

We set out six of each variety, cover them lightly, then set the whole miniature covered greenhouse on a heated mat in the sunroom. Germination can be expected in seven to ten days, depending on the warmth in the room and the soil. This will give us some 30-odd plants to share with friends and family and something on the order of six to eight plants for our own garden; more than enough to tend, weed and feed.

Checking in the side yard, we are

thrilled to see that three tries were the charm: the two small pine trees we brought back from the old family homestead where Ken and his siblings were raised have not only survived the winter, but are thriving in the shelter of a couple of balsams I dug in Maine so many years ago.

The yard is a garden of memories from other places and other times: the rhododendron I was given at the time of my dad's passing; my retirement magnolia, trees from Woody's wood lots; a beach rose grown from hips of a plant in Scituate; daylilies from Ken's trailer lot; lilacs shared by dear neighbors no longer living.

We keep a sharp eye for further signs of spring. In the tree line at the edge of the sky, the maple buds are showing red and are fattening up, the forsythia stems have started to yellow as have the willows. A chaty flock of robins arrives.

The sunsets and sunrises move closer, with soft mauves and pinks. Yet this is a reluctant season, coming on in fits and starts and disappointing often with chilly winds. It's too soon to put away the heavy sweaters and hats, but rest assured, spring will come.

Take note of every nuance and subtle delicacy. In many ways, this is the sweetest season. We emerge slowly from winter but then, *biggity-bang!* all of a sudden it will be hot summer, a-blare with sounds and color and right in your face.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Champagne, Turkey, Probation, Goats, Four-Wheelers, Raccoons, Ice, Skunks, Larceny, Fox, Logs, Cows...

Sunday, 3/17

7:09 p.m. Officers discovered a campfire, along with people trespassing, on FirstLight property on I Street. Campfire was fully extinguished by the people there under PD supervision. Involved parties are packing up and moving along.

Monday, 3/18

12:52 a.m. A 31-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, and possession of a Class A drug.

2:19 p.m. Store manager at Food City states that a male just stole two bottles of champagne and headed out on foot towards the center of town. Suspect spotted running on foot near the post office. Officer has male party matching description detained on J Street. Investigated.

5:32 p.m. Caller reporting that someone hit her car while it was parked at her place of employment today. Caller advises that they hit her driver's side front quarter panel and bumper. Caller got home and decided she should probably call the police. Advised caller that this would be on record, and advised her to check with her employer and see if they have security cameras on the premises that can be reviewed. Report taken.

Tuesday, 3/19

4:40 p.m. Officer checking on motorist at Montague City Road and Farren Avenue; appears vehicle struck an animal. Vehicle struck a turkey, which is now dead. Operator will be taking the animal with them.

4:49 p.m. Caller discovered that her vehicle was struck while she was inside Food City. No note left on her vehicle, but observed damage consistent with damage to caller's car on a nearby vehicle. Parties exchanged information. Report taken.

6:45 p.m. A 21-year-old Greenfield woman was arrested on a straight warrant.

Wednesday, 3/20

2:16 a.m. Call from probation electronic monitoring department; same has faxed a temporary warrant for a male party whose work address is in Turners Falls. Probationer is unable to be monitored or reached by any means. Contact made with supervisor at workplace, who confirmed that the male is at work at this time. Same was advised to meet officer outside loading dock. Probation department advising party should be held until court. A 25-year-old Springfield

man was arrested on a probation warrant.

1:24 p.m. Party into station advising that she was told by the Environmental Police to come to MPD with a dead bird to be tested for West Nile virus. Called animal control officer, who advises that the party need to bring the bird down to the Board of Health. Placed a call to Board of Health; no answer.

5:48 p.m. Report of eight or nine goats in the road just north of Mark's Auto on Federal Street. Goats located south of Mark's Auto and guided back to pasture.

8:04 p.m. Shelburne Control advising that a caller reported to them that he and a person he used to work for were texting back and forth and not agreeing. Caller stated he told the other male to stop texting him, and then the male texted him back stating that he was going to contact the state police. Caller wanted this on record in case anything should arise. Caller called MPD reporting same as to Control; advises he has deleted party's contact numbers, but did save his text messages in case something happens. Caller called back again advising that as he was transferring all the messages from his phone to his home phone via Xfinity, he accidentally hit the other party's number, but no message was sent. Caller states that the male party then texted him again and said to stop texting his wife's phone. Caller again just wants this on record.

Friday, 3/22

10:45 a.m. Report of erratic operation; vehicle all over road and went off the road partly into a ditch at one point. While caller was on the line, vehicle was northbound on Route 63 in Millers Falls; continued northbound from Bridge Street in MF over the bridge onto Lester Street in Erving. Shelburne Control advised. Copied over simulcast that Erving PD is off with that vehicle on Route 2 eastbound.

3:10 p.m. Caller from Bridge Street states that a female just punched and smashed out a 7' x 7' window to his business. Report taken.

Thursday, 3/21

1:54 a.m. Shelburne Control advises receiving a call reporting an open door to the apartment above the Millers Falls Laundry Company. Caller reports that apartment is vacant and no one should be in there. MPD units responding. Officer advises building cleared; no signs of forced entry or damage; nothing out of place. Requesting day

shift contact landlord.

11:18 a.m. Caller from Third Street reporting larceny of packages that were supposed to be delivered to him. Caller advises that he has talked with other residents of the building and they have had packages stolen, too. Report taken.

11:52 a.m. Motorist reported to detail officer that there are logs on North Leverett Road that were cut down and are now resting on snow that has melted; concerned they will slide into the road. DPW advised. DPW will be contacting Eversource, who is believed to have had the trees cut.

6:59 p.m. Caller from Emond Avenue requesting options about neighbors riding four-wheelers in the street; not in progress. Advised of options.

Friday, 3/22

10:45 a.m. Report of erratic operation; vehicle all over road and went off the road partly into a ditch at one point. While caller was on the line, vehicle was northbound on Route 63 in Millers Falls; continued northbound from Bridge Street in MF over the bridge onto Lester Street in Erving. Shelburne Control advised. Copied over simulcast that Erving PD is off with that vehicle on Route 2 eastbound.

3:47 p.m. Walk-in party reporting that there are people begging outside of her apartment building on Avenue A, and the other day, one of them pushed her. Report taken.

4:08 p.m. Caller from X Street states that there is a raccoon walking around the neighborhood and it may be "sick." ACO notified.

5:51 p.m. Caller from Center Street states that there is a large white skunk in her neighbor's yard that

appears rabid. Referred to an officer.

11:31 p.m. Caller from Center Street reporting a skunk under her porch; states that skunk has been in the area for some time now. Advised caller that message would be left for animal control officer.

Saturday, 3/23

5:43 a.m. Caller reporting one-car accident on Wendell Road. No parties in or around vehicle; looks as though it happened hours ago. Vehicle is down in a ditch and has struck a tree. Responding officers advising road is sheer ice; requesting Rau's and DPW. Both contacted and en route.

10:47 a.m. Asplundh crew working without a detail officer on South Ferry Road. Officer spoke with crew; work will be done for the day.

11:38 a.m. Caller reporting injured coyote in Turners Falls; advises she contacted Environmental Police, who advised they would be sending an officer but did not specify an estimated time of arrival. Caller will call EPO back to get a better estimate for ETA.

12:27 p.m. Report of coyote at New England Extrusion on Industrial Boulevard walking in circles and foaming at the mouth. Conferred with Environmental Police dispatch. MPD officer advises animal is a fox and it is walking in circles in front of their entrance. EPO en route; five minute ETA. Fox has been put down.

1:37 p.m. Report of raccoon that is not acting right on the path uphill from L Street. Area search negative.

9:01 p.m. Passerby reporting a few cows loose from farm near Senn Excavating on Wendell Road. Owner of cows notified and will be rounding them up.

9:04 p.m. Caller states that there is a car with no lights on parked by the Lake Pleasant railroad crossing; seems suspicious. Unable to locate.

Alienation Movie Premieres

By REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – Another red carpet is going to be rolled out in Turners Falls soon, heralding the production of a short film starring short people. The carpet may be a bit shorter as well, since the premiere will be held inside of the Rendezvous rather than the Shea Theater, which recently premiered the (long-titled) locally filmed movie, *The Man Who Killed Hitler and Then the Bigfoot*.

This locally-made, family-friendly (and short-titled) short film, "Alienation," is a science-fiction drama-comedy, written and directed by Vanessa Query and featuring her son, Desmond Arnold, as well as several other local families, including local artists and entrepreneurs Christopher Janke and son Theo Janke, and Daryl Beck as cinematographer along with daughter Jessica Beck. The film stars mostly local children, with the occasional adult in a supporting role.

Described as "part Casper the Friendly Ghost, part E.T., part David Lynch," the story concerns an alien (played by 8-year-old Beatrice Mickus) who is lost and looking for their way home. Trying to get help



from the dominant sentient population (i.e., humans), the alien manages only to scare everyone away with their bizarre look and their bizarre language. Will the alien ever find their way home?

"Alienation" was shot in mostly Greenfield, and some in Turners Falls. It contains highly recognizable landmarks, such as Poet's Seat Tower, downtown Greenfield, and the ruins of the Railroad Salvage building in Turners Falls. Check out the trailer for "Alienation" at youtu.be/w5ErgMrvrbg.

The premiere will include a screening of the six-minute film and a Q&A with the cast and crew. The premiere is free to attend. Donations will be accepted to fund future film projects by the group. Check it out on Thursday, April 11, at 7 p.m. at the Rendezvous, 78 Third Street. For more information and full credits, visit vanessaquery.com/alienation.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week at MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Is that birds we hear singing their sweet tunes? It's springtime, after all! Or could it be the latest music installments available from Montague Community TV?

Check out the latest at montaguetv.org:

- The Farley String Irish Band: Irish Music at Greenfield Savings Bank, 2019.
- 1st Chapter: Anand Nayak and

Jim Eagan at Great Falls Coffee House, 3/8/19.

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

Contact us at (413) 863-9200, infomontaguetv@gmail.com, or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to work with you!

MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!
C AIR'S SFCRY VIDS IQ
MIRZNUDD PRAUNDSERAD
FIG UMIRIVCMD GINYD.
EXUBERANCE IMEDCI-MINSUK
 CRACK THE CODE? SEND YOUR ANSWER TO: INFO@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

RIVERSIDE RADIATOR
 General Auto Repair
 RADIATORS for CARS - TRUCKS
 and HEAVY EQUIPMENT
 Foreign and Domestic
 Propane Filling Station
 Route 2, Gill
 863-4049 1-800-439-4049
 85 Monday - Thursday

CHARON ART VISIONARY TATTOO
 Inspired, holistic tattoos with a focus on personal energy, experience and spontaneous creation.
 www.CharonArt.com
 413.676.9146
 107 Avenue A, Great Falls

Doug's Auto Body
 Doug Smith - Owner
PRECISION REPAIRS
 MA Reg. #RS2190
 Ph. (413) 863-2785 39 Center Road
 Fax: (413) 863-0120 Gill, MA 01354
FREE ESTIMATES FREE LOANER CARS
 REPAIRS ON FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS AND TRUCKS

Montv
MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN
 EPISODE 5: PNM Bots

By J. BURKETT

TURNERS FALLS – PNM Bots is a group from Delaware. It's a duo of Troy and Heather Curry. They also run a contemporary underground record label called "Idea Records" (*ideaintermedia.com*), which has released albums by Mirror, MV/EE, Frozen Corn, Dan Melchior, Daisuke Suzuki, Die Wait Watchers, Mike Cooper, Tetuzi Akiyama, and more.

They are playing at the Root Cellar in Greenfield this Sunday, March 31 with Wes Buckley, Tarp, and Cycles Inside.

MMM: So you guys run a record label, both do visual art, and have a band...wow! And you still do tattooing... How would you compare doing these different arts?

Troy: For me it's the same process... When I am in the zone, and finally undisturbed by other thoughts. Total joy and focus. Sometimes loose and quick.

Tattooing can be very focused and one can also have a loose more relaxed approach. It deals so much with another being's space and energy from everything all around the space.

MMM: So, it's true that you like the western MA scene? What is your term for this area?

Troy: We call it the "Magical Forest." Idealized concept in mind of western Massachusetts up to Vermont. A place wherein fireflies light up the woods like glowing warm lights for cozy loving comfort zones. A world wherein many gateways in the forests open up along the path and with infinite ? possibilities.

Glowing candle lit forested villages lighting the path! We love western Massachusetts. Beautiful trees and there is magic all around swirling through every particle. Such a creative amazing place. The land "feels like a dream world." Floating world in United States.

MMM: Who are some of your favorite music makers who play out here these days?

Troy: Jeffrey Gallagher, Shannon and Beverly Ketch from Bunwinkies, Sam Gas Can, Wednesday Knudsen (upstate NY), Adolf Dove, Matt Robidoux, Dredd Foole (VT), Village of Spaces, Joshua Burkett, IDM Theatable (Maine), Tarp, Owen Manure, Arkm Foam, Cycles Inside, Mazozma, Wendy Eisenberg...

MMM: Where is your name from? And what are your influences?

Troy: Heather and I made a name for the duo PNM BOTS because it was difficult for me to say and because it just came to us. It was a name that came immediately. It may make sense to us later on?

I think much influence from LAFMS, Mike Kelley and Tony Oursler's poetics as well as Gero-gerigege and also this Sore Throat - Sore Throat LP, Incredible String Band, and classic Rock and Roll music.

MMM: There is a way of thinking about/listening to music as hearing different colors... Do you know about this? What colors would PNM Bots be?

Troy: Yes, this is like synesthesia. Makes sense to me. Also a kind of "energetic" feeling. Healing!

PNM Bots would be "rainbow spectrum"!

Heather: "I enjoy all light, even bright light. I can see and it makes me feel warm..."

MMM: How would you describe your act for the Root Cellar show? What might be expected to happen?

Troy: We keep imagining, when we play live, it sounding like the Vampyros Lesbos or Serge Gainsbourg album *The Man With The Cabbage Head...* with people dancing.

Possibly in reality it will be nothing like this. This is many times how we may feel. We are happy to play live and to see other great musicians and artists we love. I am not sure yet what will happen. Very psyched!

MMM: What about your label? Anything happening soon in the future?

Troy: We are really enjoying Idea Records. We can't wait to release more LPs. The label started a long time ago, 1998: more slowed down and started doing more. It's very fun. The approach feels very collaborative.

We want to help get really beautiful music to people. Future visions definitely include more fun collaborations and seeing more great live music arts.

MMM: Ok, great! Anything else?

Troy: People please check out the incredible Mystra label. This has been a big inspiration!

T-RUMP



OVER THE HILL



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was March 26, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Brush Fires in Lake Pleasant

On Tuesday morning, David James, who works behind the desk at the Lake Pleasant Post Office, said one of his customers commented how dry it had been lately, and how much the village needed rain.

James was off to lunch when the freight train heading north rolled to a stop near the dell at the end of First Avenue, trailing half a dozen brush fires on both sides of the tracks.

According to Patrick Lathrop, a new resident of First Avenue who had been working on the exhaust system of his black Chevy in his front yard that afternoon, the engineer stopped the freight after he noticed sparks from the train had been setting off brush fires along the track.

Lathrop's landlord called in the fires around 1 p.m. By that time, a patch of the embankment in front of Lathrop's house 30 feet by 30 feet was blazing away, he said. A large pile of scrap timber that had been tossed over the embankment in that area appeared to feed the blaze.

Ralph Rau, who coordinated the response from the Montague Center Fire Department, brought one pumper truck and a brush truck, and called in backup from Turners Falls, Leverett, and the Forest Service after he saw the extent of the blazes. "There was too much fire for us," he said. Help from the property's garden hose was ineffective.

Firefighters eventually had to spray fire-retardant foam on the

burning railroad ties to put the fires out.

Pan American Railroad director of safety Dave Nagy declined to comment on the cause of the fires.

Ward to Run for Gill Selectboard

The town of Gill has not seen a race for selectboard since 2003, when Leland Stevens defeated Sandra Brown, 125-91. This year's election may be even more interesting.

Co-owner of the Greenfield Solar Store, John Ward, a 21-year resident of Riverside, said Wednesday he had gathered enough signatures to have his name placed on the ballot for the three-year seat up for election on May 18. Stevens holds that seat, and Ward promises he will be contesting it again.

Ward said he was not running against the incumbent so much as "looking for change" on the board.

1% Increase Voted For G-M Schools

The Gill Montague Regional School Committee voted a new budget at their meeting on Tuesday, proposing a 1.001% increase of \$167,015 over last year's operating budget of \$16,625,875. This represents a decrease of about \$265,000 from the "placeholder" 2.7% budget increase approved by the G-M committee on January 27.

Interim superintendent of schools Ken Roche said the 1% budget "represents our best estimate of fixed cost increases for a level services budget, if we don't cut any programs."

Two budget proposals were

placed before the committee on Tuesday night. The first, proposing a 0% increase from last year's figure, failed by a vote of 2 to 7. The second budget proposal, for the 1% increase, passed by a vote of 7 to 2, with Mike Langknecht and Sandy Brown in opposition.

Brown said she believed that even with a 0% increase, the schools will still be facing a \$673,000 budget gap between town assessments from last year, and district spending.

"The state isn't going to give us any more money," Brown said.

Protest Held at Bank of America

Last Thursday, more than a dozen local citizens and representatives from labor unions including SEIU Local 615, Western Massachusetts Jobs with Justice, UAW Local 2322, and the Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council staged a picket line in front of Bank of America's Greenfield branch office on Federal Street, calling on Congress to pass stimulus measures to create "an economy that works for everyone," coupled with increased regulation of the banking and financial industry.

In an email from their present office, Bank of America responded to the protest by saying, "We respect the rights of individuals to demonstrate peacefully according to their beliefs. Bank of America is using the Troubled Asset Relief Program funds responsibly."

In anticipation of the protest, the Bank of America branch in Greenfield hired additional security services for the day, provided by Wackenhut.



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

COUTURE BROS.
 Since 1910
Professional Painting & Decorating Contractor
 Commercial • Residential • Industrial
 "SERVING WESTERN MASS FOR OVER 100 YEARS"
 www.couturebros.com
 400 Avenue A Turners Falls, MA • 413-863-4346

EDWARDS TREE SERVICE
 Matthew Edwards
 Certified Arborist
 Tree Climbing Specialist • Pruning And Removals
 Stump Grinding • Practicing Fine Arboriculture
Residential / Commercial / Municipal
 60 Ft. Aerial Lift • Brush Chipping
 Fully Insured With Workers Comp. • Insurance and Liability
 WWW.MATTEDWARDSTREE.COM
 Wendell, MA
 Serving Hampshire And Franklin Counties
413-325-7823 or 978-544-7452

Pipione's
 SPORT SHOP
 • Fishing supplies; Live bait
 • Fishing & Hunting Licenses
 • Paintball & CO₂ Refills
 • Guns & Ammo
 Open 7 am 7 days a week
 101 Ave A, Turners 414.863.4246

What's Old is New Again: Taylor's Tavern and Restaurant

By EVELYN AUGUSTO

GREENFIELD – We can't judge a book by its cover, but we can judge a restaurant by its menu. Folks with discerning palates can also come to appreciate a restaurant through an engaging waitstaff, elegant atmosphere, and how easy it feels to be there. And since executive chef Shawn McGuinness joined the Taylor's Tavern family last year, that seems to be what owner Mark Donoghue is counting on putting together as the restaurant seeks to reinvent itself.

The recipe for success at Taylor's is this: Take everything that the regulars love about Taylor's – its attentive and professional waitstaff and its seasoned bartenders, Kathy Loud and Tom Blanchard (who, incidentally, know their customers as well as they know how to mix a killer cocktail) – and marry these to the bountiful menu chef Shawn has created.

The results? A dining experience and fare that even the staff at another popular Greenfield venue are impressed with. "Really?" the bartender elsewhere queried, "that's



Executive chef Shawn McGuinness joined the Taylor's Tavern family last year.

on the menu at Taylor's?" "Yes," I reported. "I just had the greatest charcuterie board stacked with duck prosciutto, smoked gouda, and a bourbon-bacon marmalade. And I loved the beet and goat cheese mousse!" I beamed. "So, sorry – I'm not hungry tonight."

Taylor's resides on the lower level of a bustling building in Greenfield. The restaurant and tavern have been a favorite place to go for area residents for a long time, having been established over 35 years ago by businessman Mark Donoghue. The restaurant has been

servicing homemade meals, at affordable prices, three times a day, seven days a week for all these years. The tavern itself has a majestic bar and boasts ten locally crafted beers, including Lefty's Golden Ale and the New City Pilsner; my favorite is the Hitchcock Hurricane Porter.

I sat with Shawn in a private booth one Thursday afternoon in Taylor's just before show time, and discussed an array of topics. I asked Shawn, "Why are you preparing meals here at Taylor's? You live in Rutland, Massachusetts."

Shawn smiled and said, "I really like Mark, and I love the old-fashioned atmosphere of the restaurant. I'm also grateful for the opportunity Mark has given me to prepare the good food I think our guests are looking for."

"I like him too!" I said. "Mark reminds me of Atticus, the dad in *To Kill a Mockingbird* – don't you think?"

Shawn added, "That's about right."

"So, Shawn," I asked, "Where did you learn about the chemistry of food? I have tasted the meals you have prepared, and they're wonderful!"

"I started cooking at Café Bernardo in Davis, California when I was 24," he began. "From there I bounced around Sacramento, working anything from food trucks to fine dining. When my wife and I moved back to Massachusetts, I worked as a sous chef in Worcester, then in Shrewsbury. This is my first executive chef position. But I prepared and trained hard for this for over six years. Some weeks I put in over a hundred hours a week!"

When I asked Shawn how I should describe Taylor's new menu, Shawn's response was in keeping with his quick mind. "American," he said.

I felt my brow raise. "Since when," I asked, "is a Vietnamese marinade made with garlic, soy, and fish sauce American?"

Shawn said, "It is and it isn't. We have a combination of different cultural cuisines represented on our menu because our menu represents the melting pot that is America."

Taylor's Tavern Buffalo Chicken Mac 'n' Cheese Recipe



1 lb. boneless chicken breast
1 whole egg
1/4 cup milk
1/3 cup flour
panko
1/2 lb. fusilli pasta
16 oz. heavy cream
8 oz. shredded cheddar cheese
2 oz. grated parmesan
3 oz. buffalo sauce

To begin, put a small pot of water on for cooking your pasta. Once the water is up to a rolling boil, add in your pasta and cook for 7 to 8 minutes, then strain the water and toss lightly in oil to avoid the pasta from sticking together.

To fry the chicken, you will need a large sauté pan with roughly 1/4 inch of oil on medium-low heat. If you have a deep fryer at home, set it to 375 degrees.

Start by cutting the chicken breast into bite-sized chunks. Once you have done that, mix the egg and the milk to make your egg wash for breading the chicken.

Toss the chicken in the flour until it is fully coated then put into the egg wash. After you have thoroughly dredged the chicken, put roughly 1/2 cup of panko in a mixing bowl and add the chicken to it. Make sure when you are tossing the chicken in the panko that it gets fully coated. Gently place the chicken into the fryer/pan and cook until golden brown all the way around and to an internal temperature of 165 degrees.

For the cheese sauce, mix all ingredients in a small saucepan over medium heat until smooth. Once the sauce is smooth, add in your pasta and chicken bites. Then sit back, relax, and enjoy!

I smiled and asked, "So what do you want a dinner guest to take away from Taylor's when they leave after a meal?"

"I want them to taste a mouthful of something delicious, and have it trigger a fond memory of the past. Flavors and scents can do that. I want them to taste one of my meals and remember something that made them feel good."

Shawn will be debuting his new

menu, which boasts plates filled with Short Rib Mac N' Cheese, Garlic Soy Tips, Blackened Salmon, and Vegetarian Caprese Wraps, this week at Taylor's Restaurant and Tavern. The Tavern is at 238 Main Street, and is open every day for lunch and dinner, with breakfast served on Saturday and Sunday as well. For more information, call (413) 773-8313 or visit taylorstavern.com.



Bartender Kathy Loud leans out the door of Taylor's Tavern on Main Street in Greenfield.

VALLEY VIEW from page B1

communicate to fight off danger. A difficult concept for Western Christian culture or the Chamber of Commerce to get their heads around, I feared there'd be talk that I didn't have both oars in the water, was going off the deep end. Deeply ingrained in Western culture is the concept of humanity created in the image of God and placed on earth to rule nature and exploit its resources. At least I think I've got that little nugget of Christian Doctrine right. If not, close enough for our purposes here.

Which reminds me ... when pondering this new paradigm of trees and forests, I often entertain a salient memory from my innkeeping days. Watching a Patriots game on a brilliant, sunny, fall, Sunday afternoon, I heard car doors slam out by the carriage sheds. Soon, through the inset porch's screen door, I noticed two strangers walking up the flagstone sidewalk. I went outside to greet them and discovered they were European tour-

ists. A Belgian father and son, they were leaf-peeping through New England to celebrate the son's recent high school graduation. They wanted a room, spoke English, and were eager to chat. Always willing to engage in enlightening conversation, I invited them in.

My guests had been through Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont and were dropping south through western Massachusetts. They would leave in the morning for Lake George and the Adirondack wilderness. Both were impressed with what they had thus far seen, and enthusiastic to share their impressions, starting with the colorful mountain landscapes framing our highways.

"We don't have forest like this at home," said the college professor dad. "Your forests are vast and beautiful. Ours have been cut."

I responded that were he to backtrack 130 or so years, he would have found much different scenery. Our forests, too, had been cleared by the mid-19th century. Now, due

to the industrial revolution and loss of family farms, much of that open land has been reforested, bringing back wildlife that had long ago vacated unsuitable habitat."

Given that memorable discussion many years ago with my Belgian guests, isn't it interesting, maybe even ironic, that perhaps the single-most important book about trees and forests to hit the American market in recent years was written by a European forester – one who's seen the light, manages a rare German old-growth forest, and advocates a return to primeval forests. Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate; Discoveries from a Secret World* was published in German in 2015. The English translation hit the street in 2016 and became an instant American best-seller, with many reprints – including an illustrated coffee-table edition with stunning color photography. So, yes, there is hope.

Wohlleben's work has become a bible for the new forestry school

committed to treating trees as living beings and saving wise old trees and old-growth forests for the good of our planet. This new way of Western thinking is now prominently featured in our best environmental writing. The national exposure couldn't have come at a better time for the likes of William Moomaw, Robert Leverett, or Michael Kellett, three erudite spokesmen for the new forest paradigm they're advocating to the objection of many. Google them, read them, watch their YouTube videos and attend their local lectures. Rudely shouted down and aggressively challenged at some public events, dismissed as obstructionists by the status quo, they're well worth listening to.

So, lend them your ear. We have destroyed our planet long enough. It's time to rethink the way we do things before it's too late. Then again, there are those who proclaim we've already passed the point of no return. Yes, they say it's already too late to reverse catastrophic climate change. For a taste of that doctrine,

try author/activist Paul Kingsnorth on for size – just another wise, articulate, progressive voice worth reading or watching on YouTube.

If you're really daring and ready for a walk on the wild side, explore anthropologist author Jeremy Narby. Some would say he's "out there." Others would tell you he "gets it." You be the judge. Google him. Watch his YouTube videos. He'll take you on a magical mystery tour to the shamanic, esoteric realm of the Amazonian rainforest. There, the so-called witch doctors intimately understand the non-Christian concept of intelligence in nature, one that is in the Western world taking root as we speak.

Gary Sanderson is a senior-active member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America and the New England Outdoor Writers Association and has written about the Pioneer Valley and its hills for 40 years. He can be reached at gsand53@outlook.com.



PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

Renaissance Builders
Quality. Craftsmanship. Original Thought.
www.renbuild.net
863-8316

Cell: (413) 834-4444
bedson1@comcast.net
Home Fax: (413) 863-0218
Maniatty Real Estate
92 Federal Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
Barbara A. Edson-Greenwald
Realtor, Broker, ABR, CRS, e-PRO, GRI, SRES, CBR
Ma. License #009535800
www.ManiattyRealty.com

Rau's Auto
COMPLETE AUTO REPAIR
(413) 367-2475
531 Turners Falls Rd. Montague
24 hour emergency towing
Best service licensed Mechanics



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

– William Carlos Williams

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

March Poetry Page

Contradictions

Once I was taffy –
alive and vibrant,
stretched to the limit,
always pliable.
I was a Hegelian tightrope walker,
until the tightrope snapped
and I plunged
toward an unyielding world
littered with unforgiving spectators.
Now I am a self-trained seal,
holding old contradictions
on my dumb, wet nose –
hardened taffy
smelling of mackerel.

– Kevin Smith

The Web

Waiting
Until the level crossing opens
There is nothing to do

She touches his hand
Resting on the gear stick
Strokes it
There is no reality
Only surreality

A man on a bike
Inches past them
Catches the wing mirror
They all smile at each other
As he re-adjusts it
Happy in the moment
Caught in the web
Of time's translucent secret.

– Julian Nangle

I'm Going Golfin' Today

Oh, Screw the USA
I'm going golfin' today.
I'm so great and clever
the best golfer ever.
Yes, I'm a stable genius
With a mushroom p-----
Most other news is fake
It really takes the cake,
There was no collusion
That's a CNN delusion.
Everybody knows
I'm very, very great.
So, screw the USA
For goodness sake,
I'm going golfin' today.

– Jake Brown

Watching You Walk Away For Greg Millard

Today
your back, cocked hat, thick clothes for cold
the way you turned around to look again for
what? It wasn't there last night
We were there, 'it' wasn't, why, why not

The world is all around us, even at night, in bed
in each other's arms
distilled & injected into the odor we leave on each others
backs & thighs, between the knots & shields of all we lay
down in the dark to pick up in the morning
I like your brown eyes when you talk
you know who you are, I like your knowing this
maybe that's not enough

Let's talk, go to plays, see each other sometimes just to
see each other
If we lie down in each other's bodies again
let it be for the music we hold
not the music we might make

– Michael Lally

when you get old enough

when you get old enough
you lose your mothers one by one
not just the woman who birthed you
or raised you
or nudged you out of the nest
all the other mothers too

the women who let you belong
who take you in after theft or loneliness
or just getting by leaves you bereft

the women who give you
a floor to lay down to rest on or
a basement window to climb out of
during an earthquake

the women who ask
who are you protecting?
and warn never learn
to type or you'll be typing
the rest of your life

the women who
made room on the bench

the women who bent low
to see you because
you could not rise any
higher than low

the women who let your
laughter join theirs
the women who remember
when you were little and
still connect you to yourself

when you lose one of
your mothers like I did
a while back
now and then
grief rides in
with the tide
suddenly there is salt on your face
may her memory be a blessing

sometimes if
you get lucky
you'll be able to
pass the mother love
forward to all the children
you are that woman to

all the children
in the village
who will be sheltered because
you let them belong
because you were allowed to belong

when you get old enough
you lose your mothers one by one
and you become them one by one

– Dina Stander

Contributors' Notes:

Originally from western Massachusetts, now living in Spokane, Washington, Jake Brown is a painter of landscapes, a songwriter, and a poet.

Michael Lally is the author of twenty-seven books of poetry. His most recent collection is *Another Way to Play: Poems 1960-2017* (Seven Stories Press). He lives in Maplewood, New Jersey. Lally comments: "Here's a poem I wrote to my friend and sometime lover in 1972, Greg Millard, who was one of the early casualties of AIDS."

Julian Nangle, poet and bookseller, lives in Dorchester, England. His newest verse

collection is *Poppy and Other Poems of Grief and Celebration* (Paris & London: Alysescamps Press, 2019).

Kevin Smith, tuba player and frequent Poetry Page contributor, lives in Turners Falls with his wonderful and inspirational girlfriend, Stephanie.

Dina Stander was our Featured Poet last month. Her new book, *Old Bones & True Stories*, has just been published by Human Error. She lives in Shutesbury.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM) CALL 863-8666!

B. RUBIN & SONS INC.

COMPLETE AUTO REPAIRS

Shocks • Tires • Batteries • Starters
Struts • Tune-ups • Brakes • Oil Change

194 MILLERS FALLS RD. • 413-863-2236

10% SENIOR DISCOUNT FREE ESTIMATES

MASS INSPECTION STATION: NO. 13051

SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
DOORS & OPENERS

Devine Overhead Doors

Gerry Devine

106 West Street Hampshire: 586-3161
Hadley, MA. 01035 Franklin: 773-9497

"Home Town Auto Care - The Way It Used To Be"

JP TIRE & AUTO

Complete Quality Auto Care
147 2nd St.
Turners Falls, MA 01376
413-863-5423

Foreign - Domestic - Tires - Diagnostics
Aftermarket Accessories - Installation

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Root Cellar, Greenfield: Comedy Special: *Olivia Grace, Caitlin Reese, Laura Fattaruso, Albert Kirchner, and Matt Woodland*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Misty Blues*. Blues with a hint of funk, soul, and tent revival. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Hot Damn Scandal, Pinedrop*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Dirty Double Crossers*. 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Raffle and Swap*. Springtime Swap! Suggested \$3 door donation buys 5 raffle tickets; clothes, books, shoes, anything welcome. 7 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Hung Trucker, Unknown Cowboy Band, Brief Ermine, and Golden Egg*. \$. 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. With Steve Howland calling, and music by David Kaynor and the Guiding Star Grange Dance Ensemble. Come at 7 for a dance lesson. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Do It Now*. John Sheldon, beat poet laureate Paul Richmond, and Tony Vacca provide a powerful fusion of music, words and percussion. Their special guest will be *Derrick Jordan* on electric violin. \$. 8 p.m.

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

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

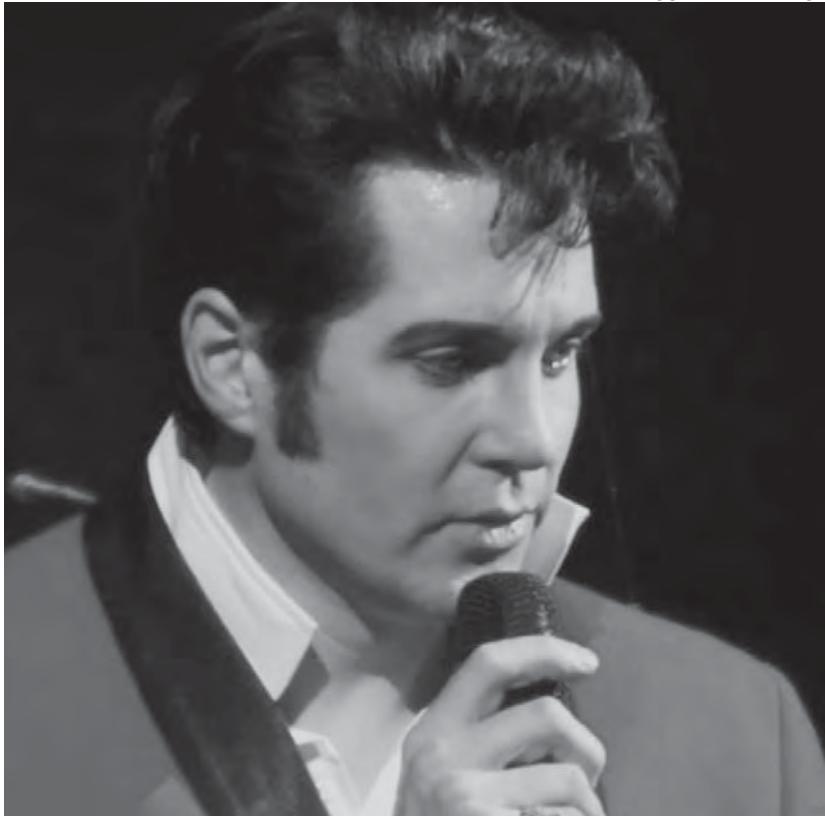
SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Rock Around the Block Sock Hop Benefit*. Get out the bobby sox and the blue suede shoes for an evening of 1950s food, dance, and fun at Silverthorne Theater's spring spectacular benefit party. \$. 7 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *All Cooped Up Concert*. Franklin County Musicians Cooperative features solo artists, duos, small group performers with a mix of folk, rock,

country, Celtic, jazz, and swing. By donation. \$. 7 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: Reading, *Jay Weingarten, Isa Reiser, Jo O'Lone-Hahn, and Beverly Ketch*. \$. 7 p.m.



SUBMITTED IMAGE

Silverthorne Theater, the resident company at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts Center in Greenfield, is having a Rock Around the Block sock hop fundraiser this Saturday evening, March 30, in the Perch at Hawks & Reed. There will be a special guest appearance by Greenfield homeboy Travis LeDoyt as Elvis Presley, as well as dance lessons with Amie Hebert, a "battle of the pies" pizza tasting, unlimited popcorn, make-your-own Herrell's ice cream sundaes, and a costume and dance contest. Proceeds to benefit Silverthorne's production of Tales of the Lost Formicans. For tickets and information, see silverthornetheater.org.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *All Local CD Release*. The Buzz local music zine and Honey Pot Productions is proud to release Volume 2 of their compilation recordings, featuring 14 local area artists and bands, Local Honey 2. Live music by *Eric Lee, Workman Song, Mad Habits, Spinelli, Lush Honey, Phenomena 256, Shantyman, Tidwell's Treasure*, and more. 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Heavy Friends, Sean Durham, Anthony Pasquarosa, and Wendy Eisenberg*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Literary Rendezvous*. Featured poet Amy Laprade, plus open mic hosted by Candace Curran and Beth Filson. 2:30 p.m..

Draw. Figure drawing session with a model in monthly sessions. \$ donation. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Oakland Stroke, The Shadow Twisters*. Rock, soul, funk, pop. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band*. 8 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Fred Cracklin, Taxidermists, Space Camp, Red Rainbow, and Drought*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *John Sheldon, Annie Guthrie*. Folk and Americana, with Arlo Guthrie's daughter and master guitarist Sheldon, who toured with Jim Morrison at 17. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Soul Remedy*. With Cindy Foster and Eva Davenport. Comedy and R&B music. \$. 7:30 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Masala Jazz*. Guitar/drums/Hammond trio. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Plants of The Bible* album release with *Bunnies, Mary Jester*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Gumboots: The Music of Paul Simon*. \$. 7 p.m.

Sts. James and Andrew Church, Greenfield: *GCC Chorus Concert*. Baroque and classical choral music, directed by Margery Heins. 7:30 p.m.

Wendell Library: Movie, *Rodan*. A large mining accident sets loose prehistoric insects and giant pterosaurs on Japan. Part of the monthly SciFi/Fantasy and Horror/Monster movie series. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *TARP, Wes Buckley, Cycles Inside, PNM Bots*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Irish Music* in the Wheelhouse. Free Irish music session. 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

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

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

THURSDAY, APRIL 4

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kids' Music Series* with Under the Tree Music Company. 10:30 a.m.

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

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Big*

EXHIBITS

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Pastel Studio*. Recent works by Becky Clark's students. Through April 26. Reception, Friday, April 5, 5:15 p.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: Six new exhibits include large paintings by *Sandy Sokoloff*, glass creatures based on children's drawings, narrative paintings by *Amy Bennett*, collaborative fiber art of *Jackie Abrams and Deidre Scherer*, immersive mixed-media installation by *Joey Morgan*, and paintings documenting several generations of an African-American and Cape Verdean family on Cape Cod by *Joseph Diggs*. Through June 16.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: Mem-

bers' exhibit in February/March: *Farms*. Reception March 31, 1 p.m. Music by *The Farley String Band*; refreshments. Film by *Rawn Fulton* at 3:30 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *The Time of My Life: Vintage Views of Western Massachusetts*. Reproduction postal souvenir albums, hands-on stereoscope, and a Viewmaster with other area scenes. Through April 21.

Gallery A3, Amherst: *In Tune with our Imagination*. *Diane Steingart's* mixed media pieces are tangible, outer manifestations of her memories and emotions, while *Gloria Kegeles's* photographs use the camera to capture images that are overlooked, unnoticed, or invisible to the naked eye. Through March 30.

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

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Library: *Gary Lippincott*. Professional illustrator. Through April.

La Mariposa, Turners Falls: *Landscape Collage by Jesus Vio*. Vio uses landscape to explore new themes and aesthetics for the general global consciousness, using multimedia collage. Through April 26.

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *A Group of Seven*. Group of women painters from Greenfield Community College in the Barnes Gallery. *Zitong Xu* in the hallway gallery: Drawings by Northfield Mount Hermon student Xu in a storytelling collection called "Lost Girls." Through April.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Spontaneous Combustion: Improvisatory Art by Adam Bosse* opens March 14 through May 5; reception April 14. Improvisations in color, paint, ink, showing with a soundtrack from Bosse's musical projects.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Women of Power. Fabric Figures by Belinda Lyons Zucker*. Through April 28. Also, *Creating Together*, collaborations between mothers and their children and an art making space for children.

Sawmill River Gallery, Montague Center: *The Glance of Mercy*. Paintings of animals by *Shali Sanders* of Orange. Also, *All Creatures Great and Small*, works from the gallery collection. Through March 31.

THE LADY KILLIGREW:
*Awesome Beer
Amazing Food*

Amazing, Awesome Employees!
440 Greenfield Rd, Montague MA
7 Days / 8am - 11pm (at least)
(413)367-9666

The Brick House
24 3rd Street, Turners Falls

Drop-In Teen Center
Mon, Tues, Fri:
2:30 to 6 p.m.
Weds, Thurs:
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

www.brickhousecommunity.org
413-863-9576

**THURS 3/28 8:30 pm
The Dirty Double Crossers**

**FRI 3/29 9:30 pm
Bluegrass & Beyond**

**SAT 3/30 9:30 pm
Heavy Friends,
Sean Durham,
Anthony Pasquarosa,
Wendy Eisenberg**

78 THIRD STREET
TURNERS FALLS, MA
RENDEZVOUSTFMA.COM
TEL:413-863-2866

CALL FOR ENTRIES:
Slate Roof Press is taking submissions for the Glass Prize. One poem will be drawn from contestants in Franklin and Hampshire County, one from across the US. Cash prize, \$250. \$10 reading fee per submission. Deadline June 15. Details at slateroofpress.com.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *The Lay of the Land*, local watercolor landscapes by Nina Coler. Through April. Reception, April 6.

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. Through July.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666

TNT Productions
DJ & Karaoke specialists

413-522-6035
www.tntprodj.net

413-256-6217
fine instruments
bought and sold
repaired and restored

Fretted Instrument Workshop
49 So. Pleasant St., Amherst, Mass. 01002

HUGE WASHERS!

HOT DRYERS!

Open 365 Days
6 A.M. - 10 P.M.

SUZEE'S THIRD STREET LAUNDRY
TURNERS FALLS

FREE WIFI



Risky Business

By **MISHEL IXCHEL**

TURNERS FALLS – I didn't fully appreciate this at the time, but when I was coming of age, I did so in New York, and at the heels of one of the most adventurous people I have ever met. This was pre-internet and social media, and everything felt like it was word-of-mouth or underground. I took for granted that my backyard was one of the world's most famous grids, and it wouldn't be till years later that I would realize just how sharp my street-smarts were.

We were good kids, for the most part. We were city kids, wild in our own ways. Whereas some may

have grown up running around forests and woods, we found ourselves weaving in and out of lofts, night clubs, parks, subways, fire escapes, landmarks, and on occasion, even strip clubs. It wasn't so much out of perversion; it felt more like we were out there earning our scout badges. It was proof of our slickness.

We colored outside the lines. Gave the middle finger to all the rules. Went where the night would take us, and encountered all kinds of people along the way. We ran around and got into all sorts of good trouble, without caring at all whether it was documented or posted or tagged or hashtagged or whatever. We played for the sake of playing.

We were 13 going on 22, and we loved it.

And yes, if my friends would have jumped off a bridge, I probably would have been mid-air right behind them.

Though it's probably not accurate to refer to these kids as my friends. In retrospect, I think I really only had one friend, a Colombian girl slightly older than me, from whom I picked up the arts of charisma, charm, right timing, quick wits and raunchy humor. She was like a cool older sister. I don't think any of the others actually liked me – in fact, I experienced some horrid bullying from some of them. But because I was a friend of the Colombian girl, there I was, getting into trouble with the best of them. In New York City.

I have always felt somewhat transient in my life. I don't have any physical roots: I've moved 20-plus times from the time I was a baby, for a variety of reasons, spread out across the board. Early adolescence straight up sucked because it coincided with my moving to the United States, a different land with a different language.

The boys were mean, the girls were mean; at first because I didn't speak English, and over time, they found other reasons not to like me (and in their own special ways, they

reminded me of this almost daily, bless their little hearts). It was the Upper East Side, and my class had its fair number of Blair Waldorfs.

Not coincidentally, it's around this time I began getting lost in books. And writing. I was happy to spend most of my free time alone doing either. Until that glorious, magical day in 6th grade when the new Colombian girl came, who also didn't speak any English. I wanted to be the friend I wish I had had when I first arrived.

I loved her from the start, and we became really good friends. We would come to bond over such things as One Hundred Years of Solitude, Fulanito, and Beavis and Butthead. We once gushed side by side as we sat in an intimate reading given by Isabel Allende; it was with her that I got to experience a thousand and one cool things.

As it were, the Colombian girl, unlike me, had won over everybody. The more English she learned, the more she befriended others. Effortlessly, it seemed. And inevitably, she became one of the cool girls. But she never forgot me, and so there I'd be, wherever she got invited to, running around like wild city children. And we grew up. Fast.

Such that when I actually turned 18, I was exhausted and nearly par-

ried out. And when I turned 21, I had almost no interest in drinking, let alone getting drunk.

The bravado I had found in my teens, and the street-smarts I picked up alongside my Colombian friend, I then used during my 20s to go after all that I desired. I took risks and I hustled, I went on different adventures and collected a different set of scout badges, so to speak.

It is no different now that I'm in my 30s. The stakes are higher, the risks riskier – being a single parent makes it slightly more so.

This past winter was true to its roots: a sort of fallowness and death permeated certain aspects of my life. While it's true that I'm no longer a teenager looking to break all the rules, nor a 20-something traveling the world and soul-searching, I still feel that same sense of adventure as I welcome the Spring on this night of the Equinox.

On this full moon, after a whole season of gestating, I think about the risks I'm about to take, and the adventure I have decided to embark upon. I do so with an open heart, feeling every bit of badassness. Remembering that I have not known life any other way.

To be continued.

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.

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD HERE (12 WEEK MINIMUM). CALL 863-8666!

• Pizzas
• Entrees
• Salads
• Full Bar & Patio

magpie

magpiepizza.com
21 Bank Row, Gld.
413-475-3570

woodfired pizzeria

FRANKLIN COMMUNITY CO-OP
144 MAIN STREET GREENFIELD, MA 01301 (413) 773-9567
3 STATE STREET SHELburnE FALLS, MA 01370 (413) 625-2548

About-face
Computer Solutions

Turn your computer troubles around!

(413) 863-5447
151 Avenue A, Turners Falls
WE FIX COMPUTERS!
www.about-facecomputers.com

The Gill Tavern
Come For a Drink, Stay For a Meal

www.thegilltavern.com Open Wed - Sun at 5 PM
326 Main Road Gill, MA 413-863-9006

Jeffrey Collura, D.M.D.
Cosmetic Dentistry

7 Burnham Street
Turners Falls, MA 01376
Telephone (413) 774-6553
TurnersFallsDental.com

Office Hours By Appointment

CEREC : SINGLE-VISIT DENTISTRY

Dennis L. Booska
Dennis L. Booska, Jr. Phone & Fax
413-863-3690

Booska's Flooring
Tile
Lino
Carpet

169 Avenue A, Turners Falls
Member The Flooring Network.

IN GOOD COMPANY
A SKILLED ELDER COMPANION SERVICE

Offering focused attention, engaging activities, outings, and respite for caregivers.

sitalang@ingoodcompanynow.com
www.ingoodcompanynow.com
413-834-7569

Sita Lang
Hospice trained
CPR certified

Turners Falls Pizza House
Family Owned & Operated
Serving Turners Falls area for 40 Years
Dave Argy, Family & Staff

**PIZZA, GRINDERS,
DINNERS, SALADS, BURGERS**

www.turnersfallspizza.com
119 Avenue A, Turners Falls (413) 863-8000

Cathy Roberts
cathy@cohnandcompany.com
413-522-3023

Recognized as one of the ten best agents in Massachusetts for client satisfaction for two years

Your trusted advisor, friend & neighbor

GREAT FALLS HARVEST
fresh • local • creative

Rich flavors from around the world with a local state of mind.

Thursdays - Fridays 5 to 9 PM
Saturdays 11 AM to 9 PM
Sundays 11 AM to 8 PM

Brunch Saturday & Sunday
11 AM to 3 PM

413-863-0023
50 Third Street
Downtown Turners Falls

TURN IT UP!

MUSIC & MOVIES

BOOKMILL | MONTAGUE CENTER | 367.0309

Gerri Johnson, Realtor
ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, SRES
413-863-9796 • GerriJohnson@Realtor.com

Gerri Johnson & Associates REALTORS

66 French King Hwy., Gill WWW.GJAR.COM
GERI JOHNSON, CRS 30 years of experience.

"WE HAD A **WONDERFUL AND INFORMATIVE** EXPERIENCE, START TO FINISH. SO HAPPY WE CONTRACTED **PV SQUARED** TO SEE IF **SOLAR** WAS A VIABLE OPTION FOR US. THANK YOU!"

PV SQUARED
HEART & SOLAR

413-772-8788
PVSQUARED.COOP
GREENFIELD, MA
MA ELEC. LIC. A13764 MA HIC 140077