

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 25

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

APRIL 18, 2019

GMRSD Announces New Principal Hire

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The hiring committee tasked with naming a successor to Annie Leonard, outgoing principal at Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School, announced their selection this week. Joanne Menard, currently principal at Petersham Center School, was chosen from among 16 applicants for the position.

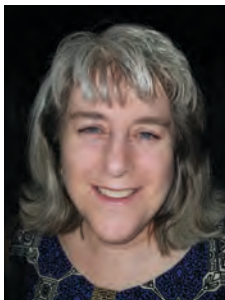
Menard wrote on Wednesday that she was “honored, and extremely excited to have been offered” the position. “After meeting with many passionate staff, students, district leaders, and community members at large,” she said, “it is evident how committed everyone is to providing the best learning environment for all.”

A former middle school science teacher, Menard has been principal at the Petersham elementary school for four years. She is pursuing a doctorate.

The committee, comprised of seven district staff members, two parents, one school committee member, one at-large community member, and one student, narrowed the applicants down to five interviewees, and then two finalists who visited the schools last week.

Superintendent Michael Sullivan described Menard

see **PRINCIPAL** page A5



Joanne Menard

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Will Form Study Group For Six-Town Regional School District

By GEORGE BRACE

Meeting Tuesday night, the Gill selectboard approved the formation of a “regional school district planning committee,” though they emphasized that it would be an exploratory committee, and did not commit the town to school regionalization. The board also signed a new contract with the police chief, and reviewed town meeting warrant articles.

The proposal to form a regional school district planning committee came out of a series of recent public meetings of Gill-Montague “civic leaders,” and had previously been endorsed by the Gill-Montague school committee.

The towns involved would include Gill, Montague, Bernardston, Northfield, Warwick, and Leyden.

Town administrator Ray Purington reported that the civic leaders group wanted to explore the idea of regionalization for financial savings, doing more with the money being spent, and improving education.

Chair Greg Snedeker said he was seeing the issue from several perspectives, and that being a teacher, one of them was the educational side. He said he knew the importance of having “right-sized” classes, one of the

see **GILL** page A5

Stop & Shop Strike Enters Second Week

By ANNABEL LEVINE

GREENFIELD – Stop and Shop workers walked out on the job last Thursday afternoon after negotiations stalled between company negotiators and representatives from the five local United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) unions. According to the union, a strike was necessary as Stop & Shop management was not budging on proposed cuts to benefits, including health insurance, pensions, and time-and-a-half pay on Sunday for part-timers.

According to company representative Jennifer Brogan, “Stop & Shop has presented fair, responsible offers to the five UFCW New England-area local unions that rewards our associates for the valuable role they play every day. We are firmly committed to an agreement so we all can get back to what we do best – taking care of our customers.”

Representatives from both sides were back at the negotiating table this week in an effort to end the strike. According to Taunette Green, a union representative who works at the Greenfield Stop & Shop, the company is still not ceding ground on proposals like cutting time-and-a-half pay for part-timers, and a personal sticking point for Green, cutting pensions. The company has maintained that these cuts are necessary to remain competitive with non-union grocery chains.

Green, who has worked at Stop & Shop in Greenfield for 46 years, says she initially started with the company in the early 1970s because one of the benefits it offered was a pension. To reduce her pension now, she says, “that’s stealing from me... It was what



Taunette Green holds a sign outside of the Greenfield Stop & Shop. The union representative has worked at the store for 46 years, through three locations and eight contract negotiations.

I was promised when I started.”

“I invested my labor into this company, and they want to gut that,” Green continued. “And that’s not right.”

see **STRIKE** page A8

The Week In TFHS Sports: Picking Up Speed

By MATT ROBINSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – This week, the Turners Falls baseball team bounced back, the boys’ tennis team stayed unbeaten, the girls’ tennis team split sweeps, and the

Franklin Tech/Turners Falls track team battled to a tie. Also this week, storms forced postponements of local sports, and African athletes swept the Boston Marathon.

Congratulations to Lawrence Cheron and Worknesh Degefa

for winning the Boston Marathon. Long-distance running, unlike most sports, goes on even when it’s raining. But in high school, when the field, court or track is wet, the events are postponed. Because of these delays, several events tend to get squeezed into a few days. This week, seven contests took place in just two days. Lucky for me, many were played on the campus of Turners Falls High School.

Last week, I reported that I saw some promise, and this week, Turners girls’ tennis won their first match, the baseball team went 2-0, boys’ tennis won two tight matches, and the Franklin/Turners girls’ track team fought hard against two D-1 powerhouses.

Track and Field

Turners/Tech 67 – Commerce 67
Holyoke 94 – Turners/Tech 49

On April 11, the Tech/Turners girls’ track team hosted a dual meet
see **SPORTS** page A4



Turners’ Dabney Rollins edges past Holyoke’s Jaden Rodriguez in the 100’ hurdles during the tri-team home meet against Holyoke and Commerce. Rollins also placed first in discus, shot put, and javelin.

Common Hall Passes The Hat For A New Roof



JACKSON PHOTO

Friends of the Common Hall treasurer Chris Wise indicates the roof in question.

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE CENTER – The old white building on Main Street known as the Montague Common Hall has a long and storied history, and if it is to have very much more of it, it will need a new roof soon.

“I’m the most optimistic I’ve been about this place in a long time, recently,” Chris Wise tells me. Wise is treasurer of the Friends of the Montague Common Hall, a nonprofit stewarding the building for general public use. “It seems like we’re getting a sustainable flow of rentals,” he says. “There was some time a few years ago we were looking at *this*, and not seeing how we’d get any of it done.”

The *this* in question is a six-page 2010 report, printed out and thumb-tacked to the Common Hall’s foyer wall, titled “Montague Grange Renovation.” The hall served as Grange 141 from the 1930s up until 2013, when the local chapter voted to disband, and the nonprofit it spun off to accept tax-deductible donations developed into the small group now keeping it in use as a community center.

Someone has taken an orange crayon and proudly awarded checkmarks to several goals listed on the report, including “repair and reroof cupola.” Of course, there’s always something – moisture control in the basement involves a sump pump,

see **HALL** page A5

SCENE REPORT

Energetic Student Council Meets At Turners Falls High School

By LESLIE BROWN

TURNERS FALLS – Out here in rural western Mass, we’re miles away from our political hub in Boston, but you’d never know it. Today the Turners Falls High School is aboil with over 200 student council members from twelve high schools. Entering the walkway to the front door, lined with cheering kids, it feels like a political rally.

Anyone concerned that today’s youth have “checked out” or are in their own private world apart from the rest of us can relax. This group of students is engaged, focused on teamwork and leadership, and has gathered to celebrate their participation in student council and to elect next year’s officers to the Western Massachusetts Association of Student Councils (WMASC).

They meet first in the school’s large auditorium for the opening ceremonies: the Pledge of Alle-

giance, and singing of the national anthem. This is to be a three-hour event which is regularly punctuated by activities called “energizers”: dancing and singing led by the student council leaders on stage. The room rocks.

We all receive printed materials with the bios of the candidates, and space for notetaking and a pen. Next: the speeches by the candidates; four for vice-president, two for secretary, and four for president. The local favorites are Ceci Wood, a tenth-grader running for secretary, and Kaitlyn Miner, a junior running for president.

Ceci has been involved in the council for two years, is the current captain of the field hockey team, and is an honor student. She describes herself as a fan of Mary Poppins and says there’s always an element of fun and positiveness which resonates for her. If elected,

see **COUNCIL** page A4

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The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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About Face Computing

Founded by
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August 2002

100 Years Ago This Month

From the pages of the Turners Falls Reporter:

Joseph Bertrang of X street has arrived home after receiving his discharge from the navy. He was attached to the tanker Henry and had some exciting experiences, including an attack by a submarine.

J.T. Miner's pool room on Avenue A was entered last Wednesday night, apparently by boys, and about \$5 in pennies stolen. Entrance was gained by breaking a light of glass in one of the back windows, after which the thief was able to reach the lock in the door.

An epidemic of roller skating has broken out among the young people of Marshall, High and adjacent streets, and all the young people of the section are whizzing, or falling over the sidewalks, according to their skill or inexperience.

The first drowning accident of the season occurred last Wednesday afternoon shortly before five o'clock, when Bolek Claston, a six-year-old Polish boy, was drowned. The little fellow, with two mates was playing on the river bank, about 300 feet above the dam, where the power company has a little wharf for the use of their boats. He fell off the bank and into the water and as the current here is very swift, he was evidently carried through the headgates and drowned. The boy's hat was found at Montague City but the body had not been recovered at last accounts.

April 2, 1919

Tree Warden Sigmund Klaiber is trimming the shade trees, setting out sapplings and doing other spring work connected with the department.

The drive for refugee clothes was very successful. Three-fourths of a ton or forty-eight bags of clothing and shoes were collected from Gill, Riverside, Montague City and Turners Falls.

The *Reporter* struggles weekly during this cruel war – never to be over, trying to get help to do needed work, but the impression is obtained that others pay a dollar a minute for unskilled labor!

April 9, 1919

Government seeds, for free distribution to makers of gardens, may be obtained, upon request, at the postoffice. Seeds are not being mailed this season, by the depart-

ment of agriculture, but are distributed from the various postoffices to those desiring them.

Turners Falls, in common with the rest of New England, has no telephone service during the strike. There is "nothing doing" at the local telephone exchange and subscribers who innocently called up central yesterday morning and got no response suddenly remembered what the reason was.

April 16, 1919

The telephone lines are again busy, after the strike, and everybody's happy.

There was such a rush for the free government seeds at the post-office that the supply was exhausted "quicker'n scat."

The eight-hour law for women and children has been signed by the governor, and goes into effect in 90 days. All women and minors may not work more than 48 hours in a week.

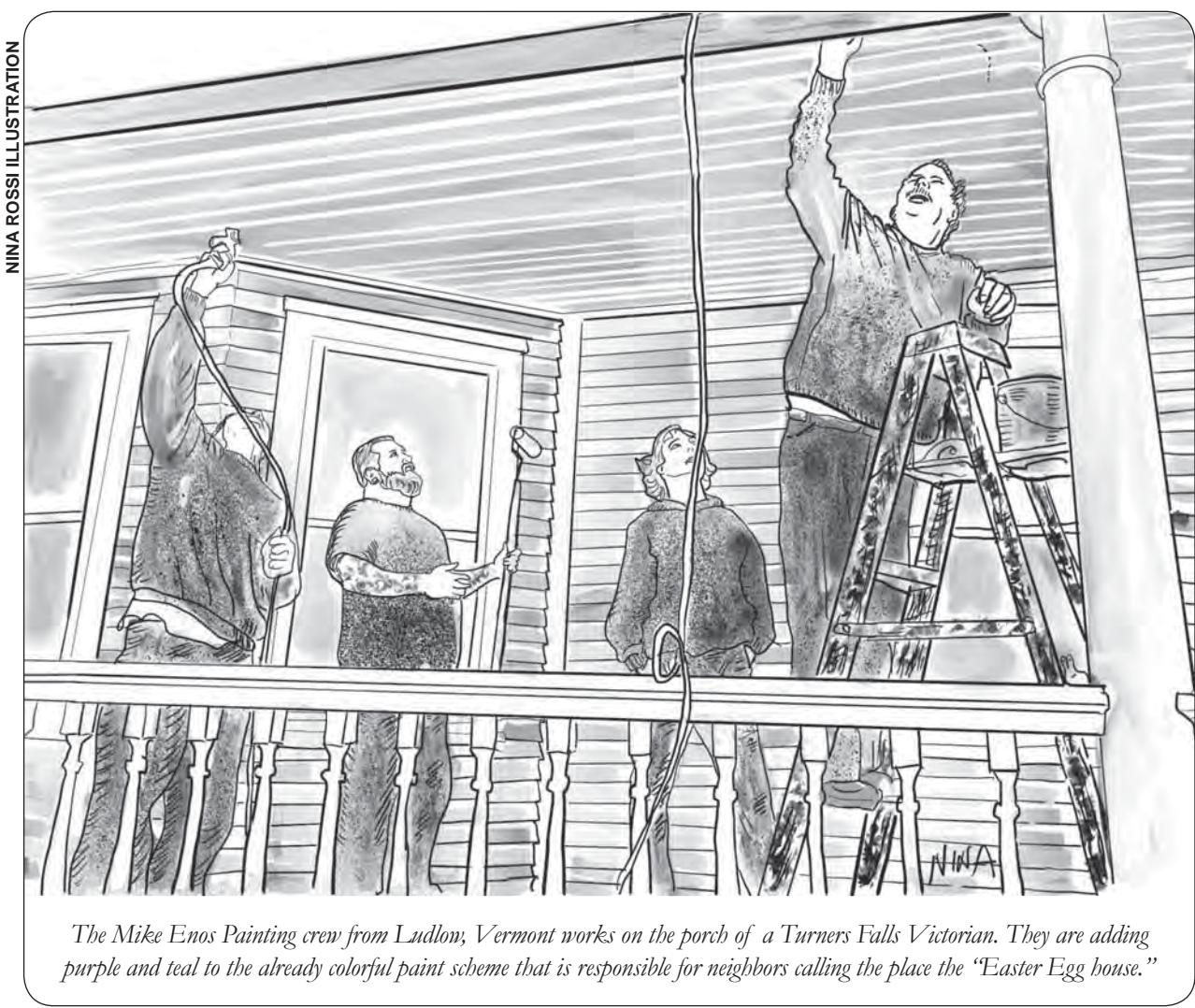
A bunch of mountain laurel in full bloom is an interesting exhibit in H.F. Seiler's store window, and shows what congenial environment will do for plants. This laurel was picked by T.H. Reynolds, of the savings bank, who thought he'd try and see what would happen if he put the laurel sprays in a large glass globe and kept the globe in a warm atmosphere.

The war exhibit train which is touring New England in the interest of the Victory loan will visit Turners Falls, arriving here on Monday, April 28th. The train will halt near the Blassberg foundry at the foot of Avenue A, and this being a very convenient place, and the time well adapted to accomodate workers in the factories, the exhibit should be seen by a great many Turners Falls people. The exhibit consists of three flat cars and a box car, and includes captured German trophies, such as guns, flame throwers, trench mortars and equipment of all kinds, as well as French and Belgian war relics.

April 23, 1919

The timber for replanking the lower suspension bridge has arrived and work has begun. The bridge will be kept open while the work is in progress.

Claude McClintock, night fore-



The Mike Enos Painting crew from Ludlow, Vermont works on the porch of a Turners Falls Victorian. They are adding purple and teal to the already colorful paint scheme that is responsible for neighbors calling the place the "Easter Egg house."

Letter to the Editors

Didn't Speak in Sound Bytes

If readers of the April 11 edition of the *Montague Reporter* were stunned and amazed to learn that we can get better public education for half the price we're paying now, I apologize for any discombobulation you may be experiencing.

Yes, I did say that. No, it was not a rational statement. I sometimes struggle to encapsulate complicated opinions in concise sound bytes: I try to say too many things at the same time. In a structured conversation like on the School Committee, I'm typically able to have a private little conversation with myself in my own head – you know, just the three of me – in order to organize a coherent thread before offering an opinion.

However, the half-baked comment in question was made in the spontaneity of a question on my way out the door from a *Montague Reporter* reporter. What came out was, "Half Price Education!," which really wasn't a very helpful contribution to the larger discussion.

For that, I apologize.

What I was actually trying to

say to the intrepid *Reporter* reporter is the same thing I said during the meeting: that I can't support a study of the fiscal sustainability of regionalization without a complimentary study of the resulting quality of education – a rigorous study, not a quick calculation on the back of an envelope.

Education is the benefit we're talking about in this cost/benefit analysis, after all, and we can't effectively make the ultimate decision(s) without all the necessary information in hand. And, while it would be reasonable to assume that the municipal study groups or the eventual, new, regionalization committee will cover these issues in the process, they won't.

That is not to insinuate some inherent flaw in study groups, or in study groupers; rather, it is the statutory and structural reality of engineering substantive operational change(s) to an institution that is under union contracts (and no, you can't wait for the contracts to expire and sneak a new arrangement

through the gap in agreements, that's illegal).

This regionalization process starts with the negotiation of a "reconciliation" of the existing collective bargaining agreements from the would-be regionalizing districts. These must be individually ratified by each bargaining unit. As that reconciliation process works its way down the line of contracts and agreements, quality of education remains a peripheral consideration, at best.

Anyway, that's what I meant to say, and you will probably agree with me that that was way too much information to reasonably attempt to cram into a compact sound byte, and that my delivery would have benefited, greatly, had I paused to reflect, just a bit.

In that spirit, I apologize again for adding unnecessary confusion to a serious debate, and promise to be less spontaneous in the future!

Thank you,

Mike Langknecht
Montague representative,
GMRSD

CORRECTION

We ran an incorrect caption on last week's Spanish-language page (*Aquí se habla español*, April 11).

A group of adults performing a folk dance at the previous week's Immigrant Voices showcase at the Shea, which should have been captioned "*Grupo folclórico de México y El Salvador*," ran instead with the caption "*Pequeños integrantes del grupo Folclore latino con la bandera de Guatemala*" – which would have matched with a different photo, which did not appear,

of a group of children performing and bearing a Guatemalan flag.

We regret the error, not least because the kids were cute and deserved their picture in the paper, too. (We even have a dedicated Spanish-language proofreader, but it just slipped through everyone's fingers, ah well.)

Our apologies to our readers, to our Spanish page editor and photographer, and especially to members of both performing troupes! We'll get it right next time.

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

Happy Easter, to all who celebrate this holiday of rebirth and renewal!

I hope that you were able to take advantage of some of the great activities I told you about last week. I didn't, because I was busy **shearing my Pygora goats**. If you want to see pictures of the goats (before and after), go to my Instagram account: www.instagram.com/dunroaminfarmdesign.

I have also started to plant my vegetable garden. Unfortunately, varmints (voles? resident wood-chuck?) nipped the leaves off the beautiful broccoli starts I got at Red Fire Farm, so I'll have to do it all over again once I figure out how to thwart the little blighters.

If you like the challenges and rewards of gardening, Suzette Snow-Cobb wants you to know that the **Great Falls Community Garden** has openings for the 2019 growing season. Plots are available for you to grow whatever you'd like. Priority will be given to Montague residents. For more information see the Facebook page or email suzette-snowcobb@gmail.com.

The Great Falls Discovery Center's Kidleidoscope program on Friday, April 19 will feature a story, craft, and games based on **the theme of Fish**. The program is geared toward tykes three to six years old and

their caregivers, and meets in the Great Hall from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 20, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Turners Falls branch of Greenfield Savings Bank, Montague police chief Chris Williams and staff sergeant Laster will present background information on the **life-saving drug Narcan** and its application. There will be a time for questions from the audience.

Feel free to bring a neighbor or friend. Thank you to the Montague Police Department for providing and sharing information! Light refreshments provided by GSB.

At 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 20, Montague Parks and Recreation is sponsoring the 14th Annual **Peter Cottontail EGGstravaganza** at Unity Park for kids ages four to 12. This event will happen rain or shine, and each child should bring his or her own basket for collecting some of the 5,000 toy- and candy-filled eggs. The event also includes raffles, pictures with Peter Cottontail, and a bake sale.

Join poets/emcees Chris Sawyer-Laucanno and Janel Nockelby, musician and poet Daniel Hales, poet and novelist Corwin Ericson, and poet Trish Crapo for a **lyric celebration of mud season**. Meet in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center on Saturday from 2 to 3 p.m. Participate in poetry reading (limit of three minutes per

person) at the open mic. Be sure to wear your muck boots!

Readers in 10 local towns have been reading and discussing the book, "The Stranger in the Woods: The Extraordinary Story of the Last True Hermit," by Michael Finkel.

If you have been participating, this week's events include a **hike to Indian Caves** from 1:30 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 20, beginning at the Warwick Free Public Library, 4 Hotel Road, Warwick; "World's Worst Weather" with Will Broussard from **Mount Washington Observatory** from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Dickinson Memorial Library, 115 Main Street, Northfield; and a **book discussion** at the Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road in Leverett from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 25. All are welcome to attend these events.

On Wednesday, April 24 at 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Greenfield Savings Bank presents "The Savvy Caregiver" program. Are you caring for a **loved one with dementia or Alzheimer's**? This informational event is just what you need for nurturing and support!

Chris Chagnon from LifePath will provide and discuss basic details relating to a training session beginning on May 2. The program will not only help you understand the impact of dementia, but also provide the tools for a quality of life this specialized work requires.

The meeting is informal with a sharing of resources between all who attend. This event is sponsored by a unique partnership between LifePath and GSB. Hand-outs and light refreshments provided.

Looking ahead...

We are starting to hear about lots of events that are happening local-

ly as part of the **state-wide "Art-Week" celebration**, which runs from April 26 to May 5. For more information about this annual event, go to www.artweekma.org or see our story on page B1.

Find bargain-priced sewing notions, buttons, fabric, yarn, ribbons, beads, quilting equipment, and other art and crafting materials at the **5th annual Stash Bash** on Saturday, April 27 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come early for the best selection, stay for lunch, and hang out until the end for the best bargains.

Located in the basement hall of Our Lady of Peace Church (accessible by elevator). The event is free, and there is plenty of free parking.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation invites you to the Great Falls Discovery Center on April 27 from 10 a.m. to noon to lend a hand during this **day of volunteer service to our state parks**. To register, visit www.mass.gov/der. Call (413) 863-3221 to discuss any special accommodations or needs you have for the day.

The Brick House invites you to **support youth art and music** on Sunday, April 28 at the Shea Theater from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. There will be musical performances by Suzuki violin, cello and guitar students of the Northampton Community Music Center.

Young people from the Brick House will be selling their artwork before and after the musical performances and during the intermission. They will retain 100% of the sales of their visual art. You can RSVP on the "Youth Arts Showcase" Facebook event page.

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Great Falls Middle

School Students

of the Week

Week ending April 12:

Grade 6

Shelby O'Leary

Grade 7

Raygan Pendriss

Grade 8

Austin Pike

Related Arts

Arabella Renaud



We didn't make it, but reader Ed Gregory sent in these pics of Sunday's outdoor lecture at the river at Turners Falls, "Rock Dam: Fragile Endangered Sturgeon Sanctuary," presented by research biologist Dr. Boyd Kynard (at right, with book) and environmental journalist Karl Meyer (far right).

"The day was slightly overcast and mild," Ed writes. "I very much enjoyed the time there. This is my third attendance... a more than worthy learning experience."

We greatly appreciate the pictures, Ed, and love it when our readers pitch in to document local events they attend. The spring calendar is always busy, and it takes a village! If you're planning on going to something other readers may find interesting, get in touch at editor@montaguereporter.org and see if we could use a photo or short report-back!



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COUNCIL from pg A1

she would like to create a community service bulletin board highlighting the activities the student group has sponsored. She hopes this online board will draw more student participation.

Kaitlyn Miner, a junior, is running for president. She also has participated in her council since ninth grade, and is currently the president of the Turners Falls student council and the class vice president. Kaitlyn is an honor student and active in sports as cheerleader captain for varsity basketball and football. She has participated in numerous community service projects.

Because she is also a farmer, Kaitlyn has created an Instagram site for her campaign featuring one of her cows. This site has been popular, and suggests that she is a strong con-

tender, but all of the students running are incredibly strong candidates; the choice will be a difficult one.

The candidates make their speeches, each cheered on by her local school attendees. Then we adjourn to the gym for more group activities and for voting. Caucuses for each school are gathered in small groups. Each is assigned three votes, which may be used for one single candidate, or spread out over the three positions.

After the ballots are collected, there is a long wait for the counting. As the nervous energy mounts, the students are engaged in activities organized by the current leadership teams. The gym roars with the activities: jumping, stamping, and at one point, an activity which resembles nothing more than a good old-fashioned yelling contest.

SPORTS from pg A1

with Commerce and Holyoke. In most sports, both Holyoke and Commerce are Division 1 city schools, but Turners does compete against them in some sports, and girls’ track is one.

Although the other schools had the numbers, Powertown managed to score 49 points against Holyoke and tie Commerce 67 all. By the way, the Holyoke team is currently 4–0, at the top of D-1.

Against Holyoke, Blue swept the discus, with Dabney Rollins hurling the disk 84’7” and Jordyn Muniz and Abby Johnson taking second and third. Rollins also won the shot put, with Johnson finishing third. Rollins made it three-for-three in field events by winning the javelin, and Gracie Rosenberg placed third, giving Turners another point.

Rollins also took first on the track in the 100’ high hurdles, with teammate Elizandra Cote taking third place. In the Mile, Chloe Sumner broke the tape in 6:52.00. Sumner also took first in pole vault, another event swept by Powertown, with Voudren and Paige Bonnarigo finishing second and third. Turners got 4 points in the 800’ because Brynn Tela and Hannah Dziedzic finished second and third. In the 400’ low hurdles, Kate Boulanger scored 3 points for her second-place finish, and Voudren added a point in the 400’ by finishing third.

Because it was a dual meet, Turners’ times and distances were the same against Commerce. But against Commerce, Turners placed better, and fought to a tie.

Rollins, Muniz and Johnson took the same places they had against Holyoke in the discus and shot put, but Rosenberg moved up to second place in javelin, and LeBlanc took third. The same three girls swept the pole vault event. The results were the same as against Holyoke in the 100’ high hurdles, but in other track events, the Blue Ladies scored higher: Bartolon took second in the mile; Voudren moved up to second and Bonnarigo took third in the 400’; Boulanger finished first in the 400’ low hurdles; and in the 800’, Tela moved up to first and Dziedzic finished second.

Their next scheduled meet is at home against Greenfield on Tuesday, April 23, weather permitting.

Boys Tennis

TFMA 3 – Greenfield 2

TFMA 4 – Pioneer Christian 1

The Turners boys’ tennis team played two matches this week, beating both Greenfield and Pioneer Valley Christian. The wins give them an undefeated record very early in the season.

The Greenfield match on April 10 was touch and go, and the winner wasn’t decided until deep into the second sets. The first singles went to Green as Brian Poirier was unable to make a comeback in the second set and lost 6-0, 6-3. On the second singles court, Will Turn swept his match 6-0, 6-0, and third singles player Brody Trott won 6-0, 6-3.

So, with the score 2–1 Blue, it came down to the doubles play. In first doubles, Joe Kochan and Josh Gaulin dominated the first set 6-0, but Green forced a tiebreaker in the second. With game, set and match on the line, Powertown held on to win 7 games to 5.

Turners had already won the match, leading 3–1, as the second singles duos duked it out. But that didn’t damper the action. Both 7th-grader Michael Boyle and 8th-grader Corin Wisniewski played a seesaw nail-biter. The junior high duo

outlasted Green in the first set tiebreaker to take a 1-0 lead, but Greenfield battled back to tie it at 1-1. The third set tiebreaker became a super tiebreaker, as Greenfield was forced to score 12 points to beat Powertown 12-10.

Powertown made it 2 and 0 when they beat Pioneer Christian 4–1 the next day. Despite the score, it was a hard fought well played victory. Poirier, who has the unenviable task of playing the best opponent in every match, garnered Turners’ lone loss; though he hit some great ground shots, he lost to his more experienced opponent 6-1, 6-2. On the second singles court, Turn won the first set 6-3, but needed to win 7 games to take the second set 7-5. In third singles action, Trott’s opponent challenged him in each set, but he prevailed 6-4, 6-4. Kochan and Gaulin won first doubles convincingly, 6-2, 6-1, and Wisniewski recorded his first career win as he and Boyle overpowered Pioneer’s second doubles duo 6-1, 6-0.

The next match for Turners was held April 16 against Saint Mary’s at Municipal Park in Westfield – more next week!



DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Jake Dodge was in control at the mound during Powertown’s 7-2 home win over Pioneer.

Baseball

TFMA 21 – Mohawk 11

TFMA 7 – Pioneer 2

Turners Falls baseball team won two this week to improve their record to 2-1.

Wednesday, April 10 was the Thunder’s home opener. In many ways, this game was a repeat of their loss against Athol: it was uncomfortably cold, and Turners again let up 6, mostly unearned, runs in the first inning. But Turners not only came back in this game, but they held on to win it convincingly, 21-11.

There’s not enough room for me to do an inning by inning tally, but I will give the stats and a few observations.

First, I’d never seen a baseball hit over the fence at Turners, but one of the Warriors did just that. And a few innings later, Cayden Lehtomaki followed suit and cracked one of his own. Second, although Powertown scored 21 runs off 19 hits and had great base running, their defense still needs improvement. Blue committed four errors, walked six batters, and let up 11 runs on 10 hits.

Third, one of the Turners kids scored from home plate without even getting a hit! And lastly, it was a pleasure listening to the running commentary from Mr. Bush. “Turners is up by a touch-down,” he would say, and “Looks like they missed

The emotional temperature is now unbearable.

When the waiting is at last over, everyone troops down to the auditorium for the results.

Our local candidates have not been elected.

Still, the event moves along, with congratulations for next year’s leadership team: Jake Bollea of Palmer High School, president; Thomas Coulouras of Long Meadow High School, vice president; and Miles McGrail of Ware High School, secretary.

The theme of this year’s conference has been “Next Stop: Leadership.” The event closes with footage from the WMASC summer camp. Final remarks come from Angela Mass, executive director of WMASC, focusing on next year’s goals of increased school and indi-

vidual participation in the program.

There is one final student speech, a teary thanks from the outgoing president, about what student council and the family of WMASC have meant to her. By now, the emotional air has been sucked from the room, and quiet student groups walk out to climb into their school buses. Life will return to normal when the students return to school after next week’s spring break.

It seems clear that participation in student council activities and community service projects, as well as the larger connection to the regional council group, have played a significant part in the lives of these students. They will all likely become active socially and politically during their last years in school, and in their future community lives.



the extra point,” when they went up by 9.

Dom Carme got the most Turners hits, with five, followed by Jaden Whiting and Cayden Lehtomaki (4), Ryan Campbell (3), Jon Fritz (2), and Kyle Dodge (1). Five pitchers took turns on the mound for Turners: Brian Murphy, Trevor Lapinski, Jack Patala, Bryce Waldron, and Kyle Dodge, who got the win.

The next day, Turners beat Pioneer 7-2. Coming into the game after defeating Frontier 1-0, Pioneer seemed like a giant killer, but one of my sources explained that Frontier actually outscored the Panthers by 15 runs but forfeited the game.

Turners’ D tightened up in this game. They still committed two errors, but their pitching staff allowed only four hits and two runs. And for the first time in three games, Turners actually led after the first inning. They managed to put two runs across in the 1st because of smart base running and a comedy of errors. Turners’s second batter, Campbell drew a 1-out walk. He stole two bases, and when Fritz reached on an error, he scored. Fritz then stole second, advanced on an error, and then scored on another error.

The Panthers got one run back in the second, but neither team scored again until the 5th when Blue put four insurance runs in the bank as Whiting, Kyle Dodge, Fritz, and Jake Dodge all crossed the plate. Campbell scored in the 6th to make it 7-1, and Mohawk answered in the 7th for the final score of 7-2.

Kyle Dodge and Fritz (2), Lehtomaki, Murphy, Whiting, Campbell, and Jake Dodge (1) all had hits for Turners. J. Dodge and Lehtomaki pitched for Turners, with Dodge again getting the win.

The Blue Nine are back on the diamond on Wednesday, April 17 when they travel to Easthampton to take on the Eagles.

Girls Tennis

The Turners girls’ tennis team went 1–1 this week to improve their record to 1–2. Powertown swept the Warriors 5-0 in the first match played in Mohawk April 11. And although Turners won all five matches, Mohawk forced a third set in two of those matches.

Haley Green won in straight sets in first singles 6–1, 6–0. Izzy Farrick had a tougher time in her match on the second singles court. The first set went to a tiebreaker, but she prevailed. She dropped a close second set, but won the third by a convincing score of 6-2. Steph Peterson also needed to win her third set after splitting the first two 6-3, 3-6. She won it 6-4, completing the singles sweep for Turners.

Turners had an easier time of it in doubles play. Maria Labelle and Ceci Wood won convincingly 6-0, 6-1, while in second doubles, Mercedes Bailey and Emily Dennison also dominated 6-2, 6-1.

Then on Friday, April 12, the ladies from Lee came to town, and reversed Blue’s fortunes with a sweep of their own. Baily and Dennison fared best for Powertown, winning four games in the first set and one in the second. Wood and Labelle also won a game in each set while Green lost 6-1, 6-0. Both Farrick and Peterson were shut out in straight sets 6-0, 6-0.

On Wednesday April 17, the girls traveled to Springfield to challenge the undefeated Bulldogs of Sabis.

Next week: The softball team begins the defense of their title.



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The hall is rented out for dance and theater rehearsals, concerts, the occasional wedding or labor history lecture, yoga classes, contra dances, and political group meetings, and the group runs monthly open mic nights.

HALL from page A1

which busily relocates the morning’s rain onto the lawn as we circle the property, and it will take a skilled hand to restore the Gothic intersecting windows facing Main Street.

The Friends’ renovations of the building are not its first revival. The Grangers purchased it in 1936 from the First Unitarian Church of Montague, and the Unitarians built it in 1835, but that doesn’t mean it enjoyed a solid century of well-painted Unitarianism, either.

The minister Edward Pearson Pressey recalled arriving in town in 1900 to take over a “broken-down liberal parish” with “a dilapidated meeting house,” a belfry “cracked and trimmed of its ornaments in a tempest,” and “[n]umerous holes in windows and boarding,” which “had been blown through by Fourth of July celebrations during Montague’s slumbering years.” Pressey and his wife Grace gave the church “a resurrection coat or two of white paint” and then used it to launch a minor arts and crafts colony.

And those Fourth of Julys weren’t the only riots in the Center relevant to the building. In 1834, after a decade of factional squabbling – and a year after they lost the right to tax the townspeople – a mob of orthodox Congregationalists reduced Montague’s original meetinghouse to rubble to prevent it from falling to their Unitarian and Episcopalian

rivals. Both of Montague Center’s churches, now facing each other across the common, were built the following year.

But now it is 2019, and the “white church” is in the care of a core group of seven or so conscientious neighbors, and they are pulling together \$30,000 to \$40,000 to do the roof.

“I think the north side got done maybe 25 or 30 years ago,” Wise says, “but the south side predates anybody who knows when it was last done. It’s just shingled, and on this side it doesn’t even have sheathing underneath it – it’s just shingled right onto the boards.”

Under that roof, which has leaked intermittently in recent years, sits the Montague Historical Society collection. “They don’t pay rent, but they did pay for the renovation up there,” Wise explains of the arrangement between the groups.

In the basement there is a small kitchen and dining hall – an adequate staging ground for weddings and baby showers – but the heart of the building, the focus of neighborhoodly preservation efforts, is a beautifully maintained, sunny, simple and spacious hall. Yoga classes, concerts, square dances, medieval fair rehearsals, and Morris dance practices take place here regularly, and two fairly tuned pianos and an army of folding chairs are on hand for usage.

But the space use revenue doesn’t cover the big capital items.

Fortunately, Wise tells me, the roof campaign is in the home stretch. A \$10,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts was matched with another \$10,000 from an anonymous donor in the western part of the country, whose attachment to the hall Wise can only guess at. Smaller contributions of \$2,000 and less have added up, too.

“And we did have some reserves,” Wise says, “so we’re mostly there. But we’re hoping to

PRINCIPAL from page A1

as the committee’s “universal choice,” and reported that “her visit with us has generated a lot of positive energy.”

“She is both relationship-focused and results-oriented,” Sullivan wrote in a public statement, “and I think she will be a good fit for our middle and high school and the larger school community.”

Sullivan also said that Menard “possesses the rare combination of personal traits and leadership skills that make her both a strong builder of positive school culture and a clear-eyed director of change where it is needed.”

The turnover at the secondary school comes amid a tumultuous year. In December, a group of district parents publicly accused the administration of poorly handling a climate of harassment and racism

among some students, prompting a process of investigation and introspection. In January, principal Annie Leonard announced that she would be taking a medical leave, but also stepping down from the position at the end of the school year.

During Leonard’s leave, consultants brought in to hear from stakeholder groups reported to the school committee that there was “a sense that a culture of racism/intolerance persists at the schools,” and that “when students encounter the discipline system, it is ineffective and/or discrepantly applied.” Sullivan has made the case that the schools’ disciplinary system was stretched too thin by prior years of staffing cuts, and a second dean of students will be added in the fall.

At the same time, a grant-funded project to completely reconfigure education at Turners Falls

Center,” Chris Pinardi writes, in explanation of the offer. “and when I was a kid, there were lots of things that brought the village together. Over time things have changed and there are fewer and fewer of these opportunities.

“The Common Hall is one of those opportunities and while we may or may not see the direct benefit of having it, certainly it gives the Village a place to pause and enjoy the company of one another.”



GILL from page A1

ways combining the districts could improve the quality of education. He said he had been more concerned about financial factors originally, but that further information showed Gill’s contribution might even go down from current levels. Snedeker went on to say it was important for people to know that forming the committee didn’t necessarily mean anything was going to happen: “It’s just an exploratory committee.”

Board member John Ward said someone had brought up the idea of calling it a “feasibility” committee, but state statutory language required the wording “planning committee.”

Board member Randy Crochier spoke about the need for towns to take steps to address issues facing the district on their own, saying “we can’t wait for the state to fix” everything, and that forming planning committees was such a step. If the process moves forward in all six towns, the next step would be the formation of a regional planning board.

The selectboard unanimously approved the formation of the three-member committee, to be appointed by the town moderator. Purington said he thought the Montague selectboard would be looking at the proposal next week.

Police Contract, Car

The board signed a three-year

contract with police chief Chris Redmond, for \$80,000 per year plus cost-of-living increases. All three board members expressed their appreciation of the chief, and the hope that he would remain with the town for many years to come. Redmond was unable to attend the meeting due to a vacation, but is expected to sign when he returns.

Purington updated the board on the status of the replacement police cruiser for the one totaled in an accident recently. He said the town has received the title for the new cruiser, and the department has removed all usable equipment from the old one, but is still waiting on the insurance claim for destroyed equipment.

Purington said the new cruiser is in the process of being marked and equipped, but did not have a firm timeline for when it would be ready.

Highway

The board approved a request from the highway department for \$80,000 in state Chapter 90 funds to cover additional costs in the recent work done on South Cross Road.

Purington said that, according to highway superintendent Mickey LaClaire, there was a total of approximately \$180,000 in the Chapter 90 fund currently, not including funding for this year. Purington said the money was to cover costs already incurred in adding paved waterways and additional gravel,

not for an expansion of the project. He said the request didn’t present a financial hardship, but was unexpected.

Ward commented that the cost overrun was a large one on a project originally projected at something in the vicinity of \$130,000, and wondered how to deal with such surprises in the future.

“The money’s spent,” he said. “Let’s replace it, but let’s keep an eye on it next time.”

There was also talk about the perception that the road was wider, leading motorists to drive faster. Purington commented that in general, they are not widening the pavement width, but stripping and cleaning up the shoulders, making roads appear wider.

Other Business

A town meeting warrant article was approved to authorize the board to enter into a new 10 year recycling contract to replace the current one, which expires in 2020.

The board also approved a warrant article to change accounting methods for local cable access (PEG), to allow the town to maintain a separate account for PEG access revenue.

The board approved a sewer commitment of \$40,416.33. Purington said that there was nothing notable, other than it being larger than last year’s amount.

The board approved a public

gathering permit for Turners Falls Schuetzen Verein, with Crochier abstaining due to being a member of that club.

The board accepted the Franklin Regional Council of Governments’ annual offer to perform traffic counts, to be made at the Lion’s Hill roadside of the Center Road intersection, at Mickey LaClaire’s suggestion. Purington noted the police department now has a traffic counter, which they can use when needed as well.

The board renewed two field leases to Joe Williams: the Boyle lot, for \$130, and the Mariamante property for \$175.

May 9 was set as the deadline for petition warrant articles.

Town clerk Linda Hodson-Mayo notified the board of an offer from Greenfield Savings Bank to donate an elm tree for the town common in celebration of the bank’s 150th anniversary. Purington researched the matter, and found elm trees are known for invading drainage pipes, which has been an issue on the common, and suggested an easily accessible clearing in the town forest instead. The board directed Hodson-Mayo to get in touch with the bank about a potential fall planting.

The board reminded the public of a retirement Party for Ronnie LaChance on Saturday, April 27, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Gill Church.

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The Children's Page

YONDERNOD ILLUSTRATION



Mrs. Mop and Mr. Broom were waiting for Vic Vac to finish a room, hearing his singing for the hundredth time, when suddenly he sputtered and coughed and a cloud of dust rolled out engulfing Vic Vac and DPW Bev! When the dust cleared DPW Bev was calling the maintenance department.

Vac away. In spite of her mixed feelings about Vic vac, Mrs. Mop was a little

concerned! What would happen now? The next day, much to their surprise, the building maintenance guys appeared with a big shiny green vacuum cleaner! DPW Bev looked it over

checking its buttons and plugs and levers. When she turned it on, what a noise issued forth! A screaming litany of complaints and commands poured out with a deafening shriek. Although

it certainly was able to clean the rugs, the vacuum loudly criticized every previous vacuum, broom, duster and mop that had ever made an effort to clean Town Hall before! Not to mention Mr.

Broom and Mrs. Mop, DPW Bev, the cleaning spray bottle, even the building maintenance guys! "I better request to buy some ear plugs," said DPW Bev! Mrs. Mop and Mr. Broom feared that their lives were ruined! "My bristles are falling out," whined Mr. Broom.

Just put my head back under the suds," said Mrs. Mop! Several uncomfortable days passed by as they adjusted to their misery. Then one morning they were surprised by the maintenance guys! They were back with Vic vac! Shined up and spiffed up and ready to go again.

Mr. Broom and Mrs. Mop almost cried tears of joy at the sight of him. They took him by surprise with their warm welcome and listened to his singing with great joy! The sun rose that

day just as they finished cleaning Town Hall. They stood and watched it together by the window near the elevator! Vic Vac sang all of his favorite songs, spiffy and new and suddenly feeling very popular!



Written by Beverly Ketch
Illustrated by Hannah Brookman

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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

Finance Committee Cool On Leverett Elementary Budget Articles, Third Cop

By ROB SKELTON

The Leverett selectboard, the finance committee, and moderator Larry Farber met Tuesday to finalize the warrant for the annual town meeting on Saturday, April 27. Each of the 44 articles will have someone speak to the question, usually a selectboard member or department head.

The majority of the fin com does not support Articles 6 and 7 (\$33K operating expenses for the school, and creating a special education reserve fund), and the fin com does not support Article 8 (\$33K for a third police officer).

Fin com members were chary of Article 12 (\$7,000 from free cash to install and maintain a donated air compressor at the fire station), due

to past experience with “free stuff.”

Article 16 is a three-pronged response to a poisonous “plume” emanating from the capped former landfill, to mitigate the water problems of nearby residents. Part one appropriates \$2,333,000 to extend the Amherst water line, which the majority of fin com supports. Part two appropriates \$150,000 to get started on the East Leverett Waterworks by drilling into a rumored massive aquifer there, as guided by a hydrogeologist currently under contract. Part three allots \$20,000 for an appraisal of the affected properties in the event of a taking by eminent domain. The fin com supports parts 2 and 3.

A citizens’ petition to approve up to \$15,000 for an engineering study of Dudleyville Road, considered

a waste of money by some members in the room, is a precursor to an expensive fix within three years, should it pass.

Leverett is the last town in the commonwealth to nominate candidates from town meeting floor, so anything might happen, but with strong incumbents running for re-election, any political surprises are unlikely.

Offices up for election this year are: assessors (one 3-year and one 2-year term); board of health (two 3-year terms); library trustees (two 3-year terms); constable (one 3-year term); fin com (two 3-year terms and a 2-year term); planning board (two 3-year terms); school committee (two 3-year terms); and selectboard (one 3-year term).

Small Fire District Meeting Is Unanimous

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – A small crowd at the annual Turners Falls Fire District meeting on Tuesday at the auditorium of Turners Falls High School approved all articles on the warrant, with virtually no debate. The warrant included the combined budgets of the Fire and Water departments, as well as articles for specific expenditures.

The combined budget, which was read in its entirety by meeting moderator Ray Godin, totaled \$3,021,457. Roughly two-thirds of this was accounted for by the Fire Department, which saw its budget increase by approximately \$168,000. Approximately \$90,000 of the increase was the result of an increase in debt service, primarily for borrowing to purchase a new fire truck. The fire budget also was impacted by a \$27,000 increase in the retirement assessment from the

town of Montague retirement board.

District accountant Eileen Tela was asked how the fire budget increase of \$194,505 would affect the rates paid by homeowners and businesses. Tela estimated that the increased levy, which she “rounded up” to \$200,000, would produce a rate increase of 26 cents per thousand dollars in valuation for residential property, and 40 cents for commercial and industrial property. She estimated that for a home valued at \$200,000, this would mean an FY’20 fire tax increase of approximately \$52. For commercial/industrial property of the same value, the tax increase would be \$80.

Tela was also asked to project the repayment schedule for the fire truck borrowing. She pointed to the district’s annual report, which indicated that at the current repayment rate, the borrowing for the truck would take nine years.

The meeting also approved a

\$40,000 special article for “driveway repairs” at the fire station, after fire chief John Zellman said the concrete in front of the station was “sinking.” He also said the blacktop at the back entrance needed to be “shored up,” but he was hoping to plan that work in collaboration with construction of the new highway garage.

Other highlights of the meeting included an appropriation of \$30,000 for upgrades to the water metering system. Water department superintendent Mike Brown explained the rationale for increasing the appropriation on the warrant from \$20,000 to \$30,000. The department, he said, is planning to replace meters outfitted with ARB boxes, which require a manual plug-in, with units that can be monitored from a distance by radios. The initial plan was to replace approximately 277 boxes this fall, but now Brown believes he can install the new meters more quickly.

The meeting also approved Brown’s requests for \$11,500 to purchase a new mowing tractor, \$8,000 for an equipment trailer, and \$50,000 for “future water main replacements and repairs.” A \$5,000 limit on spending from the land management revolving fund was also approved. Brown explained that this fund is stocked by “forestry proceeds” from the extensive properties the district owns in town.

Two articles on the agenda approved at the meeting appropriated funds for unused vacation pay and unused sick leave for the retiring deputy fire chief Leon Ambo. Other articles moved a total of \$75,000 from free cash into the district’s stabilization fund, and \$10,000 into a fund for future retiree health benefits.

The meeting adjourned after 35 minutes.

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was April 16, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.

County Planner Urges Caution On Gas Station Proposal

Of the 26 towns in Franklin County, 11 have groundwater protection zones, Peggy Sloan, planning director for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, told an overflow crowd Monday night at a hearing before the Erving planning board. Of those 11 towns, ten prohibit gas stations within the zones, she said.

The hearing was called in response to two petitioned articles brought forth by Ralph and Eric Semb, co-owners of the French King Entertainment Center and an abutting lot across Semb Drive. The articles would alter Erving’s bylaws, adopted in 2005, to allow for a drive-through fast food restaurant and gas station to be built on the lot, which is within the protection zone of the town’s aquifer.

Sloan said the one locality in Franklin County where a gas station could in theory be constructed in a groundwater protection zone is in Greenfield, where the commercial district overlies a small corner of the aquifer.

On Wednesday, Eric Twarog, senior planner for the city of Greenfield, said he had spoken with planning board chair Roxanne Wedegartner, “and she agrees we should probably amend our zoning bylaws

to prohibit gas stations anywhere within our aquifer protection zone.”

The nearly 60 Erving residents at Monday’s hearing did not seem as persuaded by Sloan’s information. A straw poll taken toward the end of the meeting found the majority raising their hands in support of changing the town’s zoning to allow a gas station in the protection zone.

Parzych Returns to Riverside School

The author of *Jep’s Place* finally showed up at the Four Winds School in Gill on Tuesday to answer students’ questions about local lore, and to offer a few pointers from a master memoirist and journalist. He sat in a circle of respectful middle school youth like Socrates surrounded by his students, and engaged them in dialogue.

Joe Parzych was scheduled to lecture at the school on ancient history on January 15, but got sidetracked by an unexpected trip to Baystate Medical in Springfield for sextuple bypass surgery the same day, after waking up in the morning with a pain like chilblains in his hands.

“If you want to make a story interesting, you have to have some sort of complications,” said Parzych, who had black panthers follow him home from Greenfield and never more than five cents to rub together when he was growing up at *Jep’s Place*.

Somewhat Older People Sought

AMHERST – Researchers in the department of kinesiology at UMass-Amherst seek men ages 75 to 85 and women 81 to 85 to participate in a study to measure walking steps during treadmill exercise and during activities in daily life. Participation involves one to three visits to the Physical Activity and Health Laboratory on campus for a total time commitment of 4 to 4.5 hours.

Participants will be asked to walk on a treadmill and perform activities such as folding laundry, watching a movie, and completing computer work. They will wear several small gadgets that measure physical activity on the waist, wrist, thigh, ankle, foot and chest, and a portable metabolic system used to measure air being breathed in and

out. For safety, they will also wear an ECG system of chest patches and cables and a blood pressure system on the upper arm to monitor cardiovascular responses.

Participants will receive a \$75 gift card as appreciation for their time. An additional, optional component of the study includes one week of physical activity monitoring during usual free-living behavior, and a fourth visit to the lab to complete a peak aerobic fitness treadmill protocol. Two \$50 gift cards will be offered for these optional components of the study.

For more information or to volunteer to participate, contact the Physical Activity and Health Laboratory at cadencestudy@gmail.com or (413) 545-1583.

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STRIKE from page A1

While the employees picket the brick and mortar stores, both sides have gone online, using social media to boost support. Stop & Shop's corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts posted on Tuesday, after weeks of silence, to state their support for their employees and commitment to a fair contract.

A union-backed Facebook group called "Support Stop & Shop Employees" has amassed nearly 29,000 followers as of print time, posting infographics about parent company Ahold Delhaize's profits, as well as sharing photos of dogs and children on the picket line. A rally advertised for Thursday in the Boston area will feature Joe Biden as a speaker, and Elizabeth Warren was photographed delivering coffee and donuts to workers, indications that the strike is garnering national attention.

The Greenfield store had about 30 people picketing on various parts of the property on Wednesday afternoon, the strike's seventh day. While this reporter was interviewing Green, a W.B. Mason truck entered the parking lot, and left a minute later after being confronted by striking employees.

Fellow unions, including the Teamsters, have asked their members to not cross picket lines, resulting in deliveries being rejected at stores across the region.

Green says that while the weather has been varied, local residents have been very generous, dropping off food, gift certificates, and even cash to picketing employees.

She adds that she is proud of her colleagues who have been holding down the line in Greenfield.

According to Green, customers in Greenfield are by and large respecting the picket line, and the parking lot stood empty as shoppers apparently flock to other stores. In Turners Falls, anyone passing by Food City may have noticed the retailer is seeing a lot more business. A manager at the store – which has a new banner indicating that it is "employee owned," following the recent establishment of an employee stock ownership plan (see story in the March 14 *Montague Reporter*) – reported that the store has been "a lot busier" during this past week. He expressed gratitude for Stop & Shop customers shopping at Food City during the strike, and encouraged them to request any items that they routinely buy that the store does not currently carry.

Green, on the other hand, worries that customers currently shopping at other grocery stores may not return. With Stop & Shop's ongoing increases in automation – including self-checkout lines replacing cashiers, and the elimination of onsite butchers – some customers, she says, may find they prefer new stores that still provide those services.

In the meantime, Green encourages supporters to join the Stop & Shop employees on the picket line. "I wish Stop & Shop would do the right thing," she says, "so that we can get back to what we know how to do best."



Caring For Dementia

GREENFIELD – If you're caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia, Savvy Caregiver can help you. The program, a free, six-session training for family and friends who are active caregivers for those living with Alzheimer's or related dementias, will take place at LifePath, 101 Munson Street, Suite 201, in Greenfield, Mass., on Tuesdays, beginning May 2 and ending on June 6, from 3 to 5 p.m. Workshops will be led by a Savvy Caregiver practitioner.

Register at info@LifePathMA.org or leave your contact information at (413) 773-5555 x. 1190. Space is limited. No walk-ins, and no professional caregivers, please. Registration ends April 25.

Savvy Caregiver will help you understand the impact of dementia on both you and the person in your care; learn the skills you need to manage daily life; take control and set goals; communicate more effectively; strengthen family resources; feel better about your caregiving; and take care of you!

"I came into Savvy not knowing anything about dementia," says Karen, whose mother has dementia. "When I finished the course, I felt pretty confident that I had a very good understanding of what was going on, and I feel like I am a lot more helpful to my mother now. I'm a lot more empathetic toward my mother. I'm a lot more patient with her."

The Gill-Montague Education Fund 2019 Annual Gala



**Saturday, April 27th
7:00 pm
Turners Falls High School Theater**

Advance Tickets: \$25 At the Door: \$30

Ticket Locations: Bernardston-Hillside Pizza; Erving-Weatherheads/Dunkin Donuts; Northfield-Bobby's Hair & Nail Salon; Greenfield-World Eye Bookshop; Turners Falls-Greenfield Savings Bank, Scotty's Convenience Store; Call Sandy at 863-7296; and the GMEF website, www.thegmef.org.

Corporate Underwriters: Greenfield Savings Bank, Montague Elks

Corporate Sponsors: Construction Monitoring Services, Inc., Franklin First Credit Union, People's Bank, The Management Solutions, The Montague Elks Lodge 2521

Montague Parks & Recreation Department PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, May 1, 2019 - 7 p.m.

Montague Public Safety Building Community Room
180 Turnpike Rd., Turners Falls, MA 01376

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 138, General Laws, as amended, the inhabitants of the Town of Montague are hereby notified that the **Montague Parks & Recreation Department** will be sponsoring a meeting regarding the **master plan of Montague Center Park** on Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at 7 p.m. Public participation is welcomed.

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Above: Decorations adorn the front yard of a Fifth Street home in downtown Turners Falls.

Spring Allergies? I Got Your Back!

By DR. NITYA EISENHEIM, ND

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Spring is almost here, practically right around the bend. Some of us are looking excitedly towards the warmer days and flowers, while some of us are dreading the approaching season. Some of you may suffer from a runny nose, itchy and/or watery eyes, or asthma that gets worse this time of year, and can make it hard to breathe, or maybe you get so stuffed up that it’s hard to think and concentrate on work.

Either way, I’ve got some great tips for you. Remember to always consult with your physician regarding appropriate treatment for you. This is not a replacement for medical or health care.

I’m a naturopathic doctor practicing in Greenfield, and in naturopathic medicine, we have several tenets: look for the root cause of illness; treat the whole person; stimulate the body’s innate ability to heal; individualize care; and view the doctor as a teacher. I am passionate about all of these tenets, and today I will focus on the last tenet, education.

So, what are seasonal allergies? Seasonal allergies, sometimes called “hay fever” or seasonal allergic rhinitis, are allergy symptoms that happen during certain times of the year – usually when outdoor molds release their spores, and trees, grasses, and weeds release tiny pollen particles into the air to fertilize other plants.



EISENHEIM PHOTO

Harvested nettles, *Urtica Dioica*.

Allergies develop when the body’s immune system overreacts to something in the environment.

What can you do? You can follow these tips to avoid your triggers:

- Monitor pollen and mold counts. Weather reports in newspapers and on radio and television often include this information during allergy seasons.
- Keep windows and doors shut at home and in your car during allergy season.
- In spring and summer, during tree and grass pollen season, levels are highest in the evening. In late summer and early fall, during ragweed pollen season, they are high-

est in the morning.

- Take a shower, wash your hair, and change your clothes after you’ve been working or playing outdoors.
 - Wear a filter mask (NIOSH-rated 95) when mowing the lawn or doing other chores outdoors, and take appropriate medication beforehand.
- Luckily, we live somewhere where a plant grows abundantly that can help us with these seasonal allergies. This plant is nettles, or in Latin, *Urtica dioica*. This plant is loved by some and hated by others, as it is with most wild plants we call “weeds.”

This is the first medicinal herb see **NETTLES** page B2

Festivals, Parades, and Tours Fill ArtWeek

By NINA ROSSI

TURNERS FALLS – On any given week or weekend one can find numerous live concerts, plays, art exhibits, and other cultural events to attend between Brattleboro and Holyoke; surely we have our pick from more than we can think of attending or affording to do almost ev-

ery weekend. Coming up at the end of April, there is an additional effort to pull together events through the ArtWeek initiative, which spread into the central and western parts of the state for the first time last year from the Boston area.

From April 26 through May 5, events are organized into a database on the ArtWeek website ([\[ma.org\]\(http://ma.org\)\) by location or by genre. There are a few local organizations and individuals who have decided to participate by registering their art happening with ArtWeek, but it is pretty spotty in Franklin County.](http://artweek-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

But whether organizers have bothered to register events as part of ArtWeek or not, there is still a lot going on as the weather warms up, so I thought we’d look ahead to the last weekend of April and give a preview of what the choices are.

Radical Interconnectedness

First of all, Eggtooth Production’s Radical Interconnectedness Festival returns to Turners Falls on Friday, April 26 and Saturday April 27, at 5 p.m. each day. The theme of this year’s festival is art that engages issues of “otherness”: race, age, gender, religion, class, and so on.

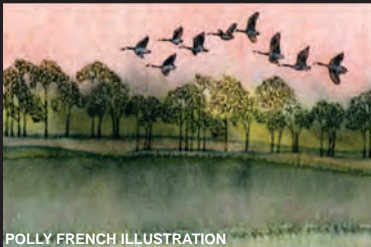
Installations, performances, and exhibits by 13 different groups throughout downtown Turners Falls will all be within walking distance of the Shea Theater, and one ticket covers access to all events for both

see **ARTWEEK** page B4



ABBIE DUQUETTE PHOTO

Katherine Adler will dance in a 30-hour durational performance at Ste. Anne’s Church on April 26 and 27 as part of the Radical Interconnectedness Festival.



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER ALBERT EINSTEIN, THE BUMBLE BEE, AND TOM SULLIVAN

By DAVID BRULE

If the bee disappeared off the face of the Earth, Man would have only four years left to live.
- Albert Einstein

THE RENDEZVOUS – Did Albert actually write these lines? Maybe he did, maybe he didn’t. These days you can never be sure of what’s real or fake. If he didn’t, he should have, because the alarm bells have been going off for a while now. The real news is that the bees and other pollinators are in big, big trouble. Because they are in trouble, all of you are too.

You will have noticed that pollinators are at the base of our ecological system. It’s true, and you can Google that if you need to be sure.

While you’re at it, Google the term *neonicotinoid*, too. That’s the chemical stuff that is killing bees and pollinators – and will eventually kill us too, according to Einstein. That is, if you believe his prediction. We can wonder whether he actually had time to write about bees or not, given the weight and mysteries of the universe heavy on his shoulders.

I learned about neonicotinoids only the other day at the Rendezvous over a few beers and cups of coffee with Tom Sullivan, local pollinator hero.

The Voo during the day is a good place to meet, as its French name implies, and I’ve had numerous business meetings there with all kinds of people: family, Indian tribal leaders, the late lamented Don Clegg, newspaper reporters, and all.

The Voo was originally the home of the Société Saint Jean-le-Baptiste, the French-Canadian social club. Just like the Polish with St. Kaz and St. Stan’s, and the Irish with their Hibernian Hall, we had our ethnic club, too. I can still picture the iconic Leo Saulnier with his long white apron, the principal bartender at the Voo in the 40s and 50s.

Although Tom and I had planned a social visit, the talk this time was about pollinators and the horrible chemical stuff mentioned above.

I did learn from Tom that those neonicotinoids are everywhere in all your favorite garden centers, hardware stores, and farmers’ suppliers. I won’t name any names because all those places employ good people. But I challenge you to ask any one of them about neonicotinoids and you’ll get vague, evasive answers. They’re not always proud of what they’re selling.

That product is in every single

potted plant or bagged shrub you buy. It’s a Bayer-Monsanto toxin in every potting mix they produce. By the way, it’s actually *banned* in Europe. But not in the USA – Donald Trump has made sure of that. The Monsanto lobbies are very strong.

Tom tells me that it’s a systemic product. It’s drawn up into the plant or shrub, and is guaranteed to kill any insect that visits those lethal flowers. Plants imbibed with the product hold it in their roots, stems, and flowers, and will kill insect visitors dead. And that stuff is in every single flower and shrub ball in every single garden center in the Valley.

You may remember Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*? Her book exposed the DDT industry and the toxic effects of that product on the ecology in the ‘50s and ‘60s. But now we’re back dealing with the same kind of danger again, but it has a different name and it’s much harder to pronounce.

Many of our local farmers pour hundreds of gallons of the stuff into their cornfields every year. One application lasts 1,000 days. Have a look at the nearest cornfield when you get a chance. You won’t see any tree swallows or barn swallows swooping over the tassels waving in the wind, because those fields are sterile; there are no insects there. Wondering about the disappearing monarch butterflies? Those fields are knocking them dead. I should think that organically raised crops will look pretty good to you, after reading up on some of those toxic additions to our food chain.

But there is hope. Local people like Tom Sullivan, Evan Abrahamson, and Peggy MacLeod are doing something about saving our pollinators. Environmental activists like Pam Kelly and Dorothea Sotiros are joining them in the effort to develop safe havens and pollinator corridors to defy the Einstein prediction.

Our champion native pollinator is the humble Mr. Bumble Bee. He is joined by hundreds and hundreds of pollinating butterflies, moths, and all manner of native wild flies.

Even though our native honey bees are basically extinct, replaced by imported European honey bees by the first colonists, at least the bumble bee is holding its own. It is challenged, however, by the competitive honey bee who, in colonies of up to 25,000 individuals, needs to forage far and wide for nectar and pollen.

Tom is director of his organization *PollinatorsWelcome.com*, and the other individuals mentioned above are also engaged in see **WEST ALONG** page B3



“MOISES”

Hey there, Moises here! I’m a pretty good cat, most of the time. I have some specific needs to ensure I’ll be happy in a new home. I’m forward and deliberate in my interactions with people – lots of head-butting, rubbing, and rolling around on the floor. I can be quite the clown, but you have to watch for signs I’m

getting a little too ramped up! If you’re a connoisseur of cat language and don’t mind providing your feline friend with some outdoor privileges, you might be the person I’m looking for. Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities

APRIL 22 THROUGH 26

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 4/22
1 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday 4/23
10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Lifesavers Session 2
Wednesday 4/24
9 a.m. Veterans’ Outreach
12:30 p.m. Bingo
Thursday 4/25
9 a.m. Tai Chi
10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga
1 p.m. Cards & Games
4 p.m. Mat Yoga
Friday 4/26
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 congregate 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 Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation

can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.
Monday 4/22
8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance
11:30 a.m. Breakfast Brunch
12:30 p.m. Pitch card games
Tuesday 4/23
8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise
10 a.m. Stretch & Balance
12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich, Special Bingo
Wednesday 4/24
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 p.m. Homemade Lunch
1 p.m. Last Drumming Class
Thursday 4/25
8:45 a.m. Aerobics
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
12 p.m. Congregate Lunch
1 p.m. Dementia Talk
6 p.m. Swing Dance begins
Friday 4/26
9 a.m. Quilting Workshop
9:15 a.m. Flex & Stretch
9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun
10:30 a.m. M3 Exercise Games
12 p.m. Lunch

LEVERETT
For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us.
Wednesday 10 a.m. Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free).
Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (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.



NETTLES from page B1
that I met and fell in love with, and I am so happy to share nettle with you. Nettle loves wet areas, and you will find it growing near streams, rivers and brooks. Nettle has tiny spiky, sharp hairs growing all over its stems and leaves. These tiny hairs are what give nettle a bad rep, but they contain medicinal compounds which can help to stabilize mast cells, creating less of an immune reaction and helping prevent seasonal allergy symptoms when taken on a regular basis.

It also contains a plethora of minerals and vitamins, most notably iron and potassium. You can ingest nettle as a tea, cook it very carefully (for at least 10 minutes, to soften the hairs), or pick up freeze-dried nettles in a capsule form.

If you’ve never harvested in the wild, please go with someone who knows what they’re doing so that you harvest the correct plant, and treat the plant community in a respectful way. One teaching I like to pass on is to give something before you harvest the plant. In many indigenous tribes in the Americas, people give tobacco as an offering to the plant before harvesting, but you can give anything that fits into your paradigm or tradi-

tion – prayer, a few strands of hair, a song, chocolate, a piece of bread, or a bead – as long as the intention of giving and acknowledging that you are taking something is there.

Only harvest as much as you need, have a plan of what you want to use the plant for, and be kind: always leave some of the plants for other people and animals, and for the plant community to be able to reseed and come back next year.


With nettle, you can get stung if you approach it the wrong way. For beginners, I suggest wearing good, thick gardening gloves, and bringing a pair of scissors along with a harvesting basket or bag. Hold the top of the plant, snip off the top 2 to 4 inches for the easiest preparation and let it fall in the basket or bag. If there are flowers, or if the nettles are more than 2 feet tall, you do not want to harvest anymore: if you harvest nettle leaves too late they can contain compounds that are harmful to the kidneys.

The “spring allergy and sinus” tea I make available for my own clients features nettle, along with lemongrass (helpful for mold exposure), dandelion and burdock root (for liver support and minerals), goji

(a red berry from the Himalayas that helps to support the liver, and is sour, which in the Ayurvedic system is considered balancing to the body this time of year), gotu kola (also an Ayurvedic herb specific for preventing allergies), and eyebright (a native plant that helps with itchy and watery eyes).

By the way, I have grown all these herbs or harvested them in this climate. The tea is delicious and nutritious, which is so important as we transition to springtime, after a long winter of eating more animal products and starches.

I have my clients who always have springtime allergies start drinking three cups of this tea per day in late March or early April, so that when the flowers start blooming, the medicine has already been in their body and it reacts less, creating less inflammation and other symptoms.

Dr. Nitya Jessica Eisenheim, ND is a Naturopathic doctor and herbalist, specializing in chronic digestive concerns, Lyme disease and chronic pain. She lives in Turners Falls, practices in Greenfield, and is founder of  cedarroseheals.com.

OUT OF THE PARK: April 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello, and happy spring everyone! I’m sure you’re all excited to see the green grass and blooming flowers. It’s been a little chilly so far, but the milder weather will be here in no time.

While we have a very busy season ahead of us with various programs and events, quite possibly our most significant event is the start of construction for Phase I of the Rutter’s Park Improvement Project in Lake Pleasant. In just a few weeks, groundbreaking will take place for a new playground, picnic shelter, and major beautification efforts. The project will go on well into the summer, and we look forward to the ribbon-cutting sometime this fall. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for pictures and updates!

Turning our thoughts to more immediate engagements, we will be holding our 14th Annual **Peter Cottontail’s EGGstravaganza** on Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m. down here at Unity Park. The event is rain or shine, and children ages 4 to 12 are invited to meet Peter Cottontail, enter into raffles, enjoy a bake sale, and of course, participate in our Egg Hunt, which includes 5,000 candy and toy-filled eggs. Please note that participants must bring their own basket or bag for the eggs. We would like to thank the Montague Elks, Letourneau Plumbing, and Greenfield Savings Bank for co-sponsoring this event.

Registration has also begun for



our **Montague Warrior Dash Adventure Course Race**, which is planned for Saturday, June 8 at 2 p.m. at Hillcrest Elementary School. We’ll be partnering with Hillcrest to bring you this awesome adventure race for kids ages 5 to 12.

Racers will compete in separate age categories; 5 and 6, 7 and 8, 9 and 10, and 11 and 12 year-olds; boy and girl winners will be crowned in each category. Proceeds benefit MPRD’s scholarship program and the Hillcrest playground project fund.

Sponsors are needed; please help spread the word! Online registration available at runreg.com/montaguewarriordash.

Summer Camp registration has also begun for Montague residents. This summer, camp will be held from Monday, June 24 to Friday, August 16. We offer theme weeks, field trips, special events, and trips to Laurel Lake. Non-residents may start to register on Monday, April 29. Our Summer Camp is licensed through the MA Department of Pub-

lic Health, and is still one of the best deals around.

There will also be a **Spring Clean-Up** at the Unity Park Community Garden on Saturday, April 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Come hang out with some friendly neighbors while we finish laying wood chips down on the paths, process our compost, and plant spring vegetables in the pick-your-own beds. As a thank you to our volunteers, we will be able to send everyone home with free seeds. We’ll have snacks and warm drinks on hand, and green thumbs of all ages are welcome!

We also continue to take registrations for our **Summer Bluefish Swim Team**. Summer Bluefish will be held from Monday, May 13 and will go through late July. Practices and meet days and times vary; family discounts available, and new swimmers are welcomed to try out.

And finally, we are very excited to announce that we’ll be holding a **public meeting** on Wednesday, May 1, to discuss the **master plan for Montague Center Park**. The meeting will be held at the Montague Public Safety Building community room at 180 Turnpike Road in Turners Falls, and starts at 7 p.m. Public participation is welcomed.

That’s about it from here. Check out our webpage on montague.net, or view our Facebook page for updates. Talk to you next month!

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

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


THE SPIRIT SHOPPE

WEST ALONG from page B1

the Western Mass Pollinators Network. Initiatives by the above groups focus on developing pollinator corridors all across western Mass, delving into more than two dozen towns, seeking support from conservation commissions, boards of selectmen, local schools, and all.

This Saturday, April 20 at 1 p.m., Tom will present his vision for a pollinator corridor through our valley towns. His presentation will be

at the John Zon Community Center in Greenfield, sponsored by *greengreenfieldma.org*

He will also present an introductory pollinator primer at the Erving Community Center on May 6, sponsored by the Erving Conservation Commission.

Watch this space for Part II about local efforts to welcome and provide for our endangered pollinators.



MOVIE REVIEW

Green Book (2018)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – When I first heard about the movie *Green Book* coming to theaters, I had a moderate interest in seeing the film. I was also a little surprised to see it at the Garden Cinema in January, when it premiered back in November. But I went and saw it, and enjoyed it very much. So much so that I sat through the whole movie. I ended up seeing it a total of three times, and sat through the whole thing each time.

Other people must have felt like I did, because *Green Book* was a Best Picture nominee when it came to the Oscars, and it won. I believe that’s why the theaters got it at the time it did.

Green Book is a true story of an Italian American named Frank Vallelonga and an African American composer and a piano player named Dr. Don Shirley.

Vallelonga worked as a bouncer at a club in New York at that time. He was in need of some temporary work while the club was being renovated. He got hired by Dr. Shirley to be a driver, because his name came up when he asked around about anyone who could handle trouble.

The pianist with his band, the Don Shirley Trio, was expecting trouble when it came to doing a concert tour in the Deep South. The Civil Rights movement had barely begun then. Black people didn’t have much of a good chance of fair treatment then.

We are shown some of what the pianist had to endure by doing this tour. But we are also treated to a portrait of who these two men were.

Don Shirley is shown to be a well-educated and cultured man who can speak a couple of languages. He knows about the Greek myth of Orpheus. He used his education to help Vallelonga write some nice love letters to his wife. I found it to be a cool surprise that he understood and spoke fluent Italian, which he showed Vallelonga by pointing out he understood a conversation that the man had with some friend from his neighborhood at one point.

Vallelonga is shown to be an honest man a couple of times in the film, when he doesn’t take a job offer a couple of times that was offered to him by, I believe, gangsters. He does a good job of keeping his word to have Shirley’s back. He also gets his eyes opened to how badly black people were treated then, and how that’s not right. A lesson learned well was when he tells one of his friends not to call Shirley an “eggplant,” a derogatory term for a black person.

Green Book was a great pleasure for me to watch. These men stayed friends with each other for a long time. The friendship continued after the tour by way of Shirley coming to Christmas dinner with Vallelonga, his family and his friends like he was asked to by the man. Another nice little surprise was the Italian’s wife thanking him for providing help with the letters when he showed up for Christmas dinner.

One of Vallelonga’s two sons, Nick Vallelonga, helped write the screenplay for the movie. I believe his father, along with Shirley, would be happy with the final screen draft of the movie.

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week at MCTV

By ABIGAIL TATARIAN

Sometimes spring seems to trickle in too slowly with the April rain, but the birdsongs beckon the blossoming to come. We hope this week, the buds will reveal their green beginnings.

Yes, the waiting is hard. Thankfully, we won’t have to wait anymore to see the following programs, now available on Montague Community TV!

- Science in the Valley, episodes 1 and 2
- Franklin County Varsity Sports Report: April 2019
- Farley String Band, at Greenfield Savings Bank: March 2019
- Harmon Personnel Services, at

Greenfield Savings Bank

- Cable advisory committee meeting: April 2019
- Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary Presents: the Amazing Beaver, at Greenfield Savings Bank

These videos can be found on Channel 17, or on our website, *MontagueTV.org*.

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Eight More Skunk Calls; Various Other Wildlife, Too; Trash Rummaging; Tire Slashing; Phone Theft; The Usual

Monday, 4/8
9:20 a.m. Caller from Federal Street complaining of loud music coming from neighbor’s garage since approximately 9 a.m. Caller advises he can hear the music from inside his house. Spoke with resident; advised of complaint; same agreed to turn music down. Officer advises the music was audible from Bangs Street.
4:33 p.m. Call regarding grandmother scam; caller requests to have on record.
6:03 p.m. Party into station to report hitting a deer about an hour ago on Turnpike Road. Report taken.
9:32 p.m. Report of assault and battery between two residents at Farren Care Center. Report taken.
9:32 p.m. Report of subject who entered the rear of Hillcrest Elementary School with a dolly 5 to 10 minutes ago; has since exited and backed a vehicle up to the building. Officers confirmed subject was janitor taking out trash.
Tuesday, 4/9
9:42 a.m. Third-party report of car vs. utility pole on Greenfield Road; one party with facial laceration from hitting steering wheel. Conferred with AMR; Shelburne Control advised for MCFD EMTs; PD units advised. Officer advises pole was not compromised.
10:33 a.m. Caller from Norman Circle requesting assistance with dead skunk in her neighbor’s yard. Message left for animal control officer.
1 p.m. Report of skunk in alley between Fourth and Fifth streets. Skunk is walking but is not exhibiting any outward signs of distress. ACO advised; unable to locate skunk.
3:53 p.m. 911 caller from Main Street reporting skunk walking around the neighborhood; skunk appears to be sick. Officer observed skunk for several minutes. Nothing alarming about skunk’s behavior or demeanor. Does not appear unhealthy or aggressive. May have just woken up from hibernation.
5:09 p.m. Caller from Ripley Road believes that she has been hearing gunshots coming from the property next door. Investigated.
Wednesday, 4/10
1:38 p.m. Report of stolen cell phone from Tangible Bliss. Suspect came into store trying to sell jewelry, stole owner’s cell phone from the counter, and left. Investigated.
2:20 p.m. Caller from Montague Avenue reporting a skunk in his

neighbor’s yard running in circles for the past hour. Caller reports that his neighbor is away. Message left for ACO.
4:21 p.m. ACO advises he took a call about a sick skunk in the alleyway near the Rendezvous, maybe near a red barn. Area searched; unable to locate skunk.
6:07 p.m. Report of a skunk that looks injured/sick walking around in area of Fourth Street. Skunk located and does appear to be sick. Officers determined that there is currently no safe place nearby to dispatch the skunk. They will try again later to see if the surroundings have changed.
Thursday, 4/11
7:24 a.m. 911 transfer call reporting that he struck a fire hydrant in front of Johnson Controls and knocked it over. No injuries. FD responding to clean up fluids. Water Department notified about damaged hydrant.
9:50 a.m. Caller is in Unity Park watching a raccoon that appears to be sick; raccoon is walking around the ballfields. ACO on scene.
10:07 a.m. Caller states that there is a dead skunk in a neighbor’s garage. Animal picked up by ACO.
4:57 p.m. Off-duty officer reporting that a female party who has two active warrants is sitting on a bench on Avenue A. A 31-year-old Montague Center woman was arrested on a default warrant and a straight warrant.
Friday, 4/12
12:16 a.m. FL Roberts employee advises they are having a problem with a male patron who was rummaging through the cigarette trash outside of the store. Employee advises they were told by managers that if they continued to allow this to occur, they could lose their job. Male was told multiple times not to do this. When confronted tonight, he reportedly threw a metal item at the ground and made a mess of the trash. Male last seen with pajama pants and black hoodie heading on L Street toward Fourth Street. Employee advises they do not want male back in store. Officer out with male on L Street; male sent back to store to pick up mess he made at request of officer who is there. Male verbally trespassed from FL Roberts; employees advised of options.
3:42 a.m. Caller from G Street reporting that a male was at her back door, knocking and looking in the window. Officer out with male and female on Eleventh Street. Male admitted to knocking on door; they were looking for someone else’s apartment. No harm meant.
11:49 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that someone slashed all four tires on her vehicle. Investigated.
12:07 p.m. Report of two loose dogs that just showed up at caller’s Masonic Street residence. Dogs are covered in mud and appear to have been out for a while. ACO advised and responding. Caller called back advising that his neighbor has a deer head mounted on a stake in their yard and one of the dogs had started chewing on it. Caller concerned that it is not deer season. Officer advised.
3:26 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reporting a dead fox in her backyard that has been there for a few days. Services rendered.
Saturday, 4/13
3:06 p.m. A 45-year-old Montague Center man was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.
5:28 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that her neighbor is intoxicated and is outside behind the apartment screaming at a child and at the caller. Investigated.
6:41 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reporting that his neighbor who has several cars on his lot is going around to all the vehicles and starting them; advises it is very loud and he would like it addressed. Officer clear; resident has been advised of complaint.
8:56 p.m. Caller reporting a male and female arguing; states male has now run down Crescent Street wearing tan pants and a white shirt. Caller is not sure what is going on. Caller called back advising he is with a female party right now who is upset over drugs being sold out of an address on Newton Street. Dispatch spoke to female briefly. Investigated.
9:36 p.m. Caller advising that the house across from him on G Street has a lot of traffic coming in and out, people being very loud, music blaring. Caller definitely feels it is all drug related. Officers checking area.
Sunday, 4/14
11:32 a.m. Caller from Bernardo Drive reports slashed tire on vehicle; suspects party leaving bags of trash and dog feces by his vehicle. Report taken.
12:02 p.m. Caller from K Street found a brown tabby cat at her door.
1:27 p.m. Walk-in party reporting rabid skunk in their horse pasture on Hatchery Road; now the skunk just went across the street. Officer advises skunk has been dispatched.
1:35 p.m. Caller reporting snapping turtle in road on Fairway Drive. Caller was unable to move it and was concerned it would get hit. Referred to an officer.
1:50 p.m. Report of breaking and entering into a vehicle on East Main Street; wanted on record only.
5:06 p.m. Fire alarm activation in Crocker Building. Caller from inside the Creemee reporting that a three-year-old child pulled the alarm. Confirmed by TFFD.

MONTAGUE CRYPTOJAM !!!

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ARTWEEK from page B1

evenings. The festival, which is funded through a Mass Humanities grant to Eggtooth, will wrap up with a panel discussion and workshops at Greenfield Community College on Sunday, April 28 with the artists, between noon and 3:30 p.m.

Some of the festival events will be at the Great Falls Discovery Center: “Artifacts of the Ephemeral,” a collection of physical objects and meditative writings by Katherine Adler, will be on display. Adler will also stage a “durational performance” for 30 hours at the former St. Anne’s church, from 3 p.m. on Friday, April 26 until 9 p.m. on Saturday, April 27.

Also on display at the Great Hall will be an exhibit titled “Vital. Vibrant. Visible: Local Indigenous Identity Through Portraiture,” featuring photographs by Sara K. Lyons, curated by Rhonda Anderson. Images from Lyons’s fine art photographic series have been exhibited in group shows throughout New England, and she teaches art, photography, and design at a public charter school and Greenfield Community College. They will be on display until May 31, with Adler’s work present only during the festival.

Also at the Discovery Center, repeating on Friday and Saturday: Voices From the Inside, a writer’s grip composed of formerly incarcerated women, will read from their work at 5 p.m. Ezekiel Baskin and Samuel Achilles Edwards present “Queer Intimacies,” a short play exploring the complex beginnings of queer relationships through audience interaction, at 5:30 p.m. on rotation. And Broadway veteran and local theater maker Lori Holmes Clark presents “Cloudy, With a Chance of Fringe,” described as “a buoyant contemplation of neurodiversity through song and dance,” at 8 p.m.

At the Shea at 5 p.m. both days, Alex DeMelo and the United ARC Performing Arts Program present theatrical performances by members of the ARC, an organization that supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. On Saturday only, at 6 p.m., Cynthia Snow will present a dance piece with Kathy Steinem focusing on aging, dementia, and caregiving, with poetry by Snow and Susie Patlove and the *a cappella* group Acappellago.

Terry Jenoure is performing “Pelala,” described as “a new fable for our day” featuring music, storytelling, and video, at the theater on Saturday at 7 p.m. as well. Images relating to her performance will also be projected onto the former Franklin County Housing Authority building at 42 Canal Road during the festival.

Two local shops are donating space to the festival artists. Julia Whalen will install an immersive piece exploring childhood memory at the Flourish With Grit shop on Avenue A, and Joe Dulude re-creates the living room from his youth in the 1970s at FAB on Second

Street from 5 to 8 p.m. both evenings. Dulude is “exploring how his past has shaped the way he thinks about himself, who he is and where he came from” through this immersive installation.

On the corner of Seventh and Prospect streets, the Church of Pod (the former St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church) will feature Karen Werner’s live experimental radio documentary performance *Strange Radio*, a “live documentary transmission on the layers of time, sound, and memory in Jewish Vienna,” from 7 to 8 p.m. both nights. (The *Montague Reporter* ran a story by Trish Crapo about Werner’s project in our March 28 issue, *Strange Radio Elicits Deep Listening*.)

Tickets for the festival are \$20, and are available at eggtooth.org or at the Shea Theater on both days.

Millers Falls Art Festival

In conjunction with ArtWeek, the Millers Falls Arts Collective has announced they will be kicking off the spring season with a downtown art happening. On Saturday, April 27, the artists of Millers Falls will open their doors to bring what organizers say will be “a feast of creativity and color to our town center.”

Over 20 local artists, musicians, and craftspeople from the surrounding area will roll into town to set up and share their creativity with art demonstrations, street performance, and live music, including local African drumming group the Wendell Warriors. There will also be craft vendors, activities for kids like creating chalk art, and generous participation from local businesses.

New Story Studio will open its doors to showcase its five member artists: Belinda Lyons Zucker, Marsia Shuron Harris, Jessica Star, Christine Texiera, and Adrian Montagano. Food will be available at the Whistle Stop Cafe or Element Brewery.

“Come and see for yourself the arts revival happening in Millers Falls,” says Eric Grab, one of the artists organizing the event, which is planned, rain or shine, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Contact Grab at (508) 243-6307 or ergrab@gmail.com with any questions, or to get involved.

Spring Parade and 5K

The ninth annual Franklin County Spring Parade will be held in Turners Falls on Saturday, April 27 as well. This year’s theme is “Magic.” Participants are encouraged to interpret this in any way they want, according to the event Facebook page, which says: “The definition of magic is endless. Whether it be the magic of Harry Potter, Queen Elsa, Disney World, witches and wizards, or grand illusionists, there is something about magic that excites us all. Bring your favorite magic with you to Spring Parade 2019.”

The parade will make a three-mile loop, beginning at 1 p.m. at Sheffield School on Crocker Avenue. It will take a left onto Mon-

tague Street, travel to the end, and turn left onto Turnpike Road. The parade will go past the Turners Falls High School, and take a left onto Millers Falls Road. At Scotty’s Convenience Store, the parade will turn left onto High Street and end back at Sheffield.

All interested groups are welcome to march; however, all entries must be registered ahead of time. For parade registration information, email Michael Nelson at michael-nelsonmba@gmail.com.

The parade takes place after the Spring 5K, which starts at 11:30 a.m. and makes the same route as the parade, except it begins and ends at the high school. For 5K info, contact Kelsey Cadran at fcspring5k@gmail.com. Costumes are encouraged.

Miscellany

Also at Turners Falls High School that same Saturday night at 7 p.m., the Gill-Montague Education Fund is hosting their Annual Gala, featuring an ABBA tribute band that will bring back “the glitter and glamour of the 70s... with [a] high-energy concert filled with lush harmonies, elaborate costumes and iconic choreography.” The Gala is a fundraiser for the Fund, which supports educational opportunities in the school district.

On the same weekend, the Asparagus Valley Pottery Trial, an annual self-guided studio tour of potters in western Massachusetts, will take place for the 15th year. This springtime tradition showcases the work and studios of a group of nationally known potters and additional guest artists in various places in Franklin and Hampshire counties. Check out a map at asparagusvalleypotterytrail.com.

Shelburne Falls has a springtime tradition in a Hilltown Draw Around, hosted by the Art Garden at the Cowell Gymnasium in that town. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the region’s largest community drawing event. It is a pay-what-you-can fundraiser for the ARTEens after school program at the Art Garden.

The gym will be covered with paper, and the doors will open at noon on Saturday, April 27 for 12 hours of doodling, drawing, sketching, coloring, and creative fun. The Draw-Around features drawing-related workshops, performances by local musicians, lots of different prompts and activities to get people drawing, and delicious food for sale at the pop-up Doodle Cafe. People are invited to come and go, and stay for as long as they like.

Lastly, the ArtWeek concept wraps up locally on Sunday, May 5 with an event at a cooperative gallery at the Montague Bookmill complex. Visit Sawmill River Arts Gallery between noon and 6 p.m. to learn from individual member artists how they “waste not, want not,” as they demonstrate how they reuse materials, and guide activities for visitors to make their own items.



Mortality and You: Explore Your Options; Tea and Cake

LEVERETT – The Northeast Death Care Collaborative is holding an event called “Mortality and Me” at the Mount Toby Friends Meetinghouse on Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27. The organization has arranged workshops and exercises that aim to help people connect, discuss, contemplate and plan end-of-life options because, “it always seems too soon, until it’s not.”

The NEDC was formed in 2018 to support those engaged in creating a death-positive cultural shift throughout the region: end-of-life doulas, funeral celebrants and directors, green and natural burial advocates, hospice and palliative care professionals, and others. (The *Montague Reporter* covered this in our February 28 issue: *The End of Life Web: Building Peer Support for Death Workers*, by Annabel Levine.)

Mortality and Me kicks off with a meet-and-greet at 5 p.m. Friday, followed by a vegetarian dinner for those who have signed up for the day of workshops on Saturday, as well as non-registrants signed up to attend the Death Café, which is open to the public for free at 6:30 p.m.

Donations are appreciated towards the cost of this dinner, and the fee for the two-day Mortality and Me event is sliding scale, according to founding member Dina Stander, who would like folks to know that “the sliding scale is generous” and there are plenty of spots still open. Please RSVP for the dinner if you are not registered by calling (413) 259-1300.

What is a “Death Café,” you may wonder. At a Death Café, people are invited to drink tea, eat cake, and discuss death. Through authentic conversation, participants hope to refashion their relationship to death and dying. The group may have a facilitator, does not dispense advice or offer therapy, according to information provided by *deathcafe.com*.

The model was started in England in 2011 by Jon Underwood and Sue Barsky Reid, based on the ideas of Swiss sociologist and anthropologist Bernard Cretaz, who organized the first *café mortel* in 2004. Since 2011, there have been 8210 Death Cafés in 65 countries. A look at the website attests to the popularity of these discussion groups.

This particular cafe is hosted by EE Miller, a Greenfield-based death educator and doula with a decade of experience as an educator, artist, and hospice volunteer.

The Mortality and Me workshops are hosted by Miller as well as Gina Colombatto, Meredith Hays, and Dina Stander. They include:

The Ultimate Shavasana, a two-hour experiential workshop

is designed to explore people’s fears around death and dying by inviting conversation about “our attachment to our bodies, including how we care for them and how we feel about leaving them in the end,” and sharing information on end of life options. A guided meditation using coffins and shrouds will provide “a transformative experience to embrace what is precious about being alive.”

The Legacy Project workshop helps participants tackle questions like *How do you want to be remembered?* Further brainstorming will identify projects and resources to make your wishes happen.

Obituary Writing will take a lighthearted look at obituary styles, and review some of the poignant stories an obit can tell. “We’ll discuss formats for interviewing obituary subjects (including ourselves) and introduce structures for life review,” reads the description. Participants will leave with an outline for a document which can be completed at home or saved for when the time comes.

Shrouding Wisdom is a hands-on session where the practice and history of burial shrouds will be discussed. Material considerations for green burial, rituals for shrouding, will be topics and there will be opportunity for shrouding and carrying each other.

There will be vegetarian breakfast and lunch on Saturday, and ample time for meditation as well as connection with others. Stander will install her “Phone of the Wind,” modeled after a phone booth made by a Japanese gardener who wanted to continue having interesting conversations with a cousin whose death he was mourning. After the 2011 tsunami, he made it publicly accessible for people to talk to those they had lost. Stander’s version has soft fabric walls, though she hopes to find the means to create something more substantial in the future.

For those who are interested in the topic of death but can’t do the Mortality and Me event, there is another event of interest on the horizon: EE Miller will also be hosting four Death Ed sessions at the Greenfield Public Library starting on Tuesday, April 30. The description for these says that the series “offers an alternative to fear and avoidance with opportunities to learn, connect with other mortals, and take action for better lives and deaths.” Topics deal with navigating the medical landscape, saying goodbye, honoring the dead, and building community.

For more information on these and other events, check out the Death Care Collaborative on Facebook or through dinastander.com; or deathcafe.com for more about cafés worldwide, and how to host one.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Comedy at the Shea*. Josie's Magical Flute presents an evening of improvised comedy. Featuring Julie Waggoner, Sally Ekus, and Mandy Anderson. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *World Dance Party with The Pangeans*. Latin jazz, reggae, samba, calypso, Afro-beat, and more. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Lizzy, Ratatoing, Strange Language, First Children*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Daryl Hance Powermouse*. "Psychedelic fuzz bomb of hot water soul." 9:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen*. Folk and roots music, bluegrass. \$. 7 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. Andy Davis with David Kaynor, Annika Amstutz, and the *Back Row Band*. \$. 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *NANA Visitor, Will Roan, Sarah and Jace*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sonny Lowdown Jam*. Roots music jam. 9:30 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Augusta Savage PopUp Gallery, 12 Federal Street, Greenfield: *Arctic Moth, Al Miller and Mark Fraser, Puertominicana*. Electronic improvisation; a soldier's words meet the soul of cello music; two drummers of poly-rhythms and sisterhood. 2 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *A Lyric Celebration of Mud Season*. Poets Chris Sawyer-Lauanno and Janel Nockleby welcome musician and poet Daniel Hales, poet and novelist Corwin Ericson, and poet

Trish Crapo, to a lyric celebration of mud season. Open mic (3 minutes per reader). Meet in the Great Hall. 2 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Greenfest 2019*. Third annual Greenfest includes bands such as *Jimmy Just Quit, Outer Style, Mass Air Flow, No Lens, Dish Soap, Pasta Chris, Etto, Disorderly Konduct* and more. Food, vendors. \$. 7 p.m.

Mt. Toby Meeting House, Leverett: *Crys Matthews, Heather Mae*. Social justice music makers with songs of compassionate discontent. Matthews is a powerful lyricist reflecting her lived experience as "the poster child of intersectionality." Mae turns her personal struggle with mental health and body image into an empowering message of self-love. \$. 7:30 p.m.

SUBMITTED IMAGE



Frank Solivan & Dirty Kitchen perform with special guest Eric Lee at Hawks & Reed Performing Arts center this Friday, April 19 at 7 p.m. They play a wide variety of new acoustic American roots music, focusing on bluegrass and aconstic country, with blues, folk, swing, and jazz also shining through as influences. Promoters call each member "an inventive powerhouse."

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *Caroline Cotter, Ashley Storrow*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Readings by Patty Gone, Stella Corso, Jon Ruseski, Zoe Tuck*. All ages, readings followed by a dance party. \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Owsley's Owls*. Grateful Dead covers. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *SpaceBar*. Infectiously heady soul-jazz collective. 9:30 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *Lake Side Drive*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, APRIL 21

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

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

MONDAY, APRIL 22

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Passover for All People*. Games, songs, food, scavenger hunt. Community meal led by Rabbi Andrea of Temple Israel. All welcome. \$. 5 p.m.

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Andrew DiRuzza*. Special dinner-time jazz set. 8 p.m.

bers, the people around them – and the aliens who are studying them, trying to make sense of the complex dynamics of the family and its environment. Opening night discussion with playwright Constance Congdon precedes the show. Tickets to benefit United Way on opening night. \$. 7 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *The True Jacqueline, Gladshot, ZoKi, Mystics Anonymous*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Tales of the Lost Formicans*. (See April 25 listing.) \$. 7:30 p.m.

St James and Andrew Church, Greenfield: *Dolunay, Cesni Trio*. Turkish and Rumeli music ensembles with album release show. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Downtown Turners Falls and Shea Theater: *Radical Interconnectedness Festival*. Art and performance of all kinds addressing the concerns of marginalized communities. Theater, music, dance, installation, poetry, video in alternative spaces and the Shea. One ticket for all. Repeats Saturday, April 27. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *The Proletariat, Moving Targets, Feminine Aggression, Human Ignorance*. Punk. \$. 8 p.m.

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

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

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *TNT Karaoke*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

Cowell Gym, Shelburne Falls: *Hilltown Draw-Around*. Annual community drawing marathon for everyone in a giant walk-through drawing space. Twelve hours of creative play, food, poetry, music, etc. Donation. 12 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Traditional Music Open Session II-Contra, Irish, Old Time Etc*. Open jam session. 3 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Joe Belmont Experience with Samirah Evans*. Jazz, funk and blues. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Tales of the Lost Formicans*. (See April 25 listing.) \$. 7:30 p.m.

EXHIBITS

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Pastel Studio*. Recent works by Becky Clark's students. Through April 26.

Augusta Savage PopUp Gallery, 12 Federal Street, Greenfield: *Dorrance Hill*, metal sculptures, and *Rodney Madison*, paintings. April 12 to April 21.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *Spring Member Show*. Artists in various media. Through May.

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

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.

Greenfield Community College South Gallery, Greenfield: *Student Art Exhibit*. Opening night reception April 18, 7 p.m. Highlighting work from current classes in the Art Department. Through May 9.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Layers and Contingencies*. Painters *Kate Marion Lapiere* and *Hannah Richards*. Through May 11.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Art of Missy Ashton*. Paintings.

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*, women painters from GCC, in the Barnes Gallery; drawings by Northfield Mount Hermon student *Zitong Xu*, a story-

telling collection called "Lost Girls," in the hallway gallery. Through April.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Spontaneous Combustion: Improvisatory Art by Adam Bosse*. Improvisations in color, paint, and ink, with a soundtrack from Bosse's musical projects. Through May 5.

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.

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

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton: *Plastic Entanglements: Ecology, Aesthetics, Materials*. The story of plastic in 60 works by 30 contemporary artists, exploring our entangled love affair with this miraculous and malevolent material. Through July.

AUDITION

New and experienced actors are welcome to audition in Shelburne Falls for Jackie Walsh's next theater production, *Ropes*. The cast is made up of three men, with ages ranging from 20s to 70s. Audition on Tuesday, April 16 at 6 p.m. and Saturday, April 20 at 2 p.m.; call Jackie for details: (413) 625-9413.



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CALL FOR ENTRIES:

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

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By **MISHEL IXCHEL**

Some women pray for their daughters to marry good husbands. I pray that my girls will find girlfriends half as loyal and true as the Ya-Yas.

Rebecca Wells, *Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood*

TURNERS FALLS – A decade ago, I stumbled into what felt like a parallel universe. I was in grad school at the time, spending countless hours at Bobst library, basically undergoing an intellectual bootcamp. Academic life is as linear as it gets, and even though I had been happy to jump through all the hoops I had needed to jump through to get into that program, I was a few months in and already feeling pretty tapped out.

The Great Loves of My Life

And then, I got the email that changed my life. It was an invitation to an “inspired movement” class, a four-week series that would meet every Sunday. There was something in the language of the email that beckoned me to partake. Without giving it too much thought, I signed up. The class turned out to be everything my life was not at that point in time: it was fluid, intuitive, and all the movements we did were in an effort to follow whatever felt good. If the movement felt good, then we were doing it right. Beyond this physical encounter with fluid movement, I was exposed to something equally out-of-the-ordinary. It’s that parallel universe I referred to earlier: I was suddenly surrounded by women who were quite literally fawning over each other. There was an air of excitement, joy, playfulness, familiarity and ease amongst them. It was my first taste of sisterhood. Meeting these women, and moving my body in ways I hadn’t before, completely rerouted my GPS. They all raved about the School of

Womanly Arts, only to learn that this school, which was NYC-based, was opening its doors to its yearly program in less than a month. I used my NYU scholarship stipend to pay for it, and even though the last thing I needed was more schooling, I enrolled in Mastery and would effectively never look back. I was recently on a call with another mama, and she was lamenting the lack of close mom friends she has within reach. I could feel her longing, and her desire to be surrounded by like-minded mamas to ride through this wild ride that is motherhood. More than that, a need for friendships with people who share similar ways of parenting. As I listened to her and what she longed for in her life, I became more awake to the presence of sisterhood in my own day-to-day. I am amazed and proud of the relationships I’ve cultivated with other mamas since setting roots down in Turners Falls. Initially, I was drawn by their parenting and overall life styles. I feel like I have been winging this whole parenting thing from the get-go, intuitively moving through it, but also looking around at what other mamas were doing and how they were doing it. And organically, this is how I gravitated toward

the women who are now the closest to my heart. There are four of us: fierce mamas, best friends, partners in crime. And there are six of them: four toddlers and two babies. I get teary-eyed when I think about all the holidays we’ve spent together; the time I pulled through with their help when my kiddo broke his leg and wore a spica cast for five weeks; all the hours spent around food and children running wild and free. They are the ones whom I leave my kid with at last minute, and often when I’m in a tight jam – and vice versa. We help each other raise each other’s children, mainly and primarily because our parenting styles vibe. This all flashed before my eyes as my friend shared just how lonely she felt in her mothering journey. And in that instant, I was able to reframe my entire single-momhood experience. Thing is, I’ve been wallowing in some kind of self-pity these last few years. I have wasted many precious hours on dating apps, or being set up by my friends, searching for my next love. Just the other night, I curled up in bed with a bag of popcorn, perfectly aware that I had chosen to eat handfuls of the stuff in an effort to satiate that giant loneliness

I felt inside. The next morning, I commented about this to a woman I was on a retreat with: I shared with her just how lonely I had felt, just how incredibly lonely it feels sometimes. And as I shared this, it hit me: While it’s true that these last few years I have lacked a thriving social life and a loving partnership, I realize that I’ve been busy nourishing some of the most important relationships of my life. In focusing so hard on what I was lacking, I had forgone fully appreciating the women in my life who nourish me in countless ways. Together, we’ve created a safe container for each other and for the children, and we have loved each other in ways that have filled my cup to the brim. It’s in these moments of reflection that I smile at the investment I made when I attended the School of Womanly Arts. This experience has given me a whole new outlook on the possibilities that can exist when women love, appreciate, and support one another. I grew up being told to never trust other women, to value marriage above all else. Opening up to sisterhood, and prioritizing it, has shown me that there truly is no other way for me to fully thrive in this world right now.

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.

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