

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 29

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THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

MAY 16, 2019

GILL SELECTBOARD

Town Clerk Hodsdon Mayo Announces June Retirement

By MIKE JACKSON

Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, who has served as Gill's town clerk since 2003, will retire at the end of June, according to a letter received by the town selectboard at their meeting Monday night.

"That's a hard one," selectboard chair Greg Snedeker said, in response to the news.

"Lynda will be drastically missed," Randy Crochier agreed.

Hodsdon Mayo tendered her resignation "with great regret," and has asked to speak with selectboard members outside of open meeting

about the reasons for her decision. She will remain in her role as assessors' clerk.

"While it feels hard to do, I just felt like this was the time I needed to do it," Hodsdon Mayo told the Reporter on Wednesday. "I would never have had the opportunity to know so many of the families and people of the town of Gill if I hadn't taken the position – that's all been a gift in the end."

"With deep regret," Snedeker moved to accept her resignation, which was approved unanimously after further deep regrets were

see GILL page A3

Montague Center Water District Needs Tank Repairs, Younger Volunteers

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague Center Water District's annual meeting on May 7 drew a crowd of twenty district members, a relatively large group compared with recent years, due to concerns about the need for investment in a new water tank and the future of the district itself.

The meeting began with the election of Ann Fisk as moderator. Rebecca Sabelawsky was then elected to the position of clerk, Nancy Dion as treasurer, and Mark Fisk as one of three commissioners. "We're going down the same old road," commented Mark Fisk, noting that the district needs more "younger volunteers."

The meeting then voted to accept reports of the commissioners and the treasurer. Commissioner Gary Dion reported that the district needed to raise water rates closer to the state average in order to qualify for grants to pay for needed infrastructure development. He said he had kept water rates down "to help the district," but now he thinks he made a "big mistake," requiring rates to increase by at least three percent over the next few years.

Nancy Dion reported that the

see WATER page A8



The district's water storage tank is in need of \$150,000 worth of repairs. Some neighborhood residents are asking about a merger with the Turners Falls district.

NINA ROSSI PHOTO

PUPPET UPDATE

Meet the Cripps



Northfield-based puppeteer Madison Cripps with his marionette, the Rat.

ROSSI PHOTO

By NINA ROSSI

GREENFIELD – Puppeteer Madison Cripps will present his unique, cabaret-style puppetry in a show called *A Slice of Crazy Pie in Seven to Eleven Acts* at the Artspace Community Arts Center on Saturday, May 25. The family-friendly show is filled with Madison's character puppets, who interact with their creator and the audience in a show that he says will be somewhat improvisational, in that character responses de-

pend on audience interaction.

Cabaret-style puppetry emerged during the Vaudeville era, and refers to puppetry in which the puppeteer is not hidden behind a proscenium, but is out front, interacting with audience and puppets.

"Cabaret style tends to have less of a story, and more trick puppet experiences," explained Madison during a recent interview I had with him and his wife Vida. "Each of my characters has a certain schtick that they do. Some things are the same

see PUPPETS page A5

ERVING SELECTBOARD

State Releases Funds for IP Mill Cleanup

By KATIE NOLAN

On May 10, the Baker-Polito administration announced a grant of \$200,000 from the Brownfields Redevelopment Fund for the abatement of hazardous materials at the former International Paper Mill site on Papermill Road in Erving.

According to Erving administrative coordinator Bryan Smith, the grant will help with the cleanup of asbestos, lead, and bird and bat

feces in the vacant buildings at the town-owned property. Smith speculated that the cleanup could be completed by next fall. After the cleanup, some or all of the former mill buildings may be demolished, and the town will market the property to developers.

A February 2016 feasibility study prepared by town consultant Tighe & Bond, Inc. noted the attributes of the former IP Mill: good access to Route 2, more than 40 acres of

space, a natural setting on the banks of the Millers River, and infrastructure for water, sewer and electricity already present.

Tighe & Bond presented several options for developing the property, including demolition of all of the buildings on the property or demolition of all of the buildings except Building 2 and a small pumphouse by the river.

In 2016, Tighe & Bond engineer see ERVING page A3

The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – This week, the Franklin Tech/Turners Falls track team traveled to Canton, the Turners Falls baseball team fell on hard times, Powertown Softball stayed perfect, and the Turners Falls boys' tennis team fell back to earth.

Players and spectators braved unseasonably wet and cold weather this week, with the enduring hope that springtime will arrive sometime before summer gets here. (Because of technical difficulties with my laptop, parts of this article will just be a short recap.)

Boys' Track and Field

Mohawk 98 – FT/TF 41

FT/TF 80 – Athol 59

The Franklin Tech/ Turners Falls boys' track team played two meets last week before traveling to Canton on Monday to compete in the Mass Vocational Track and Field meet.

On Friday, May 3, the Tech Boys traveled up the Trail to take on the Mohawk Warriors. Donte Rosewarne (12.20 in the 100M), Zackery Conway (18.50 in the 110 hurdles), Kai Rodriguez (36'7.25" in the shot put), and

see SPORTS page A6

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Large Grant Awarded For Strathmore Hazmat Abatement

By JEFF SINGLETON

Montague has received a \$250,000 grant from the state development agency, MassDevelopment, to remove hazardous materials from the buildings that remain at the former Strathmore Mill complex. The award was announced by Massachusetts Governor Baker's office last Friday, and by town planner Walter Ramsey at Monday night's

Montague selectboard meeting.

The mill complex, constructed in 1874 by the Keith Paper Company, is located between the Turners Falls Power Canal and the Connecticut River. Its identity as a paper mill ended more than two decades ago when it was sold by the International Paper Company. Two owners later, it was taken for back taxes by the town of Montague,

see MONTAGUE page A7

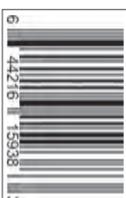


Welcome Home! Juliana Rode is congratulated by the team as she reaches the plate following her three-run homer in the fifth inning at Veterans' Memorial Field, Greenfield. Thunder roared with a 14-1 win over the Green Wave.

DAVID HOITT PHOTO

Much More Inside!

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The Montague Reporter

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August 2002

East-West

Imagine, if you will, it is 1899. Eight years ago, they invented the zipper; six years ago, the diesel engine. This is the year the paperclip is perfected. And the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is crisscrossed by a lattice of steam and electric railroads.

This year the state railroad commissioners hire one of the very best mapmakers in the field, the lithographer and publisher George H. Walker, to produce a map to accompany their annual report. Walker's 1899 map lays out the system in trim and economic detail: red lines for street railways, punctuated by circles indicating junctions; grey lines for steam railways.

The red lines burst across Walker's map from the Bay like veins, scraggling off into exurban wisps in the West.

Out here, the little streetcar systems mark factory towns: the Hoosac Valley line, branching off in three directions from downtown North Adams; another from Pittsfield up to the Pontoosuc Lake and Dalton; a trolley running from Shelburne Falls up through Shattuckville, Griswoldville, and Lyonsville past Foundry Village into the center of Colrain, and returning southbound again.

Electricity carries passengers from Easthampton or Williamsburg into Northampton, and then across the river into Amherst and up North Pleasant Street as far as the Agricultural College. Mount Tom and South Hadley are the northernmost stations of a complex system around Springfield, and Conway has its own little tram connecting the center of town to the steam railroad stations down on the Deerfield River.

And from downtown Greenfield you can loop down through Cheapside, across the Connecticut, and up into Turners Falls. From there you can ride on over to Lake Pleasant, and then decide to continue either north to Millers Falls or south to Montague Center.

None of these little commuter rails, of course, would make any sense were it not for the more powerful steam railroads connecting them all. The Central Vermont Railway's New London branch cuts down through Northfield, Millers, South Montague Station and Mount Toby on its way toward Palmer and Monson.

And the main grey stem of the Fitchburg Railroad, having wandered all the way from Boston, crosses it near Lake Pleasant and intersects with the Boston & Maine

at Cheapside before snaking its way up the Deerfield River toward the famous tunnel. Go to Niagara Falls – hell, go to Chicago. Get a sleeping car. Bring a bicycle.

One can get around this way. And one can go look for jobs, or trouble. Three times a day you can board at Millers Falls for Brattleboro or New York City. And there are *twenty-seven* trolleys from Turners Falls to Greenfield each day, Monday through Saturday – on Sundays, only twenty-two.

Imagine, if you will, it is 2019. Zippers still work, mostly, and there's still diesel and paperclips.

One new invention touted by the press is a *gravity blanket*, which is a blanket that is heavy, so that when you are under it you don't feel quite as anxious. Another is a vast network of cameras that can recognize your face and update the police as to your exact location, which you should definitely be fine with unless you have something to hide.

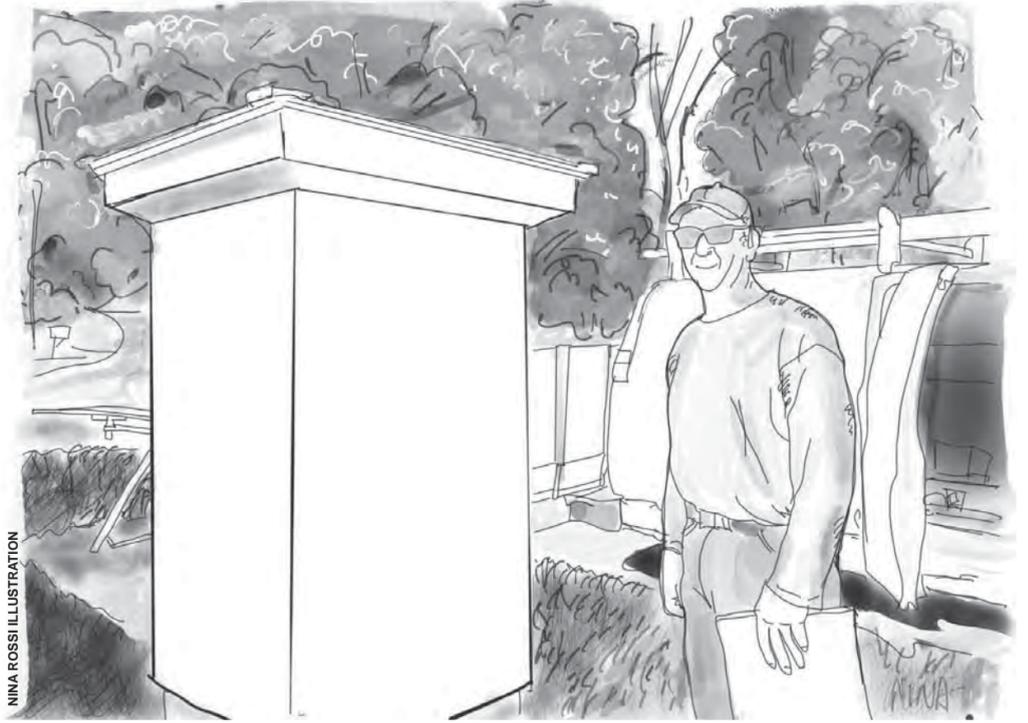
A single passenger train runs northward through Greenfield once a day, and southward once. You can catch it to somewhere near Burlington, Vermont for forty dollars, or New York City for \$67. All the trolley tracks were long since ripped up. There are buses, though not on weekends, and then there are private cars – which the Department of Labor estimates average \$9,576 per year to own.

Our state senator, Jo Comerford, has cosponsored a bill directing the Department of Transportation to study the feasibility of a passenger railway connecting North Adams, Greenfield, and Boston. It would run along what was once the Fitchburg line.

Among the bill's instructions to the DOT would be to estimate "the resulting economic, employment, social and cultural benefits to Franklin and Berkshire counties and the commonwealth as a whole" should the railway be established. The report would be due in June 2020. The department is already studying a possible southern tier link connecting Pittsfield and Springfield to the capital.

And last Thursday, according to the State House News Service, Jo rolled into a hearing of the joint committee on transportation with 700 electronically harvested comments from constituents supporting rail service.

A straight shot from Greenfield to Boston would be a game-changer – in both directions. At the hearing, Comerford made the case to



Paul Interlande installs the historic road marker back onto its foundations in Montague Center, displacing thousands of carpenter ants who had enjoyed living there for many decades.

Letters to the Editors



In Support of the Millionaire's Tax

Last fall a proposed ballot question for a millionaire's tax was struck down by the courts before voters could have their say. We are now in round two, as the state legislature is working to craft a proposed millionaire's tax to be earmarked for state education and transportation. Please consider supporting this tax policy by contacting your representatives.

The legislature is already aware of the inequities that exist within our state education Chapter 70 formula, as well as the need for more transportation funding to take care of our roads and bridges. It seems appropriate and in the interest of all Massachusetts residents to raise taxation on those who have benefitted the most

from the recent federal tax cuts. This will have the least impact on Massachusetts' overall ability to pay, since those taxpayers in the lower federal tax brackets received much less of a cut in their effective rate.

The increased revenue could make a significant impact on state education funding. Making changes to Chapter 70 in ways that capture the increased tax revenue could significantly help rural western Massachusetts.

For instance, adjusting the 59/41 local/state aggregate contribution percentages to 50/50, or gradually raising the 82.5% cap on local contribution, are policy changes that could be funded through the increased revenue from the millionaire's tax. It would give needed budget relief to local governments, and shift some of the burden away from regressive local property taxes toward more progressive state income taxes.

The reality of the recent federal tax cuts is that they concentrated even more income and wealth into fewer hands, and have shifted our overall taxes away from progressive federal taxes toward more regressive local and state taxes. The millionaire's tax is a policy that could help counter this shift, bring the state much needed revenue, and possibly reduce the overall private debt levels in the state.

If the legislature keeps its promise of earmarking the new revenue for education and transportation, then the millionaire's tax is a proposal worth supporting.

Greg Snedeker
Gill

Write Me In

I would like to ask my neighbors in Montague's Precinct 1 to write me in as a Town Meeting candidate on the May 20 ballot.

I am proud of my work on the Planning Board since 2017, and I will be an informed and useful member of Town Meeting. Montague is a wonderful and welcoming place, and I've been putting in the hours and attention to make thoughtful decisions to help keep it that way for all of us.

Please consider writing me in next Tuesday when you head to the polls.

Elizabeth Irving
Montague Center

Airport Signs Clarification

In the article about Montague Town Meeting in the May 9 issue, towards the end of the article there was a reference to \$7,500 to repair "airport" signs.

This should be clarified to reflect that this is "Airport Industrial Park" signs, and has nothing to do with the municipally operated airport under the control of the Airport Commission.

A casual reader might wonder why the town-owned airport is spending that much money on Industrial Park signs, when we are focused on managing our budget to reduce reliance on funding from taxation.

Thanks,

Peter Golrick
Chair, Turners Falls
Airport Commission

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by **CHRIS PELLERIN**

It was so nice to see people out at Unity Park taking advantage of the nice weather on Saturday. I hope the Brick House's Kickball for Kicks fundraiser was well attended.

Another eight-week session of **Neigong Taijiquan (Tai Chi)** classes at the Montague Common Hall has begun. The classes are taught by Hannah Fuller-Boswell on Wednesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. For more information and to register, email Hannah@curiouslemur.com.

A historic cargo aircraft, "Whiskey 7," will visit the **Military History Expo** happening this weekend in Orange at 645 South Main Street (exit 15 off Route 2). This C-47 Dakota was one of the lead aircraft of the first strike of the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944, and transported paratroopers for the 82nd Airborne Division as part of Operation Neptune.

The aircraft will arrive Friday, May 17 at approximately 1500 hours (that's 3 p.m. civilian time) and will be on display during the expo. Before and after the expo, for an additional donation to the museum, flights in this historic bird will be available. To reserve a flight visit www.history-expo.com and click on "aircraft tickets."

The Military History Expo will take place Friday, May 17 to Sunday, May 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Friday admission is just \$5 and features a militaria flea market, with a military vehicle and artifact display. The festivities continue Saturday and Sunday with live

equipment demonstrations as well as two battle reenactments each day. Tickets will be on sale at the gate: \$20 for adults and \$5 for children aged 6 to 16 when accompanied by an adult. Discounts are available for veterans, active duty military, and seniors. Food vendors will be available.

On Saturday, May 18 from 10 to 11 a.m. at The Turners Falls Branch of Greenfield Savings Bank, you can "**Bring a Book, Get a Book.**" There will be a collection of gently used books in various genres, perfect for children, teenagers and adults. Browse for that perfect book which will pique your interest, and be sure to bring books to swap. Light refreshments will be provided courtesy of GSB.

Join staff from the Turners Falls Fishway on May 18 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. for a **free guided walk along the canalside trail and bike path**. Learn about the amazing journeys of migratory fish as they travel upriver during their spring spawning run. Discover the history of the mills along the canal.

Meet at the picnic tables near the entrance to the Fishway at 15 First Street, Turners Falls. The walk is less than one mile along flat terrain. All ages welcome. Heavy rain cancels.

Don't forget that Monday, May 20 is **townwide election day** in Montague and Gill! Gill votes from noon to 8 p.m. at the fire station.

In Montague, polling stations have changed this year. Precincts 3 and 4 will no longer vote at Hillcrest Elementary; they'll vote at

the senior center on Fifth Street downtown. And Precinct 5 voters, who formerly voted at the senior center, will vote at town hall. Voting in Montague takes place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

"**What Would You Like to See Downtown?**" Attend the spring Cultural District meeting Thursday, May 23, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls.

RiverCulture is hosting a community get-together to discuss upcoming events downtown, as well as future plans for the Turners Falls Cultural District. Get updates from the planning department and discuss new ways we can capitalize on the great things happening in Turners Falls. This event is open to the public, and input is welcomed. Refreshments will be served. Questions? Call Suzanne at (413) 835-1390.

The Thursday, May 23 **Wendell Energy Committee** gathering at the Wendell Free Library will feature news from the committee, a short video and report about the Green New Deal, along with discussion on energy and climate issues facing Wendell. What can a small town do? A lot thus far, and surely more to come. Meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Curtiss Hoffman, professor emeritus at Bridgewater State University, will speak at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Thursday, May 23 from 7 to 9 p.m. Dr. Hoffman has just released his book, "Stone Prayers: **Native Constructions of the Eastern Seaboard.**"

On Saturday, May 25, rain or shine, the Montague Center Congregational Church (4 North Street) is hosting a **plant sale, indoor tag sale, and bake sale** – three events in one! Come from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will be free coffee, as well.

On Sunday, May 26 from 5 to 8 p.m. there will be a fundraiser for **Child Haven International** at the St. Kaz Society Hall, 197 Avenue A in Turners Falls. The suggested donation is \$20 at the door.

Child Haven International maintains homes for over 1,300 formerly destitute children and women in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Tibet, where children are raised according to principles of nonviolence, self-reliance, respect for all religions, equality of sexes, and disregard of caste.

Guest performances at the event

will include Grupo Guadalupanas, performing dances from Mexico; Gentile Mukobwajana, Tuyishime Mugisha, and Chance Nyrirama-hirwe, singing songs from Rwanda; and songs and dances performed by young violinists from Musica Franklin's Leyden Woods program. Looking ahead...

June 1 is the 14th Annual **Free Family Fishing Day**. Free fishing from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Barton Cove Campground, Barton Cove Road, Gill. Fishing equipment will be provided, but bring your own pole if you have one, as available equipment is limited.

No fishing license is needed for this event. Adults and children of all ages are welcome, but children must be accompanied by an adult.

Other events are also happening in Turners Falls on June 1 in conjunction with the free fishing day. At Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, there will be **fly lure tying and fly fishing casting** demonstrations. At the Turners Falls Fishway, 15 First Street you can learn the art of Gyotaku (**fish printing**), from noon to 2 p.m. You can also **view fish** from the USGS Conte Anadromous Fish Research Lab, 1 Migratory Way.

There will be a free shuttle bus between all of the sites, and free parking at each site. This day of fishy family fun is brought to you by MassWildlife, Western Mass Fly Fishermen, FirstLight, the Turners Falls Fishway, Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center, and USGS. These events will be held rain or shine.

On June 5 the **Great Falls Farmers Market** will be moving to a new location at Peskeomskut Park, across from the Food City Plaza. Support local farmers and makers on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 6 p.m.

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center at 99 Millers Falls Road is offering a **Wild Edibles Walk** on June 8 from 1 to 4 p.m. with Jean Bergstrom.

Jean will tell you about edible and medicinal plants in Northfield Mountain's woods and fields. This walking tour is for adults and children eight and older (accompanied by an adult). The cost is \$5 per person. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

ERVING from page A1

Josh Fiala called Building 2 "a hidden gem with all the hallmarks of a historic mill structure," including "exposed interior timbers, lots of natural light, and an open floor plan."

MassDevelopment oversees the Brownfields Redevelopment Fund, which helps to transform vacant, abandoned, or underused industrial or commercial properties by financing the environmental assessment and remediation of brownfield sites

in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth.

Four senior staffers from MassDevelopment inspected the property with selectboard members, other interested Erving residents, and Tighe & Bond engineers in March 2017.

According to the Tighe&Bond feasibility study, the mill closed abruptly in 2000. The town acquired the property in June 2014 for non-payment of taxes.



GILL from page A1

expressed by his fellow board members.

Hodsdon Mayo's letter thanked the town's voters, and also the late Harriet Tidd, who served as town clerk from 1974 until 2000 among many other public and civic roles, and passed away in 2007. "It's amazing that Mrs. Tidd's been gone as long as she has, and still has the impact on this town as she has," Crochier observed.

"It was with her support that I decided to try to run for the position," Hodsdon Mayo explained. "She had faith in the fact that I could do the job, and she helped me understand the work of being a town clerk."

She added that, though the selectboard may make an appointment to fill the rest of her term, she supported keeping the clerk as an elected position, "so that the peo-

ple's voice can be heard."

Town administrator Ray Purington said he would present the board with options for finding a new town clerk at their next meeting on May 28.

That date, which comes after the townwide election this Monday, May 20, was also set for the board's reorganization meeting. There are no contested races on the ballot, and voting will take place from noon to 8 p.m. at the fire station.

Monday's selectboard meeting was a very short one, lasting only 16 minutes.

Purington announced that insurance would cover outfitting the new police cruiser with equipment, after the old one was damaged in an accident. The total settlement amounts to \$46,372, of which \$30,836 covered the new car and its markings. The vehicle is expected to be

equipped and in service this week.

The foreclosure and bankruptcy auctions for Oakridge Golf Course on West Gill Road are scheduled for 11 a.m. next Wednesday, May 22.

The winning bid for town lawn mowing services was Art Kaczenski of Artscape Landscaping and Design of Erving. Crochier noted that his brother-in-law had submitted a non-winning bid. The board unanimously voted to award the job to Kaczenski.

The board also voted to accept a number of highway materials procurement contracts – including asphalt, rock salt, and gravel – bid through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

It was announced that Clean Sweep Bulky Waste Recycling Day is this Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to noon. Purington called it a "great way to get rid of stuff." The nearest

Clean Sweep location to Gill is the Northfield highway garage.

The following Saturday the 25th, naturalist John Root will give a presentation on "attracting birds, butterflies, and other beneficials" at the newly reopened Slate Memorial Library at 1:30 p.m.

And on Tuesday, June 4, the Gill board of health will discuss and might vote on body art regulations. Crochier, who also sits on that board, urged any members of the public who want to contribute to the conversation to either write a letter via Purington, or show up at 5 p.m. that day in the town hall basement.

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Great Falls Middle School Students of the Week

Week ending May 10:

Grade 7

Jill Reynolds

Grade 8

Mia Gonzalez

Related Arts

Aras Wiles

The 6th grade did not have a student of the week.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

“Local Man Yells At Fire”

By GEORGE SHAPIRO

LAKE PLEASANT – As a ten-year resident of Montague’s Lake Pleasant, I have front-row seating for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ logging of wildlife preserves – in my case, the Montague Plains, an “inland pine barrens.” When I moved to Montague, the sand plains were heavily forested. They now have the scenic beauty of a freshly bombarded World War I battlefield, thanks to a logging operation which has also been described as a habitat restoration effort.

As the name suggests, “heavily forested” is a temporary condition for “the Plains.” Sandy soil leads to dry conditions, and pitch-pine adds accelerant to an ecology defined by 50 to 100 years of green-growth followed by catastrophic fires. When the Commonwealth acquired large portions of the Plains in 1999, they became responsible for a rare ecosystem and liable for a large forest fire.

The exposition of ecology must always begin with an ode to undisturbed conditions, the original Eden awaiting man’s disruption. As the story goes: European farmers plowed and fertilized the barren, sandy soil, allowing non-habituated species to take root, and then abandoned a damaged ecosystem to alien patterns of growth. So, the Plains await restoration to a pristine sandy pasture dotted with drought-stunted trees. That man must walk back into Eden is one of those truths we hold self-evident – but Eden, in nature’s plan, is preceded by the hundred-foot wall of flame.

Compounding this disruption of the natural habitat, by 1999, fire suppression led to a 50-year build up of flammable biomass in the Plains. What was MassWildlife to do?

In modern, environmentally conscious Massachusetts, clear-cutting the Plains was not an option. If we ignore the question of whether the pre-European state of the Plains was undisturbed by man, the problem with restoring this habitat is that it is an ecosystem defined by fire, prone to fire; and wildfire, unlike the grizzly or the timberwolf, is a predator

which cannot be allowed back into nature. There must be compromise: a rare habitat could be restored, and the liability of an uncontrolled fire controlled.

Enter the “prescribed burn,” a generally used term in forestry: imagine a worker with a flame-thrower starting a small fire to prevent a bigger one. But in a compact, populated area like Montague, this consists of deploying a machine that is a cross between a riding lawn mower and a gas stove with the flames pointed down, surrounded by what looks like a hundred firefighters, to blacken the ground cover.

Prescribed burning allows a MassWildlife ecologist to say that fire will be used to restore the habitat of the Plains. Threatened rare species would be introduced into carefully managed restored micro-habitats: native blue lupine to foster the frosted elfin butterfly. It was only a matter of figuring out how to do it.

The first problem with prescribed burning in the Plains is that it is entirely inefficient, both in time and money. With the risk of uncontrolled fire high, only small areas can be burned at a time, and carefully. MassWildlife still describes it as an “experimental” procedure, yet they have logged over 1,000 acres which now require regular burning. The first experiment was conducted about ten years ago. After logging a small area, prescribed burning was conducted, but MassWildlife was unable to use limited burning to control the accumulation of new biomass. And once enough saplings and brush had grown, the area *couldn't* be burned, due to the risk of uncontrolled brush fire.

Without efficient burning – and possibly even with it – logged areas quickly become overgrown with saplings and bushes, which burn just as nicely as trees when conditions are right. The solution to this is to employ brush-mowers to shred all of this new growth, and leave it as mulch on the ground. Mulch retains moisture, which accelerates new growth, and the

growth of non-habitat-native plants in particular.

The end result is that the official habitat restoration plan amounts to an argument for using methods from traditional slash-and-burn agriculture to restore an ecosystem, where the cash crop is lupine rather than soybeans. This may control the risk of fire, but what about habitat restoration?

MassWildlife has presented little in the way of actual scientific research that this management strategy – selective clear-cutting, prescribed burns, and perennial mowing – will result in a reasonably natural, stable ecosystem in the Plains. The scientific publication cited to justify this strategy in the official habitat plan is an unpublished internal manuscript.

Some local residents suspect that the decision to log the Plains came out of the desire to generate revenue. This may be true, but the pitch-heavy trees of the Montague Plains were mostly woodchipped directly into trucks to serve as accelerant for biomass-fueled energy, satisfying the now-ancient legal mandate to support biomass as a viable energy source. Lonely government partisans of biomass and the owners of low-value Massachusetts forest tracts are, no doubt, pleased.

Further, having the Plains substantially logged satisfies fire safety officials that property and lives have been protected. And who has the greatest liability in the case of a major fire? The answer is likely to be Eversource, whose high-tension electric transmission lines have been running through this habitat since the plan to build a nuclear power plant.

Finally, scientists have now obtained state backing to fund an attempt at habitat restoration, and concomitant research advances careers, produces PhDs, and provides opportunities for recognition. It’s difficult to see the “Montague Plains Habitat Plan: Restoration and maintenance of natural communities in the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area” of 2017 as the product of science rather than a political compromise.

But! What is the problem with compromise?

In this case, it seems likely that no party will obtain what they bargained for. It’s hard to imagine that a Plains which must be regularly shredded by brush-mowers and crushed by 30-ton logging vehicles will ever be “restored.” Further, the constant shredding and burning is extremely expensive, which means there will be no net revenue.

Without revenue, the Commonwealth may neglect their habitat plan. But a logged Plains, covered in new growth, will be a constant fire risk. It seems possible that the end result of this experiment will be a habitat that must continually be destroyed in order to be saved: where the threat of 50-year forest fires has been traded for the threat of 10-year brush fires.

While MassWildlife has been transparent in explaining its plan, this author believes they have never been honest about the compromises behind it. They have never explained why the risk of fire couldn’t be controlled by fire breaks, instead of the modified clear-cutting they employed. I believe this is because the greatest liability was never to homeowners and residents, but to the electrical transmission lines, whose placement make them impossible to protect.

Despite the promise of being the product of a progressive and modern era, the habitat restoration plan reaffirms the original sin of US forest management: a commitment to prevent all fires. This might be the only option, but MassWildlife scientists must be honest about the consequence: the Plains will never be restored as a stable natural ecosystem.

An honest plan for the Plains would start with managing natural fires, rather than forestalling them – and the first item on that plan would be finally ending Lovejoy’s nuclear war, by moving the electrical transmission lines out of the habitat.

George Shapiro lives in Lake Pleasant and is an occasional contributor to the Montague Reporter. (The headline, just for the record, was his idea!)



On the Montague Plains: Singed earth, following a recent prescribed burn, at left; high-tension electrical transmission wires, at right.

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NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Superintendent Deemed “Proficient”

By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – The regional school committee voted Tuesday night to formally rate superintendent Michael Sullivan’s overall performance during the past year as “proficient,” a step down from his “exemplary” rating a year earlier.

The process, held under a formula set by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, was based on ratings given by committee members in 28 categories such as “cultural proficiency,” “fiscal systems,” and “family concerns.”

Gill member Bill Tomb, who joined the committee in September, abstained from the rankings; Thomasina Hall of Montague, who joined in February, did not. In most categories, different members gave Sullivan the highest and lowest possible marks. The committee was tasked with producing a “summative” ranking for the superintendent, given one “unsatisfactory,” one “needs improvement,” three “proficient,” and three “exemplary” sets of overall rankings.

“It might be helpful to talk about what will come of the evaluation – what are the stakes here?” said Michael Langknecht of Montague. “There really aren’t any.” Sullivan’s contract extends through June 2021.

After discussion, the committee voted 8-1 to rank Sullivan “proficient,” with Hall dissenting. Hall described his performance as “unsatisfactory.” “Many of his interactions, especially with families of color, have been reactionary as opposed to proactive,” she wrote. “His posture

has been defensive whenever there is a less than favorable view of the district or of his performance – including a lack of training or professional development to address student and parent concerns, and unwillingness to accept criticism.”

Jennifer Lively of Montague judged Sullivan as “needing improvement”, praising him in many regards but citing “continued difficulty with engagement and culture.”

“This is an opportunity to do Michael Sullivan a service, in giving him some feedback,” said Haley Anderson. “The meaning is in the comments, and whatever number we come to tonight doesn’t hold a lot of meaning.”

Sullivan thanked the committee for their feedback. “Some of it is maybe about my dispositions, and strengths and weaknesses personally, but sometimes it’s about what the year called for,” he said.

Equity and Engagement

A daylong training of the new districtwide “equity committee,” tasked with learning and leading efforts against discrimination and harassment in and around the schools, is scheduled for Tuesday, June 25. Of a hoped-for 20 people, only eight have so far stepped forward and been confirmed as members. One is secondary school assistant principal Kathi Smith. “We’re still trying hard to promote membership in that,” Sullivan said, adding that childcare, food, transportation support, and a stipend would be made available to participants. An application is on

the district website, and community members who cannot make the June 25 meeting are welcome to join.

The school committee read, but did not vote on, a new job description for a proposed 15-hour-per-week “family engagement coordinator.” The position combines an amalgamation of responsibilities, and Sullivan suggested that it could be modified into a role “highly related to equity as a sole focus,” or a communications specialist, “helping us get messaging out and marketing.”

“This looks like a lot to accomplish in 15 hours a week,” said Timmie Smith of Gill, asking if it could be expanded in the future.

Lively suggested that the equity committee should make recommendations that the engagement coordinator would follow. “Our schools need to be more welcoming,” she said. “We have documented concerns, over the years, with this type of communication.”

“What I would be more excited about is someone who’s an advocate for parents,” Sullivan said.

Anderson asked where the employee would spend their time working, and while Sullivan suggested that a space at the central office could be made available, Langknecht observed that if the job were an “ombudsman” role, “maybe a satellite office would be more appropriate.”

No decisions were made.

Information director Tina Mahaney gave a presentation on Plus-Portal, an online interface for parents and guardians that the district plans to roll out to better support “school-

home communications.”

“Communication has been all over the board,” Anderson, a district parent, said. The committee read a draft document that would standardize information-sharing practices.

School Police

Lively reported on a debate at Montague town meeting over funding for a town police officer stationed in the schools since September as a “school resource officer” (SRO). “The debate was really lengthy, and that sends a message,” she said, adding that many people “don’t understand exactly what the SRO does and doesn’t do.” She recommended that a review of the position be placed on a future school committee agenda, in order to “make sure it’s being utilized as well as possible.”

“I’d love to hear from students or parents who have observations about their interactions with the SRO,” said Anderson.

During the meeting’s public comment period, Scott Smith and Christopher Sabo of the Mediation and Training Collaborative spoke in praise of the work officer Dan Miner is doing in the position.

“I was not a school resource officer fan, but education has changed a lot in the past few decades,” said Smith, who is running a support group for boys with Miner. Smith said he had seen the position “improve student perception of police,” and make students feel safer. “When students feel safe, their academic performance increases,” he said.

Sabo, who works with 8th-grade peer mediators at Great Falls Middle School, said he had gotten to know Miner through his participation in a restorative practices project. “He said, ‘I want students to run towards

me, not away from me,’” Sabo said. “This person is about relationships; this person is about safety.”

Other Business

Sullivan reported that he and committee chair Jane Oakes had met with the chair of the Pioneer Valley district on the topic of forming a planning board to study the proposal to combine the two districts into one.

“They have quite a full plate at the moment,” Sullivan said, but “are interested in informing their full committee” about the proposal, which has been supported by the towns of Gill and Montague.

The grant that runs the Gill-Montague Community School Partnership is expiring this fall, and the Partnership with it. Sullivan said he had met with Dana Mengwasser, director of the Brick House, which will take over the work of coordinating the school’s community coalition, and that he hoped to introduce them at a future school committee meeting.

The state is unlikely to accept an application for reimbursement for a new Gill Elementary roof this year, as the roof is 24 years old, and the cut-off will likely be around 27 years.

The committee approved a packet of policy updates, as well as a new lease with the town of Montague for Hillcrest and Sheffield. “Elections” was removed from a list of purposes for which the town might retain the buildings, at the schools’ request.

Voting during next Monday’s election will not be held at Hillcrest Elementary; Precincts 3 and 4 will now vote at the senior center on Fifth Street. The school committee will hold a reorganization meeting next Tuesday, May 21 following the election. Five incumbents are running unchallenged on the ballot.

PUPPETS from page A1

in these shows, but it also depends on audience interaction.”

Vida nodded. “It’s like the same show,” she said, “but it’s never the same. And when people see his show, they think he is a character on stage, but this is just Madison! There is no on and off switch. His performative personality is very much true to him as a person.”

Looking at Madison’s handlebar moustache and form-fitting red jacket with turned-up lace cuffs, I could well imagine the world was a stage, and that life for the Cripps family was a continuum of creative effort, brainstorming, improvisation, and play. The couple met when “He stuck Pinky the Mare in my lap... I was picked up by a puppet!” Vida laughed.

Vida, a taxidermist, identifies herself as a Type A personality whose managerial skills have become useful in marketing her husband’s Type B style puppetry skills, but she also dabbles in puppets, and has plans to carve decorative filigree designs on goat skulls as a sideline. (Her taxidermy is temporarily on hold while their two-year-old is running around, and there’s another child due in July as well.)

The Cripps recently relocated to Northfield after living for several years in Asheville, NC, which they report is in the process of becoming a micro-brew mecca, a growth pattern that has forced artists like themselves to move out of the city. In Asheville they ran an arts program for school-aged kids, engaging them with a wide variety of two- and three-dimensional media. Madison will also teach two workshops at ArtSpace this summer, one on making Sicilian rod puppets, the other on making giant puppet heads.

Early Beginnings, Later Connections

In answer to my question about how he got started in puppets, Madison said, “In second grade my first book report was on Jim Henson, and I learned how to sew by sewing Kermit the Frog a little denim outfit. ‘Buff Man’ was a doll I made when I was little out of socks and yarn. He was overstuffed: Buff!”

Vida interjected, “His mom still has it, and it’s so adorable.”

As far as puppetry, Madison has always been drawn to the human form, drawing funny little creatures or making them out of different materials, giving them character and having them explore the world. “I went to college and studied fine art, the 2D kind of stuff,” he said. “Then I took an African dance class, and that kind of physicality made the 2D paintings feel like they weren’t quite satisfying all of my creative impulse. I realised I wasn’t using everything I wanted to.”

He picked up puppetry craft and performance skills on his own, at places like Sandglass Theater in Putney, VT, and while attending puppetry conferences such as the national ones held at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center in Storrs, CT. The University of Connecticut has a masters program in puppetry, and Madison has received mentoring from the director of the program there, Bart Roccoberton.



The Monk, a character created by Madison Cripps, employs 24 strings to control its various movements.

Puppeteers also gather at regional Puppet Slams, where they are challenged to put on improvised skits for adult audiences. Themes at a Slam range from bawdy to poetic to hilar-

ious, tending to deal with emotional subjects not suitable for children. “If you have the right energy and intention, you meet the right people,” commented Madison, who found connecting with colleagues at these events an invaluable way to learn new skills and get access to bookings at festivals and other venues.

Creative Process

Interestingly, Madison’s creative process begins with stream-of-consciousness-style mark-making on paper. From there, something emerges, suggesting a form to him, which he takes to make a figure. “I’m looking for that jumping off point,” said Madison.

From this free association emerges the figure, which also has a mechanical component built in to it. “It is based in physics and the three-dimensional world of gravity. If you want a puppet to do an action, you have to have a string to control the limb, or part of the puppet, to make that action.”

For example, to bring a puppet’s hand to its nose, you have to have a string through the head to the finger. Madison has a puppet with four strings, and one with two dozen, the Monk, who has moving eyes and hands that “do fun stuff.”

The discovery process continues as the creator gets to know the puppet. “I think I know who it is, but I don’t know them, really,” said Madison. “Who are they? What do they have to say? How do they move? How do they interact with other people? That’s my own backwards sort of process.”

The Uncanny Valley

The couple said that people often ask if there will be a taxidermy puppet at some point. “I can see using feathers and organic bone pieces to make something that didn’t exist before, maybe,” said Vida, “but not a squirrel with strings attached.”

“Marionettes and taxidermy both reside in the uncanny valley where things come back to life,” said Madison. “But people might get creeped out; it would be too much for many audiences. One of the main concepts of one of my puppet mentors was, *Consider Your Audi-*



Vida and Madison Cripps first met at a puppet show, where Vida says she was “picked up by a puppet” controlled by Madison.

ence. The moment you start to neglect them, you are losing it. Keep bringing it back to *Consider Your Audience.*”

This form of original puppetry is unusual to have in an area such as western Massachusetts, where a puppet community does not exist, according to the Cripps. They also pointed out that venues that are good for puppet shows are hard to find. The ideal space is small, with raked seating for the audience and a stage that is raised fairly high, so people can see easily.

A website featuring the couple’s work is in progress at crippscreations.com, and videos are on YouTube of performances from about a decade ago if you search for “Cripps Puppets.”

A Slice of Crazy Pie in Seven to Eleven Acts represents a rare opportunity to see this art form. It is also a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. The show begins at 1 p.m. on Saturday, May 25. There will be some merchandise for sale in the way of kid-friendly puppets, and if demand is greater than space allows for the first show, the couple say they might add a 3 p.m. performance the same day as well.



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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Greenfield: Volunteers Wanted for Tree Planting This Saturday

GREENFIELD – Join Greenfield community members and the Greenfield tree committee as we hold our fifth annual neighborhood tree planting event on Birch Street, south of Norwood Street. The Saturday, May 18 event will run from 9 a.m. to noon, and anyone interested in lending a hand can drop in anytime that morning.

Along with residents, tree committee members, and Franklin Land Trust (FLT) staff, foresters from MA Department of Conservation and Recreation will be on hand to conduct a planting demo at 9 a.m. at 10 Birch Street, and help community members plant trees.

"Tree planting is a wonderful way to build connections with our neighbors," says John Bottomley, Greenfield tree committee member. "In addition, trees beautify the neighborhood and benefit the envi-

ronment for years to come."

Previous neighborhood tree planting locations have included Hope, Washington, and Haywood streets, as well as Oak Courts. The Birch Street event is part of a larger project in Greenfield, made possible by a US Forest Service grant, in partnership with FLT, DCR, the tree committee, and the Greenfield department of public works. Thanks to this grant, Greenfield will plant about 800 trees along downtown streets and in neighborhoods in the next three years.

To request a free tree for your tree belt or front yard, call the Greenfield department of public works at (413) 772-1528. For more information about Saturday, go to www.facebook.com/Greenfieldtree/. To donate to the Greenfield tree committee, go to www.greenfieldtreecommittee.org.

SPORTS from page A1

Justin Dobias (8' in the pole vault) all had wins for the Franks.

Then the Athol Red Raiders came to Turners on Monday, May 6. Tech prevailed, mostly on second and third finishes.

Ryan Duclous took the gold medal in three events, the shot put, discus, and javelin. Rodriguez and Deven Goshea also finished second and third in the put. Dobias won the high jump and pole vault, finishing second in the long jump, while Rosewarne won the 100 and the 200.

Conway took first in the 400 hurdles and placed second in the 110, and Miguel Clapp broke the tape in the 800 and finished second in the 2 Mile. Cam Gauthier finished second in the 400 and took third in the long jump; Ryan Bergmann placed second in the high jump and third in the 100; Lucas Upham took second in the 400 hurdles and third in the triple jump, Sam Nieves finished third in the mile, and Tech swept the relays.

Then on Monday, May 13, the Boys got up early, laced their cleats, packed their equipment, and took the bus to the Blue Hills where they competed in the Mass Voc Tournament. According to coach Roman Tsipenyuk, it was even colder in Canton than it was out here, but his athletes did extraordinarily well nonetheless.

Duclous cleaned up in the shot put. He put the shot 41-2 1/2 to take the gold. Not only did he finish first in the small school division, he also won the event against the big schools. He also hurled the javelin 129.0' for second place in the small school division.

Conway finished the 110 hurdles in 18.72 seconds, which was good enough for a second-place finish against small schools, and ran the 400 hurdles in 1:02.28 for a second-place finish in small schools and third overall.

Rodriguez (33-00.50) took 7th

place in the small school shot put event, and Rosewarne finished 10th in the 100 (13.03). The Tech relay team was disqualified in the 4x100 for a zone violation.

Softball

TFHS 9 – Athol 6

TFHS 14 – Greenfield 1

TFHS 6 – Easthampton 0

The Turners Falls softball team went 3-0 this week, eking out a win on a cold and rainy night in Athol, crushing the Green Wave on a cold and rainy night in Greenfield, and finally beating Easthampton at home on a – you guessed it – cold and rainy night.

"It was warmer in February," Mercedes Morales' mom said on Tuesday, May 14 from underneath an umbrella. She was right. On February 4, it reached 59 degrees, and on the fifth, 57. In May, by contrast, the temperatures have struggled to reach 50, and it seemed to have rained every day.

Playing under these cold, wet conditions can dampen anyone's spirits, but on May 7, Blue Thunder held on to repel a late inning surge by Athol and preserve a 9-6 victory.

Athol, for their part, made a statement early by splashing across the first run. Blue tied it up in the third, and going into the fourth, it was anybody's game. Turners opened up the floodgates in that inning, scoring five runs to go up 6-1. In the sixth, Powertown added three more to take a commanding 9-1 lead.

But Athol wasn't done. Red scored one run in their sixth and four more in the seventh before Jade Tyler and the Turners' defense finally shut them down.

At the plate, Turners got 10 hits, with seven coming off the bats of three girls. Hailey Bogusz went 3 for 4 with a double and a RBI, while Juliana Rode and Olivia Whittier helped the Blue cause

By **ROB SKELTON**

The Leverett selectboard joined the planning board in unanimously appointing Tom Ewing back to the planning board, from which he had been removed by administrative snafu, at Tuesday's scheduled meeting. Pete Sylvan, owner of the Cushman Cafe, was appointed unanimously to the board of health. Time spent: five minutes.

A revenue committee, authorized at town meeting three weeks ago, has been mustered: Craig Cohen, Jim Staros, Michael Dover, Seth Seeger, and Susan Mareneck, with selectman Tom Hankinson an *ex officio* member.

In Highway news, former foreman Ethan Dickinson has been okayed by his doctor to return to twenty hours weekly. Laborer Matt Munson resigned as of May 28. The selectboard has agreed to add fifty cents to the hourly rate in order to

attract candidates, as urged by road boss David Finn.

The town is analyzing its 31 streetlights, for which Eversource charges a fee, even if they're blown out. The police and fire departments have insisted upon a streetlight at every intersection. The board discussed how bad it would be if it solicited public feedback on streetlights, setting up expectations and all.

"We can't have residents calling the shots," said Hankinson.

Now that the treasurer is up to forty hours, the town administrator Marge McGinniss decided that perhaps he wouldn't have to come in Saturdays, which was required in the past. The selectboard concurred.

The town office has decided to up its fees 100%, even death fees, which town clerk Lisa Stratford is against ("I don't think people should pay for living and dying"), according to selectwoman Julie Shively.

Time was given to a town meeting post-mortem. Gordon Fretwell of North Leverett Road contacted the board and urged a return to a static microphone format, rather than schlepping the works, and also urged the hiring of a sound engineer, which elicited groans from the selectboard, who hoped a volunteer might come forth.

Also discussed was the inadequate vision of moderator Larry Farber, unable to see citizens on the periphery, resulting in at least one question called before people were ready.

Hankinson discussed the formation of a safety complex department heads meeting once a month, to create a policy handbook, a facilities handbook, and a vendor list.

"Meeting collectively can be healthy," he said, alluding to the peacemaking he has been called upon to make interdepartmentally over the past two years.

with two hits each.

Then on Thursday, May 9, Turners won another rain-soaked game against the Green Ladies of Greenfield.



Coach Gary Mullins achieved his 700th and 701st career wins this week.

These teams have played even for the past two years, with both going 2-2. And for the past two years, the GFD has waited until the end of the game before wailing their sirens celebrating the Green Win. But after this game, the fire trucks stayed silent.

Lady Thunder got on top early and never looked back, ripping 14 hits and scoring 15 runs, while the Blue D allowed just one run off two hits. Green was kept off the scoreboard until the last inning when they finally snuck a run by.

To coach Gary Mullins, it was just another hard-fought win, with plenty of room for improvement. Unbeknownst to Coach Mullins, however, the numbers people knew it was his 700th career softball victory, and after the game, the Blue Faithful celebrated with a short ceremony and some cake. Mullins, for his part, graciously accepted the accolades and then got back to work.

On Tuesday, May 14, Mullins and his Blue Ladies recorded his

701st win against the Easthampton Eagles. The Eagles are a great team. Coming into Tuesday's game, they were undefeated with a record of 11-0, and in previous years have gone deep into the D-2 playoffs.

But in this game, it was all Blue. Turners put runs across in each of the first three innings to take an early 5-0 lead. Then in the sixth, Powertown scored an insurance run to take the game 6-0.

Powertown's schedule doesn't get any easier. They play three consecutive games in three days before hosting the revenge-minded Green Wave next Monday, May 20.

Boys Tennis

Springfield Central 5 – TFHS 0

The Turners Falls boys' tennis team suffered their first loss of the season after a long weather-induced respite. Powertown finally got back on the court on Tuesday, May 14, and were swept by the Springfield Central Eagles.

But all things considered, I think it was a good match for them. The Eagles are a D-1 powerhouse who are 11-1 on the courts, and their football team won the Super Bowl at Gillette last fall. This is the type of competition Blue needs if they are to make a run in the playoffs. And while Brody Trott was battling on Court 3, the rest of the kids from both schools stuck around and held their own intense exhibition games on the vacant courts.

Both Will Turn and Brian Poirier were swept in first and second singles (6-1, 6-0 and 6-2, 6-0) while Kochan/Gaulin (6-3, 6-3) and Boyle/Keefe (6-2, 6-1) were likewise shut out on the doubles courts.

But on the third singles court, Brody battled it out. The first set was competitive, but his opponent pulled it out to win 6-3. In the second, Trott pulled out some add-in wins and took it 6-4. By the time the third set super-tie-breaker be-

gan, most of the other boys were done with their practice games and were cheering on their prospective teammates. In the third set, Central pulled ahead 7-5, and coasted to the 10-5 win.

This Thursday, May 16, Blue Thunder plays against Greenfield for bragging rights and the top spot in the Tri-County League.

Baseball

Greenfield 6 – TFHS 0

South Hadley 15 – TFHS 0

The Turners Falls baseball team suffered two consecutive shutouts this week against Greenfield and South Hadley, and in those two games, they committed an incredible 13 errors. But more significantly, Blue suffered two devastating injuries.

In the Greenfield game, played Wednesday, May 8, Blue just couldn't get going. Green scored two runs in the first inning, and Blue had trouble transforming their own hits to runs. Defensively, Powertown was its own worst enemy as they committed five errors on the rain-soaked field.

Then on Thursday, Blue was shut out 15-0 by the South Hadley Tigers. This was a close one. It really was. After four full innings, the Cats held onto a slim 1-0 lead. But then in the fifth, walks, errors and even a few hits gave Hadley 12 runs and the 13-0 lead. They kept Blue off the base paths, and cruised to the 15-0 shutout. Again, Blue were their own worst enemy: while the pitchers only allowed seven hits in the game, the fielders committed eight errors to turn a close game into a rout.

The Boys in Blue, who are still on a playoff trajectory, will try to avert disaster as they head into the second half of the season.

Next week: Hopefully, my laptop will be fixed! 

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MONTAGUE from pg A1

which has struggled to sell or maintain it.

The announcement by the governor's office, which included the Strathmore award in a list of "Brownfields" abatement grants totaling \$2.6 million, said that Montague "will use grant funds for the abatement of hazardous materials in four buildings of the former Strathmore mill that have a future as an adaptively used mixed-use property."

The grants will help finance a \$385,000 appropriation approved by a May 7, 2016 Montague annual town meeting for abatement of the property. At the time of that appropriation, town officials argued that the future of the Strathmore complex was uncertain, but that hazardous materials would need to be removed whether the buildings were demolished or rehabilitated for use.

The uncertainties surrounding the Strathmore's future have been magnified by a recent "demolition design" project, funded by community development block grants. Town officials initially said the grants would plan a "partial demolition" of the most at-risk buildings in the complex, but the final engineering bids for the design called for the demolition of virtually all buildings except for the freestanding Building 11 and Building 9, which is owned by a small hydroelectric company called Turners Falls Hydro.

Yet the engineering firm awarded the grant, Tighe and Bond, found that demolishing such a large portion of the complex would compromise the integrity of the hydro company in Building 9. As a result, the selectboard voted in January to recommend that the engineering study return to the original concept of a partial demolition.

At Monday's meeting, Ramsey was asked if the town had determined whether the buildings not slated for demolition, but included in the abatement grant, would be viable for reuse. Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said he hoped that the demolition design study would help answer that question.

"Basically, Tighe and Bond has determined that half of the buildings in the complex are in a condition that needs to be demolished," said Ramsey. "And MassDevelopment has stepped in to clean up the buildings that are going to remain."

World Music Festival

Cassandra Holden and Kyle Homstead, representing a company called Laudable Productions, came before the selectboard for an entertainment permit to hold a "world music" festival on August 17 in Montague Center.

Homstead explained that the festival, which is called "Barbes in the

Woods," is named after a club in Brooklyn, New York called Barbes (pronounced bar-bez'). He compared the New York club to the Iron Horse in Northampton: a small but "coveted" club "that is responsible for bringing a lot of the world music into this country." In a telephone interview Homstead defined world music as representing "diverse musical styles from around the world." "It's kind of a broad umbrella term," he told the *Reporter*.

Homstead told the selectboard that his company had developed a "large audience for this music up and down the valley." The August 17 event will take place at 27 Center Street, the property of Kathy Lynch and Dean Garvin, and would be a day-long event, with the music lasting from 1 in the afternoon to 11 in the evening.

Sitting at the front table during the presentation were Montague Center fire chief David Hansen, public health director Gina McNeely, police chief Chris Williams, and RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto. Homstead reviewed plans for music on two stages, food and beer vendors, and parking and crowd control. He estimated that there would be "500 to one thousand" attendees, including several buses of visitors from New York City. There would be additional parking near the Village Store, and on the fringes of the town park behind the store.

"We're excited to integrate with the town as much as possible," Homstead told the board, noting that the event would be on the same day as Montague Center's Old Home Days. He said that his company had been coordinating parking and other aspects of the music event with Old Home Days.

"This company does really great integration," said Lynch. "They work in communities that are trying to develop the creative economy the same way that this community is. So I think this kind of creative place-making event helps put us on the map, in terms of cultural tourism, and our master plan."

The board approved a motion to grant the festival an entertainment license, but Kuklewicz called this the "first step" in negotiating other aspects of the event with the police, fire, and health departments.

"What is it you're looking for?" DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron asked at the end of the discussion, in terms of additional food vendors. "French fries," was the response.

Road Work

Bergeron came before the board to review a list of projects financed over the past year with state Chapter 90 funds, which are used primarily for road and sidewalk repair. Bergeron said Montague gets about "\$480,000 or so" in Chapter

90 aid annually.

The projects he listed were funded by state aid for multiple fiscal years. They included \$145,000 in paving for Green Pond Road in Lake Pleasant, \$145,000 for sidewalks on Avenue C and Worcester Street for \$166,250, and \$58,000 for engineering studies. Chapter 90 funds are being used for engineering work on projects being funded by the Complete Streets program, another state grant program.

Bergeron said he had paved three dirt roads – South Ferry Road, Smiarowski Road, and Fosters Road – near Montague Center, at a cost of \$158,855. In response to a question from Kuklewicz, he said the department was moving in the direction of paving dirt and gravel roads.

"For us, it just lasts longer," he said. "They are not highly traveled roads, but they are traveled roads, and gravel is very expensive to purchase and maintain. So for every summer, for the dust that cars create, is an inch of gravel." Bergeron said the only relatively long dirt road in Montague is Old Northfield Road. "That's not really our road, but we grade it and maintain it, because we have a sewer line that runs through there," he said.

Bergeron also said that independent contractor Jim Toth, who has done a good deal of sidewalk engineering for the town, will no longer be able to work on sidewalks financed by Chapter 90 funds. Town administrator Steve Ellis said state certification for engineers Chapter 90 projects has been a long-term policy that is now more "strictly enforced." Toth was unable to obtain certification to do state work, according to Bergeron, "because he does not do enough state work." Bergeron called this a "Catch-22."

Other Business

Walter Ramsey requested that the board execute an additional \$5,300 in state grant funds from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to implement "stakeholder engagement and internal capacity building" in conjunction with the town's Community Microgrid Study. He explained that this meant engaging the Turners Falls fire department and the Gill-Montague school district in a study of creating solar-powered backup battery capacity in case of a major electric power outage. The board approved the request.

The board approved a request from police chief Williams to request from civil service a list for hiring an additional full-time police officer.

The board approved a request from Ann Fisk for the for use of the Montague Center town common for the annual Memorial Day event on May 26, 2019. Michael Nelson also requested, and received, a permit

for the use of public property for the April 2020 annual spring parade.

The board executed a contract for survey services with Harold Eaton Associates for the new department of public works garage construction.

Ellis reported on the recent restoration of the Montague Center directional marker by Paul Interland. "He did a sensational job, and went far beyond what was anticipated to be a simple remove-and-replace," said Ellis. He said Interland found that the marker was "completely infested with carpenter ants," and had to be brought back to his workshop to be rebuilt.

The board voted to send a letter of thanks to Interland, which will be signed at the next meeting.

Ellis also requested that the board consider adding a video display monitor to the upstairs meeting

room for presentations. "We struggle with the logistics of having people come and make presentations," he said, suggesting an "LCD monitor display screen that you could attach an HDMI cable to."

Kuklewicz suggested that Ellis "chat with Dean Garvin [of MCTV] about it."

The board agreed, without a formal vote, to add July 1 as a potential summer meeting date, in order to consider what Ellis called "time-sensitive" contracts for work on the public works garage.

The board then voted to go into an executive session to consider litigation with regard to the FirstLight power company.

The next selectboard meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 21, as May 20 is a local election day.



LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here's the way it was May 14, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Stevens vs. Ward in Gill Selectboard Race

Leland Stevens, 78, is a life-long resident of Gill, coming from a dairy farm family who have lived on North Cross Road by the intersection of the Back Road to Mount Hermon for four generations. Stevens attended grade school at the two-room North School on Main Road, and attended middle school at Riverside, and high school in Turners, on Crocker Avenue.

Lee plowed snow for three winters in the early '50s when Warren Hastings was the Gill road boss, and served a hitch in the Army from '53 to '55. Since then he has served in farm and public-service roles, including sitting on the selectboard since 1994.

Stevens said his experience over the last 21 years will be crucial to helping the town through these tough economic times, if he wins reelection.

John Ward, 48, is a 21-year resident of Grove Street, making his first run for town office in the contest for the three-year selectboard seat. He said he's running to bring more openness to the board, and to involve more citizens in the process of making town decisions.

He was born in Milton, on the eastern side of the state, but grew up in Shelburne Falls and Conway, where he graduated from Frontier. Ward was a service manger at Performance Motors in Hadley for 13 years before moving to Labelle and Leitner in Greenfield as service manager for six years. He now owns the Greenfield Solar Store.

Greenfield Biomass Plant Clears Another Hurdle

The Greenfield planning board met last Thursday to discuss zoning waivers requested by Mackin Construction Co. The waivers were requested to prepare for the construction of a 47-megawatt biomass-fueled power plant planned by Pioneer Renewable Energy LLC, and relate to the subdivision of 208 acres of land owned by Mackin in the I-91 in-

dustrial park in Greenfield.

Pioneer Renewable Energy is owned by Madera Energy, a year-old Cambridge-based firm with one employee: Matthew Wolfe. Pioneer completed its Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act review on May 1, when state Secretary of Environmental Affairs Ian Bowles ruled that Pioneer, in its Environmental Notification Form, had adequately addressed environmental concerns around air quality, water supply, noise, clean wood fuel, traffic, and construction activities associated with the proposed plant.

After some debate, the planning board granted the zoning waivers requested.

Bridge Inspection Not For the Faint of Heart

Engineers from HNTB Corp. in Boston have been hanging out in the area lately. Specifically, they've been hanging out beneath the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge, wailing on the rusted steel deck truss with hammers, conducting audio and visual inspections of the 1938-vintage welds and girders for cracks and corrosion.

The engineers are riding in a cage on a counterweighted extension arm of a Bridgemaster "Snooper" truck, parked in the westbound lane. They work at a dizzying height above the roaring water from the open gates of the dam, and the rock abutments 107 feet below. The articulated hydraulic arm allows three workers to ride over the railing, down the north side of the bridge all the way to the abutments, or to ride beneath the deck all the way over to the south side, to inspect the superstructure there.

"You get used to it," said one of the engineers, who declined to give their names, when asked if they worry about the truck tipping over, or the hydraulic arm failing, or accidentally falling from those heights.

He said the inspections so far have revealed "no considerable change from last year" in the conditions of the steel truss deck. That is, it is still structurally deficient (rated a 33.9 out of 100), but "safe to travel," as 8,000 vehicles a day still do.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Montague Dems to Elect Delegates to Democratic State Convention

Registered Democrats in Montague will hold a caucus on Wednesday, May 29 in the upstairs meeting room of town hall to elect delegates and alternates to the 2019 Massachusetts Democratic State Convention.

This year's state convention will be held September 14 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, where thousands of Democrats from across the state will come together to discuss Party business and celebrate our successes as we prepare for upcoming elections.

The caucus is open to all registered and pre-registered Democrats in the town of Montague. Pre-regis-

tered Democrats who will be 16 by May 11, 2019 will be allowed to participate and run as a delegate or alternate. Montague can select five delegates and four alternates to the convention.

Youth, minorities, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ individuals who are not elected as a delegate or alternate may apply to be an add-on delegate at the caucus or at www.massdems.org.

Those interested in getting involved with the Montague Dems should contact Mark Wisniewski at mpwisniewski@gmail.com, or check us out on Facebook.

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WATER from page A1

previous fiscal year's expenditures were \$34,287.71, while revenues were \$52,943.04, leaving a balance of \$18,705.33 for fiscal year 2018. The current fiscal year, 2019, does not end until June 30, so Dion could not issue.

The meeting then voted \$48,000 to cover the district's expenditures in the upcoming 2020 fiscal year, and an additional \$3,000 to cover the salaries of the various officers.

\$8,835 was appropriated for the annual payment of a loan used to purchase land along Main Street south of the water district's headquarters. The land, purchased in collaboration with the Turners Falls Water District and Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, was obtained to prevent development above the district's aquifer.

At this point, the official meeting adjourned, but the commissioners remained in the room to respond to questions from residents. No votes were taken after the meeting adjourned.

Roy Rosenblatt of Center Street asked if the district needed a plan to repair its water tank, which has been found in violation of state standards because it contains rust. Dion indicated that he was moving away from the original idea of building a new tank because of the cost. He said repairs to the tank, which he said involved removing rust spots, would cost \$150,000, and could extend its life by 25 years.

Dion suggested using \$70,000 from the district's reserves and borrowing \$80,000 to cover the cost of

repairing the tank. He added that the borrowing would require an increase of \$8,000 per year in total sewer revenues.

Beyond the tank, Dion said, the state requires a periodic "asset management plan" for the district, which he completed in April with the assistance of a nonprofit firm called Resources for Communities and People, and sent to the Department of Environmental Protection.

A number of district members raised the question of the viability of the district, both in terms of its cost and its ability to sustain current administrative capacity with aging volunteers. Center Street resident Deb Radway noted there were "all kinds of grant opportunities" to study regional consolidation.

Sam Lovejoy of Main Street gave a brief, and critical, history of a well the Turners Falls Water Department built, and its attempts to sell Green Pond. "Do you want to be part of Turners Falls?" he asked, rhetorically.

Gary Dion indicated that he did not think Turners Falls was interested in joining with the Montague Center district. He also said that it would cost approximately a million dollars to build a 12" pipe from a connection to the Turners Falls District on Swamp Road to Montague Center.

After the meeting, several members indicated that they would be willing to help the district find grant funding for a study of the benefits and costs of consolidation with the Turners Falls district.

MONTAGUE REPORTER



Atticus, Enzo, and Melissa Belmonte dry their hands for long enough to read the newspaper while snorkeling the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef – the second-largest coral reef in the world – off the coast of Puerto Morelos, Mexico. "We had just seen a loggerhead turtle and a nurse shark and were about to see another turtle, a barracuda, and a ray," writes photographer/partner/dad Monte. (Yeah, that's pretty cool, but when I was filling in for Enzo's paper route, we saw a skunk... in the daytime! – Ed.)

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BARRY SCOTT PHOTO

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OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER

MAY 16, 2019

Above: Barry Scott took this photo of Avenue A on a rainy May 7 using an aerial drone. Thanks to Barry for sharing!

**Holeymoley!
A Comic Book
Store...**
**and
More!**

By **GEORGE BRACE**



Holeymoleys owner Corrine Barrineau, with guest artist Casey Collier at a May 4 signing event.

SHELBURNE – Holeymoleys Comics & Collectibles opened for business in Shelburne on Halloween of last year. Owners Tonye and Corrine Barrineau have accomplished a lot in the past six months, and all signs point to great things to come. The couple is excited about the coming summer comics season getting underway as kids get out of school. There are lots of new comics coming out these days, in addition to plenty of blockbuster comics-based movies which bring more attention to the genre, so their hopes are high as they continue to build their dream shop and put their plans into action.

Located on the Mohawk Trail a couple of miles west of the Green-

field rotary, Holeymoleys is situated inside a nondescript, bland-looking, strip-mall type building, which totally belies the vibrant and colorful space within. The shop is clean, modern, well-set-up, and contains an unexpected and interesting mix of items. Comics are the main focus and attraction, but they also have games, DVDs, comic-related collectibles, monster stuff, and just generally a lot of neat items. It is a true hidden gem.

Corrine explained the genesis of the store thusly: “Holeymoleys is something we’ve been thinking up for several years. We sold collect-

ibles online and through flea markets many years ago, but stopped when our kids were born. When we moved to Franklin County a little over two years ago we realized there’s really no shop up here. We were driving to Northampton, but our shop closed, so we thought it was time to give Holeymoleys a real try!

“Ultimately, we’d like to be a destination on the Mohawk Trail, with fun attractions for people of all ages. We hope to expand in the future to include a comic museum.”

Her use of the words “our shop” see **COMICS** page B8

**Unearthing
the Archives**
By **Charlotte Kohlmann**
**Part V: Ken Schoen
and The Jewish Historical
Society of Western Massachusetts**

A stone burl'd under history's wheel in order to stop it.
Gustawa Jarecka, contributor to the Oneg Shabbat Archive

SOUTH DEERFIELD – Ken Schoen and Jane Trigère witnessed a significant shift in the once-vibrant Jewish community of Springfield, and felt the need to do something about it. Since the 1960s and '70s, synagogues in the city’s North End had been changing due to urban renewal and loss of independent stability from finances and low membership. They saw a wave of congregations combining into singular entities, and abandoning the structures they once inhabited. This neighborhood transformation led many synagogues to throw away historic documents.

Ken and Jane witnessed this abandonment and decided to create what would become the Jewish Historical Society of Western Massachusetts. “We thought it was essential to preserve these documents. It was the natural thing to do,” says Ken. They started driving around Springfield, collecting what they could and asking community members if they could record their oral histories.

They became the keepers of these artifacts, with which they wanted to “enhance Jewish cultural life in western Massachusetts.” Eventually they developed the collection into an online archive, which exists at *jhswm.org*. After the documents are digitized, the final depository goes to the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston.

I recently met with Ken at Schoen Books, the bookstore he owns and runs out of a 1930s WPA-built firehouse in South Deerfield. The collection there focuses



Archivist Ken Schoen stands in front of a portrait of an ancestor, which hangs in Schoen Books.

on Judaica in all languages, especially German Judaica, books on the Holocaust, exile and refugee writers, and more.

The tall stacks of this shop create narrow corridors, like the small alleyways of an old city; Ken is creating a depository and reviving books that would be lost and neglected – creating yet another archive. Here, he is continuing the work that he and his wife started over 25 years ago, after Jane’s death this past fall.

“The collection goes back to the early 1900s,” says Ken. “It’s a way to remember people’s names, even if we don’t know them; it’s a way to know what people were thinking and discussing and what they were doing in these small communities.”

On the website, one can watch interviews that provide first-hand accounts of Jewish life in Orange, Athol, Greenfield, and other places across the local area. These interviews reveal how Jewish families got to these New England towns, what they did for a living, and how they built and rebuilt their lives.

This Historical Society also has a range of cemetery records, photographs, synagogue papers, rabbis’ personal papers, and complete collections of newspapers and various community newsletters and bulletins. “Nowadays we are printing copies of rabbis’ emails. see **UNEARTHING** page B5

WEST ALONG THE RIVER
INDIGO BLUE

By **DAVID BRULE**

*May is a pious fraud of the almanac,
A ghastly parody of spring....*
James Russell Lowell
(1819-1891)

ERVINGSIDE – This capricious month of May proves the above poet’s point.

We are perched on the eve of a projected snowfall in the hilltowns. We spent Mother’s Day under drizzle and forty-degree temperatures. I’ve already been tapping into the woodpile reserved for the winter season of 2019-2020, and the end isn’t in sight. We’ve been yanked back and forth by this parody of spring for too long now.

Back on *April 10*, I noted optimistically in my field journal that winter ended unofficially on that Friday night, but we didn’t notice until Saturday morning. With that day’s sixty degrees under a soft rain, the yard was full of birdsong. Especially constant was the chorus of ten song sparrows, each trying to outdo the other. Our own winter sparrow, who earned squatter’s rights to the yard by having held fast during the worst of the season, will still be here long after the others have left. He’s been singing his song since he first piped up on February 22.

That day in early April, the snow was finally gone from the yard, and the last snowbank on the north side of the house had reluctantly melted away. Pale blue Siberian scilla had begun to pierce through the warming earth. The rising river roared beyond the bare trees. White water could be seen and heard from the back porch chair, riffing over smoothed-out river boulders and shining stones. The river is entering its two millionth springtime of running by here.

The frog pond was alive with batrachian love songs, courting and copulating. They were busy filling the pond with egg masses that will soon become tadpoles.

The dusk brought the singing

of the spring peepers, singing for our elders who passed away over the winter, according to Indigenous lore. Thousands of silver bell songs ring out from the pond and marsh across the river.

That troublesome glacier of 20,000 years ago, and its annual winter foray into these parts, is forgotten on a joyous springtime date such as this. There is reaffirmation in the warm rain, most of us have made it through to another spring once again. Some day it may be otherwise, but for now, we’re mindful of living in the moment.

By *April 22*, my journal tells me of the cool misty morning with the promise of faint sunshine in the afternoon before the evening’s rain shower. That’ll be the kind of Irish mist that gives softness to the cheeks of the sprightly lasses over there across the sea. That’d do the same around here too, but for the lack of lasses who venture out of doors in the mist these days!

The spring peepers last night sang so loud that they could be heard over the roar of the white water river. That river is running high and cold. Clear water rushes noisily along the mossy banks of our little island, always polishing stones. Its shining spray is bringing out a hint of tender green along shore.

The height of winter birdsong has passed, the trilling of the tree sparrow and junco, the competitive piping of the song sparrows has diminished and disappeared off further to the north, as the singers head for their summer homes. Our lone songster sparrow remains, faithful to his yard and human friends, glad to have his lilac bush all to himself and his mate, once again.

Soon will come the summer nesters and their new calls: oriole, wood thrush, catbird, and tanager are expected to be here by their annual appointed arrival dates.

In fact, by *May 10*, all of the above summer residents have arrived. This particular date, May 10, used to be called Audubon see **WEST ALONG** page B4



A male indigo bunting (passerina cyanea).
Creative Commons photo by Flickr user Dawn Scranton.

Pet of the Week



PHOTO COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY

“HAYLEY”

Hiya! My name is Hayley, and I gotta be honest, I'm a little shy.

See, I've had a really crazy few weeks. I used to live in Georgia. Then the humans said there were too many cats where I was living, and they picked me to take a trip north in

a van to your beautiful state!

Do you think you might like to take me home? Give the humans a call or stop by to meet me! Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities MAY 20 THROUGH 24

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 5/20

CLOSED – Town Election!

Tuesday 5/21

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

4 p.m. Meditation (pre-register)

Wednesday 5/22

9 to 11 a.m. Veterans' Hour

12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 5/23

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

Friday 5/24

1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

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

For information, call Paula 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 5/20

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 5/21

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

10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich

12:45 p.m. Friends Meeting

Wednesday 5/22

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

12 p.m. Homemade Lunch

12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 5/23

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

6 p.m. Swing Dance Class

Friday 5/24

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.

cedar and rose: insights from naturopathic practice The Skinny on Lyme Disease

By DR. NITYA EISENHEIM

FRANKLIN COUNTY – May is Lyme Disease awareness month. Last month, I wrote about spring allergies, but now that the ticks are out, it's time to focus on Lyme Disease. Remember to always consult with your physician regarding appropriate treatment for you. This is not a replacement for medical or health care.

Last month, I introduced myself as a naturopathic doctor practicing in Greenfield. This month, I'll go a little bit deeper into my experience. I'm a naturopathic physician, trained at a four-year, in-residence, full-time naturopathic medical program at Bastyr University, a program accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education, which is recognized by the US Department of Education. I practice as a Vermont-licensed naturopathic doctor, and complete 30 hours of continuing education credits per year.

I trained under Dr. Emily Maiella at Windhorse Naturopathic Clinic in Brattleboro, Vermont, which is a specialty care clinic focused on Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses, and autoimmune disease. I treated hundreds of patients, from whom I have learned much, for acute and post-Lyme syndrome.

The members of one whole side of my family have all had Lyme at one point or another. These experiences have helped me identify Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses in my clients, help them, and sympathize with them.

I use multiple modalities in my practice to help people with the symptoms of Lyme disease in the acute phase, or when symptoms linger, as in post-Lyme syndrome, after they have already had a round or two of antibiotics. Some of those modalities are herbal medicine, medicinal mushrooms, nutrition and lifestyle changes, body work, and far-infrared sauna. I always individualize treatment, because Lyme disease can affect every system of the body.

Persistent Symptoms

I would like to share some basic reasons that one could remain sick, even after having had a round of antibiotics or negative labs. One is that you could have a co-infection in addition to Lyme Disease. We call these tick-borne illnesses or TBIs, such as Anaplasma, Bartonella, or Babesia. If these go untreated, then one can still have symptoms from the untreated infection. It is important to be tested for all tick-borne illnesses when Lyme disease is suspected.

Another very important reason why one could still be sick is that many people have symptoms for months without a proper diagnosis. It is extremely important to know what the top signs of Lyme and TBIs are so that you can seek medical attention right away. Ideally, you want to get treated within the week of noticing any of the warning signs mentioned below. Lyme disease causes so much inflammation in the body, the longer the infection goes untreated, the more organs and tissues are affected and damaged.

One important myth I would like to bust is that you have to see a tick



Removing a tick with tweezers.

bite or have a bull's eye rash in order to have Lyme Disease. According to the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society (ILADS), fewer than 50% of patients with Lyme disease recall a tick bite. Rashes are reported in only 35 to 60% of patients. Joint swelling has been reported in only 20 to 30% of patients, and with the prevalent use of Advil and Tylenol, this symptom can easily be overlooked.

In my clinical practice, I have also seen patients present with “mental health” symptoms, alongside of physical symptoms. I have seen fever plus brain fog and a rash with no joint pain, or fever and extreme panic/anxiety with a headache. Any extreme, sudden onset of mood changes needs to be examined for Lyme disease and tick-borne illnesses.

Seven signs that you might be at risk for Lyme, even if you did not see a tick bite or you have taken antibiotics, include:

1. Fever and flu-like symptoms
2. Fatigue (you've never felt this tired in your life and all you want to do is sleep)
3. Digestive upset, such as sudden onset of diarrhea or nausea
4. Brain fog: “what did you say?”
5. Sudden onset of extreme pain, anywhere in the body
6. Sudden onset of intense mood swings, anxiety, depression, and feeling surges of energy
7. Rash of any kind, especially right after a known tick bite, or if your occupation includes being outdoors most of the time

Please see your primary care doctor or go to the emergency room if you found a tick bite, or are experiencing any of the seven main signs above. Although I am a naturopathic doctor, I cannot stress more the importance of taking prescription antibiotics as soon as possible after a tick bite or early tick-borne illness if there are any symptoms at all. It is much more difficult to treat these infections the longer treatment is put off.

Another thing I see in my clinic frequently are autoimmune reactions, triggered by a viral or bacterial infection like Lyme Disease causing Post Lyme Syndrome. This is where your body attacks its own tissues.

Because there is so much inflammation that is caused in tick-borne illnesses, it can trigger an autoimmune process, especially if autoimmune disease runs in your family, such as celiac disease, Hashimoto's (low thyroid), rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease. Autoimmune diseases are on the rise and are more prevalent than the combination of cancer and heart disease in the U.S.

Help from Knotweed

One herb I particularly love to use for Lyme is Japanese knotweed. Its scientific name is *fallopia japonica*, or *polygonum cuspidatum*. It is a large, perennial herbaceous plant that has become an important cultural, medicinal, culinary, and ceremonial herb for a number of Asian cultures over the centuries.

It is not very popular here in the Americas, as it has become known as an “invasive weed” amongst gardeners. If we shift our mindset, we could see that this plant is actually providing a plethora of medicine for preventing and helping with many Lyme disease symptoms. It is a tasty edible that tastes like sour asparagus.

Japanese knotweed has also, according to herbalist Stephen Buhner, been proliferating across bioregions immediately preceding the emergence of Lyme Disease. The main active constituent in the plants is resveratrol, and most of the medicine is found in the root. Resveratrol has shown a measurable preventative effect against neurodegenerative processes.

For Lyme Disease, it is a great ally in calming down inflammation: it increases blood flow to areas where the Lyme spirochete likes to live such as the eyes, skin, heart and joints, which then helps to carry the medicinal constituents of any treatments to those places. It also helps with the brain fog and fatigue that often accompanies Lyme.

It can be taken alongside antibiotics, and in fact I use this herb plus 3 to 5 others in a formula to help support my clients who are on a course of antibiotics. It should not be taken in pregnancy except in small doses, and should not be used with other blood thinners.

If you do want to harvest this plant, it is up now, but you will want to avoid picking underneath power lines or along the sides of roads, where pesticides are sprayed and car exhaust is absorbed.

If you would like to learn more, come to my free, upcoming talk, Thursday, May 23 at the Blue Dragon Apothecary in Greenfield.

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



Japanese knotweed, which may help some who suffer from Lyme disease. Reprinted under Creative Commons licensure.

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PREVIEWS

Barks and Brews

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

EASTHAMPTON – May has National Rescue Dog Day in it, and has already had National Pet Week. So it would seem that this month would be the right time to preview an event called Barks and Brews, a fundraiser to raise money for the Dakin Humane Society. That, and the fact there are already tickets on sale for the event, which is happening at the Fort Hill Brewery in Easthampton on June 23.

"It's our event," I was told by Sue, the operational manager of the brewery. The brewery has been around for "almost five years," and this will be the fourth year the event is going on – the brewery has been involved for as long as the event has been going on.

There will be a VIP hour for the first hour of the event, from noon to 1 p.m., and then the general public can come in. For the VIP part of it you pay \$75, and the general public is \$30. Activities for dogs will be a part of the event – one of them being wading pools for dogs to cool off in – along with a 50/50 raffle.

Lee Chambers, the media and public relations manager at Dakin Humane Society, told me a lot of what I learned about this event. "I have been involved with the event the whole time it's been going on," she said, and mentioned she has been with Dakin for five years.

I asked Lee her opinion of Barks and Brew. "This is a very exciting event for Dakin," she said. "We love to see people who enjoy dogs, to have this event to bring dogs to." She also said this, in connection to the numbers of people and dogs who have shown up for it: "We have

sold out in the past. The previous capacity has been 500. More than 100 dogs have shown up each year," was her guess.

According to the official Dakin website, the event has sold out in the past in just two weeks.

If you need help with training your dogs, you can get that through sessions by Caryl-Rose Pofcher and Marlene Layman. Trimming of your dog's nails can happen there, too, by a place called Fur A Flyin' Pet Grooming and Day Camp.

Portraits of your pets can be taken by a photographer named Tony Downer. I have seen the photos of dogs taken by this man. If you get a photo of your dog taken by Tony, you will be pleased with the result.

2017's event raised \$25,000. One would hope that the event would do better than that the next year. Which seems to have been fulfilled: last year, this event gave them "nearly \$34,000" in terms of funds for the animals. The Dakin Humane Society will use these funds to help care for animals at its shelters in Leverett and Springfield.

Sponsors for the event include River Valley Co-op, Steve Lewis Subaru, and North King Animal hospital. A media sponsor, KIX 100.9 FM, has been involved since the first year. Last year, they were there and their radio personalities Amanda Jo and Mike Salois appeared. This year, a radio personality of theirs named Perez will be there to entertain people.

I have a dog who repeatedly gets milk bones from two different locations, which she obviously likes getting. With all the activities for dogs, this Barks and Brews event seems like paradise for them.

Circus Performers Seek to Catalyze Social Change

MONTAGUE CENTER – A local youth activism group called Youth Rise Together is putting on a circus fundraiser to benefit the Pioneer Valley Workers Center this Saturday, May 18. There will be shows at 1 and 4 p.m. at 2 North Street, Montague Center.

Organizers state that "in a country where we hear unrefined commentary on the status of immigration, it is important to remember what immigrants bring to our communities, and what their lives are like. Immigrants face financial, legal, and social challenges living in a new place, especially in today's xenophobic climate."

Funds are being raised to benefit the Pioneer Valley Workers Center (PVWC), which aims to help both documented and undocumented immigrants find work and create stable lives in the area, providing assistance with essentials such as transportation, housing, and food. The PVWC provides legal assistance to make sure immigrants receive due process in court, and they are currently focusing on a driver's license campaign to protect all MA residents by allowing anyone (documented and undocumented) to go through the process of getting a driver's license.

Youth Rise Together is an entirely youth-led and -run organization

founded in 2017 by Larkin Christie and Gabbi Perry. Their mission is "to empower youth in the Pioneer Valley to resist hate and create political and social change."

They are presenting an afternoon of circus and fun. "Circus has historically been used as a vehicle for social change," according to a press release by the organizers. "Youth Rise Together is continuing that legacy by using circus as a tool and a catalyst in our work."

Circus for Change consists of two one-hour performances by youth from western Massachusetts, most of whom have studied with two circus schools in the area, NECCA (Brattleboro), and SHOW (Easthampton). All performers are under 20, and many have been training for as long as a decade. There will be acts featuring solo and partner acrobatics, hand-balancing, contortion, trapeze, aerial silks, and more.

Tickets are \$12 for adults, and \$8 for children 12 and under. Children aged 4 and under are free. Tickets are available at circusforchange.brownpapertickets.com and at the door.

For more information visit youthrisetogether.com, Youth Rise Together on Facebook, or email Youth Rise Together at youthrisetogether@gmail.com.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Road-Rage Bros; Loose Pit Bulls; Fight At Lightlife; Fight At Fish Ladder; Cat Killed By Car; Drug Suspicions

Friday, 5/3

8:23 a.m. Caller from Federal Street reports that loud music has been coming from the neighbor's house for the past half hour and the whole neighborhood can hear it. Officer monitoring area advises that garage door is closed and music isn't too loud; there is activity in the garage and working on vehicles. Party advised of complaint and will be turning down the bass and music.

1:25 p.m. Caller from Avenue B noticed some footprints in their freshly-seeded dirt and states that someone put a chair from their porch up against the fence. Nothing was taken or broken into. Advised of options.

6:48 p.m. Staff member from Brick House reports that youth from the program are refusing to leave the property once the building closes for the night. Investigated.

Saturday, 5/4

7:02 a.m. Request for K9 unit to respond to Erving; rollover vehicle accident; operator has fled. Officer advised and en route.

7:47 a.m. Officer out with a somewhat non-compliant party on Dorsey Road in Erving, possibly related to previous call. Officer has one detained. State police on scene. Officer transported party back to accident scene, then to Erving police station.

Monday, 5/6

9:07 a.m. Employee at Family Dollar reports that she is confronting a shoplifter, and things are escalating. Involved female showing suspended license status. Involved female called friend to drive her car, but friend also has suspended license status.

[Redacted.]

10:22 a.m. Report of hypodermic needle near storm drain at corner of Canal and Second streets.

4:08 p.m. Officer conducting vehicle stop on Federal Street. Officer out with vehicle from [redacted].

Advising there is a blown tire on the wood chipper. Sunderland PD on scene.

4:12 p.m. Report that a tractor-trailer unit struck the overpass on Cheap-side, causing damage to the cab or trailer. Truck continued to Turnpike Road, past Judd Wire. Dispatch witnessed truck passing the police station and observed damage. MPD officer out with vehicle at NEX. Significant damage to trailer. GPD advises no damage to bridge.

4:41 p.m. Report of multiple syringes in alleyway off Third St. Officer located and removed syringe.

6:36 p.m. Caller from

Fourth Street states that his girlfriend just ran over some broken glass in the area and got a flat tire. He believes some kids sitting on a porch may have put the glass bottle there. Officer located a small amount of glass on the side of the roadway; no issues; no need for DPW.

7:18 p.m. Report of road rage incident that started in Northfield and continued through Gill and into Turners Falls. Caller states that at one point she pulled over to alleviate the situation; the other vehicle pulled up beside her, and a male was screaming at her. At another point, they passed her on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge and into oncoming traffic. Officer checking area; will be on lookout downtown.

8:24 p.m. Caller from Greenfield Road is concerned about a raccoon in the area; it has been sitting on the side of the road. Units advised. Caller called back advising she believes the raccoon is not sick and may just be protecting her young nearby; no police response requested at this time.

8:52 p.m. Caller from Federal Street requesting a callback for issues with a neighbor after a vehicle left the area burning rubber very loudly. Officer advises caller only wants incident documented.

Tuesday, 5/7

11:46 a.m. Caller reporting two loose pit bulls running up Fifth Street in front of the Senior Center headed towards Avenue A. Message left for animal control officer. MPD officer and ACO checked area; unable to locate.

1:15 p.m. Caller reporting vandalism that was done to an apartment they own; states that the cleaning lady who is there now noticed that someone kicked in a wall. Report taken.

2:45 p.m. Hit-and-run accident in parking lot of Franklin County Technical School. Officer and school will follow up with involved student tomorrow.

Wednesday, 5/8

6:56 a.m. Report of physical altercation between two employees at Lightlife Foods. One of them is in need of an ambulance. Officer advises scene secure; AMR can proceed to scene. Report taken.

7:15 a.m. Northampton Police Department requesting that MPD attempt to make contact with a male at a Turners Falls address. Vehicle has been parked at a rec field in Northampton for a few days, and the owner's wallet was found on the ground outside the vehicle. Officer advises contact made with male party, who left his car there due to car trouble and was not aware that he left his wallet behind. Male will contact NPD.

5:14 p.m. Caller from Fifth Street reporting that two adults are in the street throwing two-liter bottles filled with water back and forth to each other. Caller stated that they are close to their vehicles, and close to hitting the wires. Services rendered.

7:27 p.m. Caller from Newton Street reporting that his neighbor's car is parked on the side of the road and the doors are wide open. Caller is not sure what has been going on but advises that there has been drug activity involving this resident. Officer spoke with female; son just got home from baseball and had left the door open; door is being closed now. Caller called back advising that as soon as officers left the area, two males were outside at the same apartment and made a hand-to-hand drug deal. One male reportedly went back inside; the other walked to the north side of the complex. Investigated.

Thursday, 5/9

12:43 p.m. Caller reporting possible lost dog running down the street near Seventh and High streets. Described as a scruffy little dog with different shades of brown. ACO contacted and headed that way. Area checked; unable

to locate dog.

1:28 p.m. Caller received information from one of their employees that a male party was assaulted at the fish ladder. Injured party reportedly did not want police. Assailant described as wearing tan pants and a green t-shirt. Area checked; unable to locate.

8:19 p.m. Passerby reporting that another vehicle had struck a cat on Montague City Road, and the cat is deceased. Requesting assistance locating owner. Could not determine who owner is. A neighbor has put the cat in some nearby woods.

8:48 p.m. Neighbor reporting yelling and banging sounds coming from a location on Montague City Road. Verbal argument. Agreed to quiet down.

Saturday, 5/11

2:18 p.m. 911 caller from Montague Street stating that someone had started a fire along the back side of their backyard fence that faces Hillcrest School. FD and PD responding. Small brush fire discovered. FD will be extinguishing.

10:02 p.m. Caller from T Street reporting loud party with music outside. [Redacted.] Officers checked area; all is quiet at this time. Clear.

Sunday, 5/12

11:38 a.m. Officer out on Turners Falls Road with two vehicles that may have been involved in a road rage incident; advising that one vehicle was traveling too close to the other, so the driver stopped, got out, and began having a conversation with the driver of the other vehicle about it. Peace restored.

2:42 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a man was throwing around the merchandise behind the Salvation Army. Man was also checking door handles of cars, then made a threatening gesture towards him. Officers located suspect at corner of Fifth and T streets. One party arrested and transported to Franklin County House of Correction.

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MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

may 2019: jeff gallagher

By J. BURKETT

TURNERS FALLS – Jeff Gallagher is a local musician and artist who plays regularly at venues like Ten Forward/Root Cellar, Looky Here, 13th Floor, and at the recent series at Sierra Grille in Northampton. He is a solo artist and is in bands like Bridge Of Flowers (now defunct... but maybe getting back together).

He also books shows, has a radio show, and runs a label called “Ticked Off Tapes.” He is playing some local festivals, in Gill and on the Amherst common, later this summer.

MMM: Hi Jeff. Can you share some early music memories?

JG: I’ve been doing lo-fi home recordings since like 2005/2006. My earliest memories of making music were jamming with my friends Chad, Lauren and Kate in Leominster. I would play guitar and Chad would make drum beats on his MPC (like J Dilla), and we would collab. I would write lyrics for Kate and Lauren to sing on top.

I recorded my first solo album in 2007, standing in a buddy’s driveway in Leominster. That release was called *Astrological Baby*, the first Alto Jeffro release; one song can be found on Youtube, “the awful truth.” I’ve always enjoyed writing lyrics, and try to write ‘em as truthfully as I can...

MMM: So you have two LPs out now on Feeding Tube... Can you talk about that?

JG: Getting released on Feeding Tube was really life affirming for me, considering how long I had respected the label and its output, and its owner Ted Lee... I gotta say, I have endless respect for Ted and Feeding Tube for actualizing my dreams, and making me feel like a real artist.

MMM: What are some other projects?

JG: I was in a four-piece called Bridge Of Flowers with three fellas from the Berkshires, who had been in various other projects. It kinda started with Jon Hanson, on lead guitar. We started as a duo, and he said he had two friends from the Berkshires we could jam with (Shane Bruno on bass and Chris



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Wojtkowski on drums)...

We had been a band since like March or April 2016... shortly after I was involved in a bad car wreck and almost died. Before that I also played sometimes with longtime collaborators like Lauren D’Alessandro and Barny Lanman, a guy who helped produce many of the Alto Jeffro recordings from 2010 and 2011....

We pitched the idea of a BOF LP to Ted at Feeding Tube. It was just these lo-fi home sorta demos we had collected, and I was stubborn and wanted to put ‘em out. Luckily, Ted was into it.

MMM: You run a label, play solo, have different bands... and you do art and poetry. Can you talk about these creative outlets?

JG: I can say that I started the label to help people’s music get heard, and I am really open minded to releasing anyone’s stuff, as long as it’s pure of heart, or made for therapeutic reasons. I do small-edition CDs or I do small-batch recycled tapes, usually taping over tapes I find at the Survival Center. I do visual art also, and exhibited a series called “4 a.m. collages” in Greenfield a few months ago.

I guess all my work gets channeled thru me, usually as a way to cope with being alive, and to deal with the mental illness I can suffer from, which sometimes is pretty debilitating. I guess I’ve subconsciously been doing art and music therapy for as long as I’ve been ill. Creating art has gotten me thru a lotta hard times in my life.

MMM: What do you like most about West Mass? Favorite venues/bands/things to do?

JG: I love that West MA is the magical valley. My favorite haunts

T-RUMP



by denis f. bordeaux

OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark



in West MA are: Mystery Train Records, John Doe Records, Rob Robinson’s “Reanimate the Baystate” series, and I do love Looky Here, the community art space in Greenfield. The people who run that spot have been making a TV show called “Lovellights” which I find to be truly inspiring, it really blows my mind to see so many beautiful minds working together on one thing.

MMM: Is it true... Bridge of Flowers is getting back together?

JG: It is true the band is in early talks to get back together. I’m very lucky to know good mellow dudes and am excited we may get to make our second record, which was nearly ready to be recorded by the time the band imploded. If my guys out there are reading this, thanks for having patience and thanks for helping my songs be bigger than me. I value your friendships and contributions so much!

WEST ALONG from B1

Day, when groups, clubs, or solitary observers like myself went out with our checklists to tally the species of spring birds. Sort of a counterpoint to the Christmas Count in December. These days, May 10 is just another day in May.

At least I can count on the catbirds. They are busy noisily courting. The pair of them flirt, all coy, tempter and temptress, they set themselves at weird angles to each other. The male tries all kinds of antics, with wings akimbo and tail astray, while the female flaunts a quick glimpse of her red underpants, before moving five feet away. She’s apparently uninterested and ignoring the male who is trying every trick in the book to get her attention.

This could go on for a while. They came back here the other night and resumed control of the yard, as though the intervening eight months of winter were nothing but a blink of the eye. They found the yard as they had left it.

The male just now at the top of yonder lilac bush squeaks and meows, imitates all of his bird neighbors in an unending conversation with himself. I do believe he’s expressing some sort of catbird spring joy, and also letting everyone know he’s back and in charge, in his catbird’s seat. He’ll be checking the thick, impenetrable holly bush for the spot where his mate could put the perfect cup of her nest, where they will start the family once again.

While the couple was engaging in courting and foreplay, they plunged past a stunning stranger hanging out in the winter-ravaged rhododendron.

A male indigo bunting was lingering there, not far from the active birdfeeder, and waiting his chance to make a move. With a lilting flight he

landed there on the feeder, a brilliant native bird, in among the sundry squabbling English sparrows, holding his own and not feeling at all jostled by the Cockney invasives.

This deep purple bluish individual is unusual here down along the river, but he’s not far from his habitat a mile away up in the hedgerows of Mineral Mountain pastures.

In my 1917 *Birds of America* volume, edited by T. Gilbert Pearson, he writes:

The male has such a peculiar color; no bird outside of the tropics has such a peculiar blue as the male Indigo Bird. It isn’t an indigo color but rather a deep ultramarine blue. Just as you have made up your mind that this is the right name of the color, you get the bird in a different light and behold he is grayish blue, or azure-blue, or maybe olive blue.

We could argue about the shades of blue, but this bunting is so stunning that he outshines the blue jay, challenges the cardinal and rose-breasted grosbeak for bragging rights about who is the most exotic bird of paradise in this riverfront yard.

Alas, the indigo bunting, after spending a week with us, will probably move on. But if you’re lucky, and observant enough you will hear him singing in upland pastures, or on fenceposts in Deerfield, Northfield, or Montague. When the other birds have ceased calling on hot summer days, this Indigo Bird will still be holding forth, never daunted by the extreme heat of the afternoons of July and August.

That’s a pleasant thought as we suffer through another day of false spring, while May, like a chattering maiden, under north winds and cold rains, strews daffodils and lilacs in her wake!

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

MCTV Announces 120-Second Film Contest!

Montague’s public access TV station, MCTV, is sponsoring a town-wide film contest, with a grand award ceremony to be held at the Shea Theater on Saturday, September 28.

Contestants will create a short film, running no longer than two minutes (120 seconds), that shows how Montague is a wonderful, artful, diverse, exciting, and desirable place to live and visit. Footage must be original, and must have clear copyright of all audio and images presented in the film. MCTV is offering training and equipment to borrow.

Six contestants will receive a First Prize of \$200 in cash for their category, with runners-up receiving gift certificates to local merchants. Categories will

be determined by the three-person panel of judges after all entries are submitted.

The film contest is open to all residents in MCTV’s viewership area of Montague, Gill, and “Erving’side,” aged 13 years and older. Contestants must register their intent on the MCTV website by June 28 at 2 p.m. Registration is free, and puts you on the mailing list for contest updates and reminders.

Films must be submitted by contest registrants to the station by August 28 at 2 p.m. Submission fee \$10. One film per contestant. See the MCTV website, www.MontagueTV.org, for technical details on required video formats and delivery method.

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UNEARTHING from page B1

That's the equivalent now," says Ken.

The collection also has video-recorded community arts events and celebrations donated by local participants. "We discovered hundreds of photographs in a synagogue basement – all unlabeled – from the 1950s to the 1970s," says Ken. "I need a member of their community now to sit and write down the names of these people in the photos."

"When a library book has not been circulated for 30 or 40 years, I love to get the deaccessioned ones. I hope to find homes for them or it will end up as a *genizah*," says Ken. A *genizah* is a temporary repository for storing tired Hebrew language books and papers prior to proper cemetery burial.

The Weight We Carry

Jane Trigère spent her life thinking about memory, preserving it, and using it as a theme in her writing and art practice. In a piece she wrote called *To Hear One's Voice*, Jane talked about the burden of knowing and trying to preserve family histories for young generations: "I, too, have archives and artifacts that I am responsible for. I am struck with the dilemma of being the hinge generation. The generation that experienced the Holocaust are nearly gone... there is an imperative to represent this past, to prevent this history from crystallizing into myth. How does one do that?"

Before co-founding the Jewish Historical Society, she was the first director of the Hatikvah Holocaust Education Resource Center of Western Massachusetts in Springfield. She served for years on the Deerfield Historical Commission, and oversaw the restoration of many of Deerfield's cemeteries and secured Community Preservation Act grants.

"My interest for material culture developed later in life," Ken tells me. "Partly, it developed from being with Jane. The amount of material she gathered from her family and her own life is staggering." All of her family histories now live in the Brandeis University Archive. "It was kind of a weight she was carrying – a large responsibility."

"Preservation is in everything I do. It is what it all comes down to. It is about maintaining material culture," Ken continues. "I don't want it to be a museum piece. It has to be a practice that is living and breathing... It is a beautiful loop."

To be a part of any kind of collective identity – religious or not – is to be a part of a long chain of loops that practice memory through remembrance and ritual. To hear one's

voice, and for others to hear its frequencies over time, allows one to feel a fortunate sense of wholeness and a presumed generational unity with time.

Family Ties to Germany

Both archivists for their individual family lines, Ken and Jane shared maps, oral histories, ephemera and photographs that tell the story of their families which can be found at schoenbooks.com and janetrigere.com. Ken's maternal line from Herborn, Germany and paternal line from Vacha, Germany were both cattle dealers. His maternal grandparents had a close relationship with their neighbors, the Meckel family, who in the 1930s hid caches of food in the garden for Ken's grandparents to live on during the Nazi regime. Ken's father worked in Leipzig, Germany selling suits when he was 19 years old.

Ken's family and my own family stories overlap: My paternal grandmother's family lived in Leipzig. My great-grandfather was a furrier, a common occupation for Jews at that time. His father owned a butcher shop just like Ken's mother's family. Perhaps his father and my grandfather knew one another while working in the small Jewish community of Leipzig.

Ken's father escaped the war, and arrived in New York City on a Friday. By the following Monday, he had a job selling coffee to local businesses. He did not speak English when he arrived, but as time went on, he helped support 69 other people immigrating to America, including a 99-year-old woman. He would pick them up from the boat and find them jobs.

A sad family secret was revealed to Ken when he and his son traveled as "emotional tourists" to retrace their family roots in Germany. After his father's passing, he had discovered from a family tree that he had an aunt named Selma he had never known about. Selma suffered from mental illness, and the family came to the conclusion that American refugee immigration restrictions would forbid her from entering the country. Ken's grandparents left her behind in February 1939, with the mayor of Vacha's word that she would be taken care of.

But Selma was sadly murdered, following a euthanasia decree that required all physicians to identify if a patient was inherently "different": if they suffered from mental illness, were physically disabled, or had no "German blood" and were considered biological enemies – Jews or Roma. On behalf of their family, Ken and his son gave

OUT OF THE PARK: May 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello everyone. We hope you've been having an active and healthy spring, despite the relatively poor weather. Don't worry, the sun will show its bright face soon enough. Our summer program information is out, so keep reading for what we have in store for you.

First off, registration has begun for our Second Annual **Montague Warrior Dash Adventure Course Race**, which is planned for Saturday, June 8 at 2 p.m. at Hillcrest Elementary School. Racers will compete in separate age categories: 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12. 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 is available at runreg.com/montaguewarriordash.

This Sunday, May 19, our friends from the Great Falls Apple Corps will be leading an **Edible Plant Walk** at 1 p.m. You'll go on a wild food exploration through Unity Park and the bike trail. Meet at the Unity Park Community Garden to take a walk through the wild bounty of spring, and perhaps have a taste! The route is paved and fully accessible, and we welcome explorers of all ages.

Summer Camp registration also continues for Montague res-



idents and non-residents. This summer's 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. It's still one of the best deals around!

This summer we will also be offering **Skateboarding Lessons** for kids ages 6 and up. Lessons will be held Monday and Wednesday evenings at 5:30 and 6:30 p.m., from June 24 to July 17 at Unity Park. This is an awesome opportunity to learn how to skateboard or to sharpen your mad skills! Age groups may be combined if enrollment dictates.

Speaking of skateboarding, we'll be illuminating the skatepark for our ever-popular **Night Skate** on Friday, June 21, which is National Go Skateboarding Day, as well as Saturday, July 27 and Saturday, September 14, from 6 to 10 at night.

We're also thrilled to be partnering with RiverCulture and the Friends of Sheffield Elementary School to bring you **Movies In The**

Park this summer. Movies will be shown at Peskeomskut Park on Avenue A in Turners Falls, and live music will also be provided beforehand. Event dates are Friday, June 28 (*E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, PG); Friday, July 12 (*Finding Dory*, PG); and Friday, August 16 (*Cars 3*, G).

Be sure to bring a blanket or folding chair. Show times are at dusk, but get to the park early enough for a great spot and to enjoy the music. Refreshments will be provided, while supplies last.

MPRD is also partnering with Next Up Basketball to bring the Second Annual **3-on-3 Next Up Youth Basketball Tournament** on Saturday, August 10. (Rain date: Sunday, August 11.) The tournament will be held at the Unity Park basketball court. There will be four divisions: Varsity, JV, 14U, and 12U, with a four-game guarantee/single elimination format. Proof of age is required at registration. Each team must have a team captain/coach. For more information, please contact unitystreethoops3@yahoo.com.

For more information on all of these programs, check out our Summer Programs Brochure on montague.net, and get regular updates on our Facebook page, or call us at 863-3216. Talk to you next month!

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

Selma a proper reconciled Jewish burial, a long-awaited ceremony to honor her.

Memory As Resistance

Safeguarding documents, like family trees and photographs, was not a concern during the War; the concern was to escape. But Oneg Shabbat, an underground archive, had a mission to ensure as much documentation of Jewish life under the Nazi occupation as possible, for future generations. This effort was started between 1940 and 1943 in the Warsaw Ghetto of Poland by historian Emanuel Ringelblum, along with 50 to 60 archivists who participated.

It was designed as an act of resistance and was secretly assembled during Shabbat meetings. Thousands of testimonies were gathered: works of art, newspapers, ration tickets, letters, postcards, candy wrappers, diaries, journals, and reportages were gathered by an army

of collectors called "Zamlers."

The Zamlers' idea was not to provide an academic account of the time, but to go to the people and help them write history within the event. They handed out implements to fellow Jews in the Ghetto, and encouraged them to record their everyday life. "What we were unable to shout out to the world, we hid underground," David Graber, one participant in the archive, wrote. "May this treasure end up in good hands, may it live to see better times. May it alert the world."

Now the collection is housed in a museum, and its artifacts are digitized and written about. 6,000 primary source documents can be studied and testimony from this horrific moment can be remembered and taught.

Unfortunately, cultural genocide still goes on today. For example, Syria's archives and antiquities are being destroyed by rebel factions and by the Syrian state. An underground network of people are trying to save the country's heritage before all of it is sold on the black market or set ablaze.

Cultural and religious identities feel so fragile because they are so much about survival. Collective memory is valuable to culture because it can keep a community alive. Preservation comes at a high cost when "victors" continue to choose violence and annihilation of a minority group. Safeguarding people's histories and identities through the acts of archival practice and documentation of everyday life can give hope – for one's own physical survival, but also for the survival of a spirit.

Getting to know Ken, and learning about Jane through his personal accounts and her writing, artwork, and the archives she compiled,

"And now, the years have collected and I sense how my words need space on paper to be recorded and read later. We all are the hinge generation. Only we can transmit what we 'know' or have heard from earlier generations. If I have something to share, it will have to be on paper, because my time is... well, not timeless. I had forgotten. No, I had never even thought of that. I will not hear my voice in future years – not the actual voice. It will be someone else's voice I do not hear. It will be in the voice of the reader. And there is a strange, strange thought."

from *To Hear One's Voice*,
by Jane Trigère

makes me sad that I did not get to know her personally. But I can appreciate what she left behind, and see how her light emanated across those she knew and loved.

The Jewish Historical Society is looking for donations of artifacts and ephemeral material that make up the local Jewish material culture, and those interested in contributing to the oral history project. Please contact Ken.

*The Jewish Historical Society of Western Massachusetts can be found at jhswn.org, and its permanent repository is located in Boston at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at the New England Historic Genealogical Society. Please enjoy perusing the digital galleries of schoenbooks.com and janetrigere.com. One can also visit *Schoen Books* located at 7 Sugarloaf Street, South Deerfield. Ken can be reached by email at schoen@schoenbooks.com or at (413) 665-0066.*

This photograph from the Jewish Historical Society of Western Massachusetts was taken in the North End of Springfield on August 22, 1908, at the bris of three-year-old Samuel Freedman.



PHOTO COURTESY HARRY ALZENSTAT

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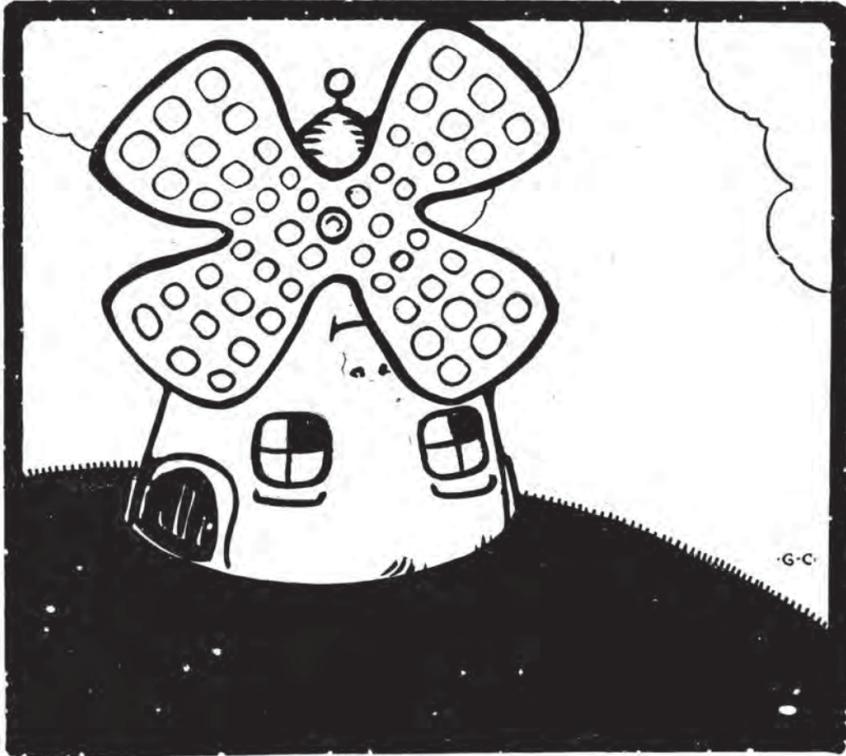
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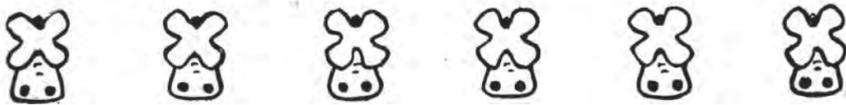
Compiled by BEVERLY KETCH

UP-SIDE-DOWN-SIDE-UP



SEE THE WIND-MILL ON THE HILL
WITH THE ARMS THAT FLAP AND FLY

TURN THE PICTURE AND YOU'LL SEE
TOMMY'S NICE NEW TIE ---



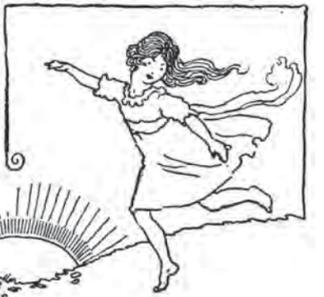
HAPPY as the day is long,
Sometimes laughter, sometimes song.
Here and there a thoughtful deed
For another's help or need.
Happy when there's work to do;
Happy when it's finished, too.
Happy when the clouds are clearing,
Never doubting, never fearing.
Happy for all daily bread,
Happy when it's time for bed.
Who can this nice person be?
Look into the glass and see.

MARY MORGAN



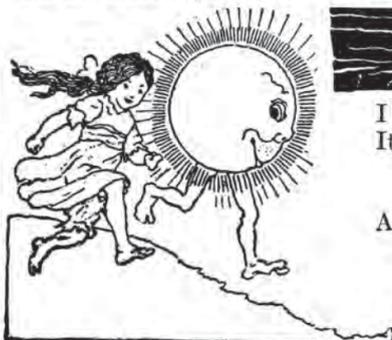
THE CHILD'S DAY

I have had such a beautiful day!
I was up at the peep of the dawn.
I chased a gray shadow
Down into the meadow,
And danced with the wind on the lawn.



Away to the crest of the hill
I followed the sunshiny road,
Then rested awhile
At a funny old stile,
And made friends with a little brown toad.

I found where the robins have built
And took just one quick little look,
And a buttercup boat
I set bravely afloat
On the shiniest part of the brook.



I have had such a beautiful day!
It was filled to the brim with good fun.
So many nice things
That the hours took wings
And just ran a race with the sun.

And now I am all tired out
And I'm going upstairs to my bed,
But it's so far to go
And I travel so slow,
Mother calls me her "old sleepyhead!"

ELEANOR C. HULL



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, MAY 16

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

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Model Home*, M. Sayyid, V. Vecker, and Jake Meginsky. \$ 8 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, MAY 17

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

L7, Turners Falls: *Hung Trucker, Huevos II, Human Ignorance, new Parents, Tuft, Psychotica, Animal Piss*. Last show at the house. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Comedy Night*. Greenfield Police Association presents a night of comedy. \$ 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Host, Wam Dust, J.J. Beck, Jen Gelineau*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lonesome Brothers, Dez Roy*. Americana and country music. \$ 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance. Cammy Kaynor with Al MacIntyre, Susan Conger, and the Back Row Band*. \$ 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sunny Lowdown*. Roots and Americana jam with open mic. 9 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, MAY 18

Wendell Town Hall, Wendell: *Carrie Ferguson and The Cherry Street Band*. Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse presents *Carrie Ferguson* in this season-closer concert. Country-tinged folk and straight-up rock with shifting palette of keyboard, guitar, mandolin, percussion and vocal harmonies. Benefit for Deer Paths Nature Center. Dessert-O-Rama and plenty of room to dance! Donation from \$6 to \$15. 7:30 p.m.

Montague Bookmill, Montague Center: *The Lied Tos, Austin &*

Elliot. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Mt. Toby Friends Meeting, Levere: *Maria Dunn*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Patti's Party Palooza*. Multiple bands on the outdoor stage. \$ 8 p.m.

SUBMITTED IMAGE



Carrie Ferguson and the Cherry Street Band close out the season at the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse this Saturday, May 18. Her shows are described as "jubilant affairs - playfully quirky, filled with humor and warmth." Come up to Wendell to dance and enjoy Dessert-O-Rama in the old Town Hall. The show starts at 7:30 p.m., and there's a sliding scale donation at the door to benefit the Deer Paths Nature Center.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lobsterz from Mars*. Grateful Dead cover band. \$ 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Arthur Brooks Ensemble*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Acid Dad, Receivers, Phenomena 256, Hotflakes*. Indie rock in the Perch. \$ 8:30 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *The Pistoleros*. \$ 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 19

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Low Frequency Sound Exploration*. 12 p.m.

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Lily Sexton, Max Wareham*. Lobby Listening Series presentation of local folk, roots, and Americana music. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Chris Pitsiokos, Heavy Sigh, Ben Wetherbee*. Jazz, improvisation, experimental, saxophone, violin. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls:

TNT Karaoke. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, MAY 20

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Matthew Milla, Closebye, Our Father's Birthday*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Quiz night*. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 21

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Center School Plays*. Greenfield Center School 8th graders write and perform one act plays each school year; this year's class presents 16 of them. Subjects include gay yodelers, a 90-year-old policeman, escaped convicts and garlic. Donation. 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jagtime Millionaire*. 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, MAY 23

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Take on Chris*. Folk pop jams in the Perch. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Vicious Rumors, Voodoo Terror Tribe, Ice Giant, Virus of Ideas*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Chris Wardlaw, Wishbone Zoe, Dari Bay*. Experimental rock, shredding, songwriting. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Inneraction*. 8 p.m.

ter, Turners Falls: *Portraits of Native Peoples of the Valley*. Photographs by Sara K. Lyons, curated by Rhonda Anderson. Through May 31.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Origins*, by Melissa Rudder. "The point or place where something begins, arises, or is derived." Melissa's work is a query of identity and origin that explores the experience of being human in a spiritual world: how we anchor ourselves and find meaning, metaphor and connection. Using multiple mediums in her art work, Melissa asks the question, "where are we from?" Through June 9. Reception Friday, May 17, 6 p.m.

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

Leverett Crafts & Arts Center:

Leah Burke: Heritage Sites and John Rathbun: Wild Creatures & Winter Flowers (Rathbun reception Sunday, May 19, 2 p.m.). Through May.

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.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague: *Roads and Rails: Trucks, Trains, and Cars with a Twist*. Paintings by Louise Minks featuring her favorite steam engine trains and old cars and trucks. May 1 through May 31. Reception Saturday, May 11, 1 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Garden Structures and Ornaments: works by Piper Glass*

FRIDAY, MAY 24

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Johnny A*. Genre-transcending original guitar music. \$ 7 p.m.

Millers Pub, Millers Falls: *Little House Blues*. 7:30 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Nick Macdonald: Four Films*. Four 1970s independent films by Macdonald featuring his "personal truth" series about Vietnam, Attica, and other topics. Followed by a question and answer with film scholar Macdonald, who is also presenting Saturday on *The Grand Illusion*. Live music before each show at 7. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Your Diary, Tiffy, Tuft*. Post pop punk. \$ 8 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *V as in Victor, Ramshakle*. 9:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, MAY 25

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Me-teor! Student Choreography to Light up your Afternoon*. Awesome Art in Motion children's dance company, made up of 15 dancers between the age of 6 and 12, presents this special show. Donation. 2 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Traditional Music Open Session II*. Contra, Irish, old time, etc. Open jam session. 3 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *The Grand Illusion*. Classic anti-war film directed by Jean Renoir, with an introduction by Jean Renoir, with an introduction by Nick Macdonald, who has studied this film extensively. Live music before the show at 7 p.m. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Brick House, Turners Falls: *Kath Bloom, Frozen Corn*. \$ 8 p.m.

Root Cellar, Greenfield: *Kyle Passen, Jazer Giles, Vic Rawlings, and more*. Audio visual experiments, jazz, poetry. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Slum Village*. \$ 8:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nico Rivers, Snughouse*. 9:30 p.m.

& Steel. Structures providing visual interest and functional support in the garden. *Water-side: Man-Made Structures in Natural Landscapes* paintings by Paul Hoffman. Each painting establishes a unique sense of place. Through June 30. Reception with classical guitar music by Chris Eriquezzo on June 1, 3 p.m.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Fabrications*, a fiber art exhibit by member artists in May.

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.

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Friday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m.
FOUR SHORT FILMS
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Saturday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m.
THE GRAND ILLUSION

Film scholar Macdonald presents both nights.
Live music, 7 p.m. both nights.

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**FRI 5/17 9:30 pm
Sunny Lowdown
Roots & Americana,
open mic and jam**

**WEDS 5/22 6:30 pm
Jagtime Millionaire**

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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.

EXHIBITS

Artspace Gallery, Greenfield: *Paintings by Karen Axtell*, through May.

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

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

Great Falls Discovery Cen-

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COMICS from page B1

to describe where they bought their comics says something about comic shops. There aren't that many around. She could have meant "the only one available," or she could have been expressing a personal connection; most likely both. As for the personal connection, the Barrineaus are all about people making Holey-moleys a place people think of as their shop. It was a theme that came up repeatedly in talking with them.

Both Tonye and Corrine are comic lovers, and the shop is clearly a labor of that love. Tonye says he's a big *X-Men* fan, and is enjoying the current *Immortal Hulk* run right now, while "Corrine is more into independents, and has quite a few Image titles on her list."

Most people are familiar with superhero comics like *Batman* and the *X-Men*, but the world of comics is large, with different styles, types, and appeal. Somewhat like brands of cars or other things, some people favor specific companies, like Marvel, DC, or Image. Others prefer smaller, "independent" publishers, who produce comics with a different range of subjects and art.

Having two store owners with different tastes and knowledge is an asset for the shop. They bring more to the table than a single owner would in their ability to make recommendations, and in stocking the store.

On the latter, Tonye said they are all ears to taking on suggestions. They welcome and seek customer input on what they should carry, and are dedicated to making Holey-moleys the kind of shop their customers want to see. It's a community-minded operation, hands-on and local.

"We are a small shop," said Corrine. "We started at ground level with no investors and no real inventory. It's just something we always wanted to do. There's no silent business partner here - it's a mom and pop shop."



Corrine and Tonye Barrineau opened the comics and collectibles store last Halloween.

In talking with Tonye, the subject of community, and the desire to make a contribution, came up again and again. One of the ways they plan to contribute is by running events. They've done several already, and Tonye says, "We're hoping to do something every Saturday, with writers, artists, and independent comic producers. Maybe even get some heavy hitters in here, like a Jim Lee."

Comics fans will recognize the boldness and ambition of having Lee, former *X-Men* artist whose 1991 *X-Men #1* is listed by Guinness Records as the best-selling comic in history, come to Shelburne for a signing, but Tonye is matter-of-fact about it. He says that while special events promote the shop, money isn't the primary motivation for wanting to run them. One of his plans for attracting bigger names is to possibly have signings benefit the school system or similar groups, and appeal to potential guests on that basis. "That way, it affects the community in a positive way," he said.

Holey-moleys will be setting up at the Western Massachusetts Comic Show at Hawks & Reed in Greenfield on May 26, but as noted above, they have already been running events of their own. On May 4, "National Free Comic Day," they held a signing with *Transformers* artist Casey Coller, and announced the winners of a robot-naming and robot-coloring contest for their 7-foot-tall shop robot, now known as "HoleyMobot."

This alone is worth stopping in to see. It is no run-of-the-mill robot, but an extremely impressive 1950s B-movie-style bot that brings a smile to your face. They also have an equally nice, life-size *Iron Man* that looks like it came right out of the movies, and other nifty display items. The shop doesn't have a full-fledged museum yet, but they are off to a darn good start.

As for events, Tonye says, "Upcoming we have our first outdoor comic fair on Sunday, June 9. We are looking forward to hosting this event monthly while the weather is nice and in the future we may expand this to a vinyl/music fair as well." He says they have other events in the works, but didn't want to comment on them yet.

Another nice touch is that Holey-moleys provides a free bag and backing board with every comic. They also have a subscription service, where they save comics for subscribers and give a discount based on how many titles the person gets. Subscribers also get a free preview guide which lists upcoming comics and related items.

I don't want to over-hype the place, or raise expectations too

high. Six months is not a lot of time to build a comic shop, and they still have work to do. On the other hand, it's very impressive already, and I cannot resist saying that I can easily see it becoming a beloved institution to comics fans, and an asset to the community, for many years to come. I think it's well on its way.

Visit *Holey-moleys Comics and Collectibles* at 1105 Mohawk Trail in Shelburne on Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays noon to 6 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The store is also online at holeymoleys.com.



HoleyMobot and the robot-naming contest winner, Dylan Vight.

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