

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 34

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JUNE 20, 2019

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Town Hears \$2.6 Million Plan To Tear Down Half of Strathmore

By JEFF SINGLETON

**TURNERS FALLS** – Last Monday, the engineering firm Tighe & Bond presented the Montague selectboard a plan for a partial demolition of the former Strathmore Mill complex that could cost the town as much as \$2.6 million. According to town planner Walter Ramsey, the town does not, at this point, have funding for the demolition, but will first undertake a \$250,000 project to remove hazardous materials from the former paper mills.

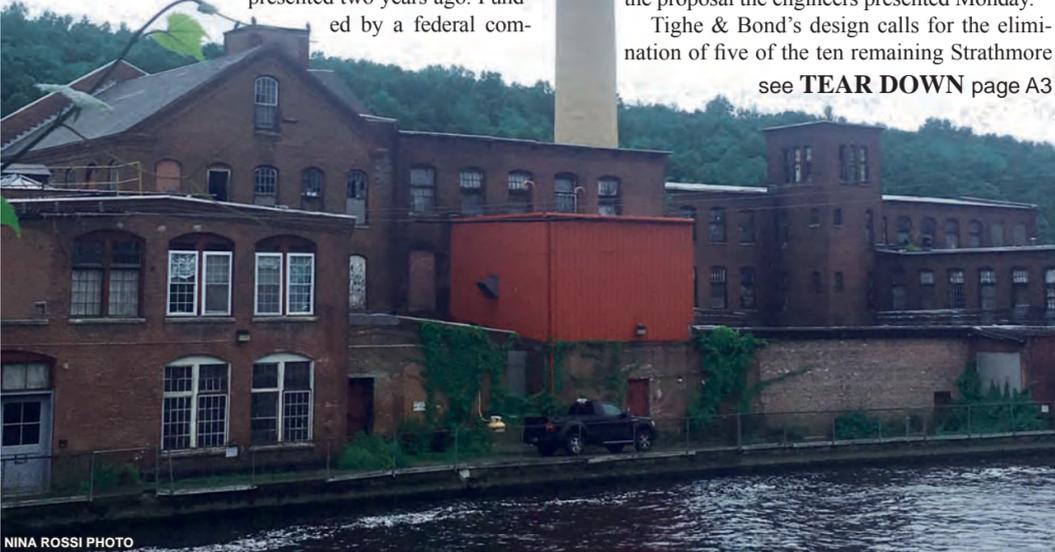
The Strathmore demolition design project, presented to the board by engineers Marc Richards and Brian Day, has shifted in scope several times since it was originally presented two years ago. Funded by a federal com-

munity development block grant, the goal was initially described as the partial demolition of the ten-building complex. But before the design went out to bid, the town changed the scope to a nearly total demolition, leaving only the free-standing Building 11 and the powerhouse now owned by Turners Falls Hydro.

The design was awarded to Tighe & Bond, who soon determined that the buildings in the complex were so tightly interwoven that a complete demolition would undermine the integrity of the hydro company. The scope therefore shifted back to a partial demolition, which was the proposal the engineers presented Monday.

Tighe & Bond's design calls for the elimination of five of the ten remaining Strathmore

see **TEAR DOWN** page A3



NINA ROSSI PHOTO

Montague has been unable to find a developer for the former paper mill complex, and is now assessing its demolition.

## Gill Gets Through Annual Town Meeting

By GEORGE BRACE

The town of Gill was able to carry out its town meeting business in one session this year, rather than two, as in many prior years. Voters in attendance on Monday unanimously passed 24 of 25 articles, and chose to pass over the one not approved. Articles concerning the town's Mariamante property, cable access fund, and school budget generated discussion, along with questions about how the budget was structured.

Isaac Bingham presided over the meeting in his second stint as moderator.

The meeting began with a statement from town clerk Lynda Hodsdon-Mayo outlining recent changes at town hall, including her own retirement on July 1. She thanked the voters who elected her, saying, "It has been such a gift." She then commended former treasurer and tax collector Ronnie LaChance, who retired in February, saying that she gave tirelessly to the town for 17 years.

Hodsdon-Mayo introduced Tom Hodack as the town's new tax collector and Peter Turban as the new treasurer. Of her temporary replacement as town clerk,



BRACE PHOTO

It took a little over two hours to approve 96% of all articles.

former assistant Doreen Stevens, she said, "I am telling you, as your town clerk at this moment, that I could not be more confident of this choice."

Hodsdon-Mayo went on to commend a list of voluntary and semi-voluntary workers who have contributed to the town, including the 225th anniversary committee, those who worked on the renovation of the Slate library, and laborers from the prison system who have worked

see **GILL** page A7

PART II

## Deadlines, Debts Loom as Inn Owner Recovers

By SARAH ROBERTSON

**CHARLEMONT** – Locals concerned about the fate of the Charlemont Inn are still looking for answers as the selectboard and board of health held a closed-door



ROBERTSON PHOTO

Chairs are stacked in a common room at the Charlemont Inn.

meeting about the property this month; the building still needs over \$2 million in renovations, and the possibility of its repossession or demolition looms.

"The Board of Health continues to work toward bringing the Inn into compliance with the sanitary code," member Doug Telling said in an email. "That is our goal – we would like to see it get to a condition where someone can reopen it and run a business."

First opened in 1787, the Charlemont Inn is a hotel and tavern in Charlemont's town center. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, though for some reason Google Earth marks its location as a "Park & Ride". The current owner, Charlotte Dewey, her mother and sister all lived in the Inn and managed the business for decades before its closure in 2011, when Charlotte was evicted for unpaid taxes to the sewer district.

Since then she has been working her way out of debt, trying to keep up with mandated repairs and hoping to

see **CHARLEMONT** page A5

## Best in the West Again, Turners Heads to State Championship Game



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Pitcher Jade Tyler and catcher Aly Murphy celebrate Thunder's 9-1 win over Hopedale in the Central-West D-III Semifinal on Tuesday, as head coach Gary Mullins applauds the team for a well-played game.

By MATT ROBINSON

This week, the Turners Falls Softball team won the Western Mass championship title, and then beat the best team in D-III Central. Now they go on to challenge the Eastern Mass champs, the Austin Prep Cougars, for the Massachusetts state crown.

Powertown used crisp base running, a few key hits, and solid defense to knock off third-ranked McCann Tech on Saturday, and on Tuesday, the Blue Bats woke up and shut out Hopedale, 9-0.

On June 15, Turners Falls beat the Green Hornets of McCann Tech 4-0 at the UMass Softball Complex. It was Blue's sixth straight Western Mass championship.

But only Green was celebrating. "I'm disappointed." That's the first thing Coach Gary Mullins said to me after the game: "We can't play like that and expect to win."

For the Green Hive, it was all smiles. They were just happy to be there, and as the Hornets' coach Robin Finnegan said later, "To play a dynasty like Turners Falls and stay within four runs? I can't ask for anything more."

But Mullins does ask for more from his team. "We have to hit better than that," he said, as he shook his head.

The potent Powertown offense only eked out four hits in the game, and benefited from six Green errors and eight walks.

Defensively, Blue played exceptionally well. Thirteen strikeouts from ace Jade Tyler, great catches by center-fielder Olivia Whittier,

and even a glove throw by Taylor Murphy kept Green off the scoreboard.

While Powertown's defense kept the Green bats quiet, their offense quietly scored runs.

In the bottom of the first inning, McCann retired the first two batters but Jade Tyler was patient enough to get walked. Then Aly Murphy cracked a standup triple, sending courtesy runner Taryn Thayer home, and Blue went up 1-0.

Three innings later, Powertown put another run in the bank. In the fourth Caitlin Reynolds was walked, relieved at first by runner Page Sulda. Because the Blue bats were muted, they had to find other ways to score, and they did. Sulda went for the steal, and when the throw went wild, she headed to third. When the outfield bobbled the ball, third base coach Jason Salls waved her home, and Turners took a 2-0 lead.

Turners scored twice more in the fifth thanks to their heads-up base running. Taylor Murphy smacked a hit and proceeded to steal second. Tyler drew a walk, but she didn't settle for first base; as Murphy booked it to third, she made it to second. Tyler was relieved at second by Thayer.

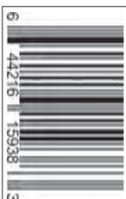
Having two runners in scoring position may have unhinged the Hornets' pitcher as a wild pitch sent Taylor Murphy home and Thayer to third. Then cleanup batter Aly Murphy was walked, putting runners at the corners. Hailey Bogosz came up next and did her job, sending Thayer home and giving Blue

see **SOFTBALL** page A2



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Turners' Taryn Thayer beats the tag at the plate in the fifth inning, scoring Thunder's fourth and final run as they took home the Western Mass D-III championship title with a 4-0 win over the McCann Tech Hornets last Saturday.



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"The Voice of the Villages"

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## SOFTBALL from page A1

Thunder a 4-0 lead.

Tyler kept Green off balance for the last two innings, and Turners Falls took home the trophy for the sixth straight year. But watching the cheering Hornets and the subdued Thunder as they accepted their trophies, I couldn't help but think that Powertown will heed Mullins' warning that they must hit better if they expect to win the state title.

So Turners Falls is playing for the State Title once again. When they suit up on Saturday, they face

a familiar foe.

AP is no stranger to Blue Thunder. Powertown beat them twice in championship games: in 2016 Turners won 2-0, and in 2017 they prevailed 2-1.

But this is a new year, with new challenges. Past records don't matter. On Saturday both teams come into the game with clean records and gamble their fortunes in a one-game take-all.

Blue takes on Austin Prep this Saturday, June 22 at 2 o'clock at Worcester State University.



NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



Each Wednesday seems to lure new vendors to the Great Falls Farmers Market. Last week, Lauren Grover set up her Paisley Peacock Body Arts booth at Peskeomskut Park to sell henna, face painting, and glitter services. Check out what's new each week from 2 to 6 p.m.!

## Rain Abates, Thunder Rolls Over Blue Raiders

By JEFF SINGLETON

AMHERST – For the Turners Falls Thunder, Monday's state semi-final softball game was a sharp contrast to the previous Saturday's Western Mass finals, where they won, but eked out four hits and left numerous runners on base. During Monday's semi-final rematch against the Hopedale Blue Raiders, by contrast, Turners batters accounted for six hits and five runs in the first two innings, and never looked back.

Perhaps Turners likes hard-throwing pitchers. Hopedale hurler Bianca Fitch certainly had good velocity. But Turners' batters consistently made contact with pitches in the strike zone, and Fitch paid the price for walks in crucial situations.

The final score was 9 to 1, with the Thunder amassing 12 hits in only six innings. Meanwhile, Turners Falls pitcher Jade Tyler held Hopedale to one run and four hits in seven innings.

The weather situation at UMass-Amherst's Sortino Field looked ominous just before the 3 p.m. scheduled game time. It was raining, and significant amounts of water had accumulated on the tarp that covered the infield. Some fans expressed the view that the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association should have called the game sooner. But as the tarp was being rolled off the field, the rain stopped, and the game got underway almost precisely at three-thirty.

Turners got on the board immediately, as second baseman Taylor Murphy singled in the second half of the first inning, then took second base on an interference call. A walk to pitcher Jade Tyler put runners on first and second, and after a fly-out to shortstop by Alyson Murphy, center fielder Olivia Whittier drove in the first run of the game with a single to center.

Another run scored on an infield hit by Hailey Bogusz, and a walk to Lexi Lacey loaded the bases. Fitch



Turners' Jade Tyler, seen here pitching against McCann Tech last Saturday, held the Hopedale Blue Raiders to a run and four hits during Tuesday's game.

then walked in a run before she was able to retire the side.

So the Thunder led 3-0 after only one at-bat. The situation quickly became more dire for Hopedale in the second inning. After the Blue Raiders went three and out, with two strike-outs and a ground ball back to the pitcher, Turners catcher Alyson Murphy belted a two-run homer into the left field screen that also drove in her sister Taylor. By the end of the inning, it was 5 to 0 Turners.

Hopedale once again went three and out in the third. Turners third baseman Catie Reynolds, who reached third base after a single and a throwing error, took home on a fielder's-choice out. The score was now 6 to 0.

Finally, Hopedale scored in the fourth inning, after the Blue Raiders' Kathleen Maloney lined a triple down the right-field line and scored on a ground out to first base. Turners went down "one-two-three" in

their half of the fourth, and in the top of the fifth, Hopedale threatened with runners at first and second. But Rachel Swanson lined out to the pitcher for the last out of the inning, and the score stayed at Turners 6, Hopedale 1.

Turners put the game away with four hits and three runs in their half of the fifth, and only a spectacular catch by outfielder Kathleen Maloney and a diving tag at third saved Hopedale from experiencing more damage.

Jade Tyler cruised through the sixth and seventh innings, not allowing a Hopedale batter to reach base, and Turners was headed to the state finals once again.

"I think they played well. I think we played better," summed up Turners coach Gary Mullins.

"You hope that they feel good about themselves," he added, referring to his team. "Because the next step is tougher."

## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# Improving Workplace Safety

By KATIE NOLAN

At the town's request, the Erving's insurance agent, the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency (MIIA), conducted an OSHA "self-audit" to evaluate town buildings for worker safety issues. On Monday night, the selectboard spent most of a short meeting discussing the audit report, and ways to implement its recommendations.

According to administrative coordinator Bryan Smith, "there are some opportunities for improvement." He added that many of the potential safety hazards had been eliminated already or were being worked on.

MIIA observed that the office space at the highway garage is closer to the electrical panels than the OSHA-mandated 7-foot buffer. Board members suggested that, in the short term, the garage break room could be used as office space. Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that the town should have a plan and a timeline to fix the problem, "now that we are aware of it."

Board members brainstormed longer-term solutions, such as moving the office to another building, creating an office space in the front lobby of the building, or using a garage bay as office space. The board asked Bryan Smith to ask the highway office staff about their preferences.

MIIA also found numerous potential safety hazards at the former school building at 18 Pleasant Street, including lighting issues, stairwells, and potential asbestos-containing materials. Currently, School Union #28 administrators work in offices on the second floor, and the recreation commission uses the first floor. Bryan

Smith said that Union #28 had been considering moving to the current library building once the new library is completed.

Selectboard member Scott Bastarache said he felt the town should either commit to substantial rehabilitation of the building or sell it and "put it back on the tax rolls." He suggested that the recreation commission could share space with the senior and community center. Moving the recreation commission to the basement of town hall was another suggestion.

The MIIA audit cited wall-mounted vertical ladders for roof access as potential safety hazards at both Erving Elementary School and town hall. Bryan Smith said that the school may decommission the wall-mounted ladders and install approved access ladders. In addition, MIIA recommended that the elementary school use a portable eyewash station and install fall protection on the roof.

MIIA observed issues with lighting at the police department and with the ventilation system for truck exhaust at the fire station.

Selectboard chair Smith read aloud three printed pages with the names of people reappointed as members of boards, commissions and committees, alphabetically, from the Archaeological Preservation Officers and Board of Registrars to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The entire board voted to approve all the reappointments.

At the end of the open session, the board held an executive session "to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation."

The next selectboard meeting is June 25, before the special town meeting, held at the senior and community center.

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## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by **CHRIS PELLERIN**

Sometimes, after the paper has gone to print, I find out about an event happening of which I wasn't aware when I was putting together my column for the week, and I feel badly that I didn't let people know about it.

**If you're organizing an event** in our local area, please be sure to email the details to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org) and I will get it. We're entering our summer biweekly printing schedule soon, so be sure to give us a couple of weeks' notice.

Summer begins on Friday, June 21! The Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, will be open seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

On Saturday, June 22 the Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center board members present a **Nature Program Potpourri**. Get to know the Friends and help elect officers for the board in a short business meeting from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Great Hall. Find out how to become a member, too.

Then join Dawn Marvin Ward for a presentation on the animals of the North Woods, and join Steve Winters and David Brule for a multidisciplinary walk involving geology and Indigenous lifeways, loss, and renewal at the Falls.

In case you missed it at Mutton & Mead last weekend, the Greenfield company Hamster Works will showcase its **giant, human-operated Hamster Wheel** again this Friday, June 21 at Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

Stop by between 2 and 5 p.m. to take a walk on the wheel, which powers a snowcone-making machine. Operators will be rewarded with a sweet treat! The Wheel's appearance is part of a new-account promotion event at the bank. It can be operated by walkers of all shapes and sizes.

And at the bank on Saturday, June 22 from 10 to 11:30 a.m., **Bingo is back**, with Ann Allen as the guest caller. Due to limited space, you must call (413) 863-4316 to reserve your seat. Cards, gag prizes, and light refreshments provided by GSB.

**Skateboarding lessons for kids** will be offered by the Montague Parks and Recreation Department Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Unity Skatepark June 24 through July 17. Call (413) 863-3216 for more information, and to make sure there are openings still available.

On Monday, June 24 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. the **Hampshire Franklin Commission on the Status of**

**Women & Girls** will hold its annual meeting and election of officers at Great Falls Harvest, 50 Third Street, Turners Falls. This independent state agency was legislatively created in 2017 to promote the rights and opportunities of women in the Hampshire and Franklin counties.

The Commission's meetings are open to the public. Public comments are welcomed at the start of each meeting. For more information contact Bonnie MacCracken at [bmaccracken.hfcswg@gmail.com](mailto:bmaccracken.hfcswg@gmail.com) or (413) 687-9493.

The **Montague Community Band** will play at Peskeomskut Park on Seventh Street off Avenue A on Monday, June 24 from 7 to 8 p.m. The theme of the concert is "British Invasion."

Looking ahead...

Saturday, June 29 will be a day-long **Mural Launch Celebration** as the final strokes are put on the Building Bridges Mural, at the Unity Park fieldhouse in Turners Falls. The mural was born from a desire to come together after the community's struggle in 2017 over the release of Turners Falls High School's old "Indian" mascot. The event is free, and all are welcome.

Beginning at 11 a.m., Project Scholar and Native Elders will offer prayers and tobacco, acknowledging the land and First Peoples, to open the ceremony. At noon, tweens, teens, young adults and families are invited to paint their handprints on the mural. Indigenous storytellers will share stories and hold space for reflection beginning at 1:30 p.m.; snacks will be provided. At 3 p.m., there will be drumming and songs, and at 4:30 p.m., music by Electric Powwow, and a dance party hosted by friends from Pollinate.

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center will be leading four **paddling tours** this summer around Barton Cove to **pull up invasive water chestnuts**. They will take place from 9:30 a.m. to noon on June 29, July 13, and July

27 (all Saturdays), and 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17.

The tours are free, and open to ages ten and up. The groups will meet at the Barton Cove canoe and kayak rental office at 82 French King Highway, Gill. Pre-register by calling (800) 859-2960. Bring work gloves, and clothes that can get wet.

You can also **kayak around the eagle nest** in Barton Cove and learn about the eagles' life history on Saturday, July 6 from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Bring binoculars if you have them. The program is free with your own kayak or \$25 to rent a boat.

The program, through Northfield Mountain Recreational and Environmental Center, is appropriate for beginners as well as experienced kayakers. Call the number listed above for more information.

Racial Justice Rising is sponsoring an event, **"LGBTQI Asylum Seekers Share Their Experiences,"** on Saturday, July 6 from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 43 Silver Street, Greenfield.

The LGBT Task Force supports and advocates for LGBTQI immigrants fleeing persecution in their home countries. A ministry of Worcester's Hadwen Park Congregational Church, UCC, the Task Force provides safe housing and access to *pro bono* legal, medical, and mental health resources for their guests until they can legally work to support themselves.

The asylum seekers are mostly people of color and often from minority religions, and at times they face situations that they did not expect in their sanctuary country. This presentation will delve into some of these instances, and how they have worked together to overcome them. Admission is free. The church has plenty of free parking and is wheelchair accessible. For free childcare, RSVP with number and ages of children. For more information or to reserve childcare, contact [email@racialjusticerising.org](mailto:email@racialjusticerising.org).

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## Memorial Gathering for Sam Walsh

Katie Nolan, Josh Heinemann, and Geri Manning are inviting people to a memorial gathering for Sam Walsh this Saturday, June 22 at Deja Brew Pub, Wendell.

We want to share stories of Sam's life, the love of family and friends, and good food. Food to share at 1 p.m. (potluck welcome), and a memorial circle at 2 p.m.



## TEAR DOWN from page A1

buildings, all on the northeast end of the complex. Two structures that are attached to the west and north side of Building 9, the hydro plant, were originally slated for demolition but would now be left standing. Richards said Building 9 "has added significant complexity to the project... due to significant structural issues, and how that building is to remain standing while partial demolition occurs around it."

A key part of the design addresses the problem of the 25-foot-deep hole that would be left after the buildings' demolition, alongside the road that borders the power canal. The plan presented by Richards and Day would use crushed brick and concrete materials from the demolition to create graded backfill. Six inches of seeded loam would then be placed on top of the slope, which Richards said would "pitch stormwater" away from Buildings 9 and 2.

A concrete retaining wall along Building 9 would also need to be constructed to separate the backfill from the hydro plant. "Unfortunately, this creates an expensive addition to the project," Richards said.

Richards also noted that "we're basing the project on what you can

see, but there's a lot you can't see. It's a complex history, in terms of how this property evolved over time."

He said the current plan is to "pin" the retaining wall to bedrock, similar to a project the company is overseeing in Gardner. Any building foundations along Canal Road would not be demolished, he explained, because "we don't want to mess with that."

Richards said the historic Keith Paper Company smokestack, which bears the letters "KPC," should be removed, but added that demolition contractors would have to determine how to remove it, since it may be difficult to maneuver a large crane on the site. He called the removal of the stack a "controlled demolition - it will be brick by brick, probably."

Ramsey said the town was in the process of getting the approval of the Massachusetts Historical Commission for the project, since the Strathmore is on the state historic register."

Richards said the \$2.6 million price tag would not include a "significant investment in weather tightening" of the four town-owned buildings not scheduled for demolition, but that openings, including from an abandoned tailrace, should be filled in "until we decide what we're going to do with the remain-

ing buildings."

The engineers were asked if they had determined whether the remaining buildings would in fact be "viable, beyond holding up [Building 9]."

"Every building here is in a state of structural decay," answered Richards. "So the question is: is there enough financial resources to save a building? Anything can be saved with endless amounts of resources... It is a challenging set of circumstances, that continue to worsen as time goes on."

For now, the town will focus on cleanup in the complex. The Baker administration's recent announcement of a \$250,000 MassDevelopment grant for states that "the town 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 reused mixed-use property."

## Other Business

Turners Falls resident Jennifer Lively came before the selectboard to request the use of public property for a community cleanup of the wooded area between Third, Seventh, Park, and High streets, which is owned by the town. She said her

group had identified materials ranging from broken glass to "tents, tarps, and stoves" in the woods.

The cleanup will be on Saturday, July 6 from 9 a.m. to noon, and cleaning materials will be provided on the "grassy area" along High Street. Lively said she was inspired by the annual Source to Sea cleanup which focuses on the Connecticut River and its tributaries. The board approved the request.

The board also approved three requests from RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto for the annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival on August 3 and 4. The first was an agreement with FirstLight Power Resources for use of property on First and L streets. It also approved two locations for the festival: next to the bike path near Unity Park, and a "Plan B" location near the Discovery Center in case of rain. The Discovery Center would also require the approval of the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Parks and recreation director Jon Dobosz requested approval for three "night skates" at the Unity Park skate park on June 21, July 27, and September 4, and for an event unveiling the new "Building Bridges" mural on the Unity Park fieldhouse

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# GUEST EDITORIAL A Lesson in Environmental Injustice, From Our Beloved Woods to an Asthma Capital

By ANNA GYORGY

**WENDELL and SPRINGFIELD** – On June 5, forest protection activists from Franklin County joined a diverse group of Springfield-area residents, legislators, and social and environmental justice activists from around the state to oppose pending rule changes to the Department of Energy Resources (DOER's) Renewable Portfolio Standard.

The technical changes would allow ratepayer subsidies for large-scale wood-burning biomass facilities, which would then qualify as "renewable" energy sources.

"We Breathe What They Burn," read the homemade yellow-and-orange buttons worn by many who came to be heard at the Wednesday evening hearing at an East Springfield school auditorium, several miles away from where Palmer Renewable Energy plans to build a 35-MW biomass plant.

Defeated in 2011 after years of citizen protest, research, and legal action, along with a similar project in Greenfield, the Springfield project could return – greased, if the new regulations pass, by a multi-million-dollar ratepayer subsidy. The project, along with other wood-burning plants in Massachusetts and neighboring states, would receive valuable financial credits as a source of "renewable energy."

The early-evening demonstration of some 80 people, followed by a three-hour-long hearing featuring 60 speakers, brought together old and new allies from the more northern and southerly ends of the Connecticut River Valley. Some came from the Wendell Forest Alliance, and others from the already vulnerable and affected urban communities that would suffer directly from massive wood-burning.

The forest activists see woodlands as a critical resource needing protection: as "carbon sinks," storing the carbon dioxide that is a major contributor to climate disruption in the soil; as habitat for flora and fauna, insects and microbes; as treasured places for retreat and recreation; and as shade and water retention zones in an increasingly hot and wet local climate.

Along with Save Massachusetts Forests ([savemassforests.com](http://savemassforests.com)), the Wendell group is actively supporting H.897, An Act Relative to Forest Protection, which would "protect all state land as parks or reserves where forest ecosystems are guided primarily by natural processes. This action will fight climate change by reducing carbon loss and increasing carbon sequestration."

That bill, sponsored by Wendell's representative Susannah Whippis, is also supported by local representative Natalie Blais, senator Jo Comerford, and others from western Mass.

Another bill also before the state's Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, H.853, would "eliminate subsidies for biomass burning for heating, which is worse for the climate crisis than burning fossil fuels."

Opposition in Springfield to burning harvested wood, wood chips, and other biomass – which



Members of Wendell Save Brook Road Forest arrived early to the June 5 hearing in Springfield, in time to hold this local banner, as others joined the roadside demonstration.

could include chemically-treated wood wastes – is spearheaded by Arise for Social Justice and the Springfield Climate Justice Coalition. This alliance includes "more than 35 community groups and businesses working together to address climate change, public health, and environmental justice," and also opposes the expansion of natural gas pipelines through local neighborhoods.

Springfield City Council member Jesse Lederman, formerly with Arise and the climate coalition, spoke against the rule changes on behalf of fellow council members. He emphasized that the issue had been fought and settled before, after a 2010 study found that biomass in Massachusetts was not "carbon neutral" when compared to coal.

Lederman also criticized the late date of the hearing, scheduled after many requests and held just two days before the comment period was set to close. Interestingly, after the large outcry – and media coverage – about the process, the DOER extended the comment period to July 26.

"Springfield," said Lederman, "is the most challenging region to live with asthma in the United States." This health plague was a major focus of local testimony. In early May, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America announced its 2019 list of "Asthma Capitals." Springfield, with its high rates of asthma and related emergency-room visits, ranked first for the second year in a row.

The rate for area adults is high, but nearly one in five Springfield children is affected with this debilitating condition, double the national rate. It greatly affects those children's lives and abilities, and their families, with multiple impacts, including pain, fear, and financial costs.

Tanisha Arena, Arise's dynamic new executive director, said that given the high asthma rates in Springfield, especially affecting low-income people of color, Palm-

er's plan to pump out more CO<sub>2</sub> amounted to systemic racism.

Powerful, personal supporting testimony came from local residents. Parents miss work to stay home with sick children or bring them to the hospital. "Fifty percent of my grandchildren have asthma," one woman testified. "Five out of ten."

Another pointed out that the few people who had spoken in favor of the new regulations all had financial interests in the biomass plant. "My vested interest," she said, "is my 80-year-old mother and 13-year-old grandson, both suffering from asthma." She added that the elderly often can't afford inhalers, and wait to seek help until their condition is very serious.

This situation was confirmed by Dr. Martha (Marty) Nathan, physician at Springfield's Baystate Brightwood Health Center, who regularly treats low-income patients suffering from asthma. The new regulations, she said, "would sacrifice my patients' health to subsidize the biomass industry."

During all the impassioned testimony from community, clergy, and environmental speakers, the four suited men at the long table on the darkened auditorium stage made no comment. But neither did they try to prevent the applause given speaker after speaker. And so the hearing went on, with the charges and facts from the audience multiplying.

Glen Ayers of Greenfield linked the implicit racism of facilitating a large-scale biomass plant in a low-income urban community with the panel itself. "The optics don't look good," he said, "with four white guys" representing the Department of Energy Resources. He called out Governor Baker as a racist.

Towards the end of the hearing, a speaker from the forest-protector part of the Valley said that the situation in Springfield was so desperate that if the regulations were approved, allowing subsidies for

harvesting and burning wood, and if such a polluting facility were approved in this urban community, there would be people ready to put themselves on the line nonviolently to prevent it.

Are we all one Valley? Certainly we in the northern climes enjoy a natural world much less polluted than to the south – on the other side of what is often, not affectionately, called the "Tofu Curtain."

As we held signs along the road before the hearing, I noted that there were few people of color among us. I asked the regional representative of the Toxics Action Center about this. She explained that it was due to discrimination: the DOER hearing had originally been planned for an earlier date at a more convenient downtown location, and many local residents were planning to attend. After the date was changed and the location moved to an area not well served by public transportation, the nature of the participation changed.

That this community has to go through another battle over this issue – and facility – is one example of environmental injustice. As are the high rates of pollution and illness in the area.

Concerned people and groups are urged to oppose the rule changes to the Department of Energy Resources (DOER's) Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Written comments can be submitted by July 26 – individual letters are the most effective – to John Wassam at [DOER.RPS@mass.gov](mailto:DOER.RPS@mass.gov), or by mail to the Department of Energy Resources, 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1020, Boston, MA 02114. Background information is available at [www.pfpi.net/ma-bio-energy-background](http://www.pfpi.net/ma-bio-energy-background).

Will it help to comment? It certainly can't hurt to have broad and strong opposition to this attempt to give new life to a discredited, and long-opposed, energy boondoggle.

Anna Gyorgy lives in Wendell.

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## NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Dispute Over a Discontinued Road

By JOSH HEINEMANN

The Wendell selectboard spent the largest part of their June 12 meeting listening to and trying to alleviate a trespassing complaint about Old Egypt Road, near where it makes a T-intersection with West Street.

Old Egypt Road has been discontinued, and over many years has softened into a woods road. Charlie Bennett owns both sides of the first section off West Street, and that means that he has control over the road's right of way. He has put in a gate, and posted the road with a "no trespassing" sign. Bennett has no issue with people who walk or ride bicycles through his property on Old Egypt Road, but the gate is meant to be a deterrent for vehicles.

The north side of the next section west on Old Egypt Road is the back part of the house lot owned by Peter Waters and Ruth Flor. Waters and Flor scheduled time with the selectboard because someone broke the gate, cut trees, and drove a "big truck" past their land, through a wetland, and over a stream to get to a small landlocked lot. The process of driving, they said, created huge ruts in the road, making it impossible to walk or ride a bicycle. The cut trees were left in the wet spots.

Waters said that when he tried to talk with the driver, he was told to "f--- off." As owner of only one side of the road, Waters does not have the right to deny access. The driver told him that Bennett allowed him to pass through the private section, but Waters felt that as a large and threatening presence, a bowie knife on his belt, he may have intimidated Bennett, a 95-year-old gentle man.

Old Egypt Road goes through to Farrar Road in Shutesbury, and this property owner had previously used that way to reach his land, until residents there gated the road because of similar actions. A third possible vehicle access may exist through the state forest off Montague Road.

The driver backs onto Waters' land to turn his truck around. Waters brought pictures of the damage done to the road, and asked who will repair it. The town will not repair a discontinued road.

Police chief Ed Chase listened to the complaints. He said that a trespassing complaint is only effective when the trespasser is on the property, and that a photograph is not adequate.

Chase also said that private property may not be landlocked – reasonable vehicular access must be allowed – but selectboard member Christine Heard added that a landlocked owner may not force an easement.

Chase said the truck involved is just a pickup, not a large truck. (Relative to the size of Old Egypt Road, a pickup may be a large truck.) When it was stuck on Old Egypt Road, it was facing out.

Waters said he would like to talk with the guy, and that he would be happy if the driver would leave his truck parked on West Street and walk in to his property.

The conservation commission has interest because of the wetland. Selectboard chair Dan Keller suggested a call to town counsel be-

cause of the conflict between one landowner's right of access, and the right of another landowner to allow or deny an easement for passage over his property.

## Old Dam Grant App

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich brought up the fact that this discussion, scheduled for 15 minutes, had gone on for 40, and that Ray DiDonato, the next scheduled citizen, was waiting. DiDonato brought two items of business, one involving his family's ownership of half of the dam that contains water for McAvoy's Pond, and the other his position as manager of the town's municipal light plant (MLP), which oversees the town's fiber-optic internet project.

He spoke first about the dam, which the state has called an imminent danger to structures downstream, including Lockes Village Road and houses around Lake Wyola. He has offered to take some responsibility for the dam's maintenance, and so he got an estimate for its repair: \$103,000 to seal the cracks, remove the inoperable gate, and put more riprap along the bank between the dam and Lockes Village Road. Including engineering, the total is \$180,000. Most of the cost is preparation, as a temporary dam would be necessary during the repairs.

DiDonato said a private dam owner is less likely to be approved for a grant for the work, and asked that the town, as owner of the dam's other half, join with him in applying for one. The owner's match would be 25%, still a large sum for both the town and a private owner. He said he has the support of Senator Comerford. The application is due in mid July, and an answer should come back in October.

Two selectboard members voted to support the grant application, with member Laurie DiDonato abstaining, citing a possible conflict of interest.

The dam's next inspection is scheduled for August. The state Office of Dam Safety has called the dam's condition as "fair," which selectboard member Dan Keller said means good, as far as dam safety is concerned. DiDonato left a copy of the contractor's estimate with the selectboard.

## Broadband Buildout

As MLP manager, DiDonato gave the selectboard, acting as the MLP's board of directors, a copy of the contract with Westfield Gas & Electric to oversee White Mountain Construction as they build out Wendell's fiber-optic network.

New Salem and Shutesbury reviewed and signed the same contract with only site-specific differences, so the Wendell board approved it without legal review, two votes yes, one abstaining.

DiDonato said that National Grid should be done with their make-ready work by mid-August, and Verizon will be next. Underground drops to individual houses, where needed, will be made during the summer when digging is possible. Assuming Verizon to be timely, cables for the network will be

## CHARLEMONT from page A1

eventually reopen her business. So far, Dewey says she has spent close to \$300,000 to date fixing various issues. Her plan is to raise the money necessary to finish renovating and open the first floor tavern – about \$180,000 – and then finance repairs to the second-floor bedrooms with those profits, loans, or future grants.

Though we reported on April 25 in Part One of this series, *The End of the Road for the Charlemont Inn?*, that Dewey's attorney Mark Tanner said town officials were considering demolishing the Inn, no officials have publicly confirmed any moves in this direction.

But now, support for the Charlemont Inn is growing in the greater community.

"Over my dead body are they going to take a bulldozer to this Inn," said Marcia Tucci, a co-owner of the building from 1987 to 1991.

At this point, the town could seek permission from the county housing court to raze the Inn on the ground that it is a health hazard, repossess the property for taxes owed, or work with the state to appoint a receiver who would take over the property.

When she heard last month that the Inn could be torn down, Tucci sent a letter to the town.

"The sentiment among town folk surrounding the topic of the Inn is one of deep depression, sadness, and frustration over the way the issues there have been handled," Tucci wrote, citing a "lack of communication or transparency on the part of town officials."

Selectboard members Jay Healy, Marguerite Willis, and Sarah Reynolds did not respond to requests for comment.

"People need a chance to act, to think creatively about how to save this important piece of Charlemont," Tucci argued, "and we can not do so when the entire topic is shut out of public debate."

Members of the historical commission also want a say in what happens to the Inn. "Why is it so secretive?" asked member Norma Coli. "The townspeople have a right to know what's going on."

On June 7 the board of health met and went into executive session to discuss pending litigation having to do with the Inn. As the meeting convened Dewey, recovering from an unexpected brain surgery, informed the officials of her plans to continue on the path of reopening the Inn.

Persistent dizziness and nausea sent her to the emergency room last month, where Dewey found herself undergoing an eye exam, then a brain scan. "Within an hour of my getting into emergency room, they told me I had a growth on my brain," Dewey said.

strung through the fall and early winter, and the system should be "lit up" in January.

## Other Business

Nancy Spittle is trying to leave her position as chair of Wendell's council on aging, but she fell into that role at the beginning of the meeting, with a request for support letters to apply for grants with the AARP-age-friendly communities, and the Alzheimer-friendly communities. Board members willingly gave their consent.

Aldrich said she is writing an advertisement for mowing town properties. She mentioned two parts, which could be bid together

The board of health condemned the building for health and safety violations in November 2015, including mold growth and a leaking roof. But Dewey says that the Inn has been unfairly targeted while other buildings in town – some completely abandoned and in far worse condition – have been left alone.

"I didn't just pick on Charlotte. It's my job to pick on places that are substandard," said Glen Ayers, the now-retired regional health agent contracted from Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG). He said he initiated closer inspections of the Inn in 2015 to protect the status of its well as a legal public water supply.

According to Ayers, the age of the Charlemont Inn property makes it exempt from certain roadway setback requirements enforced on modern wells. If the building had sat empty for five years disconnected from the water supply, it would have lost that exemption, rendering the well useless for any future business.

## For small towns, Ayers said, tax leniency can be one of the few financial safety nets a municipality can offer its struggling residents.

"There would be no chance of it being a public water supply ever again, so that led me to initiate this process with the board of health," Ayers said.

The Inn was behind on property tax payments for at least two decades, like several other properties in town, and the debt grew after the 2008 recession. According to Ayers, more taxes were owed on the Inn than any other property in Charlemont during the time he sat on the town's "abandoned and derelict properties task force."

For small towns, he said, tax leniency can be one of the few financial safety nets a municipality can offer its struggling residents.

"I'm sure Mr. Ayers will think he worked with us, but he didn't," said Dewey, who maintains that strict deadlines, unreasonable work requests, unnecessary housing court disputes, and a lack of communication or support from town officials slowed her progress in repairing the Inn.

To help save the Inn, Telling suggested that concerned citizens get together and find a benefactor will-

or separately – the common areas and the septic system mound – for which the selectboard approved mowing to address pollinator needs, a half or a third each year in late May or mid-October, with a 3" to 4" cut height.

Leonard Kopelman, founder of Kopelman & Paige, the town's legal counsel, has resigned that firm and joined another, Brooks & DeRensis. He wrote a letter to the selectboard inviting Wendell to follow him there.

Keller said he was satisfied with David Doneski, the lawyer at Kopelman & Paige who has served Wendell, and suggested that the town stay with the firm. Heard and

ing to work with them.

"People concerned about the Inn can help by finding someone or a group of people with the resources and commitment to take on this project," he said. "There are receivers willing to work with them."

Typically, a municipality will recommend an abandoned property to the state receivership program with the goal of turning it into an economic asset. Appointed by a regional housing court, a receiver has the legal authority to renovate a property, borrow money from organizations like the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, and then place a lien on the property to recoup costs.

Alan Hope, a court-certified receiver based in North Andover, submitted a preliminary assessment of the Charlemont Inn property and visited multiple times as he considered taking on the project. However, he said he has not heard back from any town officials, or their hired legal counsel Jeffrey Blake, who had initially contacted Hope about the opportunity.

"I haven't heard from Jeff Blake as to what my role is," Hope said. "The town hasn't contacted me, the courts haven't contacted me."

Instead, Dewey has applied for the Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, which helps finance the restoration of historic buildings. Hope said that the approval process can be complicated to navigate alone, and that he feels Dewey needs an advocate, like a local politician, to get things done.

"Getting tax credits is very complicated," Hope said. "It requires a lot of know-how, which I don't have."

Hope also mentioned that Charlemont's town center is designated as a federal "Opportunity Zone," which offers favorable tax treatment on capital gains to potential investors. Twelve Franklin County towns were recommended last year by Governor Charlie Baker for the federal program.

Dewey does not have the resources herself to renovate the entire Inn at once, but says she has at least enough to pay her tax debt to the town, and believes that reopening the tavern downstairs is within reach. She will be out of work for the next month, at least, recovering from surgery.

"She is a woman of faith. She believes it is right to preserve that place," Hope said of Dewey. "It's just not right that she hasn't had the political clout to get these things done."

The next scheduled hearing on whether the Inn will be repossessed for taxes owed or given to a receiver is July 19, unless it is delayed for a fourth time.



Laurie DiDonato agreed.

The board signed a request from planning board chair Nan Riebschlaeger for an application for a \$20,000 climate change vulnerability planning grant.

As the meeting was ending DiDonato, talking in her role as energy committee member, said that the cost of installing ground-mounted solar panels at the highway garage and fire station would be the same as installing them on the roof of the town office building. Energy committee members got approval from the fire association, building inspector, highway commission, and highway superintendent. Heard and Keller gave her a go-ahead.

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## 2018 Water Quality Report

### Turners Falls Water Department

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We are once again proud to present our annual water quality report, covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2018. Over the years, we have dedicated ourselves to producing drinking water that meets all state and federal standards. We continually strive to adopt new methods for delivering the best quality drinking water to you. As new challenges to drinking water safety emerge, we remain vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.

Please share with us your thoughts or concerns about the information in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies. For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Michael Brown, Water Department Superintendent, or Suzanne Leh, Clerk/Collector, at (413) 863-4542.

#### Community Participation

You are invited to participate in our public forum and voice your concerns about your drinking water. We meet the first Wednesday of each month, beginning at 5 p.m., at the Water Department Office, 226 Millers Falls Road, Turners Falls. Our Annual Meeting of the Turners Falls Fire District is held the third Tuesday in April.

Our Department Board of Water Commissioners: Kenneth Morin, Stephen Call, Bruce Merriam. Pump Station Operators: Jeffrey Hildreth, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Harry Kelly.

#### Where Does My Water Come From?

The Turners Falls Water Department's main source of water consists of two artesian wells located off Center Street in Montague Center. These gravel-packed Wells #1192000 1G and #1192000 2G pump 1.2 to 2 million gallons of water per day to the filter plant. At the plant, the water is sand filtered for the removal of iron and manganese; the treated, filtered water is then discharged into the gravity-fed distribution system.

The Hannegan Brook Well located near Lake Pleasant can yield

1.44 MGD to meet future water demands. The water quality is good and only requires the addition of water treatment chemicals for pH adjustment. The storage facilities in Turners Falls have a total storage capacity of 6.3 million gallons. Lake Pleasant and Green Pond are emergency backup surface water supplies.

Please call Mike or Suzanne to answer any questions at (413) 863-4542, email [clerk@turnersfallswater.com](mailto:clerk@turnersfallswater.com), or [www.turnersfallswater.com](http://www.turnersfallswater.com).

#### Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants may be particularly at risk from infections.

These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.

#### Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) prescribe regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

The sources of drinking water

(both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Substances that may be present in source water include: Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife; Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; Pesticides and Herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources, such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses; Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and which may also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

#### Lead in Drinking Water

*How does lead get in my drinking water?*

In Massachusetts, most drinking water sources like reservoirs and groundwater are lead free. When lead is present in water, it is typically due to the water flowing through lead pipes or plumbing in homes with lead parts or solder. Service lines, which are the pipes that connect your home to the water main, could have lead in them. Inside your home, you may have lead pipes, copper pipes connected with lead solder, or brass faucets or fittings containing lead. Lead levels are highest when the water has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours. Hot water causes lead to enter water faster.

*How does lead get into my body?*

In many cases, most exposure to lead is from paint dust, paint chips and soil contaminated with lead. Lead can also get into your body by drinking or cooking with water containing lead. Young children absorb lead more easily than adults, and lead can be passed from a mother to her unborn child. For

these reasons, lead in drinking water can be an important source of exposure for pregnant women, young children, and infants that are fed powdered formula.

Lead is not absorbed through the skin. Bathing or showering in water containing lead should be safe.

*What can I do right now to protect my family?*

Run your water before using and use COLD water. Always use cold water for drinking and cooking. Do not use hot water for cooking or baby formula. Hot water usually has higher lead levels than cold water. Running the water before using will usually reduce any lead levels by flushing out the water that has been sitting in lead pipes for several hours.

Boiling water does not eliminate lead. If there is lead in your water, boiling it will increase lead levels.

#### Water Conservation

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water.

Here are a few tips: Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.

Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.

Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.

Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Write down the meter reading before going to bed at night or leaving for a day. Include all numbers, write down the new reading in the morning and subtract the prior reading. If there has been a change it is probably due to a leak.

#### What's a Cross-connection?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in

the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand), causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools, or garden chemicals.

Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. For more information, review the Cross-connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/prws/crossconnectioncontrol/index.cfm>. You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

#### Source Water Assessment, Protecting Turners Falls Water Supply

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) for the water supply source serving this water system. This report is a planning tool to support local and state efforts to improve water supply protection. Although the TFWD has many safeguards in place, the overall susceptibility ranking to contamination of the groundwater supplies is high, based on the presence of numerous high-ranking threat land-uses within the Zone II water supply protection areas. The report commends our water system on its proactive approach to source protection. A complete SWAP report is available at the TFWD, the Board of Health office, and online at <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/swa-preps.htm>. For more information, call the TFWD at 863-4542.

#### Things You Can Do to Protect Our Water Supply

Take used motor oil and other such fluids to the town's hazardous waste collection sites, use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly, and do not use the river beds to dispose of any waste.

## Turners Falls Water Quality Data

During the past year, we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. The state allows us to monitor for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently.

In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community. Our next round of lead and copper sampling will be in 2020.

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Action Level	MCLG	Amount Detected (90th %ile)	# of sites above action level	Violation	Typical Source
Copper (ppm)	8/14/2018	1.3	1.3	.049	0/20	No	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	8/14/2019	15	0	2.3	0/20	No	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservation

#### Definitions:

**90th Percentile:** Out of every 10 homes sampled, 9 were at or below this level.

**AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal):** The

level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal):** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of

disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND (Not detected):** Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

**ppb (parts per billion):** One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

**ppm (parts per million):** One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

**TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**GILL** from page A1

on town projects. She closed by thanking the fire department, and Ken Sears in particular, who is retiring after 33 years. The townspeople rose for a standing ovation at the conclusion of her statement.

**Undisturbed Ground**

The only aspect of the \$1,787,817 omnibus budget discussed at length in **Article 12** was an item which called for more than doubling the payment on the loan for the Mariamante property, to pay down the debt due to rising interest rates.

A question was raised about whether anything was ever going to be done with the land, aside from having. Selectboard member Randy Crochier responded that his understanding was that due to the possibility of Native American burial grounds on the property, nothing can be done on the site that would disturb the soil.

Selectboard chair John Ward said he wasn't even sure ground-mounted solar would fly.

Finance committee member Tupper Brown added that "the other big restriction on that property, under the same Massachusetts statute, is the town is not allowed to sell it, or even give it away," as long as the possibility of burial grounds exists.

"If the land is useless," Peter Gundelfinger then asked, "why not just default on the loan, and let the bank take the headache?" This elicited laughter, and comments of "where were you 15 years ago?" and "okay, then our bond rating goes down" from members of the assembly.

One resident said she recalled that after the radar exploration, there was a "very dramatic" meeting in town hall with representatives from the Narragansett and Wampanoag (Gay Head) tribes, where people of the town and the tribal representatives wanted to see a cultural center built. She suggested the reason it wasn't followed up on was that the tribes have been busy in the same way the selectboard has been, and added that there's never been a statement by anyone involved that they are no longer interested in pursuing that goal.

**School District**

Attention turned to the school budget of \$1,642,995 in **Article 13**. Michael Sullivan, the superintendent of schools for the Gill-Montague regional school district (GMRSD), was asked by Tupper Brown if the district's budget was sufficient.

"I would not say it's sufficient," Sullivan replied, "but an improvement over the recent past." He said the district was able to add six professional-level positions for the upcoming year, versus cuts of two, three, or four positions in recent years.

Sullivan said the improvement was due to increases in state Chapter 70 funding, but that the budget was "still not in a place that I would call sustainable," or providing "the quality of education we'd really like to provide, particularly at the secondary level."

Later during the meeting, a question was asked about where things stood with talks about merging with the Pioneer Valley Regional School District. Snedeker said the process of looking into it is just beginning.

Jane Oakes, chair of the Gill-Montague school committee, said the rough estimate is that it would be three years before any such merger could take place.

**Saving Acorns**

**Articles 23, 24 and 25** involved

transfers from unspent, allocated money, or "free cash," into three stabilization funds. The purposes of the funds were not questioned, but the use of free cash, and the nature of the funds, were discussed at length.

Fire chief Gene Beaubien spoke in favor of **Article 23**, which establishes a stabilization fund for the purchase of airpicks for the fire department, and transfers \$15,000 into that fund. The chief said that the current airpicks, bought in 2016 with \$124,000 in grant money, have a service life of 15 years, and that the selectboard, finance committee, and fire department decided it would be wise to save for the future expense of their replacement.

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker said that getting the grant money was a close call, and the town should not rely on such funding.

Gundelfinger asked why free cash was going to this fund and others, while property taxes were being raised by 3.2%. He also asked how that hike was possible under Proposition 2½.

Town administrator Ray Purington said that the Proposition 2½ limits are measured cumulatively, and property taxes can increase by more than 2.5% in a given year.

Ward replied that the board was trying to strike a balance, and use some free cash to reduce taxes, but wanted to make budgets closer to what is actually spent. He also noted that the town was \$189,000 below the allowable levy under 2½.

Snedeker added that the economy was going well now, but this may not be case in the future. He said if the town has money set aside, it will soften the blow of costs that are definitely coming.

Dorothy Storrow of River Road asked whether placing money in specific stabilization accounts, rather than general stabilization, reduced the town's flexibility.

Purington replied that there are different philosophies about how to save for projects, and in the end, it's up to the voters. He said the path being recommended – of being more specific about use of some funds – sends a strong message of the importance of certain needs, like air packs, by backing up intent with money.

Snedeker said there is still flexibility, since the money can be transferred if necessary.

**Article 24** designated \$2,000 from free cash for the energy commission stabilization fund. John Ward pointed out that most of the money saved by the work of the energy commission has gone into the general fund and reduced taxes, and the intent of the article is to leverage some of the money the committee has saved into further savings.

**Article 25** allocated \$43,000 to be used to stabilize, or reduce, the cash levy (taxes). Steve Bathory-Peeler of Mount Hermon Road asked what was known about Gill's population and future demographic outlook.

Snedeker replied that the town was aging and seeing a decline in population and enrollment in the schools. He noted Gill had been part of a 30- to 40-year effort to keep things rural, which can constrain growth. "People lose sight of the trajectory between the federal, state, and local taxation," he said. "When you have federal tax cuts, it inevitably puts pressure from the bottom up on local taxation."

**Cable Access**

**Articles 6, 7 and 8** concerned the Public Educational and Governmental (PEG) access fund,

which is generated through a fee on cable television service paid by Comcast. A question was raised about the size of the fund, currently \$96,000, with \$12,000 to be added through Article 9.

Gundelfinger asked why that much money was not being moved to the general fund. Ward replied that it would get eaten up there, and it was important that it be available for providing transparency, via the recording of governmental proceedings. He also cited the belief that as people move away from television, revenues may decrease, and the board feels it's important to have a buffer. He cited lack of volunteers using the equipment in the past as another reason for the fund's buildup.

Snedeker pointed out that, in addition to these factors, the most recent contract with Comcast lowered the fee to the town from 4% to 2.5%, and cited uncertainty about possible changes in federal laws which may require payments to Comcast that could drain the fund.

**Old People Economic Bomb**

Questions were raised about the "other post-employment benefits" (OPEB) liability trust fund, which was to receive \$13,738 in **Article 20**. Gundelfinger asked about the difference between the large OPEB liability – \$620,000 when last updated in 2016, according to the description in the article – versus the small amount set aside currently, \$44,540.

Town treasurer Peter Turban said he didn't think there was a single town or city that has fully funded the account. "Everybody is so amazed at how much it's going to cost for health insurance for all their retirees," he said.

Gundelfinger asked if the benefits were state mandated, or if current employees could be grandfathered in, and the benefits dropped for new hires, "like everybody else in the world has done."

Town counsel Donna MacNicol said the state mandates health insurance for current town employees working 20 or more hours. She said this also applied to retirees, if the town voted for that, as Gill did some years ago. MacNicol said once retirees become Medicare-eligible, they are required to go to Medex, but the town still pays a portion. She said the state has mandated these accounts to help deal with the issue of rising healthcare costs.

**Behind On Reports**

The motion to pass over **Article 1**, concerning the production of an annual report, brought forth a question from Gundelfinger as to why the report wasn't a higher priority, given that it's a statutory duty of the selectboard, and the town was eight years behind.

Crochier said that the reports were a priority, but that turnover at town hall has been rough in the past year, with Purington beleaguered with the work of several town positions. He acknowledged it was an issue.

Gundelfinger said he thought the reports were important for transparency.

Tupper Brown said the reason for the big change in the last seven years from the previous 23, was an enormous increase in state requirements that the staff has to take care of. He said if you want the reports soon, "let the town pay for it."

He said the town could hire somebody and get it done if it chose to, but it would be expensive.

## LOOKING BACK 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here's the way it was June 18, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

**Gill Approves Town Forest**

Voters in Gill have given their approval to a gift of 162 permanently conserved acres of land along both sides of Hoe Shop Road, stretching from Bascom Hollow to the border of Bernardston (including three acres of land in Bernardston itself) to create a town forest to be used by the public for passive recreation. The 75 to 10 vote to accept the gift of land came during the special town meeting on Tuesday night, prior to the continuation of Gill's annual town meeting.

Hunting, fishing, birdwatching, hiking, and related activities will be permitted on the new town forest land, which will be managed by Gill's conservation commission, or by a town forest advisory board set up under the commission's supervision. Snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles will be prohibited from using the land. Motorized vehicles will be allowed only for trail management, maintenance, or logging in accordance with an approved forestry management plan.

Also at the special town meeting, voters heard a presentation from Tracy Adamski of Tighe & Bond, Gill's consultant for the conceptual design of the Mariamante property, a 10-acre parcel at the intersection of West Gill and Main Road. Adamski said her firm had looked at the marketability of the town-owned land, with the help of a marketing consultant, and had determined that "the best business option" for Gill to pursue would be to market it for light industry.

Greenfield historian Howard Clark and Northfield resident Joe

Graveline, both of Native descent, stood to ask the town why development was being pursued on the parcel at all, since, they claimed, the historical record showed it had been the site of an unusual Native American "spokes burial." They said the area was part of the Riverside Archaeological District, where artifacts and evidence of occupation date back more than 10,000 years.

**Over 400 At Biomass Hearing**

The Greenfield zoning board of appeals met on Monday in a twice-postponed session to hear public comment regarding special permits requested by Pioneer Renewable Energy, LLC for a 47-MW biomass-fueled power plant proposed for the I-91 Industrial Park.

The meeting was scheduled for 7 p.m., in the cafeteria of the Greenfield Middle School, after being relocated there from the police station meeting room due to "significant public interest." But Greenfield officials appeared to have a hard time gauging just how significant public interest was. By the time the meeting convened, more than 400 people had swarmed into the cafeteria in a standing room-only crowd that swelled out the exit doors and up the stairwell to the second floor.

At 7:30 p.m. members of the fire department announced that in light of the large crowd, the meeting would be moved upstairs to the auditorium.

For more than three hours, citizens addressed the board on concerns related to carbon dioxide emissions from the proposed wood chip burning plant, and also on noise levels, pollution, wood and water supply, invasive insect species, community health and well-being, property values, and tourism.

**General Housekeeping**

**Article 2**, involving the election of fence viewers and other odd-sounding jobs, was passed without discussion. **Articles 3 and 4**, on the acceptance of state Chapter 90 road funds and money from the Quintas Allen trust, were also passed without discussion. **Article 5**, authorizing the selectboard to enter into a recycling contract for a period of 10 years, was also passed without ado.

**Article 9** established a number of funds for use by town departments, boards, commissions and officers, defined the purposes for which they could be used, and set maximum expenditures from them. **Article 10** set the salaries and compensation for officers of the town, which were then funded in **Article 12**, the omnibus budget. **Article 11** authorized a cost of living adjustment of 2.8% for town employees and officials.

**Articles 14 and 15** were capital appropriations requested by the GMRSD for Gill's share of the purchase of a dump truck, and work on sidewalks at Turners Falls High School. **Article 16** authorized \$54,009 to upgrade electrical service at Gill elementary school.

**Article 17** authorized \$4,000 to be used for the appraisal of First-Light Hydro's property in Gill. Bill Tomb, chair of the board of assessors, explained that the state department of revenue requires Gill to hire an outside appraiser to assess this value every five years, at a cost of

approximately \$35,000.

Tomb said circumstances in Montague require Gill to expend the whole amount for the next appraisal, rather than share the cost as they've done in the past, resulting in an increase to the expense. Tomb said the property in question was the half of the dam, and the land along Riverside Drive, that were part of Gill.

**Article 18** allocated \$3,000 to a fund used by the board of assessors, and **Article 19** set \$5,000 aside for an independent audit of the town. **Articles 21 and 22** allocated money to construction and repair expenses at the Riverside building.

After the final vote, Timmie Smith of West Gill Road thanked Purington for spending "innumerable hours" providing materials to committees and the selectboard, writing descriptions and motions, and organizing information, which contributed to the brevity of the meeting at less than two and a quarter hours.

"Thanks ever so much," she said, whereupon the gathering applauded.

The meeting ended with a public service announcement from Barb Watson of River Road. She said a group had gotten together, naming itself "Gill Neighbors," to help one another as they age. She said if anyone was interested in receiving, or volunteering to provide, services like transportation, or a little help at home, or knew someone else that might be interested, to let them know.



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# OUT OF THE PARK: JUNE 2019

By JON DOBOSZ



**UNITY PARK** – Hello and happy summer, everyone! We have a lot to remind you about, so let's get right to it.

First, we still have some spots left in our 9- to 12-year-old group in our **Summer Camp**. This summer's camp will be held from Monday, June 24 to Friday, August 16. We offer theme weeks, field trips, special events, and weekly trips to Laurel Lake. Don't let your kids just hang around the television or smartphone all summer – get them registered in this great outdoor camp!

We will also be holding our ever-popular **Night Skates** this summer. The park will be illuminated by light towers on Friday, June 21 (National Go Skateboarding Day), Saturday, July 27, and Saturday, September 14. These events are held from 6 to 10 p.m., and we plan on providing some musical entertainment to set the proper mood.

We would like to thank members of the Friends of Unity Skate Park, RiverCulture, and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for making these Night Skates possible. Refreshments will be provided while supplies last.

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 on 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 may vary, but will generally be around dusk; check our Facebook page for updates. Be sure to get to the park early enough to grab a great

spot, and to enjoy some live music before the movie!

On Saturday, June 29 we'll also be holding a very special unveiling of our final mural on the Unity Park Fieldhouse. The **Building Bridges Mural Opening Celebration** will be held from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and will include painting, storytelling, discussion, drumming, and dancing. The mural, which beautifully adorns the western wall of the building, was the brainchild of Montague resident Elyssa Serrilli. We thank her for coordinating with local, indigenous artists to bring this wonderful work of art to the community.

In August, MPRD will be partnering with Next Up Basketball to bring the **2nd 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 and single-elimination format. Proof of age required at registration. Each team must have a team captain/coach. For more information, please contact: [unitystreethoops3@yahoo.com](mailto:unitystreethoops3@yahoo.com).

As you can see, we've got a lot going on this summer, and we couldn't be more grateful for those who helped us make it possible. For more information on all of these programs and events, check out our Summer Programs Brochure on [montague.net](http://montague.net), get regular updates on our Facebook page, or call us at (413) 863-3216.

Talk to you next month, and enjoy the start of summer!

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

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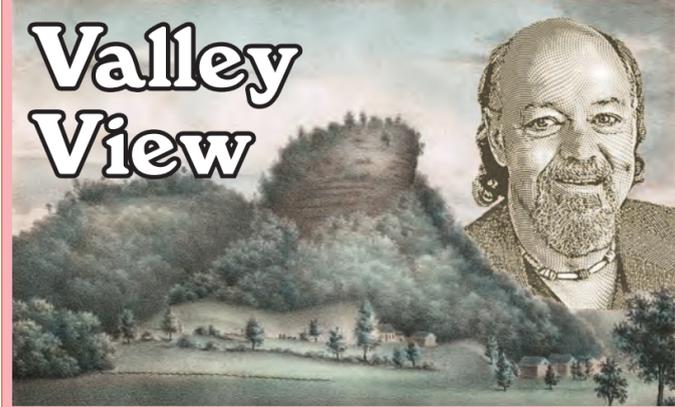
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FEATURES@MONTAGUEREPORER.ORG OF THE MONTAGUE REPORTER JUNE 20, 2019



By GARY SANDERSON

**GREENFIELD** – Two red Japanese maples and fragrant pink weigelas lit up the front yard as I sat at a tidy desk to celebrate a milestone and salute an accomplishment.

It seems like yesterday, not a year ago, that I submitted my two-week notice informing the *Greenfield Recorder* that, a whisker shy of 40 years of employment there and two days short of age 65, I was heading off into the morning sun of retirement. Time to go, the tedious wait over, I was ready to open my life's final chapter.

Confident of the path forward, I was eager to take a new trail without the specter of daily deadlines looming large. Looking back, I was overconfident. In fact, unprepared for the many unexpected twists and turns confronting new retirees.

When my wife retired four months later, we both discovered that it takes months to unwind and adjust our biological clock to *not* working. Also there was the transition to a pension, Social Security, and Medicare, getting all your ducks in a row, so to speak. It requires many phone calls and long waits on musical hold, various and sundry forms to fill out, and lots of questions with potentially bad results if the wrong answer is selected. It can be vexing. We got through it.

I expect our second year to bring new challenges requiring little tweaks aimed at making retirement life easier and more profitable. I remain confident. Like my wife says: It's a process. A new routine. The so-called golden years. I suppose you can make them exciting or dreadful. Your choice. Depends who you are and how well you've prepared. We put in our time, went to the post for decades, made a few mistakes, will be OK.

Last week, I finally forced myself to clean and reorganize my study for the path forward. It had become the behemoth bull elephant in our home – a daunting task and source of anxiety. Secretarial skills are not my bailiwick. Procrastination only grew as the lines of books in the upstairs ballroom grew longer and the stacks on the study floor, mantle and tabletops grew taller, confining me to a couple of perilous, narrow

lanes between books and furniture. One path led from door to door, the other curled toward the bookcase unit covering the north wall. I couldn't even open the six cupboard doors along the base, which were blocked. Over a period of three to five years, I had allowed the situation to get away from me. Chasing down information I knew I had stored somewhere within reach had become an adventure.

I remember the morning *Recorder* photographer Micky Bedell stopped by to accompany me on my daily ramble around Sunken Meadow, a magical riverside spot where I walk my dogs. After a brisk walk and light conversation, I was showing her around the house and confessed I was hesitant to take her through the study. It was a mess. She told me not to worry: I ought to see her dad's. That didn't comfort me. On the way through, she looked around and remarked that it wasn't bad as she snapped off a couple of incriminating shots from different angles. Later that day, sure enough, a couple of digital photos found their way to my inbox. Thanks a lot, Micky. Just what I needed. Damning evidence.

Little did she know that the visible clutter was only part of a larger problem. She had no clue, and I had no intention of showing her the many archaeological reports, genealogical printouts, and historical or literary papers crammed into old chests of drawers upstairs and down. Yes, she could see the magazines, books and papers strewn haphazardly on my desk, a chest of drawers and a couple of stands in the two rooms where I most commonly read. But everything else was out of sight. Not out of mind. At least not out of mine. Unveiling the tangled contents of those drawers was out of the question. Embarrassing. To be avoided at all costs.

I can now report that the problem was finally resolved recently. It was long overdue. I began by gathering all my books in one room, stacking them on the floor in separate categories, then organizing them in bookcases covering two walls, one in the study, another in the adjoining taproom. My wife was kind enough to help me file most of my papers and correspondence in one two-drawer metal filing cabinet next to my desk. Having lugged that beast up see **VALLEY VIEW** page B4

Above: Ed Gregory sent us this photo last week to update us on the renovation of Rutter's Park in Lake Pleasant, through the Montague parks and rec department. The image was taken looking east from Montague Avenue. (Thanks Ed!)

## GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN

By ANNABELLE LEVINE

**TURNERS FALLS** – I love pickles. I wasn't brought up making pickles, but I was certainly brought up eating them. I've eaten many a half-sour in my time, but for many years I never made my own because I thought making pickles was complicated. I had confused salt pickling with canning, and I've since found that I'm not the only one. I thought the process involved boiling and vinegar and spice mixes, and using precise, high-energy, canning techniques.

Five years ago, I found myself at a free pickling workshop for employees at my husband's workplace. The only ingredients we were using were vegetables, salt, and a little elbow grease. A coworker brought out a bin of giant daikon radishes and subsequently taught us to cut them up, put them in a plastic bag, add salt, tie 'em up, and squeezeeeeze. The more you squeezed them, the more liquid came out of the vegetables, until they were sitting in a brine of their own making. It was so easy, and I had no idea.

In the five years since taking that workshop I have adjusted my recipe a little – I use glass jars instead of plastic bags – but the principle remains the same. Add salt and squeeze, wait a few days, and you've got pickles better than any you can buy in a store.

Last summer the Great Falls Apple Corps held two free Pickling in the Park events, and with help from a grant from the Montague Cultural

Council, we are hosting a series of three free pickling workshops this year, in July, August, and September. By having a series of events over the growing season, we'll get to explore and experiment with the variety of produce that New England has to offer.

The grant will help us purchase supplies, and through donations from local farms we will have plenty of produce on hand to choose from. While many people are familiar with cucumber pickles and sauerkraut, any vegetable can be pickled, from radishes and onions to butternut squash. Each event will include an introduction with instructions and then we'll all make pickles together, with experienced picklers walking around offering advice and answering questions.

Pickling as a staple food preparation is found in traditional cuisines across the globe. The word "salad," for example, has origins in a Latin term for salted vegetables, a.k.a. pickles, *herba salata*. Lacto-fermentation, the process of pickling with salt, is an art that is old and universal, and we hope this workshop will help reforge some of those ancestral connections that have been lost to many of us.

### Growing a Neighborhood

I recently read an editorial from Boston councilwoman Michelle Wu in the *Boston Globe* entitled "Want to fix our broken democracy? Have a block party." She cites statistics that show how as a society we are increasingly lonely, and writes



Peppergrass, part of the mustard family and a wild edible.

about how we know our neighbors less and less. However, feeling comfortable in our communities by knowing our neighbors leads to more resilient communities with much higher quality of life.

Wu cites statistics, but also speaks from experience, after her street came together to organize a block party of their own. She emphasizes the importance of having a space to gather and have fun with neighbors outside of politics or policy.

I didn't know a soul here when I moved to town. I only started getting to know people through attending free events downtown, and going to public meetings about issues see **APPLE CORPS** page B5

## ArtBeat by Trish Crapo

### Art in the Fourth Dimension at the Mead Museum



"Dimensionism: Modern Art in the Age of Einstein" features work by artists, such as sculptor Frederick Kann, who were exploring the impact of the scientific and mathematical advances on the world around them.

By TRISH CRAPO

**AMHERST** – Standing in the main gallery of the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, I am suddenly overwhelmed by the space-time continuum. "Dimensionism: Modern Art in the Age of Einstein," an exhibit up now through July 28, provides a wide-ranging look at art that explored the scientific and mathematical advances occurring in the mid-1930s, including microscopic and telescopic photography and scientific theories that were redefining humans' perception of the world around them.

It includes works by well-known see **ARTBEAT** page B2

# Pet of the Week



## “RAJA AND JACQUE”

Cupid has been busy even though Valentine's Day has long past. Jacque and Raja met and fell in love at Dakin and now are looking for a home together.

Like most couples, these two squabble on occasion over whose turn it is in the wheel or who ate the last sunflower seed, but overall they enjoy playing mouse-house-together. It's the mouse version of a romantic comedy! Both are getting

used to being handled and will become more comfortable with practice and patience.

If you're looking for cute, entertaining and easy-to-care-for pets, Jacque and Raja could be a great fit for your home – talk to an adoption counselor for more information or to inquire about adoption. Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society in Leverett at (413) 548-9898 or [info@dpvhs.org](mailto:info@dpvhs.org).

## Senior Center Activities JUNE 24 THROUGH 28

### 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 6/24**

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

**Tuesday 6/25**

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Scam Jeopardy

3:30 p.m. Meditation (pre-reg.)

**Wednesday 6/26**

9 to a.m. Veterans' Outreach

12:30 p.m. Bingo

**Thursday 6/27**

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Mat Yoga

**Friday 6/28**

1 p.m. Writing Group

### LEVERETT

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

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

Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

### ERVING

Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and 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 6/24**

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 6/25**

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

10 a.m. Stretch & Balance

12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich

1 p.m. Blanket Making

**Wednesday 6/26**

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

12 p.m. TRIAD Picnic

**Thursday 6/27**

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

12:30 p.m. BINGO

**Friday 6/28**

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

### 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.

### ARTBEAT from page B1

artists including Wassily Kandinsky, Marcel Duchamp, Sonia Delaunay, Helen Lundberg, and Joan Miró, along with accompanying signage that elucidates a staggering array of mathematical and scientific concepts to try and wrap your mind around.

Much of the work is eye-catching, such as Robert Delaunay's "Rhythme sans fin (Rhythm without end)," a long canvas of simple, repeating shapes painted in bright gouache, or Frederick Kann's painted wood sculpture, "Construction." Barbara Hepworth's "Project for Wood and Strings, Trezion II," done in oil, gesso, and pencil on board, is technically two-dimensional but invokes a gorgeous, deep, three-dimensional space.

The "Dimensionist Manifesto," spearheaded by Hungarian poet Charles Sirató and published in Paris in 1936, states, "Animated by a new conception of the world, the arts, in collective fermentation (their interpenetration) have been set in motion, and each has absorbed a new dimension."

In painting, this meant "quitting the plane and entering space." For example, works that included elements collaged onto a canvas' flat surface. Or works that departed from or fractured traditional forms of perspective, such as Picasso's Cubist works. In sculpture, this meant "stepping out of closed, immobile, dead forms" and opening up to "inner space, then to movement."

The show did me the great favor of presenting works by artists I had grown up loving, under the influence of my modern-art-loving mother, in a broader social and philosophical context that deepened my understanding. Calder, whose drifting mobiles I have long loved, was expanding sculpture's three-dimensionality by introducing time as a fourth dimension in the work – presumably time being made manifest as the mobiles reacted to air currents or other changes in their environment, shifting and creating new arrangements. I had never thought of it that way before, but I loved the way it clicked for me.

As I sat on a bench in the main gallery, a father behind me stood before Harold Edgerton's photograph, "Tennis – Forehand Drive, Jenny Tuckey," and explained to his young daughter that each of the multiple rackets seen swooping through space represented one moment in the entire movement of the swing, and that the photograph was, "All of those moments in one." That seemed right, too.

Another good example of what the Dimensionists were up to was expressed in the signage for French artist Marcel Duchamp's "Rotoreliefs," two flat discs printed on each side in offset color lithography, spinning around on small record players.

"When set in motion," the sign read, "the disc appears to transport the two-dimensional object into a wobbly three-dimensional cylinder that moves in four-dimensional space-time."

That wobbly cylinder seemed a little bit like my understanding of space-time.

The exhibit spans three galleries and includes work in many genres: drawings, paintings, photographs, and sculpture, including mobiles and motorized sculpture. There's also a small viewing theater where you can sit in one of four sumptuous leather armchairs and watch three



Russian artist Oleg Kudryashov's collage, "Untitled," uses cardboard and drypoint prints to create a three-dimensional work that seems to leap out of a flat print.

short films by French filmmaker Jean Painlevé.

In one beautiful film, microscopic footage of *daphnia*, tiny planktonic crustaceans more commonly called water fleas, scurry amid the forms of the more graceful, pulsating hydra, a genus of small fresh-water organisms. There's a floating sensation to watching the film, as if you might be traveling through outer space.

Another film, which attempts to illustrate what it might be like if a creature visited us from the fourth dimension, offers this explanation of time: "The universe is like a flipbook – the past dropping away through the present."

### Fleeting Nature

After the heady realm of the Dimensionism exhibit, it was soothing to see "Fleeting Nature," an exhibit that included works by many artists that might be familiar to art lovers: Claude Monet, Andrew Wyeth, Alfred Sisley, James McNeill Whistler, Maurice Prendergast, Ansel Adams, and contemporary photographer Barbara Boswell.

But the first sign you encounter encourages you to approach the works in a variety of ways that might not be familiar. First, you are asked to examine yourself, and to consider the perspectives you bring to the works: "Do you perceive them as nostalgic, innovative, hopeful, colonialist, or something else entirely?" A stack of small cards pose additional questions you can consider, among them: "Do we look at landscapes because they reflect reality or do they produce a new reality for us? What is the sound of this place? What does the air here feel like on your skin?" And my favorite: "Would you rather walk this place barefoot or with shoes on?"

Small, simple glass salt shakers containing aromatics such as laundry sheets, chili peppers, sassafras bark, and rice steeped in oils of lavender, vetiver, and jasmine were arrayed on a shelf, presumably for you to carry with you to enhance – or perhaps confound, depending on how well the scent matched up with the visuals – your experience of a landscape.

Perhaps because I had just spent a couple of hours in the Dimensionism exhibit, I found the curatorial drive of this exhibit to contain an echo of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, which can be taken, in part, to mean that the act of observing a phenomenon changes that phenomenon.

### Constructing Collage

Also up through July 14 is a third, very small, exhibit, called "Constructing Collage," which offers 14 works, including a film montage, by artists such as Judy Chicago, Joseph Cornell and Robert Rauschenberg. Chicago's piece is a preparatory study for Emily Dickinson's place setting in "The Dinner Party," her monumental installation celebrating the accomplishments of 39 women throughout history.

A construction by Russian artist Oleg Kudryashov used one of my own beloved materials, cardboard, along with drypoint prints, to create a work in which what looks like a city on another planet leaps from a two-dimensional print.

Given that the exhibit begins with this quote by Gregory Ulmer, "By most accounts, collage is the single most revolutionary formal innovation in artistic representation in our century," I wouldn't have minded seeing a lot more work.

### Worth the Drive

All in all, the Mead, which is always free, is well worth the drive from our area. Not knowing how parking worked on the Amherst College campus, I parked downtown and walked up, about a ten-minute walk. This turned out to have been wise, as there was repaving work going on in the college's main quadrangle. Check the website or call the museum if you need to park closer.

Mead Art Museum, 41 Quadrangle Drive, Amherst. Information at [amherst.edu/museums/mead](http://amherst.edu/museums/mead) or (413) 542-2335. Summer hours: Tuesdays through Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Fridays, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Always free.



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# MONTV / MUSIK / MOUNTAIN

## Episode Eight: Chris Corsano

By J. BURKETT

**GREENFIELD**—Chris Corsano is a world-renowned drummer who went to college in western Mass and spent a good amount of time here, involved in the diverse music scene.

He has toured the country with the biggest names in rock/underground/jazz, and is playing this Thursday, June 20 and Friday, June 21 in an exciting trio with Mette Rasmussen and Paul Flaherty at Ten Forward (a.k.a. the Root Cellar) in Greenfield. There will be different guests every night, and Paul Flaherty is amazing, too – don't miss this!

**MMM:** So...! When did you start playing drums? Was there a different instrument first?

**CC:** I started drumming in 1989. I had some piano lessons before that as a little kid, but it didn't take. I took a few drum lessons when I started – those didn't work either, but unlike piano, I stuck with drums and learned by listening and watching other people and then figuring things out for myself.

**MMM:** How do you make plans for tours and shows? You must have a lot of options... How do you sort it out? (Do you think you would ever toss a coin?)

**CC:** I can't say I've ever tossed a coin. Usually, I go with what comes down the pike first. Or, if two choices present themselves simultaneously, then whichever looks more fun and/or less punishing, travel-wise.

**MMM:** I remember you were supposed to play a show with Jandek in New Orleans the day Katrina hit, right? That's crazy... Is the venue still there? When was the last time you saw "Mr. Mystery"?

**CC:** The show was going to be at Tulane University, I think, so it's still standing. I eventually got to go to New Orleans about 9 years after that, but not with Jandek.

I think the last time I saw the representative from Corwood Industries was when I played with him in 2008 in London with Matt Heyner. It was very good to see him, and I hope our paths cross again sometime soon.

**MMM:** What do you like most

about West Mass? Any favorite memories/venues/people?

**CC:** The people. The per-capita output of weirdo culture is mighty high. I saw so many amazing shows while I was living there in a lot of different great venues, it's kind of impossible to pick a favorite...

The Unitarian Church, Flywheel, New Grass, Hampshire College, Mystery Train, Fire in the Valley and Magic Triangle shows at U-Mass, the Root Cellar... The list goes on and on.

**MMM:** Your duo with Flaherty is one of your more constant collabs. Do you have any favorite stories about those shows or recordings? Does he still write you letters, and how did you meet?

**CC:** I saw Paul play a show at the Unitarian Church in 1996. I gave him a record I did a little while after that, and we did our first show together in 1999. Over the past 20 years there have been a lot of tours and recordings, and a lot of stories to go along with them.

One of the stranger ones was when we were playing in Bristol, England about 15 years ago. At some point, the music got quieter and quieter and we eventually stopped playing altogether and just listened to the sound of the rain falling on the roof. The audience and us just remained still for a few minutes... no music, no applause, nobody moved. It wasn't something planned, it just happened.

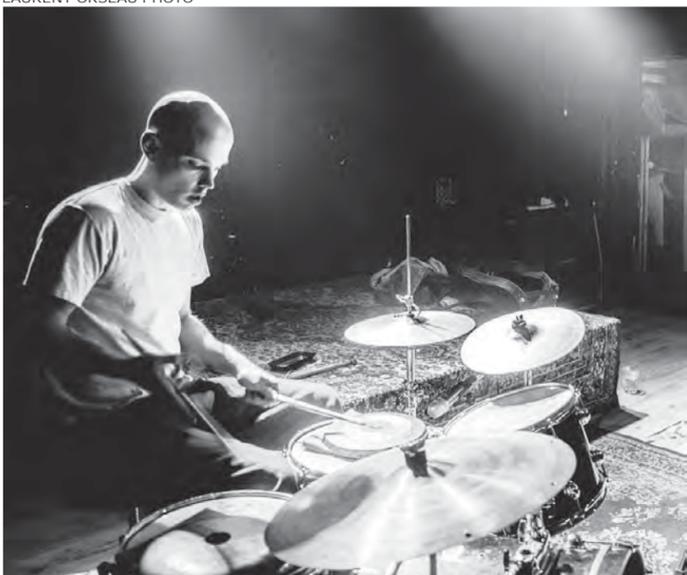
A similar thing occurred in Philadelphia, also totally unplanned. No rain that time, just us and the audience sitting/standing in quiet for a few minutes after we'd been going full bore for a while.

**MMM:** If you could record with a wild animal or bird... what animal or bird would you choose?

**CC:** I would say elephants, but Paul told me a story of a time he found his way into a circus tent after dark and tried playing with an elephant. The pachyderm wasn't having it, though.

Some seals have pretty amazing songs – not the barking, but more the synthesizer-esque songs they do. So maybe a Weddell seal-drums duo?

**MMM:** Do you have favorite



Chris Corsano is co-hosting a residency at Ten Forward in Greenfield this Thursday and Friday.

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Uncatchable Pinscher; Stolen Angel Statue; Several Warning Signs Of Deepening Housing Crisis

**Sunday, 6/9**

8:53 a.m. Checking on possible squatter in storage unit on Randall Road; alerted to same by property owner. Female advised she was resting there but was not living there; she is between housing right now. Female was advised that she cannot live in a storage unit.

9:22 a.m. 911 hangup call; on callback, spoke with female who advised child was playing with phone; no emergency. Could hear child in background; however, female seemed eager to get off the phone. Officers spoke with parties at residence. There had been a verbal altercation between the caller, her husband, and her grandmother. Situation mediated.

10:18 a.m. Report from Eleventh Street of stolen Ryobi weedwacker. Report taken.

1:19 p.m. Caller advises that a short time ago she saw a bobcat in a wooded area off the bike path near Greenfield Road and Masonic Avenue. Referred to an officer.

2:32 p.m. Caller from Farn Care Center reporting assault and battery between two residents.

6:56 p.m. TFFD reporting that a sewer cap on Montague City Road has popped off and the manhole is exposed. Cap replaced, but very loose. Water Department to be advised.

**Monday, 6/10**

12:13 a.m. 911 caller reporting smoke detectors sounding on Central Street; smell of smoke in building. Advised to evacuate if safe. TFFD on scene; command ad-

vises burnt food on the third floor. Male resident fell asleep while cooking. Clear.

2:14 a.m. Checking on vehicle in Walgreens parking lot. Owner of vehicle was arrested in Food City by MPD at end of May.

7:28 a.m. 911 caller from Montague City Road reporting a loud argument happening outside her home involving her neighbors. Male and female having a dispute over a cat; nothing physical reported. Peace restored.

9:12 a.m. Caller states that she saw the same bobcat that she saw yesterday near the bike path again today. Animal control officer advised and will check area.

10:22 a.m. Caller from Park Villa Drive would like it on record that there has been a problem with her apartment intercom for several years.

10:36 a.m. DPW worker advising that some kind of alarm has been sounding from a home on Davis Street since last week. Sound is coming from pool filter/pump. No cause for concern.

10:44 a.m. Building owner advising that someone has been squatting inside a vacant apartment on the first floor of his property on Park Street. They are entering at night, and leaving in the morning. He will be changing the locks. No police response requested yet.

2:35 p.m. Report that a tractor-trailer unit has taken down some wires at Willmark Avenue and Montague Street. PD and FD responding. Wires were not electrical; they have been picked up.

4:25 p.m. Officer checking

Peskeomskut Park area; no one is drinking.

5:12 p.m. Caller reporting two-car collision on Millers Falls Road. One vehicle is on the lawn. TFFD responding. Vehicles removed; both parties declined medical attention.

8:17 p.m. Caller from Avenue A reporting there is a female sitting under their window crying. Caller states it is hard to understand the female because they are crying very hard. Officer advises female is having a conversation with their girlfriend; nothing physical; all verbal. Officer spoke with female; she is crying over a cancellation ticket.

9:37 p.m. Caller from East Main Street reporting that someone banged on her son's window and took off. Ongoing issue. Requesting to have put on record only.

10:51 p.m. Caller reporting that someone is walking up the alley between Third and Fourth streets banging on drums. Officer advises male gone on arrival.

**Tuesday, 6/11**

12:55 a.m. Officers out at Peske Park for a male sleeping on the property. [Redacted.]

4:58 a.m. Caller from F.L. Roberts reporting that she knows of "black market fuel" and "black market meat" being delivered to in-town and out-of-town businesses this morning. Officers spoke with female. She appears to be competent. Advised of options.

7:07 p.m. Off-duty officer flagged down at St. Anne's Cemetery by two pedestrians stating that someone is in a little blue car hunched over the wheel. Female party was taking a nap, and is leaving the cemetery now.

**Wednesday, 6/12**

7:10 a.m. Caller requesting removal of female who is renting a storage unit but has been sleeping in it overnight. Providing courtesy transport to Greenfield. Female advised that if she is on the property during the hours that it is closed, she will be arrested for trespassing.

4:12 p.m. Caller reporting that there is a dog in a blue Outback parked at the driveway of the library. Vehicle has been running for over 20 minutes, and the windows are cracked. Officer advised that the owner has been notified and will be moving the vehicle into the shade; will have the A/C running.

4:49 p.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that a female is leaving trash and carriages in front of their house. Of-

ficer requesting call be placed to business to see if they can pick up carriages. Spoke with business; person who usually does this is off, and will not be in tomorrow. Officer advises peace restored; all parties spoken to.

10:32 p.m. Caller from Randall Wood Drive advises that their miniature pinscher got loose earlier this evening. Caller reports that dog is uncatchable; MPD may receive some complaints that dog is barking and running around the neighborhood. They do not want an officer to respond because they know that they will not be able to catch the dog; this has happened before, and she will come back eventually. Officer advised.

**Thursday, 6/13**

12:43 p.m. Party into station to speak with an officer regarding scam calls she has been receiving that are sexual in nature. Advised of options.

1:43 p.m. Report of stolen angel statue from a gravesite at one of the cemeteries on Turners Falls Road within the last two days. Advised of options.

2:53 p.m. Party requesting to speak with officer re: a potential issue involving a household's swimming pool. Party advises female resident was concerned that male party may "flip out" when he finds out they are not allowed to use their pool now. Officer spoke with owner of pool; they will have a latch installed tomorrow.

4:54 p.m. Party into station to drop off soliciting paperwork.

6:33 p.m. Caller reports that two aggressive dogs live across the street and tonight one of them went after a cat. Fence is falling where dogs are kept; three small children live next door. Caller fears for self and children if dogs should get loose. Referred to an officer.

**Friday, 6/14**

9:54 a.m. Report of crosswalk sign knocked over on Avenue A. Officer picked up broken sign and will bring it to DPW.

10:05 a.m. Caller requesting assistance with a sliding glass door that has come off the track. Another party is holding the door up, but cannot safely put it down, and cannot hold it much longer. TFFD responding.

4:23 p.m. Caller concerned about a suspicious red tent that has been set up in the woods next to her property. Tent unoccupied and mostly empty. Property belongs to FirstLight Power. PD will advise them.

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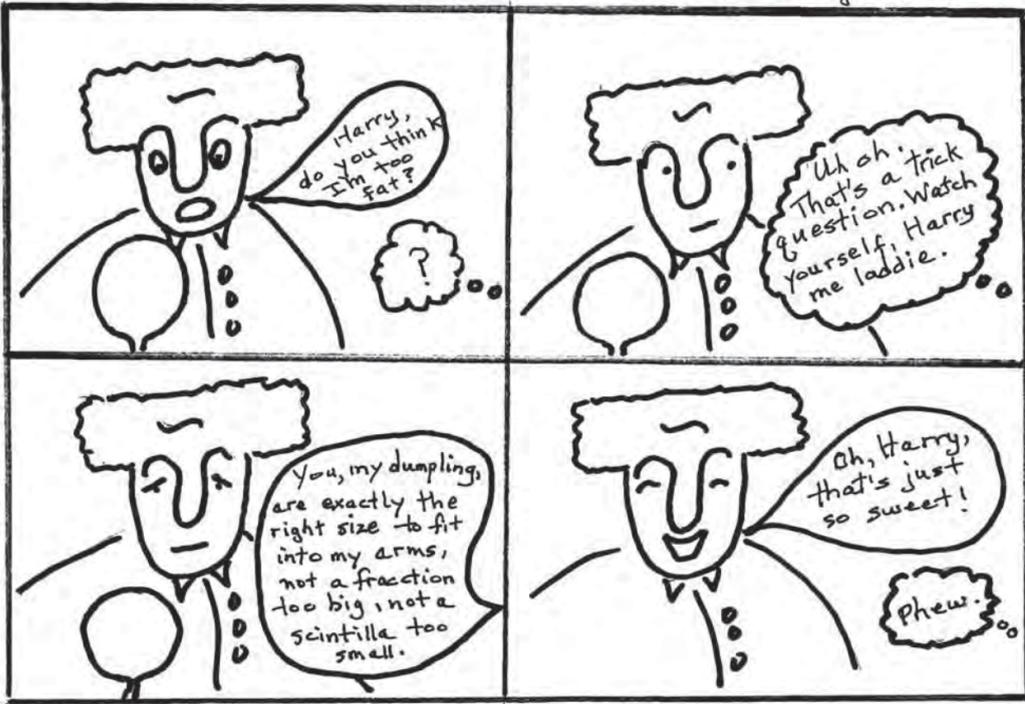
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SCENE REPORT

Mutton & Mead Festival 2019

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**TURNERS FALLS** – I have heard or seen things about the Mutton & Mead Festival for a long time. They even had a little booth at the Pumpkinfest one year in Turners Falls. But I had never been to it myself. According to the website, they were apparently going to have actual real-life jousting on horses, a comedy show of some kind called Harmless Danger, and a Birds of Prey show, which I am familiar with, having seen it a couple of times.

This year I got offered a chance to go review this medieval fair for the *Montague Reporter*. I decided to go the very first day it happened, which was June 15. As I approached the gate, I noted signs on trees with certain years on them. They made it seem like we were going back in time toward the medieval period as I walked toward the gate.

The first couple of performers I spotted were a guy playing with a wooden puppet, as part of his act, and a group acting like a comedy troupe. You are probably supposed to think you would have seen them

in a royal court. A third I saw was Sir-ly Guy Fights. I believe they were made to look like a group of medieval actors, but I hardly found them impressive or interesting.

What I did find to be impressive was the sight of the Wheel of Death. It was some sort of medieval attraction that was meant to be seen at fairs, I believe. A man was in the moving wheel, and at one point he juggled flaming axes.

Next to that were people dressed as knights explaining medieval weapons to a crowd. That was a little interesting. But it was more interesting, and rather cool, to see an actual individual working as a blacksmith at a site. There were two different forges there, one from the Renaissance period, and the other from the Dark Ages. The whole thing was called the Blacksmith Guild.

It was also very enjoyable to see the Birds of Prey show. This time, the guy handling the birds was dressed in medieval garb. He lectured about the four birds, a rabbit and a snake, and the cultural history connected to them. The birds were a falcon, a red-tailed hawk,

a screech owl, and a barred owl. I got a semi-close up look of the screech owl when it was on this man's arm and he was showing the creature around to people.

I learned that the rabbit, in medieval times, represented the power of life and death.

I found a vendor there who was selling non-metal medieval swords, as well as samurai ones – a very appropriate vendor to have at the festival. I found two artists selling prints of their works. One was named Cara Finch. Their art was a good fit to have there, too.

The fourth performer I saw was someone I really liked. The Harmless Danger juggling show was a comedic medieval juggler who juggled swords over a volunteer's head and lit torches. For his finale, he juggled lit axes while balancing on something. It was a cool act!

I was a little surprised to see an individual who ran a store called Moldavite Dreams, that I had visited a lot, with a booth there selling rocks and gems. A lot of people, like the Birds of Prey individual, were wearing medieval costumes.

I saw one guy in a full suit of ar-

VALLEY VIEW from B1

into the attic many years ago when younger, my neighbor helped me retrieve it down two steep flights of stairs. Once in the study, a ruler told me it was wide enough for legal-sized files, a plus.

I started by carrying three large, clear-plastic binfuls of ephemera, most of it archaeology- or anthropology-related, into the study and placing them on the floor in front of the couch. I took a seat and sorted through the collection paper by paper, report by report, before handing them to my wife for filing.

"You have to love a man to help him with a job like this," said my wife as, toward the completion of a monotonous, five-day, 32-hour process, she filed yet another paper into files such as South Deerfield or Greenfield, Sugarloaf, Whately or Colrain. "This is exhausting."

She wasn't lying. It was indeed a tedious process, but rewarding. Eventually, most of my papers were neatly filed in two clean, shiny, filing-cabinet drawers. An assembled stack of miscellaneous papers that didn't belong, many of them sentimental, went behind the bookcase base's six raised-panel cupboard drawers along the floor. Now, if I'm chasing information, I know it's right there at my fingertips. Over time, I'll fine-tune everything for even greater convenience and efficiency.

What a relief. I can't overstate how uplifting, even euphoric, it felt to at long last have that study reorganized in an orderly manner. My own personal most important room in the house had gone from chaos and clutter to a stimulating, functional, sunny, workspace. Paintings and sketches hanging above the mantle and across the opposite wall, banjo clock ticking, a handsome 9-point buck above the desk, it was a perfect, personalized sanctuary for reading, writing and researching. A room to be proud of, one I could enjoy entering with a cup of coffee, day or night, fair or foul, warm or cool – everything I need right there within reach.

So inspiring was it that on a Saturday-morning whim – after several subtle hints from my wife – I dug

out an old can of Brasso and decided to polish the neglected, formal, E. Smylie/New York, Federal andirons in the room's Rumford fireplace. An 1825 house-warming gift from Hull Nims to son Thomas and wife Prudence Wells Nims, they were a brass statement of Connecticut Valley prominence and refinement. I bought them from the late Lucius "Lute" Nims, who sold me my home in 1997.

With a Greenfield Meadows provenance dating back to the construction of the well-known, historic Nims farmhouse at the fork of Colrain and Plain roads, Lute thought they should stay in the neighborhood. They were his great-grandfather's. So, rather than move them to Florida or send them to his son in Michigan, he sold them to me. It didn't hurt that we were both descendants of Deerfield pioneer Godfrey Nims and his son John.

Well, those andirons have never looked better. Having spent most of a recent Saturday cleaning and polishing the many disassembled parts of one, then the other, next morning I took one to neighbor and friend Richard Shortell, an expert on early brass.

Though shiny, the brass wore light-gray stains that were stubborn and perplexing indeed. My friend, familiar with the problem, had a solution. First, he dug out his polishing kit to show me how to scrub out the vexing stains with a Brasso-quality cleaner and 0000 steel wool. Then he polished them with a finishing cream to produce a deeper luster. He sent me home with a tub of the finishing polish and three steel-wool pads. The rest is Upper Meadows history.

Now those andirons glitter in the black of night, reflecting even the dimmest artificial or natural light to 19th-century artisan Edward Smylie's desires. Even the distant sliver of a crescent moon produces a rich, cascading glow in the dark. Call it the finishing touch to a long-awaited room makeover. Finally, a retirement refuge capable of spinning the wheels to stimulate creative flow.

Step one.



mor. It would be fair to believe he was part of the jousting that was going on, but when I actually saw the jousting, these individuals weren't trying to make it seem like that. These individuals were dressed as knights, using real horses to joust, and fighting each other with swords. They did a good job. A huge crowd was around to see them do it.

There were a couple of unique things being sold at the festival. One was medieval drinking cups you would still see today, along with water buffalo horns which were also for drinking. I believe back then people would really drink out of those horns. The second unique item was these medieval-looking

window frames of some kind. I believe they were art.

People really got into the spirit when it came to being a part of Mutton & Mead. One other person was like the blacksmith. She sat cooking a bird over a fire like people from that time period would do.

I also like seeing medieval helmets that I could actually wear. More than one guy was selling them, and had a breastplate or two to go with them. An individual in a troll costume took pictures with people, giving them a nice souvenir to take home.

I happily enjoyed Mutton & Mead. It was a unique and fun experience to go to over the weekend.

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**APPLE CORPS** from page B1

I cared about, and meeting other people wanting to collaborate. GFAC is almost two years in existence, and I am so grateful for the friends and neighbors I've met with my hands in the dirt, or offering apples from the Shea tree. I've found that I agree with Wu, in that I feel more comfortable and less lonely in this community with every neighbor I meet.

Turners Falls has a multitude of free and accessible spaces downtown at our disposal where we can meet, and while GFAC events mostly focus the party around food and plants, the beauty of a local community is that we have a diverse set of interests. If we could have in common the goal of creating spaces to meet our neighbors, we could have all sorts of fun together.

Where can you host an event in Turners Falls?

Unity Park has a reservable shade tent and tables, and plenty of spots to hang out.

Across from Unity Park, the waterfront offers grills, tables, plenty of space at the end of the path, and a stellar view.

Peskeomskut Park is a beautiful spot to meet for a picnic, book club, or impromptu performance in the shell, and it also hosts the Great Falls Farmers Market, which lets community groups have tables for free. The market is interested in performers and event collaborations, and is held every Wednesday through October from 2 to 6 p.m.

The second floor of the Carnegie Library can be reserved for meetings – although there is no elevator – and outside are picnic tables and a beautiful garden and lawn.

The bike path can be used for fitness activities and walks, and there are picnic tables to meet at under the pine trees next to the path past Eleventh Street.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it's a start. When you have a plan, there are a multitude of bulletin boards around town to put up a flyer on. And never underestimate the power of sidewalk chalk.

In the meantime, come to one of our pickle parties this summer, and maybe you'll meet a neighbor who wants to plan the next event with you!

**Wild Edible Spotlight:**

**Peppergrass, *Lepidium Virginicum***

This month's wild edible spotlight is one of my original wild edible discoveries, the spicy and prolific peppergrass, also known as "poor man's pepper." I originally met this

plant as a weed in my garden, and since then have seen it growing in disturbed soils around the Valley.

Being in the mustard family, you can eat the leaves, flowers, and seeds, and the root can be used as a horseradish substitute. Right now the plant is in its flowering stage, leading to picturesque bottle brush seed head formations that will change color like foliage as the plant dries.

When peppergrass first pops up in the spring it grows in a rosette of thin, pointed leaves with sharp, ridged edges. The tiny flower is white, and like all mustards, has four petals arranged opposite each other, like a cross. Once the flower is gone it is replaced by a seed pod that looks like a tiny silver dollar.

You can find current examples growing out of the dirt pile in front of the Unity Park Community Garden shed (pictured), and sticking up through the bricks on the sidewalk near A and Third.

Take a bite of the leaf or the tip of the flower head and make sure to put it on the tip of your tongue to get the hint of spicy flavor, similar to arugula. Once the seed pods are dry you can harvest the seeds to use the same way you would use mustard seed.

As we always repeat: if you are not sure of what you're eating, don't eat it. Otherwise, *bon appetit!*

**Upcoming Events**

*Free Pickling in the Park series:*

We will have donations of vegetables and jars on hand, as well as processing supplies like knives, cutting boards, and bowls. If you can bring any of these, please do as it would allow for even more folks to participate. Picklers of all ages (with supervision) and levels are encouraged to attend, and all participants will leave with their own jar(s) of pickled vegetables.

Saturday, July 6, 11 a.m. at the Unity Park Community Garden

Saturday August 17, 11 a.m. at the Shade Tent at Unity Park

Sunday, September 22, 1 p.m. at the Shade Tent at Unity Park

See you in the Park!

*Monthly GFAC meetings* take place the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Unity Park Fieldhouse. If you are not able to make it on Monday nights and are interested in joining the group, please reach out.

You can contact the Great Falls Apple Corps on Facebook, Instagram, or via email at [greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com](mailto:greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com).



By **LESLIE BROWN**

**MONTAGUE CITY** – How we wait, with bated breath, for the first sounds and sights of spring.

By mid-March, mired in mud, we are counting the days. Earlier on, we saw promise in the bright green of bulb tops pushing up through the dirty relics of snow which still held on in the shady edges of the yard.

And then one magic morning there are yellow buds, until at last a whole section of daffodils has awakened in the front yard along the hedge. A field starts on the side hill's edge, and another line on the southern slope running towards the river. Lastly, the fragrant varieties in the woods near the bike path, a fine ode to joy in bright white and yellow.

What cheer at the end of whatever winter we have survived: long or short, frosty or mild; we're done with that and we accept the setbacks of mud, late frosts, and a final snowstorm or two.

Now the other sections of the yard join the chorus of spring: the birds, the flowing sap, the racing river, and the increasing warmth every day.

We can see the days extending as the rest of the blossoming begins: the peony shoots, then the bright pinks and reds of their blossom; the tight-budded promise of the lilacs. Every day the spring changes her dress, brightening her colors with apple and apricot blossoms, the busyness of bees and the mating of songbirds. Earlier each morning the intensity of the singing increases.

The forsythia opens, the buds start on the early roses even as the

**THE GARDENER'S COMPANION**

**Wanton Spring**

first blooming goes by.

Up on the hill, the laurel have prospered as Ken cleared them of weedy shrubs and unwanted tree sprouts last fall. They stretch skyward, the light pinks, the darker rose ones, and the charming one with the fringe of maroon on the white.

The beach roses – white, pink – open; the petals from the fruit trees are spring snow on the grass. The daffodils are finished, but the early Japanese irises are spritely in their beds: first the purple ones, then the white. Now the cultivated rose bushes are opening their skirts: white, peach and pink, ready for the Prom. We have to keep our eyes open for the daily changes in the spring bouquet. There's a new bloom for each that has retired for another spring to come.

The fanfare is staggering now: the colors darker, stronger; some to last the season until the chills of summer's end.

Spring has been a spendthrift, saving little and gradually ceding her gifts to the more staid summer blooms whose colors will be strident, if not self-indulgent. We come from a Puritan stock, after all. The prim zinnias and marigolds will brighten the vegetable garden without the charms of spring.

With this week will come the summer solstice, the longest day of the year. This is also the week of the full moon for this month, the Strawberry moon, as it is aptly named. The fireflies dot the early dark of evening, and the mosquitoes have found us. The hum of tree frogs and locusts has replaced the chirping of the spring peepers. The bats dance back and forth over the garden.

The spring panoply is winding down as if we can't sustain the pitch of this excitement. This spring has been wanton but will soon hang up its dresses as we will move to lighter,

more practical wear: shorts, t-shirts, and crops as the heat builds to summer.

No more the balmy days lulling the gardener from her work as she indulges in taking in the beautiful symphony. There's work to be done. The lawn and the weeds are lush and will command more attention. The vegetable beds need weeding after these frequent days of watering. The firewood is stacked against the coming winter. The flannel sheets and downy puff have been put away for the coming summer.

Much anticipated, spring has come in a blaze of glory and will turn soon into summer. It's been glorious, but it must come to an end.

*If ever there were a spring day so perfect, so uplifted by a warm intermittent breeze*

*that it made you want to throw open all the windows in the house and unlatch the door to the canary cage, indeed, rip the little door from its jamb,*

*a day when the cool brick paths and the garden bursting with peonies*

*seemed so etched in sunlight that you felt like taking*

*a hammer to the glass paperweight on the living room end table,*

*releasing the inhabitants from their snow-covered cottage*

*so they could walk out, holding hands and squinting*

*into this larger dome of blue and white, well, today is just that kind of day.*

– Billy Collins.  
"Today"



**Six New Exhibits Up In Brattleboro**

From combined sources.

**BRATTLEBORO, VT** – Six new exhibits open at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC) this Saturday, June 22 at 11 a.m. The exhibits include "Ocean's Edge," three artists' depictions of life at the beach; a retrospective of t social documentary photographer and activist Dona Ann McAdams; new installations by Barbara Takenaga and Angus McCullough; photographs of North American bridges by David Plowden; and a selection of steel sculptures and works on paper by Timothy Segar. The exhibits will remain on view through September 23.

"Ocean's Edge" features three artists with widely divergent styles. Isca Greenfield-Sanders' layered compositions from found images illustrate how time by the sea is remembered, as well as the wonder of being at the ocean's edge. David Kapp's collages in saturated colors use strips of cut paper to portray bathers at leisure. Graham Nickson renders the changing dynamics of the beach in all seasons, deftly capturing moments of contemplation.

"Dona Ann McAdams: Performative Acts" features McAdams' black and white photographs of performance artists, nuns, race track workers, people with schizophrenia,

working farm animals, and anti-nuclear, pro-choice, war protest, feminist, queer liberation, and AIDS activism protests.

Chief curator at the Museum Mara Williams describes "Barbara Takenaga: Looking at Blue" as "a full-body experience." Takenaga, a faculty member at Williams College, began with faux abstract-expressionist backgrounds of poured and dripped paint, then used a labor-intensive approach of applying a visual vocabulary of dots, tracings, outlining, and painting around splashes.

"Angus McCullough: Coincidence Control" was curated by Jonathan Gitelson, who says the exhibit "invites viewers to reimagine their relationship with time, to unplug and reflect." Housed in BMAC's Ticket Gallery, formerly the Union Station ticket office, the exhibit presents alternatives to standardized time, through video, sound art, artist books, drawings, and an interactive time capsule that visitors are welcome to enter.

"David Plowden: Bridges" is a selection of photographs from Plowden's book *Bridges: The Spans of North America*. Plowden has lived in the Midwest for 40 years, but he fondly remembers his childhood in southern Vermont, including the Putney train station, where

he attempted to take his first photograph at age 10, and the Putney School darkroom, where he learned to print photographs.

"Timothy Segar: Character Development" consists of steel sculptures on view outside the Museum and works on paper displayed in the South Gallery. Williams describes Segar's sculptures as "powerfully built and pulsing with vitality."

An opening reception with many of the exhibiting artists present will take place on June 22 at 5:30 pm. There will be free admission and refreshments.

In conjunction with the new exhibits, BMAC has planned a robust schedule of events – artist talks, guided tours, workshops, community conversations – to delve deeper into the ideas, issues, and practices reflected in them. A calendar is available at [brattleboromuseum.org](http://brattleboromuseum.org).

The galleries are open every day except Tuesday, 11 to 5. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors, \$4 for students. Members and children 18 and under are free of charge.

Located in historic Union Station in downtown Brattleboro, at the intersection of Main Street and Routes 119 and 142, the Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information call (802) 257-0124 or visit [brattleboromuseum.org](http://brattleboromuseum.org).

**MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS**

**This Week On MCTV**

By **MIKE SMITH**

This week MCTV will be playing the Montague finance committee and selectboard meetings, as well as the Gill-Montague regional school committee. Also playing is a video featuring Andrea Chesnes, a local resident starting a nonprofit center on Eleventh Street called Root Studio which will focus on assisting at-risk teen girls. For more information and to learn how you can help, check out [www.root-yoga-studio.com](http://www.root-yoga-studio.com).

Every Monday for the next five weeks, the Montague Community Band will be playing live music in Peskeomskut Park in downtown Turners Falls. If you can't catch the performances live you'll be able to see them on our Vimeo page which you can find at [montaguetelevision.org](http://montaguetelevision.org).

The Turners Falls High School

softball team played McCann Tech for the Western Mass championship. MCTV will have video of the game soon, and continue to follow the team on their path to glory! Producers are also working on videos from the Mutton and Mead Festival, the Mass Cultural Council, and more, so stay tuned for more updates.

The registration deadline for MCTV's 120-Second Film Festival is approaching! You have until June 25 to register at [montaguetelevision.org](http://montaguetelevision.org).

If you know of an event we should cover, or are interested in shooting video, reach out and let us know at (413) 863-9200, [infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguetelevision@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to show you how easy using a camera can be, and get you started creating your own videos!

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# The Children's Page

YONDERNOD ILLUSTRATION

Written and Illustrated by Hannah Brookman

# BEVERLY'S

Characters created by Beverly Ketch

Something was different about today. All the dishes were stacked and put away.

Then I guess I'll just wipe off the ledge"

Said D.P.W. Bev.

And she ran her soapy sponge across clean counters. Searching for grunge without one encounter.

She swept the spotless floor with a scowl,

"This isn't fun unless something's foul!"

She looked with great disgust at the sills that she dusts that did not need dusting today.

Oh, it ruins the fun of a job well done when they leave the town hall in this way!"

So she put down Mr. Broom and went to the room where they keep the office supplies

Then I'll just have to make a mess of my own."

Smiled D.P.W. Bev with a twinkle in her eyes.

First she made paperdolls of every color paper. Then she made paper hats for every member of the chamber. Some pop-up cards, some rubber-band balls and finally confetti. She looked upon her wonderful mess and said:

I think it's ready!

She stowed Mr. Broom and Vic Vac away and clocked out of work for the rest of the day. Her thoughts now unburdened by her helpless sorrow, were forming the song she would clean to tomorrow.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## EVENTS

### THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Larry LeBlanc, Boys of the Landfill, Small Change*. Coop Concert Series. 6 p.m.

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

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Glen Jones, Weeping Bong Band*. American primitive guitar; psychedelic folk. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *G-Field Throwdown*. Featuring *Bare Ass, Safehill, Bag Lady*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Sam's Place Speakeasy*. An immersive cocktail party in the lobby. Gain access through the side door with password "Rosebud." Dress like it is 1925 if you like. \$. 8 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Mette Rasmussen, Chris Corsano, Paul Flaherty, Wendy Eisenberg, Vic Rawlings, Lucy Rosenfeld, Mary Staubitz, and Arkm Foam*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

### FRIDAY, JUNE 21

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

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Finding Vivian Maier*. Final film of Pothole Pictures season. Documentary about a woman who worked as a nanny and whose thousands of photographs were discovered after her death. Local photographers will have a panel discussion at Mocha Maya coffeeshop in conjunction with this show. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Dustbowl Revival with Mamma's Marmalade*. Roots/jazz and hot swing. \$. 8 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Mette Rasmussen, Chris Corsano, Paul Flaherty, Andrea Pensado, Jen Gelineau, Paul LaBrecque, Andy Allen, Ruth Garbus, and Donny Shaw*. \$. 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. With *Jeannine Ameduri, David Kaynor, and the Back Row Band*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Sam's Place Folk Club*. An immersive cocktail party in the lobby. Gain access through the side door with password "Rosebud." Dress like 1967, if you wish. \$. 8 p.m.

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

SUBMITTED PHOTO



"Finding Vivian Maier" is a documentary about a woman who worked as a nanny and whose thousands of photographs were discovered only after her death. The film is paired with a panel discussion by local photographers. Nominated for Best Documentary at the 2014 Academy Awards. Live music each night at 7 p.m. before the show at Memorial Hall in Shelburne Falls. A Pothole Pictures presentation. This Friday and Saturday, June 21 and 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Sunny Lowdown*. Roots and Americana open mic and jam. 9:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Traditional Music Open Session*. Contra, Irish, old time, etc. Open jam session. 3 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *The Green Sisters*. Eclectic folk, bluegrass, a cappella and original music. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Pothole Pictures, Shelburne Falls: *Finding Vivian Maier*. (See Friday's listing.) \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Liam Kramer-White, Stella Silbert,*

*Sordid Org*. \$. 8 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Sam's Place 1980s Dance Hall*. An immersive cocktail party in the lobby. Recreate the '80s, and dress for the occasion. Password "Rosebud" at the side door gets you in. \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Shadow Twisters*. Classic rock from the '60s and '70s. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Land Man, Owen Manure*. 9:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 23

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Steven Schoenberg*. Improvisational piano. \$. 4 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Beach Theme Movie Night*. \$. 7 p.m.

*sa Wednesday*. With *McCoy and DJ Roger Jr*. \$. 8 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Electric Kitchen, Echonaut, Will Roan, Head of Wantastiquet*. \$. 8 p.m.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 27

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Jenny McAvoy, Austin & Elliott, Rob Adams*. Coop Concert Series. 6 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The O-Tones*. Swing and Motown from New England. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Music on the Patio*. Country with *Bruce Colegrove*. Bring a lawn chair. In the event of rain, concert moves inside. 7 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Annie Guthrie*. Folk and country, punk, blues. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *The Leafies You Gave Me, Bunnies, Fred Cracklin*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

### FRIDAY, JUNE 28

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Happy Valley Guitar Orchestra*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Lily & Lucy, Baby/Baby, Isa Reisner*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Heath Lewis*. 9:30 p.m.

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

### SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Butterfly Swing Band*. Fun, danceable, joyous. \$. 7 p.m.

1794 Meetinghouse, New Salem: *Snack Pack*. Rock and roll, hippie country, and cosmic jazz. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Luxe, I Love You!, Bong Wish, Plants of the Bible*. \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Roots All Stars*. Roots reggae lineup. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *No Lens, Destructive Charm, ZoKi*. 10:30 p.m.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 30

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

*ties*. An animal-themed exhibit by invited New England artists celebrating creatures real and imagined. Beautiful paintings and whimsical folk art and sculpture. This show will be complemented by several animal visits, book readings, activities for children, and food collections for local animal rescue organizations. Exhibit runs June 13 to July 28, with an artists' reception on Sunday, June 23 at 1 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *#rightupmyalley*: Photographs by *Edite Cunha*, shot in and around alleyways of Turners Falls, including poetry. Through June 30.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Signs [Volume I, 1977 to 2015]*. New and vintage photographic prints on the theme of signage by Peter Monroe, curated by Kate Hunter. June 21 through August 10. Reception on June 28, 6 p.m.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Library: *May Emery*. Paintings inspired by chairs. Through June.

Leverett Library: *Macayla Silver*. Large-scale paintings of birds. Through June.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Gathering My Wits*, pen and ink drawings by Linda Baker-Cimini, through July 10. Reception

with the artist Saturday, June 22, at 4 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Garden Structures and Ornaments*: works by *Piper Glass & Steel*. Structures providing visual interest and functional support in the garden. *Waterside: Man-Made Structures in Natural Landscapes*, paintings by *Paul Hoffman*. Each establishes a unique sense of place. Through June.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Albyn Davis*, photographs. Architecture, street scenes, details that can become abstractions in black and white and color. Through July 1.

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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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# Donate Diapers!

**GREENFIELD** – The annual Franklin County Diaper Drive is taking place, and will peak this Saturday morning, June 22 from 9 a.m. to noon with a special event on the Greenfield common.

Diapers are a large expense for families struggling to make ends meet. Help ensure all babies in Franklin County have access to

clean diapers! Bring donations – disposables, biodegradables, cloth – to contribute if you are able, and check out presentations about these ecological alternatives.

All diapers will be distributed to families in need through Community Action and partner agencies. To donate online, see the United Way of Franklin County website.

# Sam's Place: Immersive Theater at the Shea

By ANNA FORBES GYORGY

**TURNERS FALLS** – Have you ever wanted to time travel? Or maybe you're just always looking for a good excuse to dress up. If so, you might want to check out "Sam's Place," an immersive theater piece, directed by John Bechtold, and produced by Shea Presents in partnership with Eggtooth productions.

"Sam's Place" will run for three nights at the Shea Theater, from this Thursday the 20th through Saturday the 22nd. Part dance club, part theater piece, part speakeasy, "Sam's Place" will transform the Shea into a club from a different era each night of its run. Thursday night will be a '20s speakeasy, Friday night a '60s folk club, and Saturday night an '80s discotheque.

The show will feature live mu-

sic from Weege & the Wonder-twins and the Katie Spurgin Trio on Thursday, Eleanor Levine and the Paper City Picture Show on Friday, and a DJ set by Josh Nugent on Saturday night. There will be a cash bar stocked with era-appropriate champagne cocktails, and those who are feeling adventurous can speak with the mysterious strangers they meet in the club.

Audience members are invited to dress for the occasion, and can engage with the performers as much or as little as they'd like. Returning for multiple shows is encouraged!

*WHEN: Thursday June 20, Friday June 21, and Saturday June 22 at 8 p.m. WHERE: Shea Theater Arts Center, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls. TICKETS: \$12 in advance, or \$15 at the door.*

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