

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 38

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

AUGUST 8, 2019

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Town Reviews Its Emergency Response After Violent Storm

By JERRI HIGGINS

The extreme weather event of July 30 was fresh on everyone's mind on Monday as Turners Falls fire chief John Zellmann updated the Montague selectboard on the storm's aftermath.

Zellmann, in his capacity as the town's emergency manager, related that the event "was considered a 'microburst,' with straight-line winds that started in Deerfield [and]

came across the Connecticut River into Montague Center – in the area of Meadow Road, South Ferry Road, Mills Ferry Road, and Falls Road."

No injuries were reported, but there was a lot of damage. Zellman shared a Doppler radar image, generated by a "Lightning Tracker" weather app, showing numerous close lighting strikes in Montague and Deerfield. "It looks like a bomb went off!" board member Chris

see MONTAGUE page A7



Tree committee member Michael Marcotrigiano photographed this century-old sugar maple, compromised by decay, pushed down in last week's violent windstorm. The tree is located on Main Street about a hundred yards north of the Village Store.

A Long-Awaited Morning Hangout: Upper Bend Develops On the Avenue

By NINA ROSSI

TURNERS FALLS – Even without the two-month advance announcement about the opening of the Upper Bend Café on Avenue A, there is sure to be a line of espres-

so-and-internet hungry residents lined up to get in the doors when they open this October.

Not since the early incarnation of the Five Eyed Fox on Third Street has there been a hangout available on weekday mornings offering a



Upper Bend Café owners Bill and Tamara McKerchie (left) sit with renovators Hank Silver and Ethan Schmid (right) under a mural celebrating the river.

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Bastarache Resigns From Erving Board

By MIKE JACKSON and KATIE NOLAN

Scott Bastarache, who ran unopposed this spring for a second term on Erving's selectboard, announced on Monday that he will step down later this month.

"Having two teenage children, and a family and a full-time job, and lots of commitments in life, something had to give," Bastarache explained. "I felt that I did not have the capacity to give this position the time that it actually requires.... I'll let someone else who has that capacity step in."

The board's next meeting on August 19 will be Bastarache's last.

"I personally can understand, and I'm sure Bill [Bembury] can as well – it's tough to balance sometimes," chair Jacob Smith told him. "I appreciate that you gave it a go."

"You can always come back," Bembury said, to laughter. "People can come back – I came back."

see ERVING page A6

Village Prepares for Global Music Festival



Back to the garden: Organizers Cassandra Holden and Edo Mor of Landable Productions survey the festival site with owner Kathy Lynch.

By MIKE JACKSON

MONTAGUE CENTER – It's hard to say what Edgar L. Bartlett, who once raised hay and corn and bred Holsteins on a 200-acre parcel spreading north of this village's Main Street, would think if he could visit his land next weekend.

On Saturday the 17th, a former hay field and walnut grove at the former farm will be transformed into stages for "Barbès in the Woods," and revelers are expected to dance into the night to live music drawn from Nigeria, Colombia, Sudan, France, Romania, Brazil, and Ethiopia.

The festival features a who's who of the Brooklyn global music scene, including Afrobeat all-stars Antibalas; Combo Chimbita, a

band of Colombian expats devising new tropical fusions; the soulful pop of AlSarah and the Nubatones; the high-intensity brass of Slavic Soul Party; and electro party-stoppers Underground System.

"Global music is often booked in sit-down auditoriums, which really runs contrary to the spirit of the music," explains Edo Mor of Landable Productions, the company organizing the event.

Laudable has been booking global music in the area for about five years, including free community concerts in Easthampton called Millpond Live, a monthly Planetary Party at a local brewery, and a series of wild benefit bashes at rotating venues known as World Music Colliders.

see GLOBAL page A6

SCENE REPORT

Vans... and Vanners

By PETER WACKERNAGEL

GREENFIELD – This past week the Franklin County Fairgrounds hosted the 47th annual National Truck-In. The Truck-In, aka Van Nationals, is possibly the country's largest gathering of van people, known amongst each other as vanners. According to one vanner I spoke with, Van Nationals generally draws more than 700 vans from around North America. The week's events began with a trip to the Bernardston junkyard, and continued with events like swap meets, van shows, van competitions, rock bands, and night-time light shows, where vanners show off their custom interior and exterior lights.

The major activity of vanners is

vanning, which at its most basic level involves taking long trips and camping out in one's van. Thus, participation in highway and outdoor cultures is part of vanning. Perhaps the most essential aspect of van culture is the use of the van as a multi-purpose space, not just for travel but also for socializing, eating, and generally as a home-on-wheels. Sex-in-vans is a popular motif in van culture, one that I saw frequently expressed by a decorative license plate that reads "If the van is rockin', don't come knockin'."

Personalization and individuation are both major parts of van culture. Personalization is the process by which people modify or customize their property in order to make it

see VANS page A4



Bernie Levesque shows the iconographic tableau that connects him and his van.

PART III Real Estate Developer Appointed as Receiver for Inn

By SARAH ROBERTSON

CHARLEMONT – Charlemont resident Byron Gilchrest was appointed receiver of the Charlemont Inn during a July 25 hearing at Franklin County Housing Court.

"This is a very historic building. This building was built before we declared our independence as a country," Gilchrest said. "If that turns into a parking lot, that is going to be horrible for this community."

Gilchrest said he plans to completely renovate the Inn and restore its functional status as a hotel and tavern. He has 90 days from the July 25 hearing date to submit his renovation plans. The next hearing is scheduled for November 15.

"If the court approves it, I will begin doing some serious things, like partial demolition," Gilchrest said. "I need to figure out some things, like what's where, and what needs to be done."

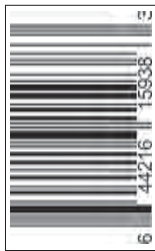
Gilchrest said he has been in close communication with the Inn's longtime owner Charlotte Dewey about the status of the Inn, work already done, and her wishes to see it restored. "I have been spending quite a bit of time with Charlotte, the owner," Gilchrest said. "She was very cooperative."

Dewey's lawyer Mark Tanner and Gilchrest came to an agreement that the developer would not seek a lien to pay for the "soft costs" of the building's assessment, and instead would wait until a plan was approved before

see CHARLEMONT page A3

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NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION



Great Falls Harvest restaurateurs Chris Menegoni and Bridget Chaffee pose in their newly renovated bar area with their 11-year-old daughter Velouria. Behind them is a new community dining table; they've also added a salad and sandwich area onto the kitchen. This will help them as they move forward with their ongoing project to open a local foods market on the Avenue A side of the building, a venture that Chris says will manifest this September thanks to a loan they recently received.

Focus and Resolve

On Tuesday the campaign to halt logging a stand of oaks in the Wendell State Forest entered a new phase, as two area residents allowed themselves to be arrested for blocking equipment from accessing the work site.

The Wendell State Forest Alliance is on the vanguard of a new sort of forest politics, using tactics and rhetoric once associated with opposition to clear-cutting old growth to challenge the selective thinning of post-agricultural regrowth.

This land was deforested, found to be of poor agricultural quality, and abandoned; much of the red oak grew back in monoculture. DCR's silviculture prescription for the 88-acre stand calls for the removal of a patchwork of "gaps" amounting to about 18 acres, repeated every couple of decades, with the goal of creating a mixed-age forest with a mixed-height overstory.

This approach is not unduly commercially motivated; until recently, it was commonly understood to be a sensible way to cor-

rect for previous human intervention and support forest health.

Now a new paradigm is coming into play: the idea that CO₂ sequestration should be our single highest priority, and that any logging works against this goal. The slogan "leave it in the ground," in other words, applied to trees.

If this is correct – we're not in a position to weigh competing technical claims, but find it plausible – it will be necessary to convince a majority of decision-makers to adopt the new perspective. It may mean, as the WSFA and others argue, that we should stop all logging on public land. And it may be strategic to create spectacles of disobedience to promote that debate.

But if so, competing messaging in the last year and a half – about the greed of loggers, the divinity of trees, the lost ceremonial landscape, and bureaucratic corruption – might not have served to promote the debate: if the climate is the highest priority, it shouldn't come across like the latest talking point.



BART BOURICIUS PHOTOS



Top: Activists block a truck from entering Wendell State Forest on Tuesday.
Bottom: State troopers arrest Priscilla Lynch (center) and Gia Newswald (right). The pair were charged with disorderly conduct and trespassing, and released.

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Letter to the Editors



Wrong Bridge Name Printed

Concerning an article published in the *Montague Reporter* (June 25, 2019, "Architectural Review: Wild Structures on the River Bank"):

The writer mentions "The stone wall has a door in it that frames a view of the Gill-Montague Bridge."

I offer this correction.

The proper name for the bridge is the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Newcomers to the Town of Montague, specifically Turners Falls, commonly refer to the bridge by the incorrect name. I would mention to those so inclined to refer to the large bronze plaques located on the north and south abutments of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. A smaller, contemporary plaque, on the north (Gill) abutment, was placed there by some ignorant and callous individual from the State after the bridge renovation was completed in 2015. That plaque describes the incorrect name of the bridge.

The area school districts of Gill and Montague are known as the Gill-Montague Regional School District (GMRSD), and commonly referred to as the Gill-Montague School District. The Gill-Montague moniker for this entity is correct and not to be used as the name for the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge.

Observation. The writer goes on to mention two assemblies along the Connecticut River below the Turners Falls Dam along the south shoreline. "Why do these built objects strike us as beautiful? For one, they are made of natural materials, materials that are themselves abundant on the site."

True, the stone wall is built of natural material... stone slabs of varying sizes. However, the bricks

mentioned are man-made using naturally occurring components, primarily clay bearing soil, sand. Other ingredients such as lime may be added. Modern brickmaking adds chemical components and dyes to enhance structure and color.

**Ed Gregory, Greenfield
Montague Historical Society
Montague Historical Commission**

The editors respond:

Thanks, Ed – this is a topic we agree with you on, and try to be vigilant about here at the *Reporter* office. Looks like an instance slipped through!

However, speaking as allies in the fight... It might not be one we win, and it might not be won by blaming the behavior on newcomers. For example, customers at the Third Street FL Roberts now encounter a prominent wall decoration about the "Gill-Montague Bridge."

Early instances of "Gill-Montague Bridge" date as far back as a 1936 *Engineering News Record* article. "The continuous truss bridge, known as the Gill-Montague Bridge, because of the townships it connects, will be a deck truss of five spans consisting of a 400-450-400-ft. continuous center unit flanked by a 150-ft. span on one end and a 225-ft. span on the other," it read.

Looking online, we now see 2,270 results for a Google search for "Gill-Montague Bridge," and only 337 for "Turners Falls-Gill Bridge." Looking at who got it wrong is discouraging: not just the predictable ones (the state Department of Transportation; certain regional daily newspapers and TV stations), but also *BridgeHunter.com*, *MontagueBridges.com*, FRCOG's 2018 "Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Resiliency Plan" report for Montague, and the Montague Business Association.

"Gill-Montague Bridge" shows up on the US Congressional Record, thanks to the state's 2003 and 2004 federal appropriations for its reconstruction. Instances occur on the town websites of both Gill and Montague. And even Peter Miller and Kyle Scott's book *Montague* (Arcadia Publishing, 2000) called it the "Gill Montague Bridge" no less than four times, twice each with and without a hyphen.

This drift will probably worsen unless concerned parties successfully argue on Wikipedia that the bridge's article name should be changed. The "talk" page for the article is probably the most strategic place to have this discussion.

But we'll try to do our part. Right is right!

CORRECTION

Oops: In our July 25 Gill-Montague selectboard reporting ("Turnover, Turnaround Planned for Turners Secondary Schools"), we mentioned that the district's new "equity steering committee... provides stipends for members." Jen Audley of the Community-School Partnership let us know we had this wrong. "While I encouraged the superintendent and the school committee to consider offering stipends to equity steering committee members," she wrote, "there is currently no plan to do so this fiscal year... the people participating in that work will be volunteering for that time." Audley clarified that a "one-time honorarium" was provided to some members who lost potential wages elsewhere by participating in a day-long orientation on June 25.

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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

A big thank you to the Montague Department of Public Works and utility companies for their speedy cleanup of downed trees and wires following **last Tuesday’s micro-burst** in Montague Center!

On Thursday, August 8, at 4 p.m., kids ages five and up can read to a Bright Spots therapy dog, yellow lab Gus, and his handler Monica at the Leverett Library, 75 Montague Road, Leverett. Register for a 10-minute slot at the circulation desk.

At 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 10, author Jennifer Swender reads from her new middle-grades novel *Solving for M*.

The Kidleidoscope program continues through the summer at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls on Friday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The program includes a story, interactive games, and a craft to introduce children to wildlife along the river. For ages 3 to 6, accompanied by an adult. Siblings and friends welcome.

The theme for Friday, August 9 is **Owls**. Later in the day, from 1 to 2 p.m. the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum presents a **live animal program featuring owls**. Learn about the adaptations that make owls the supreme hunters of the night. Live owls, touchable artifacts, and interactive demonstrations will make this an unforgettable presentation.

The **Greenfield Military Band**

performs at Riverfront Park in Erving on Friday, August 9 beginning at 6 p.m. Pack a picnic supper, and enjoy marches, show tunes, and popular favorites. The concert is free, funded by a grant from the Erving Cultural Council.

Great Falls Books Through Bars has a volunteer opportunity this Saturday, August 10 from 1 to 4 p.m. Read some letters, pack some books, and work through our backlog of requests from prisoners from across the country at La Mariposa, 115 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

We can always use extra manila envelopes and packing tape, and if you have spare paperback almanacs, thesauruses, or books on Dungeons & Dragons, we’d love to have them.

Mutts in Need is an annual fundraiser hosted by the Friends of the Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter. This year’s event will take place Saturday, August 10 from 3 to 8 p.m. at the Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club, 210 Turners Falls Road in Turners Falls. Tickets are \$30 per person and include an outdoor catered dinner, music, live auction, raffles and entertainment. All proceeds benefit the shelter. For more information see www.fcrcdogkennel.org.

Amanda Melinchuk, bat research monitor with the state Department of Conservation and Recreation, will talk about myths and misconceptions surrounding bats, **why bats are important**, threats such as White-nose Syndrome, what you can do to

help, and information on bat houses. on Saturday, August 10 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center. After the question and answer period, visitors can join Amanda outside with a bat detector and look for bats.

The towns of Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury, and Wendell are fortunate to have the Village Neighbors, where community members help aging neighbors lead independent and engaged lives at home. If you need a ride to an event or for personal needs like shopping, meeting a friend, or going to the movies, call (413) 345-6894 or contact servicerequests@villagenighbors.org.

A one-hour information session about the role Call Managers play in the life of Village Neighbors will be held Wednesday, August 14 from 6 to 7 p.m. at the New Salem Public Library, 23 Main Street, New Salem.

On Friday, August 16, **bring a chair to Peskeomskut Park** on Avenue A at 7th Street to see teenage alternative folk-rock trio ZoKi perform at 6:30 p.m., then the animated movie *Cars 3*. There will also be crafts and food at the park until 9:30 p.m. The rain date is August 23.

The 60th **Montague Center Old Home Days** begins bright and early on August 17 with the Mug Race at 8:30 a.m. A craft fair, food vendors, and games fill the Common beginning at 9 a.m. Watch the Celtic Heels kick up their heels at 11 a.m., followed by raptor rehabilitator Tom Ricardi.

Make sure you have a good seat along Main Street for the parade at 12:30 p.m. Live music by Corki and Ken and the Farley String Band round out the afternoon. On Sunday, there is a special Old Home Days worship service at the Congregational Church.

The second annual **Fairy House Day on Avenue A** is Saturday, August 17. (*See article, page B1.*)

At noon at Spinner Park, you can make a fairy house, and a winged friend for the fairies. At 1 p.m. there will be a screening of the first episode of *The Lovelights*, a children’s television series set in Turners Falls, at FastLights studio, 47 J Street. At 2 p.m. at Peskeomskut Park, you can win prizes for Most Beautiful Picnic and Garden Party, followed by family-friendly activities including a live play and butterfly release.

The rain date is August 24.

And the same Saturday, August 17 is also **Old Home Day** on the **Wendell Town Common**.

The day begins with oud player Ed Hines offering morning meditation music at 8:30 a.m., and continues with a farmer’s market, arts, crafts, tag sales, syrup, food, and more. A kids’ parade kicks off at 11 a.m., and music continues all day, including the Wendell Community Chorus, LA Wood, the Bear Mountain Boys, and special surprises!

Looking ahead...

On August 23 and 24, Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center hosts the 36th annual **Connecticut River Astronomers’ Conjunction**. Bring your telescope to Fuller’s Pasture on Friday and Saturday nights to view the stars.

Saturday begins at 9 a.m. at the recreation center at 99 Millers Falls Road, Northfield with coffee, doughnuts, and a swap table, followed by a full program of speakers. You can view the sun all day on Saturday through special filtered telescopes. For more information see www.philharrington.net/astroconjunction.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org.

CHARLEMONT from page A1

seeking any additional money.

Both Gilchrest and Dewey walked with canes at the July 25 hearing. Dewey is recovering from a brain surgery that took her by surprise in July, and has been out of work since.

“I at least feel a sense of, maybe, happiness, that finally some townspeople and Byron have truly decided that the inn is worth saving,” Dewey said. “That’s all I’ve been trying to do.”

For years Gilchrest, who lives on Potters Road, was a seasonal Charlemont resident. He runs the Boston-based real estate development company Gilchrest Associates, and would split his time between the city and another property in Florida. Now he lives in Charlemont year-round.

Historical commission members Bill and Norma Coli wrote a letter in support of the chosen receiver presented during the July 25 hearing. After Gilchrest described to the Colis his background in development, architecture and preservation, Bill felt he shared the community’s values and appreciation for the Inn.

“We’ve know Byron Gilchrest for a long time, he’s been a part-time resident and a taxpayer,” Bill Coli said. “We think he was an outstanding choice.”

According to documents provided by Dewey, the Inn needs over \$2 million to make all the necessary renovations. Meeting handicapped accessibility and fire safety requirements alone could cost over \$1 million. For years now she has been in and out of housing court for overdue property taxes.

To date, Dewey has spent around \$300,000 trying to bring the building to code, facing numerous setbacks along the way. The attempted burglary of the Inn’s copper pipe plumbing in 2012 cost her around \$30,000 to replace, and delayed the building’s opening. She still has not received any compensation for the incident. The town’s sewer district, which had repossessed the Inn for taxes owed, held the keys to the building at the time.

In 2015 the board of health condemned the Charlemont Inn for multiple health and safety violations, including excessive mold growth and a leaking roof. Since then Dewey has fixed the roof, removed some mold and installed a dehumidifying system to combat mold growth. Air quality tests since have come back positive, according to results Dewey provided.

“Charlotte made a valiant attempt to make the Inn work, but the reality of what needs to get done and the resources she needed to do it didn’t match,” Gilchrest said. “She tried very hard.”

Coli said he believes Charlotte was unfairly blamed for the Inn’s 8-year closure, which caused the building to fall into deep disrepair.

“The kitchen looks great, the cellar looks great, but the rest is a massive undertaking,” he said.

Charlotte’s mother, Jean Dewey, is a decorative artist who painted floral patterns in some of the rooms upstairs. Even if the walls can’t be saved, she said they hope to preserve the artwork.

After the Inn is repaired it will be sold at auction, where Dewey could buy it back for a steep markup. She still has plans to secure the financing to fix the Inn herself, and said she has two potential investors lined up.

Receivership

When Gilchrest decided he wanted to help save the Inn, several townspeople mentioned the possibility of “receivership.” Acting on advice from town counsel Jeff Blake, he applied to be a receiver, and was accepted by Franklin County Housing Court.

“I said, ‘well, I’m a real estate developer and an architect, but I don’t know what a receiver is,’” Gilchrest said. “Aside from the Inn, I will never be a receiver again.”

Receivership programs took off in Massachusetts around 2010 as part of then-attorney general Martha Coakley’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program, which targets blighted and abandoned properties for redevelopment. Re-

ceivers are real estate experts appointed by a court to redevelop abandoned properties that pose a health or safety risk to the surrounding neighborhood.

“In these lean economic times when municipalities have serious financial challenges and limited staff resources, the court appointment of a receiver with independent authority to undertake needed repairs under its supervision is a very powerful tool,” read a pamphlet by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

Being appointed by the court gives the receiver the legal authority to borrow money from organizations like the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation to finance repairs, and to sell or rent the property to recoup their costs and pay any back taxes, fees and fines owed.

Gilchrest said he plans to apply for historic rehabilitation tax credits to help finance the project, as well as other tax credits, grants, and preservation programs. Charlemont is a federally designated “Opportunity Zone,” targeted for incentivized development through tax breaks on capital gains. Gilchrest said he’s yet to look into the program, but will consider any options to make the project more cost effective.

“A receiver it turns out has a lot of wide latitude, a lot of power to do a number of things,” he said. “It’s going to take deep subsidies for this thing to survive.”

More lodging in Charlemont would be a boon for the local recreational industry and overall economy, according to Rural Commonwealth’s 2017 Western Franklin County Business Report.

“A lack of higher end lodging facilities limits business growth,” read the report. “Recreation companies see the biggest demand for these facilities.”

It could be years before the Charlemont Inn is open for business again, but with a local developer taking the reins with a commitment towards preservation, the Charlemont Inn could be on a road towards repair.



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CAFÉ from pg A1

mural on the left wall that carried out the theme of how the Connecticut River bends around Montague: the “Upper Bend.”

I hadn’t heard this Valley-centric term before, and Tamara McKerchie said she ran across it in a book about the natural history of shad, but hasn’t been able to substantiate its use anywhere else even after consulting with that encyclopedia of local names, Ed Gregory. The mural itself was painted by Mae Carpenter, Kathryn Greenwood Swanson, Kiah Tinkham, and Amy Wright.

The couple’s background is in food: farming for years in New England and working in restaurants. “We ran an underground brunch club for a number of years when we lived in Boston,” says Tamara. “We would cook brunch at our house on a pay-what-you-can basis. So it’s been in the making for a long time, and in our minds for at least a decade, to make an above-ground business.”

“We will have simple breakfast and lunch food with good local ingredients,” says Bill. “Coffee from Broadsheet in Cambridge. They are two years old and have won awards for their

coffee; they don’t have a presence out here, and we want to offer something unique.” The couple live on an herb farm in Sunderland, and plan to use the herbs from there for their teas.

There will be egg sandwiches and bowls with vegetables. “We will probably have a meat item on the menu, but mostly vegetables,” explains Bill. “Not strictly vegetarian, but mostly, and we will have vegan options with an egg alternative. There will be yogurt and granola, everything from scratch.” Bread will come from the new Greenfield bakery, Rise Above. But, no bagels.

There will be counter service rather than table service, and the space will seat about 20 customers. “My vision of what the space will be,” says Bill, “is equal parts people on their way to work, jumping in and grabbing coffee and an egg sandwich, and people coming in with their laptops or a book, camping out, drinking coffee and maybe eating yogurt all day.”

The Upper Bend will be open four days a week to start, from 7 to 3, Wednesdays through Saturdays. “We’ll add a fifth day somewhere down the line, once we are staffed appropriately, and when we figure out what the town can support,” Bill

adds. “Sundays will be our growth edge.” The couple have two young children, and are committed to maintaining a lifestyle with at least two days off in a row, explains Tamara. I can see how this is obviously a great idea for a young family, but since I do almost all my lonely computer work on Mondays and Tuesdays, a little froth of disappointment appeared in my future lattes.

The couple mentioned a third partner, Erin Ferrentino, not present when we met. Tamara described her as a “farmer, cook, ball of energy” and “mother hen” (no, she is not supplying the eggs; the partners are still sourcing a supplier for those), and they will be hiring one more initially to round out the team until they feel out what the work flow is and what they will need

“We are really excited about Turners, it’s such a beautiful town and the river has really taken my attention,” says Tamara. The Upper Bend has a website, *upperbend.com*, on which the curious may be tantalized by some pictures of plated food, though little else in the way of information is available yet.

The McKerchies hope for an October opening.



VANS from page A1

more unique and often is an expression of their own identity. Personalization transforms an object like a van from a transferable commodity identical to all other vans, into a personal totem that has value solely to its owner/creator.

As residents of an industrialized country where people no longer make the objects in their lives, personalizing things made in factories overseas is a way to add meaning to one’s possessions. Further, the practice of personalizing objects is often an enjoyable one that, in our highly individualistic and expressive culture, can transform the object into a sign-filled surface that becomes an expression of the owner’s identity.

(Nicholas Cage voices this idea perfectly while describing his jacket in the film *Wild at Heart*: “This is a snakeskin jacket. And for me it’s a symbol of my individuality and my belief in personal freedom.”)

Individuation is the process by which people distinguish themselves within a group. Carl Jung believed that individuation was the result of the integration of the conscious and the unconscious, or more specifically, of the ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious.

Individuation in van culture results in wild, colorful, and thematic vans. At the Truck-In, every van was different – there was a Zeus van, a Wizard of Oz van, a van that could tow a semi-trailer, a Dio van, a van about vanning.

I spoke with one vanner, the owner of “The Dino Van,” who had driven 14 hours from Spencerville, Ohio. “I wanted something different,” he said. “I always liked dinosaurs when I was younger, and I’d never seen a dino van. When I Googled it, I only saw two dino vans and I wasn’t none impressed with them.”

Seeking Pleasure
Bernie Levesque’s van, “Plea-

sure Seeker,” is a 1986 Dodge Van B200 that has been modified to roll on six wheels.

The van’s theme is “love in a cabin.” The van’s decorations relate to Levesque’s interests, and to his identity as a Canadian who lives in New Hampshire. Its interior has lodge-like decorations, including bear rugs and natural wood-paneling. Its steering wheel is shaped like a heart, and a panel underneath the front bumper reads “Yeah Baby!” This is, Levesque told me, a reference to the film *Austin Powers*.

The exterior of “Pleasure Seeker” is mainly covered in images of great outdoor landscapes, and also bears. In the iconography of the van, the bear symbolizes Levesque. “This here represents me and [my girlfriend],” he explained, pointing at a decal of two black bears hanging out at a waterfall. Levesque printed all of the decals adorning the van himself.

Next he showed me the curtains that lend a degree of privacy to the back of the van. The curtains depict two teddy bears, arm in arm, watching a lavender sunset over a range of alpine mountains. “The two bears – they’re watching the sunset. That’s what we like to do,” he explained.

Another theme of the van’s iconography shows Levesque’s complicated national identity. Across the bottom of the windshield are the large words “Pleasure Seeker,” with silhouettes of two women’s bodies, one rendered as an American flag and one as a Canadian flag, on either side.

Lastly, Levesque showed me the largest decal, which takes up most of one side of the van. It depicts a woman wearing an American flag as a dress. While fireworks explode over a city in the background, she struggles to stay clothed while a large bald eagle tears her dress off with its talons.

“I’ve got the same tattoo on my body – me and the van are connected,” he said.

Separate Subcultures
The vanners gathered last week at Van Nationals were not part of the scene popularized by millennials and Instagram’s *#vanlife*. For starters, the groups prefer different vans. *#Vanlifers* love the Volkswagen Westfalia, while vanners are dedicated to the Dodge B series.

On another level, the communities have very different orientations – as a cultural movement *#vanlife* is oriented outwards to remote spectators, while vanners are inward-oriented – the goal of their activities is to reproduce their own community. The culture on display at Van Nationals is descended from the vanning culture of the 1970s. Many of those I spoke with were college-age at this time, and most likely saw *The Van* (1977), which covered most parts of van culture in a highly sexist coming-of-age comedy.

In its very different orientation, *#vanlife* is a lifestyle-as-performance. Its point is to broadcast, to a hungry and adequacy-challenged Instagram audience, romanticized images of living in one’s van in sublime and “natural” Western locations. These artistically reactionary images, as *#vanlife*’s product, are sold for cash on the internet to advertisers, or for their cultural exchange value in a quest for fame.

Vanners and *#vanlifers* also treat the exterior of their vans in very different ways. *#Vanlifers* generally do not cover their vans in personal iconography, or any ornament at all. The form that identity expression takes in *#vanlife* is through images of people living “naturally” and alone in a “nature” that they choose to depict as much larger and more powerful than themselves. Their vans are not meant to be seen up close – typical pictures of *#vanlife* depict a small van in a vast and sublime landscape.

While iconography in vanner culture often suggests the sex act, naked millennials in *#vanlife* images are not necessarily evoking sex, but are instead attempting to show

humans in their idea of a prelapsarian state of nature.

Supposedly, *#vanlife* is a demonstration of a more sustainable way to live. Yet, selling pictures of oneself to be used by corporations to sell products is likely participating in capitalism to a greater degree than the vanners at Van Nationals.

The Moveable Home
The idea of a mobile home has existed in the West since at least the Middle Ages. In most of Europe, cottages and other kinds of small dwellings were considered chattel, or moveable property. The idea of a house, on the other hand, implies both a multi-generational permanent residence, and also an aristocratic dynasty.

Van culture is a descendent of the former tradition. It transforms the van, originally designed for transportation and work, into a moveable home. Van culture today can be seen as a phenomenon that continues the tradition of the moveable home while attaching modern cultural paradigms to it.

Vans combine the love of the automobile, the road, and natural scenery, with other modern phenomena like the need to express oneself and one’s identity; the desire for maximum individuation within a group; the romance of a life of privileged, intentional homelessness; a nostalgia for belongings that hold personal meaning; and most recently, a quest for fame recently made accessible by the internet.

While vanners at the Truck-In were certainly all about their vans and the practice of vanning, I think that the real reason the event has enjoyed such popularity for 47 years isn’t just about the joys of consumer proprietorship – it’s about community. And while the making of broad generalizations about a shared-interest group is not something I like to do often, I will, in conclusion, make one: If anything, vanners seem to know how to have a good time.



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NOTES FROM THE GILL SELECTBOARD

Officials Express Worry Over River Level, Doubts Over FirstLight Claims

By GEORGE BRACE

At their Monday meeting, the Gill selectboard discussed concerns with how the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project may affect the Connecticut River environment in Gill. A recent email to the board from FirstLight Hydro, along with low water levels in the river, prompted members to question what was going on and reiterate skepticism with FirstLight’s prior analysis of the effects of the project on the movement of silt, among related concerns.

Greg Snedeker said he was concerned by the email’s reference to what he called “modifications or updates” to the project. Snedeker said FirstLight talked about an “ability to increase their cycle rate ten times what it is now.” He said he didn’t know what that meant, but on the day of the meeting, the river was “by far the lowest I’ve ever seen” in 27 years.

Randy Crochier added that people had been talking about the low water level and posting pictures on social media all weekend.

“What does it mean if they’re going to increase the cycles,” Snedeker asked, “in respect to the amount of impact it has on the lower water line, which I think is often forgotten?”

Snedeker had pictures of the riverbank, and a video of “very normal” waves caused by wind, not boat wake, hitting the banks of the river causing erosion, which he described as looking like the calving of ice from a glacier, with soil sloughing off into the river. He said he understood the need for power, but was concerned what impact FirstLight’s

future plans might have.

“This silt that has slumped off of there, is somewhere,” John Ward said of Snedeker’s photos. Ward said he was at Unity Park over the weekend, and commented on a “huge” sandbar he viewed on “river left” from that location. He wondered whether it was due to “what we’ll call normal erosion of the river” since the project began in 1972, the level of erosion seen in the photos, or a problem FirstLight has had in the past with clogged tunnels and the release of silt into the river, for which they were fined by the EPA.

“Our town is directly below this operation, and we are being impacted pretty significantly – I think more than other areas,” said Snedeker. “With this update, it would be nice to know what they have in mind... especially if this is going into effect after an approval of their relicensing... and, is this being talked about within the relicensing?”

Ward said that FirstLight vice president and general counsel Marc Silver had written that the upgrade was something the company had done in the past, and the recent email to the board had been worded incorrectly in saying it was an “update.” Ward also said he thought the increase might mean ten more cycles per day, not ten times the number of cycles.

Ward went on to say that he didn’t want to absolve FirstLight of responsibility for erosion issues, because he felt they were “much more responsible for the erosion that we have in Gill than what they are admitting to.”

Snedeker referenced a 600+ page report FirstLight made two to three years ago which said, “in their own

words, that they were not causing any erosion.” The report stated that slowly raising and lowering the water did not have the same impact on riverbanks as the wake from boats, which he agreed was true, but that the focus of conversation had been erosion at the high-water line, and not at the lower line FirstLight is allowed to lower the river to.

Ward said he felt that the erosion issue had not been addressed in settlement negotiations with FirstLight before the negotiations had fallen apart.

“Those of us who live on the banks of the river see it,” Snedeker concluded, “and know it’s not good for the river.” He said he felt compelled to call out the company, and would like to have a more honest conversation about it. “There are shifts in the river, and it’s definitely caused by them.”

Fire Purchases

Fire chief Gene Beaubien brought a purchase order request for a new pumper truck, approved by the machinery advisory committee prior to the meeting. The 2010 Freightliner pumper truck will replace the department’s 1979 Ford pumper.

The purchase was a planned expenditure in the effort to keep the fire department equipment up-to-date, and the majority of the \$165,000 expense for the truck is to come from the balance of a \$300,000 gift to the town from Northfield Mount Hermon School for that purpose. Town administrator Ray Purington reported that there was approximately \$145,000 left of the gift designated specifically for fire vehicles.

Crochier noted that the purchase

TOWN OF GILL HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

This fulltime and benefited working Department Head position is responsible for planning, directing, supervising, and participating in the operation of the Gill Highway Department, which includes the construction, improvement, repair, care and maintenance of roads, bridges, and culverts within the town (~35 miles of gravel & paved roads), Riverside sewer system, trimming & removal of roadside trees, and maintenance and repair of town-owned buildings and related infrastructure. The Highway Superintendent is also responsible for supervising the work of 2 fulltime highway crew members and seasonal employees. Must be available evenings and overnights to assess road conditions and respond to weather-related and other emergency situations.

Salary range for this exempt position is \$54,900 to \$66,800, depending on experience and qualifications. Valid MassDOT Class B Commercial Driver’s License and hoister’s license required.

A full job description with application submission guidelines can be found online at gillmass.org/highway and at **Town Hall, 325 Main Rd, Gill, Mon-Thur 9AM-5PM**. The closing date for all applications is August 16, 2019.

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would put the town about 10% over budget, due to the department’s purchase of a rescue vehicle last year. He and Snedeker said that going a little over budget on the rescue truck was the right decision, given the deal Gill got on it and the fact that it gets the most use.

Fireman Steve Connell agreed, saying the rescue truck has “been earning its keep, big time.” The board also approved purchase orders of approximately \$1,600 to replace a hose and boot on that truck’s Jaws of Life.

The board approved a request for special state legislation, as required by law, allowing fire chief Beaubien to serve past the age of 65, contingent on the outcome of a vote at a special town meeting on August 6 authorizing them to do so.

Other Business

Purington reported that two water fountains had been ordered for the Gill elementary school, and should be installed prior to the start of school in September.

He also reported that there were no revisions to the highway superintendent job description, though Crochier asked that responsibility for the town’s street lights should

be transferred from the town administrator to the highway department. Advertisements for the position are being placed in local newspapers, and the deadline for applications is August 16.

Purington said he was asked by retiring superintendent Mickey LaClaire if he would be needed to provide training on administrative tasks, such as payroll, after he retires.

“Retired is retired,” Crochier said, suggesting someone in the department could do it. It was decided to train the two current department members on the tasks, with acting superintendent John Miner taking the primary responsibility.

The board voted to provide a letter of support for the town of Montague’s Massworks grant application for the Turners Falls Canal District Gateway Improvement Project. The project would replace the condemned Fifth Street pedestrian bridge and restore sewer and water lines and other infrastructure to the location.

The board signed a license for Bob Higgins to sell used cars at 180 French King Highway, and enthusiastically appointed Anna Hendricks to the town’s cultural council.

Brick House Youth Art Show

TURNERS FALLS – The public is invited to join the Brick House teen center youth and staff from 4 to 7 p.m. next Friday, August 16 for a youth art show and sale.

Youth ages 11 to 18 have been working hard in the Momentum Arts program, learning creative and entrepreneurial skills. Come out and show your love for young people in the community – let’s appreciate their remarkable creativity!

All ages welcome, and we will have a craft table set up for younger kids. Snacks, sales, smiles.

Youth arts programming at the Brick House is made possible by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, United Way of Franklin County, Mass Department of Public Health, and a Montague Community Development Block Grant.

The Brick House is located at 24 Third Street in Turners Falls.

MCTV 120-Second Film Contest

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

Contestants will create a short film, running no longer than two minutes (120 seconds), that shows how Montague is a wonderful, artful, diverse, exciting and desirable place to live and visit.

Footage must be original, entrants must have clear copyright of all audio and images presented in the film, and MCTV is offering training and equipment to borrow.

Six contestants will receive a First Prize of \$200 in cash for their category, with runners-up receiving

gift certificates to local merchants. Categories will be determined by the three-person panel of judges after all entries are submitted.

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

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

LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

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

Tribal Reps Discuss Mariamante Land

On Monday, August 3, spokespersons for the Narragansett Indian Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gayhead (Aquinnah) appeared before the Gill selectboard to discuss the future use of 10 acres of town-owned land known as the Mariamante parcel.

Selectboard chair Ann Banash began by saying, “We thought we should have a preliminary meeting. I know you have finally received the UMass Archaeological Services study [on the Mariamante parcel]. I presume you have some comments. We’re here to listen to you.” About 20 Gill residents were in the room.

Doug Harris, preservationist for ceremonial landscapes for the Narragansett Indian Tribe, told Banash, “I’d like to thank you for making it possible for us to speak to you. Our purpose for being here is to protect the interests of the ancients who utilized this land for hundreds of years, thousands, tens of thousands of years, since time

out of mind, time immemorial.”

Harris said the tribes have a responsibility to protect ceremonial landscapes and burial grounds. The Mariamante parcel is the likely site of an unusual “spokes burial” consisting of twelve graves arranged in a radiating pattern about two feet below the surface.

“Yours isn’t the only spokes burial,” said Harris, who mentioned another such interment in Charleston, WV. “They are rare. You have something very, very special that we hope you will be good stewards of. And we will look to assist you in any way we can to create the opportunity so that the bones and artifacts that were taken out of this place can be returned to their proper resting place.

“They may still be in collections, both private and public,” added Harris. “We hope people will step forward so these remains can go back in the ground.”

Harris also suggested putting a small pavilion on the land, with historical panels, so that “Native Americans and their allies would come to see where that spokes burial had been situated,” and so that “our children and all children can honor the place of the deceased.”

Montague Approves A School Budget

In a muddle of parliamentary procedure, the Montague town meeting on Wednesday approved a budget figure approximately \$182,000 less than the Gill Montague Regional School committee requested, for a total town assessment of \$7,120,370.

This figure represents an “affordable assessment” for the town, in light of declining state aid and dwindling reserves, said Michael Naughton, who spoke for the Montague finance committee in the absence of chair John Hanold.

The school committee has held a number of fractured votes on the budget, and chair Mike Langknecht said there is “no consensus” as to how it should proceed.

In the absence of a budget agreement as of July 1, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has imposed a so-called one-twelfth budget with an assessment for Montague of \$7,302,783. The DESE has passed along the word that this is the budget figure that will become final if the towns and schools do not reach an accord by December 1.

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GLOBAL from page A1

When a Collider was relocated to the Shea Theater in Turners Falls last October, the producers met Kathy Lynch and Dean Garvin, who live in Bartlett’s old farmhouse. The couple offered up their twelve-acre spread as a future venue.

“We came and walked Kathy and Dean’s land, and it was really clear at that point that we needed to produce an event here,” says Laudable producer Cassandra Holden. “It’s absolutely stunning, the history is really interesting, and there’s a way that you can move through the space and have a variety of experiences that’s unlike any other festival experience.”

Mor pitched the idea of a kind of field trip to Barbès, a Park Slope bar that has served as an incubator for immigrant musicians. Besides booking acts from other countries, Laudable has been building relationships with the New York-based scene.

“NYC is becoming a harder place for musicians to survive in,” he says. “They’re embracing these little New England tours as a great way of booking something outside the city that’s not too complicated.”

Though a bus is chartered to bring Barbès regulars up to Montague for the day, Mor says he expects the event to draw “90% from our Western Mass audience that comes to our Colliders and Planetary Parties.”

“The musicians like to come here because they recognize that people in Western Mass like to dance – a lot,” he adds. “I think the first half of the day is going to be way more chill, and as it cools down, we’re going to get into hours of dancing.”

Holden and Mor are nonchalant when asked how large an audience they expect to attend Barbès in the Woods.

“This is Year One,” says Holden. “This is the demonstration project. If

we have 1,000 people, that’s great – that means we have plenty of room for people to spread out and experience this place, and build a relationship with the town.”

As we tour the property, the organizers point out the uses of different spaces: an area that will serve as an entrance gate; clearings for the food and beer tent and port-a-potties; a large, sloping lawn for the main stage (“facing away from the road,” Lynch is quick to point out); blackberry brambles for foraging; a path down to a relaxing bend of the Sawmill River, where there are benches and a pit for a campfire; and a dark grove of silent, standing walnut trees.

“When I had little girls, we said this was a fairy grove,” says Lynch.

This shaded wood is the site of an intermission stage, where the Stephane Wrembel trio will play gypsy jazz, Big Lazy their moody, instrumental “Americana noir,” and Slavic Soul Party a special after-dark set.

“I think it’s going to be interesting for musicians, because it feels like you’re playing to an audience of trees and people,” Mor muses.

The bands, craft breweries, and food vendors will not be the only fare provided. Under the auspices of Eggtooth Productions, a troupe of twelve performers with the Fine House Theater Company plan “immersive one-on-one theatrical experiences in the nooks and crannies in between the major musical events,” according to director and choreographer Lori Holmes Clark.

“I’m excited about providing a sensory break, so people can kind of reframe and enjoy each of the bands fresh,” says Holmes Clark, a former Broadway understudy who now lives at Clarkdale Fruit Farm.

“We’re really encouraging people to get up and walk the property,” says Holden.



Mor contemplates the unsettling interiority of the walnut grove, a space that will serve as a second “intermission” stage throughout the day.

The festival will run from 1 to 11 p.m., followed by an afterparty at the Alvah Stone, which is open to the public. Stephane Wrembel will play another set at the restaurant.

The neighborhood logistics are complicated somewhat by the fact that the festival shares a date with Montague Old Home Days, centered a block away on the village common.

Laudable has been working with the town on a plan for offsite parking, and Lynch, who attends the Congregational Church, which sponsors Old Home Days, stresses that its organizers “were very generous in their attitude.”

“They came to the table,” she says. “They moved the parade a little bit.... I think what will happen is people will come, park, and probably walk through Old Home Days. They would have a blast there: get a burger, maybe buy a raffle ticket. This might give the church a little financial boost, too – that’s our intended effect.”

“If you don’t eat the fried dough at Old Home Days,” Lynch adds,

“there’s something wrong with you!”

Those who save room, though, will find vendors onsite such as Cor-sello Butcheria, Hearth + Timber Pizza, and Ginger Love Cafe, and the Clarkdale Fruit Farm.

As an added gesture of cooperation, Laudable is offering deeply discounted admission for all residents of Montague, including Turners and Millers Falls. The face price for Barbès in the Woods tickets is \$80 – \$75 in advance; \$20 for ages 7 to 16, and free for younger children. But anyone who goes to the Montague Village Store with proof of residence – a driver’s license or utility bill – is eligible for \$20 tickets.

“We acknowledge there are a lot of folks in the area for whom to bringing a family to an event with a \$75 ticket is a real lift,” says Holden. “We really want everyone in Montague to feel invited.”

“It’s important to bring events like that to smaller places,” says Lynch, “so people can experience diversity of culture: see people that don’t look like them, listen to music that

ERVING from page A1

After discussing state election law with town clerk Richard Newton, the board voted to set a special election for the earliest legally possible date, Tuesday, October 8, to fill the balance of the three-year term.

There is still a vacancy on the town school committee, a position for which Bastarache turned down a write-in nomination this spring. Both positions will appear on the October 8 ballot.

Candidates must turn in nomination papers by August 20.

Keys for First Responders

Under a new program, the Erving Fire department will install Knox HomeBoxes free of charge for all Erving residents who want them. “We’re the first department in Franklin County to do it,” firefighter/EMT Brandon Breault told the selectboard on July 29.

Knox HomeBoxes are small metal boxes attached to a residential doorway. They hold keys to the residence, allowing emergency responders to get into a locked house during a fire or medical emergency without damaging the building. The master keys that will open boxes in Erving will be held by the fire department.

The first eight boxes, which cost from \$167 to \$183 each, were bought using a state Department of Fire Safety “Senior Safe” grant; eight more boxes will be purchased with fire department funds, and some additional ones will be purchased by the Friends of the Erving Senior Center.

Asked about the security of the boxes, fire captain Ryan Betters said the boxes were “very secure” and “rugged.” He mentioned a video of a box being hit repeatedly with a sledgehammer without opening.

According to the fire department’s brochure, “We plan to build out our program every year until we have reached the needs of all of our residents interested in a Homebox.”

The department has established a waiting list for installation of the boxes. Residents may also buy a box for themselves at the *knox-homebox.com*. Betters said that, initially, the fire department has been contacting elderly and less-mobile residents to see if they want a box installed.

Both Breault and Betters encouraged residents to contact them at Erving station #1 or station #2 for more information about the HomeBoxes, or to sign up for one.

Paper Mill Fuel

Two representatives of Erving Industries – environmental manager Julie Hubbard and boiler room engineer Nate Haley – came to Monday’s meeting for a hearing of their company’s application to alter its license to store explosive and inflammable materials.

In 2015, Hubbard said, the company altered its license so that it could store diesel, or “#2 oil,” in a 20,000-gallon tank and a 30,000-gallon tank, and a heavier “#6 oil” that fuels a backup boiler in another 30,000 tank. The plant is primarily powered by natural gas.

Since that time, Hubbard said, the plant has been subject to “curtailment” of its gas more frequently than expected during cold spells, causing it to rely more on diesel. The diesel “goes by real fast,” Haley noted, and Hubbard said this had resulted in “pretty close calls” waiting for oil delivery trucks.

The company is now asking permission to store diesel in the third tank.

After brief discussion, and no comments from the public, the selectboard unanimously signed off on the idea. There are two weeks to appeal the decision, and the company must still secure the approval of other agencies including the state fire marshal.

Later in the meeting, the selectboard also approved an amended agreement, discussed at previous meetings, between the town and Erving Industries regarding fees at the wastewater

plant the company operates for the town.

Roads and Sidewalks

The selectboard discussed on Monday a major planned construction project on River, Warner, and Strachan streets, the Ervingside neighborhood of the former Millers Falls Tool Company. Engineering plans from Weston & Sampson are in hand, as is an estimate of about \$650,000 for the entire project. Between already-appropriated funds and state Chapter 90 highway money, which Erving has received special permission to save up from year to year for the project, the town is around \$200,000 short.

Bastarache called the gap “substantial.” “It is a substantial project,” administrative coordinator Bryan Smith replied. He said the project was “no-frills,” the neighborhood’s first major modernization.

The officials discussed a timeline for the project, and agreed to begin discussing it with property owners and abutters in September, bumping the work itself to at least next spring rather than this fall, and seeking alternate grants. “We have enough projects running,” Bryan Smith said.

Bastarache said he wondered whether the town would be penalized if it rolled Chapter 90 money over for several years for the project and then funded it from another source.

Other Business

On Monday, two new police officers were sworn in: Amanda Flowers and Christopher Miner.

After Newton administered their oath, police chief Christopher Blair asked the selectboard to consider asking a special town meeting to appropriate funds so that the two could both attend police academy in the spring semester. Blair made the case that the town should “bite the bullet and send them both together”: they could carpool, study together, and bond.

doesn’t sound like what they listen to, meet new people and have new experiences. It broadens our perspective of what the world could be.”

Even before this month’s experiment, the Bartlett Farm has had an interesting afterlife. The colonial farmhouse was occupied by a commune in the 1970s – many former residents are still in the area, including Lisa Limont, who is on hand during preparations, and hints at a performance role.

“There was a real nice neighborhood feel,” Limont remembers of her youthful days on the property.

And for his own part, Edgar Bartlett was not only a farmer but an active citizen who led Montague Center into the 20th century. He served as the first secretary of the Grange, a selectman and school committee member, and president of the Montague Cooperative Creamery Association, and he helped build and manage the village’s water district and street light system. According to the *Turners Falls Reporter*, Bartlett traveled to the 1893 Columbian World Exposition in Chicago, and in 1902 he had his farmhouse wired for electricity – way ahead of the curve.

“E.L. Bartlett has cleaned out the underbrush in his grove a little south of the village, putting in some seats and tables, grading the grounds and making an attractive stopping place for picnickers and travellers,” the newspaper reported in 1898. The following year, it noted the farmer had “kindly furnished water for both man and beast, at Spring Grove, free of all expense to the town...”

This may be our best indication that Bartlett would look fondly down on hundreds of travelers dancing ecstatically in his hayfield, though the item did go on to report that “some miscreant or miscreants have carried off the drinking cups.”



The board seemed amenable to the proposal. Bembury, a former police officer himself, said that when he attended the academy, he “envied the groups that had... more than one officer with them. It was a lot easier for them.”

Water and wastewater superintendent Pete Sanders came to the selectboard with a proposal to purchase a new, larger, truck for his department. The existing pickup is seven years old, in good shape, but too small to haul equipment and staff, Sanders explained. “None of us are small children anymore,” he joked, asking for a truck with a four-door rather than a two-door cab.

The board voted unanimously in favor of the procurement, and advised that the current truck be kept temporarily, rather than traded in, suggesting the new officers could use it to carpool to the police academy.

The board also approved a permit for Jesse Sands of Insight Solar to go door to door selling residents on the idea of solar power. “Chief Blair has reviewed this first,” Bryan Smith noted, in response to a question about a question on the solicitation application pertaining to prior criminal records.

Low bidder Authorized Services of New England will supply an emergency propane generator to the water department wellhouse for \$27,586.

Bryan Smith told the board on June 29 that Tighe & Bond personnel had spent a day inspecting the former IP Mill on Papermill Road. Smith said that Tighe & Bond would provide the town with a proposal for hazardous material cleanup at the former mill.

This week he returned with the outline of a plan. A draft procurement would go out later this month, with the goal to bid the project out in September. PCB remediation should take place in the fall, he said, though some work, such as asbestos removal, can take place during the winter. The project is funded with a MassDevelopment grant and the work should be done by June.



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MONTAGUE from page A1

Boutwell remarked, upon seeing the map.

Zellmann said he was at an Erving house fire when the initial call came in. “Montague Center responded, thinking it was just a normal storm, and they contacted Eversource,” he said. “Eversource... got on scene, and requested a response that I haven’t seen in many years. I want to give them kudos for a job well done.”

Zellman said over 800 customers lost power, and 12 emergency calls came over the 911 system. Eversource line crews and tree crews joined with the Montague DPW to address the damage. Workers cut power on Meadow Road, cleared trees and debris, and re-hung downed wires.

Most of the damage was to roofs, but an “entire tobacco barn” belonging to Nourse Farms ended up on Mills Ferry Road, said Zellmann. “Part of it was still wrapped around a broken telephone pole that was energized, so after the power was cut, we cleared that the following day,” he reported.

The department used drones, from Greenfield and the state Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), to map the damage. “There were quite a few crops that were destroyed,” Zellmann said, adding that he hadn’t received estimates of the cost to farmers, but hoped to soon.

Town administrator Steve Ellis said the airport suffered equipment loss through lightning strikes. “Preliminary estimates of what is known to have been damaged are under \$5,000,” he said, adding that insurance is expected to cover the loss.

Board member Mike Nelson, attending by speakerphone, seconded Zellmann’s remark that while the damage was significant, it could have been much worse if town centers were hit. “I’ve got to say this particular incident was definitely one of the most well-organized and fastest responses I’ve ever seen,” he said. “I give huge kudos to Eversource and the Montague DPW for doing such a great job.”

Zellman said the town departments used cell phones to communicate during the incident, and he recommended restoring radio system interoperability between the fire and highway departments. “We used to have it years ago,” he said. “Fire went onto the county system, which put us into a different frequency range.”

Montague resident Betty Tegel, an advocate for access and opportunity for those with disabilities, announced a public workshop to “learn about emergency response resources and procedures.”

The workshop, scheduled for Wednesday, September 25 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Turners Falls fire department, is presented in partnership with the state Office on Disability. Attendees will receive a free “emergency go pack” and a book of tips for first responders. Seating is limited, and those wishing to attend should contact fire captain Kyle Cogswell at (413) 863-9023, or inquire at the

public safety station. Accommodation requests must be made by September 4.

Tegel said she would send the information to local human service agencies, and requested it be posted on the town website. She said she hoped for diverse participation to “ensure that people with disabilities [and others] have the assistance they need in times of emergency.”

Zellman ended his presentation with a warning. “I think these events are going to continue to happen on a regular basis,” he said. “I hate to be that way, but the weather seems to be changing on us.”

“We’re certainly seeing more severely-impacted weather-related events over the last several years, in ours and other communities,” board chair Rich Kuklewicz agreed. “So we certainly need to be prepared.”

Moldy Opera House

Repairs at the town-owned Colle Opera House building and adjacent Cutlery Block are nearly completed, with some minor adjustment for mold issues. Ellis brought a request for a change order from Renaissance Builders for the Colle project, which is expected to be completed during the last week of August.

Preservation architect Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno, who brought in a demonstration brick, explained that the \$5,324 change order was “all about improving the brownstone.” “Mold had begun to form some time ago,” he said. “With all the humidity we had this winter and spring, and now with the heat, the mold is rapidly increasing.”

Sawyer-Lauçanno recommended a product called “Shield Green” to eliminate the mold and strengthen the stone – “it’s a pretty amazing product, and it also comes with a pretty amazing price,” he said – and that the entire area be coated with a custom product from a Dover, NH-based company called Conproco. The board approved the change order, and Ellis asked Sawyer-Lauçanno to contact the Franklin Regional Transportation Authority about the new end date. Sawyer-Lauçanno said the lift should be moved off the street to the sidewalk in front of the Cutlery Block this week.

Kuklewicz praised the “excellent job” done by the company, which emerged from the Renaissance Community, a spiritual group which owned the opera house in the 1970s. “It strikes me, with Renaissance doing the work, that the ownership and the repair of the building have kind of come full circle,” he said.

“Cumby’s” Building

Town planner Walter Ramsey came to “request authority from the board to issue a request for expressions of interest for 38 Avenue A, also known as the former Cumberland Farms property.”

Ramsey said the Montague Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC), which owns the property on behalf of the town, met after Crab Apple Whitewater dropped out of the bidding “due to

delays in the relicensing process of FERC.”

Crab Apple had proposed to use the building as a headquarters for rafting below the Turners Falls Dam, hoping that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will require FirstLight Power to divert less of the Connecticut River’s water into the power canal.

“This is prime real estate in downtown Turners Falls,” Ramsey continued. “The local market is doing quite well, and Turners has a good reputation, so the board felt like now is a good time to put out a formal request for expressions of interest... [The EDIC is] putting forth the vision the community has for the property, as articulated in the 2013 Livability Plan.”

Ramsey said the EDIC will compare the proposals of interested parties, and choose one that best meets the vision stated in the plan, which recommended demolition and building a new mixed-use structure on the site.

“This is less formal than [a public] bidding process would be,” Ramsey noted. “The EDIC has the authority to select one of these proposals, and work directly with them to sell the property.” The board authorized him to continue soliciting requests.

Global Music Fest

Laudable Productions, which is organizing the August 17 “Barbès in the Woods” festival at Montague Center (*see article, page A1*), received permission to temporarily place a high-tech sign in front of the Shea Theater. Laudable representative Cassandra Holden said she hoped the “Solstreet E Ink” bench and sign would help boost visibility and commerce for Montague Center.

The unit is solar powered, uses an electronic paper display similar to that used in e-readers, and includes USB ports for charging devices. “The screen requires very little power,” Holden said, “so we can show advertisements, and city announcements, things like that.”

Boutwell raised concerns about the structure’s stability. “How much does the whole thing weigh?” he asked. “If we have a storm that goes through, is it going to end up on the bridge?”

Holden said the unit, made largely of aluminum, is rated through 80-mph winds.

“These are in locations like Times Square,” said Ellis, “where security, durability of the item, ability to fly through a crowd at a hundred miles an hour in wind, et cetera, have to be measured and thought of.”

The unit will operate from August 10 through 17, and Holden suggested it could return for events such as Cider Days and the Great Falls Festival. She and co-producer Kyle Homstead also discussed parking plans for the festival, which is scheduled for the same day as Montague Old Home Days, along with electrical and building permits for a stage and generators. Police chief Chris Williams joined them at the table to discuss concerns

Montague Old Home Days



Montague Center, Massachusetts

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 2019

7:30 a.m.
8:30 a.m.
8:35 a.m.
9 a.m.
11 a.m.
11:30 a.m.
12:30 p.m.
1 p.m.
2 to 4 p.m.
4:15 p.m.

Mug Race Registration
Mug Race Start
Mini Mug Race Start
Quilt Show, Craft Vendors, Games
Celtic Heels
Birds of Prey, Tom Ricardi
Old Home Days Parade
Corki & Ken, Acoustic Folk Duo
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over parking at three chosen sites: one for volunteers and artists, and private properties on South Street and Old Greenfield Road.

Williams said he was concerned about the South Street site. “How are [festival-goers] going to access that?” he asked. “It looks like they’re going to have to trim some trees, and there is no access off of Route 63. I saw that there are two inlets, but they’re pretty narrow, and if someone has a nice car, it’s going to get all scratched up.”

Williams said the parking on Old Greenfield Road adds “much more space, and is a better walk, I think.”

Holden said the South Street property will be cleared, with visible signage and volunteers to wave cars in. She added that the Old Greenfield Road site “brings the majority of our festival pedestrians past the Bookmill, which I think will be good for those establishments.”

“Three people will be in radio communication at each parking location,” Homstead said, “one to control access, and two to get cars arranged in the right way. We’ll also position a couple of volunteers with flashlights along the way.”

Betty Tegel asked about the venue’s accessibility for those with limited mobility, saying she hoped coordinators will include signs for access close to the festival site. Holden said that there will be limited handicapped spots on the site, and those without handicap-access placards could be dropped off, as the grounds will be fully accessible.

Two teams from the Montague Center fire department will be at the festival. “Chief Hansen also said that he’s walked the grounds and has no concerns,” Kuklewicz reported. “He feels good about the preparedness of the site.”

According to Homstead, Berkshire Bateria, a traditional Brazilian-style percussion troupe, will be on loan from the festival for the Old Home Days parade.

All Montague residents are eligible for deeply discounted tickets to the festival. They can access the tickets by bringing proof of residency to the Montague Village Store.

Other Business

Updated plans for a MassWorks grant, due this Thursday, will be on next month’s agenda. “It’s going to be a really strong application, I think,” Ramsey told the board. “The engineering firm is doing very well.”

Ellis requested the board execute a \$12,000 agreement with Adams and Ruxton Construction company for work on the Millers Falls Library. The contract allows work to begin “most likely next week,” he said.

Ellis also said he was excited about a successful earmark of \$25,000 in the FY’20 state budget for much-needed repairs to the Unity Field House roof. “We’re very fortunate, and we cannot thank Representative Blais’ office, and her chief of staff, Lily Wallace, enough,” he said.

If approved at a special town meeting this fall, the funding will help offset the total cost of repairs, which Ellis anticipates being between \$85,000 and \$100,000.

A participation fee of \$5,500 for the Franklin County Solid Waste District’s annual hazardous waste collection day was approved. The collection will take place on Saturday, September 21 at Greenfield Community College’s main campus and the Orange transfer station.

The board approved a request by member Michael Nelson to operate a “toll booth” at Avenue A and Seventh Street on the morning of September 28, to solicit funds for the Great Falls Festival.

A request for a selectboard representative to the Franklin Regional Planning Board was tabled until the next meeting while the town finds an appropriate appointee.

A scheduled executive session was not required.



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NOTES FROM THE LEVERETT SELECTBOARD

The Use of History

By ROB SKELTON

Susans Lynton and Mareneck of the Leverett historical commission discussed the recently-completed town historic survey and a \$3,000 Mass. Humanities grant with the selectboard at its August 6 meeting. Town administrator Marge McGinnis was absent.

“We want to bring you up to date,” said Mareneck, with some of the ideas they’ve been batting around.

Lynton described a “going back to our roots,” where decentralized hamlets are encouraged, via zoning and planning, to redevelop – with cluster housing and services – into the walkable lifestyle of eras past.

“Adaptive re-use of historic assets” is ongoing in Uxbridge and Shelburne Falls, they said, including the “Mill District” in North Amherst. Slarrow’s Mill in North Leverett center, listed for sale by its owners the Kirleys, could be a brewery; the developer Cinda Jones was scoping it out recently, it was noted.

Leverett’s history, in many minds agrarian, is actually one of machine shops and cloth factories in water-powered hollows. The state grant will pay for a UMass-Lowell labor historian’s investigation.

“We want to bring these ideas to the people of Leverett,” said Lynton. Mareneck said they’d like to do a survey of homeowners along the river, and learn from them what artifacts might be on their property.

At this point someone mentioned a zipline on the Gutter – a “one-way zip, of course,” added selectman Tom Hankinson.

“If we open the door to these conversations, that could be very exciting,” said Mareneck.

“We need nice retail space,” said selectwoman Julie Shively.

“We want a place to go in town” is the takeaway from annual surveys of graduating sixth graders over time.

Board chair Peter d’Errico asked if they’d gone to the planning board – the source, he implied, of the town’s resistance to development.

Lynton suggested a picnic with the planning board.

“We had three stores and two gas stations when I first got here,” recalled Shively.

Labor Trade

Resident Sam Karlin asked to use the town hall for a play rehearsal for free, since his non-profit group decided they couldn’t afford the \$25 fee.

Shively pointed out the problematic nature of its precedent; d’Errico noted a clean-up failure at the first date would moot the remaining three.

In concert, the selectboard extracted from the cheapskate producer a promise to provide ten cast members to weed the “disastrous overgrown garden at the public safety complex. That’d be something of big value, and it would be highly visible,” said Shively.

Reparation

A document clarifying the town’s negligence in communicating insurance minutiae to the teachers’ union, resulting in monetary and coverage losses for the teachers, on which the town made good, was okayed by the board, with Shively voting against.

“I’m fine with the language [of the *mea culpa*], but I’m not fine with giving them a cut of the town’s savings,” she said.

Dead Vegetation

Selectman Hankinson briefed the board about a poison called ProcellaCOR, which has been released into Leverett Pond to control vegetation. Hankinson said the herbicide was “highly specific, and highly effective.”

Now there is a slough of dead vegetation which will need to be removed. A contract has been signed for hydroraking the pond for up to 20 hours, at \$190 per hour. The selectboard voted to kick in for two of those hours from a discretionary fund.

Hankinson also noted that the Friends of Leverett Pond have installed a boat rack at the pond’s south end, to be administered by the library with help from the Co-op.

Other Business

The selectboard shrugged off two “findings of non-compliance” and one “issue of concern” involving rehabilitation loans administered by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. “Hands will be slapped appropriately,” said d’Errico.

The board approved a letter to the



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editor slamming the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School’s lawsuit versus the state board of education for a denial of expansion. “They have all this money for lawsuits, and we’re going broke,” d’Errico lamented.

Will Stratford was thanked again by the board for filling in while the town finds a new road boss, as David Finn has taken a job repairing diesel engines in Greenfield. Stratford is a former Leverett road boss who left for medical reasons, and is now feeling better.

Shively noted a particular pothole to fix, as did Hankinson, on Shutesbury Road.

“I haven’t been on Shutesbury Road in a long time,” Stratford said. “I’m a North Leverett guy.”

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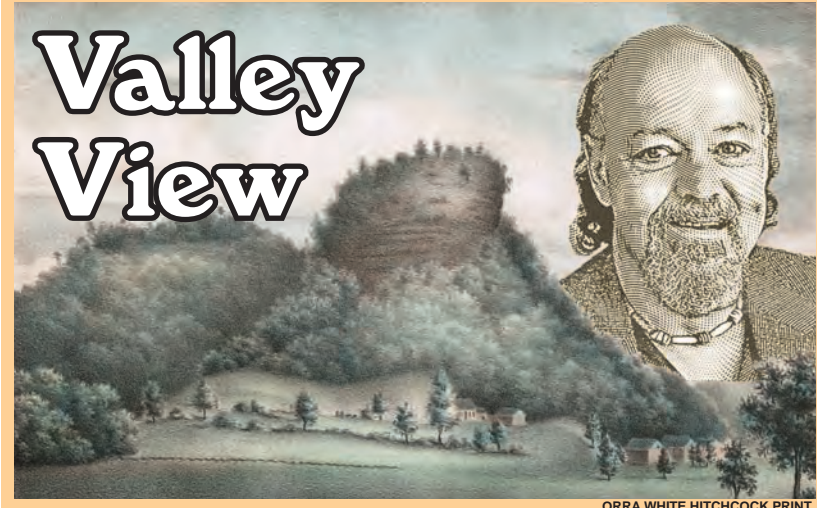
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By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – So, what exactly does a retired man with time on his hands do during the sultry dog days? That was a recent question asked of me in passing.

I can't say I gave a thoughtful answer. The questioner wasn't expecting one. Just marketplace small talk to which I responded with a playful quip. You know. Something like, "As little as possible," or, "Trying to stay out of mischief." Ha-ha.

Hours later, as the setting sun cast me into dusky introspection, I revisited the question and internally answered it.

I try to remain productive, though at a slower, steadier pace than when work loomed largest. I still read a lot, write a little, and chat face-to-face, by phone or email. I also discipline myself to pick away at a chore or two a day, trying not to overburden myself with drudgery. Plus, there's always the little stuff – caring for pets, winding, oiling and regulating antique clocks, feeding the woodstove in winter, keeping the house cool in summer, airing out the barn when the sky is high and dry. I pick berries when ripe and water the Roma tomato daily, suckering and tying as needed.

I even cleaned out the barn this summer. Long overdue. Finally, after 22 years of procrastination fueled by the responsibility of stewarding historic property, I concluded that I did not have, and likely would not find, a use for the barn accumulation left behind by former generations. With my wife's assistance, I realized reminiscence had become clutter.

So, we went to work, selling some contents to dealers and reorganizing what was left. It put a little cash in our pocket for miscellaneous expenses like fruit and vegetable runs. There's more. A couple dump runs will clear the stables, especially in the four not-so open stalls. Then, alas, a tidy, organized barn, its cupola and open chestnut framing a statement to its historic New England character.

I view all the aforementioned as mindless routine, though rewarding, mundane chores that must be done. Yet never can I put such chores in a league with reading and researching and studying the place where I was born and call home.

I'm talking about towns like Deerfield and Greenfield, Whately and Conway. But it goes deeper, expanding into Franklin County and the Pioneer Valley, Massachusetts, New England and the Northeast. Then there are the rivers: the Connecticut, Deerfield and Green, Millers and Westfield, Ashuelet and West, even the Merrimack and Penobscot. They're all connected in a sense of place that drives me.

Everything revolves around place, inspiring my reading, travels and discourse. When you think of it, what do you really know if you don't understand your place? It must be a lonely, hollow existence for those who move so often that they never find one that's theirs.

In recent weeks, there's been an enticing historical buzz in the air. Lots of little ongoing projects that you don't hear much about. As a result, I reread two books and, at the telephone suggestion of independent archaeologist Mike Gramly, added one to my library that, having finished it, I know should have been purchased long ago. I thought it was "dated." Uh-uh. Not for the most part.

My first reread was Harral Ayres' *The Great Trail of New England*, a hard-to-find 1940 study of the Indian footpath that led Puritan pioneers to the Connecticut Valley, where, between 1633 and '35, they settled Windsor, Hartford, Wethersfield, and Springfield. I remember buying the title from the Brattle Street Bookstore years ago. I had spotted a 1939 ad in the "Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society," and hunted it down online. One copy available. Not cheap. Worth it.

My renewed interest in the indigenous footpaths that greeted New England pioneers to these shores and led them up and down the coast and inland was spurred by recent interaction with an energetic group of Conway Historical Commissioners and local-history sleuths tracing the town's oldest roads and cellar holes. All Connecticut Valley towns on both sides of the river, in the flatlands and hills, were settled along such foot-wide paths that greeted pioneers. These trails evolved into bridal and cart paths, county and town roads and turnpikes.

Although Ayres' book doesn't venture this far north, it see **VALLEY VIEW** page B4

Fairies Plan Big Day on Avenue A, World Premiere of "The Lovelights"

By ANNE HARDING

TURNERS FALLS – Imagine one afternoon sitting on your front porch with your grandchildren when one of them shouts, "Look, Nan! That man has a giant chicken in his truck!"

Highly skeptical, I watched the truck do a U-turn just past my house and pull in across the street. Sure enough, a young man stepped out, walked around to open the passenger door, and brought out not only a chicken, but a turkey.

Lights! Camera! Action! An episode from the upcoming premiere of *The Lovelights* was unfolding before our eyes. This show, produced for community access TV, is set in Turners Falls, and next Saturday, August 17 will be a daylong celebration of the project. The first episode will be aired for the first time at Peskeumskut Park.

The series, still in development, celebrates art, music, nature, friendship, kindness, curiosity, and community. Written by *Montague Reporter* children's page editor Beverly Ketch, *The Lovelights* is about a family of quirky, artistic, and magical sisters who discover fairies living in their town, and embark on a series of adventures.

Hannah Brookman, an editor at Montague Community Television, is the show's producer. *The Lovelights* also received a grant from Northampton Community Television to help with production. They have been using equipment from both stations as well as Greenfield Community Television, and have collaborated with John Ancil of FastLights using their studio, greenscreen, and lighting equipment.

The scene I witnessed with my grandchildren included several of the Lovelight sisters and their neighbor Mr. Harbinger, played by Joel Paxto, who was taking his pet turkey out for a walk on a leash. Abby Rusk and Effie Paxton operated the camera for most of the shoot. Two of the Lovelight sisters – Chella, played by Ketch, and Viola, played by Brookman – rode through the scene on an ancient bicycle built for two. Dot Lovelight, played by Erica Pinto, rollerskated along with them.

It wasn't long before my grandchildren, Jaxson Giard and Sophia Voudren-McKusick, were urged to ride a vintage tricycle down the sidewalk as part of the scene.

Humble Beginnings

I've had the good fortune to be on the periphery of this three-year long adventure. Six years ago Beverly Ketch, my neighbor, held a fairy house building event and dance at see **FAIRIES** page B2



The local-access television show, set in Turners Falls, debuts next Saturday.



Velouria Menegoni plays Flora, the graceful and responsible fairy.



By LESLIE BROWN

WELLS BEACH, ME – It's a whole other life at the beach. Folks come in a unified mind: get a suntan, watch the ocean, swim in it or else at the motel pool, eat out, and party mildly.

Wells Beach is a fairly sedate, small neighborhood of a two mile or so radius off of Route One. There are three motels, four bed and breakfasts, and several hundred private homes and cottages that families from out of town and

THE GARDENER'S COMPANION Summer's Beach Therapy

state inhabit in the summer and maybe rent out when they are not. In the winter it is a majorly quiet, little-inhabited couple of miles a bit off Route One which is basically empty, although there are some year-round homes. You can tell which are the year-rounders, as they are built of a more hardy frame, look winterized, and have storm windows and chimneys.

The community, the local grocery, and restaurants depend on the income from summer visitors who come from Canada (no beaches on the ocean there), everywhere in New England, New York and New Jersey, as well as some stalwart folks from further afield.

When a large group of people are of the same mind, it creates a tight community.

Of course, there are those amaz-

ingly annoying people who manage to spoil an ocean vacation: loud drunks; people with screaming children who slap them for their behavior, thus exacerbating the problem; folks who barely cover themselves and manage to embarrass the rest of us with all that flesh. We try not to look, but somehow end up looking anyway.

Then there are the hordes who insist on traveling with their dogs. Dogs are allowed to enjoy the beach from early morning until eight and then again from late afternoon until the beach is closed at eleven p.m. We love dogs with the best of them, but of course walking in dog excrement is nobody's pleasure. And as we all know, there are people and small children who are afraid of them. Never mind the loud see **GARDENER'S** page B2

Pets of the Week



Brothers Boo and Sebastian came to Dakin when their family was no longer able to care for them. Since these two cats are best friends, they need to find a home where they can stay together. To sweeten the deal, Dakin is offering them as 2-fur-1. That’s two awesome cats for only one adoption fee!

Their family said:

“Boo and Sebastian are playful and sweet with each other and with humans. They are like dogs, they

come when you call their names and both like to be in the same room or area where you are. They have also lived with dogs, and do very well. When a visitor arrives, you can hear the boys galloping on the floors to greet the guest!

“We know wherever the boys land, they will fill your home with laughter and joy.”

Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

FAIRIES from page B1

Unity Park. Many of the K Street youngsters were involved. Their fascination with fairies was not limited to the event, and soon Ketch was writing a story about the Lovelights sisters.

There are six Lovelights: Chella, the dreamer; Viola, the creator; Elda, the listener; Dot, the wild one; Novella, the thinker; and Cordelia, the plucky youngest sister. They are accompanied from time to time by their cousins, twin sisters Veranda and Bandana; a somewhat melancholy neighbor, Mr. Harbinger; and the villain Pritty Please, the demanding Select Board Woman of Turners Falls, and an all-around baddie.

It was around this time Ketch met Brookman and shared her ideas and soon the two were collaborating to enter a pilot program for an Amazon competition. At the same time, they were both involved in the formation of the Greenfield non-profit art space Looky Here. They shared their ideas about the Lovelights program with their fellow Looky Here board members, and Abby Rusk and Sarah Lanzilotta were soon involved. Word spread to friends, and the roles of the various sisters, cousins, neighbors, and of course bad characters were filled.

Lanzilotta runs the Root Cellar in Greenfield when she’s not portraying the twin cousins, Veranda and Bandana. Rusk plays Elda, the listener and shy member of the family, who lives by the beach in a houseboat made from a giant clam-

shell. Rusk confided to me that her character isn’t really that shy, but rather has made friends with some mermaids, and is keeping it a secret from her sisters.

The deadline for the Amazon competition is long past, but the enthusiasm for the project continues. As the writer, Ketch says she often collaborates with two of the stars of the program, the young fairies Flora (Velouria Menegoni) and Fauna (Effie Paxton). I have seen these three working on the details of the program many times. I believe the girls were five or six when the collaboration started, and they’re now eleven.

Fairy Day Festivities

The day will start with the installation of fairy houses in the planters along Avenue A and in the park around noon, followed at 1 p.m. by a world premiere screening of “The Lovelights” indoors at Fastlights Studio on 47 J Street.

Prizes will be awarded for the “Most Beautiful Picnic” contest at 2 p.m., so bring on your best gourmet picnic ideas and most beautiful creations. Costumes are encouraged. The picnics will be judged by characters from the show (Mr. Harbinger, Pritty Please, and Cordelia).

The magic continues with a live-action Lovelights play, sponsored in part by the Montague Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, featuring the Lovelight sisters, their cousins, Mr. Harbinger, and fairies. In addition, there will be mermaids, pirates, a couple of narrators, a unicorn, several musicians, the sun, a rainbow and some clouds.

There will be all kinds of crafts, face painting, hula hooping, giant bubbles, and much more. There will be a butterfly release, and I’ve heard



Mr. Harbinger (Joel Paxton) walks his turkey in *The Lovelights’* first episode.

rumor that Mother Nature is going to show up.

The cast is very excited that young Annabel Cole, who stars as Cordelia Lovelight, will be able to attend the event. An accomplished young actress, she has been on tour with *Les Miserables* and has a role in the upcoming movie *In the Heights*, which will be released in 2020.

The fairy festivities continue into the night, with later activities as they light up the park with luminaries, electric capes, games, and more. A second outdoor showing of the debut episode will happen at 8 p.m., and live music and dancing will commence at 9 p.m.

And, a reminder – there will be a Fairy House Building Workshop at noon this Sunday, August 11 at Looky Here, 28 Chapman Street in Greenfield, in preparation for the next week’s big event!

Senior Center Activities

AUGUST 12 THROUGH 23

GILL and MONTAGUE The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted. Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs, call 863-9357. Messages can be left on machine when the center is not open. M, W, F: 10:10 a.m. Aerobics; 10:50 a.m. Chair Exercise T, W, Th: 12 p.m. Lunch Monday 8/12 8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot Clinic by appt 12 p.m. Knitting Circle Tuesday 8/13 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Senior Farm Share Pick Up Wednesday 8/14 12:45 p.m. Bingo Thursday 8/15 9 a.m. Tai Chi 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 1 p.m. Cards & Games 4 p.m. Mat Yoga Friday 8/16 12 p.m. Breakfast for Lunch Monday 8/19 8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot Clinic by appt 1 p.m. Knitting Circle Tuesday 8/20 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Senior Farm Share Pick Up 1 p.m. Ice Cream Social Wednesday 8/21 9 to 11 a.m. Veterans Outreach	12:30 p.m. Bingo Thursday 8/22 9 a.m. Tai Chi 10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga 1 p.m. Cards & Games 4 p.m. Mat Yoga Friday 8/23: Open ERVING Erving Senior Center, 1 Care Drive, Erving, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for activities and congregate meals. Lunch is at 12 p.m., with reservations required two days in advance. Call (413) 423-3649 for meal information and reservations. For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic. Monday 8/12 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 8/13 8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise 10 a.m. Stretch & Balance 12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich Wednesday 8/14 8:45 a.m. Line Dancing 10 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. Homemade Lunch 12:30 p.m. Bingo Thursday 8/15 8:45 a.m. Aerobics 9 to 11 a.m. SHINE 10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles 12 p.m. Congregate Lunch Friday 8/16 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 Monday 8/19 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 8/20 8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise 10 a.m. Stretch & Balance 12 p.m. Soup & Sandwich 12:30 p.m. Friends Meeting Wednesday 8/21 8:45 a.m. Line Dancing 10 a.m. Chair Yoga 12 p.m. Homemade Lunch 12:30 p.m. Bingo Thursday 8/22 8:45 a.m. Aerobics 9 to 11 a.m. SHINE 10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles 12 p.m. Congregate Lunch Friday 8/23 9 a.m. Quilting Workshop 9:15 a.m. Flex & Stretch 9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun 10:30 a.m. M3 Exercise Games 12 p.m. Lunch LEVERETT For information, contact the Leverett COA at (413) 548-1022, ext. 5, or coa@leverett.ma.us . Wednesday 10 a.m. Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation. WENDELL Wendell Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and upcoming programs. Call the Center for a ride.
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GARDENER’S from B1

snarling and barking which occurs often between protective family dogs in a new place.

But the pluses remain: gorgeous changing tides, the unique colors at the oceanside, fresh bracing air, and reliably sunny weather, by and large.

We sleep like babies in our three rooms, eat out at lunch, shop at the local Hannaford’s for things we cook at breakfast and in the evening, and spend hours walking near the beach, watching the changing tides and the sunsets at all of the quiet, less-attended hours of the day.

The ocean has a strong pull, whether primal or some built-in urge that calls to us. We connect but cannot say what it is but it is strong and healing. Being at oceanside helps us think without stress about issues or concerns or just lets us empty our heads and let the mind go where it will. This is all very restful. We don’t know if the effect would be the same if we lived there year-round; we’re thinking not. (When we first bought our house right on the river in town it was very novel, but that has since changed, and now it is really just part of where we live.)

We have a small three room part of a house, on the first floor, one block away from the beach. We have the comforts of a private bath, living room, small kitchen and bedroom combined. All you need and no more. After all, it’s all about being at the ocean.

You can buy groceries, use a pharmacy, go to the movies, eat at one of several seafood restaurants, and do laundry, all without returning to the annoying congestion of Route One. That’s fine by us, as we’re happy to

leave the pressures of the high traffic and speeding drivers to the necessary use of the above when getting from home to Wells Beach. After driving several hours on busy, fast-moving highways to get here, it makes for a refreshing week without ever taking the car out of our parking space.

Going away from home, leaving local worries behind us is great therapy. I have also distanced myself from health concerns and am actually feeling better.

Thinking about our current president and reading about other world news is instructive, but somehow not so much on our minds as we are away. People at the beach talk about every and any other thing except that. They are thinking and talking about the ocean, what tide it is, where a good restaurant is, the weather, and who’s having a party tonight. If engaged to discuss such things, they will, but that is not the reason they are there.

We all come for the ocean and the change and the chance to distance ourselves a bit from all that. It’s on the television news, but that’s not what we all watch. We watch the local news because it is interesting to see what other communities do to work on the same kinds of local concerns we do at home. Folks would rather talk about what they are doing right here, right now. It is a bit of a cocoon of comfort.

It has taken four days to get into this headset, and we only have three before we return. Clearly a week is not enough. Perhaps we should come up here several times a year for summer beach therapy.

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OUT OF THE PARK: August 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

UNITY PARK – Hello everyone, and happy summer. It certainly has been a hot one so far, but despite the warm temperatures, we’ve been having a great season. Camp is going fantastically, and our special events have been a huge hit.

Speaking of which, our third and final showing of **Movies In The Park** is scheduled for Friday, August 16 with *Cars 3* (G). Come early, as we will have live music provided by ZoKi until showtime. Movies In The Park has been a great partnership between MPRD, RiverCulture, and the Friends of Sheffield Elementary. Show times are at dusk, but get to the park early enough for a great spot. Be sure to bring a blanket or folding chair and refreshments will be provided while supplies last. We are more than thrilled by the response of this event, and look forward to planning next year’s program.

We’ll also be holding a **Competitive Style Swimming Mini-Camp** in mid-August for your competitive swimmer. The mini-camp has a competitive swimming approach, where participants will hone their skills in freestyle and individual medley strokes. Please note that this is not a learn-to-swim or swimming lesson program. Participants should be somewhat knowledgeable of all strokes and wish to broaden those skills for competitive team swimming. The camp goes from Monday, August 12 to Thursday, August 15, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Fees are \$45 for Montague residents and \$50 for non-residents.

We’ve also started registrations for our **Youth Soccer Program**. Montague residents may register now, with non-residents being placed on a waiting list. Our Youth Soccer Program includes Squirt Soccer (Grades K-2; Montague residents \$30, others \$35), Junior Travel Team (Grades 3-4; Montague residents \$45, others \$50), and Senior Travel Team (Grades 5-6; Montague residents \$55, others \$60). All teams are co-ed and schedules may vary.

On Saturday, August 10 we will also be holding our **Second Annual 3-on-3 Next Up Youth Basketball Tournament** at the Unity Park basketball court (rain date Sunday, August 11). There will be four divisions – Varsity, JV, 14U, and 12U – with a four-game guarantee/single elimination format. We’re no longer taking teams for the event, but if you want to watch some great basketball, swing on by. A huge thank you to Montague resident Joshua Morse for coordinating the event. Refreshments, supporting the event, will be available while supplies last.

That’s about it from here. Please note that our **Fall Programs Brochure** will be out soon, so be sure to log onto our webpage on *montague.net* or keep an eye out on our Facebook page.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, take some extra time off, and stay cool!

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



Our Monthly Libraries Listing is on vacation!
It will return in September.
Check your local library website for events.

TV REVIEW

Manifest (NBC)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – The TV show called *Manifest* involves a plane that disappears for five years, only it has been mere moments for the people on the plane. A kid named Cal on the plane hasn’t even aged a day.

It’s a major hit with people. I am one of the people who liked it. The show is so big of a hit on NBC that it broke the record of the most watched show in six years for the network. I know why: in a way, it resembles *Lost*, which was also a huge hit due to the mysteriousness about it.

Another reason this show is well liked could be the human drama involved, with people trying to rebuild after a mysterious event changes their lives. The TV series *4400* also had this, and I believe that is a part of why it had a reasonably successful run on TV.

Some of *Manifest*’s episodes have interested me more than others. When these individuals on the plane start to have what are called “callings,” I was interested. My favorite “calling” so far involved the heart recipient of a deceased friend

of one of the female individuals who was on the plane. She is a cop, and Cal’s aunt. She comes across this when she is investigating a robbery connected to the heart recipient.

It’s not really a terribly original concept, like the one in *God Friend-ed Me*. But it has things in it like I mentioned that have been wildly popular in other shows. *4400* got four seasons to its name, and *Lost* had six. Being on the air longer these shows would be great luck for *Manifest*. What exactly happened to these people on the plane? That question being answered should be a big help with that endeavor.

That particular mystery, I think, should make people tune in each Monday. Especially since the show doesn’t exactly just stick with the people on the plane investigating that each week. There has been a game-changing moment that I particularly enjoyed: they discover that the phenomenon that happened didn’t just include them.

Perhaps you should watch this episode online, along with the others, so you see all that has happened on *Manifest* for yourself.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Same Basic Problems Continue

Sunday, 7/21

5:11 p.m. Caller from Bangs Street states that he was threatened with violence by a neighbor. Involved male not currently home; left on a bicycle. Officers checking area. Parties are going to try to work things out with each other.

6:44 p.m. 911 caller reporting that her roommate just threw some dishes at her. Verbal argument. Parties agree to separate for the evening.

6:58 p.m. 911 caller reporting that he thinks he is about to get jumped by some other kids in a car. Officers checked area; unable to locate caller. Dispatch called him back and he gave three different locations where he was.

Monday, 7/22

7:10 a.m. Caller from Oakman Street states that there is a full-sized camper with its sides extended parked in the road. Stairs facing street have been moved. Camper was only staying one night; they are leaving today.

10:45 a.m. Caller from Old Northfield Road states that there is a bunch of glass bottles and trash across the road in the Montague Plains.

2:12 p.m. 911 caller reporting that someone has smashed in his vehicle’s windshield in the parking lot by the canal on Third Street. Damage appears intentional. Officer checking area for any cameras. Report taken.

Wednesday, 7/24

4:41 a.m. 911 caller reporting unknown male walking up and down Fourth Street yelling and screaming, possibly to himself. No one else can be seen. Units en route. Unfounded.

12:17 p.m. Report of silver Toyota Camry that has been sitting for at least an hour on Lake Pleasant Road, driver side door open, no one inside or around the vehicle. Units tied up; request Erving PD mutual aid. Officer checked length of road; no contact.

Erving PD also checked Lake Pleasant road; negative findings. Officer advises parties were picking blueberries; advises abundance of blueberry bushes in that area, and party in question was likely parked for that reason.

3:56 p.m. Caller reporting people setting off fireworks in front of the Brick House. Officer checked area; no fireworks going off.

5:24 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road requesting an officer to talk to their neighbor who is blowing grass into the road.

8:59 p.m. Shelburne Control advising car into guardrail by the bridge on South Prospect Street; unknown injuries. TFFD and AMR responding. Officer advises one occupant

fled the scene on foot and the other has gone into a house on South Prospect. A 29-year-old Millers Falls man was arrested and charged with operating under the influence of liquor; marked lanes violation; speeding; and leaving the scene of property damage.

Thursday, 7/25

12:17 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting that she saw a male on a bicycle steal the seat from another bicycle in the area. Caller’s neighbor reports that same male accosted her earlier when walking home. Officers en route. Report taken.

9:12 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street advising his medications were stolen while he was staying at a friend’s apartment. Caller not sure exactly what medications were stolen or when they were last filled. Caller advised to obtain a list of his medications from his pharmacy. Caller stated that he “just went through this with my son’s medications” and that he didn’t have to show anything; he could just get a report. Caller advised of documentation needed per officer.

3:45 p.m. Caller flagged down at Aubuchon Hardware; someone stole a weed wacker from the store’s tent sale. Description provided. Officer checked area and Patch; unable to locate male. Officers headed to G Street for follow-up investigation. Officer advises K9 sniff on Jeep. Item retrieved; officer en route back to Aubuchon’s to return the property.

4:53 p.m. Following a call from Family Dollar reporting that someone tried to steal something from the store, a 45-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with shoplifting by asportation.

Friday, 7/26

8:32 a.m. Caller from Federal Street reporting loud music coming from garage for past half hour. Resident was in process of leaving to take his children somewhere upon arrival; advised of complaint.

12:47 p.m. Caller from Family Dollar reporting subjects loitering in front of the store; advises same subjects were with suspect from yesterday’s shoplifting call. Caller advises group stated yesterday that they would return today and cause problems. Parties located and advised of consequences if this continues.

6:02 p.m. Caller states that she gave permission to a friend of her son’s to go and pick up her damaged vehicle from Rau’s. However, that person picked it up and then took it to a scrapyard and kept the money. Advised of

options.

Saturday, 7/27

12:24 a.m. Warrant arrest at Avenue A and Fourth Street.

12:54 a.m. Caller states that there is a fox that may be rabid in the area of Greenfield Cooperative Bank. Caller watched it go after one male, who had to run; it then turned and started to go towards the caller, who had to ride away on his bike. Area checked; unable to locate.

4:36 p.m. Caller looking for help getting rid of a dog that she no longer wants; requesting that animal control officer come to her apartment and take the dog. Explained to caller that this will take a little more effort on her part and ACO is not on duty again until Monday. Caller called back in an attempt to get the police to come take her dog. Advised caller to reach out to local animal shelters and vet hospitals and ask if they know of a place that could take the dog. If they find a place, there is a good chance the ACO can transport the dog when he is next on duty.

5:46 p.m. Walk-in party would like to show officer a video involving juveniles doing dangerous stunts on the roof of Hillcrest Elementary School. Officer went to the home of each of the involved juveniles and spoke to family members about the issue.

7:35 p.m. Multiple 911 callers reporting garage/structure on fire on Millers Falls Road. FD and PD responding. TF Fire Command advising that it is now under control.

9:06 p.m. Complaint re: large party with band playing and fireworks on Central Street. Residents advised of complaint; they will be shutting down the party very soon.

Sunday, 7/28

12:10 a.m. 911 caller reporting vehicle broken into behind Subway. Officer advises purse with personal items in it was taken. No damage to vehicle.

2:44 a.m. Report of three males standing out in parking lot on Fourth Street acting suspiciously. Units clear; three parties have gone inside for the night.

8:57 p.m. Caller reports that someone is setting off industrial-sized fireworks near G and Twelfth streets. Officer checked area; no one around.

9:30 p.m. Caller from Fifth Street requesting assistance with bat in house. Officer clear; bat has been removed.

Monday 7/29

2:48 a.m. 911 caller from Farren Care Center requesting assistance with removing a bat from a contained area on the ground floor. Caller ad-

vised by officer to keep bat contained there until maintenance arrives and have them open a door to let it out or to attempt to contact animal control officer later in the morning.

4:19 a.m. Report of some type of disturbance in the industrial park; yelling, hollering, and banging. Officer located noise coming from car in parking lot of Mayhew Tools. Investigated.

1:31 p.m. Caller states that a woman punched her in the back near the library on Avenue A. All involved parties spoken with. No assault; just a misunderstanding.

2:59 p.m. 911 caller reporting that he witnessed a vehicle strike a male party on a bicycle. Vehicle kept on going. AMR transporting one party; officers in area looking for vehicle.

Tuesday, 7/30

11:07 a.m. Caller from G Street reports that someone hit his vehicle at some point prior to last night. Advised of options.

1:58 p.m. Report of theft of jewelry and spare change that occurred Saturday night. Report taken.

2:52 p.m. First of fifteen calls reporting trees, poles, and wires down in Montague Center.

9:23 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street reporting that they were just beat up by a female party and several people are intoxicated. Second caller stated that they are in the house and a female party just bit them. Officer advises parties have been separated for the night.

Wednesday, 7/31

12:53 p.m. Report of three teenage males creating a disturbance outside the Brick House. One of the teens or one of their friends reportedly lit a cup on fire on the stairs, which has since been extinguished. Units spoke with staff at Teen Center.

1:54 p.m. Caller noticed two males smoking something earlier at Fifth and L streets, then noticed one of them had a fresh black eye. Subjects rode off together on bikes. Referred to an officer.

3:05 p.m. Caller reports that someone stole her daughter’s cell phone out of her purse while it was left unattended in the cart at the Salvation Army.

9:27 p.m. Caller from Montague City Road reporting their car is on fire. No one is in the vehicle. TFFD advised and responding.

Thursday, 8/1

8:54 a.m. Caller from Our Lady of Czestochowa Cemetery reports party on riding mower struck his vehicle with the mower. Officer clear; parties will be working this out on their own.

see MPD page B4

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MPD from page B3

1:22 p.m. Report of subject shoplifting phone charger from Family Dollar. Report taken.

2:12 p.m. Complaint re: white moving truck idling for past 20-30 minutes on G Street; caller concerned about emissions. Officer spoke with vehicle owner. He will be leaving in a few minutes.

8:17 p.m. Multiple callers reporting traffic jam on General Pierce Bridge. Cars refusing to back up. People have gotten out of their vehicles and are arguing. Parties spoken with; traffic cleared up.

Friday, 8/2

11:20 a.m. Caller from Lightlife Foods requesting officer to dispose of drug paraphernalia found on site; advises they believe they have identified the involved employee and expect a potentially violent

confrontation when the employee is spoken with. Advised caller that officers are en route and to hold off speaking with employee until they arrive.

Saturday, 8/3

12:40 a.m. 911 caller requesting police for unknown male in father's car in driveway. Another female in house confronted male and determined he is a relative of sorts. Male states he just needs to sleep in the car tonight. Females have no problem with this now that they know who it is. Units canceled.

10:17 a.m. Caller reporting laptop missing from home on Second Street; thinks she knows who took it. Advised of options.

3:20 p.m. Caller from F.L. Roberts reports that male party in store states they were assaulted at the park. Officer advises party was threatened in a

verbal confrontation, alcohol involved. Party advised of options.

9:28 p.m. Caller from Third Street requesting assistance with bat in house. Services rendered.

9:48 p.m. Caller from Great Falls Harvest requesting officer to remove male who is refusing to leave their business. State police advise they are on scene with MPD units. Officer advises party gone on arrival.

10:08 p.m. Officer checking suspicious vehicle at Railroad Salvage. Just a male and female talking by the river.

10:31 p.m. Caller from Third Street requesting assistance getting a bat out of their house. Officer advises unable to remove bat due to they were flying around. Clear.

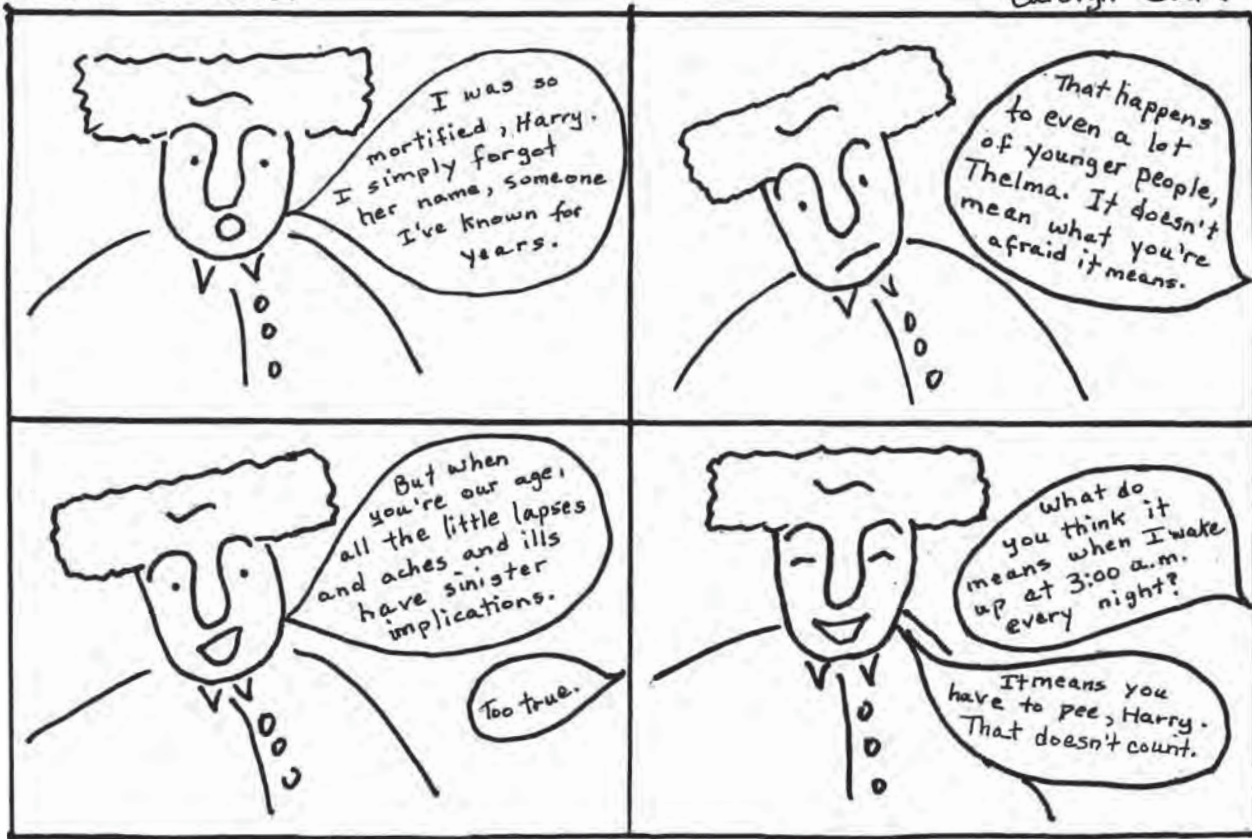


T-RUMP



OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark



be deciphered.

Still, what is certain is that the first colonial survey crew, explorers, fur traders, and settlers like Samuel Hinsdale and Samson Frary traveled to the Connecticut Valley by way of Ayres' trails. From Springfield, they took the trail through Westfield to Northampton and on to Hadley, Deerfield, and Northfield.

Enter Gramly, a paleontologist with a fascination of the Connecticut Valley that goes back at least 12,350 years – the radiocarbon-date attached to the Paleoindian “Sugarloaf Site” he has twice excavated along the Whately-Deerfield line. Gramly will implore, to anyone willing to listen, the importance of our valley in the North American archaeological record.

So, of course, he's game when the discussion turns to ancient indigenous trails leading to and along New England's largest river. Gramly speaks about such topics with unencumbered glee, not to mention venerable insight. Few understand the deep history and peopling of the Americas like Mike Gramly. Even fewer are willing to get their hands dirty, their shirt saturated, discovering more.

First and foremost, Gramly is a teacher – one who'll talk the night away to curiosities. He's a book author, publisher, and dealer, well-read with a personal library counting into the thousands, most of it archaeological and anthropological. Thus, he's a great source for suggested readings.

“I don't know if you own C.C. Willoughby's *Antiquities of the New England Indians* (1935),” he told me during a recent telephone conversation. “If not, you ought to. Though written long ago, it's relevant, and the author winds in and out of your valley.”

Cha-ching, I found one online, the gilt on the spine and cover bright and crisp, the binding, as my late father used to say, “Tight as the bark on a four-foot oak.”

Gramly was right. Willoughby

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shares much helpful information about Connecticut Valley Indians, their tools and culture, plus many detailed sketches of valley artifacts collected in Deerfield, Gill, Montague, Hadley, South Hadley, Holyoke, Springfield, Windsor, and Hartford. The illustrated relics were then housed at museums in Deerfield, Amherst and Holyoke, along with various Valley historical societies. I'd venture a guess that many of these treasures are no longer where Willoughby found them. Like so many priceless Museum artifacts, they were probably sold or pilfered out the back door long ago.

Reading Willoughby's narrative on Maine's mysterious “Red Paint People,” their cemeteries and culture, piqued my dormant interest in the topic and sent me to a bookcase for Bruce Bourque's *The Swordfish Hunters* (2012). I bought the book and had it autographed by the author at Gramly's last Sugarloaf Site dig in 2013. I immediately read it, and in June 2016 I hosted Bourque and Gramly overnight for a memorable Lake Hitchcock symposium at Eaglebrook School.

My reread of Bourque's groundbreaking work was far more meaningful than the initial read, when I was new to archaeology and barely knew the difference between a feature and an artifact.

Isn't it interesting how discovery missions get started? This time the impetus was a study of old Conway roads and older Deerfield deeds, discussions with scholars Thomas and Gramly, reading an old book, rereading another and a newer one, and melding the information into form. Yes, Ayres, Willoughby, and Bourque brought me home, with little nudges from Gramly and Thomas.

Although it's a fact that “Red Paint” cemeteries are a coastal phenomenon not found here, there were indeed Connecticut Valley burials marked with mortuary-ceremonial red ochre. So, a form of “red paint” in a similar context does indeed show up here... What does it mean?

This search, and all of its diversions, are a work in progress. It's addictive and underway, new information continually tweaking the narrative. I must keep reading, following leads from people who know more than me and asking questions, many questions, all related to this place, one where my occidental DNA is found in most of the oldest graveyards.

There's lots to learn from those “historic” burial grounds reaching back 300 or 400 years, yet far more from our indigenous prehistory that digs some 13,000 years deeper.



VALLEY VIEW from page B1

describes the major artery from Boston to Hartford and New York, and mentions the tributaries leading to Brookfield, Lancaster, and Springfield. Although unstated, those northern tributaries off that southern New England east-west artery intersected the Connecticut Valley trails, eventually crossing our Mohawk Trail, another major, indigenous, east-west footpath from the coast to the Hudson Valley and beyond.

Ayres details the landscape surrounding the trail as well as Indian villages and friendly interactions with Natives along the way. An important tool he uses to capture the trail's essence is John Winthrop, Jr.'s diary recording his circuitous, 10-day, 230-mile round trip from Boston to Connecticut and back. His late-fall route from Boston to Windsor goes – accidentally – on the northern path to Springfield. From there, he travels south to the Windsor ferry and Hartford, then south to Saybrook, where he takes the coastal path home though Providence.

Half of his tiny journal was written in Latin, the other half English. The Latin portion was translated and

published for the first time in Ayres' work. The narrative describes river crossings, bartering for food with Indians, and overnights under trail-side wigwam frames the men had to cover. Their dealings with Natives they encountered were friendly – and remember, the Pequot War, New England's first Indian war, had ended only seven years earlier, so Indians had reason to distrust colonists.

My Connecticut Path read dovetailed nicely into an ongoing, co-operative, local-history probe in which I had been involved with contact-period scholar and friend Peter A. Thomas. With work already underway for Deerfield's 350th birthday celebration in 2023, Thomas has been working diligently to unravel the deeds and settlement of Deerfield, which began in the mid-1660s as Pocumtuck, a compensatory 8,000-acre grant to Dedham.

Thomas isn't the first researcher to examine the confusing earliest deeds, and won't be the last. However, unless some forgotten seventeenth-century translation key comes to light in the secret drawer of a dusty attic dresser, the incomprehensible Indian place names may never

MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

This Week On MCTV

By MIKE SMITH

The 6th annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival took place August 3 and 4 at Unity Park in Turners Falls. His workshop not only included how to walk the runway, but how to navigate the modeling industry. Check out his valuable insights at montaguenv.org.

We'd like to remind you about MCTV's 120 Second Film Festival! There's still time to sign up, and all you need is an idea! Come visit us at MCTV and we'll train you on the basics of video production and have you shooting in no time. You could even just use your phone! Check our montaguenv.org to register and for more details.

Something going on you think others would like to see? Contact us at (413) 863-9200, infomontaguenv@gmail.com, or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to work with you!

give a runway model workshop at his store right in downtown Turners Falls. His workshop not only included how to walk the runway, but how to navigate the modeling industry. Check out his valuable insights at montaguenv.org.

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ArtBeat

by Trish Crapo

Photographs That Ask,
“But What About...”

SHELBURNE FALLS – “It all started because I was trying to do a particular thing, to capture a particular feeling of driving home of an evening,” Sarah Holbrook said.

We were talking by phone about her exhibit, “Driving Home,” at Salmon Falls Gallery in Shelburne Falls, up now through September 1. Holbrook now lives in Shelburne Falls, but had lived in Ashfield for 36 years previously.

The feeling she’d been trying to capture in the “Driving Home” photographs was the feeling of luxuriant goodwill after leaving a dinner party at a friend’s house and riding home in the passenger seat, full of good food and drink and long conversation, while her husband drove the back roads of southern Vermont and Franklin County.

Holbrook, camera in hand, has chased this feeling for eight or nine years now, sometimes standing up through the moon roof of the car to capture a shot.

In the photographs, affixed as bare prints to the walls of the gallery, barns and houses elongate, altered by the camera’s slow shutter speed. Or snowy pines and bare trees rush at you as the car you are both in and not in approaches a curve in the road. The sensuous lines of mountains echo themselves, their rolling after-images fusing to create, interestingly, both a sense of speed and a sense of timelessness.

This makes sense, Holbrook says, because the slow shutter speed she uses, combined with the speed of the car and the low light of night time “makes you take in more than the moment that’s in front of you.”

She adds, “The photograph begins to talk because it stretches. The barn dissolves and the trees come through. And then there’s the moon, above it all.”

Holbrook says that when she came back to photography sometime in the 1990s after a brief period in which she tried painting,

she wanted to do large format photography but couldn’t afford all of what it entailed: the over-sized camera, the large negatives, the darkroom setup with its enlargers and special lights and chemicals.

“Then someone showed me how to make pinhole cameras,” she says. “And that was my opening. I was right back into photography.”

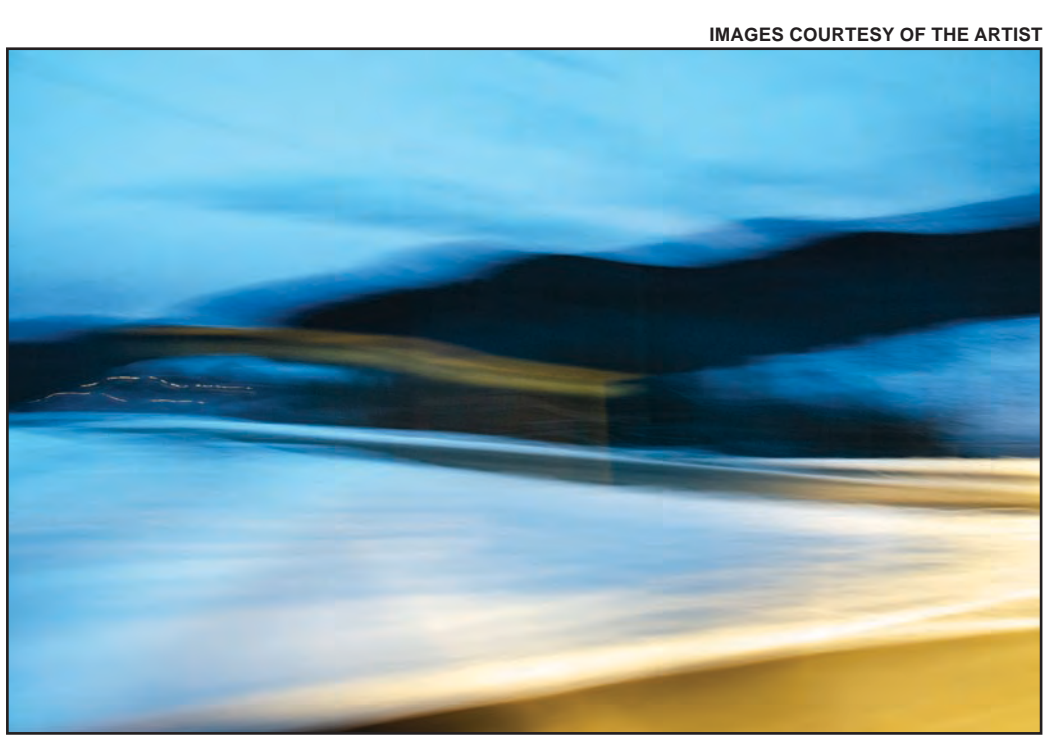
Holbrook started to build her own cameras. To get the images she wanted, she had to expose a negative for long periods of time, sometimes half an hour. “So there was this whole time/movement aspect of my photography that came on really strong,” she said. This interest in movement and time has continued in her work, even as she’s started to shoot with a digital camera.

“I have to give a nod to the pinholes because they were so important,” she emphasized. “It all came out of the pinhole: time, exposure. Light and time are what make photographs.”

Though some of the “Driving Home” images have been exhibited before, the show at Salmon Falls Gallery includes a third wall of images that haven’t been seen, and that offer contrasts to and speak a different narrative than, as Holbrook puts it, “The beauty of moonlight on backcountry roads, that romantic feeling of coming home through the night.”

Holbrook says, “Sometimes when you’re chasing something and you narrow that hunt down too narrow, meanwhile there are little things that are asking, ‘But what about...? But what about...?’”

Some of these “But what abouts” appear on that third wall of Holbrook’s exhibit space at Salmon Falls. For instance, an image entitled “Jersey” depicts the New Jersey skyline behind a blurred guard rail and a black, leafless tree that’s breaking apart against the sky; a white-on-white image of a guard rail,



Top: “Blue Gold” by Sarah Holbrook, from her current show at the Salmon Falls Gallery.
Bottom: Holbrook’s “Jersey,” part of the exhibit on the theme of Driving Home.

the scenery blurred behind it, is so simple it becomes abstract.

“So many times I’ve gone to museums and there’ve been these white-on-white paintings and I don’t get it,” Holbrook said. “I just don’t get it. But that guard rail made me get it. I like the guard rail presence because there’s this whole other aspect of roads for me which probably screams more loudly in my life right now, which is not ‘Oh, how pretty,’ but how divisive roads can be. They can cut off communities. They can kill.”

Describing one photograph that is “cluttered with buildings,” Holbrook says, “There’s a voyeur feeling to seeing past the guard rail into someone else’s life.”

Holbrook says she finds herself interested in the edgier images on the third wall that represent “what’s harder about roads.”

“I can support these photographs almost more so than these others that I was chasing so hard,” she says. “You can become enfolded in or entrapped in fairy tale imagery and just really forget there’s a whole other aspect to it.”

Salmon Falls Gallery is located at One Ashfield Street, Shelburne Falls.

For more information, contact (413) 625-9833 or salmonfalls@megaplanet.com. Website at salmonfallsgallery.com. Gallery is open seven days, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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The Children's Page

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

Energy Park, Greenfield: *Sue Kranz, Stephanie Marshall, Katie Clarke, and Larry LeBlanc.* Coop Concert Series. 6 p.m.

Leverett Library, Leverett: *Music on the Patio: Box Shop Blues.* Bring a lawn chair. In the event of rain, concert moves inside. 7 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Linda Aubry, Mike Bullock, Alex Dupuis, Jazer Giles, Chris Konopka.* Film screening, electronica. \$. 8 p.m.

Hubie's Tavern, Turners Falls: *Karaoke Night.* 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Berkshire Jazz Underground.* 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Annie Patterson, Charlie King.* Infectious song leaders with energy and humor. New material and songs from their recent CD. Part of the Great Falls Coffeehouse Series. Donation, refreshments. \$. 7 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Off Brand Video* with *Patty Gone.* \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *The Noble Impoverished.* 9:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

Porter-Phelps-Huntington Museum, Hadley: *56 String Duo.* Indian-inspired guitar and sitar improvisations by Robert Markey and Andrew Jenkins during the museums Perfect Spot of Tea event. Two seatings, at 2:30 and 3:30. \$. 2:30 p.m.

St. James Church, Greenfield: *Greenfield Drum & Dance.* African dance, followed by a Drum and Dance instead of the usual Dance Spree. \$. 6 p.m.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Mirah.* Intimate solo performance by singer-songwriter. Indoor concert and reception. \$. 6 p.m.

St. James Church, Greenfield: *Dance Spree.* Freestyle boogie: no shoes, no alcohol, no rules. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Samantha Riott, Ryan Kayhart, Space Heater, Jacob Winans.* \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *Reprobate Blues Band.* Blues, baby, blues! 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *John Sullivan Band.* Former member of Spirit in Flesh! 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 11

Leverett Crafts & Arts, Leverett: *Fundraiser Art Reception and Sale.* To benefit the Wendell State Forest Alliance. Sales of botanical imprints by Leonore Alaniz and pottery by Joy Friedman. Spoken word, refreshments. 1 p.m.



Wendell artist Donna Horn poses with one of her "Cute Little Human Monsters," part of her show at Nina's Nook in Turners Falls during the month of August. The exhibit shows paintings representing what she calls "emotional creatures." Horn is well known for starting what became an annual Wendell tradition: the "Misfit Prom," and has worked at the town's hub, the Wendell Country Store, for 26 years. See the show on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 5.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Ona Canoa, Hoo:Lumes, Sasha Milan.* \$. 7:30 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Lily and Horn Horse, Trone, Gut Fauna, Giant Sadness.* \$. 8 p.m.

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 12

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Ani Blech and the Delivery, Bromptreb, PussyVision, Karaoke with Craig.* \$. 8 p.m

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Heath Lewis Open Mic.* 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 13

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Music in the Morning.* Song, movement, laughter for young children and their caregivers. Marcy Gregoire and Hilary Lake with puppets, costumes, instruments. \$. 10:30 a.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield:

Comedy with Jon Ross. In the Wheelhouse. 8 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14

Gill Tavern: *Jazz Night.* 6 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Shout Lulu.* 8 p.m.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Alice Cohen, Straw Pipes, Lucy.* \$. 8 p.m.

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

3. Bring a chair or blanket. Rain date: August 23.

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *CP Unit, Editrix, Gloyd, DJ Megin-sky.* \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *In The Garden,* album release. \$. 8 p.m.

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

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Raspberry Jam.* 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17

Bartlett Farm, Montague Center: *Barbes In the Woods* festival, feat. *Antibalas, Combo Chimbita, Underground System, Slavic Soul Party, Anbessa Orchestra,* and more. Discount tickets for Montague residents. \$. (See article, page A1.) 1 p.m.

St. James Church, Greenfield: *Dance Spree.* \$. 7:30 p.m.

Hawks & Reed and Energy Park, Greenfield: *First Annual Fallen Angels All Day Memorial.* Featuring *DJ Chizzle* and *Mr. Cheeks* of *The Lost Boyz.* \$. 8 p.m.

Deja Brew, Wendell: *The Shadow Twisters,* Wendell's classic rock band. 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18

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

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Colamo, Wendy Eisenberg, id m theft able.* \$. 8 p.m.

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 19

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Karaoke with Craig.* 8 p.m.

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

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Music in the Morning.* Song, movement, laughter for young children and their caregivers. Marcy Gregoire and Hilary Lake with puppets, costumes, instruments. \$. 10:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21

Ten Forward, Greenfield: *Ten Acts, Ten Minutes.* Monthly Fundraiser. \$. 8 p.m.

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

EXHIBITS

Barnes Gallery. Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *The Vines of Enchantment: Alison Aune, Misa Chapell, Kirsten Aune.* Through August 30. Artist reception: Sunday, August 11 at 4 p.m.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, Brattleboro: New exhibits for the summer include beach scenes, activist photography by *Dona McAdams,* immersive installations, steel sculpture, and more.

DVAA Center for the Arts, Northfield: *Cross Pollination Part II.*

Art by members of the Leverett Crafts & Arts Center, through September 8. Paintings by *Leni Guadet* in back gallery through August.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Cantos From the Woods* by David Flood with paintings by *Maggie Hodges.* Flood produces natural art from wood that has been acted upon by forces of nature. Hodges creates oil paintings inspired by the Hampshire Valley where she lives. Through August 28. Reception Sunday, August 11 at 1 p.m.

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. Through August 10.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Paintings and sculpture by *An-naleah Gregoire.* Gregoire draws inspiration from examining issues such as the encroachment of technology on the natural world and incorporates many techniques such as ceramics, bronze casting, laser cutting and 3D printing. Through August.

Leverett Library: *Maxim Chekan.*

Oil paintings of still life and landscapes. Through August.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Cute Little Human Monsters.* Paintings by Wendell artist *Donna Horn.* The works in this show represent emotional landscapes and emotional creatures. Horn is the originator of the Wendell Misfit Prom and is well known for her elaborate costumes and floats. Through August.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Chris Hill: Nocturnal Landscapes.* Surreal botanical paintings depicting farmland and fallow fields "as they should be,"



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(Spirit in Flesh member)

WED 8/14 8 pm
Shout Lulu

FRI 8/16 9:30 pm
Raspberry Jam

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combining painting, permaculture, organic gardening and a plea to repair the earth one garden at a time. *Sarah Holbrook: Driving Home,* photographs of the winding back roads of southern Vermont and western Massachusetts (see feature story in this section for more about Holbrook). Through September 1.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *The Blue Show.* Celebration of this hue in paintings, photographs, collage, clay, glass and fiber art. Through August.

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THEATER REVIEW

Modigliani at the Roundhouse

By ELLEN BLANCHETTE

GREENFIELD – Arena Civic Theater (ACT) opened its most recent production, *Modigliani* by Dennis McIntyre, on August 1 at the Roundhouse in the Greenfield Fairground. The play is loosely based on the real life experiences of this famous Italian artist along with several other successful artists of the time who were known to be his close friends and associates. Born in 1884, the Italian artist was famous for painting expressive nudes with elongated necks, but he never met with success in his short lifetime.

The theater company expended a good deal of effort renovating the Roundhouse space to prepare it for performance, including removing the wooden bins where fresh vegetables are usually displayed during the Franklin County Fair.

The space has chairs placed on risers in a semicircle around the stage area, with innovative set designs that take advantage of the unique space. The night drew cooler as the play progressed, so while it was not air conditioned, it was comfortable. Lights are controlled from the balcony above; the actors were well lit, and the sound was quite good.

We first meet Amedeo Modigliani, played by John Atkinson, in the Montparnasse section of Paris in 1916, at a particularly low point of his career. He has failed to sell

his paintings and is drinking heavily, as are his friends. Meeting in small bistros, they cheat and steal their way to gaining what little sustenance they can.

The author has chosen to focus on this time in Modigliani's life where he is using alcohol and hashish to carry him through the day, and his focus is lost due to frustration over his apparent failure to make money or produce any more good work. His health is poor. He has stopped painting, focusing instead on sculpture.

His friend Maurice Utrillo, played by Jim Merlin, is even deeper into his alcoholism and frequently fails to make sense, although Merlin does express this loopy confusion in a quite entertaining and surprisingly believable way. Nevertheless, Utrillo's extreme behavior pushes Modigliani to fret over his friend's well being, and often the two of them have rather emotional interactions that feel dangerous and worrisome.

Modigliani has a love affair with the poet Beatrice Hastings who is portrayed by Sky Caron with an emphasis on her sensual beauty. She does her best to soothe his mood and inspire him to get back to focusing on his art while expressing her confidence in his talent. Their interaction lightens the mood as Caron plays her part with good humor and charm. Still, as Beatrice grows impatient and Modigliani

more self-destructive in his behavior, their relationship drifts, and their scenes become darker.

As the artist struggles to sell his work, his agent Leopold Zborowski, played by Henry Albin, reaches out and tells him he will meet with the art dealer Guillaume Chéron, assuring him that the man is interested in his work. In a quiet scene where Modigliani is so troubled and distressed that he has a hard time believing anything will go favorably, Albin as Zborowski sets the right tone to convince him that things will be alright.

Dominic Baird plays the artist Chaim Soutine, who seems to have an odd obsession with painting livestock and poultry. This is somewhat clumsily portrayed but is surely not an easy thing to demonstrate on the small stage. His focus in the early scenes on something about a butcher's apron which he stole for the colors on it, and the discussion of discerning color – which happens alongside Utrillo's passionate insistence on killing his mother's lover – would make little sense even to an artist today, but these were the playwright's choices.

In later scenes Soutine seems the most sane of the three, and Baird does a good job of reflecting his friendship with Modigliani when he offers a bed and food in a very kindly way and with great sincerity.

Korey Martineau, who did an excellent job of playing a lobster in the recent musical "The Little Mermaid" at Turners Falls High School, joins ACT to play two different waiters in different settings.

In a small bistro, dressed casually in a shirt and apron, he is set upon by Modigliani and Utrillo, who in desperation hope to steal his money. This quick scene ends with the waiter beat up and lying on the ground.

Martineau next appears as a more high-class waiter, all dressed up and elegant, acting serious as he pours wine and interacts with Marvin Shedd, who plays the art dealer Guillaume Chéron, meeting with Modigliani over a meal. Shedd is the consummate actor, playing this short scene with style, well grounded in stage business that elevates this moment to a wonderful kind of reality.

While Modigliani goes on and on with exaggerations of his success, trying to get a good price for his work without the benefit of an agent, Chéron calmly sips his wine and eats his food, barely paying at-

tention to the artist he clearly sees for the desperate man he is.

This production was produced by Jen Goselin, directed by Jennifer Coliskey, with paintings used in the production created by artist Zoe Kawecki. Director Coliskey gathered a fine crew to support this show: stage manager Sue Shedd; master carpenter Jerry Marciano; lighting designer Ana Steiner; with lighting and sound by Tom Mayo, and costumes by Maggie Duprey.

The play continues with performances on August 9 and 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Roundhouse, 89 Wisdom Way in Greenfield. Tickets are \$18 general admission and \$15 seniors. Tickets can be purchased at the door or reserved in advance by calling or texting (413) 233-4368. The venue is not air conditioned, and restrooms are located in a separate building.



John Atkins (left) as Modigliani, and Jim Merlin as Maurice Utrillo, in the Arena Civic Theater production about the painter's life.

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