

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 17 – NO. 41

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

## Miner Offered Permanent Highway Superintendent Job

By JEFF SINGLETON

**GILL** – The Gill selectboard has chosen John Miner to be the town’s new highway superintendent. Miner, a nine-year veteran of the department, has been the acting superintendent since last January, when former highway boss Mickey LaClaire took a leave of absence due to an injury and eventually resigned.

The decision was made on Tuesday at a special meeting to interview the two finalists, Miner and Brandon Ovitt. Ovitt is the other member of the department, which is supposed to have three employees, but has been operating with two this year.

In discussing the qualifications

of the two finalists, all three selectboard members voiced the opinion that they were forced to make a “hard decision.”

A screening committee had culled an original pool of six applicants to two. “I don’t envy you one bit,” a member of the audience told the board.

“The screening committee did a good job, but they did not leave the selectboard with an easy job,” said board chair John Ward.

“One [candidate] is more experienced, but lacks the personal skills the other has,” said Greg Snedeker.

“I feel the roads are not as good as Brandon thinks, and not as bad as

see **GILL** page A8

## New Hampshire Developer Plans To Buy, Fix, Fill Southworth Mill

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** – “My goal is to get the building back in use, bring in the best possible tenant I can that will benefit the town and the surrounding area, and provide as much good jobs and economic activity as we possibly can,” Tom Cusano told the *Reporter* this week, after we found him clearing brush outside the vacant Southworth Paper Company building.

Southworth, also known as PaperLogic and Turners Falls Paper,

closed abruptly in August 2017. About forty workers were sent home, and had to take the company to court for their final paycheck. Southworth left unpaid taxes and sewer bills as well as significant bank debt, but it failed out of bankruptcy court, and its principals have apparently moved on to other projects.

Utilities were turned off to the building, and the Turners Falls Fire Department has been keeping a nervous eye on it. Last spring the state Department of Environmental Protection oversaw the removal of

a number of potentially hazardous chemicals from the building, and had to clean up a small spill in the process.

But just when it seemed that the former Esleek paper mill was following its neighbor, the town-owned Strathmore complex, down the road of abandonment and deterioration, Tom Cusano showed up.

Cusano, who does business as the sole member of Milton Hilton LLC, is collecting former paper mills. The first was the onetime Spaulding

see **DEVELOPER** page A6



The 184,000-square-foot building, originally built in 1900 by the Esleek Manufacturing Company, has been shuttered for two years.

## MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

### Abrupt Waste Boss Exit Creates Busy Transition

By JEFF SINGLETON

With only a few days left in the term of outgoing Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) superintendent Bob McDonald, the Montague selectboard began the discussion of a “transition plan” to replace him at their Monday night meeting. Town administrator Steve Ellis told the board he plans to direct a full-scale search process, complete with a search committee which has yet to be appointed. In the meantime, with several important projects in process, he will need to find staff with the certifications required by state and federal agencies to direct the facility.

Ellis and McDonald, who sat at the front table during the discussion, listed a number of options to administer the plant during the transition. Ellis said he would be working with the plant’s chief operator, Kevin Boissoneault, but might also need to either hire staff or contract with outside companies to provide services to the plant.

“We are looking at multiple options,” said Ellis, who did not present a detailed plan. He later told the *Reporter* that the transition could take more than two months.

One of the key projects interim staff will need to monitor will be repairs to the Millers Falls sewer

see **MONTAGUE** page A7

### FirstLight Tax Settlement Figures Aired

By MIKE JACKSON

**MONTAGUE** – The official agreement between FirstLight Power and the town of Montague has been signed and released, allowing the public a closer look at the compromise agreement the parties reached over disputed tax bills stretching back six years.

FirstLight, the largest taxpayer in town, agreed to withdraw its challenge of the FY’14 valuation of \$114,183,603 for three key parcels – its two hydroelectric plants in Montague City and Turners Falls, as well as its “personal property” – and accept the taxes it paid for that

see **SETTLEMENT** page A3

## SCENE REPORT

### A Popular Taco Pop-Up

By ISABEL KOYAMA

**TURNERS FALLS** – Whenever pop-up restaurant “Santo Taco” sets up its tent each weekend, a crowd of people tend to follow close behind. Santo Taco has been popping up around western Massachusetts for two years at events, breweries, and festivals, selling authentic and unique taco recipes that keep regulars hot on

their trail around the valley.

This past Sunday, September 7, Santo Taco spent the afternoon outside of Brick and Feather Brewery in Turners Falls as customers drifted between the brewery and the taco stand.

“Each taco has its own style,” says Santo Taco co-owner Eric Dew. Dew grew up in Wendell but lived for many years in Montreal,

see **POP-UP** page A6



Amarantha Mateos, Ivette Mateos, and Eric Dew staff the taco counter last Sunday.

## Children’s Advocacy Center Hosts Fundraising Foot Race

By ANNE HARDING

**GREENFIELD** – Located on Wisdom Way since 2016, the Children’s Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Area (CAC) works to prevent and end child abuse in our community. They believe that all children have the right to be safe and to be protected from harm, and their vision is to help all victims of abuse access coordinated services.

Now, the CAC is “Calling all Superheroes” to race this Saturday morning, September 15 at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. In their words, “Many children can’t

run from abuse,” and the third annual Race to End Child Abuse is an opportunity for members of the public to move, to get involved and make an impact, and help change our community for the better.

This is a family-friendly race, with a half-mile race for children at 8:40 a.m., and a 5K run or walk for adults at 9 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for top finishers, the best superhero costume, and the top fundraiser.

The race is the third of three annual fundraisers that support the organization, along with the support of private foundations, state, and federal funding. Most recently, senator Jo Comerford was successful in adding \$60,000 from the state budget to support our local CAC.

At the organization’s annual Hope and Healing Breakfast, held at Greenfield Community College in June, executive director Irene Wood announced that the CAC had met a long-range goal in

see **RACE** page A2



Playground equipment at the advocacy organization’s Greenfield headquarters, established in 2016.

## The Week in Turners Falls Sports

By MATT ROBINSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – The fall high school sports season officially kicked off this week. Turners Falls High School teams played a combined 10 games, but there is a noticeable absence in the fall sports schedule: for the first time in memory, Turners Falls will not have a varsity football team.

Throughout the summer various students, alumni, and coaches spoke to me about the possibility of Turners not having a football team. These conversations were always cautiously hopeful, but on August 22, AD Adam Graves officially announced that there would be no team this year.

This doesn’t mean that the tradition of Powertown Gridiron has ended forever. Both varsity coach Chris Lapointe and middle school assistant coach Sean Crowell recently told me that there are enough kids on the middle school team to field future teams.

But for this year at least, things will be different. On Thanksgiving, the old timers, who’ve made the yearly

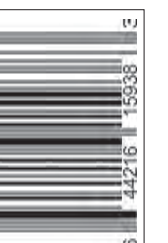
see **TFHS SPORTS** page A4



Madi Liimatainen and Taylor Greene look on as Olivia Stafford gets under the ball Wednesday night during Turners’ home match sweep of the Pioneer Panthers.

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# The Montague Reporter

"The Voice of the Villages"

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## A Note From the Managing Editor:

Hello to all our loyal readers!

We're approaching the end of our 17th year of publication, and you'll be entertained to know we're still eking out a week-by-week existence. If newspapers made money there would be more of them, of course, and those of us still in print depend on the conscious choice of our communities to support us. Thank you to everyone who subscribes, advertises, and donates each year.

The *Montague Reporter* is a non-profit – and here, you're probably already getting ready to skip over the rest of this item, because you think I'm about to earnestly appeal for donations again, or sell mugs. Sure, there's still some left, and they're \$10 apiece, but that's not what I'm after. This one's about your time.

What are you doing this fall? Want to help us out? We're short-handed, as it turns out, and looking to build up our numbers. Every week our core staff makes another heroic push and gets an edition off to the printer, but from time to time we begin to feel the effects of deferred maintenance.

If you have three hours a week to spare, or one, or two once a month, we can probably use your help. Here are some of the ways you might be able to plug in:

**Proofreaders.** We're looking for Wednesday night owls with a lust for correction. Ideally, each volunteer proofreader will come in every third week to help out. It

takes about four hours for the average volunteer to scour the pages.

**Canvassers.** There are always new businesses bubbling up, and new residents moving to our towns. Donations are necessary to patch the holes in our budget, but what we really need to sustain the paper is to connect with more prospective home subscribers, more prospective advertisers, and more businesses willing to leave out papers for sale each week. If you have a week, or a month, to act as an ambassador for the *Reporter*, let us know and we'll set you up. The hours are totally flexible, and with any luck, you'll be making a lasting improvement to our bottom line.

**Office lackeys.** At the moment, the main guy vacuuming the floor, cleaning the sink, and bringing the back issues out for recycling is yours truly. I don't mean to complain, but I could really use a hand, and it would free up my time to focus on covering the news and working with writers.

**Writers.** We're doing okay for columnists and features writers at the moment – what we need is stringers who can take short news assignments between Monday and Wednesday, and folks who can do meeting coverage. This one comes with a small stipend.

**Web developers.** Here's a big one! We have a shell of a WordPress site, an extensive but hard-to-browse archive of back issues, and big dreams for joining the 21st century. Oh, and if anyone is familiar

with Salesforce, please get in touch.

**Item editors.** There are behind-the-scenes tasks pulling together a lot of our regular items – arts calendar; police logs; public service announcements; local briefs; senior center schedules; library schedules... Some of these desks are covered, but given the chance, people might also want to tag out of these roles in order to take on new ones. If you are fastidious, online, and keep a fairly predictable weekly schedule, consider signing up for one of these.

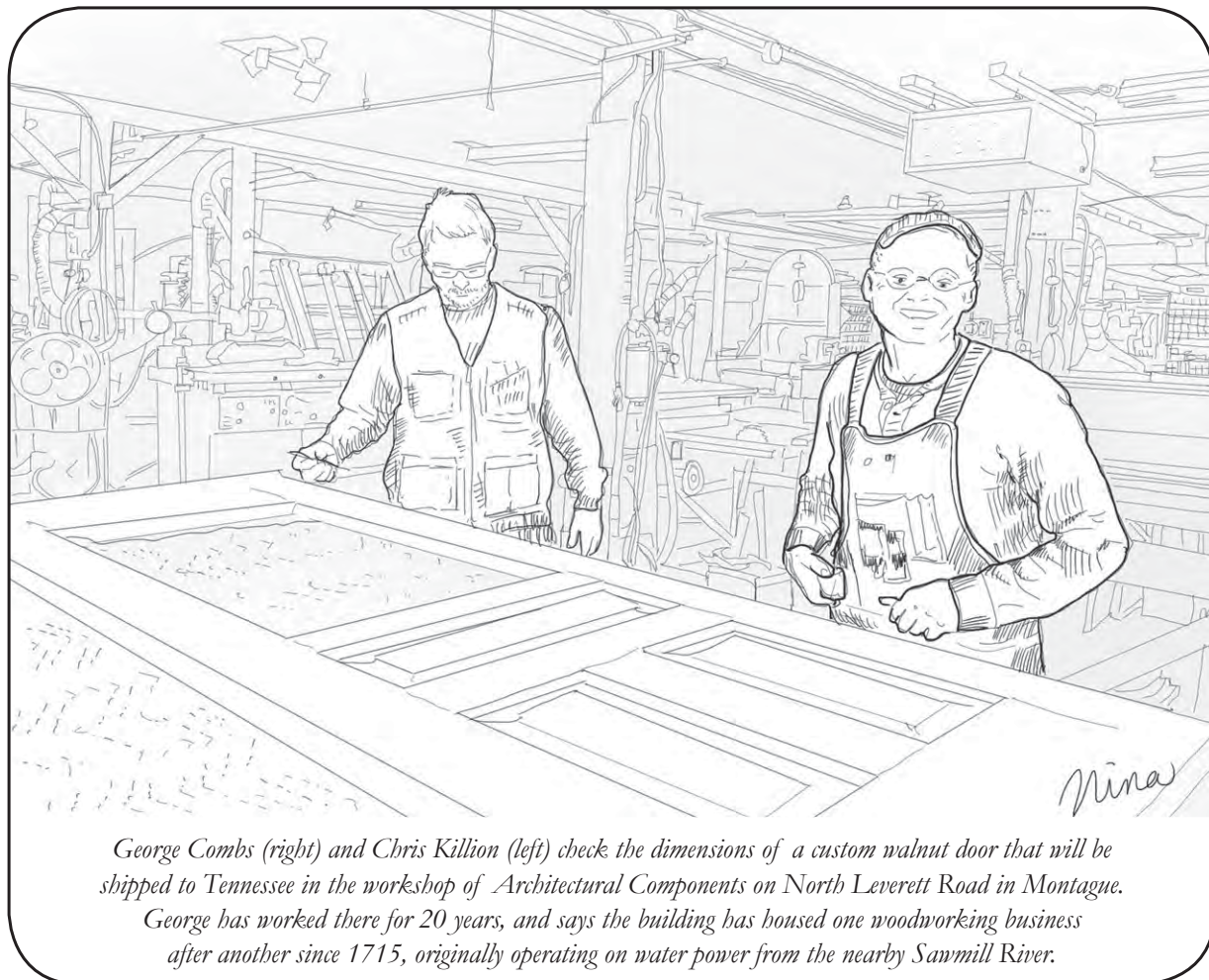
**Grant writers.** We hear of a lot more opportunities than we are able to apply for...

**Clerical help.** Sometimes the busywork stacks up! We'd especially be looking for someone who can come in for a couple hours on a Monday or a Friday.

Okay, that should give you a sense of what's needed... And if you know anyone who's sitting around on their hands, looking for something to do, maybe they need a nudge! We keep a very casual office environment.

The absolute best way to get started is to fill out the form online at [montaguereporter.org/volunteer/](http://montaguereporter.org/volunteer/), but if you don't have a computer, try 863-8666.

Okay, back to regular programming. Thanks for reading the *MR!*



George Combs (right) and Chris Killion (left) check the dimensions of a custom walnut door that will be shipped to Tennessee in the workshop of Architectural Components on North Leverett Road in Montague. George has worked there for 20 years, and says the building has housed one woodworking business after another since 1715, originally operating on water power from the nearby Sanmill River.

## Letters to the Editors

# Clicking On Icons

I loved reading Trish Crapo's article about the Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, MA and revisiting this beautiful space vicariously through her writing. I am determined to make another trip and explore the newest exhibit, "Wrestling with Angels."

I had the good fortune to meet founder Gordon B. Lankton on one of my visits to the museum back in about 2010. He was gracious and welcoming, and when asked about some ongoing construction, offered to take our small group on a private, behind-the-scenes tour. A chatty and personable fellow, he was also happy to tell us about the inception of the museum and to talk about the expansion.

In a more serious moment, Lankton said that he was grateful for his business successes, which all started with the Nypro company in Clinton. Ultimately he became the owner and CEO of the company, which expanded and built several more plants in the United States and eventually around the world.

Lankton told us his chance flea market icon purchase happened while he was building a plastics factory in Russia. That chance purchase turned into a collecting passion, and he joked that his wife gave him an ultimatum because the house was being overtaken with icons. Lankton said he wanted to give back to the community that

supported his early business beginnings, and the creation of the Museum of Russian Icons brought him a lot of pleasure and a way to share his passion with icons.

In 2010, Lankton was planning to bring in an exhibit of very large, rare icons on loan from a Russian museum. The existing facility had no space to accommodate them, so he did what any wealthy benefactor would do – purchase the adjacent building, and design and build a state-of-the-art exhibit space. It was to be the first exhibit of its kind, and the addition was about 75% complete at the time of our visit.

Lankton was proud of the archival building practices, special windows, and lighting features designed to protect these priceless artifacts. Russian icons and their owners have faced many challenges over the years during times of revolution and historic change – churches and icons were destroyed in efforts to stamp out religion and religious symbols, and their protectors faced religious persecution, deportation and death. Some icons were smuggled out of the country and others were hidden, while traditional schools of icon painting were forced underground until sometime in the 1990s.

I would echo the advice of Crapo's article, and urge anyone to visit the museum.

Anne Harding  
Turners Falls

## Clarification: Slowdown

The last Leverett Selectboard article [September 5, "Decision Postponed in Leverett Highway Hire"] mentioned that there was an illegal copyright infringement at the town hall and the Selectboard agreed to slow down the public WIFI and block BitTorrent to discourage an-

other problem.

The Selectboard would like to clarify that these changes only affect the town's public WIFI accounts, and have no impact on any other LeverettNet account with Otelco.

Leverett Selectboard

## RACE from page A1

2018 by starting to offer therapeutic and prevention services so children can begin healing from their trauma as soon as possible.

A case manager meets with the children and their families when they first come to CAC, and guides them through the process. She ensures needed services are in place, and remains available as long as the family wants.

By collaborating with medical practitioners, law enforcement, child protective services, and the district attorney's office, the CAC is able to reduce the number of investigative interviews and court appearances for victims, thereby minimizing the secondary trauma this process can cause.

Using a two-year grant from the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance, the CAC also has a linkage agreement with Clinical

Support Options, ensuring that a private clinician can start treating children as soon as possible, rather than having them be wait listed.

No one wants to think of children in their community being sexually abused or exploited, but the CAC is painfully aware of the realities. All told, the CAC interviewed 103 children from 17 different towns last year. Their ages varied – thirty of them were aged six or younger; 42 were between the ages of 7 and 12; and 31 were between the ages of 13 and 18.

Wood noted that following a program called "Talking about Touching," delivered to elementary-aged children in Athol, the number of visitors from that town doubled from the previous year. The program addressed bike safety, car safety, and body safety. Children learned about personal boundaries, and who to tell if someone touches

their body inappropriately.

The CAC is offering a new workshop this fall, "Child Safety in Today's World," thanks to a grant from the Bete Family Foundations. The workshop is available to all community members, and focuses on keeping children safe in the 21st century. Topics covered will include internet safety tips, healthy relationships, and communicating about tough issues.

The first workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 2 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Baystate Franklin Medical Center. The program will be repeated at the Athol Public Library on Tuesday, October 22, and at Mohawk Regional High School in Shelburne Falls on Thursday, November 7.

There is no charge to attend, but registration is required; readers can contact Joanne Leonard at (413) 475-3401 or [jeleonard@cacfranklinnq.org](mailto:jeleonard@cacfranklinnq.org).



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## LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by **CHRIS PELLERIN**

We've entered the season of fall fairs and festivals. Every year, we volunteer at the Franklin County Fair, **collecting recyclables and compostables** for the Solid Waste District. This year we walked six miles around the fairgrounds collecting materials from the designated bins.

An enormous amount of waste is kept from the landfill thanks to Amy Donovan and her team of volunteers. Volunteers get into the Fair for free, get a free T-shirt, earn Community Service hours or class credit (area school students), and help to slow climate change, reduce trash, and properly manage plastic waste. At past fairs we have recycled and composted four tons of bottles, cans, containers, and food and paper waste, which otherwise would have gone to a landfill!

Many hands make light work. Let Amy know if you'd like to be put on the list for next year: (413) 772-2438.

The **Kiddleoscope** program continues each Friday at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A in Turners Falls from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The program includes a story, interactive games, and a craft to introduce young children to wildlife along the river. Meet in the Great Hall. For ages three to six, accompanied by an adult. Siblings and friends welcome.

The theme for Friday, September 13 is **River Otters**.

What triggered the American Revolution of 1776? Think you know? Hear a different and unique perspective offered by **local historian James Gildea** on Saturday, September 14 from 10 a.m. to noon at Greenfield Savings Bank, 282 Avenue A, Turners Falls.

Though we've been told that the Revolution was all about taxes, this is

an interesting twist to what "really" sparked the "Shot Heard 'Round the World!" How did the famine in Bengal, India tie into a struggle on the other side of the world? Connect the dots of history with this free event. Seminar compliments of James Gildea, and light refreshments courtesy of Greenfield Savings Bank.

Take another history lesson from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday at the Great Falls Discovery Center. Cliff Schexnayder, author of *Builders of the Hoosac Tunnel*, presents why Alvah Crocker is an example of what today is termed a "lifelong learner."

Because of his lonely travels on bad roads to sell his paper, Crocker understood the importance of transportation. But during those travels he was observant of nature and the opportunities it provided. From personal experience he learned the physics of water to provide energy for mills and to destroy mills. As a visionary for progress he sought out and associated with similar hard-working individuals.

These relationships of mutual support benefited all, and resulted in a railroad across northern Massachusetts to New York and the creation of the Turners Falls Company. Find out more about these two examples and Crocker's early life, with plenty of time for questions.

Enjoy music, food, and **late-night skateboarding** under the lights at the Unity Skate Park, 56 First Street, Turners Falls from 5 to 10 p.m. this Saturday, September 14.

Take a walk back in time along the popular canalside bike path in Turners Falls on Thursday, September 19 from 5 to 7 p.m. Join local historian Ed Gregory, Northfield Mountain's Kim Noyes, and Massachusetts DCR's Janel Nockleby to discover the **rich and colorful industrial history** along this scenic paved path.

Historical maps and photographs will help bring the sights and sounds of our industrial heritage alive. Wear comfortable walking shoes and meet at the entrance of the Great Falls Discovery Center (2 Avenue A, Turners Falls). Total walking distance is no more than two miles on flat terrain. Wheelchair accessible. Pre-register for this free event by calling (800) 859-2960.

Looking ahead...

Cushman Library in Bernardston will be holding a **Book and Bake Sale** on the first floor of Bernardston Town Hall, 38 Church Street, on Saturday and Sunday, September 21 and 22 from 9 to 3 p.m. All the proceeds will be used to purchase new circulating materials for library patrons to enjoy.

Folks who would like to donate books, audiobooks, or DVDs are encouraged to do so. For complete details, go to Cushman Library's "Events" on the Facebook page. Donations can be dropped off at the Town Hall on Thursday, September 19 between 5 and 6 p.m. or Friday, September 20 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. For more information about this event or Cushman's programs and hours, visit [www.cushmanlibrary.org](http://www.cushmanlibrary.org), call (413) 648-5402, or drop in during open hours.

Connect with the natural world in a healing, calming, and replenishing way through a series of activities on a gentle, guided walk at the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center on Saturday, September 21 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**Shinrin Yoku** is Japanese for "Forest Bathing," a cornerstone of preventative health care and healing in Japanese medicine with a robust body of scientific literature on the health benefits. Join Kim Noyes, M.Ed., education coordinator at Northfield Mountain, for this gentle path to wellness accessible to almost everybody. This free walk is recommended for anyone age 18 and older. Pre-registration is required by calling (800) 859-2960.

**Celebrate Shutesbury** on the Shutesbury Town Common from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday September 21. All are welcome at this

town-wide celebration. Food, music, friends and fun!

Village Neighbors is looking for volunteers to greet neighbors and distribute information at Celebrate Shutesbury. If you can help, please contact Paula at [pr@villageneighbors.org](mailto:pr@villageneighbors.org).

On Saturday, September 21, geology comes alive through the clear and often humorous stories of Richard Little. This **relaxing cruise on the Connecticut River** will be filled with tales of drifting continents, earthquakes, dinosaurs, glaciers, Lake Hitchcock, and the strange origin of deep riverbed holes; all are part of the creation of our idyllic Valley.

Professor Emeritus of Greenfield Community College, Richard Little has published three editions of *Dinosaurs, Dunes, and Drifting Continents: The Geology of the Connecticut Valley* and created videos about the rise and fall of glacial Lake Hitchcock and the 500-million-year history of the Connecticut Valley. Prof. Little continues his passion for educating about geology through "Fantastic Landscape Tours" to significant geologic areas like the US National Parks and Iceland.

Don't miss this overview of the amazing geology of our area by one of the region's greatest geology educators. Riverboat tours will be offered from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m. and 3 to 4:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required by booking at [www.bookeo.com/northfield](http://www.bookeo.com/northfield) or by calling (800) 859-2960. More information about Richard Little's tours and publications is available at [www.EarthView.rocks.com](http://www.EarthView.rocks.com).

The **Gill Harvest Festival** will take place Sunday, September 22 from 12 to 3 p.m. on the Gill Common. The Fire Department will sell food and drinks, and the Friends of Gill will sell apple pies -- whole or by the slice.

Gill farms will display their products, and there will be fun farm activities including tractors to climb and hay wagons to ride. The kiddos can search for coins hidden in sawdust! How fun is that?

Send your local briefs to [editor@montaguereporter.org](mailto:editor@montaguereporter.org).



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**SETTLEMENT** from page A1  
year, FY'15, and FY'16.

An outside expert reassessed the properties at \$135,238,718 in FY'17, but the town has now agreed to refund the company \$790,429 for its FY'17 through FY'19 taxes, reflecting a bill based on an even \$125 million. The Turners Falls Fire District will also give the company a smaller abatement for the same years.

The parties also agreed that the \$125 million figure should be used to assess taxes in FY'20 and FY'21, though this must be approved at a Montague special town meeting next month. If town meeting members reject the agreement, the entire settlement would be nullified.

"I hope town meeting members would understand that we certainly felt that this is in the best interest of the town," said Karen Tonelli, Montague's director of assessing.

Over the eight-year stretch, the agreement ensures that Montague will collect 95% of the tax money it would have collected if the higher assessment had been upheld by the state appellate tax board (ATB).

"We could have easily added

another two more years of contesting the valuation before we'd get another hearing," explained Tonelli, who said the case was already in litigation when she took the job over four years ago.

Even if the ATB eventually sided entirely with the town, she said, Montague would sink considerable money into legal costs, including time spent by her own department's staff, town counsel, and experts the town hires to testify. In the meantime, more and more public cash has been tied up each year in an overlay account to hedge against what could be a damaging loss.

"Going to court can always pose some risk," Tonelli said, "and I think when you're talking such large numbers - the fact that they're our largest taxpayer - you do have to weigh that."

### Projected Income

The five ATB commissioners issued a preliminary ruling last December that sided with Montague - and Gill - in rejecting FirstLight's argument that the FY'14 assessment was too high. The commissioners

published a "findings of fact" report explaining their thinking.

John Shue, the vice president of FirstLight's former parent GDF Suez at the time of the hearing, testified that the company faced expenses associated with the FERC relicensing process, potentially including requirements to improve fish passage at the Turners Falls dam, and that its projected revenues were impacted by overall changes in the electricity industry, such as increased dependence on natural gas and stricter regulation of emissions.

The company also brought in an expert named Ann Bulkley from a firm called Concentric Energy Advisors to testify. Bulkley estimated it would cost \$98,420,665 to replace the property in question. She also made an assessment based on a "discounted cash flow" (DCF) model, which incorporates future predictions of the projects' income streams, and came up with a figure of \$104.5 million.

The ATB rejected the replacement approach, pointing out that Bulkley was not "a qualified engineer, architect, or construction man-

ager" and had not asked any such professionals their opinion. They also rejected her use of the DCF model, given that "the subject property is impacted by a constellation of forces beyond its control..."

Furthermore, the commissioners pointed out, Bulkley had used "a 20-year forecast period" to reach her appraisal, rather than the "typical forecast periods... [of] five to ten years" usually used as a factor in estimating what is called the "fair cash value" of assets.

"The Board found that the sheer length of this period rendered Ms. Bulkley's analysis speculative and unreliable," the report says.

The ATB went on to note that "the mere qualification of a person as an expert does not endow her testimony with any magic qualities," and ruled that "the appellant failed to offer persuasive, reliable evidence demonstrating a fair cash value for the subject property that was lower than that assessed."

"They really didn't buy the argument that FirstLight put forth with respect to the methodology," Tonelli summarized, looking back at the

hearing. The company immediately appealed the decision.

"Whether or not they would have been successful remains a question mark," Tonelli said. "Neither one of us wanted to continue with litigation to find that out."

### Joint Forces

Tonelli told the *Reporter* that she plans to meet this week with her counterparts from the towns of Gill, Northfield, and Erving to discuss the possibility of "a four-town partnership" with regard to assessing FirstLight's property in the future.

"The sticky wicket is, well, what happens if we can't all agree on the same direction, going forward?" Tonelli continued. "But it certainly makes sense: if we've all got to come up with an appraisal, then why wouldn't we be looking at if we can share the costs?"

"That was something that was initiated by Erving," she said, adding that if the towns decide to pool resources, it could allow them to re-assess the company's property as frequently as every year.



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## TFHS SPORTS from A1

pilgrimage since they wore Turners Blue themselves, won't need to get up so early to the smell of turkey and pies. They won't need to pack blankets and extra socks, and at least this year, they won't see those folks they usually see at Thee Game.

They'll still sit down to dinner, watch games on TV, and perhaps still play that touch football game in the street. But for this year at least, things will be a little different on the first day of the holiday season.

So, Turners is down to three full-time fall sports, and the first week has yielded mixed results.

### Golf

The varsity golf team began their season with three losses. They opened against Ware at Cold Spring Country Club on September 4, and then dropped a match against Greenfield on Monday.

Their closest loss was on Tuesday against Saint Mary, held on their home course at Thomas Memorial: 13.5 to 10.5.

### Field Hockey

The Field Hockey team is currently 1-2, after dropping both their away games. On September 5 Frontier, a perennial playoff team, beat Blue in a defensive battle 2-0.

On September 6 the team rebounded from that loss by shutting out Mohawk 1-0 on their home turf, but on Tuesday, the Southwick Rams defeated Powertown 3-1.

The fans in attendance at the Mohawk game were much the

same as last season – Mr. Bush, Stash, Coach Mullins, and Barry Kostanski – but there were some new faces in the crowd, cheering on their daughters and granddaughters. The big question on the sidelines was: how would the team do without Cassie Wozniak, Turners' all-time high scorer?

The consensus was that they would have to transition to a defensive team. In the opener against Frontier, Blue had held the high-flying Hawks to two goals, which was a big improvement from last year's playoff loss.

In the first half of the Mohawk game, the Blue D kept the ball in enemy territory, and veteran goalie Haley Greene kicked away the few shots that came her way. But Blue was slow to take advantage, and when the horn sounded it was still a scoreless tie.

Blue broke the tie in the second half when Brynn Tela scored an unassisted goal at 14:53. Turners threatened to score again, but were never able to find the net.

Mohawk finally hit their stride at the end of the game. Twice in the final two minutes, Mohawk drove deep into Powertown's end, but both times, Blue broke up the attacks.

With 10 seconds left, Turners took control and ran out the clock to preserve the 1-0 victory.

After the game, the regulars folded up their chairs and headed to the gym to watch the volleyball game.

### Volleyball

The volleyball team has gotten

off to the best start for Turners. Their only loss was against Frontier, the Western Mass champs, last Thursday. But the Blue Ladies have shut out their other four opponents, beating Mohawk on September 4, Greenfield on September 6, Athol on Monday, and Mahar on Wednesday night.

The team, which consisted mostly of rookies last year, now have a year of varsity play under their belts. After beating Mohawk and losing to Frontier by identical 3-0 scores, Blue hosted Greenfield on Friday, September 6.

The crowd in the gym also had holdovers from last year, with a few notable additions. Debbie Ouellette, who graduated with my brother in 1975 and has been a regular at the Thanksgiving game, was a new face in the volleyball crowd, cheering on her granddaughter.

Greenfield kept it close in the first game, matching Blue for the first 12 points. But with the score 6-6, Powertown went on a run, and never looked back. They ended up shutting out Greenfield 3-0 in lopsided matches.

On Wednesday, the team improved their record to 4-1 by defeating Mahar, 3-0. Blue held the Senators to 13 total points in three matches as they rolled 25-3, 4, 6.

Hailey Bogusz gave six assists, and led Powertown in aces with 10. Stephanie Peterson served four aces and made two kills, Olivia Stafford scored four aces, and Abby Holloway had an ace and three kills.

All three squads will be back in action this coming week, along with the Franklin Tech combined soccer teams.

And the Cheer Squad: well, as I was walking to the volleyball game against Greenfield, I saw the cheerleaders dutifully and diligently practicing their routines – even though, for this year at least, they have no football team to cheer on.



*Dabney Rollins finessees the ball over the net as the Thunder roared past Pioneer 25-3, 25-4, 25-6 on Wednesday. Hailey Bogusz earned 10 aces and 6 assists.*

## NOTES FROM THE GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

# Re-Regionalization Study; Slight Growth; Solar Panels

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** – An invitation to attend some unknown number of extra meetings was not pounced upon by any school committee members from either Gill or Montague Tuesday night, and the committee agreed to postpone until its September 24 session the nomination – or, technically, recommendation – of candidates to join a six-town planning board to study broader school re-regionalization.

The state law laying out the process by which towns may join together to form a regional school district does not very well explain how towns already involved in smaller regional districts should proceed, as it has never been done.

Bill Tomb, who lives in Gill, pointed out that he presently sits on the Gill-Montague district's committee and not Gill's, representing constituents from both towns, and therefore wasn't sure who he would be answering to if the Gill moderator appointed him to be the town's mandated school committee member on the regional planning board.

Gill, at any rate, had only passed along a request for a recommendation by word of mouth, and not by written letter as Montague had, though both towns were hoping to field volunteers by September 19.

Cassie Damkoehler rolled her eyes at the time spent picking apart these technicalities. "We should rip off the band-aid," she said, and appointed members.

"I nominate Cassie," Michael Langknecht joked, perhaps.

"I'm not interested in the position at all," Damkoehler came to clarify. "Too much on my plate."

"I have to take my name off the table," Timmie Smith agreed. "I can't give it the time it needs."

"We might have to draw straws," warned Jen Lively.

The planning board, which would come together like Voltron out of six three-member planning committees created by Montague, Gill, Bernardston, Leyden, Warwick, and Northfield, is expected to be the main topic of conversation at a "civic leaders' meeting" scheduled for next Tuesday, September 17th at the Gill-Montague senior center.

"None of us know what this commitment is really going to entail," Lively said.

"Unfortunately, I think that is going to be true for a while," chair Jane Oakes replied.

Erving's non-voting representative to the Gill-Montague committee, Theresa Kolodziej, said she had told the Erving school committee that "if this group is considering a change, then Erving should take a look at our position as well."

"It's too bad we can't call it a 'study committee,' and not a 'planning committee,'" superintendent Michael Sullivan commented. He and Langknecht both suggested that Erving could join as a seventh town in the study.

"I don't envision Erving as studying going into the region," Kolodziej said. "We got out of Mahar for solid reasons."

"But you have expressed concerns about what's going to happen," Langknecht told her, "and if you'd rather have an active part in deciding that, as opposed to waiting until the thing comes down without you having any part in the discus-

sion, it's something to consider."

### Head Count

Superintendent Sullivan presented preliminary enrollment figures, which have increased by one districtwide since last October 1, from 941 to 942. A decrease of 17 at the middle and high school has been more than offset by an increase of 18 among the elementary schools. Sullivan promised more discussion of the figures once they become official.

Sullivan also reported that the district's request to enter a cooperative football team with Mohawk Regional has been approved.

Damkoehler, a football parent, reported back from co-op practices. "Mohawk has been so gracious, and the families are wonderful," she said. One or two games will be played at Turners Falls. "All the kids have really meshed well, and it doesn't feel like a divided team," she added.

Business manager Joanne Blier said she did not expect the arrangement to adversely affect the district's finances.

### Other Business

The school committee met its new student representative, Turners Falls High School senior Kaitlyn Miner. Miner, a past student council president, said she has been in the district since the first grade, and had positive news to report about the first week of school. "There's so many positive changes that we've already noticed," she said.

Speaking on behalf of her class, Miner also floated a proposal to change graduation from June 5 to May 29, so that families with grad-

uating seniors in multiple local districts will not have to pick favorites. "We're not trying to change the date to graduate earlier than anyone else," she joked.

They also met with Stacey Langknecht, the district's newly hired family engagement coordinator. "Sometimes when a student is struggling, it's about stuff going on at home," Langknecht said. She will spend her 15 hours a week among the district's schools.

Stacey Langknecht said that after meeting with the various building administrators, she had decided it should be an early priority to focus on students with a pattern of poor attendance, and "pinpoint who those kids are and what's going on with their families."

Michael Langknecht proposed an effort to develop educational materials about school councils, which are elected at each school and involve teachers, parents, and community members. "Over the years, people who've gotten on the school committee really wanted to be on the school councils," he said.

The committee discussed the idea, and approved a plan to bring in Glen Koocher, executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, to film a presentation before a live audience that can be used as an online promotional tool for school council participation.

At the committee's next meeting on September 24, it will hear from representatives of Macleod Energy on a proposal to build a "micro-grid" of solar panels around Turners Falls High School, possibly in the parking lot and behind the athletic fields.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

# Upkeep, Bees' Needs Weighed At Wendell Veterans' Memorial

By KATIE NOLAN

The agenda item for the September 4 Wendell selectboard meeting read "7:15 PM, Harry Williston, mowing on town properties." Williston, Ted Lewis, Paul Richard, Melinda Godfrey, Maggie Houghton, and Sylvia Wetherby all took part in a broad discussion of the veterans' memorial on the north common, the mowing frequency on town properties, the encouragement of pollinator habitat, and the unauthorized mowing of a portion of the north side of the north common.

The veterans' memorial, located north of the gazebo on Wendell's north common, consists of five millstones, with brass plaques inscribed with the names of Wendell veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Between the gazebo and millstones is a neat patch of white marble chips. Extending in front of the millstones is dark traprock gravel, with random tufts of crabgrass and other plants growing through it.

Lewis and Williston have worked with other volunteers to maintain the veterans' memorial since 2007, when Lewis coordinated moving the two original millstones from the senior/community center property to the north common and adding two additional millstones.

At the selectboard meeting, Lewis and Williston recommended pouring a concrete slab to surround the memorial, because they consider the weedy condition of the gravel patch unattractive. Williston and Lewis said it was hard to find volunteers to keep the gravel section weeded. "It's manual labor," Lewis said. "You have to go up there quite often."

Selectboard members were resistant to the idea of filling the 20-by-20-foot area with concrete. Selectboard chair Dan Keller commented that memorials are often surrounded by lawn. He suggested taking out the traprock gravel, "turning it into lawn, and mowing it as part of the common."

Lewis replied that the rest of the common was not being mowed often enough to keep it looking neat. "You don't want to take care of the mowing we've got," he said.

"The overgrown grass looks bad," added Williston.

Selectboard member Christine Heard said that the selectboard had decided to mow town properties less frequently, and to stop mowing the north end of the north common "to encourage pollinators."

At the May 1 selectboard meeting, several members of an informal group of "pollinator-protectors," including Houghton, had asked to board to consider changing the mowing frequency and height. This would allow some shorter wildflowers to bloom in the lawns to provide pollen and nectar for pollinating insects.

Heard said that people have "pretty strong feelings" about lawns. She said she had stopped mowing a part of her field, and that although "it doesn't look like a managed lawn, it has filled up with wildflowers."

Wetherby said that, after the north part of the north common had been left unmowed for sever-



Discussion circled around what length of habitat is appropriate to develop on the north common, and in the area in front of the veteran's memorial in particular.

al rounds, unusual plants had been seen there.

On August 13, members of the pollinator group had inspected the unmowed area of the north common, where the vegetation was approximately 6 inches high, and had identified various wildflowers in bloom. The next day, Wetherby noticed that the area had been mowed. According to members of the selectboard, the board had not asked anyone to mow that section.

Wetherby said that the pollinator protectors want to "plant things that would attract different pollinators" at the north end of the north common. She said that the group wants to put in mowed paths and explanatory signs. "We were hoping to have a space that people could see and enjoy," she said.

Houghton added that Adam Kohl of Kohl Gardens was willing to design a planting of native wildflowers for the north common.

Lewis cautioned against infrequent mowing, citing an unmowed section of the Fiske Pond property, which was "turning to forest."

Phil Delorey, attending the meeting to provide an update on road commission actions, commented, "You don't have to have one extreme or the other." He explained that at his own property, he kept a mowed lawn, but had started letting some edges go wild. He said he had seen six varieties of bees on his tomatoes and peppers, more than in past years.

Circling back to the issue of the memorial, Keller reiterated his support for planting lawn in the traprock-covered area and keeping it mowed. "Let's try to do that," he said.

Williston also commented on the crabapple trees along Wendell Depot Road on the north common. "The crabapples are all dying," he said, "and they should be taken down." Lewis added that there are four maples on the common "that need to be looked at." Keller said that the selectboard would consult with the tree warden about the trees.

At the end of the meeting, the

board asked town administrator Nancy Aldrich to draft a letter to abutters of the north common, explaining that the lack of mowing on the north end of the north common was intentional, and that the board wanted to support habitat for pollinators.

They also decided to ask the landscaper who mows for the town to mow a perimeter around the unmowed section, in order to frame it.

### Road Commission

Delorey told the board that the road commission is considering reconfiguring the intersection of Locke Hill and Lockes Village Road, following complaints about the visibility at the intersection and past accidents there.

The highway department has painted lines in the road to indicate how a reconfigured intersection might look. Delorey said the commission will hold public hearings to consider options for reconfiguring

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the intersection later this year. He said the commission and tree warden are also discussing removing one large tree.

Delorey said that the state Department of Transportation has approved the use of Chapter 90 highway funds to repave two sections of Wendell Depot Road and a section of Mormon Hollow Road

Delorey said that the commission has received complaints from some residents about roadside cutting, done to improve visibility and keep roadsides clear. He said that the town is responsible to keep brush cut on the 8- to 10-foot roadside right of way. "It looks pretty raw at first," he said, "but it goes away after time."

He said the commission will start giving notice when roadsides will be cut, offer residents the opportunity to maintain roadside growth themselves, invite them to a commission meeting to discuss their concerns, and develop a written policy and timetable for roadside cutting.

The yard at the Wendell Recycling and Transfer Station (WRATS) will be reorganized, according to Delorey. Two new open-top containers for bulk items will be placed on a new concrete pad that will include a platform to make access to the open-top containers easier.

### Bowen's Pond

Heard reported on an informal meeting in late August with Beth Jakob and Adam Porter, downstream abutters of Bowen's Pond, and several other Wendell residents. After being informed by the state Office of Dam Safety that they must either

repair or remove the dam, the current owners have sought state help in removing the dam.

Jakob and Porter want the dam and pond intact. Heard said that Jakob and Porter told her that the state Department of Wildlife will conduct a preliminary study of the effects of removing the dam, hold public hearings sometime after December, and then decide how to move forward.

It is likely that the options will be presented next summer and fall, and a permitting process will begin after that.

### Other Business

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato said that small towns are being asked for input into the development of the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code. She said that the proponents are planning a net-zero energy building code. (Net-zero buildings are ones where the total amount of energy used in the building is equal to the renewable energy created at the site.)

Wendell is allowed four representatives. The board appointed DiDonato and planning board chair Nan Riebschlaeger. Heard asked DiDonato to work on a code that would "not make it prohibitively expensive to build."

The board decided to hire Franklin Regional Council of Governments to work on the town's Municipal Vulnerability Plan.

Aldrich reported that several boards, including the selectboard, are looking for a new clerk. The board of health has been conducting interviews for one.



On Tuesday morning, the Wendell State Forest Alliance staged a "Funeral for the Forest" in protest of ongoing logging operations. Seven people were arrested as the procession crossed into the state forest at the Carlton Road entrance.

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**DEVELOPER** from page A1

Fibre Company building in Rochester, New Hampshire, which he bought at auction in 2004. "I went to buy a forklift, and I ended up buying a factory building," he said.

Cusano added he had "learned a lot of hard lessons" at the 200,000-square-foot complex, which sits on the Salmon Falls River between New Hampshire and Maine and includes a small hydroelectric dam.

He now serves as a landlord there to a dozen "commercial-slash-industrial" tenants, including a crating and shipping company, a metal-finishing plant, a company that recycles gas and water meters, a flexographic print shop, and New England Cremation Supply.

With a full house in Rochester, Cusano's sights have turned southward. In February 2018 he purchased 130 Middle Water Street in Holyoke, a 5-story brick former mill building with 25,000 square feet of space, and last November he closed on the hulking, 230-square-foot complex at One Cabot Street from the city, which had taken it under tax title and put it out under an RFP.

One Cabot is the former Riverside Paper Company. "We're just finishing cleaning the building, and we've gotta do a little bit of rehab on the systems," Cusano said, adding that he has a couple tenants signed up, but no one has yet moved in.

Cusano said he heard about the Southworth building by "word of mouth, from someone I was doing business with in Holyoke. It was on my way home, so I stopped by and looked at it."

Town planner Walter Ramsey told him the bad news – any buyer had a lot of cleanup and repair to do, and would be committing to pay off a number of liens – but Cusano was undeterred. He has been working with Charlie Blunker, whose family once owned Esleeck, to learn the ins and outs of the property.

"Charlie's been wonderful," Cusano said. "He wants to see the place come back to life and people put back to work, and he's helped me out immensely. It's because of the pride that his family had in their property that building is in such good condition. They took phenomenal care of that property – I hope to do the same thing."

The mill has a small electrical turbine onsite, and comes with rights to draw water from the power canal, as well as a water exchange agreement with FirstLight Power that it will only run the turbine when there is sufficient flow in the canal. A line from Berkshire Gas is reportedly still active.

Before Cusano can close on the property, it must be insurable, and before an insurance policy can be issued, the building's fire suppression system must be repaired. The sprinkler system was not properly drained after the mill closed, and though Cusano said it is repairable, a number of fittings were damaged on the lower levels during the last two winters' worth of freezing and melting.

It took a number of weeks, however, to negotiate with Eversource to restore electrical service to the building. Now one line is live, and Cusano says the utility required him to put down a nearly \$20,000 deposit to upgrade the main service entrance. "It was a good compromise," he said.

He adds that he has been working with Turners Falls fire chief John Zellman "to make the build-

ing as secure as possible, and as safe as possible."

The eventual goal, Cusano said, will be to lease the building out to a single commercial tenant.

**Some Of The Expertise**

"We're aware that Mr. Cusano is in the process of evaluating the building, with a purchase and sale in place," said town administrator Steve Ellis. "To the extent that we've had engagement with him, it's been very, very promising... He understands mill buildings, and he understands old hydro, which is probably key to the economics of restoration of a building of this type."

Ellis sounded a note of caution, pointing to significant tax liens, and the eventual challenge of finding a viable tenant.

"A deal has not been consummated – we haven't got any real sense of where it's going to go," he said. "But he appears to have some of the expertise to take an old mill building and put it back into productive use... My instincts are that he's a good person, and that his assumption of ownership would be a real positive for the community."

Ellis added that having a developer on the island may improve the chances of Montague's pending MassWorks grant to rehab the condemned Fifth Street pedestrian bridge across the canal.

"The state certainly values a perceived return on investment," he said dryly. "Western Mass does not have a long line of well-heeled developers knocking on the doors of our buildings."

**Sweat Equity**

"The town was careful," Cusano says. "They did their due diligence to make sure I wasn't one of the dreamers blowing smoke up their ass."

Cusano, a New Hampshire native, grew up working. "The family had a little drive-in business, concessions," he tells me. "We sold ice cream and popcorn at the fairs, and worked 100 hours a week from about the time we were old enough to make change."

In 1976, when he was in his early 20s, he started his own business, Stove Barn, selling stoves, hearths, boilers, and furnaces in Concord. In recent years his own children have taken over its operation, allowing him to focus on his real estate ventures.

"Some of these big development companies will come in, buy a piece of property, drop \$3 or \$4 million into rehabbing it, and then they can bring in really nice tenants that pay big rent," Cusano explains.

"But the more practical New England Yankees? We buy the property, put as much money as we can into it – and the rest is sweat equity and personal pride. Then you can bring in local businesses that can take advantage of good space at a very affordable rate."

Though Cusano says he has been talking with prospective tenants, he is not yet able to make any announcement; in any case, he cannot make any formal agreements until Milton Hilton's name is on the deed. The building still houses the paper works, and he describes its layout as "extremely difficult to break up" into multiple units.

"We're digging hard to find some leads," he says, "people who might be interested in using part of the papermaking equipment. We'd like to see someone come in and use everything. We're going to keep digging until we find the best tenant."

**POP-UP** from page A1

where he met Ivette Mateos, Santo Taco's other owner and its main visionary. Mateos and Dew moved back to Massachusetts three years ago and decided to open a pop-up taco restaurant featuring authentic, Mexico City-style tacos.

"Al Pastor is our signature taco, created by Lebanese people who came to Mexico," Mateos explains, citing the first item on their menu. "It's a combination of Mexican cuisine and Lebanese cuisine."

The traditional Al Pastor captures the essence of shawarma, made of thinly-shaved meat from a spit. Santo Taco's Al Pastor features marinated pork in adobo sauce, topped with pineapple, pickled onion and cilantro. Customers can also add Ivette's homemade salsa, made with fresh ingredients from local farms.

"We like to support farmers in this area," says Mateos. "Some products that I have are local and organic." Santo Taco buys ingredients from Brook Farm, Warner Farm, Kitchen Garden, and Smith Country Cheese in Winchendon. They also offer vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free options.

What Mateos can't find locally, she imports from Mexico, where she is originally from. "You can't find pineapples growing here," she points out with a smile.

Santo Taco always generates good business for breweries, not excluding Brick and Feather Brewery. "We are in love with their food," professes Lawrence George, owner of Brick and Feather, and friend of the Santo Taco owners. Whenever the tacos popped up, George noticed that regular Brick and Feather customers tended to bring their families whereas otherwise they would usually come alone.

"A lot more kids – and dogs – on taco day!" he observes, looking around his packed brewery.

Summer is the busiest season for Santo Taco, and as sweater weather descends upon us, the taco tent will have to go indoors. During the winter, Santo Taco often

Down in Holyoke, some of the businesses that he has been in contact with are in the cannabis industry; the first detail included on the rental listing for One Cabot Street is that the mill is in a "cannabis approved area of cannabis-friendly Holyoke, Mass."

"The first tenant I've got down there is not cannabis," he clarifies. "I'm trying to get a diversity of people, and not put all the eggs in one industry." Of prospective cannabis entrepreneurs, he complains with a laugh that "you can't take 'em too seriously, unless they're legitimate, and you can't tell the legitimate ones from the dreamers!"

Though Cusano and a few hired hands have been sweeping the floors, clearing brush – he showed this reporter a mild case of poison ivy on his forearms – and replacing broken windows and light fixtures, he said he plans to hire local contractors to get the mill in rentable shape. "You have to be able to know when to put your hammer down and call in somebody that knows how to do it," he says.

"There's been a lot of people driving by, honking and waving at us while we're raking the yard," he adds. "There was a lot of fear that it was going to end up like the Strathmore."

**Team Effort**

The day before this article went to press, Cusano texted me with a follow-up statement to our interview.

"I am not a good spokesperson, so I always wonder if I say things correctly," he wrote. "I would like to make it clear that I am honored to have the opportunity to take on this project. I realize the many challenges that have to be dealt with, and the scope of the task."

"This takes a team effort, and I have received tons of support from the town and local people. Having previously done projects like this one gives me confidence of achieving our goals."



The menu included several types of tacos, as well as elote.

sets up at Honest Weight Brewery in Orange.

While Mateos and Dew say they love what they do, they have bigger visions for their pop-up stand in the future, and hope to plant their tent down for good. "We're looking to maybe have a restaurant, maybe in Turners, but it's not sure yet," says Mateos.

**NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD**

## FirstLight To Cover 85% Of Erving Taxes

By KATIE NOLAN

Erving's 2020 real property tax rates will increase slightly over last year after the selectboard approved a 65% "minimum residential factor" (MRF) at the town's tax classification hearing Monday night. The residential rate will increase by \$0.19 to \$7.54 per thousand dollars of property value, and the commercial and industrial rate will increase by \$0.32 to \$12.24 per thousand.

Using the MRF, FirstLight, the owner of the Northfield Mountain Project, will pay 84.66% of real property taxes owed to the town. The split tax rate shifts the tax burden away from residential property owners to commercial or industrial owners. The town also grants small commercial exemptions from the commercial tax rate to seven qualifying small businesses in Erving.

The selectboard hired Mariah Kurtz as assistant planner after a unanimous recommendation from the search committee. Kurtz, a graduate of the Renewable Energy program at Greenfield Community College and the Sustainable Development program at the University of Massachusetts, will work with administrative coordinator Bryan Smith on planning, land use, economic development, and grant funded activities.

Kurtz attended Monday's meeting, and said she is excited at the opportunity to work for the town.

Selectboard members Jacob Smith and William Bembury reviewed the hazardous materials cleanup report for the former International Paper plant on Papermill

Road submitted by the environmental engineering firm Tighe & Bond.

The concentration of hazardous material in one soil sample collected near a damaged transformer exceeded the state Department of Environmental Protection's reportable concentration. Therefore, Tighe & Bond recommended conducting a "limited removal action" of up to 20 cubic yards of soil. The board authorized the firm to go forward with the soil removal.

The two selectboard members plan to attend the site visit at River, Warner and Strachan streets on Thursday from 5 to 6 p.m. They will meet with interested residents to discuss the design for upgrades to the three streets. After the site visit, there will be a meeting at the senior and community center at 6:30 p.m. to review the plans and collect feedback.

The board decided to fail the bid of \$20,754 for a speed monitoring sign and trailer because the bid was significantly higher than the budgeted amount of \$13,000. The board accepted a \$36,257 bid for a 2020 F250 truck for the water department.

The board signed a contract for Tighe & Bond to conduct the FY'20 post-closure monitoring and reporting at the former Maple Avenue landfill.

The board re-appointed Peter Roy-Clark to the library building committee.

The selectboard will meet jointly with the finance committee on September 16 to consider the warrant for a fall special town meeting. The STM date will be decided at that joint meeting.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1  
system, which feeds into the town of Erving's treatment plant across the Millers River. Last winter, infiltration of water into the system reached "massive levels," which "overwhelmed" the plant, according to Ellis, and nearly exceeded the contractual limit of Montague's flow into Erving.

Montague recently contracted with the engineering firm Wright-Pierce to identify the sources of the infiltration. The firm's study found eight locations where the sewer pipes showed significant "structural deficiencies," in Ellis's words.

At Monday's meeting, Ellis proposed that the selectboard sign a \$25,000 contract with Wright-Pierce to design, bid, and oversee a sewer repair project in the village. He said that due to the potential environmental impact of another season of high inflow into the system, the state has agreed to allow a quicker bidding process, whereby the town would seek quotes from three firms that "normally do this work."

McDonald said it might be hard to find a company to make the repairs "as quickly as we want to do it," because many other towns also want to get projects done "before the snow flies."

The board approved the contract, which will be financed from sewer retained earnings. Ellis said that the overall repairs are estimated to cost \$70,000, but that he will ask the October 3 special town meeting to appropriate \$100,000 because, at the end of the construction season, the bids may come in "higher than we would like." That appropriation will appear as Article 9 on the warrant.

Ellis said that the town hoped to get the project design done by the end of September, and receive bids by mid-October. "so we can get the work done as early in the fall as possible."

McDonald and Ellis also discussed the status of a proposed solar project for the WPCF that has been in the planning stage for the past year. The project is being partially funded by a state grant called "Gap Funding," but additional borrowing is dependent on revenues from a solar credit program known as SMART. As it turns out, the credits will not be available at this time because the program's capacity in this region has been filled.

McDonald told the board he had talked to state officials who said a new solar incentive program might not be in place for another three years, which would exceed the time-

frame for spending the state grant.

McDonald has proposed that the grant, of which \$135,000 remains, be used instead to upgrade the wastewater plant with more efficient "blowers" to diffuse air into the treatment process. He said he had "run the idea by" an official at the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Ellis said that he would inform both the capital improvements committee and energy committee about the idea.

Tina Tyler, who works at the WPCF as an administrative assistant and lab tech, said it was important to talk to people at the plant "who are doing this work" about the proposal.

The board also voted to approve a new discharge permit for Great Falls Aquaculture, a fish farm in the industrial park. The federal Environmental Protection Agency has requested that Montague review all of its permits for industrial sewer users, due to the large amounts of sludge accumulating at the treatment plant.

Finally, the board also appointed Tina Sulda to a part-time position as administrative assistant at the plant. Sulda also works at the town treasurer's office.

**Special Town Meeting**

The selectboard discussed, but did not vote on, a preliminary warrant for the October 2 special town meeting.

Highlights include: revision of salary ranges for union and non-union employees, based on collective bargaining agreements; \$158,002 to pay "prior year bills for the WPCF" (Ellis said this was a "late bill" from Erving, and the available "retained earnings" held by the department reflect the unpaid amount); the \$100,000 to reduce inflow and infiltration in the Millers Falls sewers; and \$268,670 to purchase a new street sweeper for the department of public works (DPW).

With regard to the street sweeper, Ellis said the town has "larger amounts" of free cash – balances left over from the previous year, certified by the state for spending – than expected, and that purchasing the sweeper rather than leasing it over five years would save the town about \$30,000.

Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz said he would like to ask DPW superintendent Tom Bergeron if he could use some of the discretionary funding in his budget reserved for capital purchases to help pay for the sweeper.

The warrant also includes ar-

ticles to approve the recent tax agreements with FirstLight Power Resources (see article, page A1), as well as two other tax agreements. Ellis said the agreement with FirstLight involves only fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

**Other Business**

The board voted to use up to \$1,000 each year for the next three years for trash hauling and recycling for two events: Franklin County Cider Days, organized with the help of Montague's RiverCulture program, and the Great Falls Festival, formerly known as Pumpkifest. The funds come from Republic Services, the town's trash and recycling hauler.

The board executed an electric power purchase agreement for the town over the next three years with Engie Resources, LLC.

A change order and a disbursement of \$39,153.80 was approved for work on the Rutters Park project in Lake Pleasant.

After a presentation by John Zellman, chief of the Turners Falls fire department, and David Hansen, chief of the Montague Center fire department, the board approved a three-year ambulance service contract with American Medical Response.

Zellman said the company wanted a three-year contract to show they were "committed" to the area, after a number of years of "revolving-door service from different companies." "It's a challenge to provide emergency medical service within Franklin County," said Zellman.

The board held a telephone pole location hearing for a pole on Turnpike Road, needed to establish an interconnection with a new solar facility behind the Park Villa apartments.

A \$52,536 contract for a grant under the state Green Communities program was executed by the board. Ellis said the funds will be used for LED lighting in a number of town buildings, as well as the heating system controls at the police station.

Ellis reminded the selectboard and the public that applications for the committee studying school district re-regionalization can still be made to the town administrator through September 19.

There will be a ribbon cutting and performance at the new Ja'Duke theater this Friday, September 13.

The board retired into executive session to discuss a "civil action" scheduled before the state housing court. The next selectboard meeting will take place on September 16.



**MILLERS FALLS VILLAGE CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN**

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**LOOKING BACK**  
**10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK**

*Here's the way it was September 10, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.*

**Runway Replacement Is Under Way**

With the long planned runway reconstruction project finally taking off, Mike Sweeney, part time manager of the Turners Falls airport since 2003, resigned at the regular meeting of the Turners Falls airport commission on Friday.

Sweeney said, "I've taken a sales job for a different company which doesn't give me the flexibility to continue to manage the airport."

Sweeney said the change in tenure at the airport management post would have only "a very small" impact on the \$5 million runway replacement project that began on August 12.

The full depth replacement of the 3,000-foot runway, with the addition of 200 extra feet of paved surface on the Connecticut River end of the runway, will take 90 days to complete and is fully funded by a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration.

**Waiting Longer For the Bus**

There's some grumbling on the Avenue about the new Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) bus schedules, which the company recently implemented to maximize ridership and "better meet the needs of the customers." But riders are citing the reduction of stops, circuitous route changes, the elimination of the transfer program causing a doubling of fares for many commuters, and the abolishment of reduced fares as sources of particular frustration.

Many of the scheduling changes resulted from FRTA's financial constraints and the necessity of serving a large rural territory, according to Jake Toomey, FRTA general manager. For example, ridership on the nearly two dozen daily buses

between Greenfield and Montague was low, and there were many requests for increased service from more heavily populated areas of Greenfield, so the new schedules reflect both these factors.

The changes were implemented after the first significant service review undertaken since FRTA's merger with the Gill-Montague Transit Authority in August.

**Wendell Considers Non-Electric Apartment**

The most controversial issue the Wendell selectboard dealt with at its September 2 meeting concerned the effort by Jonathan von Ranson and Susan Dunlany to build an apartment for themselves in part of the barn they are rebuilding in the center of town.

In an effort to reduce their carbon footprint, von Ranson and Dunlany hope to build their apartment without installing wires for electricity, to use a pitcher pump to supply water, and to deal with waste by using a composting toilet. Heat and hot water would come from a wood-burning masonry stove with a water reservoir, and light would be supplied from kerosene lamps and flashlights kept handy by the doors to outside.

Von Ranson sent a letter asking for the selectboard's support in getting the required permits. The couple says their goal is to reduce their ecological impact by living simply, and to do so within the law.

Building inspector Phil Delorey also corresponded with the selectboard and the von Ransons about the proposed non-electric apartment, outlining the problems he has with the concept.

Delorey said town boards do not have the authority to overrule state law, and so von Ranson's petition should be addressed to the state rather than the town. In addition, Delorey said, there are steps in the local process von Ranson has not dealt with properly, which the letter enumerated.

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Non-Fatal Strangulation & Intimate Partner Violence: Best Practice Response for First Responders**

**HADLEY** – The Northwestern District Attorney's Office is offering a training for emergency dispatchers, EMS, paramedics and medical first responders on how to respond to non-fatal strangulation in cases of intimate partner violence, Thursday, October 3 at Hadley Farms Meeting House.

Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence. Unconsciousness may occur within seconds and death within minutes.

When a victim is strangled by an intimate partner, that victim is seven times more likely to be killed by that same intimate partner. An abusive partner literally has control over the victim's next breath and can inflict devastating physical and psychological effects as well as a potentially fatal outcome.

"Strangulation is the ultimate form of power and control in an intimate partner relationship," Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan said.

Daniel Batsie, Chief of Emergency Medical Services

for the Vermont Department of Health, will present the 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. training. Batsie has more than 29 years of experience as a paramedic, has directed two accredited paramedic programs, authored two EMS textbooks, and has lectured both nationally and internationally on current EMS topics.

"It's critical for dispatchers, EMS and hospital emergency department staff to be trained in all aspects of strangulation in order to recognize the predominant signs and symptoms and to utilize the most effective best practice response," said Mary Kociela, Director of Domestic & Sexual Violence Projects for the Northwestern District Attorney's Office.

Registration is currently open with priority given to EMS, paramedics, dispatchers and other emergency responders in the Northwestern District (Franklin/Hampshire counties and the town of Athol).

Visit [www.northwesternda.org/events/](http://www.northwesternda.org/events/) to register.

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**GILL** from page A1

John thinks,” Randy Crochier said.

In addition to being the acting superintendent, Miner has been with the department for nearly a decade. From 1988 to 2009 he worked for the Felton Construction Company in Millers Falls.

Ovitt was hired by the Gill department last year. Prior to that he worked for the department of public works in Winchester, NH for four years, after working on the security staff at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. Ovitt attended Franklin County Technical School.

“Brandon barely meets our standard for experience of five to seven years,” said Crochier, of the town’s criteria for highway or similar work. “If this were five years from now, it would be a different case.” Later Crochier said the town “needs someone to get moving, Day One.”

“Brandon will someday be a highway superintendent somewhere,” said Ward. “I hate to say it, but I see a lot of myself in John [Miner].”

“I don’t see any of myself in him, except that I’m a big guy,” said Crochier.

During the interview process, each candidate responded to a lengthy list of questions, divided into three general categories: “skills based,” “behavioral,” and “situational.” Questions related to skills not only included experience in road maintenance, snow and ice removal, budgeting, and knowledge of the state Chapter 90 highway aid program, but also included a variety of decision-making scenarios.

“You get called in for a flooded, washed out road. Give all the steps you would follow to address the issue,” read the third question.

Behavioral questions included “What makes you satisfied in your job?” and “What’s your favorite piece of equipment?” Miner said he found the grader “fulfilling,” while Ovitt responded that he “liked driving trucks.”

Another behavioral question asked each candidate what he would do if he suspected an employee had just returned from a lunch break “under the influence of cannabis.” Both candidates said they would send the employee home, though the question then arose of who would drive them.

Situational questions included the candidates’ response to angry calls from residents whose tires had been damaged by metal from a recent contracted construction project, and how each would “handle things” if he realized he had “presented incorrect information, or did not conduct [himself] as effectively as [he] could have.” Both said they were comfortable admitting that they had made mistakes, which was the best way to “move on” from the situation.

At the end of each interview Crochier asked each candidate what his “biggest weakness” was. Miner said he was sometimes “lazy” and used “equipment, rather than hurt my back,” while Ovitt said he was used to being “just a worker” who “powers through” situations. “Sometime you can just finesse it,” he concluded.

In the end, experience seemed to matter most, as the board voted 2-1 to hire Miner. Ward was the dissenting vote. After the decision, Ward said that his vote was not a vote against Miner, “and I hope that John can be as good a superintendent as I think he can.”

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**September 19**

The board spent a good deal of time pondering the pay rate of the new superintendent, and whether Miner might, in effect, be receiving a cut from his pay level as acting superintendent. The board voted to place him at Grade 7, Step E, which

is a wage of \$30.62 an hour. Town administrator Ray Purington estimated that this would lead to an annual salary of \$64,350.

As of this writing, Miner has not formally accepted the board’s offer.



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*Above: Cutting figs from Leyden's Dancing Bear Farm.*

# Turners Falls Takes On The Fashion World

By K. CAMARA

**TURNERS FALLS** – Preparations are well underway for Fab Fashion Passion Week, scheduled for September 20 to 22 here in Turners Falls, when I arrive at Richie Richardson's FAB Fashion storefront at 67 Second Street on a misty Friday evening. Warm finger wisps of a coastal hurricane have reached out this far west, and the chill of a cold front from the north can also be felt as I approach the softly lit shop. I am here to learn what I can of the fashion events to come.



RACHEL TEUMIM PHOTO

*Harley Willard works on her design for the ReVamp fashion show during a workshop session.*

Richie's welcoming presence greets me at the door, and a voice warm with Caribbean tones fills the surrounding space, embracing me and setting me at ease. Since first meeting him at a local event shortly after his move to Turners Falls, and whenever we have since met in passing on the downtown sidewalks, it has been this warmth and grace that have moved me, threads of a culture that he carries with him from his home country of Trinidad.

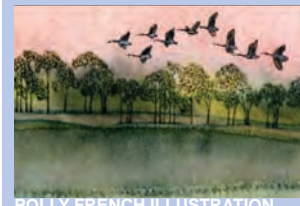
The shop is clean and inviting, with half a dozen closet racks of fashions, two sewing machines set off in a workshop in the back of the space, and a wide pine counter where he invites me to sit. He is a neighbor of mine, and it is a pleasure to sit across from him now, each of us engaged in our own ways of creative contribution to the community.

In 2018, Richie Richardson FAB launched the first FAB Fashion Passion, which brought local, regional, and international designers together on a fashion runway at the former St. Anne's church in Turners Falls. With creative direction from Richard Young, this first event featured some major designers including the Cloth and Dominique LaRoche of Trinidad and Tobago, Sonia Noel of Guyana, Shenna Carby of Jamaica, Art Groupie Collective of Ghana, CJ Original, and Richie himself. All these designers are represented in the FAB shop.

This year, FAB officially launches Fashion Passion Fashion Week, or FPFW 2019, an expansion that will again bring a mix of local, regional, and international designers to audiences here for three days of eclectic fashion.

The event begins on Friday night with an opening reception and mingle at FAB. Saturday night features a premier designer presentation at the Great Falls Discovery Center, and the event concludes on Sunday afternoon with the ReVamp Recycled

see **FASHION WEEK** page B5



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

## WEST ALONG THE RIVER

### THE URGE FOR GOING

By DAVID BRULE

**MILLERS RIVER BEND** – The morning sun like the evening sun, whether rising or setting, is nowadays coaxing out autumn colors. The riot of flowers here in the garden have that late summer look, slightly fading old gold for some, washed out mauve for others. The skies are now empty in the gathering dusk, as they are in the daytime.

*Got the urge for going, but I never seem to go...*

*When the meadow grass is turning brown*

*Summertime is falling down...*

The chimney swifts are gone from the skies. The nighthawks that just days ago knifed through the air, chasing down erratic insects up there? Well, they're gone, too. They fly away from us, bringing down the curtain on the season, drawing it further to the south. They got the urge to leave before the first real chill, then frost.

There have been some fine late August days, needless to say, and some golden melancholy first days of September. The song of the melodic wood thrush, which used to come from deep in our woods, has now become only harsh alarm notes. The singer is still here, but no longer inspired to sing. The calls have all gone from the trees, dwindled to a note here or there, no longer anything like melody.

This is the pause in the season. This is Act IV, the *dénouement*; the players in Act V wait in the wings.

Back during the last days of August, I woke up one morning and realized that the night before, the swifts had abandoned the late summer sky. Ever since mid-May we could count on their high-pitched voices and speedy flight as they screeched with delight in the joy of flying over the rooftops and the village steeples. That may not be a big deal to some, but it was a signal to the rest of us. The silence in the sky means something.

I jotted in my journal that I

would now have to take careful note of each flower and bumble bee, each faint bird song as though it were the last. I needed to note the way the shadow of the great maple tree to the east keeps me chill down here with the dog in the early morning. Isn't the season changing faster than it used to? Or is it just me.

During my morning musings, I lingered long over the mass of jewelweed, also called *touch-me-not*, that has taken over the rose garden at the edge of the deck.

These patches that have grown wild have attracted close to three dozen bumble bees. They tend their flower patch garden daily, all day long. They visit each blossom many times over, checking and harvesting, making sure some nectar or pollen wasn't missed.

Imagine yourself going through a strawberry or blueberry patch: there's always the perfect fruit someone else has missed. The bumbles are conscientious harvesters, with their golden sacks of pollen, like saddlebags filled on their hind legs.

We have suddenly come to appreciate these fuzzy neighbors – they're saving the planet. All of our pollinators are under attack, even the bumble bees, and our Valley is one of the last dwindling strongholds in the state.

Their jewelweed patch grows where it wants, it has moved around from year to year. Two seasons ago it was thriving near the compost pile, then it moved to the tangle of ferns and milkweed under the bathroom window. Now the patch has filled the south-facing flower garden as well as the garden on the east side of the house, submerging the winter bird feeder platform.

With this organic food available for bumbles and hummers, we've put away the sugar water feeder for good. The natural sources are better for them all.

On *September 1*, I moved the Adirondack chair that serves as my

see **WEST ALONG** page B3



MONIQUE BRULE PHOTO

*Bumble bee, jewelweed, and velvet leaf pods.*

# The Youngest Artist to Display

By NINA ROSSI

**WENDELL** – A collection of drawings, paintings, mixed media artworks, Lego constructions and sculpture currently on display at the Wendell Free Library is created by what may be the youngest exhibitor to date, eight year-old Calvin Feltman. The young artist met with this reporter at the library Saturday morning with his mother and father, Laura and Adam Feltman, his sister Annabelle, and his grandmother Marcelle Feltman.

Calvin credits this grandmother for arranging the show. Said Marcelle, "Whenever people see Calvin's artwork, they marvel. Rosie [Heidkamp, the library director] was saying that kids can display their art here, so I thought, here's an opportunity!"

There are many styles of paintings and drawings in the display case, including abstract art and representational paintings, but Calvin's favorite pieces are the pencil

see **ARTIST** page B5



ROSSI PHOTO

*Calvin Feltman poses with his self-portrait in front of a display case filled with a selection of the 8-year-old's artwork at the Wendell Free Library.*

# Pet of the Week

CHRISTOPHER CARMODY COLLAGE



## “BANDIT”

Hi! I'm Bandit, a young, active dog looking for an active home. I'm smart and loyal, but also a mouthy adolescent who needs an outlet for my energy. I love playing fetch, and I love my toys. I am friendly with everyone I meet, but due to my tendency to be mouthy, a household with teenagers and up is best for me.

I have been friendly with other

dogs, and having a dog buddy may be just what I need. I cannot live in a home with cats or small animals. I should enroll in ongoing training as I still have a lot to learn, but I am smart and eager to please.

Are you the one for me? Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at [info@dpvhs.org](mailto:info@dpvhs.org).

## Senior Center Activities

SEPTEMBER 16 THROUGH 20

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

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

#### Monday 9/16

8 to 9:15 a.m. Foot clinic by appt.  
12 p.m. Potluck & Bingo

#### Tuesday 9/17

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga  
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Senior

Farm Share Pick Up

#### Wednesday 9/18

9 to 11 a.m. Veterans' Outreach  
12:30 p.m. Bingo

#### Thursday 9/19

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards & Games

4 p.m. Gentle Yoga

#### Friday 9/20

12 p.m. Breakfast for Lunch

1 p.m. Writing Group

### ERVING

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

For information, call Paula Better, 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 9/16

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt  
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance

11:30 a.m. Breakfast Brunch

#### Tuesday 9/17

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

6:30 p.m. Medicare Countdown

#### Wednesday 9/18

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

12 p.m. Homemade Lunch

12:30 p.m. Bingo

6 p.m. Pitch

#### Thursday 9/19

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

9 to 11 a.m. SHINE

10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Muscles

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

#### Friday 9/20

9 a.m. Quilting Workshop

9:15 a.m. Walking for Fitness

9:30 a.m. Bowling Fun

12 p.m. Lunch

### LEVERETT

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

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

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

### WENDELL

Senior Center is at 2 Lockes Village Road. Call Nancy Spittle, (978) 544-6760, for hours and programs. Call the Center for a ride.

cedar and rose: insights from naturopathic practice

# Fermentation's Benefits to the Immune System

By DR NITYA EISENHEIM

**FRANKLIN COUNTY** – With back to school season here, you might be thinking about how to prevent colds and the flu from hitting your circle of family or friends. There are many great home remedies for colds and flu prevention, but I would like to focus on one that might not be on the top of your mind: fermented foods, specifically lacto-fermented vegetables and legumes, like sauerkraut and miso.

I'm Dr. Nitya Jessica Eisenheim, a Naturopathic physician practicing in Greenfield at Cedar Rose Naturopathic. This is my third column, the first after a summer hiatus. I'm passionate about herbal medicine, cooking, healthy food and community building. I love foraging for wild edibles and medicinal plants and igniting that passion in others. Through herbal medicine, integrative nutrition, naturopathic medicine, craniosacral therapy and visceral manipulation I was able to heal from chronic back pain, irregular menstruation, and digestive issues.

Remember to always consult with your physician regarding appropriate treatment for you. This is not a replacement for medical or health care.

Fermented foods and drinks have been staples of the human diet for at least thousands of years. Some examples are yogurt, kefir, beer and wine, sauerkraut, kimchi, miso, and fermented sausage. Defined as controlled bacterial or yeast growth and enzymatic conversions of food, fermented foods have been transformed through salt, microbes, and patience into live, cultured products containing many health benefits.

Lacto-fermented products, such as yogurt, sauerkraut, and other fermented vegetables, signal our immune system into action, balance inflammation, and are rich in vitamin C, iron, and zinc, all of which are proven to contribute to a stronger immune system. Fermentation helps break down nutrients in food, making them easier to digest than unfermented foods.

Fermentation promotes the growth of beneficial bacteria known as probiotics. We know that probiotics can improve immune func-



EISENHEIM PHOTO

Sauerkraut is a lacto-fermented food that is good for you and easy to make.

tion as well as digestive and heart health. Therefore, fermented foods can give your immune system a boost and reduce your risk of infections like the common cold.

Consuming fermented foods can also help you recover faster when you're sick. Fermentation helps break down and destroy anti-nutrients such as phytates and lectins, compounds found in seeds, nuts, grains, and legumes that interfere with nutrient absorption. Consuming fermented beans or legumes like tempeh or miso, or soaking your grains and beans overnight, increases the absorption of beneficial nutrients, making them more nutritious than unfermented alternatives.

Recent studies have shown that regular, daily consumption of fermented kimchi (spicy sauerkraut-like Korean food) improves glucose tolerance, thereby helping to prevent diabetes. Consuming fermented milk/yogurt can lower the incidence of fevers.

So, you might be thinking, how can I get my children to eat sauerkraut? Here are some tips for getting fermented foods into your family's diet:

1) Don't knock it until you've tried it. Don't assume your family members won't like it. I've seen two-year-olds gulp down sauerkraut, and teens down miso soup.

2) Use the brine of sauerkraut or pickles as you would use vinegar, such as in soups, salad dressings

and marinades for meat, poultry, or tempeh.

3) Add miso at the end of any soup you are making for a powerful boost to your digestion, along with adding its live enzymes and vitamins.

4) Add fermented vegetables, such as sauerkraut, carrots, or beets to any salad, main dish, or on top of soup.

When looking for lacto-fermented foods in the grocery store, look for live unpasteurized products that do not contain vinegar. Vinegar pickles have not been fermented and do not contain the same beneficial probiotics as lacto-fermented foods. Some examples of live unpasteurized products are Real Pickles (made in Greenfield) and Bubbies pickles and sauerkraut. For yogurt, I recommend getting a sugar-free, grass fed, organic one for the most amount of nutrients and the least amount of anti-nutrients.

If you would like to learn more about how to make a fermented product and delve deeper into the health benefits of fermented foods, including some upcoming events on this subject, go to [cedarroseheals.com](http://cedarroseheals.com).

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

## THIS MONTH AT THE SHEA

# ACT's "August: Osage County"

**TURNERS FALLS** – Arena Civic Theatre returns to the Shea Theater with *August: Osage County* by Tracy Letts. Directed by Christina Chapin, this is a turbo-charged tragic comedy centered around the Weston family in rural Oklahoma who are brought together after their patriarch, world-class poet and alcoholic Beverly Weston (played by ACT veteran Jerry Marcano) disappears.

The matriarch Violet, played by Rachel Cronen-Townsend, depressed and addicted to pain pills and "truth-telling," is joined by her three daughters (Jocelyn Glabach, Caroline Pierce, Brooke Martineau) and their problematic lovers, who harbor their own deep secrets.

Violet's sister Mattie Fae (Dawn Berne-Allen) and her family, well-trained in the Weston family art of cruelty, join in, and finally, the observer of all this chaos, the young Cheyenne housekeeper Johnna (Julia Wald), hired by Beverly just before his disappearance. Holed up in the large family estate in Osage County, Oklahoma, tensions heat up and boil over in the ruthless August heat.

Bursting with humor, vivacity, and intelligence, *August: Osage County* is described as "dense and funny, vicious and compassionate, enormous and unstoppable" in an Arena Civic Theatre press release. The play won a 2008 Pulitzer Prize and a Tony Award for best new

play. It was made into a 2013 movie of the same name starring Julia Roberts and Meryl Streep, whose performances were described as a "thespian cage match" in a *New York Times* film review.

The show contains mature themes and language, and is not recommended for young children. It runs September 20 and 21 at 8 p.m. and September 22 at 2 p.m. at the Shea Theater in Turners Falls.

Tickets are \$18 general admission and \$15 for seniors (65+) and students. They are available at the door, or by calling to reserve at (413) 233-4368. For additional information, visit ACT online at [arenacivictheatre.org](http://arenacivictheatre.org).

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Gill: (413) 863-5730



**WEST ALONG** from page B1 writing table and outdoor office. The move was symbolic, as it always is, in the fall. I moved away from the cherry tree which provided shade for my morning writings all summer long. Her leaves are sparse, not much shade anymore anyway, and I'm now more interested in a little bit of morning sun to warm fingers and sleeping dog.

Here now at mid-porch, I'm closer to the flowers, and indeed two curious hummingbird sisters, probably raised in the pine near the house, hover at my eye level, scrutinizing this new feature in their viewscape. Realizing it's only me, vaguely familiar to them, they whisk back to probe and sip the orange chalices of the jewelweed.


The only migration urge I've managed, dragging my chair from cherry tree shade to sunny mid-

porch, is temporary. This mid-spot is only a sort of halfway house to my winter outdoor office in front of the woodpile, with the north at my back, chill winds blocked by the stacked oak and maple firewood.

But that final move is a few more months into the future. There's still time to enjoy what there is left of late summer, and to anticipate the grandest days of New England, our glorious and ephemeral autumn blaze of color in October, still ahead of us.

*See the geese in chevron flight  
Flapping and racing before the  
snow,*

*Got the urge for going,  
They've got the wings to go...*

- Tom Rush and  
Joni Mitchell, 1968 

**MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS**

**Fairies And Festivals**

By MIKE SMITH

This week on MCTV we have some magical new content for you to enjoy: "Fairy Day on Avenue A," produced by The Lovelights and MCTV's own Hannah Brookman. This was a fun-filled event that took place on August 17 at Peskeomskut Park in Turners Falls.

The Lovelights gave a live performance of the pilot episode for their new *Lovelights* series, as well as live music and fun for the whole family! There was a huge turnout, but if you weren't there you can watch all the fairy fun on *montaguetv.org*.

We can all feel the fall weather creeping in, so why not enjoy those sweet summer moments for as long as we can? Videos from Barbés in the Woods are being slowly released to *montaguetv.org*. It's perfect to lis-

ten to at work or around the house if you want to hang on to those summer vibes for as long as you can!

Also on *montaguetv.org* you can stay up to date with local high-school sports with the Franklin County Varsity Sports Reports with your host Bobby C.

Sign up for MCTV's 120 Second Film Festival! Two minutes isn't a long time, but it's long enough to tell a story. Come up with an idea and visit *montaguetv.org* to sign up and for more details.

Something going on you think others would like to see? If you get in touch, we can show you how easy it is to use a camera and capture the moment. Contact us at (413) 863-9200, *infomontaguetv@gmail.com*, or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We'd love to work with you!

**A Barbecue for Sgt. Garmalo**

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GILL** - On Saturday, September 21 from 3 to 7 p.m., the 4th annual BBQ and family picnic for the Sgt. Jacob Garmalo Memorial Fund will be held at the Schuetzen Verein, 55 Barton Cove in Gill. I saw a flyer that said it will have a pig roast and BBQ, cash bar, K-9 demonstration, silent auction, face painting, and a dunking booth.

The Jacob Garmalo Memorial Fund was set up in the name of a correctional officer who died in 2016. His full name was Jacob Harold Garmalo. The fund's Facebook page says its mission is to "raise funds from individuals, businesses and corporations as a means to assist individuals recently released from incarceration in Franklin County to overcome financial hardships, instill hope and personal growth needed to move forward as positive and contributing members of the community."

Which is appropriate, given what this man's job was.

During the first two years, the fundraiser was put on by Sgt. Garmalo's family. Last year, his former co-workers at the Sheriff's Office helped out. Doni Beauregard, an executive assistant to the Sheriff for almost 20 years, said she will be helping for the first time this time around.

"Last year was the first year," Beauregard said. "We did the K-9 demonstration, and that was very popular. Everybody really loved it." The K-9 officer who did that was Captain Scott Waldron.

This BBQ involves more giving than just people helping out. "The food has been donated," she said. "The pig roast has been donated. Everything has been donated, for the most part."

The silent auction previously had gift baskets, gift cards, landscaping services, handmade furniture, and other items. "Last year, we raised a little over \$4,000," Beauregard told me. "We hope we raise even more."

I think that Jacob would be very pleased with that, along with his family and co-workers continuing to help out.

Another thing that I discovered was that at the Franklin First Credit Union, they are selling wrist bands with Sgt. Garmalo's name on them, since they came out as part of the fundraising effort too.

The event seems to have been doing well with raising funds for four years. Here's to it doing well for many more.

The flyer also gave me numbers to contact for tickets: you can call Ruben at (413) 325-6919, or Jennifer at (413) 325-4622. Tickets are \$20, or \$30 for a couple; children under 10 are free.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG**

**Stolen Motorcycle Crashes In Athol; Animal Control; Employees Harassed At Gas Station, Fish Lab**

**Monday, 9/2**

4:32 p.m. Caller reporting that six cars went by them really fast at Old Sunderland and Old Stage roads while they were walking with their young child. Caller states that cars sped up and revved their engines as they went by. They would like the speed sign board moved to the area on Old Sunderland Road near the fire department in the future.

8:34 p.m. Caller reporting that a male party is in the middle of the road near Food City waving a light around.

8:40 p.m. Officer just witnessed a vehicle strike something off the mouth of the bridge in the area of Schuetzen Verein, then take off. Shelburne Control contacted. Officer advises no signs of impairment; this was a road rage incident which caused party to swerve around the other vehicle and speed around the island.

11:14 p.m. Single-car collision; no injuries; airbag deployment. Conferred with interpreter. Party located next to fire station on Turners Falls Road. AMR and FD *en route*. Tow requested. AMR cancelled. Summons issued.

**Tuesday, 9/3**

9:24 a.m. Caller from Dry Hill Road states that she can see smoke out of her kitchen window and believes that it is coming from the dryer vent. Caller states there is no dryer hooked up to the vent and she can't smell anything; she has a disability, and cannot check the basement to see what is going on. Officers and MCFD *en route*.

2:34 p.m. Caller reporting party bitten by two dogs on Saturday while at a friend's house in Turners Falls; injuries to both legs. Both dogs were German shepherds. Animal control officer advises there are currently no dogs registered to involved residents. ACO stopped at address; parties didn't want to answer the door. There was one dog outside in the backyard barking; someone did call the dog, and the dog was gone within a minute from the backyard.

4:09 p.m. Caller from Millers Falls Road reporting that someone dumped five fence posts, a chain link fence, a kids' bike, and a tree swing in his front yard. Officer advises this was a misunderstanding between neighbors; neighbor who dumped items will be taking care of it tonight.

5:26 p.m. Caller from Morris Avenue states they are trying to put up a new fence; the neighbor has wood lying against the fence they are replacing. Caller did speak to neighbor, who stated it's on their property and they won't re-

move it. Officer spoke with all involved parties and advised them of options.

6:55 p.m. Caller from Federal Street reporting that their neighbor's son is throwing apples at their dog, and when they confronted the neighbor, the neighbor said they are going to call the ACO. Officer clear; situation mediated for now. Involved party at Bangs Street stated that the dogs are being aggressive towards kids.

7:30 p.m. First of two calls reporting that there is loud noise coming from a garage on Federal Street. Officer advises that male party at address is working on some cars for the demolition derby. Officer clear; no loud noise coming from location.

8:14 p.m. Caller from Walgreens reporting that a male party defecated on the floor; party has now locked himself in the bathroom, and the manager is standing outside the door. Officer advises male party has been moved along; no further police action required.

**Wednesday, 9/4**

9:24 a.m. Caller from Migratory Way requesting to speak with officer re: parties who have been trespassing on FirstLight property, one of whom has threatened a Silvio Conte lab employee. Officers spoke with involved parties, who were advised and moved along.

12:12 p.m. Two reports of unsafe vehicle operation at Millers Falls Road and South Lyman Street; van and SUV reportedly involved in road rage incident. Vehicle located during subsequent call.

5:12 p.m. Caller reporting loose dog with a leash still attached getting into trash in the alley between Eleventh and Twelfth streets. Caller called back to report that the owner has the dog.

9:24 p.m. Caller from Highland Street reporting that next-door neighbor's TV is too loud; would like officer to have them turn it down. Officer advises no loud noise coming from neighbor's house.

11:27 p.m. 911 caller re-

porting that he was assaulted and kicked in the ribs by three people approximately one hour ago at the intersection of Franklin and East Main streets. Caller knows one involved party by first name; she visits caller's neighbor often, and they have had interactions. Officer, TFFD, and AMR *en route*. Medical attention refused. Report taken.

**Thursday, 9/5**

2:40 a.m. FL Roberts clerk requesting police for male who was trespassed previously; same was in store and, when asked to leave, started yelling and calling clerk names. Male is in wheelchair outside parking lot at this time; caller is concerned that he may come back in. Officer advises male has left scene and may be heading up hill. Units clear.

7:51 a.m. First of three complaints regarding a neighboring residence on Federal Street. Officer advises there are currently five unregistered vehicles in front of the property.

8:55 a.m. Warrant arrest at Food City.

9:52 a.m. Party into station requesting assistance with trespassers on Migratory Way; same parties as yesterday. Involved party contacted caller to advise he was removing their belongings now. Caller agreed to give parties another 24 hours to move along.

10:01 a.m. Caller from Montague Street requesting assistance with a woodchuck that has been damaging his deck. ACO advised.

12:19 p.m. Caller requesting to speak with officer re: ongoing issue with male drinking in Peskeomskut Park.

2:23 p.m. Report of unwanted parties in front of Family Dollar for past hour and a half; parties asking people for an ID to use for Western Union. Male is sitting in one of the chairs for sale in front of the store and appears to be nodding off periodically. Male party arrested on warrant.

4:33 p.m. Caller reporting group of males toss-

ing beer bottles into their bushes and smoking marijuana at the corner of Fifth and K streets. Officer spoke with parties, who were peaceful; they were advised of complaint and will be moving along.

5:27 p.m. Party into station reporting that motorcycle was stolen from their front yard today sometime between 6:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Received call from Athol PD; they believe that the motorcycle was involved in an accident three hours ago. Confirmed that motorcycle they have impounded is the one reported stolen. Owner notified.

9:27 p.m. Report of suspected drug activity on N Street.

11:21 p.m. 911 caller from Fourth Street states that a female party outside her house is yelling that the caller's cat is her cat and that she is going to try to take it back. Services rendered.

[Calls for Friday, 9/6 not included in printout supplied by MPD.]

**Saturday, 9/7**

9:27 a.m. Report of what sounds like gunshots in woods behind house on Goddard Avenue. Determined to be nail gun being used to frame a home.

9:32 a.m. Complaint re: people at a Federal Street residence revving up derby cars very loudly every few minutes. Officers did not hear or observe anything while sitting in the area.

1:51 p.m. Caller states that people are shooting guns off at a party going on at the Scalpers Lodge. No guns; baby shower happening, and some balloons popped.

9:07 p.m. Caller reports being followed by a white van while walking her dog on Old Sunderland Road this morning. Van pulled in front of her; two men got out and started talking to her. They eventually got back in the van, continued to follow her for a bit, then drove off. Advised to call right away when something like this happens. She will call if she sees the van in Montague again.

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# Open House With Free Creative Dance Classes



JP LANGLANDS PHOTO

Students in *Awesome Art in Motion* warm up for their end-of-year performance at Hawks & Reed last May.

**TURNERS FALLS** – This Saturday, September 14, Great Falls Creative Movement will host its annual fall open house offering a day of free creative dance classes for children ages three to twelve. Come see what creative dance is all about! Learn about their fall programs and check out the Movement Studio's beautiful space on the second floor of the Brick House Community Resource Center in downtown Turners Falls.

The schedule for the day includes a creative dance for 5 and 6 year-olds from 10 to 11 a.m., followed by a class for 3 and 4 year-olds from 11:15 to noon. Grandparents, babies, older siblings, friends, caregivers, stuffed animals, and parents are all welcome to come dance with together.

In the afternoon from 1 to 3 p.m., children ages 6 to 12 are invited to try out a creative dance class which will also serve as an audition for the school's children's dance company, *Awesome Art in Motion*.

"Creative dance classes are a

wonderful way for children to connect mind, body and spirit, in a group context," says dance educator Anna Hendricks.

Creative dance, rather than focusing on a specific set of steps, provides a space and structure for students to explore their own movements. Young students explore how their own bodies can move fast and slow, on-balance and off-balance, big and small, while building physical skills, musicality and spatial awareness. Older students continue these explorations, learning to value their own bodies and creative impulse while dancing and collaborating with peers. "This is dance for everybody!" says Hendricks.

Now in its tenth year, Great Falls Creative Movement offers creative dance programming for children as well as workshops and artist residencies at schools and community centers throughout Franklin County. To learn more see [greatfallscreativemovement.com](http://greatfallscreativemovement.com), or find them on Facebook. The Brick House is located at 24 Third Street in Turners Falls.

## Wendell Cultural Council Seeks Funding Proposals

October 15, 2019 is the postmark deadline for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for local Cultural Council Grants that support cultural activities in the arts, humanities, and sciences. These grants can support a variety of projects and activities such as workshops, performances, children's programs and field trips, presentations, and exhibits.

This year, the Wendell Cultural Council (under the Massachusetts Cultural Council) will distribute over \$4,800 in grants. Our goal is to provide diverse experiences reaching a wide range of audiences.

Applications are submitted on-

line. The forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council program are available on the MA Cultural Council website at [www.mass-culture.org/lcc\\_public.aspx](http://www.mass-culture.org/lcc_public.aspx).

Paper application forms are also available at the Wendell Free Library, and must be submitted to Phyllis Lawrence, Box 81, Wendell, MA 01079 by the deadline date. If you are applying with paper application, please supply the Wendell Cultural Council with three copies.

For questions and other information on the Wendell Cultural Council, contact Phyllis Lawrence at (413) 367-2175 or [phyl.lawrence1@gmail.com](mailto:phyl.lawrence1@gmail.com).

## Gill Cultural Council Seeks Funding Proposals

The Gill Cultural Council has set an October 15 deadline for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants that support community-oriented arts, humanities, and science programs.

These grants can support a variety of projects and activities, including exhibits, festivals, performances, workshops, lectures, and artist residencies. Each year the state legislature appropriates money to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which then allocates funds to 351 communities throughout the

Commonwealth.

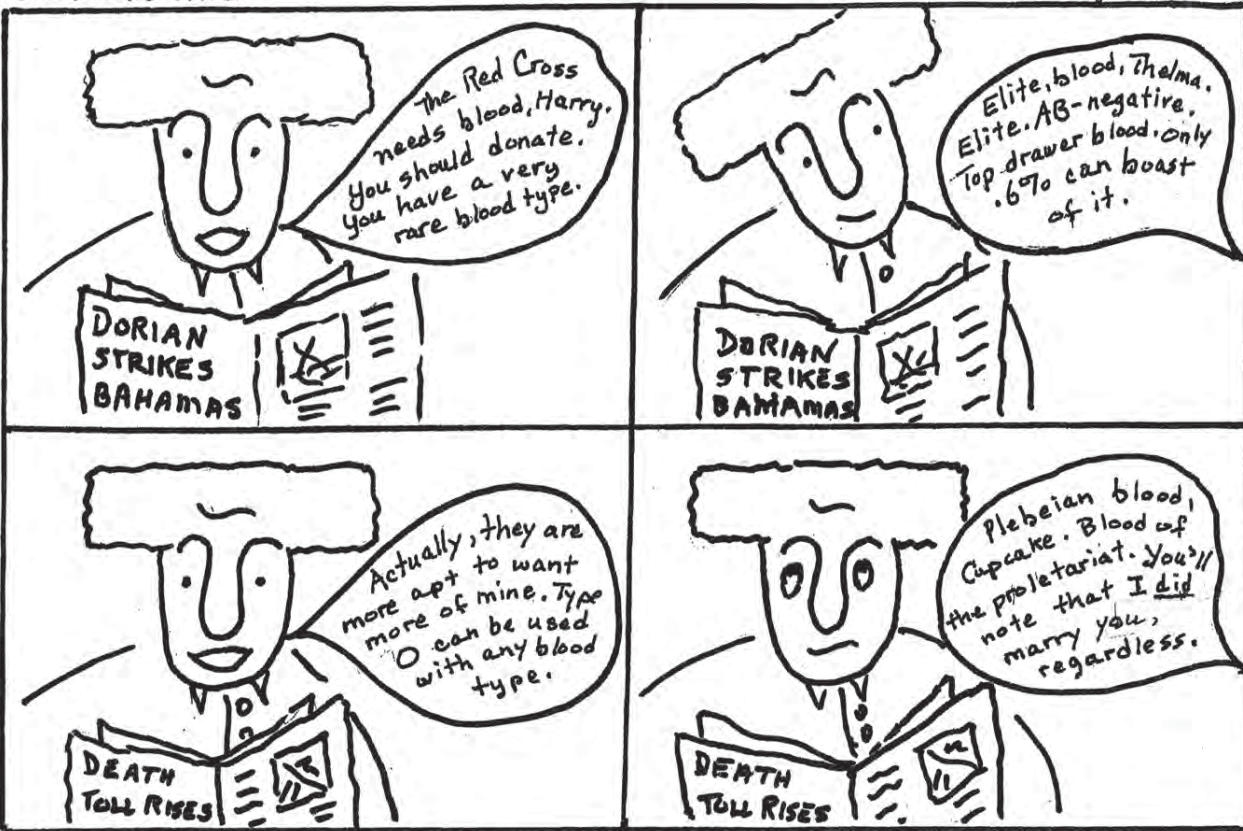
Gill will have \$4,800 to distribute this year.

Some of the projects the Gill Cultural Council helped fund last year included theater, music, and "Farm-to-Table" programs at the elementary school; concerts and contra dances in town; and a theater performance at the Gill-Montague senior center.

To see our local guidelines and fill out an application, go to [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org). Questions can be sent to [LCC@gillmass.org](mailto:LCC@gillmass.org).

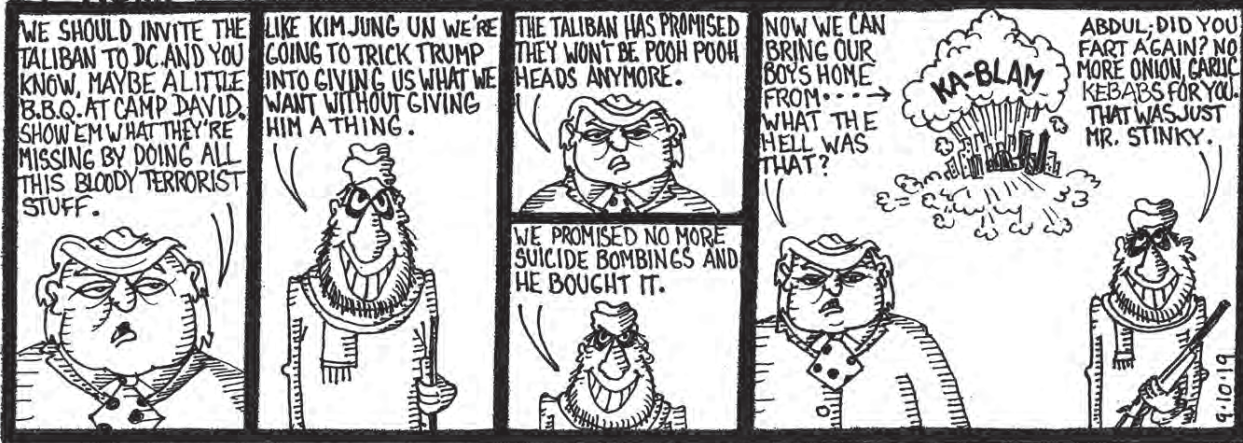
### OVER THE HILL

Carolyn Clark



### T-RUMP

by denis f. bordeaux



## Alvah Crocker: From the Rugged Hand of Poverty to Visionary Leader

**TURNERS FALLS** – Cliff Schexnayder, author of *Builders of the Hoosac Tunnel*, presents why Turners Falls founder Alvah Crocker is an example of what today is termed a "lifelong learner."

Because of his lonely travels on bad roads to sell his paper he understood the importance of transportation. But during those travels

he was observant of nature and the opportunities it provided. From personal experience he learned the physics of water to provide energy for mills and to destroy mills. As a visionary for progress he sought out and associated with similar hard working individuals.

These relationships of mutual support benefited all and resulted

in a railroad across northern Massachusetts to New York and the creation of Turners Falls Company.

Find out more about these two examples and Crocker's early life, with plenty of time for Q & A. At the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, this Saturday, September 14 from 1 to 3 p.m. Free and open to the public.

## Farmstand of the Week



JOSEPH R. PARZYCH PHOTOS

The Raymond Farm is located on Gill Road in Bernardston, on the Gill-Bernardston line. They sell a wide variety of fantastic and delicious vegetables, locally grown at their farm. They sell tomatoes, canning tomatoes, and peppers at their farm stand. You can also purchase vegetables from the Raymond Farm at Food City. Please support your local farmers, farms, businesses, and restaurants!

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# OUT OF THE PARK: September 2019

By JON DOBOSZ

**UNITY PARK** – Happy September, everyone! Yes, it's a crazy time of year, coming off the lazy days of summer and moving right into the craziness of the start of the school year. We hope you all had a great summer, because we surely did at Parks and Rec.

As a matter of fact, this was one of the best summers we've had in recent memory, with the numerous special events we were part of. We would like to thank everyone who participated, as well as our many partners who played a vital role in the success of these events.

However, we're not done quite yet! We still have one more summer event left on the calendar, our final Night Skate. **Night Skate III** will be held this Saturday, September 14 at the Unity Skatepark. The Night Skates would not be possible without the support of RiverCulture, members of the Friends of the Skatepark, and of course the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for allowing us the use of their light towers. The event will be held from 6



until 10 p.m., so be sure to swing by and be part of the energy.

As we ease into autumn, MPRD certainly does what it can to honor the season by hosting our **Annual Scarecrow Stuffing Party**. This will be an ideal opportunity to create your own hay-filled family member. The party is scheduled for Saturday, September 28 down here at Unity Park from noon to 2 p.m.

Scarecrows are \$5 per, but if you bring your own clothes, it's only \$3. We're a little short on long-sleeved shirts and pants, so if you have a few pairs you're not using anymore we will gladly take them off your hands. Drop them off at our

office during office hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The rain date for this event is Sunday, September 29. We'll have a bake sale as well, because you can't have a party without food!

We're also taking registrations for our **Bluefish Swim Team**. The Bluefish is a recreational/competitive, youth swim team that has been around for over 40 years. Practice begins mid-October, and the program goes until early March 2020. Swimming groups are organized according to ability, and if you're interested please give us a call. New prospective swimmers will need to take a swim-test to qualify. Check out our team website [montaguebluefish.com](http://montaguebluefish.com) for additional information.

That's about it from here. For updates on everything Montague Parks and Rec, check us out on [montague.net](http://montague.net), "like" us on Facebook, or call the office at (413) 863-3216. Enjoy the beginning of autumn, and we'll talk to you in October.

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

## FASHION WEEK from page B1

Fashion Show in the same location. Since the ReVamp event is the newest addition to the week, I ask Richie if he can explain the new expansion.

I had difficulty making a connection between the glamour of a runway show, with models trained to "strut" in heels after receiving two days of training by a New York casting professional, and a show that highlights the re-use of items of all sorts. The "Recycled" show has its roots in Turners Falls: over the last decade or so, signature events here have included the fashion show on top of the washing machines at Suzee's Third Street Laundry, featuring repurposed clothing from the

laundromat lost-and-found box, and creative, wearable configurations made from all kinds of materials at the downtown block party parades.

"Oh, but they are connected," he exclaims. "You see, fashion is a very big tent... What the majority of people engage in is called 'fast fashion.' The cheap products that are manufactured in other countries, not always under humane conditions, subsidized and brought to this country, and our 'bargains' actually support a cycle that suppresses and represses people. Additionally, in this fast-fashion cycle, people wear an item an average of seven to ten times and then they throw it away.

"What Rachel Teumim is doing with ReVamp is sustainable fashion.

It's about taking what's already there and repurposing it and giving people who are artists and creators, who don't consider themselves designers, the opportunity to take something, have fun, remake it and use it – all contributing to a philosophy of sustainability."

Richie goes on to note that what he and the other designers and makers do is also a part of this philosophy, by providing an option for "original wear." "I take my time and make it," he says. "I use quality material. I pay my people well. And because it is so well made, unlike fast fashion, you don't need to buy ten of mine. You have a piece that will be in your wardrobe for a very long time, that you can wear on many different occasions."

### Whitewashing

Richie Richardson goes on to say that fashion is the contribution he feels he can make to the Turners Falls community, a community that he feels he "fell in love with from the beginning." More than anything else, he believes the event is about "giving fashion a human face" which represents a more global diversity.

"The arbiters of fashion," says Richie, "those who write the fashion narrative, are all white – in a world that is constantly changing. There is a whitewashing in fashion, and here we have the opportunity to say: the face of fashion is universal. It is also ageless. It is also diverse."

The openness and generosity of Caribbean culture has informed Richie's attitude of inclusivity: "Because that is where I am from, I say 'why not fashion?!' Everybody participates in fashion! Fashion itself is democratic!"

When Richie pauses, I chime in excitedly: "Yes, I see – humanizing it, and addressing the elitism by using local models, and racism by way of their diversity."

"Yes, yes," he says. "Precisely! We will train the local models, and teach them all that they need to 'look amazing.' And they will at least be given an experience, if they want to pursue this in some way."

I next inquire into the tradition of "Fashion Weeks" in general,

## ARTIST from page B1

drawings of what he calls "Bots" that he did with assistance from his dad, who gave him pointers on shading.

"I don't have to color it in," said Calvin, "and it looks cool after."

Marcelle said she was fondest of his doodling pictures, several of which are colored in and are framed to sit on a shelf, and some of which are labeled Cute Drawings and are character drawings from random shapes. That idea is represented in his Blob paintings as well, where a blob of paint is then made into a creature with the addition of details in pen.

His art classes at the Swift River School, where he is in the third grade, are the source of many of the paintings on display, including Neptune Castle, the Blobs, and a realistic rendition of an owl on a stump under a full moon. Interestingly, the Neptune Castle one was painted with cardboard. "You dip cardboard pieces in ink and print them on," explained the artist. "It was a little tricky. And then we water-colored them."

Clay creatures and Lego free-style creations demonstrate that the boy is no one-trick pony; he shapes

and builds into the third dimension with some degree of confidence, and, according to his grandmother, at a quick pace, too.

His colorful clay "Investigator" series are made out of Foamy modeling compound, which is lightweight and bouncy when dry, instead of shattering like regular clay will do. Experiments in different clays can be disappointing, like the time five-year-old Calvin's dinosaur melted in the oven when they tried to get it to harden after it stayed soft for over a month. Luckily, Laura has pictures of it before it went into the heat.

Does Calvin aim to be an artist when he grows up? "That's one of the things I want to do these days," he admits. Alternately, he would like to be "a YouTuber." ("Stick with the art," muttered a family member.) The family hopes other kids who see Calvin's artwork will be inspired and that more kids might want to display their work at the library.

Calvin seems unfazed by the attention; one of the labels in the exhibit quotes him as saying: "Art relaxes me."



## FASHION PASSION FASHION WEEK

Turners Falls MA | September 20-21-22  
Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

Premier Designer Runway Presentation  
& ReVamp Upcycle Fashion Show

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and Richie paints a picture for me of what that is like in Manhattan, where he tells me FAB Fashion has its headquarters. I am bedazzled by the picture of multiple daily runway shows under a tent, surrounded by many smaller salons hosting their own shows. The financial figures are staggering, and a far cry from these beginnings here. Backing the production of this month's event, he tells me, is Jerry Jordan Brown, the founder of the Brooklyn Fashion Week and now a member of the FAB team.

When next I ask if he hopes this will expand to fill up a week of events, Richie says, "We hope to add something meaningful to this as time goes by, with the promise of a new day next year inspired by something from Trinidad and Tobago, and the proposed cross-cultural 'Twin City' of Port of Spain's artistic Woodbrook neighborhood."

### Recycling

As for this neighborhood, those interested in participating in the ReVamp event as designers can still attend one last workshop tonight, Thursday, September 12, at the FAB Fashion shop for inspiration in creating their own upcycled fashion piece. Those who are able to create a piece on their own and want to enter are encouraged to contact Rachel Teumim at [rteumim@gmail.com](mailto:rteumim@gmail.com) before September 19.

Models for ReVamp are also still being sought, and interested volunteers are still needed. Contact Rachel at the same address for more information. In her press release, she writes: "Fashion is an opportunity for creative expression and a place to play with identity and gender, art and functionality, confidence and style. ReVamp is about taking something that had a previous life and turning it into fashion to add layers of creativity, meaning and whimsy."

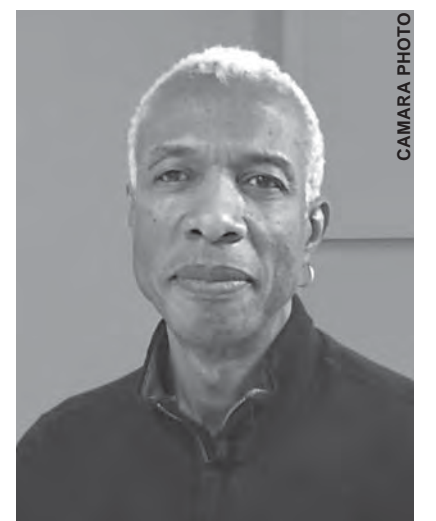
Rachel urges people to use creative interpretation of the fashion show framework: to "take what's there and reimagine it; start cutting and stapling, sewing, glueing, even if you're not sure what will happen. Find clothing or objects that pose a

challenge, that have no other destiny than the landfill or the rag bin, and turn them into something beautiful! Or at least, something wearable."

Previous experience may come in handy, but is not required. There will be some materials for people to use as well as sewing machines, should they be needed. People are also encouraged to bring "clean trash" that they think could make interesting wearable art. Work on designs, get help and inspiration, meet other designers and the organizers, and learn more about ReVamp.

Veteran designer Anne Harding will be showcasing three outfits at ReVamp. One of these, made with typical Harding humor, is made with AARP materials and will be modeled by a 70-year-old.

This second FAB Fashion Week promises fresh perspectives on materials, models, and ideas about art and design, from high fashion to clean "trashion."



CAMARA PHOTO

"Fashion itself is democratic":  
Richardson says he sees the  
Turners Falls event as an end run  
around the "arbiters of fashion."

### FPFW 2019 Schedule

Friday, September 20, *Opening Reception and Mingle* at FAB Fashion, 67 Second Street. 6 to 9 p.m.

Saturday, September 21, *Premier Designer Presentation* at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A. 6 to 9 p.m.

Sunday, September 22, *ReVamp Recycled Fashion Show*, Great Falls Discovery Center. 3 to 5 p.m.



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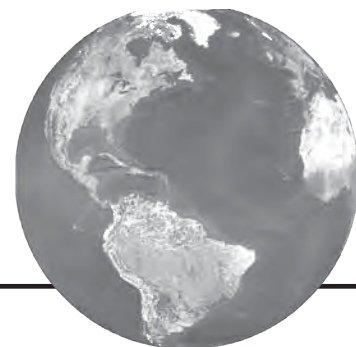
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# Aquí se habla español

Esta es la página en español del periódico **The Montague Reporter**. Aquí podrán encontrar cuestiones acerca de la comunidad hispana, eventos de interés, curiosidades, y noticias en español. Si quiere colaborar o compartir alguna sugerencia, envíenos un correo electrónico a: [spanish@montaguereporter.org](mailto:spanish@montaguereporter.org). Esperamos su participación.



## La nueva Ley de Carga Pública y sus efectos en la inmigración legal.

Por **VICTORIA MAÍLLO DE AGUILERA**

De entre todas las medidas que la administración Trump ha llevado a cabo hasta el momento para frenar la inmigración legal, la nueva "ley de carga pública" podría ser la que tuviera el mayor impacto. Está diseñada para reducir la cantidad de personas que son elegibles para obtener tarjetas verdes de residencia y otros tipos de visados, creando nuevas definiciones de lo que significa ser dependiente o ser una carga para el gobierno.

La administración de Trump a lo largo de estos años ha iniciado varias propuestas legislativas para reducir la inmigración legal, pero han tenido o tienen muy pocas posibilidades de llegar a convertirse en una ley. Por el contrario, en este caso, la administración de Trump cree que puede implementar la nueva Ley de la Carga Pública a través de una acción ejecutiva, sin necesidad de pasar por el Congreso.

La nueva ley fue anunciada por el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de EE. UU. (DHS) como tan solo como una propuesta de regulación el 22 de septiembre de 2018. Más tarde el DHS publicó una regulación final el 14 de agosto de 2019, que está programada para entrar en vigor el próximo 15 de octubre de 2019.

Para contrarrestar esta nueva Ley de Carga Pública algunas organizaciones que abogan por los derechos de los inmigrantes han indicado que presentarán demandas que desafíen su legalidad. Por lo tanto, incluso después de la publicación, los desafíos legales podrían retrasar su implementación.

Pero, ¿en qué consiste la ley que se está aplicando actualmente? En este momento,

los oficiales de inmigración deciden la posible carga pública evaluando si un solicitante de una tarjeta verde o una persona que quiere entrar en los Estados Unidos con un visado dependerá principalmente del gobierno para obtener apoyo económico. Para decidir si una persona es una carga pública, los oficiales de inmigración se basan en múltiples factores especificados en el INA. También deben confiar en la "declaración jurada de apoyo", que es un contrato firmado por el patrocinador del inmigrante, que indica que el patrocinador apoyará financieramente a este. Esta declaración jurada de apoyo ofrece

pruebas contundentes de que el inmigrante no dependerá principalmente del gobierno, sino que será ayudado por su patrocinador.

De acuerdo a la política existente, los oficiales de inmigración también consideran si un inmigrante que solicita una tarjeta verde o la admisión a los Estados Unidos ha usado asistencia monetaria (como TANF, también conocida como "asistencia social" o SSI) o atención institucionalizada a largo plazo en el pasado. Los inmigrantes que hayan utilizado esta forma de asistencia tendrán que demostrar que no es probable que necesiten estos recursos para recibir apoyo en el futuro.

El uso de programas de salud, nutrición y vivienda financiados con fondos públicos no se consideran actualmente factores negati-

vierta en una carga pública. Esta ley solo se aplicará a las personas que deseen ser admitidas en los Estados Unidos o que soliciten un ajuste de estatus.

2. La ley de Carga Pública no se aplica en el proceso de naturalización, a través del cual los residentes permanentes legales que lo solicitan pueden convertirse en ciudadanos estadounidenses.

3. La política existente aún está vigente. La nueva regla se aplicará a las solicitudes de ajuste de estado selladas a partir del 15 de octubre de 2019. La nueva regla no se aplicará a las aplicaciones de ajuste de estado que estén pendientes o selladas antes de esa fecha.

4. La nueva ley define una carga pública como una persona que recibe cualquier cantidad de beneficios públicos durante más de un to-



vos de carga pública. A partir del 15 de octubre de 2019, la nueva regla sí considerará algunos de estos beneficios en la determinación de la carga pública. Este es un cambio drástico de la política llevada a cabo hasta el momento.

Vamos a tratar de resumir aquí algunos puntos importantes con respecto a la nueva Ley de Carga Pública:

1. La nueva ley interpreta una disposición de la Ley de Inmigración y Nacionalidad (INA) relativa a la inadmisibilidad. El motivo de inadmisibilidad en cuestión dice que una persona es inadmisibile si es probable que en el futuro se con-

1 Fuente: USCIS, Servicio de Ciudadanía e Inmigración de los Estados Unidos.

tal de 12 meses durante un período de tiempo de 36 meses. Cada beneficio utilizado cuenta para el cálculo de 12 meses. Por ejemplo, si un solicitante recibe dos beneficios diferentes en un mes, eso cuenta como el uso de los beneficios durante dos meses.

5. La nueva regla amplía la lista de programas financiados con fondos públicos que los oficiales de inmigración pueden considerar al decidir si es probable que alguien se convierta en una carga pública. Según la nueva regla, Medicaid, el Programa de Asistencia Nutricional Suplementaria (SNAP), la asistencia de vivienda de la Sección 8 y la vivienda subsidiada por el gobierno federal se utilizarán como evidencia de que un solicitante de

## Tablón de anuncios

• **Food Bank de Massachusetts** sigue ofreciendo comida gratis cada tercer miércoles de mes en el parking del Senior Center en Turners Falls cuya dirección es 62 5th Street. La próxima distribución de comida será el miércoles 19 de junio de 1:30 a 2:30 p.m.

Por favor asegúrense de traer sus propias bolsas. Este programa se realiza en alianza con FCCMP y Montague COA. Si tienen preguntas, contacten con The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts en el teléfono (413) 247-9738.

• **Center for New Americans.** El Centro de Atención a Familias de la organización Center for New Americans se ha trasladado desde su localización anterior en Turners Falls a Greenfield. La nueva dirección es 278 Main Street, Greenfield.

• **Fashion Passion Week, Discovery Center.** Organizados por Richie Richardson tendrán lugar una serie de actividades relacionadas con la moda los días 20, 21 y 22 de septiembre en Discovery Center en 2, Avenue A en Turners Falls.

tarjeta verde o visado es inadmisibile bajo la carga pública.

6. La nueva ley permite a los oficiales de inmigración considerar el dominio del inglés como positivo o la falta de dominio del inglés como un factor negativo; las condiciones médicas y disponibilidad de seguro médico privado; y uso anterior de exenciones de tarifas de inmigración. La regla requerirá que los inmigrantes adjunten una Declaración de Autosuficiencia cuando soliciten una tarjeta verde además de los muchos formularios ya requeridos.

7. La regla crea "factores negativos muy ponderados" y un par de "factores positivos muy ponderados". Por ejemplo, es un factor negativo muy ponderado recibir más de 12 meses de beneficios públicos en conjunto durante el período de 36 meses antes de presentar la solicitud de ajuste o admisión. Los factores positivos muy ponderados incluyen tener un ingreso familiar de al menos un 250% por encima del nivel federal de pobreza.

Al aplicar la ley se aplicarán una serie de circunstancias que evaluarán el criterio de carga pública. Esto significa que el funcionario encargado del caso debe considerar tanto los factores positivos como los negativos al determinar la probabilidad de que alguien se convierta en una carga pública. Como mínimo, un funcionario de USCIS debe considerar los siguientes factores para hacer una determinación de carga pública:

- Edad
- Salud
- Estatus familiar

- Activos financieros
- Recursos financieros
- Educación y capacitación

La presencia o ausencia de un solo factor no puede ser el único criterio para determinar la inadmisibilidad por carga pública (a menos que ese factor sea la ausencia o insuficiencia de una declaración jurada de patrocinio económico, cuando así lo requieren las leyes y reglamentos que rigen un beneficio específico de inmigración, tales como ciertas solicitudes para un ajuste de estatus relacionado con la familia).


Al evaluar la totalidad de las circunstancias, incluyendo los factores estipulados por los estatutos anteriormente mencionados, un funcionario puede considerar el hecho de que la persona reciba ciertos beneficios financiados por fondos públicos. No todos los beneficios financiados con fondos públicos son relevantes para decidir si alguien tiene probabilidad de ser una carga pública. Al determinar si alguien puede convertirse en una carga pública, USCIS considerará si la persona tiene una gran probabilidad de depender del gobierno para su subsistencia, como podría comprobarse por medio de la ayuda pública en efectivo que reciba para incrementar su ingreso o la institucionalización para cuidado a largo plazo a costa del gobierno.

Por último, es muy importante añadir que, aunque la nueva norma se promulgue, la extensión del número de beneficios de gobierno que remiten a una denegación por motivos de carga pública, no se podrá aplicar en solicitantes que obtuvieron esos beneficios antes de la fecha de entrada en vigor de la nueva ley.

Como consejo puedo decirles que si están pensando en solicitar una tarjeta de residencia o una naturalización, es mejor que lo hagan de inmediato, y con la mayor antelación posible a estos nuevos cambios.

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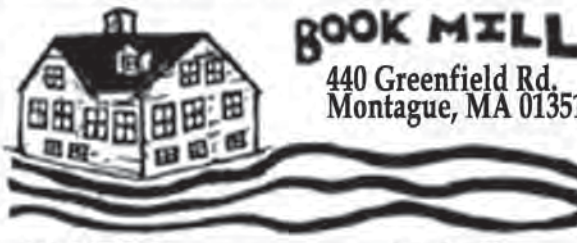
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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Little Arcs, Kimaya Diggs, and Eleanor Levine*. A sweet night of precious songs. \$ 8 p.m.

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

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The O-Tones, Girls From Mars*. \$ 6:30 p.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Ropes*. Play about three brothers killing time in an airport on their way to their estranged father's last tightrope walk. Footlights at the Falls production. \$ 7 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Paula Bradley, Rafe Wolman*. Great Falls Coffeehouse Series presents old-time and early country music with Paula and Rafe. A lively and joyful musical celebration that includes songs and tunes. Coffee and baked goods available. Suggested donation \$6 to \$15. 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *String Sextets in September*. Mohawk Trail Concerts presents *Adaskin String Trio* and the *Elm City Ensemble*, performing Dvorak and Brahms while photography by *Liz Gardner* is projected. Free for 16 and under. \$ 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Immaterial Possession, Camo by Camouflage, Underwear*. Hypnotic dance and luring song. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Phlange Delight, Crystalline Roses, and MaZozma*. Psychedelia. 9:30 p.m.

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

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Learn about Alvah Crocker, the founder of Turners Falls, with *Cliff Schexnayder*, author of *Builders of the Hoosac Tunnel*. Presentation followed by a question and answer period. 1 p.m.

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

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Jen Curtis & Friends*. Violist *Jen Curtis* with pianist *Jeanette Fang* and members of the *Melodic Refuge Orchestra*, with an eclectic mix of styles and compositions. Indoor concert. \$ 5 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.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Ropes*. Play about three brothers killing time in an airport on their way to their estranged father's last tightrope walk. Footlights at the Falls production. \$ 7 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Da-*

ages. Donation. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Boy Harsher, Sibling*. \$ 8 p.m.

## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: Jazz Brunch with the *Jazz Mesmeriz-*



Nancy Lautenbach exhibits "Mapping the Body: a mixed media exploration of the female form" at Nina's Nook through October 26. The installation includes sculptural surprises as well as wall art. Her Pod series features a feminine, organic form that "alludes to secrets, body, sexuality, shame, woundedness, containment, fear, and the intimacy of being," says Lautenbach. "Through line I explore the contours and curves of the body and the movement of her inherent energy." Reception with the artist this Saturday, September 14, from 5 to 8 p.m. For more information, see [ninasnook.com](http://ninasnook.com).

vid *Liebe Hart* (Adult Swim) live show & screening of *Shrek Retold*. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Duke Robillard Band*. \$ 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic #35*. Big-town performance in a tiny village. By donation. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse, Wendell: *Lunar Carnival*. Energizing and inspiring bohemian sounds with a magical blend of soulful harmonies. To benefit Launchspace at the Orange Innovation Center. Dessert-O-Rama, coffee and tea, fun for all

ers. 11 a.m.

Antenna Cloud Farm, Gill: *Jen Curtis & Friends*. (See Saturday's description.) Indoor concert. \$ 3 p.m.

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Ropes*. (See Saturday's description.) \$ 7 p.m.

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

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

## MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

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

mer include beach scenes, activist photography by *Dona McAdams*, immersive installations, steel sculpture, and more. Through September 23.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *Fabrications II*. Textile creations, both wearable and fine art. Through November 2. Reception with the Farley String Band, Sunday, September 22 at 1 p.m.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Speaking for the Trees*. Paintings by *Cindi Oldham*. What if, in addition to sustaining us, trees were sentient?

What if they had communities and wept for each other? What if they nursed and cared for their young? Would that change everything? Through September.

Greenfield Gallery: *Linda Leighton: From the Gardens*. Photographer's thoughtful meditations on a garden theme.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Paintings and sculpture by *Annaleah Gregoire*. Gregoire draws inspiration from examining issues such as the encroachment of technology on the natural world and incorpo-

## TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

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, SEPTEMBER 18

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

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

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: *James Fernando, John Lentz & Bill Winslow, Steve Arnold*. Resonator Series by Hawks & Reed. \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Play, *The Revolutionists*. Silverthorne Theater presents this brutal comedic quartet about four very real women who lived boldly in France during the Reign of Terror. \$ 7:30 p.m.

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

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

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

Memorial Hall, Shelburne: *Ropes*. (See September 13 listing for description.) \$ 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Revolutionists*. (See Thursday's description.) \$ 7:30 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance*. *Liz Nelson* calls with *David Kaynor, Susan Conger*, and the *Back Row Band*. \$ 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Films by Artists: How to Turn a Bicycle into a Record Player*. Program curated by *Josh Guilford* and *Andrew Ritchey*. \$ 8 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *August, Osage County*. ACT presents this play about the dark side of a Midwestern family. See press release in this section. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Lez Zeppelin, She Said*. All-female Led Zeppelin tribute with opening band *She Said* performing originals. \$ 8 p.m.

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro, VT: *Alloy Orchestra* presents *Man With a Movie Camera*. Alloy Orchestra performs a dynamic live soundtrack to Soviet director Dziga Vertov's 1929 surrealist masterpiece. \$ 7 p.m.

rates techniques such as ceramics, bronze casting, laser cutting, and 3D printing.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Mapping the Body*. Multi-media installation by *Nancy Lautenbach* featuring her Pod series inspired by the female form in collage, drawings, and sculpture. September 12 through October 26. Artist reception this Saturday, September 14, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Karen Iglehart: Entering Abstraction through Color*. Oil

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## CALL FOR DESIGNERS

ReVamp is an upcycled fashion show as part of FAB Fashion Passion 2019, September 21 and 22 in Turners Falls. This call is for wearable pieces made from recycled clothing or other materials, with creative interpretation and whimsy encouraged. Workshops will be held before the event; contact Rachel Teumim at [reumim@gmail.com](mailto:reumim@gmail.com) for more information.

## CALLS FOR ART

Nina's Nook in Turners Falls invites artists to submit erotic art for *Triple SSS 2020: Sensual, Sexual, Smut*. Submit up to three jpegs to [erotic-art2020@gmail.com](mailto:erotic-art2020@gmail.com) by January 15. A \$10 participation fee is asked at drop off to help with expenses relating to the reception.

Artspace in Greenfield welcomes artists and art instructors with ideas for exhibits and programming at the center. If you have an idea for a class, a musical project, a gallery exhibit, or what have you, please contact the office at (413) 772-6811 or email [info@artspacegreenfield.com](mailto:info@artspacegreenfield.com).

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**FRI 9/13 9:30 pm**  
**Phlange Delight**  
**Crystalline Roses**  
**MaZozma**

**MON 9/16 8 pm**  
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# THE AUTHORS' CORNER: ART BALTAZAR

By **IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS**

## TURNERS FALLS – Happy Fall!

Earlier this summer, I read a comic book titled *Superman of Smallville* by Art Baltazar and Franco. When I went to the Book Expo in New York City, I met both Franco and Art Baltazar at the DC Comics booth, and got a signed copy of the book.

I really loved the *Smallville* television show, so I was super excited that this comic book takes place in Smallville, with Clark Kent (Superman), Lana Lang, and even Lex Luthor as middle-schoolers.

Clark is learning how to use his powers, when mysterious things start to fly away and disappear! Clark's parents end up grounding him, thinking that he's responsible. However,

it's not Clark who's doing it. Lex, Lana, and Clark investigate the situation, and on their way, find Superman's super dog, Krypto, who helps save Smallville!

The artist is Art Baltazar, and he cowrote the story with Franco. The illustrations are really amazing. One that I especially like is where Clark is flying in the sky, and there are a ton of stars behind him, and the sky is fading from purple to blue, and it's really pretty.

13-year-old Clark Kent lives on a farm with his mom and dad, and he has chores to do around the farm. One of them is putting the cows back in the barn, but the cows don't listen to Clark, so he picks them up, opens the roof of the barn, puts them in, and slams the roof back on.

There's a really funny picture of all the cows sitting on top of each other, and hanging on the beams from the ceiling in the barn, and Clark's dad, Jonathan, telling Clark to do it the right way – without his powers.

One of my favorite parts of the book is when Clark finds Krypto, his pet super dog. The way Krypto is drawn is really cute, and it's funny when Krypto saves Superman. After that they fight an alien spaceship, and then clean up Smallville together.

This book is more for younger kids, 2nd to 4th graders probably. It's a step up from picture books, and it's really cute. I think younger kids who like the *Dog Man* and *Captain Underpants* books would find this really funny! I recommend it for kids who don't normally like to read, because it's funny and has a lot of great art.

Now I'm going to interview Art Baltazar, who wrote this book along with Franco!



In this scene from *Superman of Smallville*, Clark cheats at chores.



Our correspondent, networking at the Book Expo with Franco (left) and Art Baltazar (right).

**Izzy V-C:** Who was your favorite superhero or villain as a kid, and currently?

**Art Baltazar:** AW YEAH! When I was a kid, I loved Spider-Man. I had Spider-Man action figures, and I would have him fight the Lizard and the Green Goblin! The TV show was on every day after school with the catchy theme song. Then later, he was on TV with his amazing friends.

I used to read Spidey comics when I was little, and used to draw his webbing in the comics with a marker. It's true. Now, I am still a Spider-Man fan, but I seem to be leaning lot towards the man of steel... SUPERMAN!

**IVC:** What gave you the inspiration to write and illustrate this graphic novel? Did the TV show *Smallville* inspire you to write this?

**AB:** Yes! I loved the *Smallville* TV show. My love for Superman started with *Superman the Movie!* Once I had seen that movie, every superhero needed a cape.

I was fascinated with Superman! I really, really, liked the *Man of Steel* comic by John Byrne. It was the Superman origin story for generations!

**IVC:** If you weren't an author and illustrator, what would you want to be?

**AB:** I think I would like to bake cakes and

desserts. Sweets always bring joy to many faces. Yes. I would bake cakes.

**IVC:** Of all the actors from *Superman* TV shows and movies, who is your favorite?

**AB:** My favorite Superman of all time is Christopher Reeve. He is Superman.

But, over the years I met several others. I met Brandon Routh, Dean Cain, and Henry Cavill. I think Dean Cain is cool. I really like him too. He's a nice guy. I follow him online, and I think he remembers me.

**IVC:** In your opinion, who would win: Superman or Batman?

**AB:** SUPERMAN. Every time. Of course.

**IVC:** If you could have any superpower, what would you pick, and why?

**AB:** It's a choice between being very stretchy or being able to move at super speed. But, now that I think of it, I could really use the power to manipulate time. It would really help with my comic book deadlines. You are awesome, Izzy! AW YEAH!

Thank you so much, Art, for letting me interview you! I really liked this book, and it was a quick, funny read over the summer.

I hope you all have an amazing school year!

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