

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 8

also serving Irving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

DECEMBER 19, 2019

MassWorks Grant Aims to Support Mill Redevelopment

By ISABEL KOYAMA

TURNERS FALLS – The power was back on in the Southworth Mill on Tuesday morning as town and state officials convened to officially announce a state grant of \$2.16 million to the town of Montague.

The MassWorks Infrastructure Fund, which is giving 36 grants this year to public infrastructure projects, will fully fund Montague’s plan to restore and revamp the “island” strip of land between the power canal and the Connecticut River, home to the once-booming mills in downtown Turners Falls.

The funding will go toward re-connecting buildings to the town sewer and restoring a pedestrian bridge on Fifth Street, which has been out of commission since 2017. The rebuilt bridge would allow safe, accessible foot passage over the canal, connecting island businesses to their parking lots across the water. Connection to the town’s sewage system would release the mills from their capacity limitations and render business development more viable.

About 50 people – town staff and officials, small business owners, politicians, and members of the

see MILLS page A6



The press conference was held in the paper mill, which has been closed for two years.

Greenfield, Montague Officials Worried About FRTA Garage

By MIKE JACKSON

GREENFIELD – Montague and Greenfield officials met Monday at the Greenfield city hall to discuss the issue of an aging bus maintenance garage the towns are leasing to the Franklin Regional Transportation Authority (FRTA), whose plans to build a replacement facility have apparently stalled due to lack of funding.

The garage, located on Deerfield Street in Greenfield, belongs to the two towns jointly and is the last remaining property of the otherwise defunct Greenfield-Montague Transportation Area (GMTA), an entity dating back to the days of electric street trolleys.

Greenfield mayor Bill Martin has

identified the building as a temporary location for the city’s fire station, in the event that construction of a new library requires the demolition of the existing station before a new one is ready to open on Riddell Street. GMTA’s last lease to FRTA expired last spring and, after two short-term extensions, is now renewing automatically on a month-to-month basis.

Concerns over the building’s condition, and that the GMTA’s bank account – \$54,411.84 as of this week – may be insufficient to cover significant repairs led GMTA to propose extending the lease until June in exchange for a guarantee that FRTA would cover such projects.

“We’re only maintaining and

see GARAGE page A8

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

China’s Recycling Regulations Hit Montague Budget

By JEFF SINGLETON

The town of Montague could soon be paying as much as \$50,000 annually to send its recycled materials to Springfield, according to a contract endorsed by the selectboard on Monday. The price tag represents a big change in a program which has generated revenue for the town in the past.

Montague’s recycled materials are primarily collected at the curbside next to stickered trash, but can also be dropped off at the town transfer station on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Like other local programs which feed into the Springfield facility known as the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF), Montague operates a “two-stream” program which sorts materials before they are picked up: cans, bottles, and plastic containers one week, and paper and cardboard the next.

Town administrator Steve Ellis noted at Monday’s meeting that a previous town meeting had authorized the board to enter into a new contract with the company that operates the MRF for the state. “At that time, there was a lot of forewarning of the fact that the recycling market has changed substantially,” Ellis said. “Over the course of the last three or four years, China has stopped accepting a lot of types of recyclables.”

According to the website Vox, China announced its new, more restrictive policy on recyclables, called “Operation National Sword,” in July 2017. Last March it banned 24 types of scrap and applied more rigorous contamination standards to other materials, which recycling officials quoted by the site described as “impossible to reach.”

The new contract, negotiated by the state with the company that administers the MRF, applies to all 60 cities and towns that currently use the Springfield facility, although each locality could in theory reject it and look for alternatives. The agreement was recently presented to the towns in the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD), of which Montague is a member.

Ellis said he, department of

see MONTAGUE page A7

A Year-End Note From Our Managing Editor



ANNABEL LEVINE PHOTO

By MIKE JACKSON

TURNERS FALLS – Writing last week’s lead editorial, reflecting on the challenges faced by newspapers in our era, I joked about setting up a steam-powered printing press in the back office in order to subsidize our journalism with commercial printing – the way another paper once managed to stay alive for 50 years in this town.

The day that issue came out, we received notice from our Northampton printer that the cost of printing the *Montague Reporter* will be going up, effective January 1.

The price hike for the 16-page product in your hands is either small or steep, depending on your perspective. On one hand, it represents a 15% increase – the first in seven and a half years of high-quality service, and an adjustment scarcely over the rate of inflation during that period.

On the other hand, we’re so accustomed to squeaking by on a tight margin that we can’t help

but look at that increase and think: *that’s seven new business card advertisers we’ll need to pick up in January*, just to stay in place.

I’m sharing this for transparency’s sake, and to enlist the community in thinking about how to continue to support the *Reporter*. New subscriptions, merchandise sales, and even donations are incredibly helpful – and all are encouraged this holiday season – and we also need to sell a certain number of display ads each month to stay in the black. But our bread and butter has always been in those business cards.

Take a moment to thumb through our pages. There are currently 64 business card advertisers, each committed to run for at least a season. Many pay for their ads a full year at a time.

When someone pulls a card out, we often hear the same thing: they want to support us, but times are tight, and they haven’t heard recently from any customers that they noticed the card in our paper.

see NOTE page A2

High School Sports: Basketball’s Back!



DAVID HOLTT PHOTO

Breakaway: Marcus Sanders drives into the lane past Monson defenders as Blue hosts the Monson Mustangs.

By MATT ROBINSON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – For those who don’t know, I have a respiratory disease, with symptoms such as year-round chronic bronchitis, sporadic laryngitis, and periodic fatigue. Every December, I come down with walking pneumonia which saps my energy even further. So until the new year, I’m only reporting on the games I attend.

This week, I saw five basketball games in two days.

The 2019-2020 winter high school sports season officially tipped off last Thursday with the Eagle Holiday Classic, held at Franklin County Tech School. The Holiday Classic is an annual two-day basketball tournament, with eight teams competing on both days. Four games were held on Thursday, and the consolation games were held on Friday, followed by two championship contests.

see SPORTS page A4

Conservation Commission Extends Wendell Solar Array Decision Into the New Year

By JEFF SINGLETON

WENDELL – On Tuesday, December 17 Sunpin Solar, the company seeking to construct a large solar array in Wendell on the corner of New Salem and Morse Village roads, made a presentation before the town’s conservation commission. The con com must either vet any site plan that includes wetlands within 100 feet of the project, or decide that the project does not meet the criteria under state law or local bylaws requiring its involvement. That decision must be made before the project can seek a special permit from the town planning board.

The Sunpin array has encountered a good deal of opposition from residents who oppose large-scale solar projects that impact forests and farmlands. In early

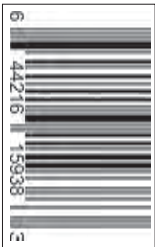
October, Wendell town meeting placed a one-year moratorium on new applications for large-scale solar projects, pending a review of town zoning bylaws by the planning board.

The project, which was proposed last June prior to the town meeting vote, is not affected by the moratorium, though protests against the project at planning board meetings this fall were an impetus for the action by town meeting.

Meanwhile, the proposal continues to work its way through the appropriate town committees under existing bylaws, and the planning board is now awaiting a decision by the con com.

Sunpin has applied to the commission for a “Request for Determination of Applicability,” called

see SOLAR page A5



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The Montague Reporter

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Victoria Maillo, *Spanish Page*
Beverly Ketch, *Children's Page*
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Gloria Kegeles, *Editorial Assistant*

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Christopher Carmody, *Layout Assistant*

Technical Administration

About Face Computing

Founded by
Arthur Evans Harry Brandt David Detmold
August 2002

NOTE from page A1

Though these are ads, we know they're often placed more in the spirit of underwriting the news than in seeing an immediate return. We hope that you notice them, and if your favorite mechanic, dentist, locksmith, attorney, realtor, or bar happens to have a card in, we encourage you to thank them for supporting our work.

If they don't have a card in, ask them to consider it. Again, we're looking for seven...

That's the tough stuff out of the way: hat in hand, the earnest appeal. There are also a number of positive things to note as we head around the bend into 2020!

- For the first time, we have a business manager on board, and I think we made a smart hire in Annie Levine. Not having to oversee the subscription renewals, weekly deposits, paychecks, newsstand invoices, ad inquiries, trash stickers, or any of the other money-related business that has haunted my waking and sleeping hours for the past seven years will be good, I think, for me personally, and more importantly should free me up to do an editor's job more fully and more properly.
- We now boast a full stable of rotating columns: biweekly, triweekly, monthly. Many have gained loyal readerships, and the constancy helps us fill up the B section without too much hassle so we can put more thought into gathering the news. Our regular comics section has grown from one to three. Readers keep sending in beautiful horizontal photographs for the B1 header. And we're proud to now feature the writing of two school-aged correspondents!
- We're once again putting in work on *montaguereporter.org*, including making it easier to subscribe online. Our archive is still up, but experiencing technical difficulties, and we hope to fix

that in 2020 while also improving search functionality.

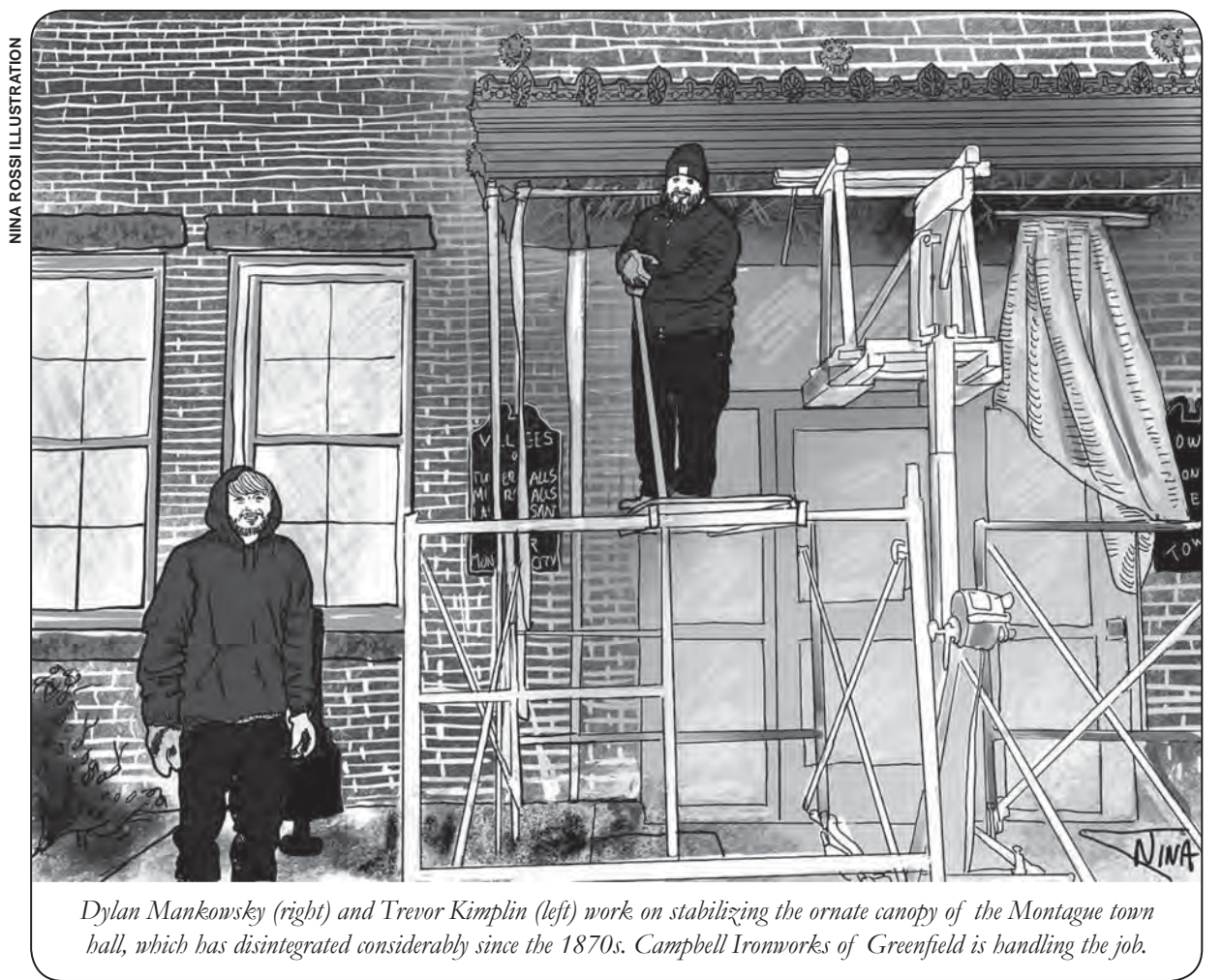
- This year we dipped a toe into the Greenfield water: new delivery routes, new columns by two long-time Greenfield writers, and more frequent feature articles set in that town. While we've heard some objections from this side of the river to the idea, the shire town is home to nearly twice as many people as our five official coverage towns combined, so we'll keep at it for now. If you know anyone over there, tell them about the *Reporter*! Just as importantly, if you feel we're missing stories in our own towns, let us know. We'll do our best to catch up.
- We've begun looking more closely at grants that might support various aspects of our work. There are more out there than when we started, and it's worth getting the applications in.
- And one more thing: I don't mean to spill the beans prematurely, but there's talk of launching a little media project on the side. Keep your ears open!

This week I read an article tallying up 7,800 media jobs lost nationwide in 2019. It reminded me how lucky we are to serve a community that actively tries to nurture independent local journalism.

I'm really proud of the team we have built during the seven years – and 322 issues – since founding editor David Detmold stepped down from his post. The world around us is changing, and we are up for the challenge. I'm inspired by all the talented, passionate, smart people I get to work with here: there are too many critical writers and volunteers to thank each one by name.

The *Montague Reporter* is taking next week off publication, returning January 2, 2020. Please send us Letters to the Editors for that edition. We'll need 'em.

Above all, thank you all for your readership – and happy New Year!



Dylan Mankowsky (right) and Trevor Kimplin (left) work on stabilizing the ornate canopy of the Montague town hall, which has disintegrated considerably since the 1870s. Campbell Ironworks of Greenfield is handling the job.

Letters to the Editors

Patch Food Dump Risks Rats

Hello Patch Neighbors,

I'm writing to ask the person or people who are throwing compost, leftover takeout, and raw meat alongside 10th Street to stop!

Not only is this very dangerous to the many dogs and cats who live in the neighborhood, but it's also prone to draw rats. *Rats*.

A couple years ago, rats were a big problem in the neighborhood, after the town repaired pipes going from the canal to the river on the upper portion of the island. Rats were living in those pipes, and during the repairs, they came into the neighborhood. First they started eating people's compost piles, then vegetable gardens, then chicken feed and eggs, then breaking into people's garages and basements. They ate the rubber off the handlebars of my then-roommate's bicycle.

My neighbor would see them skittering around the garden near her young daughter in broad daylight. One would jump out of the coop when she would let the chickens out in the morning. I love animals and respect all Life, but it was still pretty creepy...

So, please, please, whoever you are, please stop throwing compost at the edge of 10th Street.

I realize that for a long time there has been a tradition to throw leaves and branches there. I'm totally cool with this, and so are the neighbors I've talked too. The yard waste does not feed the rats, and is

not a risk to pets.

If you're like me, and want your food waste to go back to nature instead of to the landfill or incinerator, perhaps you would like to build a rat-proof composter for your home. If so, you are welcome to come take a look at mine, for ideas or to copy. Mine is 3' high, 4' wide, and 3' deep, and fits the compost of four households, plus some leaves. I flip it twice per year, once just before the snow and once just after the snow, and then start the pile again.

The Summer and Fall compost "finishes" over the winter, and is ready to apply to my small vegetable garden by mid-spring. The Winter compost "finishes" over the summer, and is ready to apply to fruit trees and bushes in the fall. It's pretty great and easy, and keeps the critters out.

If you'd like some help and you're open to paying me for my time, I would be happy to build a similar composter with you in the Spring. It's pretty fun and low tech. The only materials you need are hardware cloth (a.k.a. two 3' rolls of hard wire grid), a few boards, a few screws, a box of thick staples, four hook-and-eyes – and a handle, if you're fancy.

Thank you, thank you,

Elyssa Serrilli
H Street
Turners Falls

Correction: GMRSD Budget

The coverage in our December 12 edition of the December 10 Gill-Montague regional school committee meeting (*Superintendent Search Forums Scheduled for Next Tuesday*, page A1) included a major error.

Superintendent Michael Sullivan did *not* give the committee "a presentation on the district's preliminary FY'21 budget" during the agenda topic "Preliminary FY21 Budget – Discussion." Instead, he presented "a model to show how the budget pieces fit together," at this early stage of the process, using figures modified from last year's preliminary budget proposal for FY'20.

Consequently, everything we wrote in the two subsequent paragraphs was spurious disinformation. Let's try to set the record straight:

The \$10,035,821 affordable assessment figure for Montague was last year's. Back at the November

26 meeting, business manager Joanne Blier did give an "early estimate" of what that will be this year: \$10,478,819, an increase of 4.41%. The corresponding affordable assessment for Gill was, similarly, not \$1,634,027 – Blier's estimate is \$1,706,156, by no coincidence also an increase of 4.41%.

Estimated Erving tuition is not \$940,000; it sits at \$1,088,800. Chapter 70 aid from the state isn't \$6,441,443, the administration's most recent guess is \$6,880,284 – and so on down the line.

If you still have a copy of last week's paper, we ask that you remove page A3 and destroy it. We flubbed this one squarely, and we apologize to our readers as well as to the subjects of the story. The *Reporter* is now accepting applications for reporters to cover school committee meetings in 2020. It's fun!

Pop-Up Appreciation

We would like to offer thanks to everyone who supported the No Regular Thing Holiday Pop Up Shop at 7 North Street the weekends of November 30 and December 7.

Many volunteers contributed beautiful handcrafted items for sale, staffed the shop, or provided refreshments. We are pleased to report that we raised a total of \$3,100. We donated this money to three organizations whose mission is very specifically focused on carbon sequestration and halting climate change: 350.org, the Sunrise Movement, and our beloved local

Drawdown Montague.

The event was successful on so many levels. In addition to raising money, the pop-up shop created a space for the community to share their hidden talents as well as their concerns about the climate crisis. It was a true joy to see friends and neighbors connect and it was a great reminder of the strength of community.

Laurie Rhoades
Judith Lorei
Montague Center

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No paper fourth week of November,
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LOCAL BRIEFS

Compiled by CHRIS PELLERIN

Dear Readers, this is my last Local Briefs! It has been a pleasure to work with the *Montague Reporter* staff and regular contributors to the column during the past year. I wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season and new year!

Learn about our wildlife neighbors who share our home in the Connecticut River Watershed. The **Kidleidoscope program** at the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls includes a story, activities, and a craft to introduce young children to wildlife along the river. For ages three to six, accompanied by an adult. Siblings and friends welcome.

The program Friday, December 20 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. is about **Winter Birds**, and December 27’s program is **River Otters**.

This Saturday morning, the Greenfield Savings Bank branch in Turners Falls is hosting a **Card Signing for Veterans** event. Please consider this “give back” event to thank our service men and women! The community room will be open from 10 to 11:30 a.m. with a supply of cards and pens for community members to address and write a note to someone they probably do not even know at the Holyoke Veterans’ Facility.

Your kind words and hand-written sentiments will definitely bright-

en their Holidays. Feel free to bring any extra cards that you may have at home. No reservations are required, and light goodies will be provided by the bank.

Don’t forget to turn in your completed **Open Door Promo** card by 1 p.m. on Saturday, December 21 for a chance to win one of two \$150 gift certificates.

On the night of the solstice, Saturday, December 21, a dedicated tribe of storytellers will present the **34th Annual Storytelling and Songfest Celebration** at Hawks & Reed in Greenfield.

The lineup includes stalwarts Maggid David Arfa, Sonny Crawford and Emily Gopen, Michael Evans, Jay Goldspinner, Yosl Kurland, Rona Leventhal, Rob Peck, Sarah Pirtle, John Porcino, Bob Reiser, ReBekka Tippens, Tim Van Egmond, Rochelle Wildfong, and guest performers Jack Golden, and Eric Phelps.

The event starts at 7 p.m. in the Perch, the venue’s elevator-accessible 4th floor space. Get there at 6:30 p.m. to get a seat, or reserve one by calling (413) 624-5140. The event is a fundraiser for the Food Bank of Western Mass and the Massachusetts ACLU’s work defending immigrant and workplace rights.

The **Leverett Congregational Church** (LCC) invites everyone to their Christmas Candlelight Service

on Monday, December 23, at 7 p.m. Celebrate with traditional readings, music, and carol singing, closing with Silent Night by candlelight. Open to all, children are welcome.

The LCC congregation is open and affirming, handicapable, and children friendly. The church is located across from the Leverett Post Office at 4 Montague Road, Leverett. For more information, go to www.facebook.com/levlcc or contact Claudia@ClaudiaGere.com, (413) 359-0003.

The **last Bingo event** of the year at Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls will be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. next Saturday morning, December 28.

Bette Sokoloski will be welcomed back as the guest caller, and the bank will provide cards, gag prizes, and some light refreshments at this family-friendly event. Due to limited space, seating will be on a first call, first reserved basis, so call (413) 863-4316.

On Saturday, December 28 from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls hosts **Rocking with the Fossils: A Family Program**.

Examine a simulated version of Dinosaur Footprints Reservation, and make inferences about the track makers. Photos and investigations demonstrate what it takes to become a fossil and where they are most likely found. Make your own “fossil” to take home. For children ages six to 12 with their grown-ups, siblings, and curious adults.

On Wednesday, January 1, enjoy a leisurely **three-mile stroll down the Canalside Rail Trail** and get the New Year started off on a Great Falls note. This family-friendly hike follows a gentle route and provides an opportunity to discover the abundant natural, historical, and cultural features that make the Center and rail trail such an amazing State Park!

Be prepared for cold weather: dress in layers and wear winter boots. Dogs are welcome on leash. Afterward, enjoy a cup of hot chocolate in the Discovery Center’s Great Hall. Meet at 1 p.m. in Great Hall. The hike begins at 1:15 p.m.

Do you know children who are talented instrumentalists? Are they motivated to practice and make music with other young musicians? The **Pioneer Valley Symphony Youth Orchestra** offers a dynamic and supportive ensemble environment for talented musicians in middle and high school. Directed by Steven Bathory-Peeler, the PVSYO performs in two stand-alone concerts and collaborates with the Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra. Chamber ensemble opportunities are also offered.

Auditions for all instruments – except the trumpet and clarinet – will be held at Artspace, 15 Mill Street, Greenfield on Sunday, January 5 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Registration is required; visit www.pvsoc.org/youth-orchestra for more information.

Send your local briefs to editor@montaguereporter.org

G-M Super Search: Forums Jan. 7

GILL-MONTAGUE – The Gill-Montague regional school committee has begun the search process for selecting its next superintendent. The committee has hired the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to provide consultation services for the search process. MASC representative Tracy Novick will host forums with those interested in providing their point of view as input to the process.

The forums will be held at the middle/high school cafeteria on **Tuesday, January 7** at the following times: 1:30 p.m., meet with student representatives; 3:30 p.m., meet with interested district faculty and staff; 4:40 p.m., meet with district administrators; and 5:30 p.m.,

meet with parents and the public. In addition, anyone who is interested is invited to respond to a brief written survey about the selection process. The results are being independently received and tabulated by MASC on behalf of the school committee. The survey may be found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/GMRSD19. In the days ahead, the school committee will establish dates for a screening committee to review initial applications and recommend candidate finalists. Once the dates are announced, they will appoint people to serve on the screening committee. The committee is encouraging as many voices as possible to participate in this important process.

LEVERETT SELECTBOARD BRIEF

Highway Hire, Fire Promotion At Short, Snowy Meeting

By JERRI HIGGINS

Due to unforeseen circumstances, a reporter from this paper was not available to attend Leverett’s selectboard meeting Tuesday night.

Contacted Wednesday by phone, selectboard chair Peter d’Errico reported that it was a brief meeting, to “deal with some immediate issues.” Many of the original agenda items were tabled, and town administrator Marjorie McGinnis was also unable to attend.

To wit:
• The Leverett highway department hired Robert John Eagles with a start date of December 30, mak-

ing the department fully staffed.
• Andrew Coblyn was approved as a new fire department member, and Tyler Hallock was promoted to lieutenant. Leverett town clerk Lisa Stratford swore Hallock in, with his grandmother on hand to pin his badge on him.
• Transfer station coordinator Annette Herda spoke to the board about some “impending increases in recycling fees,” said d’Errico, and ways to save Leverett money through adjustments in the way glass recycling is handled. D’Errico also noted that Leverett’s incoming revenues will cover the town’s recycling expenditures and “a little bit more,” he said.

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Ovalle

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Devin Emond

Related Arts
Taryn McDonough

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NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

Recycling Fees Would Top Erving’s Budget Growth

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday the Erving select-board and finance committee, meeting jointly, continued their discussion of the town’s FY’21 budget. The most significant increase, estimated at \$30,000 in the draft budget, is in the cost of recycling.

Administrative coordinator Bryan Smith told the board that the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has negotiated a new 10-year master contract with Waste Management Recycle America to operate the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility, where Erving’s recycled material has been sent in previous years. The contract specifies a cost to Erving and other Franklin County towns of \$93.50 per ton of recycled material.

In the past, before the collapse of the recycling market, towns were paid for their recycled material. The cost per ton will now rise by 2.5% each year for five years. Towns have until January 31 to sign the contract or find another fa-

cility to take their recyclables.

Smith said more information will be available next week.

Selectboard member William Bembury suggested, facetiously, that the town should “take down the [International Paper] buildings, and build our own facility.”

Smith also observed that curbside pickup of trash is free in Erving, one of only two towns in Franklin County that do not charge residents for trash disposal. He suggested that, as costs rise in other towns, out-of-town trash might wind up on Erving curbsides.

“Free is not realistic,” he warned, and suggested more information for residents about the cost for curbside trash pickup and disposal.

Jacquelyn Boyden said the town has an unenforced two-bag-per-week limit for pickup.

Suggestions for changes included charging for disposal of more than two bags per week, or issuing 104 free trash bag stickers per year, with more free stickers available by application.

Public Safety, Public Works

The board and fin com heard from the police chief Christopher Blair and fire chief Philip Wonkka about their departments’ FY’21 budget requests. Peter Sanders, selectboard member and head of the water and wastewater department, presented his department’s request. All three departments are requesting small increases over FY’20.

Blair’s request recommends step raises for four officers. Wonkka indicated that the 2% requested increase in the fire and emergency medical services budget was due mainly to increased equipment costs.

According to the documentation, the FY’21 wastewater budget request reflects a slight increase due to laboratory expenses and maintenance. For the water department, wastewater staff are taking on some of the water department duties, and costs were shifted from the wastewater budget to the water budget.

Administrative coordinator Smith presented the buildings and ground maintenance and highway budgets. There is an increase in the

request for the buildings and ground maintenance budget, based on additional custodian time at the new library building. Increases to the highway budget include telephones for employees, purchase of safety wear and OSHA related equipment.

The line item for snow removal material was increased to allow for use of more salt and less sand, after complaints from citizens about the amount of sand used. Additionally, more maintenance and cleaning of catch basins and culverts has been proposed.

Other Business

Smith reported that Todd Kirton, a site professional licensed by Tighe & Bond, had emailed him that there were no detections of contaminants around vandalized transformers at the former International Paper Mill above the state’s Reportable Concentrations in soil samples.

Therefore, the area around the transformers is not considered a “disposal site” where hazardous materials were released. The town will backfill the excavated area.

SPORTS from page A1

Franklin Tech Girls 43 – Mt. Everett 36
Mohawk 46 – Franklin Tech Boys 44
Hopkins 50 – Franklin Tech Girls 28
Franklin Tech Boys 52 – Mt. Everett 36

On the opening day of the tournament, the Franklin Tech girls played Mt. Everett and the Tech boys played Mohawk.

The girls’ game was interesting to watch, and not just because there’s a few new faces on Franklin’s roster. It was interesting because both Tech and Mt. Everett are called the Eagles, and Tech, though the tournament host, was counted as the visiting team.

This led to a little confusion, as both bleachers were cheering “Go Eagles,” and some spectators were confused as to why the Visitors were credited with points when Tech scored. (By the way, neither team should be referred to as Lady Eagles: ornithologists classify both male and female simply as Eagles.)

The Tech Birds built the lead early and never let up. In the first half, both teams expended lots of energy and players contested shots, intercepted passes, and dove for loose balls like NFL players going after fumbles.

An interesting phenomenon happened in the first half, and carried on through the entire game. When players shot foul shots, the entire crowd was respectfully silent – in contrast to many other venues, where fans make as much noise as possible to try to get the shooter to miss.

By the time the buzzer sounded to end the first, Tech was on top 23-12. The Franks maintained that 11- to 12-point lead until midway through the third quarter. Then, with the score 31-19, the Mountain went on a tear. They banged inside, drew fouls, and made shots to pull within 7 points with 12 seconds left on the clock.

That’s when Tech committed an offensive foul, and Everett sunk a 3-pointer at the buzzer. Going into the fourth, it was suddenly a 4-point game, 32-28.

Mt. Everett is not a technical high school, so like the Turners Falls softball team, they have junior high girls on their roster. Their three eighth graders were responsible for much of the Mountaineers’ offensive output. This will probably not be Everett’s year, but in four or five years, watch out!

During the last period, the veterans from Tech simply outplayed the Mountain to win by a comfortable margin, 43-36.

Jordan Hurlbert scored 14 points for Tech, followed by Jocelyn Crowningshield with 12. Also scoring for the Franks were Gabby Castagna (8), Isabelle Duga (6), Desiree Doane (2), and Emily Ryan (1).

In the final game on Thursday, the Franklin Tech Male Eagles played Mohawk. This was an-

other interesting game, and not just because it was a two-point barnburner. It was interesting to me because I knew everybody. Mohawk’s basketball team has some of the same players as the Mohawk/Turners Falls coop football team, and the same fan base showed up for this contest.

The first quarter was a defensive battle, as both teams blocked shots and came down with defensive rebounds. As a result, the score was only 8-6 Mohawk at the end of one. Mohawk came storming out of the gate in the second and built a 17-10 lead, but the Techies regained their composure to tie it at 17. At the halftime buzzer, the score was 20-17 Mohawk.

Tech went on their own run in the third quarter to go up 25-20, and forced a Warriors timeout. It worked – the Mohawks went on a 13-to-2 run to close out the third leading by 6 points. They increased their lead to 7 early in the fourth quarter, 36-29.

But the Franks weren’t about to give up without a fight. They battled back, and tied it up at 36. Mohawk responded with a 3-pointer, and then Tech then scored two unanswered 3-pointers and a 2-pointer to open up a 44-38 lead.

That’s when Mohawk called another timeout, and answered. They tied it at 44, and with 9.8 seconds left in regulation, scored again to go up 46-44. After a Tech time out, they got the ball with 5.6 seconds left. They rolled it down the court to preserve the clock, but were unable to score, and in the end dropped the game 46-44.

Four Franks scored all of Tech’s points – Bailey Young (15), Garrett Cole (14), Ty Sadoski (9) and Justin Littlewood (6) – while Ryan Bergmann limited Mohawk’s offense with his defensive play.

The Tech boys returned on the second day to play Mt. Everett in the consolation game, and the Tech girls played Hopkins Academy for the championship.

The consolation game was almost as close as the opener against Mohawk, but Tech did what they had to, and maintained a slim lead throughout the game and holding on to win it 52-48.

Young had a monster game, ending with 26 points. Cole had 8 points, pulled down 12 rebounds, and blocked a shot, and Littlewood (7), Bergmann (5), Sadoski (4), and Ryan Artus (1) all joined in on the parade.

In the girls’ championship game, the Eagles were able to keep pace early. The Franks instituted a full-court press while Hopkins put their defense near the arc. This resulted in a close game: 7-5 after one quarter.

But the Academy started hitting outside shots in the second, and Tech had difficulty getting rebounds. As a result, Hopkins outscored Franklin 17-2 in the quarter to lead 24-7 at half halftime. The Eagles were able to score 11 points in the third, but Hopkins kept hitting the long shot, and

after going into the final quarter, the Falcons had opened their lead up to 45-18.

Hopkins used the shot clock in the fourth, waiting until it was almost depleted before taking shots. This strategy kept the fourth-quarter totals low, and Hopkins defeated Tech 50-26 to take home the trophy.

Duga (8), Crowningshield (6), Doane (5), Hurlbert (4), Emily Merritt (2), and Castagna (1) all scored points in this one, with Gemanaia Cruz coming off the bench in relief.



Turners’ Brendan Driscoll drives to the hoop against the Monson Mustangs during an independent match at Turners Falls High School.

Monson 67 – TFHS 54

After the Tech girls’ game, I drove to Turners Falls High School to watch the Boys’ Thunder play against Monson. The Turners boys’ team is small this year, not only in size but also in numbers. Only eight varsity boys suited up for the game.

The Monson Mustangs took advantage of Turners’ fatigue factor, turning a 13-12 nail-biter after a quarter into a 36-25 lead by the half. The Horses poured it on in the third, outscoring Blue 14-7. Powertown made some headway in the final quarter, but it was a little too late, and Monson held on to take the contest, 67- 54.

Anthony Peterson had a good night, scoring 17 points and grabbing 15 rebounds. Chace Novak hit four 3-pointers, finishing with 12 points. Marcus Sanders, who returned this year after a hiatus, scored 8, as did Brendan Driscoll. Jaden Whiting (4), Ryan Duclos (3), and Jon Fritz (2) scored for Blue, with Liam Driscoll providing backup support.

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SOLAR from page A1

an RDA, a procedure under state law to determine whether the con com needs to issue a permit to protect endangered wetlands. If a wetland exists within 100 feet of the project under state law, or triggers a town wetland bylaw, the commission must issue a special permit if the project is to continue. The special permit may be based on a determination that the project would not impact the wetland, or could require changes in the project design.

At Tuesday’s meeting, Stephen Herzog of the engineering firm AMEC Massachusetts made the presentation on behalf of Sunpin, which consisted of project maps and potential wetlands. His presentation was discussed by three conservation commissioners, several associate members, and several potential members.

According to con con member Adam Kohl, the commissioners have identified an “isolated wetland” within 100 feet of the project which had not appeared on Sunpin’s previous maps, and was not flagged on the site as required.

Herzog suggested that his client might argue the project would not impact the wetland, which appeared

on the new maps he brought, but commission chair Robin Heubel said this would trigger the requirement of a formal “Notice of Intent” to apply for a special permit.

Two members of the commission plan to leave at the end of the month, raising the possibility that Sunpin may need to formally reapply for the RDA.

The other option, members noted, would be to move the project so it is further than 100 feet from the wetland. This option would require a new site plan proposal to be presented at a future meeting.

Ward Smith, a wetlands consultant and future conservation commission member, noted that a GIS map for the area also shows a “perennial stream” within 200 feet of the proposed project, which could violate another state law.

Smith said that the feature shown on the map, which he had

observed during an inspection of the site, might not actually satisfy the criteria for being considered a perennial stream, but he suggested that Sunpin probably needed to address the problem, in order to prevent a scenario in which a locally-approved project is appealed before the state Department of Environmental Protection.

With these two issues unresolved, the board did not take a vote on the requested RDA, and the Sunpin process will continue into the new year.

Two members of the commission, including chair Robin Heubel, plan to leave at the end of the month, and two residents expect to replace them.

The turnover on the committee raises the possibility that Sunpin may need to formally reapply for the RDA. Furthermore, one of the new members – Tim Sheehan, who was also in attendance at Monday’s meeting – will be in Germany for the first few weeks of 2020.

The commission decided to schedule its next meeting for January 28, which would be the earliest it could vote to move the solar project on to the planning board.



NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Board Opposes State Lands Bill

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Holiday scheduling made the Wendell selectboard’s December 11 meeting the last one before Christmas. The next scheduled meeting date would have been Christmas Day itself, and so that meeting is already rescheduled for Monday, December 30.

And so, on December 11, the Wendell selectboard table held four plates piled high with homemade cookies. People who came in with selectboard business were offered cookies to eat right then, and bags to take cookies home. This article will not offer a review of the flavors offered or a discussion of the scope of flavors, as the writer had eaten dinner before the meeting, and did not have room to sample everything.

Board members signed the regular year-end license renewals: a Class III motor vehicle salvage license for Scott’s garage, a liquor license for the Wendell Country Store, and an after-4:30 pouring license for Deja Brew. The state Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABCC) allows Wendell 13 more on-premises licenses and one more package store license.

They signed an appointment slip for Joanna Moest as assistant assessor, and, with Laurie DiDonato recusing herself, for Liam DiDonato as selectboard clerk.

State Lands

They also signed and sent to state representative Susannah Whipps, with a cc: to state senator Jo Comerford, a letter parallel to the Warwick selectboard’s letter opposing bill H.897, which would ban commercial logging on state-owned land including state forests. (The text of that letter appears on page A3.)

Selectboard chair Dan Keller said that although the Wendell Forest Alliance (WFA) supports that bill and opposes logging on state land, with the thought that the older trees that are cut down sequestered more car-

bon than the young trees that grow up when the canopy is removed or thinned, there are others in town who are less vocal, but think the DCR plan is ecologically sound.

The bill is still in conference.

Keller said that WFA member Jim Thornley had been arrested trying to stop a coal train that was on its way to an electric generation plant. Keller said that the plant is normally idle, and is only used when the natural gas generating plants cannot meet demand. The train was stopped four times on its journey.

Collection of Things

Building inspector Phil Delorey came in to continue “the saga” about the property at 131 Lockes Village Road. The board of health and conservation commission have both complained about the condition of that property.

As Delorey explained, the owner, Andy Hamilton, has done little or nothing to improve his relationship with the town, or to clean up or contain his collection of things. He strung a rope across the front and hung tarps. He has ignored the mounting fines for his unregistered vehicles on the property, and in fact, Delorey said it appears he has added more unregistered vehicles, and that from the road, it looks like more people have moved in.

A draft copy of a court injunction was done in August, and town coordinator Nancy Aldrich said the injunction should be final by Friday.

Delorey said that Hamilton ignored the court order to clean up and would be expected to ignore any injunction.

Aldrich said she would call to invite him to tell his story to the board, and get something started.

Other Business

Treasurer Carolyn Manley told board members that town counsel had one objection to the personnel policy. The restriction that would keep a person from totaling

the hours from two part-time positions to make a total of 20 or more hours per week, and so be entitled to health insurance and other benefits, is not allowed under state law.

Aldrich brought up a request that the annual town meeting be given a regular date, like the first Tuesday evening in June, or on alternate years, the first June Saturday morning. The 2020 town meeting is on track to be on a weekday evening, after being held on a Saturday in 2019.

She also reported that the town’s insurance company, Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) awarded the Wendell highway department a grant of \$2,900 to buy a fireproof cabinet for their flammable materials.

Board member Laurie DiDonato said there has been an off odor in the town hall bathrooms, with the suggestion of a mold buildup somewhere.

Keller suggested that the floor drains may be the source. Those drains are rarely flushed, and water in the P trap evaporates and allows aromas from the septic system to find their way into the bathrooms.

Board member Christine Heard suggested adding an occasional flush with warm water to the town custodian’s workload. If that does not help, the town facilities engineer will have to probe further.

Acting as the town’s Municipal Light Plant (MLP), board members authorized a motion to approve payment of \$7,000 for pole insurance, pending clarification by MLP manager Ray DiDonato.

Aldrich said that County Roads, which supplies line-of-sight internet service to homes near the town center, found that the outside outlet that they use was not serving. She said they checked the circuit breakers, and got the inside copier to work, but that the labeling of circuits and breakers in the main box was difficult to follow.

Keller said he would talk with Jim Slavas, town facilities engineer.

New Year’s at the Shea: Theater Wraps Up 2019 With “Last Night” Event

REPORTER STAFF

TURNERS FALLS – It’s the end of a busy year for our non-profit community theater, the Shea Theater Arts center. We spoke with program coordinator Emma Ayres to get her perspective on her first year as program coordinator at the theater, a position that often threatens to overflow its 15-hour-a-week salary limitations. We also took a look at some events at the end of 2019 that promise to be pretty exciting.

Looking back at 2019, Ayres said she is proud of how she has been able to prioritize fair compensation for artists, and for instituting a collaboration with Eggtooth Productions to create the Sam’s Place lobby series.

“Sam’s Place invited new energy into the theater and reconsidered all of the spaces of the Shea as viable performance spaces,” said Ayres. Attendees entered an alleyway door with a password and were led through backstage areas to emerge in a lobby transformed by actors in character and live musical ensembles, all performing on various themes, such as Roaring Twenties and other decades, or creating a spooky Halloween experience.

Another highlight of this year was the 24-hour fundraiser event called “413 Says #Closethecamp.” The July festival aimed to raise awareness of the poor conditions at Customs and Border Protection detention centers and the cruelty of family separation policy. Artists and staff donated their time and talents, so all \$5,000 raised went to organizations working in support of migrants: RAICES Action Network, Immigrant Families Together, and the Pioneer Valley Workers Center. Ayres said she collaborated with over 100 different musical, theater, and visual artists to create the event.

“I’m just really excited for all the ways that the Shea can say yes to innovative concepts of what is theater, what is music, and how we can be an experimental space for those questions to be asked,” Ayres said.

Programming has attracted audience members from Boston, New York, Vermont, and elsewhere, but Ayres said she is aware of the need to keep events accessible for locals. To that end, a new initiative called Cinemastorm has been bringing \$5 movies to the Shea once a month – except December, which had no room in the schedule for a movie night. Cinemastorm brought people back into the theater who hadn’t been there in 15 years, according to Ayres.

The Grand Finale

Tickets for a New Years Eve festival featuring Franklin County bands, Last Night in Franklin County, will be kept to a low price of \$12 – an affordable price for eight hours of music. “I want to make it clear we are not trying to be Northampton First Night,” said Ayres. “We are starting small, but our hope is to grow it into something townwide, and not just at the Shea. The goal down the road is to be integrated with local business.”

The event will start at 5 p.m. Tuesday, December 31 and end at

1 a.m. Ticket holders will be able to come and go, so one can catch an early act or two, go out to dinner, and come back to dance the meal off. The floor in front of the stage will be cleared, and the plan is for performers to change every hour. Starting with the Tommy Filiault Band at 5 p.m., the following bands will appear on the main stage: She Said, Old Flame, The Pistoleros, Sister Jawbone, AfterGlo, Full Spectrum Dominance, and The Leafies You Gave Me. In the lobby between 8:15 and 10, enjoy music with Wallace Field and Corey Laitman. All ages are welcome.

A portion of the proceeds from Last Night will benefit Eliza’s Watch, a new app to alert family, friends, or medical personnel if a drug user’s vital signs drop. The app is being developed by Dan Harper, the father of 26-year-old Eliza Harper, who died suddenly of an overdose in her family home after a ten-month period of recovery. Family were at home, but unaware of the emergency. Since then, Harper has worked to make an app that can be worn as a ring or a watch and call for help even if the wearer is unconscious. Learn more at elizaswatch.com.

“There is so much need in this world, and change is really sustainable and possible at a local level,” said Ayres. “Entities like the Shea can have an impact to change and develop their communities.”

Also This December

This Saturday, December 21, Monte Belmonte and John Hodgman will appear on stage to discuss Hodgman’s new book, *Medallion Status: True Stories from Secret Rooms*. The book explores Hodgman’s strange career, including “how to prepare for a nude scene with an oboe” and other funny stories from the “weird, marginal level of fame” that he has enjoyed.

Erin McKeown will provide musical levity with alternative holiday songs. The show starts at 8 p.m.

On Monday, December 23, a screening of *Jingle Bell Rocks!* with Canadian filmmaker Mitchell Kezin will spread weird cheer, combining social history and pop culture in a “trippy, cinematic sleigh ride into the strange and sublime universe of alternative and underground Christmas music,” according to the press release for the movie.

The flick stars Joseph Simmons of Run-DMC, John Waters, Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips, Clarence Carter, *Schoolhouse Rock!* creator Bob Dorough, The Mighty Sparrow and “many more irreverent and insightful musicians, cultural icons, obsessed collectors, and critics.”

Kezin will provide an introduction when the show begins at 7 p.m., and the audience will be able to ask him about the project during a question-and-answer period after the film.

More news about programming at the Shea will be forthcoming in the new year. Check the sheatheater.org website for updates. If you have an idea for programming you’d like to see or help produce, Ayres can be reached at gettotheshea@gmail.com.

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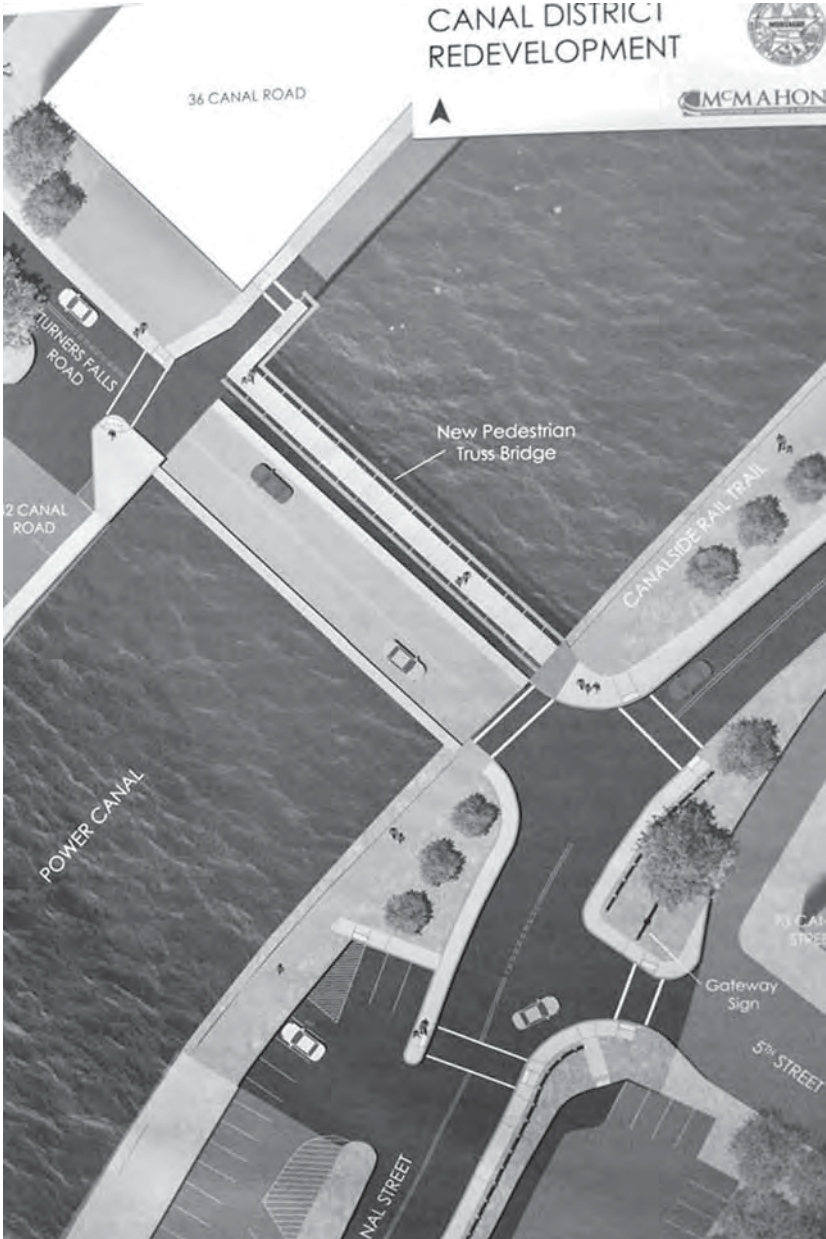
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MILLS from page A1

press – gathered on the first floor of the mill around propane space heaters and a table of donuts and coffee, chatting as the delegation from Boston was delayed by a snowstorm.

When he officially announced the grant, Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kennealy complimented the Montague project, stating that it met the MassWorks Fund’s criteria of potentially “having a big impact on the community.”

“It’s really going to redefine this area as the gateway into Turners,” said Montague town planner Walter Ramsey, who played a leading role in the design and grant application for the “Canal District” plan. “Right now it’s the back door.”

Ramsey added that the funding will also go toward repairing and rebuilding sidewalks on both sides of the canal. He estimates that construction will start in the summer of 2020.

“One of the things that has become clear in the first 11 months that I’ve been in office is that water and sewer infrastructure is the most pressing need for western Massachusetts,” remarked state Senator Jo Comerford. Small towns, she said, often don’t have the ability to put forward capital for such infrastructure.

“I’m incredibly excited about the potential of what can happen here on the island,” Curt Sherrer told the crowd during the December 17 event. Sherrer owns the smaller mill across the street, once known as Mill No. 2, where he is developing a cidery, and rents space to a yoga studio and vintage clothing shop.

“In the season of gift-giving, normally I get a tie and a Christmas sweater,” Sherrer continued, “but this year I’m getting a bridge and sewage... It was the biggest thing on my wishlist!”

Town administrator Steven Ellis called the grant a “very significant investment,” and commented that it would enable “eager developers to realize their dreams.”

There on Tuesday to potentially realize his dreams was New Hampshire-based developer Tom Cusano, who has been finalizing his “imminent” purchase of the Southworth Mill. Cusano says he plans to close on the property next week, but that he cannot make any promises – buying the property has turned out to be anything but run of the mill.

“I’ve learned a whole new meaning to patience,” reflected Cusano,



who said he has been working on the deal for “literally a year.”

Cusano started out in retail as a small business owner, selling wood-burning stoves, chimneys, and fireplaces in the 1970s. In the early 2000s he came into the business of buying massive industrial buildings unexpectedly, while betting on a forklift being auctioned off at a factory in Rochester, NH. He didn’t walk away with the equipment he had come for, but he did end up buying the 200,000-square-foot building.

“I just jumped in with both feet and said ‘all right, *let’s go!*’” said Cusano, who now has 12 commercial tenants renting every square foot of space in the Rochester property, and is redeveloping two former mill properties in Holyoke. When asked about his vision for the Turners Falls mill, Cusano said his “top priority is to line up somebody who wants to make paper.”

Other tenant possibilities might come from the cannabis industry, said Ramsey.

The historic 140,000-square-foot paper mill has been left in a state of disarray since the day it was shuttered in August 2017. Southworth filed for bankruptcy, putting 50 people out of work in Turners, and about 70 more at the company’s Agawam and Seattle locations.

Cusano has been assessing the building’s state and undertaking initial repairs with the help of onetime owner Charlie Blanker, whose fami-

ly received praise on Tuesday from town officials for keeping the mill in good condition over the years. Now that the power is back on, Blanker and Cusano are better poised to evaluate the building’s functionality.

“Without the power you can’t do much of anything,” Blanker told the *Reporter*. “They finally got the utility to turn the power back on. At the moment, it’s only being used for lighting. The next step is to see if we can get the elevators running.”

After Tuesday’s press conference, Bill Smith, a retired Southworth employee of 30 years, led attendees on a tour through the mill. From the bowels of the basement where river water was filtered through sand, to an upper floor of swanky offices, scraps of paper were scattered everywhere.

“They left everything,” said Smith as he peered into a corner office where, amidst stray papers and Cumby’s take-away cups, someone had left a pair of glasses on their desk.

Although the 100-year-old building’s electricity has been off for two years, Cusano says it is in good shape. “You can buy these old mill buildings for a dollar, but it’ll take \$10 million to fix [them],” he said. “This building is a fair price. It’s got value because it doesn’t even need a million dollars’ worth of repairs and improvements.”

Mike Jackson contributed additional reporting. 

Top left: The town’s plans for the canal bridge and sidewalks. Middle left: Former Southworth employee Bill Smith examines artifacts. Bottom left: Crates, on the tour. Top right: Turners Falls fire chief John Zellman (left), Tom Cusano (center), and town administrator Steve Ellis mug after the press conference. Lower right: The paper works.

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MONTAGUE from page A1

public works superintendent Tom Bergeron, and Bergeron’s assistant Matt Cadran attended the meeting. “It was our consensus opinion that, while we prefer not to spend this amount of money,” said Ellis, “this is the reality that we need to understand and work with.”

Ellis reviewed the math of the new contract. The base cost for sending materials to the MRF will be \$93.50 per ton. From this is subtracted an amount based on the monthly value of recyclables on the current market, which Ellis said was \$28.30 per ton this December. This would leave cost to the town of \$65.20 per ton after the contract is implemented next year.

Ellis then told the board that, based on these numbers, the “worst-case scenario” estimate was a \$50,000 annual cost. He told the *Reporter* that Montague recycled 546 tons of material in 2018, an amount which, using this month’s reimbursement rate, would come to an annual cost closer to \$35,000.

Ellis added that there had been an increase in demand for recyclables over the past few months. “There are still lot of uses for many of the recyclable materials,” he said, “and what we’re seeing is domestic markets modifying, and beginning to increase demand.”

Amy Donovan, program director of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District, confirmed Ellis’ assessment that the domestic demand for recycled materials could increase in the coming years. She also told the *Reporter* that some of the contamination problems that prompted China’s policies resulted from “single stream” recycling, where materials are not sorted before collection.

The MRF is one of the only facilities in the state that operates a dual-stream system which produces cleaner output. However, Donovan said, the initial market impact of China’s restrictions raised costs for all cities and towns in the state, including those with dual systems.

Donavan credited her organization, along with the cities and towns in the region, for educating citizens about the kinds of materials that can be sent to the MRF. Montague residents can click on “Recycling and Transfer Station Info” on the town website, then click on “What Do I Do With....” to get to the MRF website, which includes reference lists of materials that can be recycled. For example, the MRF can accept clear plastic egg cartons, but not egg cartons made with cardboard or styrofoam.

The board voted to approve the contract, and authorized Ellis to sign it at the appropriate time.

Community Development

During the same meeting, the selectboard held an information session on the town’s 2020 federal Community Development Block

Grant (CDBG) application, presented by Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, which administers the grants for the town.

McHugh said Montague is eligible to apply for \$737,935 in total grant funds, which are generally divided into four kinds of projects: housing assistance, public facilities, public social services, and planning.

A debate erupted on the board over extending the proposal deadline for social-service projects, since a human services organization that in recent years has received funds for an English Language Learner (ELL) program had missed the deadline, and there was no other applicant to fill this slot. Selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz argued that the deadline should be extended for all projects, including those already received for other categories, while member Michael Nelson said that this would penalize those who had come in before the deadline.

In the end, the board voted to extend the deadline until January 8 for a potential ELL program only.

Town planner Walter Ramsey took the floor to recommend an infrastructure project which would renovate a half block on the southeast side of Avenue A, at the Colle building and Shea Theater. Ramsey said this is a “heavily used” portion of the street, in front of two town-owned buildings. The project, which has already been designed, would replace concrete planters with granite, plant new trees, and create a new handicapped parking space.

Nelson, noting that this project only addressed part of a block, asked how long the entire streetscape design created with a previous grant would take to implement. Ramsey estimated it would take 15 years.

“By the time we get it done, it will be time to start over again,” commented selectboard member Chris Boutwell.

“Well, if you think about it, the streetscape is a continuous maintenance process,” replied Ellis, noting that the proposed granite curbing should have a longer shelf life.

Ramsey also proposed a design project for a playground upgrade at the Hillcrest Elementary School, a town-owned building and property. He said that during the following grant cycle, the town would be looking to fund the renovation itself.

In response to a question from Kuklewicz, Ramsey said the playground design cost is currently estimated at \$40,000.

“I get it, and certainly our kids are our future,” said Kuklewicz. “But how many \$250,000 parks can we afford?” Noting the cost of the Rutters Park project in Lake Pleasant, which he said was approximately \$400,000, Kuklewicz said he would “have to think about it.”

The informational meeting closed without a vote. McHugh remained at the front table to seek an

extension of time to complete the Rutters Park Project through June 30, and the board approved his request.

Electric Cars

Ramsey requested that the board approve a purchase order and financing for two electric vehicle charging stations in downtown Turners Falls.

The board had already approved the stations, which will be located at the Second Street and Sixth Street public parking areas. Eversource will pay for the “infrastructure” and charging stations, while the town covers operational costs.

After estimating those costs, Ramsey requested a reserve fund transfer of \$11,562. He said this would get the charging stations up and running until the cost is included in the town budget. “The ultimate goal is to recoup these costs by charging users a competitive per-kilowatt hour rate,” he added.

The board endorsed the request, which must also go to the finance committee, and awarded the contract to construct the two stations to a company called Voltrek.

Other Business

The meeting began with a presentation by DPW superintendent Bergeron on an inspection report by the solid waste management district on the town transfer station, and another report by the state Department of Environmental Protection on the closed landfill.

“We really don’t have any bad black marks against us,” Bergeron said of the transfer station report, though he noted a signage issue and the need to put certain equipment up on pallets.

Town treasurer Eileen Seymour reported on an upcoming bond issue which will borrow \$6 million to fund the new DPW garage and refinancing borrowing for several earlier projects to achieve savings in interest.

The board voted on a series of sewer abatement requests described by interim water pollution control facilities (WPCF) superintendent Kevin Boissonnault, as well as a long list of annual permits and licenses.

Ellis reviewed the progress of updating town personnel policies, which will go before a future town meeting.

At the end of the regular meeting, the board retired into a brief executive session to negotiate a final contract with Eric Meals to be permanent superintendent of the WPCF. The board returned to announce the contract, which will pay \$84,688 annually. Meals, who needs to inform the town of Hatfield where he is currently superintendent, will assume the position during the third week of January.

The next scheduled selectboard meeting will be on January 6, 2020.



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LOOKING BACK:
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Here’s the way it was December 17, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive

Town to Meet with
Ancil on Strathmore

“We’re looking to getting through the winter with Mr. Ancil,” said selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt on Wednesday. John Ancil owns the Strathmore Mill in Turners Falls, and hopes to someday develop that 244,482-square-foot, 1871 former paper mill into a green campus for a professional video and television school and production studios. He was set to meet with the Montague selectboard on Wednesday, but that meeting has been delayed until January 5.

Reached by phone, Pruitt said the selectboard hopes to focus on the town’s concerns over building security and maintenance at the Strathmore. Ancil intends to bring a PowerPoint presentation to that meeting, to update the board on his progress with the building.

Among other things, since assuming ownership in April of 2008, Ancil said he has worked to secure the building, boarded up windows, helped to maintain the sprinkler system and invested about \$80,000 in cleaning up the interior of the property and removing about six tractor trailer loads of recyclable paper, some of it quite soggy, from the mill, which suffered a serious arson fire one year earlier.

The town was involved in a lengthy tax taking of the Strathmore with previous owner Jerry Jones, who owned the property and lived in the mill at the time of the fire. In April of last year, the town was in land court in Boston to complete the taking when Jones transferred the deed for the Strathmore through a salvage contractor from upstate New York named James Bent, for one dollar, and then to Ancil, for \$50,000.

Both Jones and Bent have since worked for Ancil cleaning up and maintaining the property, and salvaging materials from the mill for resale. Town officials fear Jones may still be living in the mill.

Bent recently signed a \$25,000 purchase and sale agreement to buy the crumbling Railroad Salvage building.

The selectboard quizzed building inspector David Jensen on Wednesday, in Ancil’s absence. “My understanding,” Jensen said, “is Mr. Ancil has verbally committed to maintenance at the Strathmore, but if anything serious happens there, he is not prepared to foot the bill.”

NMH Northfield Campus to
House Christian College

At a Wednesday afternoon press conference, Steve Green, president of Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc., an Oklahoma City-based chain of retail arts and crafts stores, announced it has purchased the Northfield campus of Northfield Mount Hermon School for \$100,000 to serve as the home for the C.S. Lewis College, a planned Christian institution of great books and visual and performing arts.

The sale includes 217 acres comprising the core campus and the 35 buildings thereon. It does not include the D.L. Moody birthplace, the Moody homestead, or the golf course, water department, and 2,000 acres of adjoining woodland.

Skate Park a Go!

Voters at the Montague special town meeting approved three articles intended to clear the way for a permanent concrete skate park Tuesday night, causing the entire high school auditorium to break into sustained applause.

A permanent home for the Great Falls Sk8 Park has been a long term goal of the youth of the community, and their adult supporters, for more than a decade. The town will seek funding to construct the concrete skate park, which may cost around \$100,000, from a federal community development block grant, in conjunction with a second phase of renovations at Unity Park.

A deal with abutting landowner Tim de Christopher, the skate park’s former landlord, removed the last obstacle to closing Williams Way, a short connector between First and Second streets, bordering Unity Park. With the closing of Williams Way, the land beneath the road, and twenty-five feet of town land on the side abutting de Christopher’s property at the former Williams Garage, will now be merged with Unity Park to form the footprint for a 4,800-square foot skate park.

Town meeting approved giving de Christopher \$1,000 in return for his signed waiver of damages and release of claims in connection with the 25 feet of land adjoining Williams Way, on which de Christopher held a deeded easement. A memorandum of understanding now conveys a 15-foot-wide easement to De Christopher, his tenants, or future owners. The town will not be obligated to plow the property.



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GARAGE from page A1

operating this building, in any sense, in support of FRTA's occupancy there," explained Montague town administrator Steve Ellis. "The building should be closed, or substantially repaired, at some point in the very near future. We don't want to be obligated to potentially six-figure investments in the building."

FRTA rejected the lease, asking for a longer term on the theory that it might allow for investment from the state Department of Transportation, but not offering any specific counter-proposal. "We don't know what that means," said Mark Smith, Martin's director of administration. "Is that one year, two years, three years?"

Greenfield worries that extending the lease beyond the fall of 2021 may jeopardize the use of the building as a fire station. But any hopes that clarity would be offered at Monday's meeting were dashed when FRTA assistant administrator Michael Perrault called out sick, leaving the towns' trustees to vent about the predicament.

"I'm only mayor 16 more days," said Martin, "but I don't feel like the taxpayers in Greenfield should continue to, artificially and superficially, hold this operation together for FRTA. They need to make some long-term plans."

Mayor-elect Roxann Wedegartner was also at the table. "I agree with Bill," she said. "FRTA probably does need to consider a long-term plan that's more secure for them. But I have no opposition to extending the contract... giving FRTA a little more breathing room, and giving us a little breathing room to learn more about the scheduling of the building of the fire station."

While 70% of the GMTA's assets belong to Greenfield, it is governed by a board composed of two trustees from each town. Ellis said that the Montague selectboard might be willing to "make things simpler for Greenfield by liquidating our share of that building" – but only if they were convinced they would not be "unreasonably burdening public transportation" in doing so.

"The town of Montague has no desire to see public transportation in the county substantially disrupted," said Ellis. "It has no desire to see Greenfield's ability to execute important municipal building projects unnecessarily interrupted. And it feels like those two things, right now, are potentially in conflict."

Jeff Singleton, Montague's alternate appointee to the FRTA advisory board, pointed out that with their weighted votes, Greenfield and Montague represent "a majority of most meetings" of that body. He suggested that the two towns ask the transit authority administration for "something in writing that clearly states what the FRTA's game plan is for the future.... It can't just be some vague things thrown out at a meeting."

"They don't have to come to a meeting to give us that information," said Montague town accountant Carolyn Olsen.

"They're the tenant. It's really incumbent on them to be forthcoming with information to support why they need a longer-term lease," added Smith.

Ellis made a motion, approved unanimously, to ask FRTA for a statement about its plans, including a "Plan B" for a garage to move to if the Deerfield Street building is not available.

A late attempt to reach Perrault and FRTA administrator Tina Cote for comment Wednesday was not answered as of press time.

A state-funded study in 2015 steered FRTA to select a site for a new facility on Laurel Street in Greenfield, but it was rejected when it was discovered to be in need of too much environmental cleanup. The authority then partnered with Montague to plan for a site on Sandy Lane, but an application for \$20 million in federal funds to build the facility only garnered a \$6 million grant in early 2018.

Since that time, FRTA has reportedly been attempting to significantly redesign the project to fit a smaller budget, but no plan has been released.



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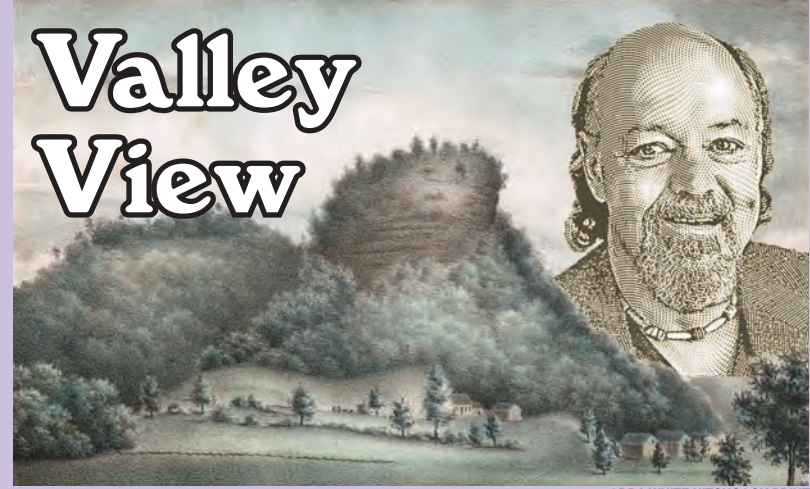
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By GARY SANDERSON

GREENFIELD – A white carpet blankets the meadow as the sun rides low in the southern sky, freezing poignant memories of my finest gun dog, Chubby – registered “Old Tavern Farm’s Rabble Rouser” – who suddenly took ill in his eighth year and died well before his time on the final day of pheasant season ...

It’s Saturday evening. I’m running around in my pickup to put together a Sunday-football dinner – the Patriots hosting Kansas City at 4:25 p.m. in the long-anticipated rematch of last year’s AFC Championship game. I lean forward to reach for my sound system when I feel a subtle reminder of Chub-Chub tickling my face along the right crease of my nose. It’s the tip of a long, thin, pheasant tail feather, stuck into the passenger-side visor and reaching out past the rearview mirror. I stuck it there after my buddy removed it and two others from a big rooster we shot toward the end of the season in Hadley, hunting a large, swampy aquifer along the southeastern base of Mount Warner. Another reminder of my extraordinary English springer spaniel, who most likely was the victim of coyote poison misdiagnosed as Lyme disease.

No, I haven’t gotten over it yet. I still often think of Chub-Chub, who almost completed his ninth hunting season in a career that began as a 6-month-old tagalong with his mother. I can still see him looking back to locate me on hunts, standing broadside, strong, erect, alert posture, head turned, ears raised, signaling, “Come on, Man, I’ve got fresh scent.”

It’s never easy to lose a good dog, known for millennia as man’s best friend. But when it happens to a dynamo in his prime, before he’s showing any signs of age or wear and tear, it’s even tougher – akin to losing a teenager in a car accident. Here today, gone tomorrow. So much left in the tank. That was Chub-Chub. Never a trip to the vet for illness or injury. Never a bad day in the field. Many truly remarkable ones.

Which brings us to the retrieve of that heavy, long-tailed rooster whose three longest tail feathers are still stuck into my passenger-side visor. It was not Chubby’s last retrieve, and it may not

even have been his best of the season. Yet it was indeed memorable, now unforgettable as things have played out, because it displayed so much of what made this gun dog truly special.

Veteran field-trialers who knew him marveled that he had it: speed, spring, power, enthusiasm, agility, stamina, nose, spirit, and a soft mouth to boot. A powerhouse in the field, he never left so much as a faint tooth bruise on a retrieve. I don’t think you can teach that. He was a natural – the best of many productive flush-and-retrieve dogs I’ve owned. Perhaps he stood out because he had been mine from the womb, was born and died at my home, which was his home, too. We were bonded from birth. I do believe that makes a difference.

Winding down, the six-week season had reached the time when stocked pheasants that survive have acclimated to their coverts, grow wise, and learn to outmaneuver hunters. They anticipate danger from the distant sound of bells, whistles, and voices, maybe even the slamming of a door, and acquire the uncanny ability to flush within view and earshot but just out of range. They also learn safe escape routes to dense, beaver-saturated alder swamps impenetrable to humans.

Even so, few stocked pheasants winter over like they did when I was a boy and spring broods showed up most years in our South Deerfield yard. Today, even those that escape four-legged predators, of which there are many, fall prey to birds of prey.

The difference between Chub-Chub and his wild cousins, the fox and coyote, was that he worked in unison with me and knew how to get out in front of a runner, turn it around, and force it back in my direction. No, it didn’t always work out that way, but he knew the game. His goal was always to give us a shot and him a retrieve.

That’s the way this Hadley flush-and-retrieve unfolded in the evening shadow of Mount Warner, just one of many for the “Best of Chubby” highlight reel. There were three of us in the field that day, and two dogs, the other Cinda, an 11-year-old bitch with field-trial points to her credit and a pedigree that overlapped Chubby’s in many places. Sometimes kennel and

see **VALLEY VIEW** page B8

Above: Jenna Wikler of Gill shared this photo of Ruggles Pond in the Wendell State Forest, iced over.

ArtBeat by Trish Crapo
Abstracts and Assemblages by Allen Fowler

TURNERS FALLS – Walk into Great Falls Harvest on Third Street and you’ll stumble upon an eclectic exhibit by Turners Falls artist Allen Fowler that’s worth a look. The show will be up for at least a month, Fowler says, and probably longer. Exhibit arrangements are low-key at the restaurant, which features the hearty, imaginative, locally-based menu offerings of chef Chris Menegoni.

In the main dining area, Fowler has hung paintings from his abstract “Dig” series. One of Fowler’s influences for the series was classical Asian landscape, with its unique perspective that manages to blend a bird’s-eye view with the sense of a human spectator looking off across a great distance.

“I was trying to play around with that,” Fowler says. “Also, archeological layers. Are we uncovering things?”

He’d also been looking a lot at the paintings of Agnes Martin, a Canadian-born American abstract painter, whose minimalist penciled grids and white gesso-ed surfaces create a sense of stillness. “Her work is really about that stillness,” Fowler says, “and sometimes a repetition of line or contour.”

Though the “Dig” paintings are nothing like Martin’s paintings, Fowler says he attributes their “mutedness,” as well as his intentional painting-out of earlier marks, to having been immersed



“Tilt,” by Allen Fowler. Fowler’s assemblages make use of simple materials such as found metal pieces, old wooden drawers, as well as bright acrylic paint.

in her work before he began.

Working in Series

Working in series came about as a way to solve a particular problem Fowler was having. “Often what I found when I was working singularly, is I would want to take a paint-

ing in two different directions,” he says. Working in series frees him to do that, if he wants to, and to let go of whatever first conception he had, and follow the work.

When he began the “Dig” series, Fowler laid canvases on the floor see **ARTBEAT** page B5



By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – “I always thought co-parenting was a load of crap people made up,” my friend recently said to me, adding: “you know, to pretend everything is ok.”

I looked at her and nodded. This is not the first time someone close to me has shared this same sentiment. And then I smiled when she said,

Reflection & Revision

“And then I met you and your co-parent, and you guys have totally proved me wrong.”

It’s nice to get that kind of raw feedback from someone so close to me. Not that I need the validation, but in the midst of the day-to-day, it’s easy to forget that the work my co-parent and I have put into our relationship is truly valuable and, to varying degrees, revolutionary and against the grain.

The learning curve was huge. We stumbled, fell, and stumbled again. Our saving grace was finally sitting down with a guide and teacher whom we both trusted and respected. It felt so good to air our frustrations in the presence of someone else; it felt as though it was the first time we truly heard each other. We walked away from that session learning about non-violent communication, and ever since then, have

made sincere efforts at communicating in this way when things go south.

As we near the end of the year, the general consensus seems to be that we are reminiscing and reviewing the past twelve months – one of my teachers is even encouraging the review of the past ten years. I appreciate this exercise, not only because it helps me pause and appreciate the highlights that I’ve experienced, but most importantly, because it helps me to digest them.

Many spiritual teachers preach about the practice of gratitude: in essence, the more we express gratitude, the more we open ourselves up to receive even more of that which we are grateful for. In a similar vein, the end of the year brings the opportunity to think about the past and acknowledge all the good, if only to have a better see **INDIE MAMA** page B4

Pets of the Week

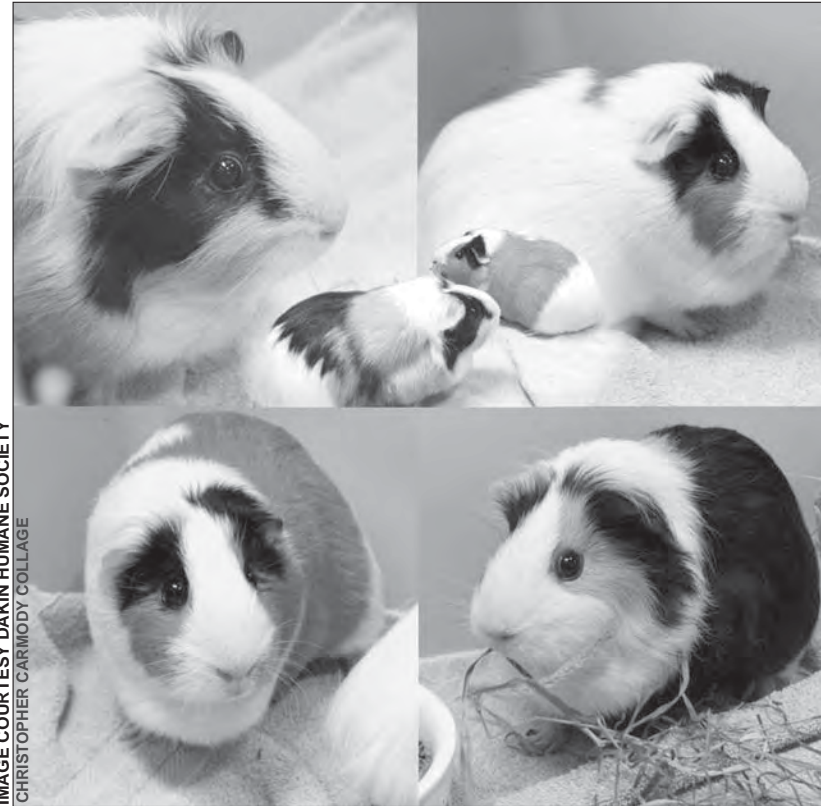


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FACES & PLACES



JERI MORAN PHOTO

On Tuesday evening, some local residents who didn’t want to risk the snowy roads to travel to Springfield held a small rally on the Montague Center Common in support of Wednesday’s presidential impeachment vote in the US House of Representatives.



Sex Matters

a sex-positive health column

by STEPHANIE BAIRD

*yes is a world
& in this world of
yes live
(skillfully curled)
all worlds...*

— e.e. cummings

Let’s talk about consent and pleasure. As someone who came of age in the ‘80s and ‘90s, I was aware that not much was discussed, or even known, about active negotiation of sex-related activities. During my work in the late ‘90s, primarily working with sexual assault survivors, “consent” concepts emerged in clinical work as well as in rape crisis educational campaigns.

However, most of these campaigns centered around the “no means no” concept. This, of course, is paramount. Humans being able to say “no” to unwanted activities is the foundation from which we can later say “yes” to wanted activities.

For much of the 20th century stereotypical male and female gender expression involved the idea that a cisgender man should want and try for sex, and that a “good” cisgender woman should be a “gatekeeper,” saying no often, but eventually “giving in.” (Like Scarlet O’Hara and Rhett Butler in *Gone With the Wind*: he forcibly dragged her, kicking and fighting, upstairs for sex, and then the next scene shows her, post-sex, looking content.) It wasn’t okay for a woman to outright want and ask for sexual activity: that desire somehow put the woman in a “slut” category.

Luckily, our wonderful 21st century has brought increased activism, with folks naming “slut shaming” as a bad thing, along with the creation of the problematic term “man-slut” (which I dislike), in an attempt to equalize notions of sexual desire.

Now that we are one-fifth of the way into the 21st century, with *#Me-Too* solidly in place, humans continue to expand the conversation around consent. At a minimum, for a person to legally consent to any sexual activity – physical, verbal, or otherwise – the person needs to be of age. (16 is the youngest age for any type of intercourse in Massachusetts; this varies state by state.)

Modern, full consent has further evolved into the acronym FRIES. Coined by Planned Parenthood, FRIES stands for consent being:

- *Freely given.* Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- *Reversible.* Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime – even if you’ve done it before, and you are preparing to do it again.
- *Informed.* You can only consent if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they’ll use a condom, but don’t, then there isn’t full consent.
- *Enthusiastic.* When it comes to sex, you should only do things you *want* to do, not things you are expected to do.
- *Specific.* Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn’t mean you’ve said yes to other things (like intercourse).

I personally love the addition of *enthusiasm*, as this concept finally equalizes desire within all the genders. No longer does sex just have to be a dude being trained all his life to seize a moment of sex whenever opportunity is there. Now women (and other genders) have been given permission, and the imperative, to enthusiastically ask for what they want.

In November I saw acclaimed journalist Peggy Orenstein speak on “Girls and Sex: From Risk and Danger to Responsibility and Joy,” and learned some helpful terms and alarming statistics.

She noted that research psychologist Sarah MacLelland coined the term “intimate justice.” According to Orenstein, intimate justice asks: “Who is entitled to engage in a sexual experience? Who is entitled to enjoy it? How does each partner define good enough? Sex has political as well as personal components, reflecting issues of gender inequality, economic disparity, violence, and mental health.”

Orenstein shared research that looked at *cis-female self-objectification* – girls trying to attain an “effortless perfection of hotness and sexiness for the male gaze” – and found that more self-objectification correlated to less sexual satisfaction. It is also linked with depression, anxiety, eating disorders, negative and reduced cognition and political participation.

She noted that many heterosexual teens and young women seemed to have undergone a “psychologi-

cal cliterodectomy,” preferring to give rather than receive any kind of pleasure, mostly for status, security, and notions of power. However, this “orgasm gap” disappears among lesbians.

One antidote for this lopsided quandary of who gets to receive pleasure can be found in an encouraging 2016 book by local author Dr. Rosalyn Dischiavo called *The Deep Yes: The Lost Art of True Receiving*. At a talk she gave, one of the first things Dr. Dischiavo asked was whether we remembered our last shower. She pointed out that folks often mindlessly rush through their showers, sometimes even forgetting if they have shampooed, when showering is a great opportunity to say “yes” to mindful sensuality with oneself.

Her book explores the original *yin* energy of receptivity as one of “drawing in... allowing,” and incredibly active in its “power to receive.” In India, she notes, “the Goddess Shakti, the embodiment of all power, is the *yin* principle.” Within the white *yang* of the yin-yang symbol is Spanda, the feminine *yang*: spontaneous movement, birthing, and power. She applies these ideas to saying “yes” to sleep, mindful eating, our beautiful bodies, and pleasurable sex with oneself and others.

After hearing Orenstein’s alarming review of the pleasure disparity, and her mention that even modern sex educators fail to mention the clitoris to their children at early ages, I found a diagram of female genitalia and gave my nearly nine-year-old daughter a quick anatomy lesson, telling her that the clitoris is the only organ functioning solely for fun and pleasure – something she can learn about, on her own, as her life progresses.

Since she had already had some accurate sex ed through first-grade Our Whole Lives (OWL) classes, and since she knows I teach OWL, this wasn’t hopefully brand new information, but rather just another conversation in a lifelong open discussion of positive sexual health.

Stephanie Baird is a certified OWL facilitator and an EMDR psychotherapist and consultant who encourages her clients towards thriving sexual health. She welcomes feedback and suggestions at sexmatters@montaguereporter.org.

Senior Center Activities

DECEMBER 23 to JANUARY 3

GILL and MONTAGUE

The Gill Montague Senior Center, 62 Fifth Street, Turners Falls, is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Congregate meals are served Tuesday through Thursday at noon. Meal reservations must be made one day in advance by 11 a.m. All fitness classes are supported by a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Voluntary donations are accepted.

Council on Aging Director is Roberta Potter. Kitchen Manager is Jeff Suprenant. For more information, to make meal reservations, or to sign up for programs, call 863-9357. Messages can be left on machine when the center is not open.

M, W, F: 10 a.m. Aerobics;
10:45 a.m. Chair Exercise
T, W, Th: 12 p.m. Lunch
Monday 12/23

1 p.m. Knitting Circle
Tuesday 12/24

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

Wednesday 12/25

Senior Center Closed

Thursday 12/26

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards, Games, & Pitch

4 p.m. Gentle Yoga

Friday 12/27

1 p.m. Writing Group

ERVING

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

meal information and reservations.

For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shopping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 12/23

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

Tuesday 12/24

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

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

12 p.m. Home Made Lunch

Wednesday 12/25 - Friday 12/27

Closed so Santa can rest.

Monday 12/30

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

Tuesday 12/31

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

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

12 p.m. Home Made Lunch

LEVERETT

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

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

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

WENDELL

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

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GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN



CREATIVE COMMONS IMAGE

Black Birch (Betula Lenta)

By RACHEL LABRIE

TURNERS FALLS – Season’s Greetings, *Montague Reporter* Community! The wheel of the year continues to turn, and we have now arrived at the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. I love the twinkle of Christmas lights, the cute decorations and wreaths placed all over town, and this year we were lucky to get a nice snowfall before Christmas, adding a magical touch to our little village of Turners Falls.

December is the time I strain all of my herbal infusions from the growing season, making salves and tinctures to stock up my herbal pantry and to make gifts for my loved ones. It has become a yearly ritual for me, and I look forward to making handmade, medicinal gifts from plants I harvested in the gardens and forests around my home.

The Great Falls Apple Corps takes this month to rest and reflect on the great year we had in 2019. Three Pickle in the Park workshops, a rainwater harvesting workshop, T-shirt fundraising, a native plant installation at the “Church of Podcast” on Seventh Street, and the year ended with turning and sifting our compost pile at the Unity Park Community Garden – a big to-do we finally got around to doing at our yearly Fall Clean Up day!

We have a lot in store for next year and will continue to have meetings throughout the winter on the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Unity Park Fieldhouse for anyone interested in getting involved, or who just wants to say hello.

Edible Spotlight:

Sweet Birch or Black Birch, *Betula Lenta*

Most everyone can identify the beautiful white birch, but there are at least four species of birch that grow in New England. Birches are an early succession tree, meaning they show up in areas where soil may have been disturbed, forests have been logged, and along streams and ponds. Once other trees grow above them and block out the sun, they begin to die off, as they are not very shade tolerant.

The sweet birch, also known as black birch, has a smooth, shiny, dark brown to grayish-black bark with little white notches when it is young. As sweet birch ages, the bark

begins to get rough and rather scaly, breaking into plates. The bark does not peel off the tree like with white birch or paper birch. The leaves grow in pairs; they are two to four inches long, and are alternate, serrated, and oval, with a prominent pointed tip. They are a dark shiny green in the summer and turn to a wonderful bright yellow and gold in the fall.

The best way to identify a sweet birch is to pull a branch close to you and break off a twig. If it smells sweet and minty, you have found your friend the sweet birch. This tree is the source of wintergreen oil, known for its antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, and antioxidant properties.

The source of this wintergreen oil is the inner cambium layer of bark. The aromatic, minty smell comes from methyl salicylate, closely related to salicylic acid, the active ingredient in aspirin.

This compound is a pain relieving ally that has a warm and soothing effect from the menthol. A tincture made from the inner bark is a delicious pain and inflammation reliever used for muscle soreness, achy joints, headaches, sprains, and bruises. Infused into oil, the pain relieving oil can be used for massage or added to a hot bath.

The sap of all birches is well known as a nutritive tonic, rich in vitamins and minerals. It flows abundantly in the spring after the maple flows. The leaves of sweet birch are considered medicinal as well, and have been used as a remedy for the kidneys, aiding in the elimination of urine, and soothing irritation.

For me, the smell of wintergreen and Christmas go hand-in-hand. I often add the essential oil to my diffuser this time of year, and breathe in the sweet minty-ness. I have also added the oil to lotions and salt scrubs that I give away for Christmas gifts. The smell makes me feel like I am being hugged by my sweet Grandmother.

In fact, when I was in my herbal class last fall, we were meditating with sweet birch and I envisioned the tree reaching out its tender branches to move my hair behind my ear and embrace me – the only time I have ever experienced a “vision” while meditating with a plant. It was a very special moment for me, and I have kept sweet birch close to my heart ever since.

The Great Falls Apple Corps wishes you a very happy holiday and a delightful new year full of magic and enchantment, with the help of our plant friends.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Man Pees Suspiciously; Some Cars Go In Snowbanks; Other Cars Get Repossessed; Hunting On A Sunday?

Sunday, 12/8

10:02 a.m. Caller states that a silver Honda Civic was speeding and passing cars in a no-passing zone on Millers Falls Road; vehicle almost crashed into him.

12:55 p.m. Caller from Randall Wood Drive states that someone drove through the front lawn of a property that they just purchased. Must have happened overnight. No callback needed.

1:03 p.m. Caller states that the crossing gate is stuck down at the Lake Pleasant railroad crossing. Officer confirmed both gates are stuck down. Pan Am notified.

2:47 p.m. Caller from Norman Circle states that this afternoon a neighbor told him that a suspicious male in sunglasses was walking on his property and looking into some of the windows. Referred to an officer.

8:16 p.m. Business owner reporting a suspicious male urinating behind his business on Avenue A. Advised of options.

Monday, 12/9

1:29 p.m. Report of disturbance on Central Street; caller advises that a male not known to him was pounding on his door. When caller opened door, the male reportedly accused him of popping his sister's tires and threatened to assault him. Male has since left immediate area of caller's door but is believed to still be on the first floor. Officer advises verbal argument over a vandalism incident. Report taken.

2:14 p.m. Off-duty officer advised by passerby of vehicle all over the road, described as traveling up hill toward Stop & Shop. Greenfield PD advised.

2:59 p.m. Vehicle into utility pole on First Street; female occupant out of vehicle walking around; could be disoriented. Conferenced with AMR; TFFD and PD units advised. Pole is damaged but intact. Eversource assessed pole and states it's fine. Rau's has vehicle.

6:24 p.m. Caller reporting that her female husky named Paris slipped her collar down at Renovators Supply and ran into Millers Falls. States she is very friendly. Officer advised.

Tuesday, 12/10

8:04 a.m. Multiple alarm activations at Farmacy 253. Officer responded and spoke with manager; advised of additional alarms and provided with copy of town bylaw for false alarms. Manager will be contacting alarm company.

8:20 a.m. Report of slashed tires on Central Street. Report taken.

8:24 a.m. Report of motorist stuck in snowbank on Greenfield Road. Area

search negative.

2:32 p.m. Walk-in party reporting larceny of her trash/recycling bins with trash/recycling still inside; requests to have on record in case there are any other suspicious incidents. Advised of options.

4:05 p.m. Caller complaining of snowbank in road at Eleventh and G streets. Officer advises snowbank isn't any larger than others in town; no further action needed.

6:23 p.m. Male was sitting by the donation bin at Jarvis Pools. Checked on by officer; subject said he was just taking a break and went on his way.

7:42 p.m. Caller states that several hours ago, he left a bag at a friend's house that had all of his medications and money in it. When he returned, the bag was missing. Report taken.

Wednesday, 12/11

2:42 p.m. Caller states that the sidewalk in front of the community garden at Third and L streets is not cleared and is slippery. Caller states he fell on it earlier and called the town hall, who advised him to call the police and report it. DPW supervisor checked area and determined sidewalks are totally clear.

3:42 p.m. A 22-year-old Montague Center man was arrested on a straight warrant.

9:22 p.m. Caller states that there is a truck sitting out by where the new DPW building construction is happening. Tractor-trailer unit parking for the night there. They have a delivery at this location in the morning.

Thursday, 12/12

12:45 a.m. Assisted with vehicle repossession on Avenue A.

7:54 a.m. Caller states that she is an employee at Cumberland Farms and they have a gentleman in the store who they have asked to leave multiple times, but he is not leaving the property. Officers

transporting subject and bike to his residence.

7:57 a.m. Caller states he is working on Second Street for Maverick Construction and a vehicle has been parked in the way for a few days; requesting officer attempt to make contact with owner to move it so they can continue to work. Services rendered.

11:37 a.m. Shelburne Control requesting officers to Crescent and Bridge streets, where a repossession is occurring and the owner of the vehicle is irate. Officer advises repo went through and owner was advised of options.

12:34 p.m. Car vs. deer on Millers Falls Road. No injuries; no fluids; deer took off. Report taken.

4:43 p.m. 911 caller reporting that a grey Subaru is operating erratically on Turners Falls Road and has no lights on. Officers followed vehicle for a few miles; no infractions observed.

5:10 p.m. Report of active gas leak near entrance to airport off of Millers Falls Road. FD and Berkshire Gas responding.

7:18 p.m. Walk-in would like to speak to an officer about a disturbance that happened in his store earlier today.

[Friday's calls were not included in the printout we were provided.]

Saturday, 12/14

4:42 p.m. Caller from Family Dollar states that they have a person in the store whom they asked to leave; female stated she would only leave if the police showed up. Caller states party is causing a disturbance. Officers advise that three parties are leaving and have been verbally trespassed from the store.

Sunday, 12/15

1:45 a.m. 911 call mapping to within 46 meters of a Central Street location. Officer spoke to first

floor residents; all denied knowledge of call. All quiet on arrival.

9:31 a.m. Caller states he got a call that the main door at the old town hall in Montague Center was open; requesting officer go check it out and secure the door, if possible; if not, then DPW should be notified. Officer advises door not open and building secured.

9:52 a.m. Caller from the Patch states that she has called multiple times to complain about a woman's dog who is never on leash and runs and jumps on her and her dogs. Caller states that today around 9:20, when she asked the other woman about a leash, she replied, "We have our own philosophies on leashes." Officer will forward information to animal control officer, who will return call tomorrow.

11:24 a.m. While attempting a call back for an abandoned 911 call, party called in on the business line reporting sounds of gunfire in the area of West Chestnut Hill Road. Officer out with male in orange who discharged black powder but also states he heard what sounded like someone discharging a handgun. Area searched; nothing found.

3:30 p.m. Caller states that there is a tree on wires at the fish hatchery and it is blocking the roadway so her coworker can't leave the area. Caller states she already contacted Eversource, but they still have not shown up. Contacted Eversource, who advised that they were *en route* to the Hatchery already; they will be updating their ticket and notifying the crew. Officer going out to check scene; advises tree is on wires over the roadway. Believes once the wires are taken off, they should be able to move the tree to the side. Eversource on scene.

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INDIE MAMA from page B1
understanding of where we can set our sights for the coming year.

This certainly has been a big year for me and my little one. Many leaps were taken, and many miracles experienced. As I glimpse back, I am bewildered at all the things and people that have now part of our lives. My gratitude list is a mile long, and at the very top of this list is the appreciation I feel for my co-parent.

And in the spirit of gratitude, old years, and new beginnings, I'm going to share with you one of the things that has helped us in our path of co-parenting. It's mystical, and non-quantitative, but I've always been a sucker for all things magic.

Towards the end of my pregnancy, when we were still together as a couple, I made a vision board. Here's the thing: ours was an unplanned pregnancy, and at that point we were basically scrambling trying to figure out how we would make it work. We put all of our individual dreams on hold, and instead focused on how we would make ends meet. We moved to western Mass., and overall, we started from scratch.

Around this time, I took part in a vision-making workshop. While many things were still up in the air, and there was so much uncertainty, I knew I had nothing to lose by creating a visual representation of what I desired our lives to become. What I learned about vision boarding is that when you make one, you are encouraged to cut out images from magazines that make you feel something, even if they don't make sense.

My vision board looked like this: there was a picture of a man cooking in a kitchen; next to it is a separate image of a woman enjoying a meal with a baby on her lap. Below, I glued an image of a man holding a baby, and next to that there is an image of a woman writing and working by herself.

When I glance at it now, I can't help but smile: we couldn't have possibly planned it, but this vision has subconsciously helped us carve out our paths. It took a long time for us to get to where we are, with many bumps and painful moments along the way, but today, it more or less captures our reality. My co-parent is the head chef at a retreat center, and I've taken the leap and launched my own business. We are independent, and have been blessed to be able to pursue our passions. While one of us is plugging away at work, the other is nurturing our son.

Our son is no longer a toddler, and we are facing new challenges these days and doing our best to navigate them. As we move into the new year, as well as into the new adventures that come with parenting a four-year-old, I look forward to creating a new vision board for the next phase of our lives.

Ecuadorian-born and New York City bred, Mishel Ixchel is mama to a 4-year-old, and currently resides in Turners Falls where she practices and teaches the art of sacred self-care. You can find her on Instagram @indiemamadiaries.



MONTAGUE COMMUNITY TELEVISION NEWS

Shea Theater Shows on TV

By MICHAEL SMITH

The Welcome Yule Holiday Play at the Shea Theater is a tradition we hold dear in Turners Falls. If you weren't able to see it for yourself, don't despair – MCTV has you covered! Check out our website at montaguetv.org for Part One.

While you're there, also check out another recent production at the Shea, called *Mr. Drag and How the Grinch Stole Karl*.

Don't forget that MCTV is your resource for town meetings and events. We regularly post town

meetings and local events on montaguetv.org so check it out sometime and inform yourself about what new developments are happening in your community!

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!

Bud's War, Part 6

By JERRY "JINX" COLLINS

TURNERS FALLS – Jerry "Jinx" Collins wrote about his youth growing up in Turners Falls in his memoir "Jinx: A New England Mill Town Urchin's Life, the Depression through 1952," which we have excerpted from previously.

Now, Collins is sharing the experiences he and his brothers had during active duty in the armed services in excerpts from his latest memoir, still in progress, "Transition: A Journey From Youth to Manhood." In this installment, Jerry continues to learn about what Bud experienced during the war, many years later.

Sharp-eyed readers noticed that last week, Part 5, mistakenly ran as "Part 6"! We're back on track now.

It would not be too long before the USS *Henry A. Wiley* again would enter battle as one of the first ships, with the mission of escorting the minesweepers prior to the Marines landing on Okinawa. In Bud's opinion, the battle of Okinawa made Iwo seem like a picnic.

Having completed the preparation portion of its assignment, the ship took its position between the island and Japan's mainland, where it saw the first waves of enemy airplanes as they approached. It appeared to Bud that the whole Japanese air force came out of the sky at once. Bombers, dive bombers, torpedo planes, and Kamikazes were everywhere, trying to sink the US fleet.

Actually, his ship's gunners shot down fifteen of them, as well as two Bakas: one-man guided suicide

bombs. The Baka, with its pilot inside, would be attached to the belly of a Japanese bomber (called a "Betty" by the Navy crew men), and then was released for attack when within range of its targeted ship.

The Wiley was the only ship in the US Navy to shoot down two of them. It narrowly escaped one that was determined to sink it, and was only saved by a daring Marine Corps aviator who, coming from out of nowhere, dove in between the ship's anti-aircraft gunfire at the last minute to destroy the enemy Kamikaze roaring in for its kill.

Many years after the war, when the ship's crew started having reunions, they searched for that pilot and, finding him, made him an honorary member of the *Henry A. Wiley*. For many years after, this pilot attended those ships reunions. At one of them he confessed that that was the only kill he made during his World War II service.

COMICS

by denis f. bordeaux



Submit your comics to editor@montaguerreporter.org. Original, locally produced content only, please!

the while, he knew many would succumb to the awful carnage that the sharks would create before the Wiley could get the remaining survivors aboard. One of the sailors they rescued, who had been very seriously injured, came to one of the ship's first reunions to thank them personally for saving his life.

I cannot even imagine what lasting effect the witnessing of Kamikazes exploding on board sister ships and setting them ablaze, or rescuing sailors who had to abandon their ships, or pilots who had bailed out of their disabled planes – treading water in the shark infested seas – would have had on those brave young warriors.

But now I believe I understand why it took so many years before my brother, and most of the others who witnessed first-hand the horrific events of war, would be able to talk about what they experienced.

Sinking of the USS Luce

It wouldn't be until December 27, 2015, when my brother and I were attending a Christmas party at a friend's home in Arizona, that I would learn of one of the most tragic events he witnessed.

While discussing the time that each of them had spent in the Navy, my friend Jim mentioned that he had a cousin who was one of the very few survivors of the USS *Luce*, which was sunk during the Battle of Okinawa. With this my brother exclaimed, "The *Luce*! My ship, the Wiley, was dispatched to pick up the surviving sailors who were treading water after they had abandoned it."

He then described the horrific scene where – being off duty from the radio shack and aiding in the rescue – he looked down and saw a multitude of shark fins circling around all those surviving sailors in the oil- and blood-filled sea. All

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ARTBEAT from page B1

and painted with large gestures, “knowing I was going to paint those things out, or mute them,” he says.

I wondered whether there had ever been a conflict between leaving some early mark and the impetus to paint over it. Were some marks harder to give up?

Fowler says, “There are different stages where you wish you had left it alone, but you can’t go back. But I’ve gotten more comfortable with that. I’ve gotten more comfortable trying not to make some portion of the canvas so precious that you have to keep it at the expense of the rest of it.”

“In my landscape work,” he continues, “I’m often playing around with the looseness of nature and the geometric grid we put over it with our cities, and even in agriculture, with farm fields.” The paintings become a conversation between natural and human constructs, between the gestural and the geometric.

Fowler rotated the canvases as he worked, creating multiple horizon lines, and setting the challenge of not allowing himself to “settle” in any one orientation but rather to “re-enter the painting again and again.”

Fowler is often working on more than one painting, or even more than one type of artwork in his studio at the same time, along with writing poems and plays. Having multiple projects going enables him to shift focus if a particular work isn’t going well, or if, as might happen with the layers of white he applies to his paintings, something needs time to dry before he can keep working on it.

Regardless of the medium, Fowler almost always finds himself working in series. When he’s writing poems, he’s already thinking about how they will work with others in a chapbook. He writes plays in trilogies.



CRAPO PHOTOS



Fowler’s assemblages make use of simple materials, such as found metal pieces and old wooden drawers, as well as bright acrylic paint. Left: “Tilt.” Right: Fowler’s assemblage, “Waxing,” re-envisioning a found metal scrap as the moon.

Assemblages

Fowler’s assemblages, hung mostly in the restaurant’s poolroom, can also be seen as a series, since they share a pared-down aesthetic that makes use of found materials and just a few bright colors of paint. The assemblages are not as far removed from his landscape work as they might appear at first, Fowler says. He points out their tendency, though they are abstract compositions, to include clear horizon lines.

“The assemblages are a bit more playful,” Fowler says, adding that some of them can even be a bit snide, though he wouldn’t characterize the

ones at Great Falls Harvest in that way. He hopes to mount a show of the “ruder” work soon, perhaps across Avenue A at LOOT, a source of some of Fowler’s materials.

Fowler works with random pieces of metal, wood, and ordinary objects, such as a painted metal dustpan, to create compositions inside wooden boxes, old mirror or picture frames, or, as a result of a recent kitchen rehab, wooden drawers.

Pointing out the assemblage he’s titled “Waxing,” which features a rusted, distressed partial disc of thin metal that resembles a waxing moon, Fowler smiles and says, “I

think I found that in a Cumberland Farms parking lot.”

We speculate as to what the metal might have been, originally. Some kind of protective plate from the underside of a car? But it doesn’t matter, finally, because Fowler has given it new life, in a new context.

“They’re not as worked,” Fowler says, comparing the assemblages to the paintings. “It’s really dictated by the materials. The relationship between shapes and where they fit into a box. What object can go into this container? Where does this rusted nail go? It’s sort of fun.”

Fowler will be adding to his ex-

hibit at Great Falls Harvest in a couple of weeks, hanging some large paintings on the blank walls above the assemblages. But I’d say, don’t wait: go on in and check it out. And why not play a game of pool and have a beverage or a bite to eat while you’re there?

At Great Falls Harvest, 50 Third Street, Turners Falls. Hours are Thursdays and Fridays, 5 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sundays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information see greatfallsharvest.com or call (413) 863-0023.



Project New Hope

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I first heard about Project New Hope, Inc. when I wrote about a turkey giveaway for veterans run by the Arredondo Family Foundation. I recently interviewed Bill Moore, the president of the project “since it started,” which was nine years ago. Bill says it will be “10 years, January first.”

Project New Hope is run out of two locations. One is 70 James Street, in Worcester, and the other is 1029 North Road in Westfield.

“We offer free weekend retreats for military, Gold Star, and survivors’ families,” Bill told me. “We send 140 military and veteran children to camp each year. Gold Stars are spouses or parents who lost a child or a spouse in wartime. They have 20 veterans and 20 spouses at each retreat.”

Speaking of that turkey giveaway, where I first heard about them, they have participated in Turkey for Vets for the last three years.

Project New Hope also runs another program called the Back to School Brigade. “We build up a thousand backpacks of school supplies,” Bill said. They have partnered with Operation Home Front’s Back to School Brigade for several years to distribute school supplies.

Around Christmas time, people sometimes do these “giving tree” things. You get a piece of paper of some kind with something someone wants on it, and you get that person

what she or he wants. Project New Hope’s version of that is called Operation Jeep. They have people register on their website and make a wish list of items that their child would like. The list is submitted to the donor, and they go get presents. The donors drop off the gifts at the offices in Westfield and Worcester, and arrangements are made with military families to pick them up.

This operation has been going on for several years. I was told they “served 200 families last year.”

In connection with that 10-year anniversary I mentioned was coming up, a gala will be held on April 4, 2020 at the Wachusett Country Club in West Boylston. The gala will celebrate Project New Hope and express gratitude towards the people behind the project.

On top of these programs and events, they have a motorcycle run and a golf tournament for fundraising. As for how you can volunteer to help them out in any way possible, there is an application online at their website which you can fill out in order to be one.

Both locations I spoke of can have emails sent to them if you want to contact them, and both places have numbers to call as well. In Worcester, contact smwilder@projectnewhopema.org or (508)762-9738. In Westfield, contact abaxter@projectnewhopema.org or (413)315-3873.

For more information about Project New Hope, visit www.projectnewhopema.org.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Have a Green New Year by Reducing Holiday Trash

FRANKLIN COUNTY – During the holiday season, the average American family throws away at least 25% more trash than they do during the rest of the year (US EPA). Think about your household: could a large portion of this trash be avoided, reused, recycled or composted? Reducing your holiday waste can help you save money on “Pay As You Throw” town trash stickers or bags, save money for your town, reduce carbon and methane emissions, and protect our environment.

The Springfield Materials Recycling Facility, which sorts and bales recyclables from 60 communities in western Massachusetts, including those in Franklin County, asks residents to keep the following recycling guidelines in mind.

Wrapping paper and tissue paper are acceptable in paper recycling, but only if they do not contain foil, metallic inks, or glitter. Tape and labels are OK. Paper gift bags and shopping bags are also recyclable, and any type of handle is OK to include.

Other holiday waste that is recyclable: greeting cards (except those with foil, wire, glitter); paper envelopes (and plastic windows are OK); catalogs; calendars; corrugated cardboard boxes; and paperboard gift boxes.

Here’s a holiday tip: when opening or wrapping presents, keep a paper bag or recycling bin handy to collect paper recyclables.

Please *do not* put the following items in your household recycling: ribbons, bows, tinsel, holiday lights, Christmas tree netting, polystyrene (styrofoam), bubble wrap, packing peanuts, plastic shipping envelopes, plastic bags, or plastic “blister pack” packaging (formed plastic used to package toys, etc.).

Holiday light strings are *not* recyclable in municipal recycling programs, because they get wrapped around the sorting equipment at recycling facilities. Light strings are accepted for recycling at most scrap metal dealers, such as WTE in Greenfield.

Clean, dry packing materials such as packing peanuts, bubble wrap, envelopes lined with bubble wrap, inflatable “air pillow” packaging, and styrofoam sheets are accepted free for reuse at the UPS Store, 21 Mohawk Trail, Greenfield: (413) 772-2523.

There are many creative ways to reduce or reuse gift-wrap. One of the most important steps for reusing is unwrapping gifts carefully and reusing gift-wrap, gift boxes, ribbons, bows and gift bags next year.

According to the EPA, battery purchases and usage increases by 40% around the holidays. All seventeen town transfer stations within the Franklin County Solid Waste District accept rechargeable, button, and lithium batteries for free, year-round recycling. Place them in a bag or container and hand it to the attendant. Rechargeable batteries are found in many electronics, phones, appliances, or toys that can be recharged. These batteries contain heavy metals, and should never be thrown in the trash.

Composting is easy and can greatly decrease holiday meal food waste. The municipal compost programs at the transfer stations in Bernardston, Conway, Deerfield, Greenfield, Leverett, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Wendell and Whately accept all types of food waste, including meat, bones, cheese, and paper waste such as napkins, paper towels, egg cartons, paper to-go containers, soiled pizza boxes, and more. These programs are usually open to permit holders only.

When the holidays are over, check with your town about Christmas tree recycling. Your tree may be recycled as mulch this spring!

Questions? Contact Franklin County Solid Waste Management District: (413) 772-2438, info@franklincountywastedistrict.org; or visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org, springfieldmrf.org, or tinyurl.com/recycle-holidays.

MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).

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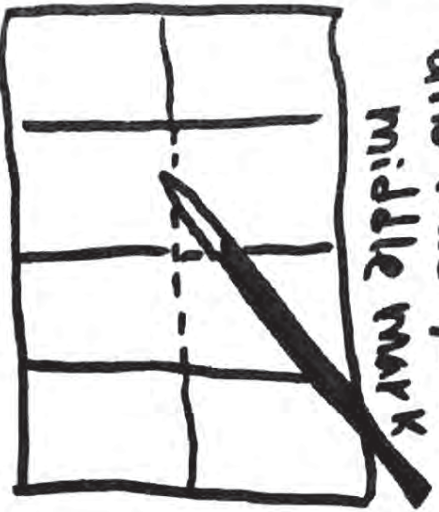
gretchenwlmt@gmail.com 413-824-7063

The Children's Page

YONDERNOD ILLUSTRATION

Text and illustration by HANNAH BROOKMAN

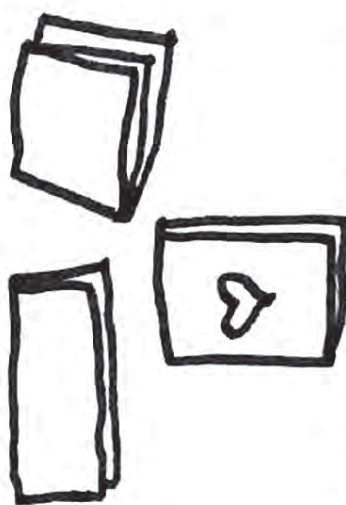
Slit it with a knife
or scissors, something
that is sharp.



Now unfold everything
and find your
middle mark

4


fold your page in
half one way.
Then fold in half
the other.



fold it up one more
time to see the book's
final size!

3

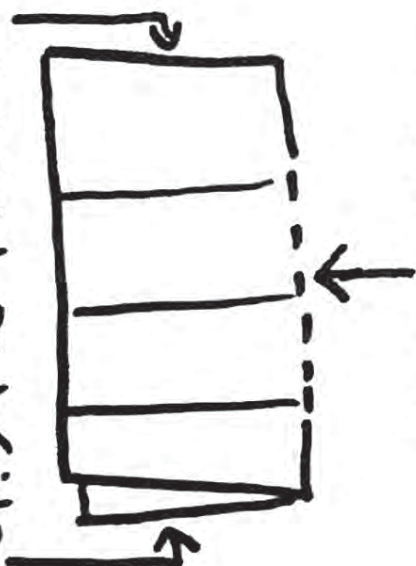
cut around the dotted
lines but not yet in
the middle!



you'll need to find
your scissors

2

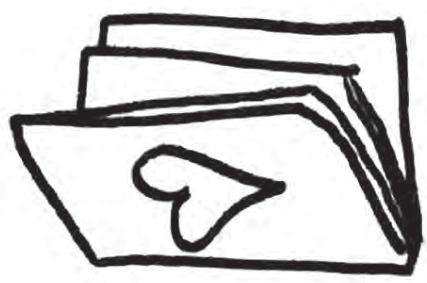
fold the page in half
again, so the slit is
on the top.



Now grab each side
and push together
until X marks the spot.

5

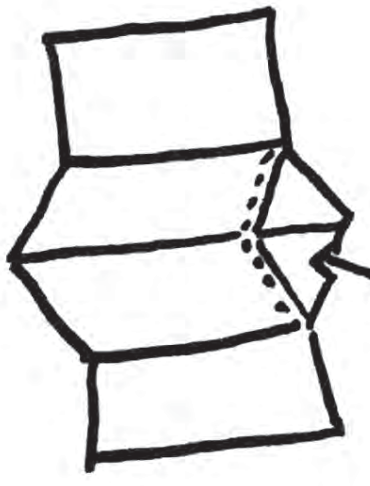
To make this



little book of
mine ...

1

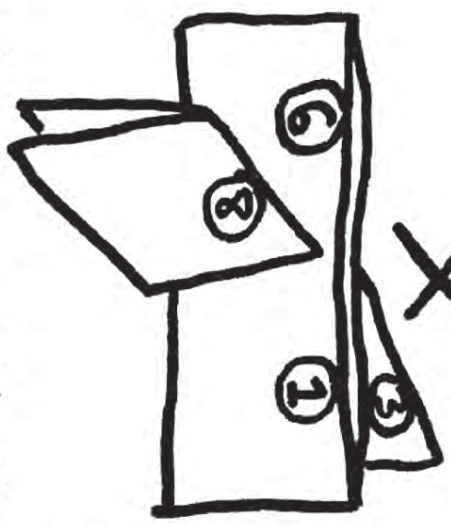
When you see the X,
just one step is next.
Find page number ①.
Fold it so it faces
front, and you are done!



The slit should be open
wide, so the corners
touch inside.

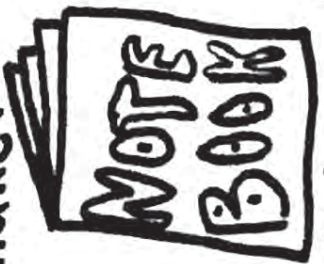
6

Now that you know
how to make this
Shape, think of
all of the many
books you can
make!



7

*they
are
reversible too!



8

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Cruz-Mas 2019*, Danny Cruz memorial event featuring a mindfulness meditation session at 6:30 p.m. followed by *Flaming Dragons of Middle Earth* open karaoke jam at 7:30 p.m.

The Hive, Greenfield: *James Hefflin Gypsy Quartet, John Lentz Trio*. \$ 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Half Shaved Jazz*. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Lisa/Liza, Joe Mygan, Taxidermists*. \$ 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band*. 6:30 p.m.

Millers Pub, Millers Falls: *Little House Blues Band*. Harmonica driven, Chicago-style blues quartet. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Barbie May Dieward, Jazer Giles, Lailye Weidman, Tatyana Tenenbaum*. \$ 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pamela Means and Soul Magnets*. \$ 8 p.m.

Guiding Star Grange, Greenfield: *Contra Dance with Andy Davis, David Kaynor, Laurie Indenbaum*, and the *Back Row Band*. All welcome; no experience necessary. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Nate Cozzalino*. 9:30 p.m.

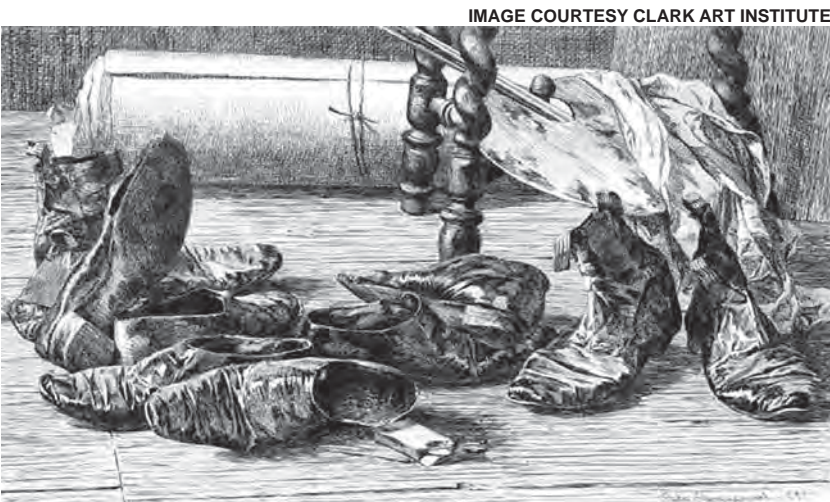
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Leverett Library: Author talk with *Bruce Watson*. With one eye to the skies and one on history, this local author will celebrate the winter solstice by discussing his book *Light: A Radiant History from Creation to the Quantum Age*. Along with celebrating light on the shortest day of the year, Watson will also explore light through the eyes of poets, philosophers, artists, photogra-

phers, and mystics. Lighting a candle, shining a beam through a prism, and showing why you got ripped off for those “polarized” sunglasses, he will explain how we came to live in the Age of Light. 2 p.m.

12 Federal Street, Greenfield: *Frost Heaves* album release and more. The *Frost Heaves and Hales* play a set celebrating Hales birthday and the release of their new album: *Repointing The Steeple*. At 8 p.m., they will play a *Velvet Underground* singalong set (words will be projected). Also, a celebration of the newly reopened Federal Street Books, next door to the event space. Donations welcome. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Solstice Storytelling Celebration*. \$ 7 p.m.



Jules Ferdinand Jacquemart, Souvenirs de voyage (*Still-Life with Shoes*), 1862. Part of the “Travels on Paper” exhibit at the Clark Art Museum in Williamstown. The Clark is offering free admission and activities during their First Sundays Free program, starting January 5. Join a gallery talk in the exhibition “Travels on Paper,” make a constellation map and planetary wall hanging in the Family Room, or choose from other interactive exhibits. If the weather allows, borrow a pair of snowshoes and explore Stone Hill, part of the 140-acre grounds at the Museum.

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Bearly Dead*. \$ 7:30 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *John Hodgman and Monte Belmonte's Holiday Spectacular*. With tales from *Hodgman's* new book, *Medallion Status: True Stories from Secret Rooms*, and special musical guest *Erin McKeown*. \$ 8 p.m.

Majestic Saloon, Northampton: *Dump Him, Fine., Nanny, and DJ Lindz*. \$ 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Astrology Rave In Capricorn*. Tarot, palm readings, guest bartender from Murr-ma Distillery. Benefit for Looky Here. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *No Lens*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Ravenwood*. 3 p.m.

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

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Jingle Bell Rocks!*. Cinematic sleigh ride into the universe of alternative and underground Christmas music, featuring *Joseph Simmons, John Waters, Wayne Coyne, Clarence Carter*, and more. *Mitchell Kevin*, the Canadian filmmaker who put together this documentary, will be in attendance for a question & answer session. \$ 7 p.m.

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

theme. \$ 7 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Queer Night: Merry & Gay!* 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Bad Behavior* featuring *DJs Tallgirl, Odiosa, and Kashmere Champagne*. Harsh noise, kumbia mutant, minimal wave. \$ 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Light the Night Chanukah Celebration*. Dance, music, food, candle making and lighting. \$ 4 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Noise Nomads, Feedback Queen, Bridge of Flowers, Cosmic Ray, and KHF*. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Andrea Pensado & Jake Meginsky Duo, Carbus, Elias*. \$ 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Voo Karaoke*. 8 p.m.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Bella's Bartok, The Suitcase Jacket*. \$ 9 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Franklin County Last Night Concert*. First ever “Last Night” celebration, featuring Franklin Countybands: *Tommy Filiault, She Said, Old Flame, The Pistoleros, Sister Jawbone, AfterGlo, Full Spectrum Dominance, The Leafies You Gave Me*. With *Wallace Field* and *Corey Laitman* in the lobby. \$ 5 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Time Travelers' Ball*. Join time travelers from every era imaginable – dance the Caveman Stomp through the Jetsons Strut! Kids' countdown with sparkling cider at 8 p.m. Costume contests. Party goes until 2 a.m. Doors at 7 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Bella's Bartok, Consider the Source*. \$ 9 p.m.

Bishop's Lounge, Northampton: *Home Body, The Medicinal Purpose*. Throwback, vintage, and futuristic attire encouraged. \$ 9 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Badfish, Jimmy Just Quit*. \$ 9 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro, VT: Film screening, *2001: A Space Odyssey*. On New Year's Day, enjoy Stanley Kubrick's epic sci-fi classic on the Sanctuary screen, paired with thematic catering and cocktails. \$ 7 p.m.

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 eroticart2020@gmail.com by January 15 for the February show. A \$10 participation fee is asked at drop off to help with expenses relating to the reception.

Sawmill River Arts Gallery will host another community Small Works Show of original 2- or 3-dimensional art in February, 2020. Non-juried show open to all ages, all mediums. Limited to two pieces per artist, 10” in any direction, including frame (if framed); at least one will be exhibited. Details, application form available at the gallery and online at sawmillriverarts.com. Bring form, \$5 fee per piece, and art work to the gallery between January 12 and 26. Art work must be for sale. Contact Louise Minks, (413) 367-2800, or Louise@LouiseMinks.com.

Looky Here will open an invitation show of Art on January 18. Pieces will be selected from email submissions up until January 4, so send your drawings, paintings, poetry, video, dance, ceramics, sculpture, photo and fiber art for consideration. The opening will feature performances as well as a gallery show. Send photos and questions to lookyheregreenfield@gmail.com.



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THURSDAY 12/19
7:30P **Half Shaved Jazz**

FRIDAY 12/20
6:30P **Uncle Hal's Crabgrass Band**
9:30P **Nate Cozzalino**

SATURDAY 12/21
9:30P **No Lens**

SUNDAY 12/22
3P **Ravenwood**
9P **Karaoke!!**

MONDAY 12/23
8P **Open Mic w/ Heath**

THURSDAY 12/26
8:30P **Andrew DiRuzza Trio**



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AUDITIONS

Pioneer Valley Symphony Youth Orchestra seeks talented instrumentalists in middle and high school. Auditions for all instruments except trumpet and clarinet will be held in Greenfield at Artspace on January 5, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Register online at pvsoc.org/youth-orchestra.

EXHIBITS

Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts Center: *Resident Artist Group Show*, an eclectic holiday sale by studio artists at LCA. Through December.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: Exhibits include *Fafnir Adamites: Interfere (with); Doug Trump: By Rail; Maria Elena Gonzalez: Tree Talk; Gordon Meinhard: The Lives of Tables; and Thelma Appel: Observed/Abstract*. Through February.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *Season of Light*. Member holiday show. Through December.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls:

Junior Duck Stamps: Come see the top entries for the statewide 2019 Junior Duck Stamp competition. Through December 22.

Greenfield Gallery: *Paul Hoffman, Paintings and Illustrations*. Poetic dreamscapes informed by a lifetime of world travel. Through January 18.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Free Library: *[not necessarily] By the Book*: Altered books by *Trish Crapo*. Through December 21.

Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton: *Coalesce (Premier) & Precarious*. Paintings by Alice Thomas. Through December.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Art of the Mon-*

tague Reporter. Exhibit of cartoons and illustrations from our pages. Through December.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Michael Tillyer and the Anchor House Artists*. A curated show of work by artists who have been members of the Anchor House, a studio and workspace for artists who live with mental illness. Also on display, works by the Vermont Glass Guild artisans. Through December 31.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Tiny Treasures* group show. Paintings, ceramics, leather, paper cuts, jewelry, wood and ornaments by member artists. Through January 27.

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VALLEY VIEW from page B1

breeding mates, Cinda and Chub-Chub were from the same bolt of cloth.

It was our first visit to the old haunt, an expansive mix of agricultural and ragweed fields, alder and cattail swamp, and woodlots, bordered on the south by a neighborhood and on the east by a horse farm. We knew how to hunt it, where pheasants most often flushed and where to set up for shooting lanes.

We had been burned there many times when the dog or dogs beat us to a double-rutted farm road lined on the right by alders and raced to the culvert at the end, playing the wind for the entire 80-yard sprint. Often, the dog would detect scent and flush a bird or birds before we were within range. Then the chase was on.

To prevent this, we sent Killer to the end of the alder row before releasing the dogs from the truck. That way, we had it covered.

When Cooker and I reached the farm road, he walked it toward Killer with Cinda, and I took Chub-Chub through the alders to a dense field bordered on the east by woods and swamp Chubby knew well. The distance from the road and alder row, across the overgrown field to the wood line, is about 100 yards, and Chubby and I were hunting it out when I heard a cackle and two shots, then lively conversation. Cinda had chased the rooster down a ditch

and flushed it some 35 yards out in front of my companions and quickly out of range.

Chub-Chub was busy quartering his field, and seemed to pay no attention to the shooting until he had thoroughly covered it. But then he circled back to me and worked the alder row. There he immediately picked up the scent Cinda had already flushed, followed it out, and disappeared into the dense cover on the other side of a small brook and culvert. I thought he was still close to me when I heard two shots, then a shout from Cooker that Chubby was headed my way with a rooster.

No, he hadn't totally ignored those first shots, just put them temporarily on the back burner. He had followed out the trail to Cinda's flush, lost scent, and quickly, unbeknownst to me, gone to my two hunting buddies to the area where the rooster had landed. Soon after reaching Killer and making his presence known, Chub-Chub went to work doing what he did best: finding pheasants. He started hunting, stopped suddenly with his nose high and turned his head toward Killer, ears perked in a familiar pose that called for action.

"Heads up, Cooker. He's on it."

I heard a shot, then Cooker's shout that Chubby was headed my way with the bird.

I found a place to cross the ditch and small brook, entered the field my buddies were hunting and soon saw Chub-Chub coming my way, retrieving the limp bird. He came

straight to me and delivered the bird to hand. I dropped it into my vest's game bag, rejoined my buddies and we walked back to our vehicles.

Chub-Chub had struck again, put on quite a show. He arrived on the scene late, immediately winded scent, flushed the rooster, and retrieved it at least 150 yards to my hand. That dog always knew where I was, even when distracted.

When we got back to my truck and Chubby was secure in his porta-kennel, I pulled the heavy bird from my vest and remarked that it may have been the nicest rooster of the season, with the longest tail feathers.

"Save the tail feathers for me," I said to Killer, who immediately pulled out the three longest ones.

"It's easier to pull them when the bird's still warm," he said. "Do you want more than these?"

"No. That's enough."

So now, there they are, three long tailfeathers extending toward me from my truck's passenger visor, a daily reminder of an extraordinary gun dog that died before his time.

"If I were you, I'd put a rubber band around those feathers and save them somewhere in memory of Chub-Chub," said Killer when told of the poignant tickle.

Well, maybe someday. Not yet, though. For now, I think I'll leave them right where they are.

I still cherish memories of Chub-Chub, difficult as they are.



2019 Holiday Bread Schedule

From the staff of life at Red Fire North, (Annie, Carly, Caroline, Hannah, Jean, Noah, Paul, Ruth, & Watson)
A joyous holiday and peaceful New Year

12/19: Panettone

An Italian favorite, buttery and rich and full of nuts and fruit...

12/20: "To a Young Wretch" Apple Cheddar Bread

After you set up your holiday tree, Brew some tea, Toast this delightful bread, spread a thin layer of honey on it and read the poem of the same name by Robert Frost. I guarantee that you never had a better tree!

12/21: Pagan Bread for the Winter Solstice

A bread that gives thanks for another year of wheat and sustenance, and celebrates the fertility of the year to come...

12/22: Stollen

A traditional German gift bread, tasty and full of almonds!

12/23: Festive Chanukah Challah

Traditional Jewish bread studded with raisins.

12/24: Cranberry Twist

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