

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 9

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 2, 2020

Administering To the Future: Our Chief Executives Look Ahead at 2020

By JEFF SINGLETON

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The classic New Year’s article in your local newspaper reviews the most important news events of the previous year. But since the *Montague Reporter* takes a short break during the early winter holidays, this issue comes out on January 2, when our readers may be hoping to look forward, not backward.

So we have decided to ask the town administrators of our coverage area – Montague, Erving, Wendell, Gill, and Leverett – to predict what they think will be the biggest news stories of 2020.

This was, of course, a somewhat unfair question to ask, since the “biggest news stories” often achieve that status by the very fact that they were not predicted. Additionally, town administrators seem to be hesitant to predict bad news. But we plowed ahead, asking our local officials to look into their small town crystal balls.

Erving: A New Library!

Erving town administrator Bryan Smith’s immediate response to our question was to point to the “grand opening” of the town’s new library on March 29.

“The new library is the result of nearly a decade of planning, advocacy, and fundraising,” he said. “The dedicated work of Barbara Friedman, Library Director, the Board of Library Trustees, the Library Feasibility Committee, the Library Building Committee, the Friends of Erving Public Library, and many staff and community members made this project a reality.”

Smith also pointed to potential progress on other local projects which are in various stages of development. He said the town hopes to procure a developer for a senior housing project, to be located on Care Drive next to the new library and the senior/community center.

Erving also hopes to complete a hazardous materials remediation project at the former International Paper mill in Millers Falls, a site planned to house light industry and “mixed use” in the future. Other projects that will continue into 2020 include a master planning project

see **AHEAD** page A7

SHORT DAYS, LONG SHADOWS



Happy new year! Christine Trincherro took this photograph last week at the corner of Old Sunderland and Taylor Hill roads in Montague Center. “Even though the shadows are long,” she writes, “the brilliant sunshine inspires me to think of spring.”

CHRISTINA TRINCHEIRO PHOTO

PLAYGROUND STUDIES

A Contemporary Park For Children

By PETE WACKERNAGEL

LAKE PLEASANT – In recent memory, Lake Pleasant has had fewer town projects than the town’s other villages. “People in Lake Pleasant have always felt like we’re the red-headed step child of Montague,” says resident Deborah Frenkel.

This is one reason why the town selected Rutters Park for redesign three years ago.

This fall, the new Rutters Park opened in Lake Pleasant. The playground was the result of years of collaborative envisioning, planning, and design between the Town, a design committee made up of Lake Pleasant residents, and Anja Duffy, landscape architect at engineering firm GZA Geoenvironmental.

According to Duffy, Rutters Park was conceived of as “a park in which the residents of the Lake Pleasant community can allow their children to freely play, and to gather in as a community.”

The Reign of Children

Playgrounds, and the idea that



The grass is still growing, but the new playground is open!

PHOTO COURTESY GZA

children require specialized spaces, are modern phenomena. According to Professor Carla Pascoe of the University of Melbourne, children were historically not thought of as a group distinct from adults – children carried adult responsibilities, like work and marriage, because people saw them as miniature grown-ups. During this period before playgrounds, children appropriated spaces like streets and side-

walks as informal zones for play.

Over several centuries, Enlightenment thought led to the idea of childhood as a state of vulnerability, dependence, and innocence, intellectually climaxing in Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi’s assertion that children have unique abilities and needs.

Playgrounds emerged in the 19th century as a result of concern with

see **PLAYGROUND** page A5

Warming Up to Yoga At Fire + Embers Studio

By SARAH LANZILLOTTA

TURNERS FALLS – Fire and Embers Yoga Studio, located at 141 Second Street in downtown Turners Falls, celebrated its opening day last Saturday with a 10 a.m. Bikram class packed to the brim with seasoned practitioners and beginners alike.

I attended the inaugural class at the invitation of my friend Hannah Brookman, who knows that I am a heated yoga enthusiast – especial-

ly during this time of year! – and asked me if I would write an article for the *Reporter*.

I was excited to learn that there was a new heated studio so close by to where I live in Greenfield, and to get to know the person behind it, owner and instructor Mishel Ixchel. (Editors’ note: Ixchel also writes a column for this paper, *Life + Times of an Indie Mama*.)

Mishel was introduced to Bikram-style yoga in 2006, soon after she graduated college. “I was immediately hooked, and within the month signed up for teacher training, mostly because there were Bikram studios all over the world, and my certification would allow me to teach and practice just about anywhere,” says Mishel.

see **WARMING** page A4

New Hampshire Developer Closes Southworth Deal For \$679,087.24

By JEFF SINGLETON

TURNERS FALLS – The building known locally as “Southworth,” a large 19th-century Turners Falls paper mill on the Connecticut River that closed abruptly in the summer of 2017, has a new owner. New Hampshire developer Tom Cusano officially closed on the property two days after Christmas, according to documents at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds.

Reached by telephone, Cusano said that the building was still being called Southworth, despite the fact that the company with that name is virtually defunct. “That’s what we’re going to call it until we find a tenant,” he told the *Reporter*.

According to registry documents, Cusano signed a deed for \$679,087.24 reflecting a transfer of the property from Southworth, whose application for Chapter 11 bankruptcy was rejected by a federal court in 2018, to Cusano’s company, Milton Hilton LLC. Cusano also signed a mortgage on the property for \$750,000 from Investment Capital Commercial Mortgage, LLC, a firm based in Cape Cod that specializes in commercial loans.

The Southworth deed had liens for back property taxes, sewer assessments, and payments owed to

see **DEAL** page A8

GILL SELECTBOARD

Gill Assesses Its Options in The Face of Recycling Hike

By GEORGE BRACE

At its December 23 meeting, the Gill selectboard continued deliberating on responses to a hike in disposal fees for recyclables coming up in July. The board also started looking into a potential date for a special town meeting in January, and heard updates on equipment for the fire department.

Town administrator Ray Purington updated the board on a “huge change” in the cost of disposing of recyclables at the Massachusetts Recycling Facility (MRF) in Springfield, set to take effect on July 1. There is currently no fee for the disposal of recyclables, and the town receives a credit of \$6 per ton for such materials.

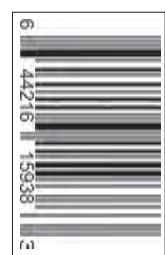
Purington said that the proposed contract with the MRF for the period beginning on July 1 includes a charge of \$93.50 per ton for recyclables. The new fee would be offset by an increased credit based on the average market value of the recyclables. He gave the example of “blended materials,” such as paper and steel, currently being valued at \$24 or \$25 per ton, but added that glass was to receive a negative credit.

The new fee could be further offset by using MassDEP Recycling Dividends Program (RDP) money. Purington reported that Gill received \$4,200 through the RDP in 2019, but has traditionally set some of that money aside for future contingencies. He said the DEP, which has encouraged towns to save the

see **GILL** page A6



Owner Mishel Ixchel, in the entryway to the new Second Street studio.



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The Montague Reporter

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Endless Presence

The United States currently keeps military bases in over 70 of the planet's 195 formally sovereign nation-states, and military personnel ("consultants," for example) are stationed in about 70 more.

President Trump's primary foreign-policy instinct seems to be to bellyache that all these other countries aren't paying us sufficient fees for the service. Readers might be frustrated that this ignores the history behind various entanglements – many *do* safeguard flows of treasure to the system's core, if indirectly – or view it merely as a premise for shakedowns. But setting all that aside, it's a funny and somewhat novel approach: isolationism updated to the 21st century, treating geopolitics as a set of transactions among equals, framing the US Armed Services as simply a kind of public-sector Blackwater.

Of course, the president is encircled in his cabinet by genuine hawks of various persuasions. But the resulting policy incoherence has some interesting effects – it might even open the door to peace on the Korean peninsula, for example.

Iran, though, is still a consensus enemy. This calls into question the theory held by some liberals that Trump is a Trojan horse for Russian state interests. His surrender of the Syrian peace process to Turkey, his coziness with the House of Saud, and his steadfast support of a worsening status quo in Israel and its holdings are all consistent with a central anti-Iranian animus.

Which makes what happened this week in Iraq so momentous. Perhaps hoping to cash in on three

months of popular protest against Iran's increasing dominance of the country, the US carried out a series of airstrikes against the Iranian-backed Kataib Hezbollah militia. But this was met with a backlash, as Iraqi police allowed demonstrators to swarm into the Green Zone and besiege the American embassy.

Officially, the American occupation of Iraq has ended. The "war" took four years, the "withdrawal" another four, and eight years later, about 5,200 US troops remain, supplemented by thousands of retired US troops on private payrolls. One to two million Iraqi deaths have been attributed to the conflict.

Anyone running for office in the US is expected to condemn the invasion as a mistake, but what this means is unclear: opposition leader Nancy Pelosi recently said she did not think lying to the public about weapons of mass destruction was an impeachable offense, though ironically, Trump himself argued that Pelosi should have impeached Bush in an 2008 interview.

The attack on our \$750 million embassy in Baghdad puts Trump in an odd position. His transactional worldview should seek him to demand rent of Iraqis for the ongoing costs of US security presence in the country. But it's hard to save face while retreating after an attack, and many of his core supporters have enshrined the 2012 siege of our embassy in Libya a canonical fable of liberal fecklessness.

So: 750 more Americans are being deployed to Iraq. What's the plan? We should be asking every presidential candidate that question.



Bryan Call has purchased Crestview Liquors in Turners Falls from his father, Greg, who bought the business in 1982. A photo from that year hangs in the store showing an 8-year-old Bryan at the register making his first "sale."

Letters to the Editors

Open Letter to Rep. Whipps and Sen. Comerford From Twenty-One Citizens of Wendell

Dear Representative Whipps and Senator Comerford:

The Wendell Selectboard sent an open letter to you that appeared in the December 19, 2019 *Montague Reporter* expressing the Selectboard's opposition to House Bill 897, "An Act relative to forest protection" (malegislature.gov/Bills/191/H.897).

The Selectboard did not hold a community discussion or community vote on H.897 before sending its letter, so there is no way of knowing whether it expresses the majority view in town.

It has been suggested that those of us with differing opinions about H.897 should be seeking a compromise. Under normal circumstances, compromise would be the preferred option, but climate change is creating a new normal, and climate change is not compromising with any of us.

In November 2019, another open letter was signed by 11,258 climate scientists from around the world declaring a "climate emergency" and warning of "untold suffering." "We need to quickly curtail habitat and biodiversity loss, protecting the remaining primary and intact forests," the scientists declared. Harvard University Research Professor Emeritus, Dr. Edward O. Wilson, as well as the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), etc. also tell us that protecting remaining forests is crucial if we are to avoid the more drastic effects of climate change.

"Many decades of research have convinced me and many other conservation scientists that we must save at least half of the Earth from industrial exploitation if we hope to avoid catastrophic plant and animal extinctions," Professor Wilson writes. H.897 "...would make us the first state to give this protection to all of its public lands. I strongly support this bill..."

We are urging our Selectboard members to familiarize themselves with the warnings of Professor Wilson, the IPCC, et. al., as well as the contents of H.897, and reconsider their opposition to the bill, since their letter contains several inaccuracies. Here is a point by point correction of their misperceptions:

1) The Selectboard writes that H.897 is "... designed to eliminate logging and forest management on state owned Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) land."

The truth is that H.897 would ban commercial logging on state-owned land, but it is not "designed to eliminate... forest management." H.897 allows for forest management on public lands for public health and safety,

invasive species, fire hazards, specialized habitats and other concerns if scientifically proven to be necessary.

2) The Selectboard writes that "...a carefully considered, well thought-out forestry management plan is a far better approach to protect the health of our forest lands now and for generations to come."

The truth is that a legal mandate to make wood production a top priority was passed in 1943, 70+ years before the climate crisis became widespread public knowledge. The law has not been updated to account for climate change, biodiversity, or the increasing need for green space. DCR's current forest management is based on this outdated mandate. Passing H.897 would result in a forestry management plan which integrates the latest climate science.

3) The Selectboard writes that Wendell residents had our opportunity to discuss H.897 at a hearing, held over a year ago, to discuss the Department of Conservation and Recreation's then-proposed logging in Wendell State Forest: "During this meeting, residents were able to make comments and ask questions of the DCR representatives..."

The truth is that the October 17, 2018 hearing to which the Selectboard refers predated the January 18, 2019 filing of H.897 by three months. A review of the video and transcript of that hearing reveals that there was no reference to H.897 at that hearing.

4) The Selectboard writes that as a result of the October 2018 hearing the Selectboard members were "satisfied with the responses from DCR and with their approach to forest management."

The truth is that the public at the October 2018 hearing was far from satisfied with DCR's responses and approach to forest management. Over 50 members of the public attended the hearing, and every member of the public who spoke opposed the DCR cut in our State Forest. Yet the Selectboard bases its opposition to H.897 on that hearing, where the bill was not discussed.

This difference of opinions between our Selectboard and many members of the Wendell community raises the issues of: whether the Selectboard ought to seek and represent the majority opinion of the town when it issues position statements to politicians and/or the press; and, whether Selectboard members should have expressed their opposition individually rather than by publishing an open letter from the town's most powerful board.

5) The Selectboard writes: "Although some in see **LETTER** next page



Open Letter From One Leverett Resident

Most *Reporter* readers may be uncomfortably familiar with the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels telling us we have about *one decade* to drastically reduce CO₂ emissions and to greatly increase carbon capture.

Apparently the Wendell Selectboard missed the memo. Instead, they seem to be relying on junk science from who knows where and the words of the now disgraced Leo Roy, former chair of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation.

Most every week we read new studies and reports of the critical need to protect and preserve existing forests (proforestation) and to plant trees in formerly disturbed lands (re-forestation) to help in the struggle to confront the Climate Crisis.

I don't know if anybody on the Selectboard has children or grandchildren, but if so, they might want to reconsider their opposition to H.897 *An Act Relative to Forest Protection*. Future generations will judge us harshly as to where we were when climate chaos was upon us.

Don Ogden
North Leverett

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PHONE: (413) 863-8666

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LOCAL BRIEFS

LARKIN+ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

Compiled by NINA ROSSI

Hello, and Happy New Year everyone! We extend heartfelt thanks to Chris Pellerin, who did such a terrific job this past year pulling together notes for our **Local Briefs**. For now, I'm taking a swing at this column while we look for another volunteer to compile these resources once a week.

Could this be you? Are you a bit of a busy-body who likes knowing what's happening? Would helping connect people with what's going on in their community be of interest to you? Give us a call (413) 863-8666, or email editor@montaguereporter.org.

Congratulations to Janet Andrews of Greenfield and Matt Atwood of Lake Pleasant for winning this year's downtown Turners Falls **Open Door Promo!**

RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto gave each winner \$150 of gift certificates for goods and ser-

vices at 26 participating businesses after the drawing on Saturday, December 21.

A **Winter Farmers' Market** will be held in Greenfield this Saturday, January 4.

The market takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Discovery School at Four Corners, 21 Ferrante Avenue. You'll find a wide variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and mushrooms, frozen local meat, maple syrup, jams, preserves along with other locally produced food, clothing, and other wares.

The next winter markets will be held February 1 and March 7.

Dawn Dorsey is **bringing the YMCA to Greenfield Savings Bank's** community room this Saturday, January 4. She'll be on hand to present all of the beneficial programs the Y has to offer, and to explain how economical individual and family memberships can be.

Did you know the Y offers child-

care and before and after school drop-offs in a safe environment? Come and ask questions, pick up some information, and enjoy light refreshments courtesy of the bank, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Living with a chronic health condition, or offering support to someone else who is? Learn how to actively manage your health, or help a loved one to do so, during a series of **Healthy Living Program** workshops sponsored by LifePath. Andi Waisman of LifePath will be at the Greenfield Public Library on Monday, January 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to offer information and answer questions about the program.

Workshops are free of charge and take place throughout the year at convenient locations in Franklin County and the North Quabbin region. Caregivers and their loved ones are welcome to attend, and this program is free and open to the public.

Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center invites folks to kick off 2020 with an afternoon of fresh air, exercise, and camaraderie at the center this Saturday, January 4 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Explore the mountain's scenic trails with brief stops along the way to showcase seasonal highlights such as frozen streams and rocky ledges. After warming up on hilly terrain, toast 2020 with hot drinks by the pellet stove. Wear warm, waterproof footwear and dress in layers that can easily be removed. Footwear will be dependent on snow and trail conditions, and snowshoes or micro-spikes (available to borrow) may be required. Plan for a hike of between 2 and 4 miles, with an elevation gain of approximately 400 feet.

This free event is primarily for adults, but children ages 12 and older are welcome. Pre-registration is required by calling (800) 859-2960. Snowshoe rentals are available for \$16 per person.

The monthly **Soup & Games Night** at Greenfield's Hope and Olive restaurant takes place from 5 to 7 p.m. next Monday, January 6. Enjoy a free buffet of soups and breads, grab a drink from the bar if you wish, and sit down with friends to play games or chat.

All proceeds from this month's event benefit LiveSTRONG, a program for cancer survivors at the YMCA.

On Wednesday, January 8 from 7 until 8 p.m., enjoy an evening focused on the intriguing and bizarre-looking **sea lamprey** at the Millers River Environmental Center with Kim Noyes of the Northfield Mountain Recreation and Environmental Center.

With a life history that includes years in our freshwater rivers and epic migrations to and from the sea, lamprey are one of the most unusual residents of the Millers River. Friend or foe depending on where you live, lamprey provide amazing ecological benefits to New England freshwater streams.

This free program is co-sponsored with the Athol Bird and Nature Club and takes place at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. No registration is required.

Learn about insects that can take the cold during the **Winter Bugs** program at this Saturday's **Kidleidoscope Story Hour** at the Great

Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls. The free program includes a story, activities, and a craft to introduce young children to wildlife along the river. For ages 3 to 6, accompanied by an adult. Siblings and friends are welcome.

On view starting this Sunday, January 5 in the Great Hall at the Great Falls Discovery Center will be an exhibit called **You Are Here** featuring work by regional artists in multiple media exploring maps, the significance of place, and movement across boundaries. The exhibit is curated by Exploded View – of which I am a member – and explores questions of place such as Where do you live? Where are you from? Where do you dream? How do you find your way?

An **opening reception** from 1 to 3 pm. on Sunday, January 12 will provide the opportunity to meet artists in the exhibit and will feature a short performance by Exploded View.

During the next two months, you may also come upon members of our group working in various corners of the building, and enjoy various programs planned in conjunction with the theme of maps and locations. The program is supported in part by a grant from the Montague Cultural Council and RiverCulture.

Winter hours at the Center are Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Join a **discussion on the topic of homelessness** at the First Congregational Church, 43 Silver Street in Greenfield on Saturday, January 4 at 10:15 a.m. Sponsored by Racial Justice Rising, the featured speaker will be Tanisha Arena, MS, the executive director of Arise for Social Justice in Springfield, along with members of both organizations and people who have experienced homelessness.

Says Arena, "I am a part of the community I serve, and I bring my whole self to this work, each layer of my identity contributing to cultivating relationships and building bridges in the community. I believe in connections, in the power of community and in speaking your truth. Authenticity will never go out of style." The program is free. For childcare, please contact email@racialjusticerising.org

The **Artspace Community Arts Center** is gearing up for the new year with lots of new classes in art and music. Located right at the bottom of Bank Row in Greenfield, the space is convenient and the programs are affordable. Artspace has provided area artists and musicians a space to create, teach, and collaborate since 1973.

They offer group art classes and music lessons, as well as private music lessons on strings, brass, woodwinds, guitar, piano, and voice. Enrollment is open and ongoing.

Winter 2020 courses begin the week of January 6, and generally run for eight weeks. Highlights from the new schedule include ukulele lessons, *papier-mâché* and mask making, handbuilding with clay, painting and calligraphy in the Chinese method, puppets and creatures for kids, and much more.

Noontime open jam sessions on Fridays continue with instructor Kevin Dee. Bring your favorite instrument and sit in at these lunchtime sessions; all ages and abilities are welcome.

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Related Arts
Kailey Steiner

LETTER from page A2

Wendell do advocate for the cessation of logging on public lands, we've heard from many other Wendell residents who disagree with this approach..."

Knowing there were differing views on this issue among Wendell citizenry, the Selectboard might have called for a community discussion and vote on H.897.

6) The Selectboard writes: "It is unanimously agreed among Select board members that the prohibition of logging on public lands is not a reasonable step and not necessarily the most beneficial approach to our forests."

The truth is that the world's most highly respected climate scientists, including the IPCC, advise protecting intact forests and that our forests would benefit from H.897's inclusion of the highest standards of sustainable forestry and native biodiversity protection.

7) The Selectboard writes: "We feel that careful forest management, much along the lines of the DCR approach, may very well produce the results most favorable for carbon sequestration and the long-term health of forest ecology..."

The truth is that DCR differs with our Selectboard's opinion about carbon sequestration. At the DCR Forest Stewardship Meeting on October 12, 2018, DCR State Public Lands / Management Forestry Program Director William Hill said, "Leaving a forest uncut sequesters more carbon. We accept that." If DCR were serious about carbon sequestration, they would not be carrying out plans to harvest relatively mature trees in 30 state forests just as they are reaching their full carbon-sequestration potential, which peaks at about 170 years on average and can then persist for decades, if not centuries.

Climate scientists also advise planting trees, but stress that it will take at least 100 years for young trees to approach the carbon-sequestration potential of the more

mature trees we already have. With climate change upon us now, that is 100 years we can't afford to wait.

And, regarding forests' long-term health, DCR's approach fails to acknowledge scientific studies that have found the genetic diversity of tree species in forests to be greatly reduced by logging, thus decreasing these species' long-term ability to adapt to climactic changes.

8) The Selectboard writes: "...any possible benefits from the logging restrictions in the bill are outweighed by the detriments and potential risks, including the risk of fire."

The Selectboard's concern about fire is shared by us all, but H.897 allows for forest management on public lands for public health and safety, invasive species, *fire hazards*, specialized habitats, and other concerns when scientifically proven to be necessary.

We have asked to be placed on the agenda for the Selectboard's next meeting on Wednesday, January 8 to discuss House Bill 897 and the Selectboard's letter.

Thank you for recognizing the need for legislation that addresses the climate emergency.

- Charles Cooper
- Shay Cooper
- Laurel Facey
- Anna Gyorgy
- Lisa Hoag
- Gloria Kegeles
- Seal LaMadeleine
- Heather Lenz
- Mary Vaughn McBride
- Morgan Mead
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WARMING from page A1

Bikram is a system developed in the 1970s by a teacher named Bikram Choudhury. It consists of a precise series of 26 poses practiced over a 90-minute period in a heated room, in front of a mirror.

The Fire and Embers studio aims for 105 degrees Fahrenheit at 40% humidity. The studio's website describes the hot yoga practice as integrating "functional elements of breath, stability, and mobility to optimize each individual's potential for physical, mental, and emotional well-being."

Mishel has indeed spent the last decade exploring hot rooms around the world, a journey that has provided her with valuable research she's using to build her own studio. Mishel says that when life brought her to Turners Falls a few years ago, she felt the need for a local hot room, and knew there must be others who felt the same way.

"The practice became an integral part of my well-being, and not having anything out here started taking its toll," she explains. "I missed my practice, and pulled together every possible resource to launch this school." With lots of support from friends and family, and guidance from her friend Roody Senecal, the owner of Yoga Tribe Brooklyn in New York, Mishel has spent the better part of a year tirelessly working on this project.

The construction of her space has been a roller coaster and a transformative experience, says Mishel. "I've learned to trust in ways I never have," she comments. Finishing touches are still being put on the space - including getting the heat high enough for Mishel's standards - but she says it feels like an amazing accomplishment to open the doors on schedule.

Taking Mishel's class was a lot

of fun. She's an energetic, confident, and attentive teacher who exudes optimism and doesn't take herself too seriously. Her directions were clear and measured, and she held a focused energy in the room that made me feel comfortable trying unfamiliar poses in front of strangers, and in front of the studio's mirrored wall which is used as part of the Bikram teaching method.

Mishel's easy command of the room, recognition and love for the friends who showed up to support her, and strong belief in sharing the benefits of this practice made me feel safe and welcomed as a beginner. In the days following my visit to the studio I could already feel the benefits of the practice, including strength in my back and a deeper awareness of my posture.

When I ask Mishel what impact she hopes her studio will have in Turners Falls, she says that in addition to the studio serving as a place for people in the community to learn therapeutic tools for self healing, she believes in giving back to the town and its ecosystems through her business's financial structure.

"I am a believer in triple-bottom businesses," she explains. "What this means is that part of our profits will go back into the community. Each year we will choose a different non-profit to donate to.

"This year, we're going to donate a percentage of our profits to the Connecticut River Conservancy. They do many things that benefit the river, and in particular, our proceeds will help fund the legal battle that the conservancy is waging against the Canadian company responsible for managing the dam in Turners Falls - mainly, to hold them accountable for its proper maintenance."

CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT

K. of C. Sponsor Youth Free Throw Championship

TURNERS FALLS - All boys and girls ages 9 to 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition for the 2020 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship. The local competition will be held Saturday, January 11, at 2 p.m. at the Sheffield School Gym, Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls with on-site registration beginning at 1 p.m.

The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championships is sponsored annually, with the winners progressing through local, district, and state competitions. International champions are announced by the K of C international headquarters based on scores from the state-level competitions.

All boys and girls from 9 to 14 years of age are eligible to participate and will compete in their re-

spective age and gender divisions.

All contestants on the local level are recognized for their participation in the event. All participants must furnish proof of age and written parental consent.

For entry forms, or for additional information, contact Joseph Vias at (413) 768-4978 or council737gk@gmail.com.

The Knights of Columbus is an international Catholic family fraternal service organization with over 1.8 million members in 15,000 local councils. Last year, Knights donated over \$185.7 million dollars and 76.7 million volunteer hours to local, national, and international charitable and benevolent causes. Sponsoring projects to benefit their church, councils, communities, culture of life, families, and youth.

Mishel tells me she felt an immediate connection to the land in Turners. "I felt deep heartbreak when I first arrived, and when I learned of the history of this town, I immediately understood why," she says. She sees herself as one of many people invested in working together in Turners to bring positive change and transformation.

I ask what is next for her studio, and she says that one thing we can look forward to is a beautiful garden outside her building, built in collaboration with her friend Shawn, whose green thumb is responsible for the gardens at the Great Falls Discovery Center.

As we head into the months of winter, Mishel hopes more people are drawn to a yoga practice that incorporates the warmth of both heat and community. "Since the onset of this project, I've met many people who also love this practice, and since we've opened our doors, we have new people coming through every day," she says. "It's great to know I'm not the only one devoted to a hot yoga practice."

To find out about classes and other events at the Fire and Embers Yoga studio, visit online at fireandembers.com, or email hello@fireandembers.com.

High School Sports Update: Worth Two Thousand Words



At left: Turners' Chase Novak flies to the hoop past Franklin County Tech defenders Ryan Bergmann and Garret Cole as the Thunder roared to an 81-49 win over the Eagles on December 19. At right: Turners' Dabney Rollins drives past Lee defender Emma Puleri as Blue hosted the Lee Wildcats on December 18. Our regular local high school sports coverage, interrupted by the holidays, will return in next week's edition. Look for us on newsstands!

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PLAYGROUND from page A1
the perceived dangers of the industrial city, and through the writings of Friedrich Froebel, founder of the Kindergarten movement, and John Dewey, who theorized that play was essential for child development. Many of the first playgrounds were built in Germany, as a strategy to increase the physical fitness and health of young Germans.

Critics of playground design, like Pascoe, accuse them of being laboratories for Progressive ideas of social engineering. They are didactic places that are supervised by adults and aim to produce a certain kind of child. These playgrounds embody ideas that equate health and organized play with moral goodness, nationalism, and democracy. They kept kids off the streets, and were seen as places that would counter juvenile delinquency. In cities with large immigrant populations, playgrounds were also seen as places where the younger generation would be Americanized.

Playground design changed after World War II, as the regimented, limited play of older playgrounds began to be interpreted negatively. "Adventure playgrounds" eliminated traditional swing-sets and slides in favor of manipulable objects. In these playgrounds, the major activity was building, and children were empowered as creators.

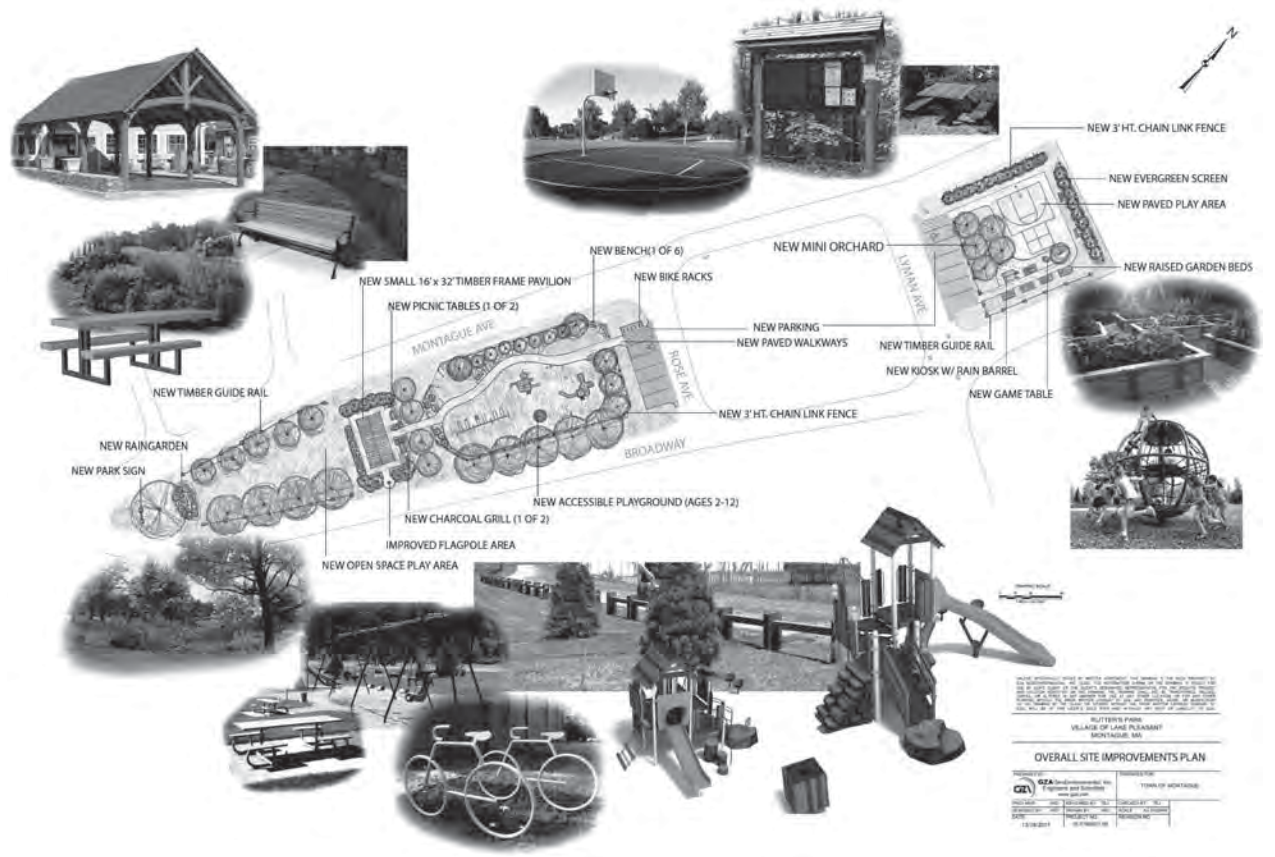
While ideas of the function of

playgrounds has changed over time, certain core ideas persist. Playgrounds are still domains of children, territories where the society of children reigns, and where kids learn to be a part of this society. "Kids are learning how to be around each other. They're learning how to share," explains Rutters Park designer Duffy.

Playground-making today is not often undertaken by children, as it was during the "adventure park" era of the 1970s. Standards are maintained by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM). To prevent children's arms or hands from getting stuck, ASTM standards require that playground equipment should have no openings wider than three inches. To eliminate the possibility that clothing or straps might get snagged, the standards state that equipment should have no protrusions.

ASTM also lists playground surfaces that will not cause concussions, a material property referred to as "impact attenuation." These include engineered wood fiber and loose fill rubber. Rutters Park is surfaced in wood fiber, and bounded by a three-foot rubber walking track.

"Rutters has 14 inches of engineered wood fiber," says Duffy. "The wood chips are rounded and weathered, it doesn't splinter. It does biodegrade so it needs to be replenished. The surface needs to



GZA's overall improvement plan for Rutters Park included a timber-frame pavilion, grill, open space play area, and bike racks.

attenuate the head hitting it."

But the idea that children should have input into the design process continues. "On site visits, I try to find a kid and say, 'Hey, what do you want?'" says Duffy. "They have to like and enjoy it in order to respect and maintain it."

Parks These Days

As any design is influenced by the culture of its day, new parks are a reflection of today's issues, concerns, and ideas. Rutters Park can be understood as a contemporary public park in its focus on stormwater management, its planting plan, and the simple, biomorphic form of its play area.

Further, it is contemporary in its intent. Jon Dobosz, director of Montague's parks and recreation department, explains that he wanted something "more 21st century instead of 20th century."

Rutters Park manages stormwater onsite. Instead of directing water into a storm sewer, as engineered water-management solutions do, the park collects rainwater and allows it

to infiltrate into the soil. "Stormwater runs off pavements to grassed swales or plant beds where it can infiltrate," explains Duffy. "The entire playground area has an underdrain system under its wood chip surfacing that collects stormwater and feeds it to an underground stone leaching basin."

This strategy for managing stormwater contributes to cleaner Montague waters. According to the EPA, non-point source pollution – mainly runoff from agricultural fields and impermeable surfaces such as roads and parking lots – is the leading cause of polluted waters in most states. Rain gardens capture pollutant-laden stormwater and direct it into the soil, where microbes are able to break down the pollutants.

The planting design at Rutters Park is in a contemporary mode. Hallmarks of this style include complexity, native plants, tight spacing, and the use of certain ornamental grasses. The planting design is structured in layers, with plants that occupy the canopy,

shrub, and ground layers.

Trees include American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) and serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), and inkberry (*Ilex glabra*), hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*), juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*), and ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) make up the shrub layer. The ground layer is made up of ornamental grasses and perennials.

The grasses include dwarf maiden grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*), dwarf fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*), and Lilyturf (*Liriope spicata*). Perennials include butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*), purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), daylily (*Hemerocallis*), and sedums.

The dense planting creates a barrier between the road and the park. "I selected plants that can easily spread thus taking up the large plant beds, creating a dense buffer of planting between active play areas and road," says Duffy.

Good design amplifies a site's sense of place by making perceptible the characteristics that define it. Rutters Park aims to do this in Lake Pleasant, as, explains Duffy, "inspiration was taken from the surrounding environs – wooded, natural, small; a close, neighborly scale."

Good design also creates meaning for the community by involving local residents in the envisioning process. "It was the most community involvement I've seen," says Duffy.

The public process that resulted in the design for Rutters Park created much goodwill in the village. "To get something like this in the village is great for us," says Frenkel. "We're all feeling super grateful – people are just over the moon."

Next summer, residents of Lake Pleasant will be able to enjoy the first season of the new and long-awaited Rutters Park – while they continue to wait for Phase II of the project, in which the basketball court a block away will be redesigned.



Simpler times: the Rutters Park playground, before the makeover.

Montague Cultural Council Announces 2020 Grants

MONTAGUE – The Montague Cultural Council (MCC) announces the award of 19 grants totaling \$6,290 for cultural programs in Montague. The MCC is part of a network of 329 local cultural councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation.

The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community. Grant amounts awarded this year ranged from \$150 to \$500.

Grant applicants are encouraged to provide programming which reaches varied audiences and are hosted in accessible locations. Awards are given to those projects

which can demonstrate strong public benefit. This year's grantees include instrumental concerts, visual arts exhibitions, theatrical productions, discussion series, and poetry workshops. We hope that Montague residents will partake in this wide variety of cultural opportunities throughout the year and that the events will draw visitors as well.

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of municipally appointed volunteers. The members of the Montague Cultural Council are: Kate Martineau, chair; Rachel Teumim, vice chair; Daniel Brandon; John Furbish; Anne Harding; Betty Tegel; and Kathy Lynch. We are always looking for new members. Please feel free to contact us if

you are interested!

The MCC will seek applications again in the fall, deadline around October 15. Guidelines and complete information are available online at www.mass-culture.org. Additional questions can be directed to montaguelcc@gmail.com.

Grants have been awarded to:

Spring: Slate Roof Press's "Poetry in our Schools" program at the Tech School; the Great Falls Apple Corps' food forest planting party; a Franklin County Musicians Coop concert at the Great Falls Discovery Center; the New England Banjo Festival, happening in Turners Falls in April; Nolembeka Project's Day of Remembrance in May; and the Montague May Day Fine Art Exhibit.

Summer: The Millers Falls Art

Happening, in June; a virtual reality and robotics workshop at the Millers Falls Library; a concert in Montague Center by the Sugarloaf String Band; Gretchen Krull's Voices Carry at the Shea; Real Live Theater's production of The Moors; Barbes in the Woods' return to Montague Center; and Bim Bam Music at Northfield Mountain during the summer playgroup.

Fall: Mary Jo Maichack's Cabaret Show at the Gill-Montague Senior Center, the Migrations Festival.

Ongoing or date TBA: A program on owls at the Great Falls Discovery Center; Musica Franklin Community Nights; Racial Justice Rising's monthly series; and Great Falls Books Through Bars' documentary and discussion evenings.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Start the Year Off Right: Dispose of Your Christmas Tree

"Start the new year off right by promptly disposing of your Christmas tree," says state fire marshal Peter J. Ostroskey. "A dried-out Christmas tree will ignite quickly and spread a fire very fast... Trees should be taken down promptly, and disposed of properly. Even a well-watered tree quickly dries out and becomes a danger."

Take advantage of community pickup days or recycling programs, many of which start this week. To find out if your community has a Christmas tree recycling program, contact your local public works department or recycling committee.

The state Department of Environmental Protection has information on tree recycling at www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/02/05/xmastree-recycling.pdf. Some local goat farms accept bare tree and wreath donations, as goats are looking for green things to eat.

On December 18, 2018 at 2 a.m., the Revere Fire Department responded to a Christmas tree fire in a two-family home. The fire started in a first floor living room. Alarms alerted the occupants, and no one was injured at this fire. The building did not have sprinklers,

however, and damages from the fire were estimated to be \$155,000.

Over the past few years, there have been several fires involving dry Christmas trees. Ostroskey advises: "Keep the tree watered and away from all heat sources. After Christmas, dispose of your tree promptly. If a fire should start for any reason, a tree will help spread the fire extremely rapidly."

Ostroskey says that disposing of trees by using gasoline or other fuels to ignite them can lead to serious burns, and a potentially damaging fire. Open burning season does not start until January 15, and the use of gasoline is prohibited.

On December 27, 2018 at 5:43 p.m., the Blandford Fire Department responded to an outside Christmas tree fire. The homeowner was trying to get rid of the tree by burning it with gasoline. When he tried to ignite the tree, the gasoline fumes blew back at him, causing first- and second-degree burns to his face.

For more information on fire safety, contact your local fire department, or the Office of the State Fire Marshal at 1-877-9 NO FIRE or online at www.mass.gov/dfs.

Sawmill River 10K Run Results

MONTAGUE CENTER – One hundred and forty-seven runners crossed the finish line at the Annual Sawmill River 10K Run in Montague Center on New Year's Day.

Meghan Davis of Plainfield, MA and Wouter Hoogkamer of Pelham were the overall female and male winners. Davis finished with a final time of 39:54:46, with Hoogkamer bringing in a time of 34:12:43.

The winners per division are as follows:

Youth Division (ages 17 and under): Male, Will Draxler of Heath (37:27:25). There were no Youth Female entries.

Open Division (ages 18 to 39): Female, Davis; Male, Hoogkamer.

Master Division (ages 40 to 49): Female, Laure Raffensperger of Greenfield (44:01:31); Male, Daniel Grip of Millers Falls (35:39:52).

Senior Division (ages 50 to 59): Female, Vikki Lenhart of Amherst (44:49:58); Male, Nat Larson of Amherst (35:43:40).

Senior+ Division (ages 60 and up): Female, Debra Hevey of Chicopee (51:23:19); Male, Andy MacDonald of Amherst (42:17:83).

Proceeds from the event, which was organized by the Montague Parks & Recreation Department, benefit the department's Sponsor-A-Child Scholarship Program.



MIKE JACKSON PHOTOS

Above: Meghan Davis of Plainfield was the fastest runner in the Female divisions, finishing at 39:54. Below: Pelham's Wouter Hoogkamer finished first, at 34:12.

GILL from page A1

money, was "changing its tune" on how it wants to see the money spent, and that a change in the program now allows towns to use these funds to pay disposal fees after the first \$50 per ton.

Selectboard member Randy Crochier asked what the RDP money has been used for in the past. Purington replied that the town usually buys copy paper and trash stickers, and helps offset the cost of items collected on hazardous waste day.

He mentioned that discussions had been held in the last couple of years with the Franklin County Solid Waste District (FCSWD) on the possibility of putting RDP funds toward the collection of organic waste, but the timing was still not right. Purington said that using some of the money to offset the new fees was a good way to both help the town's budget,

and keep the DEP happy.

Purington went on to report that the FCSWD has recommended that Gill sign the contract and deliver it to them, but would not forward it to MRF until the deadline of January 31. The FCSWD is exploring options which may result in a better deal, and wants to hold off until the last minute.

The FCSWD has cautioned towns against raising trash bag sticker prices in response to the new costs, out of concern that it will create problems with hoarding and illegal dumping. Purington also noted raising the cost of stickers might lead to greater use of private dumpsters, which was not a problem in itself, but would reduce trash revenue to the town.

The discussion concluded with the board deciding to table the matter until its next meeting.



FILE PHOTO BY NINA ROSSI

Gill's recycling goes to the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Springfield, pictured above.

Special Town Meeting

The board discussed potential dates for a special town meeting in January to take care of a number of bookkeeping and other matters. Warrant articles had not been finalized at the time of the meeting, but Purington said they would likely include an article from the board of assessors regarding FirstLight, and budget articles for legal fees and salaries.

No date was chosen, but Crochier said it would most likely be sometime between January 14 and 21.

Fire Department

The board announced that on December 12, the governor signed special legislation, required by state law, raising fire chief Gene Beaubien's mandatory retirement age from 65 to 70. The news was met with a joke or two, and much rejoicing from the board.

Chief Beaubien reported that his department had received two grants from the state Department of Fire Services: one for \$3,900 to purchase gloves and hoods, and the other for \$5,000, to go towards installing a gear washer in the public safety building.

The chief said he had spoken to a plumber about the washer installation, and believed it would be straightforward and inexpensive. The department plans to rig up a system for drying the gear in their hose-drying area, rather than purchase a dryer at the present time.

The chief also reported that Engine Two had not yet returned to service, as it was still awaiting a part at the repair shop.

Purington informed the board that he had spoken with other local town administrators about posting Engine Three for sale as surplus, and that they suggested an internet auction site, which would get more exposure than the town's traditional postings in local newspapers and on the town website. He said the cost was only \$30. The board

agreed it sounded like a good idea.

Other Business

Purington provided an update on the potential installation of a fiber-optic cable along Main Road to the Northfield Mount Hermon School on utility pole space owned by the town. As part of the proposed deal, Gill could receive cable connections for town buildings.

Questions had been raised about the possibility of a connection at Gill elementary school, but Purington said he'd learned that the Gill-Montague Regional School District already has a fiber-optic connection and did not need another one. He also learned that the entire school district uses a 1 GB connection, which is what connected town buildings would receive if they choose to enter into the agreement. While the Slate Library currently receives free cable through Comcast, it might be interested in the much faster connection.

Chief Beaubien mentioned that the safety complex had experienced internet problems that morning.

The board approved 2020 car dealer license renewals for A-J Cycle Shop, Green River Powersports, Atlantic Wholesale, Chappell's Auto Service, Doug's Auto Body, Riverside Radiator, Town Line Auto Repair, and TEK Cycle.

The board accepted a Quintus Allen distribution for 2019 of \$1,783. The funds are earmarked to be used for educational purposes.

The board approved a use agreement with Northfield Mount Hermon for a community skate at McCollum Ice Rink.

The meeting closed with announcements: "Gillbilly" t-shirts are on sale at the town hall for \$15 each, with proceeds to benefit the agricultural commission, and trash and recycling pickup has been moved to Saturday, January 4, due to the New Year holiday.

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AHEAD from page A1

for Erving Center, a pedestrian improvement and streetscape project along Route 63 in Erving, and ongoing work with the Route 2 Safety Task Force.

Smith pointed to the challenges caused by the changing recycling market, causing a significant increase in the cost to send recyclables to the Springfield facility known as the MRF.

He also noted that the tax case involving the assessment of the First-Light power company – a significant factor in determining the town’s future revenues, as the majority of its taxes are from the Northfield Mountain pumped storage project – may be resolved by the state Appellate Tax Board in the coming year.

Wendell: Slow Shifts

Wendell town coordinator Nancy Aldrich began by noting the challenge of school budgets and assessments during the coming year. Wendell is part of the Mahar middle and high school district, and joins with New Salem in sending students to the Swift River elementary school in that town.

Aldrich emphasized that elementary assessments to the two towns are heavily influenced by their enrollment, which is calculated according to a five-year “rolling average.” She said that the “pendulum is now swinging toward Wendell.” Aldrich also pointed to the rising cost of special education at the elementary school. “To their credit, they are doing a good job, but the cost is high,” she said.

Wendell plans to rewrite its solar zoning bylaw in 2020, and all large-scale solar projects have been put on hold until that process is complete. A decision on a large-scale array on the corner of New Salem and Morse Village roads, not impacted by the moratorium, should be forthcoming within the next few months. That project is before the conservation commission, which will meet again on January 28, and then moves on to the planning board.

Aldrich stressed the problems staffing small town government, with personnel working on a part-time basis, as well as serving on key volunteer committees. She said Wendell had “just recovered” from the early retirement of its assistant assessor, and noted the potential retire-

ments of the tax collector and treasurer, both of whom are elected. At the end of 2019 two members of the conservation commission, currently reviewing the large solar project, retired, although their replacements should be sworn in by the commission’s late January meeting.

Aldrich splits her own time as town coordinator of Wendell and New Salem.

Leverett: Bridges and Wells

The first thing that Leverett town administrator Marjorie McGinnis predicted for 2020, with a big sigh of relief, is that the Coke Kiln Bridge in North Leverett will “finally get done.”

That bridge, which helps connect North Leverett Road to Hemenway Road, has been out of commission for nearly four years. Efforts to receive special state funding for its reconstruction failed, and the current project is being funded by the town, though drawing heavily on its state Chapter 90 highway aid balances. (According to selectboard member Peter d’Errico, the new bridge is currently “in place,” but has not yet opened for travel.)

McGinnis expressed her hope that 2020 will finally see a resolution to the drinking water access problems for residents living near the old landfill on Teawaddle Road. Contaminated water from the former town landfill has affected five homes near the east end of the road, and the town has been providing bottled water to the households for years.

An April town meeting approved three options for addressing the problem – connecting to the Amherst water system; attempting to drill new wells to a source below the contaminated plume; or taking the houses, with reimbursement at market value, by eminent domain. (Since that meeting another option, installing a new water purification system, has emerged, according to d’Errico, who told the *Reporter* that cost estimates for all the options are currently “in process,” and that within the past week the town has received a report on the cost of drilling deeper wells.)

McGinnis also predicted continued debate during the upcoming budget season over the cost of education. Leverett funds its elementary school directly through its town

budget and pays an assessment to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District, which serves middle and high school students. The elementary school has struggled to meet budget guidelines set for all town departments by the town finance committee. Meanwhile, the method of calculating the regional school assessment has caused conflict between member towns, particularly Leverett and Shutesbury.

McGinnis also noted the importance of upcoming contract negotiations with police department, fire department, and elementary school employees.

Gill: That Dam License

Gill town administrator Ray Purington, when asked about 2020, first echoed his Erving counterpart, noting the increase in recycling costs under Gill’s new contract with Waste Management Recycle America, the firm that operates the recycling facility in Springfield. Towns like Gill, which used to receive up to \$50 per ton for recycled material, will now have to pay \$93 per ton, minus the fluctuating market value of the material.

At its December 23 meeting the Gill selectboard put off voting on the new contract until January. Purington said the regional solid waste district would like to have the contract delivered to it by January 17. He also noted that the town needs to negotiate a new contract with its trash hauler, which brings recycling to the MRF.

Purington expressed the hope that FirstLight, after years of negotiations, studies, and stakeholder input, will “finally” present a final proposal to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a long-term license for its hydroelectric projects at Northfield and Turners Falls, on the stretch of the river bordering Gill. He hesitated to predict, however, whether this would be the year the licensing process will be completed.

Purington also mentioned the school regionalization study being conducted by the six towns that are currently members of the Gill-Montague and the Pioneer Valley regional school districts as an important 2020 development.

Like Nancy Aldrich in Wendell, Purington noted staff changes in Gill, including the retirements of

the town clerk, treasurer-collector, and highway superintendent during the past year.

Montague: New DPW Garage

Always the optimist, Montague town administrator Steve Ellis said that, looking forward to 2020, he was “excited about the future development of past properties that have contributed to the town’s economic and social fabric.”

He referred specifically to the recent purchase of the large factory building on the Turners Falls power canal abandoned by the bankrupt Southworth Paper Company two years ago, and the potential construction of a new four-story building at 38 Avenue A, modeled on the historic Grand Trunk Hotel that used to occupy the site.

Ellis noted significant progress on the department of public works garage on Turners Falls Road, which is expected to be completed this summer. He said the completion of the new facility will create

the possibility that the current garage, at 500 Avenue A, can be “re-purposed” for private development.

Ellis also discussed the project to cap the burn dump on Sandy Lane behind Judd Wire. That project will be funded by Kearsarge Energy, which will locate a solar array at the site. The company has already built two other arrays in the vicinity. He also mentioned improvements planned for Millers Falls, including a new trail system and better access to the Millers River for boaters.

He asked Ellis if he might foresee any potential negative developments during 2020. “Challenges?” he replied, and then said that the town “looked forward” to seeing progress on repairing the state-owned General Pierce Bridge over the Connecticut River. A renovation of the Montague City bridge, which has been reduced to one lane due to safety concerns, is scheduled to go out to bid during the coming year.



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

Here’s the way it was December 23, 2009: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive

Disagreement Over Spending Threatens Regionalization Drive

The effort by the town of Wendell to get the other three member towns of the Mahar Regional School District to adjust per-pupil costs at Mahar to more equitably reflect the aggregate wealth of the member towns is threatening to derail ongoing plans by the towns of Petersham and Orange to regionalize as a K-12 region.

Town meetings in both Orange and Petersham voted in recent years to regionalize their elementary grades; they already regionalize their upper grades in Mahar. But unanimous consent of all four towns in the Mahar region is required to change the regional agreement and allow Orange and Petersham to form a split, or hybrid, K-12 region within the Mahar district.

Wendell’s finance committee and selectboard are opposed.

Jim Slavos of the Wendell finance committee wrote to the Mahar regionalization planning committee on December 7, saying, “Both the Wendell finance committee and the selectboard are not prepared at this time to recommend to the Wendell town meeting either a four-town K-12 region [to include Wendell and New Salem] or a split/hybrid region.

“This position is based on a careful weighing of all the impacts, both positive and negative, either approach would have on Wendell’s fiscal situation and current educational programs, a comprehensive review of the final reports of the consultants hired by the committee and the full record of committee discussions and decisions.”

Slavos and Wendell finance chair Michael Idoine have developed exhaustive documentation that the state funding formula for Mahar penalizes Wendell for having fewer students enrolled in Mahar high school relative to the oth-

er three member towns, requiring Wendell to pay higher per-student costs than the objectively wealthier towns of New Salem and Petersham.

Biomass Study Raises Claims of Bias

The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) sponsored a public stakeholder meeting on Thursday at the Holiday Inn in Holyoke, where consultants enlisted to produce a biomass “white paper” for the state gave a brief overview of the methods by which they would determine the sustainability of biomass plants – including the availability of clean wood – and gauge the likely extent and impact of CO₂ emissions by the plants.

The state has placed a temporary hold on approval for biomass plants for six months to a year, until the results of the white paper are in.

About 200 people attended the meeting, which allowed for “structured and facilitated conversations to gather public input” for the research team’s consideration.

But opponents of four biomass plants proposed for western Massachusetts – including a 47-megawatt plant planned by Madera Energy for the Greenfield I-91 Industrial Park – did not wait for those conversations to make their case. Prior to the meeting, several community groups held a press conference expressing their opposition to the plants.

The groups maintain the consultants chosen for the white paper study, including Manomet, Pinchot, and the Biomass Energy Resource Center, have already demonstrated their support for biomass energy technology, and the white paper will prove to be a “white-wash” slanted toward the industry.

Biomass proponents’ concept of “carbon neutrality” is challenged by opponents, who point out that trees which take 60 or 70 years to grow will be incinerated in minutes in biomass plants.



NINA ROSSI PHOTOS



Montague town administrator Steve Ellis, center, moonlights with AfterGlo at the Shea Theater on Tuesday night. The local rockers’ 10 p.m. set during Franklin County Last Night was interrupted by a fire alarm.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

First-Time Homebuyer?

FRANKLIN COUNTY – Are you ready to buy a home? Franklin County Regional Housing and Re-development Authority (HRA) presents a first-time homebuyer workshop on Saturday, January 11 and Saturday, January 18, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days.

Topics include the roadmap to home ownership, goal setting and budgeting, credit, meeting the professionals (a lender, a realtor, a

home inspector, an insurance agent, and an attorney), and more.

The cost is \$50 per household, and the workshops are held at the HRA offices at 241 Millers Falls Road in Turners Falls.

The snow date is January 25.

Pre-registration is required, and the deadline to register is Tuesday, January 7. For more information, contact Melanie Gaier at (413) 223-5217 or mgaier@fcrhra.org.

DEAL from page A1

the Turners Falls fire and water districts. Cusano said all of those were also paid at the December 27 closing.

During the bankruptcy proceedings two years ago, Southworth appeared to be on the verge of selling the Turners factory to a Maine company, but that deal fell through. At the time, a sale price of up to \$4 million was floated, and Southworth listed the value of the factory, land, and an adjacent water treatment plant used by the mill at \$2.24 million.

Cusano told the Reporter that he is looking for a single tenant, hopefully in the paper-making business, rather than dividing the factory into smaller commercial or residential spaces. He pointed to the internal layout of the factory and the presence of working paper-making machinery as the rationale for this approach.

“We’re taking our time,” he said.

“We want to find the right tenant.”

Cusano said he himself has no experience in the paper business, and recognizes the challenges faced by paper companies in the United States. “It’s a very labor-intensive and capital-intensive industry,” he said. “They’re dropping like flies.”

The developer has also been consulting with Charlie Blanker, whose family owned the mill from 1980 to 2006 under its original name, the Esleek Paper Company. “Charlie has been there since the first day I looked at the place,” Cusano said. “He’s helping because he believes in the business. He’s a great guy.”

Cusano was a featured speaker at a recent event, held in the factory building, announcing a \$2.16 million infrastructure grant from the state to rebuild a pedestrian bridge that connects Southworth to its employee parking lot across

MONTAGUE REPORTER ON THE ROAD



Emily Greene of Greenfield brought the Reporter with her on a recent Code Pink tour of Cuba. “This was an organic farm cooperative in Artemisa, just outside Havana,” Greene writes, “that we visited, [and] learned of some of the techniques they use, such as building bee hives with non-stinging bees in little box houses. We watched the farmer’s daughter sucking the honey up out of one of the boxes. They graciously served us platters of their vegetables.... He supplies vegetables for his community, and then for markets in Havana.”

Going somewhere? Take us with you! Send photos to editor@montaguereporter.org

the Turners Falls power canal. The bridge will also provide sewer and utility connections to several buildings on the island between the canal and the Connecticut River. Cusano, who said his building already has access to sewer, water,

and electricity, said he would be heating it during the coming winter with “construction heaters.”

Asked how the Southworth project compared to other buildings he has developed, Cusano replied that “they’re all different.” But he said

the negotiations over the purchase of the property, which took a year, were complex and at times frustrating. “I’ve learned a whole new meaning to patience,” he said at the December 17 press conference.



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JANUARY 2, 2020

Above: Gill reader Don Plante captured this sunrise over Barton Cove from the Gill-Montague Bridge.

LOOKING AT THE LOTTERY, PART I: AN EARLY AMERICAN FUNDRAISER

By NINA ROSSI

TURNERS FALLS – For several decades, habits of drinking and smoking put me in the proximity of scratch and lottery ticket players at the various convenience stores where I stopped to refuel my addictions. Picking and choosing from brightly-colored rolls of instant tickets, I watched people spend a quick fifty bucks at the counter, and then sit in their cars outside the store to feverishly scratch off the surface to find out if they were an instant winner or not.

Usually not, of course. But to be in that fevered state of hopefulness, those few minutes between buying and scratching, folks were willing to shell out an awful lot of money. Back then I guess I considered cigarettes and alcohol a superior pastime, one that could be considered “normal,” social, moderately priced (in those days), and with the benefit that I was able to multitask while drinking or smoking.

During the late ‘80s and ‘90s, I noticed that these garishly decorated scratch tickets were part of the trash that skittered through the breeze on Turners Falls’ deserted downtown streets, reminders of this game that keeps people losing – and yet still hoping – in a cycle that seemed akin to the fortunes and failures of the town. Tickets screamed promises: “Diamond Millions,” “Road to Riches,” “Cash Vault,” “\$100,000 a Year for Life,” “\$4 Million Gold Rush,” “Holiday Bonus,” “Cash in a Flash,” “\$500 Madness,” “Instant Winner”...

Because these appeared in my path and represented



ROSSI PHOTO

Massachusetts’ per-capita spending on the lottery is the highest of any state in the country.

the themes of post-industrial abandonment I was already exploring in my art, I incorporated used scratch tickets into paintings and sculpture, along with empty nip bottles and ciggie butts.

In the course of one studio session, I turned a ticket over and called the “If you think you have a problem with gambling...” number on the back to find out if any organizations in Massachusetts were out there working against this state-sponsored gambling business. It felt morally wrong to me that our own government profited from people’s weaknesses, and that it did so with such misleading, P.T. Barnum-style advertising.

see **LOTTERY** page B5

THE AUTHORS’ CORNER: GAYLE FORMAN

By IZZY VACHULA-CURTIS

TURNERS FALLS – Happy almost 2020! Last year, I reviewed a couple of short stories from the holiday collection, *My True Love Gave to Me*. This month, I decided to reread some favorites of the stories, and reach out to some of the other authors.

I was excited that I was able to get a response from Gayle Forman, who wrote “What the Hell Have You Done, Sophie Roth?”. Today I’m going to be reviewing a couple of my favorite holiday stories, including Gayle Forman’s, and then interviewing Gayle Forman! Enjoy!!

One of my favorite stories in *My True Love Gave to Me* is “Polaris is Where You’ll Find Me,” by Jenny Han, who also wrote the *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before* series. Jenny Han’s story is about a teenage girl named Natty who was adopted by Santa, and lives at the North Pole.

Natty was found in Santa’s sleigh in South Korea, fifteen years before the start of the story, in a basket with a note that said “Please take care of my daughter” in Korean. Ever since, Natty has been the only human girl to ever live at the North Pole. She ends up falling in love with an elf named Flynn, which is super exciting to read about!

This short story kind of reminds

me of the movie *Elf*, because just like Buddy the Elf, Natty is the only human in the North Pole and struggles to fit in. She’s also Santa’s adopted daughter, whereas Buddy the Elf was also adopted by Santa. I love this story so much, because it’s so cute, and the setting is super fun! I like details such as when Jenny Han describes the air as smelling like peppermints, and how everything is covered in snow that makes everything look “diamond dusted!” This short story is a quick and fun



PHOTO COURTESY IZZY V/C

Our correspondent, in the spirit of the season.

read, perfect for the holidays!

The next short story I’m reviewing is “Star of Bethlehem” by Ally Carter. “Star of Bethlehem” is about two girls, Hulda and Lydia, who meet in an airport and switch places. Lydia (Liddy) is a famous singer who is tired of her life and impulsively swaps plane tickets with an Icelandic girl named Hulda. Lydia wants to have a normal holiday, and not have to live up to her famous personality, Liddy Chambers.

Hulda has a plane ticket to Oklahoma to visit her boyfriend Ethan, who she met a year ago when he was studying in Iceland, but she isn’t really in love with him anymore and wants to go to New York to visit her new boyfriend. So Lydia has to pretend she’s Hulda for the remainder of her stay with Ethan’s family. The thing is, Ethan’s family begins to really like Lydia, and Lydia feels guilty for letting them believe that she’s Hulda.

I thought this book was so exciting and cute, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone who enjoys love stories, or quick holiday reads!

Gayle Forman’s story, “What the Hell Have You Done, Sophie Roth?”, is about a girl named Sophie who believes she has made a lot of stupid mistakes in her life. Sophie calls these her “What the hell have

see **AUTHORS** page B5

WEST ALONG THE RIVER

THE DURKEES OF POINT PLEASANT



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

Owing to the holiday, we are reprinting a West Along the River column from January 2015! – Eds.

By DAVID BRULE

ERVING/NORTHFIELD – A late Monday afternoon, on the eve of the Big Snowstorm predicted for overnight, the abandoned road past French King Rock is leading me to Point Pleasant.

Slipping along on silent skis just before dusk, now down through a hemlock grove, I reach the spot where the track swings to the right. I’m following the trace of the Indian path that led for millennia from Pocumtuck (Deerfield) to Squakheag (Northfield).

This is the trail also used by the arrogant and doomed Captain Richard Beers who led his men to their deaths on Northfield Plain in September of 1675 during King Philip’s War.

But this evening, the snow-covered dirt road is quiet and peaceful. The Connecticut is frozen over for the most part since mid-December, now that the nuclear plant north of here is shut down, and no longer flushes its superheated water into our river.

I’ve skied past this spot for many winters in the past, always stopping at this curve in the road where an ancient maple stands, battered by the years, but clearly put there by a human hand, put there for a purpose.

I would never have known that this quiet spot I’ve been drawn to over the years was actually called Point Pleasant, if not for a tattered scrapbook compiled by one Mrs. Florence Chaffin of Millers Falls, who donated her collection of articles and photos to the now defunct Erving Historical Society.

Flipping through the yellowed pages of the scrapbook the other day, a sudden leap of the heart and a dizzying, telescoping sense of time travel brought me up short on the page where Mrs. Chaffin penned in careful handwriting: “*Durkee Tavern, built in 1789.*”

The accompanying snapshots depicted that exact spot and that exact maple tree where I always paused while out skiing. Only, in the snapshot, the tree was young, and there was a broad expanse of meadow leading downhill to it, instead of thick woods.

Now if you’ve ever had anything to do with Millers Falls, you’ve heard the name of Durkee’s Tavern, infamous and legendary in local lore for raucous nights on the riverbank, a gathering place for story-tellers, river-



L. C. Durkee

boat men, log drivers, carousers and drinkers of bad, low-quality New England rum (called “blue ruin” at the time).

Durkee’s holds a mystical place in the region’s oral history. There were even witches involved: Granny Stowell and her daughter Dycie, who worked at the Tavern, and who tried to cast a spell on one young boatman with whom she fell in love.

Dycie’s effort at casting the spell ended badly, causing the young man to be crushed by a falling tree near the tavern. The local legend has it that Granny’s husband later danced on her grave in the cemetery on Mineral Road, and that Dycie finished her days in the Northampton Asylum.

Harper’s Weekly published the tale in 1882, Millers Falls historian John Taggart documented the story in the early 1900s, and it was passed on in this column last October 2014.

But back to the Durkees. According to actual historical records, three generations of Durkees ran the Tavern, and farmed at the Point, officially within the town boundary of Northfield, in the neighborhood known as Northfield Farms.

The tavern was built by Thomas Durkee and was run by Thomas and his son Jeremiah. Two of Thomas’ grandsons, Oscar and Lauriston, were born in the tavern and kept the farm going into the 1920s.

Built along the traditional Indian path to Squakheag, the tavern see **WEST ALONG** page B4

Pet of the Week



IMAGE COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY

“MOCHA”

Whether you're new to sharing your home with a house rabbit or not, Mocha could be the perfect bunny for you.

This handsome fellow is confident and friendly, and isn't likely to hide when he meets someone new. He's curious, creative, and loves to explore the house.

Mocha has excellent litterbox habits. He enjoys hanging out with

his people but also knows how to keep himself busy in their absence.

He would be happiest with someone who could provide a stable, loving and long-term home.

Get in touch with Dakin's adoption center in Leverett for more information about Mocha and the adoption process. Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities

JANUARY 6 THROUGH 10

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 1/6

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 1/7

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

Wednesday 1/8

11:30 a.m. Friends Meeting

12:30 p.m. Bingo

Thursday 1/9

9 a.m. Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

1 p.m. Cards, Games, & Pitch

4 p.m. Gentle Yoga

Friday 1/10

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

Bettors, 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 1/6

8:45 a.m. Step & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance

No Lunch Served

12:30 p.m. Card Pitch Game

Tuesday 1/7

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

9:30 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

12 p.m. Pizza & Salad Lunch

Wednesday 1/8

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

11 a.m. M3 Games

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

12 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

Thursday 1/9

8:45 a.m. Aerobics

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

Friday 1/10

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting Workshop

9:30 a.m. Fun Bowling

12 p.m. Congregate 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.

JANUARY LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

Turners Falls: Carnegie (413) 863-3214

Montague Center (413) 367-2852

Millers Falls (413) 659-3801

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Thursday, January 2: *Music & Movement.* Bilingual Spanish/English series for young children, with *Tom Carroll and Laurie Davidson*, will take a turn at the Carnegie Library, January through April. Designed for preschoolers and their caregivers. Every Thursday until April 30. 10 to 10:45 a.m.

Wednesday, January 8: *Homeschool Science at the Carnegie.* *Jim Terruso*, who has worked for the DCR and the Springfield Science Museum, will do a four-week series on Wednesdays for homeschoolers and their caregivers. 1 to 2 p.m.

Saturday, January 18: *Pirate Party.* Aaaaargh, mateys! Are ye ready to play like pirates? Play games, make some crafts and eat some grub! Designed for children of all ages and their families/caregivers. 10:30 a.m. until noon.

LEVERETT LIBRARY

Thursday, January 2: *Library Book Group* discussion of *Jayber Crow* by *Wendell Berry*. 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, January 7: *Family Scrabble Club* resumes. 7 years old and up. 3:15 to 4:30 p.m.

MOVIE REVIEW

A Christmas Carol (FX, 2019)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – I thought it would be fun to review a version of *A Christmas Carol* that aired on December 19, 2019 on FX and the BBC, written by a man named Steve Knight.

In this movie, he said, and I quote: “I am trying to make some suggestions about why Scrooge is Scrooge.” “Every generation needs its own interpretation,” Knight said in a *New York Times* article on the new *A Christmas Carol*.

One way this interpretation is done is by having a relatively young Scrooge, played by Guy Pearce, with a horrible father who leaves him to be abused by a schoolmaster. In the opening scene Scrooge's business partner, Jacob Marley, wakes up in his grave to noise. So that is something different from what was supposed to be in this story! A new interpretation for this generation, like Knight said.

Also, this time, the movie is a three-part miniseries.

A cool thing that they do is, instead of Jacob just being in chains, they show him getting his chains put on, and meeting up with the Ghost of Christmas Past. That Ghost tells him what the deal is, and how his fate is tied to that of Scrooge's: Scrooge must repent in order for Marley to get out of purgatory. This definitely is something different to have in the story, as well as something that feature in there that we never learn how exactly it was put into motion to begin with.

There is another scene, that has been seen several times in the different versions of the movie, where donations are asked for, and Scrooge gives more or less the same reply. They have kept that in all of the

Erving Public Library (413) 423-3348

Gill: Slate Library (413) 863-2591

Leverett Public Library (413) 548-9220

Wendell Free Library (978) 544-3559

Northfield: Dickinson Library (413) 498-2455

Weather, etc. sometimes causes changes in library events; you may want to call ahead to confirm events.

bot. (Robots will be one of the themes highlighted in this year's Science Fiction / Horror Movie series.) 7:30 p.m.

ERVING PUBLIC LIBRARY

Wednesday, January 8: *Fundraising Committee* reports on ongoing fundraising results and plans for Grand Opening of new library. 6 p.m.

DICKINSON LIBRARY, NORTHFIELD

In the Gallery: *Ben Rathschmidt, Nanci Dailey, "Looking for Light."* Through mid-January.

Friday, January 3: *Kids' Friday: New Years World Traditions.* Grape-eating, wish-making, cookie-eating, plate-breaking, elf-finding, chair-jumping, talking to animals... 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

Friday, January 17: *Kids' Friday: Movie, Abominable.* (Rated PG "for some action and mild rude humor.") 1:50 to 3:30 p.m.

WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

Saturday, January 11: *Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse: Green Sisters.* Sliding scale admission. 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 18: Movie screening, *Forbidden Planet* starring *Walter Pidgeon, Anne Francis, Leslie Nielsen* and featuring *Robbie the Ro-*

Thursday, January 23: *Trivia at Cameron's.* Library Trivia Night at Cameron's Winery, with Jan and Dan. Come with a team (up to 6 per team) or without one (we can match you up with others). Age 21+. Food and drink available for purchase. Three rounds of 10 questions each. 6:30 to 8 p.m.



versions of the movie I have seen, so this was true to the original in that way.

Like I mentioned with it showing how the whole ghost thing gets put into motion, Jacob continues to have scenes in the afterlife with the ghosts. They made Scrooge's sister the Ghost of Christmas Present, while the Ghost of Christmas Future remains a ghost that doesn't speak.

I really like what they do with the Christmas Past ghost, who changes into a different form each time that he and Scrooge visit. Each form was a connection to the time they were in when this ghost was undergoing his turn with Scrooge. Also, making his sister one of the three ghosts was just a very good idea.

They put some other new things in. One of the last things they did differently is how Scrooge was shown to have finally changed. It was a very original moment – a moment that included all three of the spirits appearing in one scene. It also involves the character of Tiny Tim.

This is a very different version of this tale. I liked it very much.

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Montague Community Television News

The Week of January 2 to January 8

By MICHAEL SMITH

As 2019 comes to a close, now is the time to reflect on everything this past year had to offer. The best way to do so is by checking out our website at montaguetv.org. There you can relive all the local events and happenings that took place in 2019. Just click the "latest video" tab, and take a stroll down memory lane.

For instance you can relive the exciting summer music festival extravaganza Barbes in the Woods. Follow vimeo.com/358848912 to some warm and funky summer vibes to chase the winter blues away!

Or travel back in time to August for the first ever Fairy House Day on Avenue A: vimeo.com/357221590. Watch MCTV's own Hannah Brookman and Lovelights Productions perform live at Peskeompskut Park right here in Turners Falls.

If you need to catch up on per-

formances happening at the Shea Theater, we've got you covered! If you want to hang on to the holiday spirit then you'll want to watch the Annual Welcome Yule performance (vimeo.com/380329933) as well as Mr. Drag and how the Grinch Stole Karl (vimeo.com/378601422).

We here at MCTV had a blast covering all the happenings of our wonderful community here in Turners Falls. We wish everyone a safe and happy new year, and we can't wait to see what 2020 has to offer!

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 7

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.

Collins will be sharing with us 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.

With the battle ended and Okinawa secured, the Wiley set at anchor in the bay.

Bud, on duty when he overheard a message coming from a destroyer next to theirs, recognized that ship's identification numbers as one on which his best boyhood friend had been assigned. Joe Vienseck, nicknamed "Joe Barrel," lived two doors down from us in "The Block."

Bud ran up to the signal deck and got the flagman to signal over to the other ship regarding Joe. Shortly after a launch arrived to the Wiley and on board he came. There they were, two young buddies from Turners Falls, meeting after one of the biggest battles of the war in the middle of the Pacific and having a great afternoon together.

I really wanted to find out more about his war, but that would have to wait until future visits back to Turners from my home in Arizona.

This wonderful morning with my brother Bud will live in my memory always.

War was not always just blood and gore. It had its lighter side in stories that Bud would share with me during the winter of 2015 which he spent here at my house in Arizona. Attempting to persuade him, I prodded him, "Why not move in with me permanently? You know we cantankerous old codgers hit it off pretty well."

"Yep, like Felix and Oscar" – from the *Odd Couple* movie – "but I don't want you to change your life-

style for my sake ... and I miss my apartment," he responded.

As I'm just like him, I understood that he was really saying, *I like my independence*. So I said, "Okay, but if you change your..."

"I know," he interrupted, ending that conversation. But a day or two later, he'd relate the following stories:

"I remember reporting to the Wiley for the first time. As I walked up the gangplank to board, a large, swarthy, older chief boatswain's mate tried to order me to come and perform duty under him..."

"I knew what kind of duty that was – scrubbing decks, painting, hauling and loading gear and all kinds of grunt work, and I wanted no part of it. So I quickly said, 'I'm to report to the radio shack,' and off I scurried, chuckling as I heard the chief yelling 'I'll get your ass yet, sailor.'"

After a short pause, he continued.

"My radio duty was arranged as a three-shift operation where each shift I spent eight hours constantly monitoring incoming and sending outgoing messages. Supposedly, we operators were allowed eight hours for sleep and the rest of the time for seeing to our other personal needs, such as laundry, letter writing, and other incidentals. However, as it was wartime, the situation required that all off-duty personnel help in the loading and unloading of supplies whenever the Wiley docked to acquire them."

Now chortling, he continued, "Well, between the Iwo and Okinawa campaigns, we put into Ulithi and, as I was off my duty shift, I was told to report to the loading dock. From his ship's deck, that chief boatswain's mate stood looking down with a snarly grin at little old swabby me struggling to hand the five-inch slippery coated gun shells – weighing almost half as much as I did – up to the next sailor in the chain assigned to the ammo loading detail.

"In my mind I can imagine that burly old chief getting the last laugh and saying to himself, 'I told you I'd get your ass someday, sailor.'"

Hearing this hilarious story, in my mind – for some unknown reason – all I could envision was another "Rockwell Moment."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Suffering Goose; Hit & Run; Transcript Wanter; Fight Over Cigarettes; High Brother; Jester Outfit

Monday, 12/16

11:45 a.m. A 31-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a default warrant. 2:39 p.m. Caller states that there is an injured Canada goose that looks like it is suffering in the dirt parking lot off Unity Street. Environmental Police forwarded to Mass Wildlife, who requested an officer do a drive-by and provide more details; they will call the biologist and make him aware, but they have nobody available right now to come out and investigate. Animal control officer contacted; will check it out and let dispatch know. ACO called back; has the bird; advises she has an injury to her back, head, and one wing. Injuries appear to be healing up but she is very weak and needs food. ACO is willing to nurse the bird back to health if needed. Contacted Mass Wildlife back; they advised to have ACO contact Spruce Hill Veterinary Clinic in Springfield. Info given to ACO.

Tuesday, 12/17

2:46 p.m. Caller advises he spoke with officers re: addressing trailers parked on the street and obstructing sanding/plowing in area of Vladish & Emond avenues; requests owner be advised not to park on the street during snow events. Message left with crew doing some work on the property. They will advise homeowner of complaint. 3:58 p.m. DPW advising that there is a vehicle stuck sideways in the road impeding traffic on Lake Pleasant Road. Entire road checked; vehicle gone.

Wednesday, 12/18

6:08 a.m. Caller states that he was in the area of Scotty's convenience store walking to work and was hit by a car that then sped off. Caller did not get a description but was soon picked up by a coworker who offered to bring him to the hospital. Caller chose to go to work; he now needs to go to the hospital but would like to report the accident to an officer. 7:09 a.m. Officers out with DPW for towing in Third and Fourth street lots. 5:23 p.m. Officer witnessed a "road rage" incident begin to unfold in front of him while patrolling near Farren Care Center. He pulled over and intervened, defusing the situation. Parties moved along without further incident.

Thursday, 12/19

12:23 p.m. Sidewalk in front of a Third Street property is still unshoveled. Message left for property owner. DPW advising about another section of Third Street near Keith Apartments that appears to be town owned and unshoveled. 3:58 p.m. School resource officer requesting officers respond to Turners

Falls High School for a male party who is there threatening to break into the school and stealing transcripts. Party gone on arrival. Officers heading downtown to attempt to locate and verbally trespass him. Vehicle with two involved people located at Unity Park. Party verbally trespassed from high school by officer; advised by officer that an official No Trespass order would be filed with the sheriff's department. 10:06 p.m. Officer reporting that a group of people is attempting to push a vehicle out of gas down the hill from Scotty's to get gas. Officer reports that they made it down the hill and into the gas station. 11:44 p.m. A 63-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested on a straight warrant. 11:48 p.m. Caller states that a fight is occurring in the hallway of the second floor of an Avenue A building; believes three people are involved. Second caller states that he believes that two people were involved, that they were in a physical fight, and that one may be bleeding. Fight over cigarettes. One party left scene; other declined need for medical attention.

Friday, 12/20

1:26 p.m. Caller from Masonic Avenue states that a plow company is doing damage to her property. Advised of options. 2:29 p.m. Trespass notice serviced in hand; party no longer allowed on the property of Turners Falls High School. 4:39 p.m. Caller advises he saw someone who seemed inebriated when he left the gas station heading toward Avenue A; called back stating he was driving home when the vehicle pulled out in front of him, almost hitting a couple cars. Vehicle located; Rau's responding. Operator picked up by wife. 6:01 p.m. Caller reporting male subject out in front of Turners Falls Pizza House asking people for money and claiming he is a vet. Advises same male as before; has his walker with him. Officer advises someone had already purchased the party a sandwich and he was moving along. Owner of Pizza House advises they will call every time because he wants him removed.

Saturday, 12/21

12:05 p.m. Report of hunter with gun slung over shoulder walking in area of golf course. Officer checked area and spoke with a hunter who came from the woods off the bike path but was not hunting in the area described. 5:53 p.m. Car vs. deer near Water Department. No injuries; deer appears to be dead on side of street. Responding officer advis-

es vehicle is drivable and operator will be driving it home; second officer en route to take deer. 10:13 p.m. Caller states that his brother has been high all day and is causing a disturbance, yelling and stomping. Officers clear; spoke with brother, who is going to bed for the night.

Sunday, 12/22

1:58 p.m. Report of Lake Pleasant railroad crossing arms going up and down sporadically; train idling in area but not blocking crossing. Pan Am will send someone out. 7:20 p.m. Report of chimney fire on Union Street. Shelburne Control notified to dispatch MCFD.

Monday, 12/23

10:39 a.m. Caller states that she saw a truck stop and drop a male party off at the cemetery by Randall Road; party got out of the truck with a long gun and walked into the cemetery. Caller states she saw him point the gun in the air. Area checked; nothing found; officer advises party is probably in woods hunting. 5:08 p.m. Motorist locked inside gate at Silvio O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center; requesting assistance. Caller let out by employee.

Tuesday, 12/24

9:26 a.m. Chimney fire reported on Old Sunderland Road. Shelburne Control advised. 12:42 p.m. Report of as many as ten males involved in a physical altercation outside of a building on Fourth Street, one armed with an 8" to 10" kitchen knife. As call went on, parties began to disperse; male with knife believed to have gotten into a white SUV. Vehicle belonging to someone at caller's residence may have been damaged during altercation. MPD, MSP, Erving, and Gill PDs responding. Damage to one vehicle. Witnesses spoken with but unable to locate suspected parties; parties at apartment they are believed to have entered would not cooperate. 1:58 p.m. Loud music complaint on G Street. Officer spoke with resident; music is being turned down. 8:02 p.m. Multiple reports of fireworks in area of Crocker Avenue. Area checked; nothing found. 9:14 p.m. Motorist reporting that a man in dark clothing appeared to be jumping out at cars as they drove by him on Montague City Road. Area checked; nothing found. 9:49 p.m. 911 caller reporting hit-and-run accident involving a parked car on Davis Street. Report taken.

Wednesday, 12/25

1:38 p.m. Neighbor reporting very loud music coming from G Street location again. No loud music heard; officer advised par-

ties of complaint. Second call regarding loud music on G Street at 3:17 p.m.

7:42 p.m. A 19-year-old Greenfield woman arrested on a straight warrant.

8:04 p.m. Greenfield PD called to report that a woman came into their lobby stating that there was a man in a jester outfit walking in the middle of the road on the bridge over the canal. Male matching description located at FL. Roberts. He is OK and was advised of the complaint.

Thursday, 12/26

9:54 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street reporting vandalism to vehicle overnight. Report taken.

10:51 a.m. A male (age and address redacted) was arrested on two straight warrants.

3:35 p.m. Following an incident of threatening and harassment at the Alvah Stone, male (age and address redacted) was arrested and charged with disturbing the peace, threatening to commit a crime, and civil rights violation.

5:28 p.m. Request for assistance with male in Family Dollar who has dropped several packets of heroin and appears to be high. Male (age and address redacted) arrested and charged with possession of a Class A drug with intent to distribute.

5:32 p.m. FRTA bus vs. car incident on Bridge Street; no injuries/smoke/fluids.

10:38 p.m. Report of verbal altercation turning physical in front of house on Millers Falls Road. Peace restored.

Friday, 12/27

9:27 a.m. A 29-year-old Turners Falls woman was arrested on two straight warrants.

11:16 a.m. A 45-year-old Montague man was arrested on a default warrant.

4:20 p.m. Caller from West Mineral Road reports that a hunter crossed her property to get to the woods; vehicle parked nearby. Officer responded; no one around vehicle; left note on vehicle.

Saturday, 12/28

8:39 a.m. Report of slashed tire on Randall Road. Report taken.

2:20 p.m. Report of man in wheelchair panhandling outside Walgreens. Caller states that she asked him to leave and he refused. Unable to locate; will search downtown.

10:31 p.m. Caller states that a small white pickup truck drove down Fifth Street at a fair rate of speed with at least one missing tire. Caller states truck was throwing sparks and made a scraping noise as it passed. Officer located blown-out tire at intersection of Park and Unity Streets; following tracks down Millers Falls Road. Vehicle located on Newton Street. One party detained. Summons issued.

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WEST ALONG from page B1
was well situated when that trail became a stagecoach road in the 1770s. The tavern became a regular stop on the Hartford-to-Brattleboro stage line.

As the region developed, to promote commerce, locks and canals were built in the 1820s to help move goods up the rapids surrounding French King Rock. The tavern prospered with the canal and locks traffic, and with the advent of the legendary log drives on the Connecticut.

Lauriston C. Durkee, born on the estate in 1840, became an influential and wealthy entrepreneur. Perhaps owing to the experience of his father and grandfather in the tavern business, L.C. made his money importing and selling liquor.

He invested in real estate in Boston and continued to prosper. Apparently he was a generous and kindly person, who donated considerable sums to charity, as we will see further on.

After a stint as an officer in the Civil War, he built a ten-room home at Point Pleasant, with a beautiful view up the river, next to the ancestral tavern site (which burned in 1880). The homestead became a favorite gathering place for family and friends. A photograph in the Chaffin scrapbook shows the front door with its sign:

"You are always welcome here."
Hardly into his forties, L.C. became blind, and brought his older brother Oscar and Oscar's wife Nettie Morgan Durkee, born in Gill, to care for him and his farm.

When L.C. died in 1894, he left his property to Oscar, along with considerable machinery, farm animals and a tobacco barn filled with 7,900 pounds of leaf tobacco!

He was buried, as he had wished, in a vault on the front lawn of his homestead, "so that his spirit might eternally see the beautiful Connecticut River."

Oscar and Nettie lived out their lives at Point Pleasant, and when Oscar died in 1923 and Nettie in 1927, they too were buried in that family vault overlooking the river.

In his will, L.C. stipulated that when Oscar and Nettie passed away, the ten-room home on the river would become a Home for the Aged of Franklin County. However, the trustees of the estate determined that the location at Point Pleasant was too remote, and not practical for a rest home. So no action was taken on L.C.'s wish. The homestead itself burned to the ground in 1940.

However, in 1941, income from the Durkee fund and other donations financed the purchase of the John W. Haigis house at 24 Church Street in Greenfield, which became the Home for Aged People of Franklin County.

The Home recently closed its doors in 2013, after seventy years of operation. Lynn Stowe Tomb, local historian and graphic designer, was commissioned by the Board of Directors to publish a history of this institution, entitled *Memoirs of the Church Street Home*.

So now today, in the gathering dusk before the Big Snow, all is quiet here at Point Pleasant, as it has been for the past seventy years. The burial vault of the Durkees stands guard over the site, far up on the rolling hillside that was the front lawn. Trees, brush, brambles, wild grasses, nature and time have reclaimed the spot where the boisterous and busy tavern stood, and where the gentle L.C. Durkee lived out his days.

I'm left standing under the ancient maple, straining ears and imagination, trying to make out what the wind in the trees and the landscape are saying. There's little to be heard but the sweep of history in the maple's branches, and maybe the faint sound of the first snowflakes settling on the granite burial vault bearing the Durkee family name.

Story gathered from various sources: the 1927-1970 scrapbook of Mrs. Florence Chaffin, the writings of Mrs. Elsie Scott of the Northfield Historical Society (1975), and the research of Lynn Stowe Tomb (2014.)



This picture of the Durkee property was found in Mrs. Chaffin's scrapbook.

COMICS

by denis f. bordeaux

T-RUMP

THE HOLIDAY CALL: HEY VLADIMIR, HOW'S IT GOING?
IT'S 3 A.M., THIS BETTER BE GOOD, FOOTSTOOL!

JUST WANTED TO CHAT... FEELING DOWN ABOUT THIS IMPEACHMENT... --SO HOW ARE THOSE WEAPONS WE BOUGHT UKRAINE WORKING OUT?
OH I HEARD VERY GOOD. KILLING BUNCHES OF MY PEOPLE.

AND HOW ARE YOU GUYS DEALING WITH THE WEAPONS THAT WE SUPPLIED TO THE IRANI'S, TURKS, AND THE TALIBAN?

THEY'RE VERY EFFECTIVE. ESPECIALLY AGAINST CIVILIANS. YOUR NEW TANKS ARE AWESOME, AND THE AK47 IS STILL KING.

WELL THEN, THERE YA GO. I FEEL BETTER!
PROFITS ARE UP.
UNEMPLOYMENT IS DOWN.
LIFE IS GOOD
NIGHT, NIGHT DJ. HAPPY NEW YEAR
THANKS V.P. YOU TOO.

THREE DEGREES OF WARMING
by JANICE ROWAN

As the ice sheets melt, scientists are cloning mammoths...

Do you really want to let that gene out of the bottle?

OVER THE HILL
Carolyn Clark

Hello, I'm Harry. Thelma has a cold. She doesn't know I took her place. Don't tell!

Harry, who are you talking to?
Just myself, Cupcake.

By dose is awe stuvd up.
Tea with a dollop of honey will fix you right up, Thelma.

And more than a dollop of whiskey. She'll sleep like a baby.

GLIMPSES FROM THE OFFICE
by ANNABEL LEVINE

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The Comedy of Errors

TURNERS FALLS – Twenty-six actors, ages 8 to 18, make up the four casts performing William Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* at the Shea Theater in January. These are the Young Shakespeare Players (YSP) East, and their mission is to find their voice through immersion into classical theater with Shakespeare's plays.

At YSP there are no auditions or rejections; all participants receive substantial speaking roles. YSP East's motto, from Hamlet, is "the readiness is all." Actors learn to appreciate both the language and the drama in these great works, as well as the technical aspects of acting and stagecraft.

The Comedy of Errors will run four casts through eight performances of this rarely-staged comedy between January 14 and 19. All performances are free.

Imagine if two identical twin boys were separated shortly after birth. Then imagine another two identical



twin boys, born the same day as the first two, were purchased to be the first pair's servants – and they, also, became separated at the same time. Now, 23 years later, all four – both sets of twins – find themselves in the same city, and don't know it! Everyone confuses each twin for the other. Masters and servants mistake one another, a wife thinks she's dining with her husband when it's really the brother-in-law she never met before, and people assume that they're surrounded by witchcraft or madness.

Shakespeare never wrote a zanier, funnier comedy than *The Comedy of Errors*. As usual, YSP East performs it uncut!

Come watch this inspiring youth ensemble perform on Tuesday, January 14 through Sunday January 19 nightly at 7 p.m., with additional matinee times at 1 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Performances have a run time of approximately 150 minutes, with one intermission.

All ages are welcome, and no reservations are required. Doors open 20 minutes prior to each show, and delicious concessions and Bard-inspired merchandise will be for sale, with all proceeds going to support YSP East's scholarship fund. The 501(c)3 organization operates with no paid staff and no overhead.

For more information, call (802) 258-7922.

LOTTERY from page B1

I was put in touch with the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling. Although they had no Massachusetts chapter, I attended their annual convention that fall in Providence, Rhode Island as an exhibiting artist. As it turned out, all the anti-gambling activists at the convention were church-affiliated. While this was disappointing, since I had hoped for a coalition of progressive politicians and citizen activists, the stuff I learned from the presentations reinforced my alarm and dismay at government-sponsored gambling.

The recent legalization of marijuana in Massachusetts reminded me of some of the history I learned at the NCALG convention. Lotteries were once illegal in the US, and were deemed so suspect that when states started to promote these games, in New York state ticket sales were limited to banks and other institutions. The intense security surrounding growing and selling legal cannabis has brought back to mind what I learned about the initial fears over the legalization of the lottery. Ultimately, I suspect that the new cannabis industry will "normalize" itself, as the lottery has, and that cannabis will one day be sold alongside tobacco, alcohol, and scratch tickets, in order to cultivate new customers.

But this made me wonder: were

lotteries always forbidden in the US? I have been finding out more about the history of lotteries in this country, and the answers are surprising.

Revenue Raisers

Games of chance have been popular for thousands of years, of course, and wagering on foot races, tests of skill, and other games were common in many different cultures. Although Puritans arriving in this country had strict rules against gambling because they believed it promoted the sin of idleness, they changed their tune when money was needed for public works projects and improvements. Much wealth flowed from the colonies to Britain, but not enough was reinvested in infrastructure here; the idea of raising revenue for such projects with local taxation was as unpopular back then as it is now.

Lotteries as a way of raising revenue were already familiar to many colonists. Numerous English lotteries arose in the 16th century as the capitalist economy began disrupting feudalism: for instance, the Virginia Company financed the Jamestown settlement through a lottery. There were few other ways to raise investment capital, and individuals who were eager to improve their lot became eager customers.

In colonial days, tickets were sold in a process that could take many weeks or months, and the

AUTHORS from page B1

you done, Sophie Roth?" moments.

For example, one of the potentially bad decisions Sophie made was when she decided to move from the city and go to a college in a small town in the middle of nowhere to save her family money on tuition. This makes her feel like an outsider, and she feels like she is different from everybody else at the school. (Sort of like Natty, being the only human girl at the North Pole!)

Sophie is being her usual sarcastic self with her roommates, which they don't understand, and they call her "so big city." Sophie – who is Jewish in a school where everyone else seems to celebrate Christmas – can't get home for the first few days of Hanukkah because flights are too expensive during the holidays. She decides to go to a Christmas caroling party which feels like a terrible idea until she meets someone who makes her feel like less of an outsider.

This short story is so sweet, and is great to read over winter break!

Now I'm going to interview Gayle Forman, who wrote "What the Hell Have You Done, Sophie Roth?"

Izzy Vachula-Curtis: I've read that you used to write articles for *Seventeen* Magazine. What things did you write about in your articles? Which do you prefer: journalism, or writing stories?

Gayle Forman: I had an amazing job at *Seventeen* and I did all kinds of articles from personal essays to quizzes to listicles ("75 Reasons Why Life Without A Boyfriend Rocks").

But my favorite thing was the articles I did, serious pieces about child soldiers in Sierra Leone or migrant farmworkers in the United States, or the divide over guns as told through young people. Adults were always surprised we did those kinds of articles... for teenagers, but our readers were super engaged,

and I have long since understood how intelligent and thoughtful and resourceful teens are (maybe more than adults). It's why I love writing for and about teens.

As for journalism vs fiction: I don't have a preference. There were things I loved about journalism – travel, learning new things, meeting amazing people – and things I love about being a novelist: spending a year or two on a single story, escaping into your own imagination. So it's a tie.



IVC: I really enjoyed the story about Sophie Roth in *My True Love Gave to Me*. Are Sophie and your other characters based on people you know in real life?

GF: Every character I write is a mash-up of myself and people I know, and sometimes I don't even recognize where the line was.

In Sophie's story, it was only years later when I was looking at pictures from college that I saw a picture of the guy I based Russell on (whose name was Russell) I didn't even realize at the time. Russell, if you're reading this: Thanks!

IVC: In the story, Sophie talked about how horrible the Christmas caroling was, and the Christmas songs that she doesn't like. What are your favorite and least favorite holiday songs?

GF: I love hearing actual people sing so there's no Christmas carol I don't love if carolers are singing it. And I really love modern takes on the classics, whether it's the David Bowie and Bing Crosby "Little Drummer Boy" or Low's Christmas album.

But like Sophie, I'm Jewish, so I also feel a little bit apart from Christmas songs, so when I hear the generic versions playing in stores, I cringe. I don't think I'm the only one.

IVC: I liked the part about Sophie eating apple pie with cheese, which a lot of people think is unusual. Do you have any unusual food combinations that you enjoy?

GF: Well, since we're talking about Sophie, eating latkes, or potato pancakes, the Jewish tradition is to eat them with sour cream and applesauce, which is delicious in the same way apple pie with cheese is: sweet and savory.

I also like making up my own ice cream recipes: my specialty is strawberry balsamic.

IVC: In your novels *Where She Went*, *Just One Day*, and *Just One Year*, the main characters all travel and explore "secret" parts of cities. Where are your favorite places to travel, and what are your favorite "secret" parts of those places?

GF: This is such a good question. I have too many favorite places to list them, but I do adore getting lost and finding a place by "accident."

I've lived in New York City for more than 20 years and I still find places here and it fills me with this amazing thrill, like the mysteries are still out there.

Thank you so much, Gayle Forman, for answering my questions!

I hope everyone has a happy and safe New Year's Eve, and if you read any of these short stories, that you enjoy them. Bye!



drawing also took a long time, as names were pulled from one container and matched to an equal number of prizes or blanks pulled from another container. Prizes would typically constitute 85% of the take, with 15% going to the project. Private citizens often volunteered to organize these lotteries for public works projects, not taking any commission on sales, in much the same way people these days would volunteer to run a charity raffle or event.

After the Revolutionary War, capital was scarce, and from 1776 to 1789, each state issued its own currency. Depreciation and inflation was a serious problem. Leaders feared that too many banks would make depreciation worse, so by 1789 there were still only three banks in the country. The French and Indian Wars, as well as the war against Britain, were financed in part through lotteries.

Wealthy colonists were wary to protect their riches, and were not particularly interested in investing private funds in public projects. A series of lotteries in the 1790s funded improvements and construction for the founding of 47 colleges; Dartmouth, Princeton, Yale, and Harvard were among them. Private entrepreneurs would raise money this way to fund manufacturing startups, and many churches funded construction projects this way.

Moral Minorities

Back in 1699, Cotton Mather voiced the opinion that a lottery only serves to "pillage the people of a considerable sum, and invite a number to assist them in their actions, in hopes of going shares with them in the advantage; and such is the corruption of mankind."

Quakers and Congregationalist leaders also objected on moral grounds, believing that little benefit came back to the large numbers of poor and marginalized citizens who spent their money on lotteries. They warned that gambling and lottery decreased individual initiative by stimulating false hopes of gain without effort.

But other church groups saw money raised this way as economic salvation. They viewed lotteries as charitable contributions for public purposes, with reputable citizens managing them, much like a church bake sale or raffle today.

For example, in Pennsylvania between 1790 and 1833, 60 different church groups were authorized to make lotteries including Baptist, Catholic, Jewish, Lutheran, and Episcopal congregations – with the exception of Quakers, who have consistently remained critical of the lottery.

An estimate of lottery sales during 1832 in Philadelphia, the country's largest city at the time,

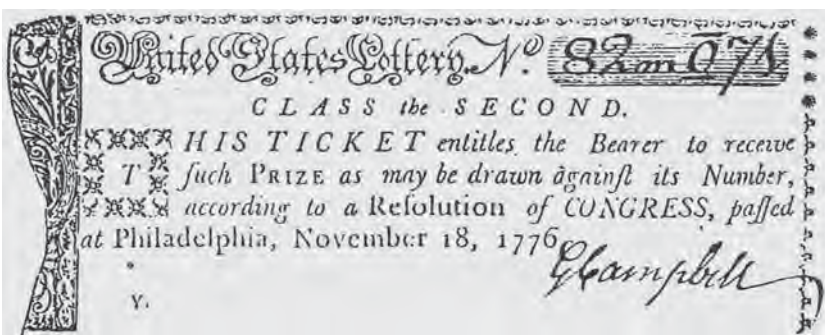
was \$1.5 million, or \$7.50 per person. Another estimate puts lottery expenses for that year at a total of 3% of national income. (In 2017, Americans spent an average of \$225 per person per year on lotteries – more, actually, if we only count the 49% of adults who play. Massachusetts leads the entire nation with an average of \$767 per capita annual lottery spending.)

As I found out at the NCALG convention, gambling objections in this country are currently raised primarily by church-affiliated groups; Southern states with strong Christian leadership were among the last to adopt state-sponsored lotteries in the 20th century.

These were minority objections in the rapidly expanding 19th century capitalist economy. Gambling was a very popular pastime, and taxation was a hotly resisted way to raise money for public works. But by 1894, lotteries were forbidden in every state: Louisiana closed out the trend, and they would remain illegal until our "Live Free or Die" neighbor, New Hampshire, started one up again in 1964.

So what happened during the 19th century to halt the use of lotteries as a proven system to raise investment capital?

Find out more in Part II of *Looking at the Lottery*.



Continental Congress Lottery ticket from 1776. (Wikimedia Commons image courtesy of Ron Shelley, from his collection.)

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the
poetry
page

It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
for lack
of what is found there.

- William Carlos Williams

edited by Christopher Sawyer-Lauçanno
Readers are invited to send poems to the
Montague Reporter at: 177 Avenue A
Turners Falls, MA 01376
or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

Our Monthly Poetry Page

This Month's Featured Poet: Candace Curran

We are very pleased to present this month the work of Candace Curran. Curran was twice named Western Massachusetts Poet's Seat laureate. She is a founding member and organizer of group multimedia installations including INTERFACE, Four on the Floor, Three on a Tree, and most recently, Exploded View. Curran's publications include the anthology *Bone Cages*, the chapbooks *Bugaboos* and *Dirty Dishes*, and the poetry book *Playing in Wrecks* (Haley's Press). She has published in the journals *Raw Nervz*, *Meat For Tea*, and others. She lives with her man and half-rescued dog in Buckland.

Restorations

It was a day of lay-downs
and get ups
to shore up
the shakey
with bird bits and drinks
deep in bed dreaming
or propped against sinks
just breathing out again

after breathing in

a non skid kind of day
filled with sleepy soft
dark holes for hiding
and the time it takes
for finding
stray parts and loose limbs
the stuffing to sew up
whatever it takes
to be grown up

a slow slinky
back
a muscled memory
consensus
all spackled and patched
for feeling alright
for moving forward
and walking upright
ready or not

Tussilago Farfara

*Coltsfoot blooms and dies in the spring before the
appearance of its leaves earning it the name, "son
before the father."*

Spring spat a wild spray of Coltsfoot
even the snowplows couldn't disembowel
sunspots lemon drops
your mother's kitchen yellow

bursting from cart paths railroad tracks
a strong tonic brilliantly broadcast
over the monochromatic
monotony of roadside dead-leaf brown

Spring shoos colonies of Coltsfoot
Cough-wort Horse-hoof
to bud and then flower
presenting son before the father

woolly down plumes soft as butter in the
Goldfinch nest staged as an after-
thought unfolding
sea-green the heart shaped leaf

Steller's Cows of the Sea

First extinction of a marine mammal at human hands 1768

Haven't we had enough
aren't we just full up with it
a bellyful of bad politics
the poisons and policies of
cheaters and liars sanctioning
lead bullets and den trophies
Can you picture that...

the licensing of pesticides and
pollutants hitting us where it hurts
impacting generations
cutting gouging deeper into
the family food air water rights
going once going twice
Democracy to the highest bidder

native populations wildlife
habitats honeybees zapped
swept under the rug
a cleansing we time travel
backwards poli-tick-tick-ticking
do you hear the silent siren
the whales bringing it home to show
how they can't digest this world
stomach it birth or breathe inside it
a bellyful they beach and split
modeling life and death in plastics
going once going twice tick tick
Can you picture that...

Winter Shawl

Snowshoeing Johnny Moore's pasture
first thought is golden pears
but it's Cedar Waxwings that startle
burst the heirloom tree
fly out like buckshot
bluster and rise

hover in bullseye brilliance
for a three second still-life
a blue ribbon award winning

photograph captured before
sinkholing
the constellation unspooling
returning on a long
pull of tattered thread

Chords for a Dead Man

She releases a shower song
from the sill of an open window

to the beat of a hot water heater
in the heat of love snagged in the limbs

a mongrel language part Wampanoag
Foxglove fisher cat thrown in

the lost epic a dirge
a simple rusty hinge unleashed

bursting the wings of wood pigeons
freezing a gravedigger's shovel

halfway to his mouth

Echocardio

Oh she let anger fly
finely etched
a beloved wine glass
suffering wing damage
a solo piece of their
what love gone
loose and deja'
leaving no footprint
you would notice
and not the first time
oh no not the first time
in a not together
too bright mourning
the wind raining acorns
wind bellowing yellow
leaves kissing the water
a mirror and she
follows down hollows
entering a silken body
cold enough to
cauterize a keening
the murmuration
slingshot back like
a slap
leaving no bullseye
you would notice

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *Heath Lewis*. 5 p.m.

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

Looky Here, Greenfield: *The Big Draw*. Figure drawing session with a model in monthly sessions. \$ donation. 7 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Falltown String Band*. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 3

Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton: *Bodies in Motion Festival at 33 Hawley*. APE@Hawley and the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought present a festival of performances, classes, and workshops from January 3 through January 31. \$. See scdtnoho.com for full schedule.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *New Year's Eve Simulation*. Countdown to 2020 with DJ Mary Jester and DJ Lucie Rosenfeld. Dancing and champagne; elegant dress encouraged. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *JC Hill*. 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4

Looky Here, Greenfield: *2D Needle Felting* workshop. Learn to make 2D images using roving and felting needles. Materials provided, but feel free to bring a sweater or soft surface of your own. Wool blends are suggested. \$. 2 to 5 p.m.

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

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Metazoa*, Heather Hummel. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Jazz Brunch with the John Lentz Trio*. 11 a.m.

Green Fields Market, Greenfield: *Co-Op Straight Ahead Jazz*. Balcony in the afternoon. 12 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Vision Board Collage* workshop. Ex-

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.

press your intentions for the new year with a vision board, a collage led by your intuitive desires for the year to come. Collage and other art supplies will be provided, but please feel free to bring any you wish to use or share. Free. 2 to 5 p.m.

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

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Musical Monday with Jeff*. 2:30 to 6 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: Movie double feature: *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, 6 p.m.; *Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey*, 8 p.m. Free entry; full bar and flatbread pizza available. Doors at 5 p.m.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Music in the Morning*. Children's music series. Live, interactive music by educator Marcy Gregoire, accompanied by movement specialist Hilary Lake. Puppets, costumes, musical instruments. 10 a.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Open Mic Night*. Repeats on first and third Tuesdays. 7:30 p.m.

ranged in rich four-part harmonies and sung for the struggles of today. Coffeehouse concert with refreshments available; suggested donation of \$6 to \$15. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Kaliope Jones homecoming, with Sodada*. \$. 8 p.m.

Majestic Saloon, Northampton: *Nemesister, La Neve, DJ Gus*. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Holy Basil, Sax Machine, Scare City, Mary Jester*. 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

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

Mount Toby Friends Meeting-house: *Yosl Kurland*. Kurland, a founding member of the Wholesale Klezmer Band, performs songs illuminating a Jewish perspective on social justice in Yiddish, Hebrew, and English. Aaron Bousel accompanies on the accordion. \$. 7:30 p.m.

CHARITY KEHL PHOTO



The Falltown String Band, who have been playing together for 32 years, return to the Rendezvous this Thursday night.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

The Quarters, Hadley: David Bowie birthday party with DJ Krefting.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Owls's Owls*. Grateful Dead family night. 9:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

Asbestos Farm, Hadley: *Deer Scout, The Duchess, Jesus Vio, and Gilt*. 8 p.m.

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Windborne*. Quartet of singers currently performing a collection of music from working class movements for people's rights in the US and UK over the past 400 years, rear-

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Bombtrack*. Rage Against The Machine tribute. \$. 8 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *Tether, Noise Nomads*. Noise and experimental show, with a closing ceremony for Lauren Pakradooni's multimedia exhibition, *Describing Sunset to a Robocaller*. 8 p.m.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *You Are Here*. Performance and opening reception for this month's art show, which features work by more than 30 artists on the theme of maps. Exploded View will perform new work at 2 p.m. 1 p.m.

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Cold Rain Band, Omega Vague, Dei Xhrist*. 7 p.m.

EXHIBITS

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 January 12.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *You Are Here: A Juried Community Art Ex-*

hibit. Work by regional artists in multiple media exploring maps, the significance of place, and movement across boundaries, curated by Exploded View. Where do you live? Where are you from? Where do you dream? How do you find your way? Where are your borders? Do maps lie? January 5 through February 29 in the Great Hall. Reception Sunday, January 12.

Greenfield Gallery: *Paul Hoffman, Paintings and Illustrations*. Poetic dreamscapes in-

formed by a lifetime of world travel. Through January 18.

Hosmer Gallery, Forbes Library, Northampton: *Marty Espinola*, photographs; *Jon Bander*, metal sculptures. January 8 through February 4.

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

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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9:30P JC Hill
SATURDAY 1/4
9:30P Metazoa
SUNDAY 1/5
11A Jazz Brunch w/
John Lentz Trio
9P Karaoke!!
MONDAY 1/6
8P Bingo!!
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The Beginning of a New Year



By LESLIE BROWN

MONTAGUE CITY – We look to the new year with a mixture of hope and dread. The news is full of violence – the ease of access to weapons; the latent anger held by so many individuals; the lack of controls available – this is a violent society. Those who want to kill will do so.

Today's mixed precipitation is a metaphor for the unexpected: sleet, rain, freezing rain, snow, and cold. Those who want to kill will do so regardless of law enforcement, the intervention of right-minded individuals, and the innocence of victims.

Where can safety be found? We used to believe in the safety of small-town life, but know now it is no guarantee. Recently a local young woman left behind her four-year-old son when she was murdered for reasons as yet unknown.

The Christmas season is one of hope and belief. We were fortunate in being able to hold a Solstice party, a Christmas dinner for Ken's brother who lives like a hermit in Warwick, a second Christmas for my Vermont family of eight, and then lastly, a dinner for a couple of old friends just last night in celebration of the season.

True, we have now had more than enough Christmas, and plan to lie low over New Year's with take-out Chinese food. Sometimes we last until the descent of the shining ball; we have also been known to

fall asleep before midnight.

The new *Farmers' Almanac* predicts the 28th through the 31st of December to be blustery and colder with snow showers and flurries; then in January of 2020, on the 4th through the 7th, there will be a storm from the mid-Atlantic to Cape Cod with a significant snow of four to eight inches.

Before you pooh-pooh the *Almanac*, it might interest you to hear that its accuracy is high since the predictions of 1818. The *Almanac* was established in 1792 and is still a trusted source of information for many. It can be consulted for weather prediction, astronomy, and garden information on timing of planting, soils etc. – unlike television or newspapers, whose information often varies from day to day.

In any case, we have already ordered our garden seeds and planned much of what we will plant next season.

Although the ground is hard, the woodpile continues to harbor small critters like voles and chipmunks, which by rights should already be tucked in their underground winter homes. Many of these small neighbors are feeding from the base of the bird feeder and the Indian corn in the feeder on a tree.

The squirrels continue to be hyperactive; they have stashed acorns and also feed on the dropped seeds under the feeder. Their lives are not without peril, as we have seen eagles, hawks, a coyote, and unleashed dogs running through the yard.

There is risk everywhere, yet we remain optimistic. There are good people out there.

Just yesterday there was a young couple downtown helping an older driver with their jumper cables; some local knitters hung a woolen

clothesline of warm socks, scarves, and hats for the taking; and a kindly neighbor dropped his plow and removed the heavy snow left at the end of our driveway earlier this month.

January first, the hardy souls will again make the Sawmill Run, and the monks from Leverett will beat their drums across the bridge over the river, more than likely. And then a new year will begin, ready or not.

We trust it will be characterized by positive political change, a brighter world for those in need of caring and food or shelter, and less acrimony in our local community. If we all try to think more positively, remember to vote, and say whatever prayers or poems we say aloud in the dark before we sleep, we will be moving in the right direction.

In the words of Dylan Thomas, from *A Child's Christmas in Wales*:

Looking through my bedroom window, out into the moonlight and the unending smoke-colored snow, I could see the lights of all the other houses on our hill and hear the music rising from them up the long, steadily falling night. I turned the gas down, I got into bed. I said some words to the close and holy darkness, and then I slept.



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CONTEST ANNOUNCEMENT

Poet's Seat Poetry Contest

FRANKLIN COUNTY – The Friends of the Greenfield Public Library are seeking poems for the 29th annual Poet's Seat Poetry Contest, which is open to all Franklin County residents and students. Submit up to three poems. The deadline is March 2, 2020 (postmarked).

This contest has been sponsored by the Friends annually since 1991. It is held in honor of Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, who lived in Greenfield from 1847 until his death in 1873 and was considered by his contemporaries – Emerson, Thoreau, and Tennyson – to be a gifted poet.

Awards will be given in three categories: first, second, and third place in the adult division, and the four top poems in the youth division – ages 12 to 18 (divided into 12 to 14 and 15 to 18 for judging). The Poet's Seat awards ceremony and poetry reading will take place in April in honor of National Poetry Month.

The adult first prize winner will receive stewardship of the Poet's Seat chair, with their name on a plaque listing all the previous winners, as well as a handcrafted Poet's Platter and a gift certificate to a local bookstore. All other winners will receive a handcrafted mug along with a gift certificate to a lo-

cal bookstore. (Pottery courtesy of Pam Adorno and Nancy Uchman.)

Here are the submission rules: Submit up to three poems. Number the pages of multi-page poems. Indicate "Adult" or "Young Poet." Young Poets should write their age on the front of the sheet where the poem appears, lower right-hand corner, circled. No identifying information on the front of the sheet, and no staples.

All poets, on reverse side of poem, should write their name, address, telephone number, and email address. Poems will not be returned. Submit on white paper, printed clearly in ink or typed in plain typeface. Include SASE for notification of receipt of entry; otherwise notification will be via email.

Only unpublished poems may be submitted. Previous first-place winners may not submit poems, though top-placing youth poets may re-submit when they enter a new age category. Entries must be received by March 2, 2020 (postmarked).

Mail to: Poet's Seat Poetry Contest, Greenfield Public Library, 402 Main Street, Greenfield, MA 01301. For more information, contact Hope Schneider at 772-0257 or email hopeschneider395@comcast.net.

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