

# The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 13

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

JANUARY 30, 2020

## Erving's New Library Nearing Completion



KOYAMA PHOTOS



Above: Erving's long-planned new library will be open at the end of March.  
Below: The walls of the children's room and maker space are brightly painted.

By ISABEL KOYAMA

The town of Erving is two months away from opening a new public library, located on Northfield Road between the Erving Senior Center and the elementary school, a stone's throw away from the current library on Moore Street.

After almost a year of construction, a dozen men in hardhats chip away at final touches of the new building, which smells of newly laid carpets and freshly painted walls.

The building's interior has high ceilings lined with exposed pipes and low-hanging rod lights, a nod to Erving's mill town identity. The library also lets in the town's natural beauty through full-length windows that directly face the woods.

"We're going to watch the seasons change through those windows every year," remarks library director Barbara Friedman as she looks out onto what will eventually constitute an outdoor patio.

Construction is slated to finish by the end of February at the earliest, according to Nick Jablonski, the assistant project manager from Project Planning Professionals (P3). The new library's project managers have worked on other local buildings like the library and

senior center in Greenfield.

Jablonski, who grew up in western Massachusetts and recently worked on the Dartmouth Public Library in the eastern part of the state, says the design has a "modern, industrial feel." Although Erving's new library is "smaller, square footage-wise," than the Dartmouth building, Jablonski says, "it feels larger because of the exposed structure. It opens up."

With 8,294 square feet to work with, the new building is significantly bigger than its predecessor, which has about 700 square feet of useable space and has been nicknamed "Erving's living room."

"We literally had no space to put people," reflects Friedman, who is already referring to the Moore Street library in the past tense. She says that several library programs, like "craft days," have had to be outsourced to other venues in Erving, such as the school and the senior center.

The new library will also be fully accessible for people who use wheelchairs, offer strong WiFi, and be more energy efficient.

The building is shaped like an "H." In the middle is a media center, home to a circulation desk, DVD stacks, and a café. The wings on either side that include a meeting room, business center,

see **LIBRARY** page A6

## Solar Company Must Re-Apply For Approval From Wendell Con Com

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Wendell conservation commission has been advised by the state Department of Environmental Protection that Sunpin Solar Development, LLC must submit a new Request for Determination of Applicability (RDA) for the large-scale solar array it plans to build on the corner of New Salem and Morse Village roads.

An RDA requests that the commission rule on whether a project complies with the state Wetlands Protection Act and town bylaws dealing with wetlands. Sunpin applied for one last fall, but since then, two of the three members of the town conservation commission have been replaced. The DEP has advised that the two new members must participate in the process from the beginning, so Sunpin must reapply.

"[T]he new commissioners were not present during the application process, related hearings and review," DEP spokesperson Kathleen

see **SOLAR** page A5

## Gill-Montague Regional School Committee Hillcrest Teachers Call For Investment in Clinical Support

By MIKE JACKSON

**GILL-MONTAGUE** — After several years of downsizing, Gill-Montague schools expect to bring on more staff in the fall for the second straight year, thanks largely to changes in the state funding formula projected to result in an 11% increase in Chapter 70 aid to the district. The school committee approved a preliminary FY'20 budget on Tuesday night that would allow

the addition of nine full-time positions: four teachers, four first-grade paraprofessionals, and an adjustment counselor.

Before they discussed the budget, however, they heard from teachers and staff at Hillcrest Elementary School about another need. A delegation of 15 members of the Gill-Montague Education Association (GMEA) union attended the meeting, and kindergarten teacher

see **GMRSD** page A8



Jessica Fox (front, right) presented the GMEA's statement to the committee.

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

## Town to Scale Back Planters, Fix Up More Affordable Housing

By JEFF SINGLETON

The Montague selectboard has approved a new plan to downsize two planters in front of the Shea Theater and Colle Opera House, part of a "streetscape" project on Avenue A in Turners Falls funded by federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

The new proposal, unveiled by town planner Walter Ramsey and Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing Authority, which administers block grants for Montague, was estimated to save \$148,000 on the project. The board, on the advice of Ramsey and McHugh, voted to use the savings to fund the rehabilitation of potentially three units of affordable housing.

The original proposal, presented at the board's January 13 meeting, would have raised the planters, which currently contain both smaller plants and trees, by several feet, widened the curbing on the sides for pedestrian seating, and replaced the current concrete with more durable granite. But Michael Nelson and Chris Boutwell, the two selectboard members who attended that meeting while chair Rich Kulewicz was in China, objected to the \$436,000 price tag for a project

see **MONTAGUE** page A6

## State Reps Warn Census Undercount Could Hurt County; Hope For Big Push

By MIKE JACKSON

**TURNERS FALLS** — "We need census ambassadors. That's all of us," Elaine Arsenault told a small meetingful of surprised, newly appointed census ambassadors last Thursday afternoon. "We need trusted voices in every community sharing the message that the census is safe, it's easy, and it's important."

Beginning March 12, the United States 2020 Census will start sending out postcards urging everyone (that's *everyone*) to call or log in online to register the inhabitants of their homes, their birth dates, and a few other vital stats.

The information collected won't be  
see **CENSUS** page A7

## High School Sports: The Week In Review

By MATT ROBINSON

The Turners Falls High School basketball teams played in four close, hard-fought games this week.

Also this week, Kobe Bryant and several others lost their lives in a helicopter crash. Bryant's death puts things into perspective: there is more to life than sports, much more.

**Turners Falls Boys**  
Greenfield 63 – TFHS 49  
Frontier 57 – TFHS 56

Last Thursday, January 23, the Turners boys' team and their followers traveled across the river to take on

their perennial rivals, the Green Wave of Greenfield.

The first few minutes of the game were not pretty. Green shot out to an incredible 18-0 lead. It was like they borrowed the old Boston Garden leprechaun to deflect every shot that Turners attempted.

The spell was finally broken when Jaden Whiting hit a foul shot to make it 18-1. Green scored the next hoop, but Whiting and Ant Peterson hit 3-pointers, and the first quarterly mercifully ended with the score 20-7.

There is a rivalry between Turners Falls and Greenfield  
see **SPORTS** page A4



DAVID HOIT PHOTO

Turners Falls' Taylor Greene (left) shot a 3-pointer over defender Erin Gilrein's head as Powertown hosted the Smith Academy Falcons on Tuesday.

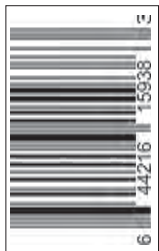


Light pours into the teen room, which will be equipped with gaming computers.

### Packed To The Gills With Content

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# The Montague Reporter

*“The Voice of the Villages”*

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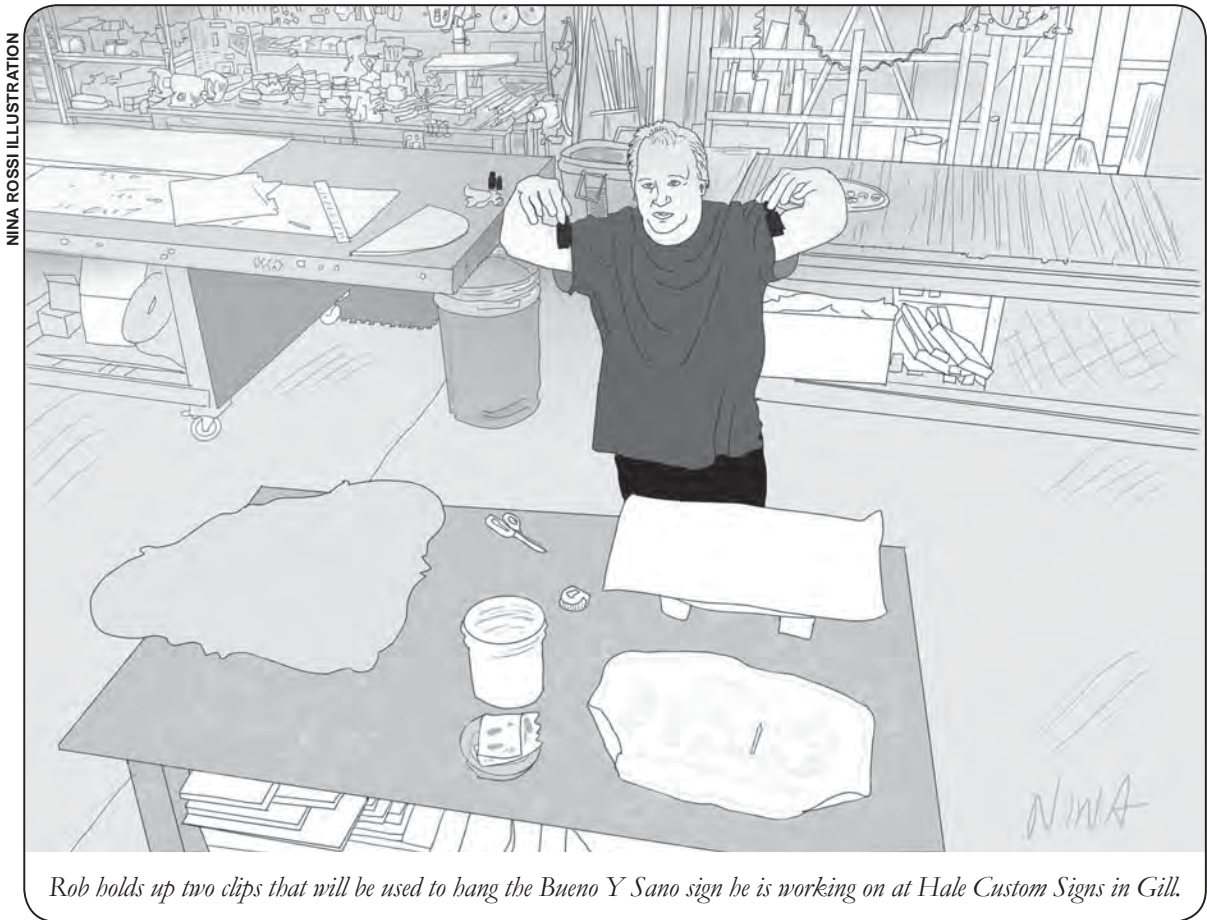
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August 2002



Rob holds up two clips that will be used to hang the Bueno Y Sano sign he is working on at Hale Custom Signs in Gill.

## A Time Kapsule

This curious item appeared in the *Greenfield Gazette and Courier* on April 17, 1871:

A notorious villain by the name of Butterfield, who for the past few years has been prowling about Charlemont and has succeeded in seducing the wife of one of our citizens to leave her home and wander about the country, was put under \$500 bonds for his appearance at the next Supreme Court. For want of bail he was committed to jail in Northampton, whither he was followed by his paramour, who pleaded with the jailer to let her occupy his room with him.

The story next popped up June 5: Henry Wright and Charles D. Nelson of Charlemont were charged with assault on Mrs. Laura A. Harris, the complaint being that the defendants took her from her room at night and administered a coat of tar and feathers. They were put under bonds of \$1000 each and the case continued until Friday next.

The June 12 edition had more details – under the headline “**Trial of the Charlemont Ku-Klux**”:

Whether she was guilty or not of the alleged crime of adultery there is no excuse for resorting to the gross, inhuman assault which was heretofore supposed to belong peculiarly to the ku-klux outlaws of the South. Mrs. Harris’ testimony was that on the evening of the 18th of April, while she was sitting at the chamber window of her husband’s house, a crowd appeared in the street. Masked men knocked at the door and then entered through the cellar, after being told by the husband that if they did so it would be at their peril. Harris was seized and bound, although he was armed with a revolver, and the chamber door was broken down with an axe by four or five of the ring-leaders. Mrs. Harris was found behind a bureau, (Here we’ll skip a few lines describing the mob assault in unnecessary detail.)

... smeared with tar and feathers. Then getting her up, tar was poured from a pan upon her head. She begged them to let her go, promising to leave town if they would do so. She was finally left in the field and went home.

Two weeks later, the paper printed a Letter to the Editor:

“...The guilt and crime of the wife were beyond the denial of the husband. She had clandestinely left him and remained away more than a year in different places in different States, and her guilty paramour meets her at her first place of stopping, and is with her and for no good purpose, at every place she stops.... And will the people of any ordinary town say that this was any ordinary case or one that demanded any ordinary treatment? Would not they say, and would not you, Messrs. Editors, say that such an Augean stable must be cleared by some means, and if all milder means proved unavailing, would not force, if employed as the last resort, be considered as the least of the two evils?”

The case was back in the news in March 1872, with six fresh arrests in the original attack. Wright was sentenced to two years’ hard labor in the House of Correction at Northampton. The judge at his trial observed “that this outrage was countenanced or encouraged by men who called themselves respected and who stood foremost in the ecclesiastical and educational affairs in that place...”

This prompted another angry letter from Charlemont:

“... For a long time our village has been the home of a fallen woman, growing year after year more bold in her career of infamy and sin. Remonstrance was vain, and when her crimes became too open to become longer tolerated the indignant people tried the law.... but the law was of no avail, and the woman Harris walked their streets more bold than ever.... The consequence was what might be expected. Urged on by her paramours, and by others of no enviable reputation, nearly five months after she caused the arrest of several young men of the village....

“[I]s the sacred honor of the people of Charlemont at the disposal of a few high officials, and a woman whose vileness and crime can find no parallel in Massachusetts? If so, heaven help them!”

**How much history is forgotten?**

## CORRECTION

Our coverage last week of the Leverett Village Co-op’s annual meeting (*Village Co-op Plan: New Board Members, Borrowing, Marketing*, page A1) mistakenly identified Sam Black, an incumbent board member running for re-election, as “Sam Lovejoy.”

Mr. Lovejoy has done many other things over the years, and his name was invoked during general discussion of the coop’s plan, but it does not appear on the coop ballot. We apologize for any confusion we may have caused, and thank our readers who pointed it out!

Letter to  the Editors

## Tree Bill: 30 More Wendellites Weigh In

**Dear Senator Comerford and Representative Whipps,**

Recently, the Wendell Selectboard sent you each a letter opposing H.897, “An Act Relative to Forest Protection.” As citizens and voters of Wendell, and your constituents, we join the Wendell Selectboard in its opposition to this legislation.

What supporters of H.897, such as RESTORE: The North Woods and the Wendell State Forest Alliance, have not entirely articulated is the full impact of this proposed legislation. In 2010, stakeholders from across the Commonwealth, including environmental activists, state and local officials, land trusts, and individuals representing state or national conservation agencies, got together to define three types of use designations within state protected land: *park*, which comprises areas of active recreation; *woodland*, which undergoes active forest management; and *reserve*, which is primarily untouched land.

These designations were determined after careful study and an inclusive process involving many stakeholders. At the time, climate change was a known threat, and the role of carbon sequestration in climate mitigation has been studied since at least the mid-2000s; however, these stakeholders still agreed on the above designations.

H.897 would significantly change these agreed-upon designations by eliminating *woodlands* from our state protected lands. Some proponents of this measure argue that forest science is junk science, and that only climate science is valid. Some proponents also deride valid science around bird habitat loss in the Commonwealth as for the birds.

In doing so, these proponents are engaging in a form of anti-science, where they pick and choose which science is valid based on their worldview. Science must be viewed holistically, and conflicting scientific conclusions must be reconciled through sound policy-making.

Make no mistake, we view climate change as an emergency. Climate change will bring temperature changes to our region, and is also projected to bring intensified storms, allow incursion of new invasive insects and other pests due to increases in their ranges due to more favorable temperatures, and the further diminishing of habitats for threatened species.

It is paramount that within this context, our state agencies tasked with managing our protected state lands have flexibility to manage forests to address these threats.

H.897, by eliminating woodlands all together, hamstringing these agencies in terms of their available climate mitigation strategies. For example:

H.897 does not allow for commercial logging, meaning local loggers will not be able to bid on these projects, and meaning rather than receiving revenue from the projects, the State will need to pay to have the logging done;

H.897 expressly states that the timber in *reserves* shall not be sold, removed, or destroyed, and diseased timber, and the associated pests, will remain in the forest;

H.897 allows for vegetation management to ensure public health and safety; provide fire protection and prevention; remove invasive species or pests; restore or protect habitats for rare or endangered species and exemplary or rare natural communities; control erosion and stabilize soils; maintain existing agricultural fields, vistas, and hiking trails, which *DCR forest management plans already address in woodlands*, a designation which we believe should be maintained;

H.897 importantly bans the creation of new fields, vistas, and wildlife openings, thus depriving the ability to habitat manage, which proponents have claimed the bill still allows.

Equally as important, H.897 was drafted by an activist group, RESTORE: The North Woods, and has been locally supported by a small, but vocal, group of Wendell residents who do not represent a majority of stakeholders, nor is there evidence that they speak for a majority of Wendell citizens.

The *park*, *woodland*, and *reserve* designations will hopefully be up for review soon, and presumably this would involve another public, inclusive process where all stakeholders have a seat at the table. The Legislature, by taking up H.897 and relying on proponents and opponents lobbying for and against its passage, would circumvent an important public process – one that is necessary to ensure all stakeholders are at the table, and that sound public policy is developed around managing our forests with climate change mitigation, habitat loss, and other important environmental factors considered carefully.

Such a public process should not be circumvented by the Legislature.

We urge you to reject H.897, and we do not believe this measure should be sent from the committee to the full Legislature for a vote.

Respectfully submitted by the undersigned citizens of Wendell,

- Raymond DiDonato

Michael Idoine

Anne Diemand Bucci

Jeffery Budine

Gillian Budine

Margo Culley

Jacob Doody

Ted Gagnon, Jr.
- Melinda Godfrey

Paul Godfrey

Fred Holmgren

Karen Idoine

Daniel Keller

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Harry Williston

Marianne Sundell\*

\*Shutesbury resident, Wendell landowner

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(ORIGINAL CONTENT ONLY, PLEASE)

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**Published weekly on Thursdays.**  
*Every other week in July and August.  
No paper fourth week of November,  
or the Thursday closest to 12/25.*

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

I'd like to do a little shout-out right off the top here for **Bruce Watson's *The Attic***, an online magazine which lands a fascinating story in my inbox once a week and is now going into its fourth year. Billed as "True Stories for a Kinder, Cooler America," Watson's stories run the gamut of history, science, humor, American faces and places, arts, literature, and more.

The Montague Center author writes: "Time was when magazines I wrote for, *Smithsonian* and *American Heritage*, explored this space. But screens have silenced kinder, cooler Americans. The result is a nation of angry, shrill voices. If you are sick of the anger, join me in The Attic."

Watson is the author of several books. His most recent, *Light: A Radiant History from Creation to the Quantum Age* (Bloomsbury Press, 2016), is about how humans have experienced light throughout the ages. Learn more at [brucewatsonwriter.com](http://brucewatsonwriter.com).

The **LAVA Center grand opening** is coming up this Friday and Saturday in Greenfield. LAVA is a new performing arts incubator, black box theater, and community space at 324 Main Street, between TD Bank and the Pushkin Gallery.

Enjoy music from the Farley String Band on Friday at 4:30 p.m., and then watch Greenfield's winter carnival parade pass by at 6. Bring the kids back for story hour with Doug Selwyn at 1 p.m. on Saturday, and enjoy a Strings for Kids Ensemble performance at 2. At 5:30 p.m., check out the **BYO Performance Salon**. Organizers invite the community to bring something performative to share, such as "your favorite poem, something you've written, musical instruments, etc."

Silverthorne Theater Company (STC) occupies one of the offices.

At 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, the theater will pull out some of the most spectacular costumes used in STC's past six seasons, as well as samples from its collection, for a **festive fashion show**. A display of outrageous footwear will be up for auction; proceeds will fund STC's "Theater Thursday" play reading series.

The opening weekend concludes with a potluck supper and discussion on Sunday, February 2 at 5 p.m., accompanied by a traditional Irish music session.

Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls announces another event in their community room for this Saturday, February 1. Montague Police Department staff sergeant Lee Laster will discuss ways to minimize dangerous situations in a family-oriented public safety presentation called **Keep Your Precious Valuables Safe** from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The "precious valuables," in this instance, refers to children.

Light refreshments will be provided, and the bank hopes attendees will bring their children to the event. According to the press release, "While there is indeed evil in our world, knowledge is powerful!"

Also opening this weekend on Saturday, the Sawmill River Arts Gallery **Small Works Show and Sale** has its opening reception from 1 to 4 p.m. The gallery, located at the Montague Bookmill complex, has collected small works of wall art from the community for the exhibit, many of which will be for sale at a very affordable price. Come out and support local artists.

Ever thought about mapping your heart? Join Exploded View for a non-medical intervention meant to help open your heart to a loved one in a **Mapping the Heart workshop** at the Great Falls Discovery Center on Sunday, February

2 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Supplies will be provided to make a valentine for your loved one – human or wild – or send to your favorite climate activist, scientist, senator, or congressperson. Be inspired by various folding techniques demonstrated by Exploded View member Trish Crapo. The workshop is part of a series of events tied to the regional art exhibit *You Are Here*, curated by Exploded View and on view in the Great Hall until the end of February.

Next Wednesday, February 5, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, and the Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, the **national co-chairs of the Poor People's Campaign**, are coming to Greenfield as part of the "We Must Do MORE (Mobilizing, Organizing, Registering, and Educating)" national tour. They will be giving a talk at the Second Congregational Church, 16 Court Square, at 7 p.m.

The Poor People's Campaign moral agenda is based on the fact that "140 million poor and low-wealth people in a country this rich is morally indefensible, constitutionally inconsistent, and economically insane."

The MORE campaign hopes to "shine light on the conditions of those most impacted by systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism" in the context of elections.

"It is no accident that, despite both parties appealing to their bases, the single largest voting block in American politics is those who did not vote at all in the 2016 elections," they argue. "The current system does not work for the poor, and they make up the majority of non-voters."

Orange has a new arts center called Stage on Main. I haven't gotten over to one of their events yet, but a posting on their Facebook page about an exhibit of **marquetry and paintings by Ralph L. Henley** (1915 to 2002) on February 8 from 3 to 5 p.m. caught my eye.

"For many years of his life, Henley pursued his hobby of making marquetry furniture to use in the home he built in Orange. Marquetry is a woodworking technique, on the idea of making jigsaw puzzles, where the craftsman uses wood veneers to construct designs that are

then applied to a surface. People are surprised to discover that many of the drawers in Henley's furniture not only stored his family's possessions, but were decorated inside and out with marquetry scenes of sailing ships, animals, and birds.... A lot of his paintings depict the Town of Orange."

Sounds unusual and interesting! Call (513) 633-4302 for more information. Stage On Main is located at 17 South Main Street in Orange.

The Universal Access program of the state DCR is sponsoring a series of **free, adaptive winter recreational programs** called All Out Adventures at the Wendell State Forest this winter. Individuals with disabilities and their families and friends can enjoy ice skating, cross-country skiing, sit-skiing, gentle sled hockey games, kick-sledding, snowshoeing, hiking, and snowmobile rides on group excursions.

Meet at the lodge on Saturdays in February at 11 a.m. Bring your own lunch, and pre-register by calling (413) 584-2052. More information at [alloutadventures.org](http://alloutadventures.org).

Also coming up in the great outdoors, check out **full moon snowshoeing** at Northfield Mountain and Recreation Center, February 8. The event begins at 5 p.m. so you can watch the moon rise over the winter woods. Two miles will be trekked as night stories are shared, followed by hot cocoa by the stove.

The exercise is said to be "moderately strenuous" and suitable for adults and children 12 years and older. Snowshoe rentals are \$16 if you need some, and pre-register by calling (800) 869-2960.

Interested in **exotic birds**? Go back to the Northfield Mountain on Tuesday, February 11 at 5:30 p.m. to get a taste of the tropics with education coordinator Kim Noyes, who will share photos and stories from a recent visit to Costa Rica.

"Dancing manakins, slow-moving sloths, monkey troops, and the Resplendent Quetzal are just part of the incredible biodiversity," says the event description. The program is free, and all ages are welcome.

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

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## GUEST COLUMN

By MICHAEL NAUGHTON

**MILLERS FALLS** – The main topic at the Millers Falls Community Improvement Association (MFCIA) meeting on January 17, held at the Millers Falls Library, was discussion of a request by Gary Patel, owner of Carroll's Market, to have some of the parking spaces in front of his store designated as "short term."

Patel had made his request to the Montague selectboard last fall, but before acting on it, the board had requested that the MFCIA offer input from the community. Given the busyness of the holidays, the group opted to postpone discussion until the new year, and Thursday was the day.

Mr. Patel was there, as was Dan Hunt, owner of the Whistle Stop Café, who had similar concerns. Both men said that vehicles often parked in the spaces in front of their establishments for long periods of time, sometimes all day, and said that their businesses had been negatively affected as a result. Mr. Patel said that he believes potential customers drive by, and if they don't see an available space, keep driving rather than park further away.

Discussion among the eight attendees ranged from this particular issue to the broader question of whether there is adequate parking in the village

as a whole, and how recent and ongoing redevelopment efforts might affect the situation.

Some of this focused on whether the town might try to acquire additional property for public parking, with suggestions ranging from a lot on Franklin Street to parcels near the railroad tracks. Some also expressed the hope that the efforts of Bob Obear, who has renovated several buildings in town and is working on others, will lead to more parking availability.

Gary Patel noted that he has private parking available next to his store, but access to it from East Main Street was blocked during the last streetscape project. There is still access from King Street, but customers have to drive around the block to get there, and it is currently underutilized.

After some discussion, the group agreed that opening a one-way access from East Main Street, with customers entering there and exiting on King Street, would be a big improvement.

There was also discussion of how short-term parking would be enforced. It was generally agreed that the burden should not fall primarily on the business owners, but how the town might do so effectively was less clear. In the end, the group decided that they did not need to resolve this question.

Noting that several of the spaces on the south

side of East Main Street are currently designated as two-hour parking, the group decided to recommend that the selectboard designate three spaces in front of Carroll's Market as 30-minute parking, and all of the other diagonal spaces on both sides of East Main Street as 2-hour parking. They recommended that these be actively enforced for one to three months, so that people get the message.

They also recommended that the selectboard consider reopening access to Carroll's parking lot from East Main Street, and offered to help the selectboard explore other options for increasing parking availability in the village. Kate Martineau volunteered to write a letter to the selectboard to that effect.

In other developments, Jeffrey Warren reported that he is now the Millers Falls representative on the tree advisory committee, replacing Zhao-hong Wen. He said that the town is considering adopting a tree bylaw, and he may be seeking input on this if it goes forward.

Warren is also making progress on establishing a community garden on the lot next to Highland Apartments, and said he hopes to hold an informational meeting in the coming weeks.

Michael Naughton is a member of the Millers Falls Community Improvement Association.

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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Rising Property Values, Future Police Chief

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Among the tasks that face the Wendell selectboard at the beginning of a new year is a tax classification hearing. The board of assessors usually comes in for a few minutes, recommends a single tax rate for both business and residential properties, and gives a recommendation of the tax rate for the coming fiscal year. The selectboard agrees to the single rate, and the proposed assessment.

This year, with a new paid assessor, they had more to say.

Anna Seeger did most of the talking for the assessors. She said that the valuations of 70 of the town’s 300 properties have been checked against their appropriate expected sale prices, and overall, the previous valuations were low. Houses have been selling well, and getting more than the asking price. Seeger said that a house on the market at \$200,000 might get an offer of \$300,000.

Without wired internet connections, Wendell’s prices may have been kept low. Now that the town is in the process of getting high-speed internet connections to residences, the price of homes may be increasing.

Many houses have seen improvements that have not been assessed or added to the property’s value: additions, renovations, and upgrades. The growth in personal property valuation, including solar installations, is \$4 million. Re-evaluation is scheduled in two years, but until then, and until the whole town is re-evaluated, inequities will persist.

Finance committee chair Doug Tanner said that when property values are increased, the tax rate can go down.

Chris Wings, chair of the board of assessors, said she wished the news was better, but the estimated tax rate for FY’20 will be \$23.62 per thousand dollars, up \$1.01 from last year. That rate will be reflected in the bill due in May 2020.

Chase Replacement

Bruce MacDougall of Municipal Resources Incorporated of Meredith, NH was on the agenda to discuss the police department succession committee’s effort to find someone who can replace

Ed Chase, Wendell’s long-term police chief.

MacDougall, a former Methuen police chief in Methuen, said that on this visit he had come more to listen than to speak. MacDougall had interviewed Wendell’s three officers and Chase, and said he planned to meet with the New Salem selectboard on January 27.

Tanner pointed out that for most of his tenure as chief, Chase got a small stipend: \$1,500 a year. That stipend has been increased, but is still far below a full salary. Whatever succession plan Wendell follows it will cost more money.

Selectboard chair Dan Keller, a member of the succession committee, said the committee is reviewing options, and plans to send a survey to Wendell residents asking what people want from the police chief and the police department.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich quoted one response from a 2013 survey: “Police should be like a good dog. They come when they are called, and otherwise are out of sight.”

MacDougall said that police work now has become more involved, and too important to be done incorrectly or insufficiently. Keller mentioned liability issues for the town.

Leverett and New Salem have shown interest in sharing a chief with Wendell. A police district composed of those three towns would have a large hole in the middle: Shutesbury, which has resisted prior contacts. Wendell’s shared fire chief with New Salem has worked, but the two fire departments had already worked together through mutual aid, and the chief has only brought them closer. The towns’ police departments have worked more independently.

Getting into a regional arrangement is difficult, it was pointed out, and getting out of one is more difficult.

Tanner said some towns have given up entirely on having a police department, and use Massachusetts state police. MacDougall replied that state troopers all work full-time already, so any time they spend responding in Wendell would be paid as overtime, time and a half, by the town. Tanner said even that large expense might compare favorably with the pay of a full-time chief.

MacDougall pointed out that with state police covering Wendell, there would be no patrols,

only responses.

He said he thought a retired police chief from a larger city might be willing to work as a part-time chief in Wendell.

Other Business

Selectboard member Christine Heard brought up transferring the meetinghouse property to the Friends of the Wendell Meetinghouse, saying, “I think we agreed we want to hand the property over.”

The board discussed whether the town should pursue a land use agreement with the Friends. Keller suggested just entering a purchase and sale agreement, but the Friends, who feel that the situation is confused by the separate ownership of the building and land, are not comfortable with that. They have agreed to pay for the cost of clearing the title with a quiet title complaint.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has asked the town to identify its priorities for direct local technical assistance. Keller suggested an inventory of the culverts in town.

Aldrich said that when New Salem had that done, the job was thorough and valuable: culverts were mapped, and, evaluated for their condition and adequate size. She said the cost, if the town had contracted independently, would have been \$12,000.

Treasurer Carolyn Manley, although not in the office at the time, suggested exploring the feasibility of shared services for OSHA compliance. Heard suggested help with the open space and recreation plans. Aldrich said she would email the survey to the planning board.

Income at the WRATS increased from \$11,404 in FY’18 to \$35,716 in FY’19, a result of tighter control, but solid waste disposal still cost the town more than WRATS fees brought in.

Board members decided to interview two of three applicants for the multi-board clerk position.

With her upcoming retirement from the selectboard, Heard listed three objectives she wants to focus on until retirement, and hopes are pursued after she leaves: transferring the meetinghouse to the Friends; finding a solution for the property at 97 Wendell Depot Road; and cleanup of the property at 131 Lockes Village Road.

SPORTS from page A1

which spans generations. It’s not quite as intense as the one between Kansas and Kansas State, but the Blue/Green rivalry is alive and kicking.

I got to the game early to watch the JV game, and sat at midcourt behind the scorers’ table. As that game wrapped up, more and more Blue Jackets took their seats behind me: a mix of the cheer squad, the JV boys’ team, members of the swim teams, both girls’ squads, and others I didn’t recognize. The bleachers to our right were filled with parents, teachers, and alumni, and although the students behind me made the most noise, the adult section was the most vocal.

Late in the second quarter, with the score 35-18, the Greenfield coach questioned a call. He huddled with the referees and the call was overturned, giving the Wave a 38-18 lead. This did not sit well with the grown-ups. They protested mightily, and called out some pretty inflammatory accusations.

The half ended with Green scoring two more points to make it 40-18. Throughout the break, the adults continued to question the refereeing.

As far as the students in attendance, the Green Kids didn’t really get loud until the score was 18-0, but the Blue Jackets behind me kept pace with their cheering. I’ve never sat in front of the cheer squad before,

and believe me, they can get pretty loud – especially during the chant, “If you can’t hear us, we’ll get a little louder.” With every verse, they did indeed.

I knew that if the Thunder Men could pull within 15 by the fourth, they would have a chance to win, and they did: after three, the score was 49-36.

Turners hit a 3-pointer to open the final period, and suddenly it was a 10-point game. Green held onto its lead through the quarter. With the score 61-49 and less than a minute on the clock, Turners was forced to foul, and Green scored the last two foul shots to take the game 63-49.

Brendon Driscoll led Turners in scoring with 14, followed by Anthony Peterson (12), Jaden Whiting (10), Marcus Sanders (6), Chace Novak (5), and Liam Driscoll (2).

On Monday, Turners traveled to Deerfield to play the Frontier Red Hawks. I’ve been to dozens of basketball games this season, but this was the most entertaining for me.

The Blue Jackets were in attendance again, but in smaller numbers and with less intensity than in Greenfield. In this game, Powertown made up for the height disparity by running a tight defense. They badgered the Frontiersmen throughout, scoring points on steals and fast breaks. The game was hard fought, with Red holding a 15-13 lead after a quarter and a 29-27 lead at the half.

Powertown scored the first points after the break to tie it up, and going into the fourth had a 2-point lead themselves, 41-39. Frontier answered to knot it again at 41. It was tit-for-tat until, with the score tied at 51, Frontier scored four more points to open up a 55-51 lead with 37.5 seconds left in the game.

That’s when Turners called time. The Red fans began to chant “it’s all over, it’s all over,” but they got quiet when Peterson hit a 3-pointer. With 20.8 remaining, Turners was forced to foul. Red sunk both free shots to go up 57-54. Blue scored one more basket to make the score 57-56, but there wasn’t enough time to foul again, and Frontier held on to win by a point.

Novak scored 24 points for Powertown, followed by Peterson (10), Liam Driscoll and Sanders (8), Whiting (4), and Brendon Driscoll (2).

Girls Basketball

TFHS 42 – Athol 38

Smith Academy 47 – TFHS 44

Last Wednesday, the Athol Red Raiders came to town, and the Blue Ladies defeated them 42-38. The win was the Thunder Ladies’ third of the season.

Smith Academy came on Tuesday, and Powertown tried to make it two in a row. It was scoring by committee for Blue, with Kendra Campbell, Hailey Bogusz, Taylor Green, and Lindsay Whiteman

earning points in the first quarter. Blue took an early 11-3 lead, but Smith charged back to tie it at 11, and the quarter ended with Turners holding a 13-11 lead.

The game remained tight through the second quarter. With the score 18-16 Smith, Stephanie Peterson sank two free throws to tie it up, and Greene scored the last points of the half, to put Turners up 20-18 at the break. Powertown skyrocketed ahead 29-20 in the third, finishing the quarter with a 33-27 lead.

But the Smithies tied it up halfway through the fourth quarter, and moved into a 38-36 lead. Blue went on their own run to go ahead 42-39, but Smith overcame that deficit, too, ending up ahead 45-42 with 46 seconds on the clock.

Blue intentionally fouled and scored the next hoop, pulling the game within a single point with 34.9 left. They hadn’t committed enough fouls to force a foul shot, so they had to keep fouling until a Falcon finally went to the line.

But she hit both shots, giving Smith Academy a 47-44 lead as time was running out. Powertown inbounded the ball, but was unable to hit the 3-pointer that would have sent the game into OT, and Smith took home the victory.


Next week: A look at Tech – and saying goodbye to seniors.



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Week of February 3 in Montague



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**SOLAR** from page A1

Fournier explained. “MassDEP’s Wetland staff recommended that the Con Com and applicant begin the process again to ensure the voting members could make an informed decision.”

At a meeting on December 17, former commission members expressed concern about a wetland that appeared to be within 100 feet of the proposed project. According to state and town law, a wetland that close would require Sunpin to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) application, and request a review and special permit from the con com.

According to Ward Smith, an incoming con com member, if Sunpin can show the array does not fall within a 100-foot “buffer zone” of the wetland, the commis-

sion does not need to review the project, which can then move back to the town planning board for consideration.

But Smith also said he felt there was some ambiguity in the criteria under the town wetlands bylaw. The bylaw primarily references the 100-foot buffer required by state law, but also suggests the need to protect a “200-foot upland area” adjacent to any “vernal pools.” The wetlands area discussed by the commission on December 17 was not identified as a vernal pool.

The commission, with its full complement of new members, is slated to meet again next Tuesday, February 4 to review the new RDA. The town website lists Smith as the commission’s chair but Smith, who has just been appointed, said

no vote has yet been taken on the position. The site also lists Adam Kohl and Melissa Grader as members, but Kohl is being replaced by Timothy Sheehan. Grader is the one holdover from the previous commission.

The Sunpin project has generated considerable opposition in Wendell from residents who object to the cutting of local woodlands to accommodate large-scale solar arrays. Partly as a result of this opposition, town meeting last fall declared a moratorium on new large-scale solar applications until December 2020, to allow the planning board to review the town’s solar bylaws.

The Sunpin project, which was initiated in the spring of 2019, is not affected by the moratorium.



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION  
**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**  
PROJECT FILE NO. 601186

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed **Greenfield-Montague - Bridge Rehabilitation, Br. G-12-020=M-28-001, Montague City Road over Connecticut River** project in Greenfield-Montague, MA.

**WHERE:** Shea Theater Arts Center, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376  
**WHEN:** Tuesday, February 4th, 2020 @ 6:00 PM  
(Snow date: Thursday Feb. 6th, 2020 at 6PM at TFHS, 222 Turnpike Rd, Montague, MA 01351)

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed **Greenfield-Montague Br. G-012-020=M-28-001 - General Pierce Bridge Rehabilitation** project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The purpose of this project is to rehabilitate the existing structurally deficient bridge and improve the condition for service and public safety. The proposed project consists of the rehabilitation of the General Pierce Bridge carrying Montague City Road over the Connecticut River between Greenfield and Montague, MA. The project consists primarily of deck replacement, various steel member replacements, isolated steel repairs, and utility additions. The proposed roadway alignment and profile will be similar to the existing conditions. The intersection in Gill of Route 2, Main Road, and Avenue A will be modified to better handle additional traffic when the bridge will be closed during construction and detour will be in place. No right-of-way is necessary for this project.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below. Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Bridge Project Management**, Project File No. 601186. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto:dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us)

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email ([MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us)). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation/delay announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.  
CHIEF ENGINEER

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GILL POLICE LOG

# Crashes, False Alarms, Elderly Hitchhiker

**Wednesday, 1/1**  
5:20 a.m. Returned call about a legal question from caller on Chappell Drive.  
8:19 p.m. 911 caller from River Road reported smoke in the basement. Investigated.

**Thursday, 1/2**  
9:03 a.m. Mountain Road Estates call reported a fox in his yard, limping with its eyes half closed.  
3:46 p.m. Caller from Boyle Road reports that numerous American Express accounts were opened in her name.  
8:32 p.m. Caller from Chappell Drive reported possible intoxicated driver.

**Friday, 1/3**  
11:01 a.m. Burglar or hold-up alarm went off on West Gill Road.  
1:35 p.m. Attempted warrant service on North Cross Road.

**Saturday, 1/4**  
1:01 p.m. Assisted Montague PD on Fourth St.  
1:02 p.m. 911 caller reported a stove fire on the French King Highway. Call transferred.  
2:57 p.m. Medical emergency on West Gill Road.  
3:35 p.m. Caller from Erving reports a Subaru tracking to the side of the road with flickering taillights. Caller doesn’t know if the operator knows that something is wrong. The vehicle was later stopped in Gill.

**Sunday, 1/5**  
2:10 p.m. Medical emergency on Mountain Road in Erving.

**Monday, 1/6**  
12:59 p.m. 911 call from a French King Highway address on an open line.

**Tuesday, 1/7**  
6:34 p.m. Residential burglar alarm on French King Highway.

**Wednesday, 1/8**  
8:59 a.m. Burglar alarm on French King Highway.  
2:41 p.m. Assisted state police on Chappell Drive once clear of court hearings.

**Thursday, 1/9**  
10:33 a.m. Assisted with funeral procession at Gill lights on French King Highway.  
11:55 a.m. Caller on South Cross Road reported a salesman in small gray car.  
4:47 p.m. Caller from Myrtle Street would like to speak with an officer about a past assault.

6:03 p.m. Caller from South Cross Road requests a welfare check.  
6:12 p.m. Caller reported a white Mazda 6 hit a deer on Main Street in Northfield. The deer is still alive and in the middle of the road.  
6:20 p.m. CO alarm on Cove View Lane.

**Friday, 1/10**  
5:22 a.m. 911 hang up call from Green Hill Road. All checked OK.  
12:10 p.m. Medical emergency on Memorial Grove Road.

**Saturday, 1/11**  
11:15 a.m. Medical emergency on Purple Road.  
3:12 p.m. Elderly party found walking on French King Highway, attempting to get a ride to Athol. No wants or warrants. PD transported her to Dunkin Donuts and made contact with an Erving PD, who will take her to Orange.  
4:48 p.m. Caller from Boyle Road reported a vehicle parked on NMH property for four hours, is concerned.

8:41 p.m. Officer en route to possible jumper on the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Taken for evaluation.

**Sunday, 1/12**  
10:22 a.m. Caller reported a disabled vehicle on the French King Highway. The car ran out of gas.  
3:53 p.m. Burglar alarm on Boyle Road.

**Monday, 1/13**  
11:42 a.m. Caller from Main Road reported attempting for two weeks to get keys back for caller’s business.  
4:31 p.m. Assisted Erving PD at West Main and Bridge streets.

**Tuesday, 1/14**  
3:22 p.m. Caller from Erving reported green Audi driving erratically west-bound on Route 2, passing in a no-passing zone, forcing the caller and a tractor trailer off into the breakdown lane.  
3:50 p.m. Caller reported a vehicle losing rear wheel on the French King Highway. PD located the wheel but were unable to replace with spare because the studs were broken off. Waited with caller until Art’s Tire arrived.  
5:18 p.m. Caller reported a disabled Nissan Versa east-bound on Route 2.

**Wednesday, 1/15**  
11:17 a.m. Caller reported that a female party took out a sign at the French King Highway and Main Road.

**Thursday, 1/16**  
8:58 a.m. Caller reported downed wire at Ben Hale Road. No tree involved, no fire, but road is blocked.  
5:44 p.m. Report of accident on French King Highway involving a Camry and a Subaru. A vehicle exiting the parking lot struck a passing vehicle. The vehicles are pulling into the parking lot and there are no injuries.

**Friday, 1/17**  
10:45 a.m. Caller reported icy road conditions on Main Road between Lily’s Farm and Main Road. Highway supervisor notified.  
2:22 p.m. Two loose dogs, a black Labrador and a small brown dachshund type, reported running in and out of traffic on West Gill Road.  
6:28 p.m. Caller found an older boxer on Main Road with a collar and leash attached to it. Caller is standing by with the dog.

**Saturday, 1/18**  
9:20 a.m. Caller from Mountain Road reported an unwell raccoon in the yard.

**Sunday, 1/19**  
4:53 p.m. 911 misdial from Lamplighter Way.

**Monday, 1/20**  
6:09 p.m. 911 transfer call from Walnut Street, requesting a police escort so that he can get his personal belongings.  
6:40 p.m. Resident from Main Road dropped off a propane tank located over embankment from previous accident on South Cross Road.

**Tuesday, 1/21**  
8:51 a.m. PD conducted drill on Boyle Road.

**Wednesday, 1/22**  
8:38 a.m. Caller reported a disabled red Nissan Rogue in roadway at Main and West Gill roads.  
1:29 p.m. Caller reported solicitors at her Boyle Road residence for the second time this week.

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**MONTAGUE** from page A1  
that only completed half a block.

Nelson argued that at that rate, the entire streetscape project, which had already been approved by the board, might take 20 years. He said he was afraid that a financial crisis during that time period might leave the project only partially completed.

The revised proposal reduces the height of the curbing to six inches and its width to twelve, similar to the current planters. It also slices the planter in front of the Shea Theater in half, leading to the removal of a tree. Benches will be placed in the empty space, and a new tree will be planted alongside the alley entrance next to the Shea. Ramsey said the proposal had been endorsed by Josh Goldman, president of the Shea Theater Arts Center board.

There was a lengthy and rather technical discussion of how many affordable housing units could be rehabilitated by the funds freed up by reducing the streetscape cost. The board eventually settled on three units, although this could change during grant process.

Nelson was asked how spending the savings from the reduced planter project – which also includes rehabilitating the brick sidewalk next to the planters – meets his original goal of speeding up the time to complete the total streetscape. Nelson responded that he might prefer to spend the savings on an expanded streetscape this year, but time was too short to design such a project.

“The savings that we’re recognizing with the new suggestion gives us more money to do more projects faster,” he said.

**A Clerk At Work**

This will be a busy year for Montague town clerk Deb Bourbeau, with four elections during the coming nine months. These include a presidential primary on March 3, a town election on May 18, a state primary on September 1, and the final state and national election on November 3. There are various deadlines for voting registration, as well as to file as a potential candidate for local offices. Montague’s Democratic Party also holds a caucus to endorse candidates.

Bourbeau came before the board to request that it execute the warrant for the March 3 presidential primary. Montague Center (Precinct 1) will vote at the fire station at 28 Old Sunderland Road; Lake Pleasant and Millers Falls (Precinct 2) at the Highland School Apartments at 446 Millers Falls Road; the Hill neighborhood of Turners Falls (Precincts 3 and 4) at the senior center at 62 Fifth Street; downtown Turners (Precinct 5) at the town hall on Avenue A; and Montague City (Precinct 6) at the public safety complex at 180 Turnpike Road. The board approved the warrant.

Bourbeau announced that the last day to register for the March presidential primary, or to change party affiliation, will be Wednesday, February 12. She said the town clerk’s office will be open until 8 p.m. on

that day. Citizens can also register on the Secretary of State website. Absentee ballots, which can be obtained online or from the clerk’s office, must be submitted by noon the day before the election.

Bourbeau also announced the filing dates for nomination papers for various elected town officers and town meeting. Papers can be picked up at the clerk’s office until March 26.

Those wishing to run for town-wide office must collect 37 signatures from registered voters and submit them by March 30. Nomination papers for town meeting require ten signatures of registered voters within the candidate’s own precinct, and must be submitted by the same date. There are openings for town meeting in every precinct.

“I’m really stressing the fact that I would really, really love people to come in and take out nomination papers for town meeting,” Bourbeau said. “We’re in dire need. I think right now we have 16 openings.”

Candidates for regional school committee need to pick up papers at the superintendent’s office on Crocker Avenue. Those wishing to seek the endorsement of the Democratic caucus on the ballot need to contact chair Mark Wisniewski at (413) 588-6307.

While at the front table, Bourbeau reminded the board that dog owners have until May 31 to renew their licenses. The license is \$5 for a dog that is spayed or neutered, or \$10 “if your dog is still intact.” After March 31, a late fee of \$20 gets “tacked on.” Owners must bring proof of rabies vaccine from the dog’s vet. If a dog has died or been given away, owners are asked to call Bourbeau so it can be taken out of the “database.”

Finally, Bourbeau noted that the town census was recently mailed out, she urged residents to “look them over, sign them, and get them back to me.” She said that completing this census “keeps your voter status current”; any voters who do not return the census by June 1 will be required to show an identification and “sign forms” at the polling place.

**Special Town Meeting**

The board quickly reviewed the warrant for a special town meeting at the Turners Falls High School auditorium on the evening of Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m.

The warrant currently contains 11 articles. Highlights include creating a special “Cannabis Fee Impact Stabilization” fund, to park portions of local revenues from the cannabis production and sale facility on Millers Falls Road; allocating a portion of recent revenues from that facility into the stabilization fund; and allocating another portion, from a retail sales tax, into the town’s existing capital stabilization fund.

The warrant also allocates \$800,000 from the assessors’ so-called “overlay reserve” – freed for town use by the recent settlement with the FirstLight Power company

– to capital stabilization.

Other articles will rescind a \$521,000 appropriation for a canceled solar array at the water pollution control facility (WPCF), but also appropriate an additional \$130,000 for the WPCF’s operating budget; appropriate \$75,000 for removing an oil tank at the WPCF; increasing the budget of the dispatch department by \$12,000; and allocating \$19,000 to purchase voting booths.

The board did not take any votes on individual warrant articles, or the warrant as a whole.

**Other Business**

The selectboard executed four grants from the state Department of Transportation presented by Turners Falls Airport manager Bryan Camden. They included a \$92,500 grant for LED runway lights; \$13,709 for a new propane mower; \$120,000 to construct a solar array that would provide the airport with electricity; and \$92,150 to “remove vegetation in runway 34 approach.”

Camden noted that the solar array will be connected to the electric vehicle charging station planned for the airport. “That should be pretty cool,” he said.

The board appointed Shawna Williams as “permanent intermittent reserve police officer,” and Kate Dempsey Martineau as a library substitute. They also reappointed town administrator Steve Ellis as the town’s chief procurement officer.

At the request of executive assistant Wendy Bogusz, the board executed an estimate of the town’s population, which increased by approximately 3% from the previous year to 8,673.

At Ellis’s request, the board transferred \$2,000 from the “community development unallocated” fund to the town-owned Shea Theater.

The board executed two agreements with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments for procurement services, and a \$3,000 contract with Chris Sawyer-Lauçanno to develop bid specifications and construction oversight for work on the Unity Park fieldhouse roof. They also signed a “certification of operations” with the state Department of Environmental Protection regarding the town transfer station.

At the end of the meeting, Ellis reported that the state had agreed to a project to improve sight lines on the dangerous intersection of Route 63 and North Leverett Road. However, the letter from the state, read by Ellis, did not commit to “state or federal funding” for the approved “intersection improvement project,” a response to concerns expressed by town officials.

“Step one.... or two, actually,” said Kuklewicz of the letter.

The board adjourned to an executive session to discuss contract negotiations with police lieutenant Chris Bonnett. The next scheduled board meeting will be on February 3.



KOYAMA PHOTO

Floor-to-ceiling windows will let light into the adult collection room.

**LIBRARY** from page A1

collaboration room, adult room, teen room, children’s room, and maker’s space. There is also an outdoor patio, and three bathrooms. Book stacks will be dispersed throughout, taking up the same amount of space they do in the current location.

“There are no meeting rooms in the current library,” says Friedman. “There’s no place for people to spread out, have a program, or just have a good conversation with others.”

The new library’s meeting room will have built-in cabinets for storage, a kitchen, 56 chairs, a boardroom table, and a television. “We can have meetings here, or we can dance in here,” Friedman says.

Rooms like the business center, collaboration space, and adult room will be available to reserve as quiet spaces. The spacious, rain-bow-shelved children’s room, the maker space, and the teen room, on the other hand, will likely be hubs of activity.

Although the construction team broke ground about a year ago, this \$5.5 million project has been in the works for more than seven years, since the town founded a feasibility committee and was awarded a planning grant in 2013.

After a lengthy process, the town voted to apply for funding from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), which was awarded in February 2018 at \$2.7 million, covering half of the project’s expenses. The town and other funds have matched the grant to make up the other half.

“It’s really a town project. Everybody has put their mark on it,” comments Friedman, who adds that at least 50 people making up vari-

ous town committees have helped.

Friedman says everything has run smoothly, due to factors including a “damn good construction company” that employs local workers, and a library building committee made up of people with substantial background and skills. “We have an HVAC guy, an electrician, two librarians, a teacher...” lists Friedman.

The town contracted Somerville-based architecture firm Johnson Roberts Associates, Inc. to oversee the library’s design and construction, headed by architect Phil O’Brien.

Johnson Roberts’ online portfolio shows 29 libraries the firm has designed, including the nearby Leverett Public Library, their smallest project to date.


“We’ve helped 35 or 36 different communities apply for a grant, and every community is different,” O’Brien told the Reporter. In regards to the Erving project, he says, “I’m extremely happy with the results. A good team always makes a good project.”

934 people, residing in Erving and neighboring towns, possess Erving library cards, and Friedman says she hopes that the new library will reflect the town’s needs and attract new patrons. “My hope from the very beginning has been to expand opportunity for Erving residents,” she says. “I hope there will be an opportunity for people to get together and generate ideas.”

The building will be open on March 1 for a visit from state senator Jo Comerford, who will be given a tour at 2 p.m. An official grand opening celebration is scheduled for Sunday, March 29 at 1 p.m. There will be live music and dedication speeches, and the public is encouraged to attend.



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**CENSUS** from page A1

shared with anyone else, such as law enforcement or ICE, but it *will* be used to draw new political districts, and to allocate state and federal funding to local communities.

That’s why this local “census launch” event, held last week at the Gill-Montague senior center, featured state reps Natalie Blais (First Franklin) and Paul Mark (Second Berkshire) as keynote speakers.

The good news, Mark said, is that with a projected 5% population growth, Massachusetts isn’t expected to lose another of its nine remaining seats in the House of Representatives, like it did after the 2010 count.

“The bad news is that most of that growth is in the eastern part of the state,” Mark explained glumly. “Our districts are going to continue to get bigger.”

Each state representative currently serves about 41,000 constituents, and that number is expected to reach 45,000 after redistricting. State senators have it even worse. “It’s going to mean more towns,” Mark said. “We’re always in the car. It means that many more boards of selectmen, that many more school committees to deal with.”

With Franklin County’s population – and Montague’s – expected to shrink slightly, and with this year’s census administered primarily online, a lower-than-accurate count could have a lasting negative impact on the area.

The tally is used to calculate everything from Medicaid, SNAP, Head Start, and school lunch programs

to funding for local roads.

“It’s estimated that \$2,372 per person in annual federal resources are lost for every person not counted,” said Jessica Atwood, economic development program manager at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. That means, she said, that if only 3% of the county evades the head count, \$50 million in local grants could go missing over the coming decade.

Households that ignore the first two postcards will receive a paper questionnaire. (Montague, outside of Turners Falls, will skip right over the postcards to that step). If no answer is submitted by mid-May, they should expect a knock on the door from a census taker.

Arsenault described this stage as the “most expensive,” and urged the audience to urge the public at large to self-respond. Problem neighborhoods will be targeted with “questionnaire assistance centers,” equipped with computers and staffed with helpful assistants.

Montague town clerk Deb Bourbeau said that she has been receiving calls asking whether census responses are shared with other agencies.

“Every census bureau employee takes an oath to protect your information,” Arsenault replied. “And we are sworn for life.”

*The main Census site is [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov). Those wishing to help can go to [masscounts.org](http://masscounts.org) to learn more.*

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LEGAL NOTICE of PUBLIC MEETING  
Leverett Conservation Commission

The Leverett Conservation Commission, in accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act (MGL c.131 §40), will hold a public meeting on **February 10, 2020** at a meeting beginning at 7:15 p.m. at the Leverett Town Hall, 9 Montague Road, Leverett, MA to review a Request for Determination of Applicability submitted by **Kristen Chamberlin** for drainage work at **23 Cider Mill Road**. The application is on file and is available for public inspection in the Conservation Commission Office on Mondays, 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. or by appointment at (413) 548-1022 ext. 3.

This notice is also available at [masspublicnotices.org](http://masspublicnotices.org).

## NOTES FROM THE ERVING SELECTBOARD

# Wage Study, Trash Contract, Cook

By KATIE NOLAN

The Erving selectboard met with the finance and capital planning committees on Monday, and approved a draft capital spending plan of \$755,000 for FY’21. The most expensive items include \$150,000 for a dry storage building for the highway department, \$150,000 for upgrades at the Park Street park, \$95,000 for network upgrade, and \$70,000 to replace carpets at Erving Elementary School.

The majority of the funding for Erving’s capital projects comes from taxation, but the capital planning committee estimates \$146,000 will be available from water department earnings, wastewater department earnings, state Chapter 90 funds, and grants.

According to Debra Smith and Benjamin Fellows, who serve on both the capital planning and finance committees, capital planning received \$1.5 million in capital requests and prioritized the \$755,000 in projects. The committee also worked the recreation commission to develop a long-term plan for park maintenance and upgrades.

Administrative coordinator Bryan Smith cautioned that the capital plan is still a draft, and will likely change before the FY’21 budget is finalized.

### Employee Compensation

At Monday’s meeting, the selectboard and fin com also discussed a long-awaited study of town employee compensation from the Collins Center at UMass-Boston.

In January 2019, the board signed a contract with the Collins Center for a comprehensive personnel policy review, position classification, and compensation study to guide the town in determining compensation for non-union employees. At that time, the board expected results by May 2019.

The draft study presented on Monday reviewed job descriptions and employee compensation in a number of “comparable towns,” including Athol, Conway, Gill, Greenfield, Montague, Templeton, Wendell, and Williamsburg.

According to Bryan Smith, because Erving is unique in being a small town with multiple departments and a large budget, the com-

parable towns include a balance of other rural towns with low populations and towns with larger budgets, with a preference for towns within 30 miles of Erving. “The data set is imperfect,” he acknowledged.

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that, although the town needs to pay competitive wages in order to retain employees, “we can’t pay outside our means.”

According to Bryan Smith, the town stopped using a graded system for classifying employees in 2010, but the Collins Center study proposes a return to a graded system, with eight grades and 15 steps within each grade. The police department could continue to use its current system of four grades, and the fire department its system of seven.

The grades are ranked based on the amount of autonomy, decision-making, responsibility, and credentials required by each job. (The study does not consider compensation for elected and appointed officials.) Bryan Smith said that once the report is finalized and approved, he can develop an implementation schedule.

Jacob Smith said that it would be necessary to talk with department heads, boards, and committees before implementing such a plan. If a new graded system is approved, it would affect the budget for all town departments, so the schedule would need to be in place before the FY’21 budget can be finalized.

Bryan Smith said that a consultant from the Collins Center would be available to meet the selectboard to answer questions in February. The board decided to review the report and discuss it further at its next joint meeting with the fin com on February 3.

### Solid Waste Costs

The board continued the discussion of disposal of recycled material and solid waste begun in December, when Erving was presented with a 10-year master contract with Waste Management Recycle America to operate the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF).

Erving has sent its recycled material to the MRF for years. Under the new contract, the cost for sending recycles to the MRF would increase, with an adjustment based on

the types of recycled material sent by the town and the market value of the material.

Originally, area towns were given until January 31 to sign the contract, but that deadline has been extended to February 28.

Meanwhile, earlier this month, Erving’s current trash hauler, USA Waste & Recycling, through their Murphy Road Recycling (MRR) subsidiary, proposed a lower disposal rate for recycles based on Erving’s municipal curbside collection contract with USA Waste. Because of differences in the structure of the MRF and MRR contract proposals, they are not directly comparable.

At Monday’s meeting, Bryan Smith told the selectboard that Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) director Jan Ameen told him she believes the MRF contract is the best option for Erving.

Also in January, the FCSWMD asked the town to consider a regional plan to send solid waste to the Community Eco Power trash-to-energy facility in Agawam at a rate lower than their current disposal cost.

Erving’s current contract with USA Waste for hauling and disposing trash – originally negotiated with Duseau Trucking before Duseau was acquired by USA Waste – ends June 30, 2021. Bryan Smith reported Ameen’s recommendation that the town request bids from waste haulers for trash pickup and disposal after that expires. The board authorized him to publish the request.

Selectboard members and citizens attending the meeting spoke in favor of more education about recycling for town residents. Bryan Smith said he would be reviewing educational materials with Amy Donovan of the FCSWMD.

### Other Business

The board appointed Deborah Porlier as senior center cook for 19 hours per week. She will start on February 18. Senior center director Paula Betterers said that seniors have been asking how soon center-cooked meals will be available again.

The board appointed Matthew Morin to the police department as patrolman. He will start after training at the state police academy.

## LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

*Here’s the way it was January 28, 2010: News from the Montague Reporter’s archive.*

### Radar Results May Indicate Colonial Burials

Like a scene from a science fiction movie, Doria Kutrubes focused her projector on a weird circular formation about three and a half feet below the surface of the soil, just beyond the western edge of Main Road, across from the town cemetery. Was it a circle? Or was it an X shape?

As the lights came up and the projected images faded on the screen at the Gill town hall, nothing was certain. Kutrubes, president and senior geophysicist of Radar Solutions International of Waltham, had succeeded only in deepening the mystery about what may lie beneath the surface of the 10-acre parcel at the corner of Main and West Gill roads.

Regional Native American tribes believe the Mariamante parcel may be the site where an unusual “spokes burial” of historical record is located. At their request, Kutrubes came to Gill last October to conduct an exhaustive survey of the site.

The town purchased the Mariamante parcel for \$245,000 in 2004, and had hoped to use the land for commercial development. Local lore provides ample support for the idea that the land has been a rich trove of Native arrowheads and artifacts, and recent surveys by UMass archeologists bolstered this, identifying one area of the parcel in particular the archeologists believe should be off limits to development due to its cultural sensitivity.

But the exact location of the spokes burial site, discovered on the land formerly owned by T.M. Stoughton in 1881, has so far proved impossible to pinpoint.

Kutrubes’ results did show signs

of soil disturbances consistent with burials.

However, a seemingly regular pattern of such reflections beneath the surface of Main Road, continuous with the cemetery wall and extending up to the wall itself, suggest to Kutrubes burials that might well date not from the Native prehistory of the site, but from Colonial times.

**Leverett Approves Another \$30,000 to Test Wells**

A hint of rebellion hung in the air Tuesday evening at the Leverett special town meeting, as a large crowd questioned the wisdom of spending large sums of money to eliminate a threat to private wells that may not exist.

Among the three warrant articles presented to the voters, the issue that raised the most controversy was the motion to appropriate \$30,000 for the ongoing testing of wells near the site of a former town landfill.

Modest levels of manganese have been recorded since 2008 in wells on Teawaddle Hill Road and Cushman Road, in the vicinity of the former landfill on Cemetery Road. The town is under orders from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to conduct two more rounds of groundwater sampling before July 1.

A number of residents, irritated by the cost of testing and what they considered the high-handed methods of the DEP, challenged the wisdom of the testing regime, even suggesting the town refuse to comply with the DEP directive.

“It’s easier for them to ask for more information than to consider other options,” said Chuck Dauchy, a board of health engineer. “We might be able to make an argument to use local geologists to challenge the DEP,” said Dauchy, who noted that Leverett has nearly as many geologists as lawyers.

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**GMRSD** from page A1

Jessica Fox read a prepared statement on behalf of the group.

“The issue that we want to bring to your attention, in part, we feel needs addressing through the budget,” Fox told the committee. “What we’re experiencing – even with our youngest learners – is an increasing number of students coming to us with mental illness, and students who are experiencing abuse and neglect and severe trauma.”

Fox said the same problem is faced by schools around the country, but that at Hillcrest, staff do not feel properly equipped to respond to “extreme behaviors that range from disruptive to violent.” While districts are required to educate each student in the “least restrictive environment” possible, she said, “for some, it seems like a clinical setting would be more appropriate.... We’re skilled educators, but we can’t necessarily provide psychiatric treatment and stabilization.”

The statement praised recent measures including the establishment of a therapeutic classroom and hiring of a full-time counselor and behavioral analyst at Hillcrest, but called for clearer guidelines and the use of funds either to place students out-of-district, or to develop new facilities. It suggested that administrators engage with other area towns and the state to “establish cost-sharing residential and day treatment programs for children” jointly.

While the GMEA’s intervention did not lead the school committee to modify the FY’20 preliminary budget, superintendent Michael Sullivan offered one response as the budget discussion began.

“You guys were spot on,” he said. “All communities are facing these challenges with students that come highly dysregulated, or with very high levels of need.”

Sullivan said he had approached the Collaborative for Educational Services to help develop regional clinical support, and a pro-

gram has been set up at Northfield Elementary School. “It’s the first year of that program, but it’s doing exactly what we intended it to do,” Sullivan said. “We have one of your former students enrolled there.”

The committee heard presentations from school principals about the proposed new positions. Conor Driscoll discussed a reading teacher Gill Elementary would share with Hillcrest and Sheffield Elementary, and Joanne Menard discussed the need for a music and theater teacher at the secondary level, as well as a health and physical education teacher at the high school. Melissa Pitrat was joined by pupil services director Diane Ellis to discuss a new special education teacher for Sheffield.

“Our staff has spoken to the level of trauma and behavioral health needs that we’ve seen across our population,” Hillcrest principal Sarah Burstein said, before endorsing the hiring of four new first-grade paraprofessionals.

The school committee approved, by a vote of 7 to 0 with one abstention, a preliminary operating budget of \$21,434,450 for FY’21.

Montague’s assessment currently stands at \$10,478,819, an increase of 4.41%, while Gill’s is at \$1,766,787, an 8.12% increase. The disparity was caused by a larger decrease in Montague students enrolled in the schools than Gill students.

The school committee approved an application to the state for reimbursement for the Gill Elementary roof. “Fourth time’s the charm,” said business manager Joanne Blier. It also approved updated policies on homeless students, military children, and children in foster care.

A screening committee for the superintendent search is being appointed. “We have at least one volunteer for each position, and in some cases, probably more,” reported chair Jane Oakes. “They’ll start their work once applications close on February 21.”

The school committee’s next meeting is scheduled for February 11.



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**12:00 PM- LUNCH** and opportunity to view “You Are Here: An Exhibition by Exploded View”  
**12:20 PM- MODERATED PANEL DISCUSSION:** *Where Do We Grow from Here?*  
**1:30PM- FACILITATED BREAK-OUT SESSIONS:** *Envision Future Development*  
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ANNE JEMAS PHOTO

Above: The view upstream from the White Bridge, Turners Falls. The Southworth and Strathmore mills are on the right.

A Huge Showcase of Talent At Looky Here 2020

By SAMANTHA WOOD

**GREENFIELD** – Looky Here is living up to its name. The arts collective has opened its first big gallery show, drawing on submissions from a public call for art. Called *Looky Here 2020*, the exhibition attracted varied and inspiring pieces from more than 30 artists, and it is worth a long look. The show, which includes painting, collage, ink, mixed media and small sculpture, as well as several short films, is curated by Looky Here member Hannah Brookman. “We’ve been having shows here, gallery shows, for the past two years, but most of them have been curated from within,” Brookman said. “There’s about ten members of Looky Here, and we’ve kind of been rotating through curating dif-

ferent shows. This one is our first public call.” A warm, cheerful crowd at the opening reception on January 19 offered a welcome counterpoint to the bitter cold night. Megan Moss Freeman of Haydenville has two collages in the show. In the one called “Solstice,” a single eye, surrounded with gold glitter eyeshadow, holds the center of the image, with bold, black fluid lines radiating outward. “I was putting a lot of pieces together in my own life,” Freeman offered, “and this was sort of a physical representation of that emotional, internal process.” Some hint of solid ground was important here, and the distant landscape beneath orients the viewer just enough. On the opposite wall hangs Jonas Fricke’s “Commiserating Buddies.”

Fricke, of Brattleboro, Vermont, presents these two pieces as one, each barely containing a figure, as they are filled almost to the edges, which are almost touching. Within the figures fit multiple shapes, scenes holding complex geometric landscapes like gestures of stories and emotions. These busy internal selves are speaking to each other across their borders. “I got to know them as I was creating them,” Fricke said. “I feel for them. I can see their exuberance, and I can also see their pain.” Gianni Ignatious “Iggy” Passiglia and Kaci, two students at Greenfield High School, collaborated on a film, “Profile on Alto Jeffro.” “Our video is a documentary on Jeff Gallagher, the art that he has made, and his music,” Passiglia said. see **LOOKY HERE** page B4



WOOD PHOTOS



The gallery and workshop space is located on Chapman Street in Greenfield (left); Julia Shirar, “Hug” (right).



MARY AZARIAN WOODBLOCK PRINT

By LESLIE BROWN

**MONTAGUE CITY** – One of the main complaints of folks in my age range is arthritis. The last time I had a physical, my physician asked if I had any questions. I replied that my knees were painful. “You have arthritis, and it’s not going to get any better,” he said. No kidding, but where did he learn his bedside manner? Then he told me he was leaving the practice, and moving to the home of his fiancée in Las Vegas. I waved him a mental goodbye, and hoped he would do better there. In the revolving door of my

THE GARDENER’S COMPANION  
The Ups and Downs of Aging

medical practice, I’ve seen two other nurse practitioners, one of whom I found particularly responsive and helpful. Maybe I can be assigned to her in the future – if she doesn’t leave. Two years ago we were getting ready to go on vacation and the cat developed a cough. We called a traveling vet, who was like the cat whisperer, despite his dirty Mickey Mouse t-shirt. The cat usually takes a powder when anybody comes to the house, but she just sat and looked at him while we talked. He suggested I get the cat some CBD oil, but said that she looked healthy enough to him. He asked if we had any ideas about her cough. We said we thought possibly it was because she liked to lie under the tarp covering Ken’s table saw in the yard and that likely it had grown moldy under there. He concurred with our diagnosis, and suggested we remove said tarp and buy some CBD oil to drop

into her food. I spent a small fortune for a bottle. Naturally, she wouldn’t touch the stuff. However, I read somewhere that CBD oil could help arthritic knees, so I gave it a try and rubbed some on. Bingo! It worked! So, money well spent, anyway. Unfortunately, the Mickey Mouse vet subsequently moved to Connecticut. Another disappearing doctor! We’re trying not to take it personally. Well now, my hair has turned grey, like that of many of my friends, but it had always been straight, and now I am blessed with the curly hair I always wanted. And it is still as thick as ever. Win-win! Except for the arthritis, I seem to be in very good health – although that is the kind of thing best left unsaid. Now we are retired, and can afford to go south for a month or so. This has been overall a mild January, but lately it has been especially cold. see **GARDENER’S** page B5

WEST ALONG THE RIVER  
THE BALL PLAYER’S WIFE



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

By DAVID BRULE

**MILLERS FALLS** – When you live in an old ancestral home, from time to time the house gives up its generations-old secrets. A carefully handwritten cache of letters turned up a month ago, hidden in the pages of an *Old Farmer’s Almanac* from 1921. The *Almanac* – along with football yearbooks from 1915 and 1917, newspaper clippings of articles on the proper care of poultry, recommendations for horse liniment products, and all – had been stashed away for the past 90 years, pretty much undisturbed. All this material is part of a family time capsule, artifacts relegated to the north bedroom which has served as a final resting place for many unwanted objects of generations past. Too good to throw away, too old to be useful: old chairs, lamps, clothes, photos, wedding mementoes of couples long ago passed away. These souvenirs of earlier generations in this house wind up there, upstairs. We’ve added our own contributions, too, over the past 40 years. So it turned out one dark January day we thought we’d look through some old boxes of books that had migrated up here from the last century. The letters that were filed in the *Almanac* were written by grand-aunt Gertrude to her husband, our grand-uncle Douglass Smith. It told of a lonely woman, recently married at 20 years of age, writing her husband who was off barnstorming in the far off reaches of New York State. You may remember the name of Douglass Smith, the ballplayer. Back in the days when Doug and baseball were young, he was a celebrated southpaw from Millers Falls who terrorized the local base-

ball leagues from 1909 until 1912, when he was signed on as a relief pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. He was destined to pitch his first game in the big leagues in Fenway Park. Born in this house in 1894, Doug went on at the age of 18 to become a lefty for the Sox. A left-handed pitcher, he had a blazing fastball, and what we would call these days a toxic spitball, banned as a biohazard in the contemporary leagues. Doug always laughed when he told us about the disgust on the face of the catcher and umpire when he fired one of those spitters in there. In high school, his teams beat all comers. He didn’t mind dusting off a few opposing batters, sending them into the dirt to avoid his bean ball. He would resort to that tactic from time to time to try to rattle them, to break their concentration. Baseball was bare knuckle in those days. More than once teams had to fistfight their way out of ball parks, especially when Doug helped roll up the score on the home team. Even young players chewed Slippery Elm tobacco, and Doug kept a plug in his back pocket for when he needed to throw a spitball. In his later semi-pro years, our uncle used to say he enjoyed a couple of slugs of whiskey in the dugout between innings. As a teenager he was scouted and recruited by the Red Sox and went to work for them in 1912, the first year Fenway Park was open. His contract, by the way, is also put away in the upstairs north bedroom: he earned \$100 a season for his relief pitching duties with the Sox. Not much pay, but he was having the time of his life. His days with the Sox, however, were numbered. Our uncle Doug was the son of a mixed-race mulatto man, my see **WEST ALONG** page B5



Muralist Marvo Correia (second from right) stands with author David Brule (left), Susan Bellemare, and Tom Gessing during the July 2017 unveiling of Correia’s portrait of their great-uncle, Douglass Smith, on a mural in Millers Falls.

REPORTER FILE PHOTO BY MIKE JACKSON



# Pet of the Week



IMAGE COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY

## “TIGER”

I had a rough start in life in Texas, but my foster mom helped me fatten up, and gave me confidence. I like to jump for joy and I can get a little mouthy, which isn’t a great fit for small kids; I may knock them over. Chasing cats and small animals is too much for me to be able to resist, but I love playing with other dogs. I am a bit exuberant when it comes to

dog play, so will need a tolerant and active dog buddy.

If you have an active family and are looking for a friendly, outgoing, outdoorsy addition, give Dakin a call, or stop on by and speak with an Adoption Resource Counselor.

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

# FEBRUARY LIBRARY LISTING

**Montague Public Libraries**  
*Turners Falls: Carnegie* (413) 863-3214  
*Montague Center* (413) 367-2852  
*Millers Falls* (413) 659-3801

**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

### ART EXHIBITS

**Wendell Free Library:** *Birds Bring Peace*, pencil drawings by *Lynne Stopen*. Through February. Reception on Saturday, February 1, 3:30 to 5 p.m.

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

### MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

**Saturday, February 8:** *Valentine Party at Carnegie Library*. Children and their caregivers are invited to come make valentine-inspired crafts, cards and other heart-themed fun projects. Refreshments will be served. 10:30 a.m. until noon.

**Wednesday, February 19:** *Tom Ricardi of the Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center in Western Massachusetts* will offer close encounters with live *Birds of Prey* at the Carnegie Library. 1 to 2 p.m.

**Friday, February 21:** *Library Legos*. Children’s creations will be put on display in the program space. We have LEGOs for all ages! 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Saturday, February 22:** *Family Movie at Carnegie Library*. Children of all ages and their caregivers are invited to come watch a movie at the library. Refreshments will be served. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### LEVERETT LIBRARY

**Sunday, February 2:** *Wildlife in Our Backyard: The Other Leverett Residents*. This hands-on presentation focuses on the wildlife that shares our space here in the Valley in the winter. Sponsored by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, and presented by *Julie Anne Collier*. 2 to 3 p.m.

**Thursday, February 6:** *Tech Help (Drop-In)*. Bring your device, library card, and technology questions and get one-on-one help with library volunteer Leah Larkey. On a drop-in basis, no appointment necessary. Also on Thursday, February 13. 6 to 7:45 p.m.

**Sunday, February 9:** *Worm Composting Workshop*. Call library for details. 3 to 4 p.m.

**Friday, February 21:** *Library Legislative Breakfast*. 7:30 to 9 a.m.

**Sunday, February 23:** *Regenerative Agriculture Presentation with Rema Boscov*. 3 to 4:30 p.m.

**Thursday, February 27:** *UMASS Public Domain Exhibit Talk*. Call library for details. 6 to 7:30 p.m.

### WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

**Thursdays through March:** *Zumba with Julie Rich*. Drop-in classes at the Town Hall. 10 a.m.

**Saturday, February 1:** Reception for *Birds Bring Peace*, pencil drawings by *Lynne Stopen*. 3:30 to 5 p.m.

**Friday, February 7:** Movie, *Harriet: Live Free or Die!* Based on the remarkable life of Harriet Tubman. 7 p.m.

**Sunday, February 9:** *Community Book Group*. Discussion of *Driving Miss Norma* by Tim Bauerschmidt and Ramie Liddle. Discussion led by *Ruth Flohr*. 4 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 12:** *Portraits: Learning to Draw the Human Face* with instructor *Sally Stuffin*. For both inexperienced and experienced artists. Class will explore universal facial proportions and use a variety of approaches and materials. Please pre-register. 4 to 5:30 p.m.

**Thursday, February 13:** *Necessity vs. Ethics in Clinical Research*. Clinical trial consultant *Cheryl Hayden* will explore the background of “ethics” in medical clinical research and the breadth of research being done today. Followed by discussion. 5 p.m.

**Friday, February 14:** *Dinosaurs of Wendell* with *Cirden Kearns* from Wendell, and a 10th-grade Mahar student who shares his research into, and passion for, prehistoric fauna and geology of our area. 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 19:** *Portraits: Learning to Draw the Human Face*. (See February 12.) Pre-register. 4 to 5:30 p.m.

**Saturday, February 22:** *The Dragon King with the Tanglewood Marionettes*. Award-winning production for pre-K to adults. Come see marionette puppetry at its finest with colorful sea creatures, adventure, and an unforgettable Dragon King. At the Wendell Town Hall. 4 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 26:** *Portraits: Learning to Draw the Human Face*. (See February 19.) Pre-register. 4 to 5:30 p.m.

**Friday, February 28:** *Voyagers, Visitors, and Home* with Quabbin wildlife photographer *Dale Monette*, based on his

recently released book of the same title. 7 p.m.

**Saturday, February 29:** *Up-cycle Tote Workshop* with *Lou Leelyn*. Tote Making 201 for experienced sewers. Please pre-register. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### ERVING PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Saturday, February 1:** *Trivia Night!* Presented by the EPL FUNdraisers to benefit the new library. At the Montague Elks Club. Doors open 6:30, trivia starts at 7 p.m. \$

### DICKINSON LIBRARY, NORTHFIELD

**Friday, February 7:** *Kids Friday: Animals in Winter*. What do animals do in the winter? Join *Gini Traub* from Mass DCR to explore! Dress warmly in case the weather allows us to go outside. 2 to 3 p.m.

**Saturday, February 8:** *Senator Jo Comerford Library Visit*. As part of her People’s Office Library Tour, Senator Comerford makes an informal visit. Comerford’s district director Elena Cohen notes: “We’re celebrating the central role that libraries play as democracy engines.” Learn more about what the senator does in the legislature, ask questions, share ideas, and join in on the conversation about issues affecting our communities. 11 a.m. to noon.

**Tuesday, February 11:** *Questions about Cannabis?* Includes responsible storage, current laws, photos, and samples to see and smell. 253 Farmacy is a new “deli-style cannabis marketplace” in Turners Falls, “the first vertically-integrated dispensary in Massachusetts,” i.e. they grow, process, and sell their cannabis products. *Seth Rutherford*, local soil science expert, gives a short presentation and answers your questions. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

**Thursday, February 13:** *Environmental Awareness Group*. This month’s selection for discussion: “Forest Carbon,” available as a PDF at [masswoods.org/caring-your-land/forest-carbon](http://masswoods.org/caring-your-land/forest-carbon). 6:30 to 8 p.m.

**Saturday, February 29:** *Rich Earth Institute Presentation*. Brattleboro’s Rich Earth Institute operates “the nation’s first community-scale urine reclamation project.” Learn about their research, its social and ecological implications, and how you can participate. Save your water to save our water. 1 to 2 p.m.

## Senior Center Activities FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH 7

### 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 2/3**

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

**Tuesday 2/4**

10:15 a.m. Chair Yoga

**Wednesday 2/5**

9 to 11 a.m. Veterans’ Hours

12:30 p.m. Bingo

**Thursday 2/6**

9 a.m. NO Tai Chi

10:15 a.m. NO Chair Yoga

10:30 a.m. to noon Brown Bag

1 p.m. Cards, Games, & Pitch

4 p.m. Gentle Yoga

**Friday 2/7**

12 p.m. Pizza Party

1 p.m. Writing Group

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

**Monday 2/3**

8:45 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt

10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance

*No Lunch Will Be Served*

12:30 p.m. Card Pitch Game

**Tuesday 2/4**

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

9:30 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic

10 a.m. Stretching & Balance

*No Lunch Will Be Served*

**Wednesday 2/5**

8:45 a.m. Line Dancing

8:45 a.m. Relaxing Technique

10 a.m. Chair Yoga

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

12:45 p.m. Bingo & Snacks

**Thursday 2/6**

8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic

8:45 a.m. Interval Training

10 a.m. Healthy Bones

12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

12:30 p.m. Brown Bag Pick Up

**Friday 2/7**

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](mailto:coa@leverett.ma.us).

Wednesday 10 a.m. Flexibility & Balance Chair Yoga at the Town Hall. Drop-in \$6 (first class free). Friday 12 p.m. Senior Lunch. Call (413) 367-2694 by Wednesday for a reservation.

### WENDELL

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

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THE SPIRIT SHOPPE



# Bud's War, Part 11



The author's brother, Harold J. "Bud" Collins (1925-2018)

By JERRY "JINX" COLLINS

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

Now, Collins is sharing the experiences he and his brothers had during active duty in the armed services in excerpts from his latest memoir, still in progress, “Transition: A Journey From Youth to Manhood.”

This is the final installment of the series. Jinx and his brother arrive back in Turners from visit by train to the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC in 2017.

Upon arrival in Greenfield, getting a cab was itself an experience. I called what I believe is the only taxi company in the area and was told to wait outside by the taxi sign, and that someone would be there in about 20 minutes.

Now, finding directions to the taxi sign at this modern station was anything but normal. There were no directions outside of the station building. I figured that they would see the two of us standing there, and he (or she) would see us as we were the only people there. Wrong! Forty-five minutes later I redialed the taxi company and was told that the cab had come and waited ten minutes, and we did not show up.

“What!” I said. “We were standing there by the driveway and never saw a taxi.”

“Well, you weren’t by the taxi sign,” came the response.

“What sign? I never saw one.”

“It is right across the drive in the car-parking area. We’ll be back in about a half an hour to get you.”

Looking across the driveway from the station, I still didn’t see a taxi sign. So I walked over to the parking area and, after searching all directions, there was TAXI. But it was only printed on the side facing the parking area, and was blank on the station-facing side.

Not very visitor-friendly, I thought. There should be clear directions on the platform, or the drive side of the station building. How can one expect people to find the taxi if needed?

Oh, and when the taxi showed up, it had no roof-mounted sign. I guess I’ve become too “citified” and forgot, after almost 50 years living away, what small towns are like: “my bad!”

We finally arrived at Bud’s apart-

ment, tired but happy.

In spite of the somewhat harrowing ending, as I looked down at Bud quietly snoring in his recliner with a contented look on his face, I couldn’t help but feel a little pleased for this planned venture. Bud had finally made it.

### Bud’s Last Days

The cuckoo clock that had hung on Mom’s wall ever since my brother Don gave it to her, 20 years before she passed away, was now displayed on the stark white wall opposite the entry to Bud’s one-bedroom apartment. It chirped the call for his 10 o’clock meds and the check of his catheter.

It would be the last time for me to arise from the brown tweed rocker-recliner where I had slept for the last two weeks in order to check on him. Four hours later, I would hear the last groan and gasp for air come from his mouth.

I woke Royer, who was sleeping in the bedroom, and then called the hospice nurse to come to the apartment to pronounce him deceased. She asked us for some of his clothes – he had spent the preceding three weeks in a hospital gown – to dress him for the undertaker.

This prompted a crazy idea I had, so I looked at Royer and said, “Let’s give him a proper sendoff like the Vikings did, when a clan chieftain, dressed in his best-loved regalia, was sent off on his final sail into eternity on his flaming funeral pyre.”

After all, in my mind Bud had been a hero and our clan’s chieftain.

He grinned, remembering what we had talked about earlier. So off we stumbled to Bud’s closet and dresser, where we retrieved mismatched socks, white boxer shorts with huge red hearts all over them, and a blazing orange golf shirt. Between guffaws, as the nurse was dressing him, she said, “What a beautiful way to show your love for him!”

To some of you reading this, it may appear to be almost sacrilegious, but if you knew Bud as Royer and I did, you’d know that he was up there clowning around and laughing right along with us.

As the funeral director, Henry Kostanski – whose uncle Walt had been a good lifelong friend of Bud’s – and his assistant proceeded to carry our brother out, I silently prayed:

“Your war is finally over, Bud. Enjoy eternity now with your fellow crew members – all of you who have done your time in hell – you were truly part of the Greatest Generation.”

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

## Possum Dispatched; Shed Burglaries; Stuck Truck; Early-Morning Yell; Money Owed; Sneeze Gas

#### Sunday, 1/19

7:49 p.m. Party from Union Avenue into station to report theft of a belt sander, band saw, drill press, and a 2.5-ton chain fall that were in her shed. Caller believes this happened within the last week; she is in the process of moving. Report taken.

#### Monday, 1/20

11:48 a.m. Caller from Sherman Drive reports neighbor is cutting trees that may be on town property, and some of the debris is in the road. Responding officer advises neighbor has already consulted town tree warden, and there is no debris in the road at this time.

2:44 p.m. Report of a subject flying a drone by the footbridge and the dam. Officers advised.

3:32 p.m. Caller from George Avenue states that there is a possum walking down the street; caller is worried it may have rabies because he thinks they are nocturnal. Second (walk-in) party reports that the possum is near house number 8 and looks like it may have been hit by a car. Area checked; unable to locate.

6:42 p.m. Caller from George Avenue states that there is a possum at her mother’s front door. Officer dispatched possum with one .22 round. Called DPW to have it picked up tomorrow during the day.

7:10 p.m. Report from Millers Falls Road of barking dog in area; caller is unsure exactly where it is coming from, but she said it has been going on for several hours and is concerned because of the cold weather.

Caller called back stating dog has been let back inside the house.

#### Tuesday, 1/21

12:18 a.m. Caller from Fourth Street states that there is a lot of noise coming from the apartment above her; she can hear thumping, stomping, and children crying. Officer spoke with second-floor tenant, who advises she has some small kids who were running around while she was cleaning the apartment in preparation for moving. Advised that 12:30 a.m. is not the best time. Units clear. Caller called back stating noise had gotten worse and has now woken her kids up. Officer stood in hallway for five minutes; no noise heard.

3:12 a.m. Caller states that she got a call from her brother stating he was stuck on the side of the road. States her brother told her that it’s very cold out and his phone is about to die. Officer advises operator is out and all set; he is on his way again.

9:45 a.m. Caller from East Taylor Hill Road report-

ing he is out of propane and has a foul odor permeating his residence. MCFD responding.

5:38 p.m. Caller from Seventh Street reports he arrived home to find his snowblower missing from an unlocked shed in his yard. He also noticed lights on in the basement and thinks that someone may have accessed that as well. Report taken.

11:03 p.m. Loud noise complaint on Fourth Street. Quiet upon arrival.

#### Wednesday, 1/22

1:49 a.m. Officer assisting stuck tractor-trailer unit at East and West Main streets in Millers Falls.

5:34 a.m. Caller from Pine-wood Circle states that a male party is in the backyard yelling at the top of his lungs and that it is around the eighth time in a year that he has done this. Officer spoke to involved party about complaint.

7:32 a.m. DPW picked up a couch that was dumped on Lake Pleasant Road. Receipt with name/address from September 2019 found in cushion. Officer placed call to involved party.

12:19 p.m. Report of two loose dogs, one brown and one black, on Masonic Avenue. Caller does not recognize them but advises that they killed one of the neighbor’s chickens earlier. Caller has informed the neighbor who owns the chicken. Officer checked area; unable to locate dogs. Copy of call left for animal control officer (out sick today).

11:40 p.m. Officers attempting to locate party for warrant service on Hillside Road. Spoke with party’s father, who claimed that the party will turn himself in.

#### Thursday, 1/23

12:39 a.m. Officer advising party’s father from previous call is giving officers consent to enter the house and arrest this party. Officer requested to reach out

to Greenfield PD for an officer who can assist in case this party runs. GPD officer en route. Officers searched house; party not located. Father advising party may have run while father was making contact with officers.

3:26 a.m. Caller from Third Street advises seeing three males assaulting another party. Caller does not see any weapons. Officer transporting one party to Park Street; advises it appeared to be a dispute over money owed.

Involved party appeared to have minor injuries but refused medical assistance. 6:07 a.m. Caller from Montague Street reports that a male party with a flashlight appears to be looking into cars. Officers spoke to homeowner at this location; he confirmed he was just outside with his flashlight looking for his newspaper.

7:20 a.m. Caller from Norman Circle reporting a suspicious male next door sleeping under her neighbor’s camper. Caller wasn’t sure of party’s name but believes he has dealt with him frequently on Hillside Road. Party wearing maroon clothing and carrying a yellow blanket. He was also yelling that he didn’t know what was going on and that he didn’t have any shoes. A 28-year-old male, address redacted, was arrested on three straight warrants.

2:11 p.m. Caller reports that a male is soliciting in the Food City Plaza and claiming to be a veteran. Gone on arrival.

11:03 p.m. Caller states he is a taxi driver and was at St. Kazimierz Society to pick someone up. Passenger was being belligerent, so he didn’t want to drive him to Greenfield. While on the phone with the first caller, a second 911 call came in: it was the

passenger stating that he recorded the whole thing and the driver was the problem. Officers advised. Abandoned 911 call had also come in; upon callback, found it to be the passenger, who stated he is all set now and is walking home. Another 911 call received from passenger at 11:10 p.m.; still not giving his name; stated he didn’t mean to call this number and hung up the phone. Officers checked area; unable to locate passenger walking.

#### Friday, 1/24

2:21 p.m. Report of two loose dogs acting aggressively toward caller on caller’s property on Montague City Road. ACO notified and responding.

2:59 p.m. Landlord from Fourth Street reporting squatters in an apartment that he owns. Advised of options.

3:31 p.m. Caller from Third Street requesting an officer respond to speak to her neighbor, who just threw a flower pot at her. Flower pot not thrown directly at caller. All parties advised of options.

4:40 p.m. Caller states that a male and female have been yelling outside at Depot Street and Montague City Road for the past thirty minutes. Peace restored. 6:59 p.m. Caller states that someone vandalized his vehicle while it was parked at work (Farren Care Center). Referred to an officer.

#### Saturday, 1/25

3:11 p.m. Caller from Salvation Army states that something in the air inside the building is causing everyone to sneeze and cough, and a little girl is crying about it. Caller believes that someone mixed chemicals and put them in the heating vent. Officer reports that the fire department has cleared the building and is letting people back in. FD will remain on scene.

### Montague Community Television News

## Cannabis Lecture; MLK Day

By MICHAEL SMITH

This week we have some exciting new content for our viewers. Seth Rutherford of 253 Pharmacy gave an educational lecture about cannabis at Greenfield Savings Bank, and MCTV was there to record. 253 Pharmacy is a new local dispensary, and Seth’s goal with his talk was to educate people about how to safely and responsibly consume cannabis products, as well as how to stay in compliance with new laws and protocols.

It was a fascinating insight into a new emerging industry, and gave Seth an opportunity to express his company’s dedication to educating the community about safe and responsible cannabis use. The video is available now at [montaguenv.org](http://montaguenv.org) under “Latest Videos.”

For over a decade, Greenfield Community College has been hosting events celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The event has expanded over the years, and 2020 marked the largest to date. Check out the video at [montaguenv.org](http://montaguenv.org).

Also available is the latest Montague finance committee meeting, in case you want to update yourself on what’s new with local politics.

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, [infomontaguenv@gmail.com](mailto:infomontaguenv@gmail.com), or stop by 34 Second Street between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. We’d love to work with you!

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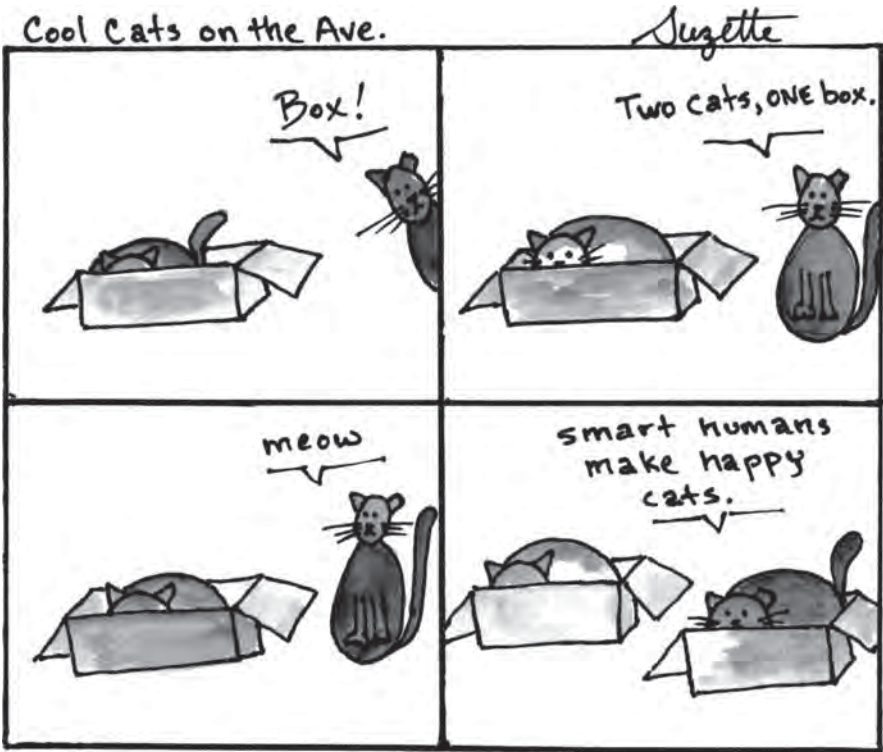
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**LOOKY HERE** from page B1

Gallagher is a member of Looky Here, and this video conveys a sense of Gallagher and this place, which its members are given the latitude to use as a vehicle for their own work, and to share that freedom with other artists.

“We wanted to make a short documentary for a class, about this place and about him,” Kaci explained. “It took a couple of weeks. Editing was a pretty easy process.... It was my first time making something like that.”

Hanging on a narrow wall near the piano, Julia Shirar’s pieces “Hug” and “Tool Chest” make excellent use of a grayscale watercolor style to depict figures in relation to each other. The postures of the people are both casual and alarming; the tones, almost soothing. The faces are abstract, conveying what could be ennui, maybe laughter, or some kind of slow-motion horror.

It is hard to tell exactly if these are mundane scenes, or if something might have gone horribly wrong, and this makes them very compelling.

A piece by Edite Cunha of Turners Falls, “Madonna do Hipermercado (The Madonna of the Hypermarket),” creates iconography

from grocery store flyers. “The hypermarket is the supermarket in Portuguese: hipermercado,” Cunha explained. “These are made in sardine tins, and they are made with all the recycling in the flat in Lisbon last summer.”

Reminiscent of medieval religious art, a painted gold board holds rows of sardine cans, each framing images and words, and embellished with sparkling jewels. In them, smiling women present doughnuts, hamburgers, pizza. As we bend to peer closer into each one, we are caught in the act of our own material worship.

“I was asked to do the recycling, and of course I didn’t,” Cunha said, smiling. “I did this instead.”

The grainy short film, “Hunchback Kombucha,” by Jenna Wikler of Gill, is part horror movie, part advertisement. It is almost creepy, trippy, playful, and given that Greenfield is the home of Artisan Beverage Katalyst Kombucha, very much of this place. One must read fast to catch the credits, which are filled with funny details.

Julianne “Jules” Jones is a mixed media collage artist who lives in Turners Falls and has a studio in Greenfield. “Underworld”

is a large painting split horizontally, with a strong color line a bit more than half way up. Faceless figures float, dreaming or dead, some upside down, blue-gray, vulnerable in a black background below. Above, upright figures with detailed faces – the sun, too, has a face – radiate in a vibrant red. The two

worlds are held together by their dividing line, and this tension of internal privacy and outward-facing exuberance builds a tight interdependence.

Jones uses a process of collage painting, drawing from a cache of precious scraps to

continued on **NEXT PAGE**



WOOD PHOTO

The exhibit's opening reception on January 19 was well-attended.

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WEST ALONG from p. B1

great grandfather Judah, and his mother was a lovely Scots woman from Aberdeen, Lizzie Moir Smith. That made him at least a quarter Black/Native American. That didn’t sit too well with the Boston Red Sox – he was hired at 18, and fired at 19 when the Sox found out he had “black blood.” His career in the big leagues ended almost before it had begun.

He did get his revenge on the Sox, however, a few years later, when his semi-pro Syracuse Stars played the Boston team, world champions at the time. We shall revisit that game in the next installment in two weeks.

The letters written by his wife Gertrude had remained folded away in the covers of that 1921 almanac until we found them last week. Back in 1973 we cleaned out Doug’s house in the Ervingside neighborhood of Millers Falls, a few weeks after he headed to the retirement home in Greenfield. A lot of his books and mementoes came back to this house on the Flat, to this Smith homestead where Doug was born. That’s where Gertrude’s letters waited to be found.

Sister Sue and I were going through those books and boxes when we found the letters written by Aunt Gertrude to her wandering husband off barnstorming, playing semi-pro ball. They preserve not only the loneliness of a ball-player’s wife, but also provide glimpses into village and family life at the time.

Millers Falls, Mass. July 28, 1921

Dear Doug,

Glad to hear from you, honey. You said in your letter that your arm wasn’t any better, and that you went to the doctor... if your arm isn’t any better before long, come right home and rest up... for it won’t do it any good if you use it when you know you hadn’t ought to. I shall only be too glad to have you home with me again. Then next summer I think your arm will be all right again...

The note paper is neatly folded, with the fold slightly off-center to fit into the small 2- by 3-inch envelope sent from the Millers Falls post office to General Delivery in Port Henry, NY.

The letter is still as crisp as it was in July 1921, and if like most letters written on paper, it was probably read only once or twice, then put away in a book for me to find one hundred years later.

In some ways it felt like I was prying into the personal letters of a young couple, but I don’t think Doug would mind now. We took good care of him in his declining years, 50 years after the letter was sent to him, and now 100 years later when we found it.

Doug’s left arm was a matter of concern for his young wife. They made their living with that arm, so of course she wanted him to take care of it.

Gertrude went on to describe her life and the goings-on in the village, especially mentioning the Millers Falls tool shop where my grandfa-

ther Alan worked, the Millers Falls Paper Company, and my great-grandmother Lizzie:

Well, every thing is still the same here... the shop will start up the second week of August. Your brother Alan is working on the paper mill dam, so that will help them out a little bit...

Well Doug, I got my pay tonight so I am going to pay our coal all up, so that will be off our hands... we went blueberrying Wednesday with your mother. I gave her a dozen quart cans so that will help her a little...

And in the mill was something awful. This afternoon heat was so hot honest I thought once I would have to come home but I stood it all right. And tonight I’m home writing to you.

I can picture her in the quiet home on Pleasant Street, writing at the kitchen table under the oil lamp, describing her work day, and the bath she was going to give to the cat Bunny to get rid of his case of fleas.

She closed this letter with more news of the family and her activities:

I have eight quarts of blackberries canned all ready, we will have more canned this year than last. Now remember if your arm bothers you come right home won’t you... and I do honest and truly hope and just pray that God will help your arm and that your arm will be better; but come home if it isn’t.

With lots of love from your loving wife,

Gertrude.

Clearly Doug Smith was away from home a lot, and young Gertrude missed him terribly.

Between 1912, when he first pitched at Fenway and was dropped by the Sox for reasons of his mixed race, and the time of these 1921 letters, he moved from city to city trying to make a living with that left arm. He was frugal, a good son of his Scottish Calvinist mother. He and Gertie saved a lot of his pay, and lived comfortably – even during the Great Depression, which was right around the corner.

Little did he know in 1921 that he was only one year away from ending his career as a pitcher for good.

But that still leaves us in the dark about Gertrude. Was she always in the background, waiting for him to come home? All we’ve got left to tell us of who she was are these letters. We know something of her parents, but Doug and Gertrude had no children to tell us more about her. She died in 1967 when I was away from home, and I never heard talk of her, even second- or third-hand.

Yet she turned up here, in this old house, in her few surviving letters that we were meant to find.

I’ll look harder for this ball-player’s wife during the next few weeks, and I’ll let you know what we find.

To be continued.



GARDENER’S from page B1

We have been blessed with bright sun to take the edge off, but we are still getting a bit sick of the cold, and looking forward to going to northern Florida. Ironically, most recently it has been icebox weather down there, but we expect it will be more moderate when we get down at the end of the month.

We had hoped to leave on the 27<sup>th</sup>, but Ken developed a problem with a tooth and had to have it pulled at the last moment. He has been uncomfortable and unhappy about the delay, but perhaps it’s better to have it tended to before traveling. He won’t suddenly have to find an unknown dentist there, or spend money on treatment that he’d rather spend on something more pleasant. They also discovered a large filling that needs replacing, so now when we do leave, he’ll have a healthy mouth.

Luckily I have just had my own aging teeth cleaned, so barring some untoward problem, I should be fine. It reminds me of a “Senior BLT” we were served on the road to Florida last year. It turned out there was no bacon in it! Perhaps they thought that was a safer bet for seniors. We didn’t hang around for the bacon, as we wanted to get back on the road.

We have learned quite a bit over our last three trips to St. Augustine. For instance, we no longer try the sometimes scenic route called Foggy Gap, for obvious reasons. We once tried that route and only safely navigated the Gap by staying behind an 18-wheeler and keeping our eyes on his taillights.

When we were traveling to Mexico, we always met someone who had come specifically for dental work. It is much less expensive there. In fact, many Mexican communities have large populations of Canadians, who have no health insurance whatsoever and find the care to be much less expensive and just as professional. Not to mention, the retirement dollar goes further.

We think now and then of returning to Mexico, but my investigations have not proved enticing. The lovely upstairs *casita* we rented three times in a row has been sold, and while our previous landlord has another rental, it is in a large city. One of the things we loved most about our stays in the village of Ajijic was that it was charmingly small and parked on a small lake. However, now “progress” has built a superhighway around the lake, and all the charm is gone.

We’ve realized recently that there is a great deal of our own vast nation we have never explored, and there is talk of a trip to Niagara Falls and the Finger Lakes. As it is, we will continue to make summer trips to Wells Beach in Maine, where we rent a small apartment and can walk al-

most anywhere we want to go.

We will also look for other options in Florida, such as on the Gulf side where the water is much warmer. We can wade in St. Augustine, but the water there is much too cold for anyone except small children and polar-bear types to actually swim.

We always opt for the smaller places. We remember Mexico fondly for the local markets, the slaughtered goat on the bed of the dump truck, and the regularity of Fiestas. We were never ill there, though we did stick to bottled water. Actually, we do the same in Florida, as the tap water there is vile, tasting of chlorine.

I recently read Bill Bryson’s *The Lost Continent: Travels in Small-Town America*, the reminiscence of a family trip and a return to the same territory as an adult. It is charming and humorous, a laugh-aloud read.

Last summer we made such a reminiscence trip to Owl’s Head, Maine, where I had first traveled with my late husband and more recently with Ken. Our aging landlord, who is in his 90s, still lives there, but is fortunate enough to have sold his incredible property on the ocean at the end of a dirt road. The sale has given him the things he most wanted: a large sum of money to give to his sons, and the opportunity to live out his days in this place where he brought his late wife so many years ago. Perfect. We hope he can die there in his bed.

He also hopes we will visit again, but we’d like to remember the place the way it used to be, when we stayed in the aging cottage while he lived in the garage apartment he designed for himself years ago. Realistically, he himself could pass on at any time, although he is a tough old Yankee. No doubt the new owner will build another one of the McMansions that have filled all the empty lots on the once very private road.

This is the unfortunate thing we call “progress.” As we all know, progress is a relative thing, and perhaps it is true that mostly aging types have regrets, although I suspect some young folks do too.

I seem to do well if I go regularly to the YMCA and walk to keep my knees limber. One of my retired friends sent me to a terrific orthopedist in Northampton who gave me good news. Apparently my bad knee is bone-on-bone, but the most I’ll ever need is a gel shot, in which gel is injected into the troubling joint. I consider that to be good news, as I understand that replacement joints are a very big deal, and not always successful.

In the meanwhile, I’ll use the Mickey Mouse vet’s CBD oil on my aching knees, and look for warmer temperatures.



continued from PREVIOUS PAGE

weave older work into new compositions. “When you see a finished piece,” Jones says, “there will be many, many, many layers of painting, spray paint, drawing, printmaking, with almost a mosaic-type quality where I’m stitching things together.”

The local art scene is blossoming in multiple dimensions.

One of Looky Here’s great strengths is that members do what they want, without trying too hard to market or brand the place. Brookman says Looky Here “has a life of its own. It changes with each event, each new person who walks in the door. And everyone who comes in feels at home. People aren’t afraid to touch things, ask to teach, ask to show and sell work, or offer suggestions.”

The current show will be up until April.

Looky Here is a collective, nonprofit, volunteer-run art space at 28 Chapman Street in Greenfield, offering workshops, Risograph printing, and selling donated art supplies and music equipment. Open by appointment or by chance: your chances are best during the Sunday “Early Bird Music” shows, Tuesdays between 2 and 8 p.m., and on Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The gallery will also be open for viewing whenever there is a workshop in progress.

You can keep up with goings on by checking looky-heregreenfield.com, on Instagram @l00ky.here, and on Facebook @lookyherelookyhere.

Samantha Wood is an artist and writer living in Greenfield. Wood’s video of the show’s opening reception available at youtube/gsr0wcDGoac.



TV REVIEW

The Return of *Manifest* (NBC)

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

**GREENFIELD** – On January 6<sup>th</sup> on NBC, *Manifest* returned for a second season. This show involves what people are calling “callings.” People from a plane that mysteriously disappeared for five years now experience visions and are hearing things.

The show’s first episode seems to show one of these “callings” during its opening scene. Sometimes two individuals experience the same calling, and they also did that with the opening scene. Also, to spoil my favorite episode with the game-changing moment, there is an individual named Zeke, who wasn’t on the plane, that is linked with them. This guy’s storyline is that he went on a hike and got trapped in a blizzard a year ago.

Zeke is still part of the show. He is in a bit of a mess, due to something that ended in a cliffhanger last season. We are shown exactly what happened in this episode.

A storyline for this season’s first episode is the search for a couple of missing passengers. Someone or something wants to find them, which we are shown by two individuals experiencing the same calling, and while doing this, a group appeared that views them as a threat and is going after them.

Cal, a young boy who was on the plane and experiences the callings very strongly, used them to try and find Zeke when he was missing. I won’t say how helpful that was, but it does come into play. The group, called X-ers, will be featured more

in Season 2.

There is also a theme about making the most of a second chance, and that is continued in this season, too. Cal’s father Ben will realize he hasn’t been doing that. I think he will try to do that. One of the callings the episode featured has a nice twist, despite what two other passengers believe is going on.

It would seem a line mentioned in the show’s first episode, about them eventually knowing the other passengers as well as they know themselves, is coming true. It comes at the right time for two passengers involved in the calling I mentioned. Also it turns out that someone who, as far as we know, was killed off wasn’t really.

So, this episode had a couple of moments that I really liked. The mystery will deepen, a season preview said. Another preview showed me Ben will learn that his son has a huge answer as to what happened on the plane. This could lead to more game-changing moments.

Another thing that could be interesting to see is if the passengers coming to know each other, like I mentioned, comes true – especially if some of them don’t really know what is going on with their visions. One of my favorite episodes from the first season had something like that happen, so if it happens again in this season, it could be a favorite moment for me again.

One way or another, there are going to be things to watch and enjoy with this show again.

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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  
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or to: [poetry@montaguereporter.org](mailto:poetry@montaguereporter.org)

# January Poetry Page

## Pity the Nation Whose Leaders Are Liars

(After Khalil Gibran)

Pity the nation whose people are sheep  
And whose shepherds mislead them  
Pity the nation whose leaders are liars  
Whose sages are silenced  
And whose bigots haunt the airwaves  
Pity the nation that raises not its voice  
Except to praise conquerors  
And acclaim the bully as hero  
And aims to rule the world  
With force and by torture  
Pity the nation that knows  
No other language but its own  
And no other culture but its own  
Pity the nation whose breath is money  
And sleeps the sleep of the too well fed  
Pity the nation oh pity the people  
who allow their rights to erode  
and their freedoms to be washed away  
*My country, tears of thee  
Sweet land of liberty*

– Lawrence Ferlinghetti  
San Francisco

## A Christmas Prayer

Some say you died for my sins,  
but I say you just died.  
They killed you then,  
and they kill you now.  
Breathe the living cosmos  
into their moribund minds.  
Make everyone a hero,  
and be crucified on the cross  
of ritual slavery  
to money, machines, markets, and militarism.  
Who knows when you were born?  
But your death lingers long, like nativity.  
Cultures praise you in Heaven,  
from sepulchers for the living  
where your head is mounted  
on Mammon’s mantelpiece.  
We celebrate your birth,  
the potlatch turned inside out  
and squeezed dry for one day  
at the altar of take.  
And somehow you still weather the beatings,  
be you martyr, messiah, or masochist.  
And guilt’s garden,  
garnished with worm-eaten apples,  
is more than just the manure of clerics.

– Kevin Smith  
Turners Falls

## from After Maurice Scève

I was a child, I cried a lot, I grew up  
but didn’t stop crying, I broke the rules,  
grew old, dried up at last: now I’m  
left collecting raindrops. After all they  
pass through the same alembic: parting,  
apart, people passing at the foot of time  
passing: I was a child, I grew old, my  
pure water pooled here: one drop like  
the next, one instant like the next,  
my blood is an ink stain.

– Enis Batur  
Istanbul  
Translated by Clifford Endres  
and Selhan Savcigil-Endres

## I Am Everything

I have spoken every word of our lexicon, breathed the smoke of the fires of creation  
I reside among the ruins of eternity, set my foot upon desolate shores  
I sit behind the rulers of ancient empires, trample the innocent under iron shod feet  
I drift through the woods and the waters, temples of stone and steel and glass  
I am avarice, insolence, decadence  
Indolence, sufferance, sloth and sorrow  
I am the gnarled hands crating primordial tools, soft white fingers gliding over commands  
I am the sun searing infinite grains of sand  
The moon on the vast, frigid wastelands  
I am everything...

– R.M. Garcia  
Erving

## Galesburg

I want to hear a bobwhite call its name from the fence row  
west of the barn where the stand of black locust grew.  
Scent of sassafras digging along the ditch bank in search of tonic.  
Meadow larks from the tall wheat grass a song of crystal  
bells melting in the silence from where it came.

A place to watch the river sway, waiting for a pileated to rivet the sky.  
The river low and warm, carp backs above the waterline, bull frogs talked the daylight down.  
Cicadas ebullient river of sound down the trunks of trees under the sigh, wind in the leaves.  
Scent of mown hay, invisible blanket as it lay, over the brown and confounded earth.  
Milo corn leaves lazily scratch at the wind and, a flight

of black birds in the fall last for three days in a continuous flight, a black rope  
of wing beat threads, starling and grackle voices, red winged and yellow winged.  
An undulating vessel of song in the air, and the time to watch. The perfected  
slowness of a porch swing, the practiced tired and warm familiar voices  
in their worn leather boots faded Big-Smith dungarees.

I want to go back to Galesburg before this Demerol wears off  
and I turn against the stiff linen over clear plastic mattress protection,  
look down those rows of beds, at the tired scared faces of young men  
their youth fade, see in their eyes what they see in mine  
before I think again how bones felt breaking, how  
flesh feels tearing, before I had ever wondered, am I really alive.

– Al Miller  
Montague Center

## Contributors’ Notes

Lawrence Ferlinghetti is the grand old man of American letters. Founder of City Lights Bookstore and Publishers, he’s been writing exquisite poems for 80 years.

R.M. Garcia, when not writing poems, works at the Silvio Conte Anadromous Fish Research Laboratory in Turners Falls.

Enis Batur is one of the leading figures in contemporary Turkish literature with more than a hundred published books. Clifford Endres and Selhan Savcigil-Endres are Kadir Has University professors emeriti. These poems are excerpted from a new collection-in-progress of poems that Talisman House is scheduled to publish next year.

Al Miller’s poetry often focuses on his Vietnam experiences. He is a long-time contributor to the poetry page. Two of his recent poems were published in *War and Moral Injury: A Reader*, edited by Robert Emmet Meagher and Douglas A. Pryer (Cascade Books, 2018).

Kevin Smith, tuba player and frequent Poetry Page contributor, lives in Turners Falls with his wonderful and inspirational girlfriend, Stephanie.

CHARLOTTE KOHLMANN PHOTO

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## EVENTS

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Write Here!* Brown bag writing workshop. 12 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *The Thursday Experiment* featuring *id m theft able*, *Androo Wang*, and *Craig Davis*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *The Star Show*, GCTV live taping: conversations followed by performances, hosted by *Finley James*. This month's guests: *Loculus Collective*, *Nemesister*, *Lena Abraham*. \$. 8 p.m.

Sierra Grille, Northampton: *Bunnies*, *Hot Dirt*, *Eternal Crimes*. \$. 9:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

LAVA Center, 324 Main Street, Greenfield: *Grand Opening Party* with the *Farley String Band*. 6 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: *Four Rivers Charter School Annual Variety Show*. 7 p.m.

Hutghi's At The Nook, Westfield: *Major Stars*, *Mountain Movers*, and the *Moloney-Pasquarosa Duo*. Heavy psychedelic. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *SpaceBar*. Danceable blues, rock, r&b, and more. \$. 8:30 p.m.

The Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bluegrass and Beyond*. 9:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Astrology Rave in Aquarius*. Benefit for Looky Here, with *DJ Leo Megin-sky* and dance performance by *Loculus Collective*. \$. 10 p.m.

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *International Family Dance*, 12:30 p.m.; Kids' Story Time with author *Doug Selwyn*, 1:30 p.m.; *Strings for Kids Advanced Ensemble* performance, 2 p.m.;

*Lindy Whiton* photography exhibit opening, 3 p.m.; *BYO Performance Salon*, 5:30 p.m.; *Silverthorne Theater Fashion Show*, 7:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro, VT: *Mystra Record Imbolc Festival*. Featuring *Mia Friedman's Sand Frame*, *Wendy Eisenberg*, *Wes Buckley*, *if not I than who then*, *Dredd Foole*, *Frozen Corn*, *Hung Trucker*, *Apie*, and *Ten Gallon Hat*. \$. 5 p.m.

Flywheel Arts, Easthampton: *Doomsmas II*, featuring *Black Pyramid*, *Benthic Realm*, *Curse the Son*, *Cazador*, *The Original Cowards*, and *Problem With Dragons*. All ages, substance free space. \$. 6 p.m.

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

SCDT, Northampton: *HUT 28* featuring *Tyler Rai*, *Julio Cesar Diaz*, and *Ruth Garbus*. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro, VT: *Dead Meat*. Grateful Dead tribute band. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Bad Behavior*, dance party with *DJs Odiosa*, *Tall Girl*, and *Kashmere Champagne*. House, techno, kumbia, etc. 9 p.m.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

The 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.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *Mapping the Heart*. Make a valentine. Supplies provided. 1 p.m.

LAVA Center, Greenfield: *Musica Franklin* performance, followed by community potluck and discussion. 4 p.m.

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

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bin-go*. 8 p.m.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

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*. 7:30 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

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

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

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Stone Church, Brattleboro, VT: *Blackalicious*, with *Light Pockets* and *JARV*. \$. 7 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.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Amai*, *Mary Jester*, *Blood Mobile*, and *Blundt Cake*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Stone Church, Brattleboro, VT: *The Big Takeover*, *Wheel Out*, *Sector D*. Reggae. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: East coast rap legends *Smif-N-Wessun*, with *LS Camp*, *OG Mach*, and *DJ Rec*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hutghi's At The Nook, Westfield: *Dropweapon*, *Feminine Aggression*, *Decussata*. Punk. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Bashful Slasher*, *Wendy Eisenberg*, and *Toppus Bottomus*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8

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

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Skell Presents *Death Threat*, with *Shots Fired*, *Brain Vacuum*, *Marble Mouth*, and *Tar*. Hardcore. All ages. \$. 6:30 p.m.

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro, VT: *Ross Goldstein: Mellotron and Organ*. Improvisational performances by composer Goldstein and Brian Dewan to celebrate the release of Goldstein's new ambient album *Timoka*. \$. 7 p.m.

Montague Common Hall, Montague Center: *Open Mic Night*, with singer-songwriter *Louise Mosrie*. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Gaslight Tinkers*, *Taproots*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro, VT: *Yarn*, with special guests *Saints & Liars*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Slap Frost Review*, feat. *Equipto*, *Michael Marshall*, *Z-Man* and more. In the Perch. \$. 8 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Futurefolk*, dance party with *DJ Quils*. Disco, funk, international, soul, hip hop. 9 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *Jimmy Just Quit*. \$. 9 p.m.

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Mitchel Violins*, *Scare City*, *Federico Balducci*, and *Nightowl Pete*. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Spontaneous Combustion 13*, featuring the *Northampton Community Music Center Improv Ensemble*, *Matt Weston/Adam Bosse* duo, and a directed open improvisation. Bring an instrument! \$. 7 p.m.

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

## CALLS FOR ART

#Local Gallery, Easthampton seeks works in 2 and 3D that relate to "Mountains Majesty." All mediums are eligible, and the gallery encourages artists to "think outside the box" on this theme. Deadline: February 26. Submission fee of \$35 for up to 3 images; see details at [localgallerybyciderhouse.com](http://localgallerybyciderhouse.com) or call (413) 203-5781.

Sixth Annual May Day Fine Arts Sale at the Montague Center Library (second floor) seeks Montague artists interested in selling their work that day. Any medium, with a sale price of \$150 and under, is welcome. The event will be held May 3, in conjunction with the May Day celebrations on the Montague Center town common. Send an email of interest by March 6 to [montague.art.movement@gmail.com](mailto:montague.art.movement@gmail.com).

Two episodes are up!



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Bluegrass & Beyond

SUNDAY 2/2  
11A Jazz Brunch w/  
John Lentz Trio  
9P Karaoke!

MONDAY 2/3  
8P Bingo!

WEDNESDAY 2/5  
9:30P Dead Night w/  
Owsley's Owls

THURSDAY 2/6  
8P  
Falltown String Band



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## EXHIBITS

Art Deviation Gallery, South Deerfield: *Edgy* and thought-provoking art from around the world. Featured artists from France: *Christophe Mourthé*, *Cathy Peylan*, and *Anne Eliayan*. Reception on Saturday, February 8 from 4 to 6 p.m.

Art Garden, Shelburne Falls: *Woven Together*. A community exhibit about relationships. Opens on Saturday, February 8 as part of the Winter Hoopla event at the Garden. Through February.

Artspace, Greenfield: *46th Annual Teen Art Show*. Featuring selected art works from students from 12 public and private schools in the Pioneer Valley. Through February 14. Reception Friday, January 31 at 5:30 p.m.

Augusta Savage Gallery, UMass: *Beyond Planet Earth: Hot Housed, Volunteers, and Anomalies* by *Anne LaPrade Seuthe*. February 3 through 24. Reception on Monday, February 3, at 5 p.m.

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: *My Little Town*. Member exhibit, in tandem with solo exhibit *Paintings by Bev Phelps*. Through March.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: *You Are Here: A Juried Community Art Exhibit*. 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? Through February 29 in the Great Hall.

GCC South Gallery, Greenfield: *Juana Valdes*. Printmaking, photography, sculpture, ceramics, and site-specific installations, to explore issues of race, transnationalism, gender, labor, and class. Gallery talk on February 26 at noon. Through February 27.

Hampden Gallery, UMass Amherst: *Christine Texiera: Release the Moorings*. Mixed media paintings using a pouring technique. Through February 28. Reception Sunday, January 26, 2 p.m.

Herrick Gallery, Wendell Free Library: *Lynne Stopen: Birds Bring Peace*. Drawings of birds in graphite and colored pencil, capturing their unique characteristics. Reception on Saturday, February 1, 3:30 p.m. Through February.

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

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Looky Here 2020: A Submission Based Art Show*. Works by over 30 regional artists in a variety of media: paintings, poetry, video, sculpture. Through April.

McCusker's Market, Shelburne: *Wool Works: Making Art and The Intuitive Process of Play*. Exhibit by *Rachelle Royer-Llamas*. Through February 28. Reception February 2, 3 p.m.

Sawmill River Arts, Montague Center: *Small Works Exhibit and Sale*. A non-juried exhibit of small-scale community artwork. February 1 through February 29.

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Sweet*, a group show. Paintings, ceramics, leather, paper cuts, jewelry, wood and ornaments by member artists. Through February 24.

Smith College Art Museum, Northampton: *Black Refractions*, highlights from the Studio Museum in Harlem, through April 12. Also at the museum, *A Dust Bowl of Dog Soup: Picturing the Great Depression*. Featuring 50 photographs and prints from artists including *Dorothea Lange*, *Arthur Rothstein*, *Marian Post Wolcott*, *Martin Lewis*, and more. These artists helped shape social policy by making the travails of rural America visible during the Depression, which stimulated enthusiasm for Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Through June.

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# GREAT FALLS APPLE COLUMN

By ANNABEL LEVINE

**TURNERS FALLS** – When I first sat down to write this month’s Great Falls Apple Column, I felt my usual optimism clouded behind my growing uneasiness with the political whirlwind surrounding the impeachment trial. I’m not naive enough to think that the discarding of ethics for political gain is anything new, but seeing it broadcast so plainly and unapologetically lately is making me feel uneasy.

In a time when anti-semitism is on the rise and I find myself questioning whether it’s even safe to wear my JCC Camp Grossman staff tee-shirt in public, the idea that the president is taking to Twitter to insult elected officials tasked with investigating him using anti-semitic dog whistles is making my skin crawl.

I generally try to offer an inspirational take when I write about the Great Falls Apple Corps, about how excited we are to be planting fruit trees and food forests, but this week I’m finding that inspiration hard to find buried beneath all the chaos coming out of the Senate. I’m having trouble finding the silver lining when it seems like the entire sky is gray.

This sense of dread is not so unheard of in the history of the Apple Corps. I would argue my part in its founding was a direct result of how I felt after the 2016 election. That event shattered a lot of my assumptions, and I couldn’t shake the

gnawing takeaway that I hadn’t done enough, should’ve been more involved. I felt disconnected from our collective fate, and resolved to not feel that way again. I had just moved to town, felt like I did not belong to a community, and clearly needed to put in some work.

I researched how to run for office, even completing a few units in an online incubator for women deciding whether to run. It quickly became apparent that I couldn’t govern effectively if I wasn’t integrated into my community. Heck, at that time I’d never even set foot in town hall! I set that dream aside.

So I set my immediate sights a little lower, and decided to try to just meet people. Once I knew who was around, I hoped, my path would organically materialize. In the spring of 2017 I started going to town cleanups, and took a Spanish class at La Mariposa. I attended town meetings I was interested in, and learned just how easy it is to have a say if you just show up. By the fall, armed with my apple picker and a few budding friendships, I finally started to feel like I was getting to know the town’s character.

Fast forward over two years, and instead of feeling like I needed to meet the town’s characters, I am starting to feel like one. I am putting roots in the ground, both literally and figuratively, and am grateful that this was the path I took.

If I learned anything from the

despondency I felt in 2016, it’s that sometimes times of darkness are needed to catalyze positive change. I used my anger and disappointment to find a clarity of mind, an arrow pointing me in the right direction.

Maybe someone is feeling that way right now, watching our senators playing with fidget spinners and our sense of justice on the Senate floor. Perhaps this swirl of chaos fogging my brain is clarifying someone else’s.

If that’s you, ride the wave! Where the feeling goes is up to you, but I implore you to follow that path. If you find that arrow is pointing towards a garden, we’ll be here with open arms.

**Forage Spotlight: Snow!**

This month we’re taking a break from the plant kingdom to talk about an almost ever-present winter friend and food source... snow!

Pardon me if this one seems obvious, but in a world with refrigerators that can make their own ice, it can’t hurt to remind everyone of the precious bounty that lies outside our kitchen walls.

Our foraging blurbs always include tips for harvesting, so for today, we recommend common sense: Is the snow fresh? Is it clean? Is it white and not yellow? You’re good to go.

One of my favorite uses for snow is to use it to make maple lollipops. Find a strip of clean snow – perhaps on a railing, bench, or other eas-



PIXABAY IMAGE BY GAUTHEROTTIPHAINE

*Fresh snow means it’s time for maple sticks!*

ily accessible spot. Heat up maple syrup. Pour it in a line on the snow. Place a stick at the beginning of the line, and start rolling it, so that the now-hardening maple twists around the stick. Enjoy!

Want to eat the snow itself? Make a slushie! Mix fruit juice and honey, or maple syrup, and pour it over a bowl of snow. If you add some alcohol, you’ve got yourself a snow cocktail.

The sky’s the limit with creative uses to eat snow. Give it a try, and

enjoy it while you can – it’ll be gone before you know it!

*The Great Falls Apple Corps is a volunteer group that advocates for planting food in public spaces in downtown Turners. All are welcome at our next organizational meeting on Wednesday, February 5 at 6 p.m. at the Unity Park Fieldhouse. Check us out on Facebook and Instagram, and get in touch at greatfalls-applecorps@gmail.com.*



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