

The Montague Reporter

YEAR 18 – NO. 17

also serving Erving, Gill, Leverett and Wendell

\$1

EDITOR@MONTAGUEREPORTER.ORG

THE VOICE OF THE VILLAGES

FEBRUARY 27, 2020

EXIT INTERVIEW

“Well, I Could Do That!”



Christine Heard is stepping off the Wendell selectboard after 22 years.

By MIKE JACKSON

WENDELL – Christine Heard, who has served seven terms on the Wendell selectboard and ran unopposed last year for an eighth, quietly announced in January that she would be stepping down from her seat this spring. Nomination papers are available now for any candidates interested in serving the last two years of her term.

This week, Heard came in to the *Montague Reporter* office to talk about her experience on the board. She seemed happy to reflect on her time on the job, on the qualities required of an elected official in a small rural town, and on the ways Wendell is and isn't changing.

We talked at some length, and the following transcript has been cut down significantly, reordered, and edited slightly for clarity.

MR: We've never met before! I've sat in covering selectboards in the other four towns we cover, but never Wendell.... How long have you lived in town?

CH: Since 1977. So that's 42 years – 42 and a half, I guess.

MR: Where did you get there from?

CH: From the eastern part of the state. We were living in Oxford, near Worcester, just before we moved to Wendell.

MR: What brought you west?

CH: Well, the thing that brings many people to Wendell is cheap land. I was close with my sister and her family, and I had a family. They were interested in moving out near UMass, and found a place to rent in Wendell. We were looking for something to buy, and found something affordable.

MR: I've talked with a few people about what Wendell was like in the '70s. Sounds like a bit of a free-for-all.

CH: I guess it was! My youngest was six months old, and I had five kids, so I didn't jump into town life much, except that my kids were in school.

MR: How did you start getting involved in the public?

CH: I was on the school see **INTERVIEW** page A6

ERVING SELECTBOARD

Town Officials, Staff At Odds Over Retroactive Raise Promise

By KATIE NOLAN

On Monday night, Erving's administrative coordinator Bryan Smith presented a spreadsheet to the selectboard and finance committee showing that the cost of implementing a new employee compensation plan on April 6, with no retroactive pay, would be \$20,360.

According to a report at a February 10 joint meeting, the cost of paying the new salaries retroactive to July 1, 2019 is at least \$87,000. However, at a June 2019 special town meeting, voters only approved \$50,000 for potential compensation adjustments.

The board, fin com, and several town employees discussed how to implement the study for over two hours.

The study, prepared by the Collins Center at UMass-Boston, compared Erving's hourly rates to those in sixteen local towns, and found that many Erving employees are paid less than comparable employees elsewhere. It also found that several positions were misclassified: the "assistant assessor" was actually functioning as a principal assessor, and the highway foreman actually as a highway superintendent.

The study proposed a graded system, with eight grades and 15 steps within each grade. Employees would advance one step after each year. The Collins Center provided a market-based rate for each step, and recommended that each employee initially be placed on the step of the grade that provides for an increase. For the majority, this would mean being placed on Step 1 of their proposed grade, even if they had worked for the town for many years.

Assistant assessor Jacqueline see **ERVING** page A7

MONTAGUE SELECTBOARD

Board Endorses State Fees On Carbon Dioxide Emissions

By JEFF SINGLETON

At its February 24 meeting, the Montague selectboard unanimously endorsed a resolution presented by the town's energy committee in support of state legislation proposing "carbon pricing" – fees on energy sources, such as oil and gas, that produce greenhouse gas emissions.

Proposed carbon pricing legislation would increase the cost of fuel for heating and transportation, but not for the generation of electricity. Revenues from the process would be returned to consumers in the form

of rebates. Electricity produced by coal and natural gas plants is already regulated under a regional "cap and trade" policy, where polluters can purchase credits to generate greenhouse gases from those with lower pollution levels.

The word "tax" was carefully avoided in the statement approved by the board, and by energy committee member Sally Pick, who presented it on Monday night. The resolution portrays carbon pricing as a market solution to the problem of greenhouse gas emissions, while

see **MONTAGUE** page A8

GILL-MONTAGUE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Comfort Dog Clears “Last Hoop,” Superintendent Screening Underway

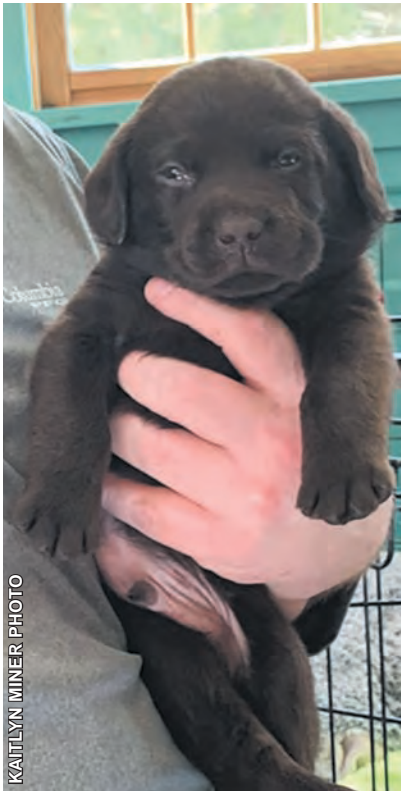
By MIKE JACKSON

GILL-MONTAGUE – School resource officer Dan Miner will soon have another tool at his disposal when he walks the halls of local schools: a Labrador puppy whose "primary function," according to an agreement between the town and school district, "will be to provide interaction, and foster dialog and communication between staff, students, and the SRO."

This "comfort dog," named Mack, was donated by a breeder, and will be owned and insured by the town of Montague. Miner told the school committee Tuesday night that the hope is for the cost of feeding and caring to be met by fundraising.

The school committee received letters endorsing the comfort dog program from the middle/high school student support team and principal, the district's directors of teaching and learning and athletics, and an anonymous 7th-grader.

"We're breeding these Labs based on their temperament, for comfort or therapy work," Peggi Brogan of New Hampshire-based Boonefield Labradors told the *Reporter*. "I've been involved in therapy work with dogs for eight years now, and I've seen the work that they can do. I



Mack will be sworn in on March 16.

wanted to make that opportunity available to organizations and towns without any taxpayer expense."

Brogan, who says the business has a wait list from other police departments that will take it into the fall, plans to be in Turners Falls on March 16 to watch Mack be "sworn

see **GMRSD** page A2

CEMETERY BEAT

A Final Forest Resting Place

By ANNABEL LEVINE

GILL – The town of Gill has a new cemetery, but don't look for a fresh lawn with stones rising from the landscape. Gill's new cemetery, named Riverside Woods, is a natural burial ground. Located in a for-

ested lot between Riverside Cemetery and Mountain Road, the space is full of pine, black birch, and soon, the dearly departed.

Riverside Woods practices natural burial, which generally implies bodies are put into the ground unembalmed, wrapped, or housed in

a readily biodegradable container (such as a fabric shroud or pine box), and buried without using a concrete vault or grave liner. This newspaper has published quite a few articles on green burial in the past, if you are interested in going more in depth on this topic (see the *Montague Reporter* of January 18, 2018 or February 28, 2019).

Gill Cemetery Committee member Joan Pillsbury spoke with this Montague see **PLACE** page A5



The town acquired the wooded acres, fortuitously, along with the Riverside Cemetery in 2016.

High School Sports: The Week In Review



A time for celebration: Turners' Anthony Peterson is congratulated by his Thunder teammates after scoring his 1,000th career point Tuesday night.

By MATT ROBINSON

TURNERS FALLS – So much to report on!

This week I had planned to list the Turners Falls girls' basketball stats, give an update on Franklin Tech wrestling, and review the Turners Falls cheer squad. But with the start of the MIAA playoffs and the Small Voc state tournament, there were five basketball games this week, and there simply wasn't enough room, so I decided only to write about the games.

Both Franklin Tech teams were in action, as well as the Turners Falls Boys. Turners won the first round of the D-IV West playoffs Tuesday night against Tech. In a highlight of the home game, senior Anthony Peterson hit the millennium mark, earning a place in Turners Falls school history.

MVADA Tournament

Old Colony 62 – FCTS Boys 50

FCTS Girls 52 – Lynn Tech 31

Old Colony 52 – FCTS Girls 44

Last week the Massachusetts Vocational Athletic Directors Association (MVADA) held their 2019/20 State Basketball Championships. Franklin Tech hosted games both nights.

On Thursday, the second-ranked Franklin Tech boys' team took on the number-three Old Colony Cougars in the early game, while the top-ranked girls played the nightcap against fourth-ranked Lynn Tech.

see **SPORTS** page A4

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The Montague Reporter

“The Voice of the Villages”

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August 2002

2/11/16

The Clinton camp will naturally do everything in its power to frame Sanders’ landslide victory in the New Hampshire primary as his inevitable high water mark. This puts into broad circulation political talking points about that state’s Democratic voters’ status as demographic outliers....

Nate Silver ran the quotients of 2008 primary voters in each state who identified as “white” and “liberal” and multiplied them to get a back-of-envelope “white liberal” ranking. Iowa and New Hampshire were surpassed only by Sanders’ own Vermont, and our own state came fourth....

One fascinating consequence of this framing is the way this sets up the rest of the primary around a competition to court black and Latino voters – particularly the younger ones whose age cohort is most prone to feeling the Bern – with arguments that their economic interests are best served by either an insider or outsider, gradual or abrupt, approach to political reform....

[T]he primary is becoming a race between two camps of white progressives to show that the other betrayed Civil Rights-era alliances a generation ago.

By immersion in urban, and then state and federal, political machines, one camp says, the other was led down a road of compromise with the rich, and ultimately acquiesced [in] slashing safety nets, gutting working-class family assets, and mopping up the fallout with a brutal expansion of incarceration.

But a finger is pointing back. On Sunday, Bill Clinton described Sanders’ politics as a “hermetically sealed box.” [Sanders] was of a generation of white progressives who identified with and even contributed to the Civil Rights movement, who happened to migrate from racially diverse cities like his native Brooklyn to segregated white rural areas just as those struggles got too complicated, too heated. From 1964 to 1968, Sanders, already an avowed socialist, spent his summers in Vermont. In 1969, he moved to the Northeast Kingdom.

What sort of socialist is motivated to spread his gospel where there are as few people as possible? What sort of democrat is drawn toward a more homogenous state?

Over the next several months, if indeed a new radical alliance is forged at the Democratic Party base, it will have to address the legacy of this white flight to greener pastures, and contend with the betrayal it meant to so many left behind.

2/27/20

That’s an excerpt from this column, four years ago this month. For the eleven days between the New Hampshire primary and the Nevada caucus, Bernie Sanders held a slight lead in the pledged delegate count – in effect, yes, the high-water mark of his campaign.

The party, or at least party activists, are still polarized between two camps. One has managed to preserve certain core principles – people over money; workers over owners; universal inclusion and participation – as if they were hermetically sealed. The other entered alliances with wealth to sponsor technocratic solutions to social woes.

The eventual election of Donald Trump, a catastrophe for the Democrats, was a repudiation of what they had to offer. Between six and nine million people who voted for Obama in 2012 switched parties. Without them, Trump would have earned fewer votes than Mitt Romney or John McCain before him.

Many liberals spent the next four years blaming that defection on an essential racism of the white electorate, or on misogyny, or on pernicious foreign influence. To stabilize their perspective, they applied the same accusations against the party’s left wing. The left, meanwhile, spent four years organizing a broader coalition.

Last week Sanders, advancing past the “white liberal” strongholds of Iowa and New Hampshire, racked a major victory in Nevada, buoyed by overwhelming Latinx support. The most recent polls show him overtaking Joe Biden as the most popular primary candidate among African-Americans.

And, according to the projections, this newly built rainbow coalition might nearly sweep Super Tuesday, collecting Sanders more delegates than his two nearest rivals, Biden and Michael Bloomberg, combined.

The “left” and “center” camps each genuinely believe the other is more vulnerable to a Trump-led Republican party in the general election. Which will inflame greater reaction: a rehash of the Third Way triangulation of 1985-2016, or an embrace of the traditional left-wing politics that were driven underground in this country over the course of the Cold War?

Over the next several months, if indeed a new radical alliance is forged at the Democratic Party base, it will have to address the legacy of that white flight to greener pastures, and contend with the betrayal it meant to so many left behind.

NINA ROSSI ILLUSTRATION

George Hemingway gets a haircut from Debbie Kelly at the Mia Bella Salon on Fifth Street in Turners Falls. The full-service salon recently opened in the space where A Turning Point had been for many years.

Letters to the Editors

If I Ask...

I’ve decided to vote my values rather than my fears.

If I ask a lot of young people who they support and why and really listen to and understand their vision, then I am supporting the planet and their future.

Nina Keller Wendell

Charge Up

Please be advised that the Town of Montague has installed electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at three Turners Falls locations: the Second Street public parking lot, the Sixth Street public parking area, and the Turners Falls Municipal Airport.

As of Tuesday, the stations are operational and ready for public use. A small fee is charged to cover the town’s operational costs.

The stations, provided by Eversource, advance Montague’s Green Community commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Even if you don’t personally drive an electric vehicle, the Town recognizes that it is important to provide the modern infrastructure that will enable individuals and ultimately the automobile industry to transition away from reliance on fossil fuels.

Please encourage everyone you know with an electric vehicle to use these chargers!

Walter Ramsey
Montague Town Planner,
Green Communities Coordinator

GMRSD from page A1

in” to the police department at a selectboard meeting.

The dog would be available to support children in counseling, shared with the broader community after traumatic events, and otherwise accompany Officer Miner at the school. “The animals relieve students’ stress, help kids learn to read, and even boost test scores and attendance,” wrote director of teaching and learning Christine Limoges.

Erving representative Theresa Kolodziej and Montague member Thomi Hall asked Miner what he would do about students who are allergic to dogs, or afraid of them.

“I have 100% control of the dog,” the officer told the committee. “If there is a student who is afraid of the dog, we can build a rapport, starting with baby steps.” He said he would check in with teachers about student allergies before bringing Mack into classrooms.

The school committee unanimously approved the agreement.

Screening Screeners

The school committee has appointed a separate screening committee to review applications for the superintendent position. Applications closed last Friday, and the screeners are now meeting in executive session to select finalists to report to the school committee on March 10.

The screening committee is comprised of student Jade Tyler; parents Ashley Laramie, Jocelyn Glabach, and Leslie Cogswell; at-large community members Jacqueline Watrous, Betty Tegel, and Betsy Burnham; Hillcrest Elementary principal Sarah Burstein; business manager Joanne Blier; teachers Karl Dziura and Melissa Bednarski; custodian Matthew Howe; and cafeteria manager Liana Pleasant.

No spot was set aside for a member of the district’s equity steering committee (ESC), an oversight that led to a minor controversy last week after an application from Pleasant, an ESC member, was not approved before the group’s work began. In response to appeals from ESC members and supporters, the school committee called an extra meeting on February 20 to appoint her.

The committee also requested, and received, a written progress report from the ESC. “We’re hoping to foster a little more communication in the future,” said chair Jane Oakes.

Other Business

Joanne Blier reported that the district had received a single quote, for \$49,500 from the Abrahams Group, to provide consulting work to the study committee investigating the feasibility of a six-town district including Gill, Montague, and the four Pioneer Valley Regional towns.

A single quote for \$9,700 came from software company Transfinder to estimate the costs of merging the six towns’ bus routes.

Sheffield Elementary counselor Kevin White is this year’s recipient of the district’s Harold Grinspoon Excellence in Teaching Award.

“He’s a role model,” said superintendent Michael Sullivan. “He arrives early, leaves late, dresses well, loves kids.”

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Compiled by NINA ROSSI

This evening, February 27, the **Battlefield Grant Advisory Committee** will host a forum on “New Field Research 2019” in the Turners Falls High School Auditorium, 222 Turnpike Road, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Presenters include David Naumec, and Ashley Bissonnette of the University of Connecticut Research Team.

Following the talk, a group of local historians will present a panel discussion titled “Emerging Stories of This Land.” Panelists include Liz Coldwind Santana Kiser of the Chaubunagungamaug Band of Nipmuck Indians, Chief Roger Longtoe Sheehan of the Elnu Abeanaki, local historian and *Montague Reporter* columnist Gary Sanderson, and Joe Graveline of the Northfield Historical Commission.

The Battlefield Grant was designed to create a comprehensive study of the extent and context of the 1676 massacre and battle that was a turning point in the King Philip’s War. An additional purpose is to engage local officials, landowners, and the interested public in an effort to locate and encourage the protection of the site. The project stems from a 2004 reconciliation ceremony between the Montague Selectboard and several tribal dignitaries to commence a healing process that involves an exchange of actions to promote understanding about and between cultures.

Also tonight, the public is invited to attend a **RiverCulture Steering Committee** meeting, upstairs at Town Hall in Turners Falls at 6 p.m. RiverCulture director Suzanne LoManto will review the first half of FY’20 and the organization’s direction for this year, and summarize expectations going forward.

LoManto says new committee members are needed, especially from the villages of Montague Center and Millers Falls. Community discussion is also going to be part of the meeting, so come give your two cents about what cultural events or goals you envision for Montague.

Moonlight and Morning Star will pay tribute to Black History Month at the Greenfield Savings Bank in Turners Falls on Friday, February 28 from noon to 1 p.m. They will perform with songs and instruments in the bank’s community room.

The next day, Saturday, February 29, Greenfield Savings Bank will hold another of their popular **BINGO games** in the community room at the bank from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Bette Sokoloski is the guest caller, and spots at the table are by reservation only. Call (413) 863-4316 to book a spot.

The last event at the Discovery Center for Exploded View’s *You Are Here* art exhibit and two-month residency will be held at 1 p.m. this Saturday, February 29 in the Great Hall. The **Leap! Open Mic** asks writers who want to share their – or others’ – work on the theme of

boundaries, maps, and sense of place, to come read for five minutes. This is also the last day to see the *You Are Here* art show.

Coming next at the Center is **Fertile Ground – Corn, Cranberries, Tobacco, and Artists**. The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association’s traveling exhibit explores connections between the Connecticut River Valley’s agricultural landscape and generations of artists in the Fuller family of Deerfield.

Imaginary art studios represent three generations: George Fuller’s painting studio, Arthur Negus Fuller’s printmaking studio, and Elizabeth Brooks Fuller’s *en plein air* (outdoor) studio. Enjoy reproductions of oil paintings, prints, and watercolors from Memorial Hall Museum’s Fuller collection; learn how farming influenced these artists’ work; and create your own art inspired by our local landscape. The exhibit is designed to engage all ages, with English and Spanish translations, and will run from March 5 to April 29.

The **Wendell Community Chorus** will give a concert on Sunday, March 1 at 5 p.m. at the Wendell Town Hall. The concert, called *One Planet, Many Voices*, will include songs of inspiration, healing, and hope by Bobby McFerrin, Matisyahu, Tina Malia, the Wailin’ Jennys, and much more. The chorus will be joined by local musicians Moonlight Davis, Mother Turtle, Derrik Jordan, and Ben Kohn. Suggested donations at the door from \$7 to \$10.

The next Hope & Olive Soup and Games night will be a **fundraiser for Looky Here** next Monday, March 2. Looky Here is a volunteer-supported, nonprofit arts space on Chapman Street in Greenfield offering workshops, concerts, shows, films, Risograph screenprinting, and low cost art supplies. Enjoy soup and bread at the event, shop for some cool Looky Here merchandise and items from the artist consignment booth, play games, buy drinks at the bar, and make a donation!

The LAVA Center in Greenfield offers a **free workshop on Improv Storytelling** on Tuesday, March 3 and Tuesday, March 31 at 7 p.m. Teaching the workshop are Amy Timmins and Marian Kelner. Improv Storytelling will introduce participants to the principles and techniques of improv through various prompts and storytelling exercises, exploring the both verbal and non-verbal formats.

Timmins is an experienced workshop instructor and performer, and Kelner brings skills and support developed over a long teaching career to these sessions. No previous acting or improv experience is necessary; just come with an open mind and desire to jump right in. You may attend one or both sessions.

Also at the LAVA Center, Wendell’s **Paul Richmond will be celebrated** along with the writers featured by his Human Error publications on Monday, March 2 at 7 p.m. Richmond has worked to promote local writers for many years,

by holding open mic events, Word Fests, a Word stage at Garlic and Arts, etc. He was also nominated as the national Beat Poet Laureate. For details, go to localaccess.org. This event is part of a Monday night literary series at LAVA.

Dina Stander wrote in our last issue about the **upcoming premiere of the documentary film (413)Art**. The film is being screened this Friday, February 28 at the Shea Theater at 8 p.m. In case you missed the article, *(413)Art* investigates the local arts scene through interviews with a diverse range of local artists working in various mediums, who share their work practices, stories, and studios with the audience.

The TFHS class of 2023 is looking for teams to play against ninth-graders at their **Trivia Night Fundraiser** on March 14 at the Elks Club. Gather up to six adults and put your knowledge to the test. There will be prizes, and the price to play is \$10 each or \$50 for a team. Register by emailing brooke.martineau@gmr.us or call (413) 863-7200 x7285.

Have you ever heard over a dozen guitars playing together in an orchestra? The **Happy Valley Guitar Orchestra** brings their large ensemble of electric, acoustic, classical and bass guitars to the Shea Theater on Saturday, February 29 at 7:30 p.m. The orchestra, composed of both amateur and professional musicians, will play an eclectic array of music from Bela Bartok to James Brown, arranged and directed by Joseph Ricker.

A **discussion on Forest Carbon** will be held at 6:30 p.m. next Wednesday, March 4, at the Millers River Environmental Center at 100 Main Street in Athol.

Paul Catanzaro, associate professor and state extension forester at UMass-Amherst, will lead the discussion to help provide a better understanding of the role carbon plays within forests, the impacts of two land-use options (forest conversion and forest management) on forest carbon, and the trade-offs of these decisions. Sarah Wells, conservation director at Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, will share the approach of her organization to incorporating climate change resilience into the long-term management of properties that Mount Grace owns.

The talk is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be provided.

Eveline MacDougall, director of Fiery Hope Chorus (called Amandla Chorus for 30 years), will present a program at the Athol Library about her book, *Fiery Hope, building community with the Amandla Chorus*, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 5. The book traces the history of the singing group, which presented world music with a message of social justice, as well as autobiographical information. For more about the book, visit fieryhopebooks.com.

Kidleidoscope Story Hour at the Great Falls Discovery Center continues in March with *Who Lives in a Tree?* on Friday, March 6; *Chipmunks* on the 13th; and *Salamanders* on the 20th. Learn about wildlife with your children from ages three to six at 10:30 a.m. Siblings, caregivers, and friends are welcome.

Also at the Center on Saturday, March 7 is a story hour for the same

age group called *When Will It Be Spring?* Consider the early signs through stories, crafts, and adventures, at 10 a.m.

A **free program on the topic of Palestine** is being offered by Racial Justice Rising on Saturday, March 7. Held at the First Congregational Church in Greenfield at 10:15 in the morning, the talk will include an historical overview, Palestinian resistance, Israeli and US solidarity, and a look toward the future. There is free childcare available, but please RSVP with the number and ages of children: email@racialjusticerising.org.

It’s already been **one year in business for the Local Yoga Joint**, 42 Canal Street in Turners Falls, and founder Jocelyn O’Shea is holding an Anniversary Party on Sunday, March 8. She’s offering a free yoga class at 10:30 followed by chair massage and reiki with Shyla Maung and tarot readings with Myk Freedman from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. – plus more fun stuff yet to be determined.

If you think you want to take the one hour yoga class, please pre-register because space is limited: local-yogajoint.com. Otherwise, just drop in after 11:30 a.m.

Have you ever been to the sculpture garden at the **Three Sisters Sanctuary in Goshen, MA**? Created by Richard Richardson, this lovely property on Route 112 South has been transformed into a magical installation of art and fantasy, including a fire-breathing mosaic dragon overlooking the outdoor natural rock amphitheater that adds fiery drama during evening concerts and other occasions.

During the off-season, the Sanctuary is having a **Logo Contest** for a design to represent the sanctuary. Submit your image by March 17 to have it featured on limited edition t-shirts, merchandise, and print for one year. The winner receives two nights stay free at the Three Sisters Sanctuary Airbnb, or \$150 cash. Find out more by contacting Alexandra Mello at (413) 210-4346.

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Leverett Dems to Hold Caucus on Sunday, March 8

Leverett’s Town Democratic Committee will hold a caucus on Sunday, March 8 at 2 p.m. at the Leverett Library to elect two delegates and an alternate to the 2020 MA Democratic State Convention. All registered Democrats in Leverett are eligible to participate.

This year’s state convention will be held on May 30 at the Tsongas Center in Lowell. Youth (17 to 35 years old), minori-

ties, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ individuals who are not elected may apply to be an add-on delegate at the caucus or at www.massdems.org.

The Leverett Library is located at 75 Montague Road, Leverett.

For more information on the caucus or on the Leverett Town Democratic Committee, contact Barbara Tiner, chair, at Barbara@wetlanded.com or (413) 441-3708.

Announcement: TF Water Department Shutoffs

On March 9 the **Turners Falls Water Department will begin to shut off water** to properties with water usage bills more than 90 days overdue. These bills were mailed November 1, 2019 and due within 30 days.

Payments can be made at the

Water Department office, 226 Millers Falls Road between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. A drop box is located to the left of the front door for payments after hours.

Any questions can be directed to clerk/collector Suzanne Leh at (413) 863-4542.

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GUEST COLUMN

By **MICHAEL NAUGHTON**

Ten people gathered for the latest meeting of the Millers Falls Community Improvement Association (MFCIA), which was held at the Millers Falls library on February 20. There were two main topics on the agenda: how best to respond to Montague town officials’ request for help in raising public awareness of their efforts to reduce “I&I” in Millers, and how best to pursue concerns about the location of the FRTA bus stop on Bridge Street.

“Inflow and infiltration,” or I&I, is water that enters the sewer system without having come from the town water supply. It has been an ongoing problem in Millers Falls, as well as other parts of Montague, and its priority has recently been raised because Millers Falls’ sewage is pumped to the Erving treatment plant, and its volume has begun to cause problems for that plant.

I&I typically comes from two sources: leaks in the pipes, and storm drains that are connected to the sewer system. Montague recently completed a project that was supposed to fix a major source of leakage, but since then the flow to Erving has not been reduced as much as was expected, and Montague officials have now turned their attention to storm drains.

They are planning to have an informational meeting for sewer users to explain that connecting roof drains, sump pumps, etc. to the sewer is not allowed, and to explain ways to identify such connections. In most cases these connections would have been made years ago, and current homeown-

SPORTS from page A1

The Franklin Tech boys held the early lead in the opener, but were unable to hold on. They went on a 10-5 streak, and closed out the first quarter at 18-13. But the Cats clawed their way back in the game. When they hit a three to tie it at 20, Coach Tim Artus sent in his first sub.

With the score tied, the Colonists implemented a new strategy. On offense, they spread out, at times passing the ball all the way back to the midcourt stripe. This thinned out Franklin’s D, allowing Old Colony to pass into the unguarded lanes.

Another change the Cougars made was on defense. One player always stayed behind of the ball handler, poking the ball out of his hands. But the Franks held tough, and going into the half, the Colony led by 1. It was anybody’s game.

“We’ve had bad third quarters,” one of the regulars said to me as the second half began. And it was true in this game. As Old Colony began to pull away, the Franks played their own brand of aggressive D. This strategy helped them stay in the game, but also led to foul trouble for the Franklin starters, and by the time the fourth quarter rolled around, Tech was facing an 11-point deficit.

I’ve been to several Tech games this season, and this one was a little different. In most of the other games, their fan base was mostly family members. Having mostly adults in the audience, the games were cordial. But in the Old Colony game, the rafters were filled with students from both schools. When a player went to the foul line, all sorts of intimidating gestures and calls rang out in the gym.

One of the plays that incited the home crowd was a kick out of bounds. The Colony retained possession, got a new shot clock, scored, and went to the line on a frustration foul. This swing put Tech down 52-39.

The Franks made one last shot and pulled with 7 points, 54-47. But there wasn’t enough time, and Tech ended up dropping the game 62-50.

Bailey Young led Tech in scoring

Millers On The Move: February 2020

ers might not be aware of their existence. They have asked for the MFCIA’s help in arranging and publicizing this meeting.

Some members of the group remembered that 10 or 15 years ago town officials came around and inspected people’s systems, looking for these connections, and people expressed some surprise that current officials seemed unaware of that effort. Noting the size of the turnout for their own meeting, people were also a little skeptical that the MFCIA would be better able to publicize the current effort than town officials themselves, but the group agreed to do what it could to get the word out.

Right now, the meeting is tentatively planned for Thursday, March 19, with time and location to be determined.

The bus stop in downtown Millers Falls, on Bridge Street, has been a topic of discussion since the public input meetings for the Millers Falls Strategic Plan. Despite the absence of one of the leading advocates for change that night, the meeting decided to move ahead to see what can be done.

The main concerns are safety issues with the current location, as the bus often blocks traffic on what is a busy artery through town. (Bridge Street is also state Route 63, which is a major north-south route.) There are also concerns because there is no shelter, or even bench, at the stop, so riders sometimes use the steps and porch of an abutting property.

After discussing several alternative sites, including the former location on Franklin Street and

a site on Newton Street offered by a local property owner, the group decided to begin by researching why the site was moved to its current location, and what the process is for changing it. It was agreed to begin by contacting Montague’s representative to the FRTA, and to see where that leads.

The group would also like to get feedback from people who use the bus, and to that end a sign will be posted at the bus stop. All comments are welcome, but the MFCIA is particularly interested in whether riders think the current location is dangerous, as well as suggestions for a better location. There was also interest in finding out how far people travel to get to the bus stop.

Responses can be made by email to the MFCIA at millersfalls.improvement@gmail.com, or on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/millersfalls/>. Please share any thoughts that you have – good, bad, or neutral – about bus service to Millers Falls and the Bridge Street stop.

Finally, there was a short discussion of upcoming events.

The main one is the annual village cleanup; it was decided to try to pick a date at the next meeting, on March 19. (If the meeting for sewer I&I is on that date, the MFCIA meeting will be held afterwards.) Other possible events are a tree walk to highlight the new trees planted in Millers Falls, another Summer Social sometime in July, and maybe a Millers Falls pub crawl.

Stay tuned!

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

MIAA D-IV West

FCTS Girls 47 – Pathfinder 25

TFHS Boys 65 – FCTS Boys 52

There was no rest for the Lady Eagles. On Monday, they returned to the Franklin Tech gym to take on the Pathfinder Pioneers.

“They don’t want to lose three against us,” commented one of the adults in the crowd. Pathfinder has a good basketball program, and although they lost twice to the Eagles, one of those losses was by a mere 3 points.

That sentiment was echoed by Coach Gamache: “We don’t take anybody for granted.”

With relief center Ryan out of the lineup, the Pioneers had the clear height advantage. But Hurlbert and the rest of the Blue D were up to the challenge. Every single pass and shot was contested, and when a Pioneer held the ball, looking to pass to an open player, one of the Eagles would sweep in and grab it.

With most of the passes tipped away, it looked a lot like a volleyball game. And when they got the ball into the paint, Hurlbert frequently blocked the shot, giving opportunity for the Eagles to set up fast breaks.

The Pioneers initially went up 3-0, but that was all she wrote. Tech stormed ahead, leading by 9 at the half and 19 after three.

Any hopes of a comeback ended on the first play of the fourth. The Eagles forced a backcourt violation, and from there it was off to the races. When they expanded their lead to 47-20, the benches were cleared, and Franklin took the game going away 47-25.

One of the nicest things in the game was the support the varsity players gave to the reserves. They never stopped cheering encouragement to their teammates, the same support that their teammates gave to them. Hurlbert led the scoring for Tech with 17, followed by Crowningshield (10), Doane (8), Castagna (6), Cruz (4) and Duga (2).

The Eagles make their way to the Berkshires tonight to take on number-4 Lee.

The Franklin Tech Gentlemen

Eagles crossed the road on Tuesday in a bid to upset the Turners Falls Thunder. Tech were the visitors, despite their superior record, because tech schools generally have a lighter schedule than public schools.

Several students wore shirts reading “Feed the Ant,” a reference to Anthony Peterson’s quest to score 1,000 career points. At the half, he only needed 3, and he seemed determined to hit a 3-pointer. But Tech knew his quest, and wouldn’t leave him open on the outside. So Anthony had to settle for a couple of foul shots to near his goal. At 4:21 of the fourth, Anthony finally hit a field goal to push him over the 1,000 point mark, and get his name on that coveted banner in the gym.

Turners dominated when these two teams met during the regular season, especially because of their height advantage. But that was then. On Tuesday night, Tech never gave up, and Turners had difficulty pulling away.

Part of the reason for the close score is that it was a very physical game. Bodies banged into each other throughout the contest, and several boys hit the floor. But the combination of Marcus Sanders’ drive to the hoop and Peterson’s domination on the boards gave Turners a small cushion throughout.

Early in the fourth, Tech pulled within 6 points, 46-40, and it was a whole new game. But Tech’s balloon seemed to pop after Peterson hit his thousandth point. They stayed in the game, but Turners quietly pulled ahead and finally won 58-48.

In this game only four players scored for Tech: Cole (24), Young (17), Littlewood (8), and Bergmann (3).

Sanders led the Thunder with 27, followed by Peterson (21), Chace Novak (9), Jaden Whiting (4), and Liam and Brendon Driscoll (2 each).

Turners travels to North Adams this Friday to take on Drury in the second round of the D-IV playoffs.

Next week: the cheer squad’s last dance, Tech wrestling, and more playoffs!



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NOTES FROM THE WENDELL SELECTBOARD

Locals Suspicious of Growers, Energy Use

By JOSH HEINEMANN

Lucas Thayer of Appleguy Flowers LLC, his lawyer Blake Mensing, his real estate broker Brad Spry, and his aunt Alice were all in the Wendell selectboard office at 7 p.m. when the board’s February 19 meeting started. Their interest was a property on West Street where Thayer hopes to grow 25 to 50 marijuana plants outdoors.

Four Wendell residents listened to their proposal, and then stayed to state their concerns. They allowed Thayer and Mensing to give their full presentation first.

The law requires that the growing area at the “Tier 1” facility (Tier 1 is 0 to 5,000 square feet, Tier 2 is 5,000 to 10,000 square feet, and Tier 3 larger still) be fenced and illuminated with redundant security cameras, a landline, and cell connection to the security company. Mensing said that police departments have expressed appreciation for growing facilities in some urban areas, because the increased security presence has lowered the crime rate there.

Thayer said the site has only a few large trees, and that most of the ones he would clear are small and young and that he would use them on the site. He plans to fertilize the plants with worm castings and local compost, and grow them in bags on trays to avoid runoff. There would be a doghouse-sized structure to hold security information for 90 days, as is required by law. During the harvest, which would last two weeks in October, there would be a Porta-Potty on site for three to five workers.

Thayer said he did not anticipate a problem with increased traffic, as might happen with a retail outlet. He mentioned that the retail price of marijuana is ridiculously high, and that he is also trying to start a facility in his hometown of Harvard.

In response to selectboard chair Dan Keller’s question about odor, Thayer said he would have flowering plants that would mask the aroma of the product. The state forbids any facility to be a bad neighbor, and excludes marijuana from right-to-farm protections.

Citizen Pru Smith objected to Thayer’s description of the site, saying it holds many large trees, and that the small ones are small not because they are young, but because they have been crowded. She said she thought Thayer had been inconsistent, saying he planned 25 plants at a planning board hearing but then increasing it to “25 to 50.” (Thayer responded that he expected some mortality during the growing season.)

Mensing cited the rights of private ownership, and pointed out that the clearing of 10,000 square feet is smaller than the 40,000 that normally would be cleared for a house and lot.

A town is allowed to tax a “grow” up to 3% of its income, but only to recover costs that the town incurs as a result of the facility.

After the Appleguy Flowers people left, Smith said again that she found their inconsistencies bothersome, and said she did not trust them.

Citizen Dan Leahy said he thought the town should look beyond these applicants to ones that might follow them. Earlier this year a proposal was floated, and dropped, for a 30,000-square-foot indoor grow. Like the series of solar projects that are on hold while National Grid expands the capacity of its Wendell Depot substation, it would require 3-phase electric power, and consume the electricity that 7,000 homes normally use, Leahy said.

Smith said that the town’s vote to allow marijuana, in supporting the ballot question that led to its legalization, put Wendell on the map. Leahy said Wendell citizens voted in the spirit of “live and let live,” and not to encourage large-scale growing. State law allows a household to grow up to 12 plants, but not to sell. Appleguy Flower’s proposal is commercial, he said, likening it to the 10-acre solar facility Sunpin proposed for the corner of New Salem and Morse Village roads. That differed from home rooftop solar panels in the same way that this proposal differs from home growing, Leahy said, and does not fit the wooded character of Wendell.

Selectboard member Christine Heard commented that Wendell once was all cleared farmland.

The planning board supports a moratorium on marijuana facilities, but the Appleguy Flower proposal will not be affected if the town creates one.

Permitting takes time, and Thayer said being able to grow in 2021 would be “amazing.” The town’s next step is to create a host agreement, for which there are models already. The only two towns in the state that have allowed outdoor grows are Barre and Sheffield.

Appleguy Flowers representatives are scheduled to meet the selectboard again on March 4 and April 1.

Two Reportbacks

Selectboard member Laurie DiDonato gave reports from two meetings she attended: the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), held in Boston, and the Wendell common committee. The MMA is changing its name of town executives from “board of selectmen” to “select board,” two words and an overdue change.

The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) brought up cybersecurity and ransomware as a growing concern for towns and

PLACE from page A1

Cemetery Commission member about how this new cemetery came to be, and how it works now. Pillsbury, who was looking for green burial options in Gill in 2009 and came up empty, ended up working for Green Burial Massachusetts – alongside current Montague Cemetery Commission member Judith Lorei – and was elected to the Gill Cemetery Committee when a spot opened up in 2014.

A few years later, in May 2016, the town of Gill acquired the Riverside Cemetery after the Riverside Cemetery Association dissolved. Along with the acquisition of the cemetery itself came the adjoining 2.8 acres of forested land. The committee jumped on the chance to expand the cemetery into the woods, and finally give residents of Gill the option of a green burial.

Pillsbury stressed that it took the support of the cemetery commission, town selectboard, and finance committee to make the project happen. Once the project was approved, it took a few years to come up with a set of rules and regulations for Riverside Woods.

The committee has borrowed heavily from a document of rules and regulation standards released by the Green Burial Council, a national non-profit that advocates for environmentally sustainable natural death care through education and certification. While rules were being written, paths were being cleared and select maintenance needed to be done.

After years of work, the cemetery was officially “opened” at a Gill Cemetery Committee meeting last month.

One of the rules decided upon by the committee is that burials would be sequential. In practice,

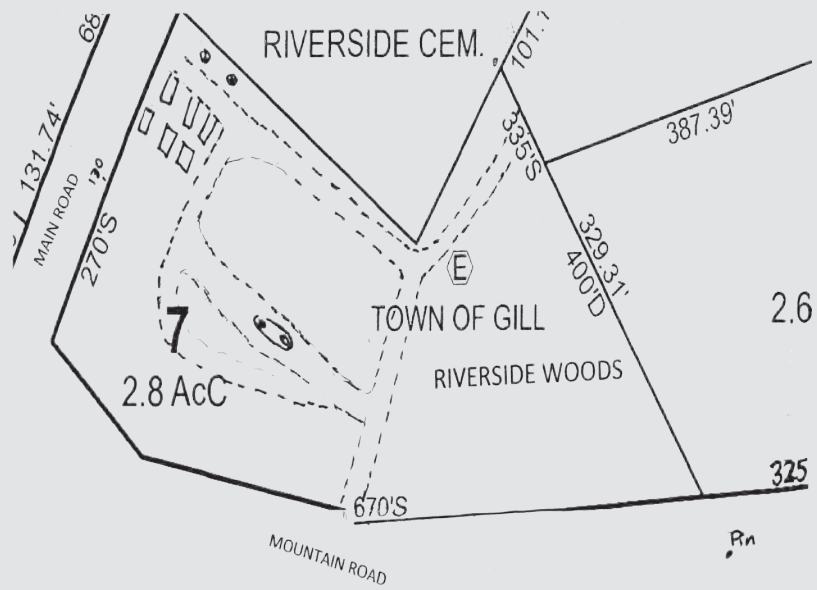
cities, and said it is important for towns to maintain backups so stolen records can be recovered.

The MMA suggests more communication among town boards and departments. Heard said that no one came to Wendell’s “all board meetings,” and that pizza might induce better attendance. After the national state of the union address, the MMA recommended a regular state of the town address. Heard said the annual report, prepared for town meeting, serves that purpose.

A workshop on energy promoted green energy from local sources for municipal aggregation. Local sourcing encourages development of new projects, rather than unspecified “green” energy, which can be credits from already established wind farms in Texas.

Reporting from the town common committee, DiDonato asked what that committee’s short- and long-term mission was: limited to the issues that led to its formation, or more expansive.

Keller said the committee is advisory, and can grow to include as much as its members want or merely concern itself with the issues that led to its creation: crabapples, the effort



this means that one does not buy a specific plot, but rather purchases a “right to be buried.” Plots are then assigned at “time of need.”

Pillsbury explained why one can’t just go and choose their own spot in a wooded burial ground like Riverside Woods. She says because bodies are buried under a mound, the ground becomes unsuitable for heavy machinery, like the machine used to dig the graves. Therefore, the graves must be filled in a certain order to ensure that the mounds do not block access to fresh sites.

The grave sites on Pillsbury’s map are laid out in rows of two. This way, if people want to be buried together they can purchase adjacent plots, and one will be left empty in the sequence once the first plot is assigned.

Riverside Woods is open to both residents and non-residents of Gill. Fees include \$700 for a resident and \$1,000 for a non-resident, as well as costs associated with opening the grave and use of town resources if a funeral director is not hired. For full information on fees, contact the committee.

Grave markers are allowed, but

only in the form of flat (no more than 3” above grade), natural rock such as fieldstone or river rock.

If you are interested in the space, go take a look for yourself. When Pillsbury goes to visit Riverside Woods, she parks on Mountain Road and walks in through a path. The path winds through and Pillsbury says “people can bird or they could walk.” When asked if there were plans for benches, she said not yet – but for now, “there are stumps!”

For more information on Riverside Woods, including details on rules and regulations, please contact the Gill Cemetery Committee at jpillsbury@gillmass.org.

This article was written and submitted by Annabel Levine on behalf of the Montague Cemetery Commission.

That commission is currently in the process of finding land for a green cemetery here in Montague. If you are interested in learning more, please email at judithcemetery@gmail.com, or attend their next monthly meeting, dates TBA.




of them. A police chief shared with New Salem would hold a full-time position with benefits, not a part-time position without benefits in each town. Leverett may still be part of a contiguous town group interested in researching a common chief. The shared fire chief, currently paid separately by Wendell and New Salem, would also have to become a single benefited position.

Town coordinator Nancy Aldrich reported that C2 Energy paid Wendell \$3,710.20 for Wendell’s hosting of its solar installations. C2 bought the contract from Seaboard Solar, and Wendell agreed to host Seaboard’s solar installations and be paid for each kilowatt generated. This money has been slow in coming, and much less than promised, but the payment was more welcome than the bills that C2 has sent.

She also reported that Mass Audubon is again offering camperships to Wendell residents in lieu of paying taxes for its land in town. Instead of classroom instruction, which can disrupt a teacher’s plans, they will pay for the classes to go to Mount Wachusett Meadow Wildlife sanctuary in Princeton, Massachusetts.

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INTERVIEW from page A1

committee for a while – that was when my kids were going to school there – and then I wasn’t on anything for a while.

The person I replaced was Margo Culley. When she was retiring, like me, she asked me if I would be interested, and I said no, I didn’t think so. She asked me way ahead of time.

But then when it actually happened, and nobody was running, I thought, “Well, I could do that!” My kids were a little bit older.

MR: *Why did she think you’d be a good fit?*

CH: Probably because I’m smart and kind, and calm – calm is important. I don’t know, I never asked her that!

MR: *What was the dynamic on the select-board when you were first on it?*

CH: Well, Ted Lewis was on it, and he’d been on it for a long, long time – he was the chairperson, and he knew all the back history. Anne Zak was on it, but she didn’t stay on it for very long, maybe a year and a half.

It really wasn’t very different – it’s a very collegial group of people in town in general, people in town government are very cooperative. They don’t have a big agenda, they just want to do whatever their job is and make it work for Wendell.... I guess you have to be a people person to do that job.

MR: *A little bit of mediation, sometimes?*

CH: Quite a bit there is of that. Meetings get intense – we’ve developed a kind of protocol. If we think it’s going to be a difficult meeting, we read a little: “You’re talking to us, not each other; you can’t call names,” et cetera. It makes a big difference.

And we stay calm – we don’t get involved in the argument.

MR: *Have you rotated the chair much?*

CH: No. Ted was the chairperson for all the years. He’d been on the board 39 years when he got voted out [in 2009].

Dan Keller has been the chair for the past two-plus years. I wanted him to have the experience while I was still on the board.... It’s a skill, to facilitate a meeting, which I had learned. In fact, I really like it when things get hot, so I can really exercise my brain and keep things calm.

But that’s one thing about being on the selectboard: you don’t have to have a certain interest, or be a certain kind of person, because it’s a team of people, and you can follow your own interests and work on that part of the job...

MR: *How has that division generally gone? I know it was you, Dan and Jeff Pooser for a while – what was your lane?*

CH: When something new comes up, one or two people say that they’ll be involved in it.

Ted really knew the buildings, and the town property, as well as the history. Dan has kind of taken over that: he stepped up and helped Ted with that as he was getting older, so he’s really the person that deals with town buildings. I’m the liaison to the schools, somewhat.

Laurie, our new member, is on the energy committee. We asked her to be in charge of the town hall kitchen oversight committee, and we just recently formed a town common advisory committee.

Sometimes nobody wants to do it, and then one of us has to say, “Well, I’ll do that.”

MR: *There’s often one major issue that a board works on over the course of several years – in Wendell, recently, it’s been the broadband project. What other major waves have you seen?*

CH: I think the other major thing was the construction project, when we built the library, the town office, and the town well and septic system – that was a very big project. I think that was in 2008 and ’09 that we did that work.

MR: *Broadband seems like it’s underway for real now?*

CH: It really is! They’re giving us a March 9 start date – although it’s our third postponement in three months – it is really ready to go. Everything is in place, except that we’ve been waiting for the utility companies to finish the work on the poles, to make them ready for the cable.

MR: *I saw your recent update that the buy-in effort hit its target.*

CH: Yes. We’re very happy about that –

that was a big concern. There’s a whole group of people in town, including my colleague Dan Keller on the board, who think that we shouldn’t have broadband and it’s going to be too expensive a project for the town, maybe nobody will sign up and it’ll lose money...

When we hit that number – 265, I think it was – it was kind of a relief. And it’s still several months before we even get going, and have our ISP provider signing people up.



MR: *But some people felt like the town should not have gotten into the business of broadband?*

CH: Yeah, there are people who feel like it’s too expensive and that it will change Wendell. I mean, it will change it, but most people do have internet service – it’s just going to bring us better service.

It’ll make it easier for people who want to do a home business – we have quite a few of those in town – and people who want to go to school. But I don’t know that that’s going to change us. We’ll be keeping up with the rest of the world, to some extent.

The big concern for the finance committee has been the cost of funding the broadband, because we’re taking out a \$1.5 million loan – maybe we won’t borrow that much, but that’s the loan we signed up for....

We’re approaching our levy limit, so that’s a big thing for the finance committee this year. I don’t know that there’s any other issues on the warrant, particularly – just funding.

MR: *Seems like Wendell is getting to a similar position to where Leverett’s been in the last few years: so close to the levy limit that they’re trying to limit [budget] growth across the board, but there’s some amount of growth in the schools that everyone agrees is necessary.*

CH: Right, well, that’s the problem. If you don’t have growth in town, if there’s not new homes being built, then you can’t raise your levy limit.

MR: *And you’re not even keeping up with cost-of-living adjustments.*

CH: Exactly. But just in the past year or two, there has been construction in town: people making additions... That’s looking better than it did a year ago.

MR: *Is there also growth in terms of people moving to town?*

CH: There is... I’m very close to the school, because I was the secretary there for 18 years, and I still volunteer there every week – it’s a regional school with Wendell and New Salem. When my children were there, Wendell had the bigger proportion and paid the bigger part of the budget, and then gradually New Salem kept going up, and we started going down.

But just since I left, it’s switched, and now the Wendell population is growing. That’s partly just demographics, you know – older people moving out, young families moving in – but it’s partly due to construction. People are looking to move to Swift River School.

MR: *What do you do at the school?*

CH: I volunteer in the preschool classroom. I hang out with the kids. They often have me doing cooking. My grandmother name is Clucky – I have grandchildren at the school, and they call me Clucky so the rest of the children call me Clucky. So it’s “Cooking With Clucky.” It’s a fabulous school, I think – they

have wonderful teachers, and all the staff down to the cooks and custodians are really nice people, and everyone’s focused on teaching and doing the best they can for the kids.

MR: *Do the two towns get along pretty well over the school district?*

CH: For the most part. Sometimes one person from one of the towns has an issue with the school, but it’s not usually the town governments – we get along well. We share the school, we share our town coordinator, and we don’t exactly *share* the fire chief, but we have the same fire chief.

And we’re looking into how to manage our police chief. Both Wendell and New Salem’s police chiefs are looking at retirement, so we kind of have to do something. New Salem, Wendell, and Leverett got a grant from FRCOG to look at what the alternatives are. They just got the report a couple weeks ago, so they’ll be sorting through that....

MR: *I saw that the planning board is recommending a moratorium on marijuana grows, while they sort out the bylaws – similar to what just happened with large-scale solar.*

CH: Right. And we did have someone come to our meeting last week who wants to grow outside and was looking for an agreement with the town. It makes sense to me: they want to farm, they just want to grow marijuana instead of chicken or apples or whatever. It’s very circumscribed by the state, in terms of security.... People are building houses, people are growing their businesses.

MR: *Do you think having broadband in town is going to hasten new construction?*

CH: No... What we say is, if we didn’t have broadband it would be bad – people would not want to move to town. Having broadband just makes us competitive with all the other towns; we’re not going to make it more attractive.

MR: *Besides getting hooked up with broadband, is it starting to feel like Wendell’s more on the map?*

CH: I hope not! I’d rather not have us known.

MR: *It’s not really the idea for it to be.*

CH: No. I think people move to town because they want to be quiet and unobtrusive, for the most part, and not part of a bustling metropolis by any means.

MR: *In the 40-plus years you’ve been in town, you must have seen some changes – and not just at town hall.*

CH: Well, government in general is being more regulated. We used to just have a dump, and now we have a recycling center. It just gets more and more involved with regulations, and the Open Meeting Law – there’s all this stuff coming down from the state level.

Generally, I think Wendell used to be a very loose community: people really did what they wanted, and it just is having to tighten up and match the state standards. We created a bylaw about people having junk in their yards. That’s what I see as the long-term trend.

MR: *So you end up being the face of modernization?*

CH: The selectboard, I think, is funny – people think it’s a big important job, and it doesn’t feel like that to me. It feels like you’re kind of watching over the whole town, just keeping an eye on the whole thing, but really, other people are doing the work. If something’s not going well then we try to step in, but a lot of times, if it’s an elected official, we really don’t have much say in what happens.

But we work to keep everything going smoothly, as much as possible, and help what we can. The selectboard can’t decide to have broadband – things that have to do with money go to the town, and many decisions to the planning board, or the conservation commission.

MR: *Sometimes there are big public controversies that the selectboard ends up being a focal point of, even though they’re larger issues. The most recent, on everyone’s mind, is the forest logging.*

CH: We didn’t even need to be involved in that forestry issue, much, and didn’t, until towards the end of it.

It was interesting to me, because there’s a small group that’s really vociferous and ada-

mant, and on fire about cutting trees, and that’s been a persistent issue since I started on the board. But most people don’t feel so passionate about it, and a lot of people understand managing woodlands – it’s not a bad thing to manage your woodlands. There’s plenty of trees in Wendell, in my opinion. But we don’t have control over the Wendell State Forest or anything, so we just stayed out of that.

But then the Warwick selectboard wrote a letter, and I liked what they had to say. And after a while I said in our meeting, “You saw the Warwick letter, I sort of had the thought maybe we should do something like that.” And both Dan and Laurie said “Yes, let’s” – no discussion! So then Nancy [Aldrich] wrote the letter, and we edited it.

But there’s this whole group of people who don’t say much, and I felt like that’s who we were speaking for. But we didn’t have to. We chose to put ourselves in that position.

MR: *During the recession I remember there being a lot of activity countywide around emergency preparation. We were all looking at Wendell, working neighbor-to-neighbor mapping out resources after the [2008] ice storm...*

CH: I was part of that – we had a co-captain system that we set up for a while. We never had to use it, but it was interesting, because a lot of people volunteered. We had 22 neighborhoods, and we had two co-captains for every neighborhood. We imagined, in an emergency, maybe you’d have to walk everywhere, and you’d need to do it soon – so we kept it small.

MR: *Or snowshoe!*

CH: Snowshoe, or ride your horse, whatever it took. We got people to volunteer to be co-captain and we trained them.

Some of it was “don’t go near any wires,” but the real job they had in an emergency was to go check on their neighbors and see what they needed, and communicate that to whoever needed to know. Maybe they needed somebody to cut down a tree – it wasn’t your job to do that, but maybe you knew a neighbor who could do that.

So, that was a whole system that we set up. But when we had the new fire chief, Joe Cuneo, he wasn’t comfortable having volunteers do that job, and he felt that at that point they had enough firefighters to do that kind of work. They had done it in New Salem....

I think [the fire department is] looking for new people right now.

MR: *Are there generally a lot of opportunities for volunteering right now?*

CH: Yeah, there’s always room for more people! A lot of our jobs are elected, but at least half of them are appointed. It’s up to the selectboard to make those appointments...

I think that’s something I’ve been good at: recruiting people, paying attention. I drive down the road and I think, “Who lives here? Oh, they have teenagers, don’t talk to them. But him, hmm...”

MR: *You’re stepping off mid-term?*

CH: Right, after one year.

MR: *And you ran unopposed last year... Have you run any competitive races over the years?*

CH: I have, a couple of times. When I first ran, two other fellows were running against me, and there was one other time when a woman ran against me.

MR: *When you ran, what was your value proposition to the people of Wendell?*

CH: I really didn’t have much of an agenda – I just wanted to help keep Wendell going. It takes a lot of work! I felt like I could help oversee the whole thing.

I like being part of a committee. I wouldn’t want to be like the mayor and have to make the decisions, but I like being part of a team. That’s why I like Swift River, it’s very much a team there.

MR: *What would you say directly to people who might be interested in taking out papers?*

CH: Well, I think it’s a really interesting job. I really find it fascinating.... It’s always something different, it’s not the same issues. And then you have long issues that are taking years to work their way through, but it’s good to pay attention to those now and then, and

see **INTERVIEW** next page

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INTERVIEW from prev. page
get them done.

And the people that you work with are really intelligent, and interesting, and pleasant. It's not a struggle. Of course, there's some people that are more difficult that come to meetings, but the town government workers are really interesting people. I'm hoping that this conversation will encourage people to run for the board. March 14 is the last day to take out nomination papers, and you have to return them by the 16th. You just have to get 25 signatures on the paper, it's not hard to do.

And I want people to understand it's not a big, time-consuming job.

MR: And it's only a two-year commitment. Dan Keller let me know he's planning to run for his seat.

CH: Yes, he is. We're trying not to all leave at once! We've got Laurie, who's only been on it for a year and a half – but she's very good.

It's good to volunteer and do things for other people. I've found it very rewarding and challenging. I like working with people – you have to have a lot of patience and perseverance, because a lot of projects

are very long projects. You can't go in and think, "I'm going to change this." You've gotta go in and think, "there's work to be done and I'm going to do it."

This is not necessarily always true, but it has been true for most of the 22 years that I've been on the board, that we operate mostly by consensus. Many times we don't even take a vote. Sometimes you have to take a vote, for the record, for something – and sometimes we don't agree on what should be done, and then you take a vote.

MR: It's fun to talk to you, because I've been reading your name every two weeks for seven years, and it feels like someone has stepped out of a book who I actually get to talk with – and ask this character their perspective on how these things go.

CH: [Laughs.] I think it's an easy job. We have our coordinator, who does research, writing letters, a lot of work for us. Mostly I'm involved in making phone calls or emailing people – which you do at home, so to me, that doesn't seem so much like work – and going to meetings. Probably one meeting a week, on av-

erage. It changes from time to time.

MR: As an outsider, Wendell's often explained as a place where a lot of people moved in say the '70s and '80s, but everyone figured out, better than in a lot of places, how to get along. Do you think that's fair?

CH: I do think it's a pretty phenomenal town for how people do get along, how cooperative it is, and how they take care of each other. It's really amazing to me. Not everybody gets along with everybody, but a long time ago I realized what I think is the hallmark of Wendell, which is tolerance. People tolerate others. They might not agree with them, but they're not going to fight with them – they're not going to insist they do things the way they want them.

MR: As someone who has been a newcomer, but not recently, do you have advice for people who are newcomers in these communities?

CH: Yeah – get involved in the town. Have some fun with the rest of us. There's a lot of things: Good Neighbors, the library, the schools – a lot can be done, if you want to get involved!



ERVING from page A1

said the board of assessors had prepared a letter saying that she had "been doing the job without the title of principal assessor for years. To start at Step 1 – is that really fair? I've already been doing the work."

Selectboard chair Jacob Smith said that the board "didn't know the market value three years ago, or five years ago," and that in order to have "consistent application," each employee would be placed on the step that gave them a raise: in Boyden's case, Step 1.

Boyden said that the board of assessors had voted to give her a 2% merit raise in FY'20, but had been asked to defer it to the results of the compensation study. In her case, she said, Step 2 was more appropriate.

Jacob Smith said he disagreed, because the implementation plan was not going to be applied retroactively.

"We should put each one where they belong," argued Daniel Hammock, a member of the fin com and board of assessors. "They don't deserve to be treated as if they just walked in off the street."

Selectboard member William Bembury said he had no problem with Boyden's request for Step 2 status, but that "once we go down that slope, it's open to everybody."

Collins Center consultant Mary Aicardi said that the town "might want to treat misclassified positions differently."

Jacob Smith, referring to the 2% cost of living adjustment (COLA) voted in June 2019, replied, "That was before we decided to do a COLA, meaning, at that point, not to go retroactive."

Bembury commented that it was "usually me" who brought up

retroactive pay, based on his history of receiving retroactive raises while working for state government. "For me it was a given. I always brought it up. I'm not sure the board always agreed."

"It wasn't a decision," Jacob Smith added. "It was a discussion point."

"It's concerning to be put on Step 1, with the same job description as a part-time call firefighter, said Brandon Breault, a full-time firefighter and emergency medical technician. "I am bringing a lot to the table." Breault said the Erving fire department could "end up like the police department, with people leaving left and right.... You're getting a very good deal for fire protection in this town. You need to consider employee qualifications."

"We talked at length about the feeling of being on the first step, rightly or wrongly or otherwise," said Jacob Smith said. "We could create Steps 1, 2 and 3, and put everyone on Step 4. There has to be a method to put everyone somewhere."

Bembury said the town initiated the study "to develop a pay scale fair to all town employees... If you try to make everybody whole, we've reversed it and gone back to an arbitrary merit system." "This was a big project, it's not perfect," Bryan Smith commented. "It's important to put a piece of it forward."

"It was retroactive as I understood it," said Hammock. "If it costs \$100,000 to keep our workers paid fairly, so be it. I advocate putting people where they belong.... It's the people's money, they can vote it at town meeting."

Aicardi suggested that the town could give bonus checks to employees with many years of service, but said the proposal addressed compa-

rable worth and pay equity. "If you don't implement this, you've got no system," she said.

"There is no 'fair'," said fin com member Debra Smith. "We have to meet in the middle."

Jacob Smith asked Aicardi and Bryan Smith to double-check the firefighter classifications. He said he had understood that call firefighters would be in separate grades from full-timers.

Bryan Smith was also asked to show how implementing the pay scale would fit into the FY'21 budget. The board and fin com will continue to discuss the matter on March 2.

Other Business

The board approved a bid from Casella Waste Management of Massachusetts for curbside pickup of household solid waste and recyclables for three years, starting July 1.

Casella's bid was lower than that of USA Waste & Recycling, Erving's current hauler. Casella's bid also included continued dual-stream collection of recycles to be brought to the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). USA Waste's bid included single-stream recycles to be brought to Valley Recycling.

The board also signed a contract negotiated by the Department of Environmental Protection with Waste Management Recycle America to operate the MRF. Bembury said he objected to the contract, and wanted Bryan Smith to draft a letter to state representatives detailing the town's objections to the contract.

The board approved a 20-year structured tax agreement with French King Solar, LLC.

Matthew Morin was sworn in as a police officer.



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

Here's the way it was February 4, 2010: News from the Montague Reporter's archive.

Selectboard Chair Patricia Pruitt Will Not Run Again

Three years ago, when she decided to run for a second term, selectboard chair Patricia Pruitt said she would not seek a third. This week, Pruitt confirmed that decision.

Pruitt said, "The town has accomplished a lot of positive things in the last three years. The most outstanding and visible achievement is the new police station, but the RiverCulture program is another thing that affects the whole town in a very positive way."

But, she admitted, "Anything to do with money right now is a challenge. We've been working hard to hold onto our services, to keep our employees as best we can....

"The big frustration is our old buildings. We're not making the kind of progress we'd like to be making. We still have our desires for a new garage, a new library building, and senior center. The wish list is long. It will take time."

Leverett Police Department Presents a Budget

Chief of police Gary Billings said arrests have more than doubled in town since 2008, and accidents are up by two thirds. If he were forced to cut his budget by 5% – a scenario the selectboard has asked all town departments to prepare, in case state aid is cut by a similar amount – Billings says he would be forced to cut into hours for part-time police officers, just at a time when "some of the more unsavory elements" seem to have discovered Leverett.

The finance committee and selectboard poked around in the line items in Billings' proposal for a while. "Last year we squeezed your budget in a number of places," recalled selectboard member Peter d'Errico wistfully.

"You've done that three years in a row," Billings responded.

Vermont Says No

National media packed the corners of the Vermont Senate chamber with television cameras, and the *New York Times* filed a story within minutes of the final gavel falling on the 26-4 vote to deny the state's lone nuclear reactor the 20-year extension on its operating license its parent corporation, Entergy Louisiana, had sought.

The 38-year-old Vermont Yankee reactor in Vernon is scheduled to retire in March of 2012. It has been plagued by a series of leaks and accidents since Entergy took ownership of the plant from a consortium of Vermont utilities in 2002.

Never before had a state voted on whether a nuclear power plant should continue to operate within its borders, and Vermont's action came just one week after the Obama administration announced plans to commit billions in taxpayer-funded loan guarantees to revive the fortunes of the domestic nuclear power industry.

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MONTAGUE from page A1
portraying the legislation as reflecting the true cost of carbon emissions. “Free markets operate most efficiently when individuals and corporations are responsible for the cost of their actions,” the statement reads.

Pick told the board that the statement is virtually identical to one they had passed two years ago, with the exception of one new paragraph, which calls for a portion of the funds collected from the fee to “be allocated to energy efficiency and renewable energy measures for municipalities and for public and electric transportation, particularly for lower income residents of Massachusetts.”

The resolution also states that the carbon pricing legislation should be structured so that “the economically vulnerable residents of Massachusetts are not caused any undue financial hardship because of this law.” Pick said that this would be accomplished by giving larger rebates to lower-income households.

In support of the resolution, Pick noted that a survey by a Yale University Program on Climate Change Communication showed that 78% of Franklin County respondents “support regulating carbon dioxide as a pollutant.” She called this finding “pretty astounding.”

“Well you don’t know who they polled,” said selectboard chair Rich Kuklewicz.

“No, but they are reputable in terms of doing surveys,” Pick replied.

The resolution did not endorse specific bills before the legislature, but several times Pick cited H.2810, which now sits before the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. According to Mary Jo Maffei of Climate Action Now, the “Benson Bill,” as it is named after a former sponsor, would initially place a charge of \$20 per ton on CO₂ emissions, rising by \$5 per year thereafter. Seventy percent of the revenue from the

charge would be redistributed in the form of consumer rebates.

The policy, according to H.2810, would be administered by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, in collaboration with the Department of Revenue.

Maffei said the joint committee had held a hearing on H.2810 in early January and was originally scheduled to act on it February 5, but voted to delay final action until June 4. She was hesitant to make predictions about the bill’s fate, noting that carbon pricing bills have been before the legislature for at least four years. Still, she said, 96 of the state’s 160 representatives have signed on to the bill.

Short-Term Spots

The selectboard discussed parking – or the lack thereof – in downtown Millers Falls. Town planner Walter Ramsey told the board that the newly-formed Millers Falls Improvement Association had received complaints that parking “had been clogging up a bit, particularly from residents using East Main Street to park long term, particularly in places used for businesses.”

Ramsey recommended that three spaces “in the proximity of” Carroll’s Market be limited to 15 minutes. The Improvement Association letter recommended two-hour parking on the rest of East Main, but Ramsey said this would be difficult to enforce due to police staffing constraints.

The board approved the three 15-minute spaces on East Main Street during Carroll’s business hours, and also a curb cut to improve access to a parking lot behind the market. This might involve recreating a proposed curb cut that had been eliminated a number of years ago during the Millers Falls Streetscape project.

Bridge Divides

Department of public works superintendent Tom Bergeron presented an update on the status of various town bridges. “I’m not real-

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ly going to give you good news,” he said, announcing that a month ago he had received an order from the state Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to reduce a small but heavily used bridge on North Leverett Road to one lane.

Asked when MassDOT might fix the bridge, Bergeron said: “I doubt very much it’s on any list.”

On the brighter side, town administrator Steve Ellis told the board that the South Street bridge near Montague Center “surprised us by showing up on the state priority list.” Ellis said he would be attending a meeting of a regional transportation committee the next day, “having a conversation about how we can advance conversations” about needed bridge repairs, but that he suspected state

work on the North Leverett Road bridge might be “four years out.”

The board did not take a vote on town bridges.

Other Business

The board vote to adopt the town’s final Multi-Hazard Mitigation plan, which Ramsey said had been approved by both state and federal emergency management agencies. “This will help keep us eligible for a lot of other funding streams,” said Ellis.

Brian McHugh of the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority requested that the board pay the Berkshire Design Group \$550 for bid documents for the restoration of Spinner Park in downtown Turners Falls. The

board approved the request.

The board appointed Patrick Murphy to the position of wastewater technician at the town water pollution control facility. It also approved dates for summer concerts by the Community Band at Peskeompskut Park. At Ellis’s request, the board approved two small “rounding amounts” for town debt service.

Ellis also announced that the power canal in Turners Falls would be drained by the FirstLight power company during the week of September 14 to 19. He said the annual draining for canal repairs and inspection will also allow the construction of a new pedestrian bridge across the canal at Fifth Street.

The next selectboard meeting will be on March 2.

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JOE KOPERA PHOTO

Above: The view from Chestnut Hill at dusk last Tuesday: most of Montague, the western hilltowns, and Mount Greylock.



Unearthing the Archives

By Charlotte Kohlmann

PART IX: POLLY ANDERSON, MURIEL SHIPPEE,
AND THE BUCKLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



By CHARLOTTE KOHLMANN

BUCKLAND – Kid slippers with grosgrain binding and square toes; Mr. Ward’s spectacles; Lena C. Wiley’s 1893 autograph book; a notebook used by the Pomeroy family, comprised of seven ivory slabs, each engraved with a different day of the week; “letters of sympathy to Miss Alta Carpenter by Crittenden Pupils”: these are just a few of the objects one can stumble upon while visiting the Buckland Historical Society.

These ordinary and mundane objects curate the monotony of historical Buckland’s rural life, and help form the collective memory of this town in a 21st century context. The sieve of documented ceremonials of birth, childhood, adulthood and death centuries old, can be rightfully searched and researched in the security net of such a small archive.

“Why hang onto these things if it isn’t to learn about them?” asks Polly Anderson, program director at the Buckland Historical Society.

Earlier this month, Anderson and Muriel Shippee, the Society’s curator, showed me around the 1860s Greek Revival-style Buckland Center School building where the Society’s collections are on display from May through October.

The wear and tear of schoolchildren was evident in the well-worn flooring and door frames; skid marks decorated each step of stairs. A fireplace spanned the entirety of one wall in the main room, which once functioned as a kitchen. Centuries-old glass vitrines scooped up from old department and hardware stores have a second life here, housing Buckland residents’ garments, commonly-used items, handmade objects, and such accessories as Alice Ware’s carved, wooden-handled

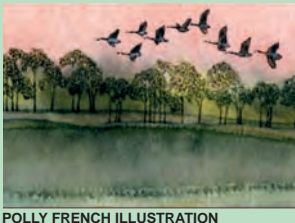
At top right, Buckland Center School students and teacher, circa 1888. Photo courtesy of the Digital Commonwealth of Massachusetts. At bottom right, Polly Anderson and Muriel Shippee outside the same schoolhouse door this month.

black taffeta parasol and the knitted, yolk-colored socks once owned by Pearl March’s grandmother.

Both Muriel Shippee’s husband and Polly Anderson see **UNEARTHING** page B5



KOHLMANN PHOTO



POLLY FRENCH ILLUSTRATION

WEST ALONG THE RIVER IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING

By DAVID BRULE

ERVINGSIDE – I may well be the only one you know who is lamenting the lack of snow.

I’m becoming resigned to this non-winter; I’ll have to yield to the inevitable. Spring is coming on without there having been a real winter season. I live in a place where we pride ourselves on the harsh misery of a hard season. And how do we revel in spring if we haven’t earned our redemption through suffering? Snowshoes and skis have remained idle and forlorn, leaning against the wall near the front door. Except for the distant memory of a brief November snowfall that seemed to promise a classic New England winter, the season has been bland, with mostly bare ground.

Regardless, I’ve been out here all along keeping the weather company, out of the icy wind, my back to the sheltering woodpile, scratching away on my winter reports. I put the pen to warm and thaw in my pocket from time to time as the ink coagulates and really does only leave scratch marks on the page. Facing southeast, I can keep track of the sun’s progression along my valley rim, where it rises steadily more and more to the east every day.

This Sunday morning, the sun breaks over the peak of the neighbor’s roof. Just a short while ago, the first light broke over the Aquinnah of Martha’s Vineyard, then reached the towers of Boston city center, made its way along the Boston and Maine Railroad tracks past Fitchburg, and now has reached the steeples of Millers Falls and the white pine trees towering over my valley along the west-flowing river.

At least that’s how I imagine it.

The icy snow in the back yard extends out from the back steps, but only serves as a hard, cold day-bed for our Siberian husky who, like me, longs for fluffy snow.

The inevitable began out here before the end of January. Then woodpeckers launched their drumming season on dead branches early, laying out their springtime territories. My field notes tell me that the song sparrow began his spring piping on February 2, ahead of schedule based on the last 10 years of notations in the house journal.

Seems we can’t even count on the groundhog these days. Even he called for an early spring and then promptly went back to sleep. Is all of this a sign of things to come, with winter retreating farther and farther north as the climate changes?

Down along the Connecticut River, the size of the geese flocks is growing. Several hundred keep stretches of water open near Barton Cove. Yesterday, new arrivals came winging in, clamoring and honking in their excitement to join the flock. However, they hit the skids when landing on the frozen surface, braking and sliding on their rear ends like so many over-excited politicians showing up in New Hampshire.

That same morning a pair of eagles sat side by side in the morning sun at the top of the tallest pine in Riverside, then began their slow circling courtship flight over the river, scaring up a hundred gulls. The eagles paid them no attention for once, having mating in mind. I scanned that flock of gulls looking for the Iceland gull (*Larus glaucoideus*) and its north Atlantic companion, the glaucous gull (*Larus hyperboreus*), reputed to be mixed in with the mundane riff-raff herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*).

see **WEST ALONG** page B4



By MISHEL IXCHEL

TURNERS FALLS – Dating as an indie mama has been... a menagerie. I mean, even in my pre-kid days, I found it to be quite the ride. Luckily, I made just about every possible mistake in my twenties, so now that I’m in my thirties, and with a kiddo in tow, I feel a hellalot more equipped to steer clear of potential trouble.

My child’s dad and I have been navigating (and pretty much nailing) the co-parenting lifestyle. He’s a really good guy, an incredible dad, and this alone inspires me to work through whatever we need to work through. Misunderstandings are fewer and farther between these days,

When Worlds Collide

though on occasion when things get out of balance, we seem to get back up on the horse in no time.

Because, at the end of the day, I manage to see beyond the issue and instead concentrate on the greater picture: how this man shows up as a dad for our kid time and time again.

Given that we’ve been separated for almost four years now, dating other people has been part of our co-parenting equation. Long ago, we agreed that we would only introduce a certain someone if we felt like it was the real deal. I, for one, have no interest in knowing about his random hookups, and I see no point in divulging my personal life with him in detail. But if it’s the real thing, as we call it, then communication is in order, because then it’s only a matter of time before the child becomes involved.

I’ve met my co-parent’s significant others, and one in particular I simply adored. She created such a deep bond with my son that she im-

mediately had a place in my heart. And even though the relationship didn’t work out, he still remembers her fondly. Her involvement in our lives set the standard: whoever would be part of our day-to-day simply had to have a loving connection with our child.

I once tested these waters with someone I thought was a potential partner. Looking back now, perhaps I should have realized that there was something missing; of course, I should have known better when, upon meeting him, I ended up with teenage poultry in my apartment. (Yes, you read that right. The story is long, and perhaps not appropriate for this publication, but that’s exactly what happened and I’ll leave it at that.) All of this to say that, even though this man and I had a connection of sorts, there was no magic on the handful of times that my son was around. There was no effort on his part to engage the little one.

see **INDIE MAMA** page B3



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES ILLUSTRATION

Song sparrow (melospiza melodia).

Pets of the Week

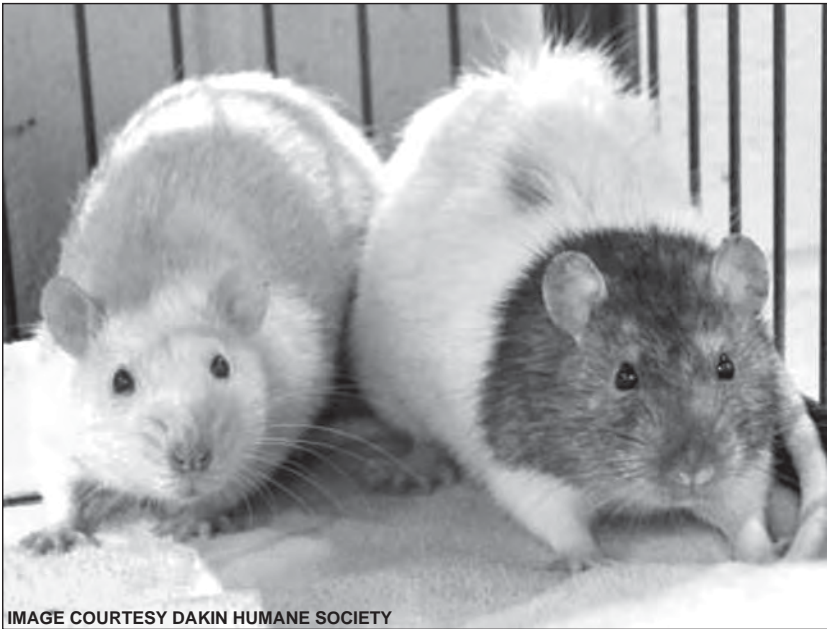


IMAGE COURTESY DAKIN HUMANE SOCIETY

“MERIADOC & PEREGRIN”

Have you ever wanted a rat? Have you ever wanted two rats? Or maybe a young person in your life wants two rats? Well, meet Meriadoc and Peregrin. Dakin is currently offering them for 50% off adoption fee, which means these little hobbits come two for the price of one!

They are both male, in Lever-

ett, and 2 years old. Dakin recommends solid bottom, powder-coated wire cages. A two-foot cube is the minimum size for a pair of rats. Think you might have what it takes to finally become a rat person? Contact the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society at (413) 548-9898 or at info@dpvhs.org.

Senior Center Activities MARCH 2 THROUGH 6

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 3/2

1 p.m. Knitting Circle

Tuesday 3/3

Senior Center Closed

Primary Election!

Wednesday 3/4

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

Thursday 3/5

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 3/6

AARP Tax prep by appointment
No activities or classes

ERVING

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

For information, call Paula Betters, Senior Center Director, at (413) 423-3649. Transportation can be provided for meals, shop-

ping, or medical necessity. Call to confirm activities, schedule a ride, or find out about the next blood pressure clinic.

Monday 3/2

8:45 a.m. Stretch & Sculpt
10 a.m. Healthy Bones & Balance
12 p.m. Homemade Lunch
12:30 p.m. Card Game: Pitch

Tuesday 3/3

8:45 a.m. S.W.A.P. Exercise
9:30 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
10 a.m. Stretching & Balance
12 p.m. Homemade Lunch
1 p.m. DIY Crafting

Wednesday 3/4

8:45 a.m. Sleep Yoga
8:45 a.m. Line Dancing
10 a.m. Chair Yoga
12 p.m. Congregate Lunch
12 p.m. Bingo & Snacks
1:45 p.m. UMass Architects meet

Thursday 3/5

8:15 a.m. Foot Clinic
8:45 a.m. Interval Training
10 a.m. Healthy Bones
10 a.m. A Matter of Balance
12 p.m. Homemade Lunch
12:30 p.m. Brown Bag pickup
Friday 3/6
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quilting Workshop
9:15 a.m. Walking Group
9:30 a.m. Fun Bowling
11 a.m. Massage appointments
12 p.m. Congregate Lunch

LEVERETT

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

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

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

WENDELL

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

MARCH LIBRARY LISTING

Montague Public Libraries

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

ART EXHIBITS

Leverett Library:

Sunday, March 1: *WINGMASTERS*, portraits of birds: drawings by *Julie Anne Collier* and photographs by *Jim Parks*, who rehabilitate injured birds of prey through their partnership *Wingmasters*. Through April.

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Thursday, March 5: *Genealogy Gathering*. Carnegie Library. 6 to 7:45 p.m.

Saturday, March 7: *Book Sale*. Carnegie Library. 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 14: *Life-Sized Candyland*. Carnegie Library. Join us for the biggest game of Candyland you have ever played! Designed for children of all ages and their families and their caregivers. 10:30 a.m. to noon.

LEVERETT LIBRARY

Sunday, March 1: *Reception for Julie Ann Collier and Jim Parks of WINGMASTERS*. Will feature several live birds of prey. Exhibit is comprised of the birds' portraits, with drawings by *Julie Anne Collier* and photographs by *Jim Parks*, who rehabilitate injured birds of prey through their partnership *Wingmasters*. Notecards with prints from Collier's drawings can be purchased at the reception. 2 p.m.

Tuesday, March 3: *Library Book Group*. This month's book is *The Man with the Golden Arm* by *Nelson Algren*. All are welcome. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 14: *Protections for Elders and the Massachusetts Judicial System*. March is National Judicial Outreach Month! As part of this outreach, Leverett Library will welcome *Hon. Justice Linda S. Fidnick* of the Hampshire Probate & Family Court. Hon. Justice Fidnick will talk about the legal system and how it engages and protects elders, and answer questions. 12:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 15: *The Silent Service: Life Under Water On A Nuclear Submarine*. A talk

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

by *Jim Field* and *Steve Purdy*, with *Mitch Mulholland*. 2 p.m.

Sunday, March 22: *Meeting of the Leverett Organizing Committee for the 250th Anniversary*. Celebrate your town in 2024 – help us plan! Everyone is welcome. 3 p.m.

Saturday, March 28: *Native Traditional Ecological Knowledge* with *Elizabeth James-Perry*. Leverett and 23 other towns are hosting the second Libraries in the Woods Community Read in March, April, and May. They will be reading *Braiding*

Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by *Robin Wall-Kimmerer*. On March 28, Aquinnah Wampanoag speaker *Elizabeth James-Perry* will give a presentation referencing foodways, arts and material cultural traditions from period sources. The artist will bring examples of her weaving, with wampum jewelry for sale. Sponsored by the Leverett Cultural Council, Friends of Leverett Library, and donations. 1:30 p.m.

WENDELL FREE LIBRARY

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

Saturday, March 21: Movie screening, *Bicentennial Man*. Part of the library's monthly Sci-fi/Horror Movie Series. 7:30 p.m.

ERVING PUBLIC LIBRARY

Sunday, March 1: *Craft Day – Make a Decoupage Plate* with *Arlene Maggie*. 1 p.m. *Meet and Greet with Senator Jo Comerford*. 2 p.m.

Monday, March 2: *Senior Day at the NEW Erving Library*. Come and see! 10 a.m. to noon.

Tuesday March 3, Wednesday March 4, Tuesday March 10, Wednesday March 11 and Tuesday March 17: *Class Tours of the NEW Erving Library*. 10 a.m. to noon.

Saturday, March 14: *Zydeco Connection*. Benefit at the Wendell Full Moon Coffeehouse for the Friends of the Erving Library. 7:30 p.m. \$

Sunday, March 29: *Farley String Band*, popular traditional music. 1 p.m. *Clinical Notes*, popular songs from Broadway, etc. 3 p.m.

DICKINSON LIBRARY, NORTHFIELD

Wednesday, March 4: *Morning Book Group* discusses *Meet Me at the Museum* by *Anne Youngson*. 10 a.m.

Friday, March 6: After school program, *Making Mini-tree-houses*. 2 to 3 p.m.

Tuesday, March 10: *Gardening for Birds* with *Ted Watt* from the *Hitchcock Center*. Co-sponsored by the Northfield Bird Club. 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 11: *Non-fiction, Fiction and Poetry Group* discusses *A Separate Peace* by *John Knowles*. 3 p.m.

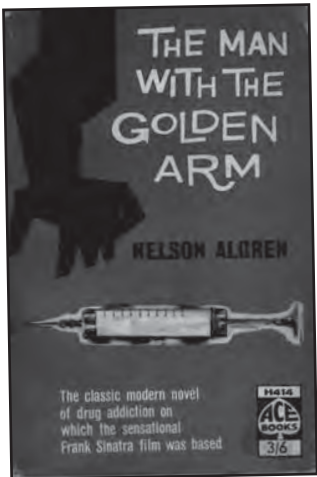
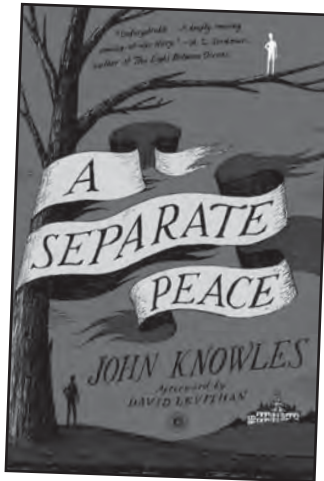
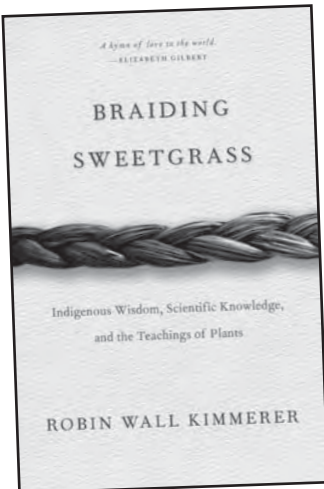
Thursday, March 12: *Environmental Awareness Group* discusses *Underland* by *Robert Macfarlane*. 6:30 p.m.

Friday, March 13: After-school movie, *Frozen 2*. 4 p.m.

Friday, March 20: *Making Windsor Chairs* with *Patrick Perkins*, using 18th century tools and techniques, and how to combine oil and milk paint for a durable finish. Supported in part by a grant from the Northfield Cultural Council. 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 28: *Family Musical “Innie / Outie”* from the *People's Own Organic Power Project*, starring *Shawn Shafner* and *Wanda The Sock-Puppet Worm*. Sponsored by the Sustainable Future Fund of the Vermont Community Foundation. 10:30 a.m.

Tuesday, March 31: *Carving Out a Living on the Land* with *Emmet Van Driesche* of *Pieropan Christmas Tree Farm*. “Tales of Resourcefulness and Craft, and Emmet carves a spoon while he chats.” Part of the Libraries in the Woods 2020 Community Read series. 6:30 p.m.



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Sunderland: (413) 665-5030
Gill: (413) 863-5730

INDIE MAMA from page B1

It boils down to this: the “real thing” means not just having a meaningful relationship with me. It also means making the effort to cultivate a relationship with my son.

And up until recently, I decided to release all efforts in trying to find someone who fit that description. Instead, I threw myself to the whims of the internet gods, seeking nothing but fun and adventure, and made myself a Tinder account. Internet dating feels like shopping at a garage sale or a thrift shop: with some patience, you’re bound to find something interesting.

I once cringed at the thought of meeting someone from a dating app. The romantic in me clung to the idea that the connection had to be in real time, face to face, in person. It’s an antiquated idea, and it’s also narrow-minded. I began to think differently about it, seeing it as simply another avenue to meet someone. And by looking at it dif-

ferently, I’ve also approached it differently. As a result, I have met some fascinating people, some of whom have become dear friends.

I had no high aspirations this last round when I made myself an account, other than to shake up my routine. Best case scenario? I’d hang out with some cool people and do some cool things. As I began to swipe my way through the singles in my area, the longing in me to meet the real thing dissolved.

What is it that they say: when you stop looking for it, you find it?

Right. That. The good old internet led me right in the direction of what very much feels like the real thing. And while I’m thrilled (‘cause let’s face it: who doesn’t *love* the beginning of a new romance?), I’m also realizing that the time will come for my worlds to collide.

Will sparks fly when he meets my child? Will there be a loving connection?



The Montague Reporter Podcast presents a free screening of Disney's *Newsies* (1992) for our loyal listeners



Four episodes are up! Find us on iTunes, Spotify, Stitcher, etc.

Sunday, March 1
5:30 p.m. at the Montague Reporter
177 Avenue A, TFMA

SCENE REPORT

Native American Dance Event

By MELISSA WLOSTOSKI

GREENFIELD – The Nolumbeka Project has a mission, according to their official website, “to promote a deeper, broader and more accurate depiction of the history of the Native Americans/American Indians of New England before and during European contact and Colonization.”

The last time I know of them doing that was on February 1, when Annawon Weeden and James Moreis taught Native American social dance and stomp dance in the Cohn Dining Commons at Greenfield Community College.

I decided to go to observe the whole event with my own eyes. Before the event got started I took notice of things that showed Nolumbeka rolled out the welcome wagon and really got into the spirit of this. There were refreshments, books on Native Americans for people to look at, someone selling Native American jewelry, and chairs for people to sit in a semi-circle like Native Americans do.

I think people really thought they’d have a big turnout before this happened, because GCTV showed up with cameras to film the event. They did indeed have a big turnout. One more thing is there was a woman there with a Native American drum. So talk about really getting into the spirit of things!

The event opened with a Native American prayer by Elnu Abenaki chief Roger Longtoe Sheehan. It actually was a song that I found very interesting and cool to hear. The Elder also beat a drum while he did it.

The dancing, taught by Annawon Weeden and James Moreis, started in that semi-circle form I mentioned.

Then there were people following this guy in a line. A bunch of people even had rattles in their hands to shake while this was being done. It looked sort of neat to do, and people certainly seemed to enjoy doing it.

David Brule, the president of the Nolumbeka Project, spoke at the event. He spoke of River Stories 2020, which seems to be Native Americans telling stories up and down the Connecticut River. Two of the locations he mentioned were Springfield, MA and the Pocumtuck Homelands Festival that I believe goes on in Turners Falls in August. That sounded like an interesting thing to go to hear.

James Moreis led the people in one of the dances, called a hunter dance, I believe. That dance stayed in a circle form, and appeared to me to be like a game of London Bridge Falling Down. I say that because people held their hands together and up high while other people went under them. People seemed to enjoy that, too. Another dance was more like couple dancing, due to the people being in pairs.

One of the dances involved people holding hands with each other and being in two circles. It looked like they were sort of doing the hokey pokey. Some of the dancing seemed repetitive to me. I believe you call the first one a stomp dance, and the others social dances.

The event went well for people who were getting dance lessons, some possibly doing this for the first time. They did all of the dances I mentioned very well, and seemed to enjoy doing them. The people in the audience seemed to enjoy watching them, too.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTAGUE POLICE LOG

Hillside Bomb Threat; Bike Theft; Central Booking; Groggy Raccoons; 166-Foot Skid; Roofing Nail Spill

Sunday, 2/16

6:02 p.m. Anonymous caller reporting several kids riding ATVs at high speeds up and down Randall Wood Drive. Area checked; nothing found.

Monday, 2/17

12:09 a.m. Manager at Hillside Plastics reports that an employee found a bomb threat written on a note inside of a bottle in the building. Caller has evacuated the whole building. Officers sent and TFFD started. Building checked with managers; nothing out of the ordinary located. Building cleared.

3:52 a.m. Caller from Fifth Street states that a male party is banging on the front door to her neighbor’s apartment, causing a disturbance. No one at door or in area upon officer’s arrival.

1:06 p.m. A 55-year-old Turners Falls man was arrested and charged with operating with a suspended license and possession of a Class E drug.

4 p.m. Walk-in reports that someone came to her house wanting to help her lower her electric bill; is concerned they may have gotten information from the Eversource bill that she showed them. Advised to call electric company in the morning.

Tuesday, 2/18

4:18 p.m. Vehicle into tree on North Leverett Road. Party is out of vehicle. Shelburne Control notified to tone MCFD. AMR advised and en route. Mutual aid officer advises that truck slid off road into a tree; no injuries at this time. Officer requesting call be placed to DPW about current road conditions. DPW advised.

4:51 p.m. Caller reports that his bike was stolen from his porch on Fourth Street. Black road bike, “Raleigh Capri,” with black and white camouflage handlebars. Report taken.

7:07 p.m. Caller reports he went off Greenfield Road, hit a snow bank, and struck his head. No airbag, smoke, or fluids. AMR not available; Shelburne Control requested to tone MCFD. Operator passed field sobriety tests. Report taken.

7:44 p.m. Vehicle went off road and struck wires near Hillside Plastics. Four occupants got out of vehicle. No MPD officers available due to call volume; call placed to Shelburne Control to request Erving PD. Call given to TFFD. AMR requested and en route. Officer advises EPD can cancel; he is now en route. Eversource reporting 25 minute ETA. Report taken.

Wednesday, 2/19

10:32 a.m. Single-car collision on the sharp corner

at Lake Pleasant and Old Northfield roads. Caller is out of vehicle and requesting an officer. Officer requesting contact with DPW about involved locations and road conditions. Officer reports that there were two juvenile passengers in the vehicle at the time of the accident. Operator walked kids home and then went back to the scene. Officer following up at residence to check on kids. Both parties are fine; no reported injuries at this time.

12:11 p.m. Three-vehicle collision in front of Windy Hollow Veterinary Clinic on Sunderland Road. No sign of smoke/fluids/airbag deployment; no apparent injuries. Officer reports 166 feet of skid from one involved vehicle. Involved trailer had an expired registration.

6 p.m. Caller from L Street reports that a half hour ago, his security system advised him of a male party on his porch carrying a clipboard. Caller requesting residence be checked. Services rendered.

10:21 p.m. Caller reporting a possibly injured goose on the side of Montague City Road near Walnut Street. Calls placed to Loril Moon-dream and animal control officer; messages left for both. Also left a message with a waterfowl rehab in Bernardston. Caller later advised goose took off.

Thursday, 2/20

10:28 a.m. Caller reports he got a scam call from central booking in Baltimore, MD claiming that his grandson was in a bad motor vehicle collision. Caller reports that he knew it wasn’t his grandson because of how the caller was addressing him. Caller contacted central booking and was advised that it is a scam.

12:51 p.m. Caller from Crescent Street reporting that a suspicious male party just knocked on his door claiming to be a rep from Eversource. Caller called Eversource to confirm and they report-

ed that they did not send him. Party did not provide his name or a solicitation permit. Officer advised. Area search negative.

Friday, 2/21

8:47 a.m. Caller reports somebody in dark clothing standing on the ice under the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Caller is concerned for person’s safety. TFFD advised and responding; advises the person is ice fishing. No issues at this time.

9:23 a.m. Commercial fire alarm activation at 253 Pharmacy; “fire explosion room gas.” TFFD advised. 12:01 p.m. 911 caller reporting two males, one of whom is a high school senior, climbing the supports under the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge. Caller’s brother observed a video of same on Snapchat and recognized one of the males. Erving PD is in the area and responding. Gill officer advises no visual on their side; MPD negative as well.

1:37 p.m. Caller reporting a groggy raccoon on the Montague Town Common; reports that it walks ten feet and then lies down again. No signs of injury. ACO advised; same unable to locate animal at this time.

2:16 p.m. Report of loud music and slamming coming from a Fifth Street residence. Officer spoke with both parties; appears to be mutual at this time. Both advised of options.

4:13 p.m. Caller states there is a raccoon staggering around not looking well; walking along Canal Road near old Railroad Salvage. Caller states it is near a small brown shed near a blue shed. Officer states nothing found in area. Copy of call left for ACO.

5:19 p.m. Caller from North Street stating she has what looks like a rabid or sick raccoon wandering around her house. Responding officer advises raccoon doesn’t look sick but may have been hit by a car with injury to its paw. Raccoon had wandered

into the woods behind the neighbor’s house prior to officer’s arrival.

8:45 p.m. Two callers from Grove Street reporting that dogs at a nearby address have been barking outside for over two hours. One caller states this is an ongoing issue and she feels the police and ACO have just thrown their hands up at the issue, so they are just going to continue to call. Officer advises dogs have been brought inside for the night. Copy of call left for ACO.

10:55 p.m. 911 caller from Our Lady of Czestochowa states he has a new phone and hit the button by accident. Advised caller someone will be coming to check on him. Caller states he is leaving the church to drive some people to Chicopee; stated multiple times he is OK and there is no emergency. Caller no longer in area; said he hit a new button on his phone but there is no problem.

Saturday, 2/22

2:32 p.m. Report of man ice fishing with two kids; caller concerned that ice is not thick enough to be safe. Referred to an officer. 7:51 p.m. Family Dollar employee states that a man just stole some items and went running up Seventh Street. Officer advising suspect may have stolen items from Walgreens as well. K9 track conducted starting at Carnegie Library; dog followed scent all the way up to the last house on Seventh Street. Report taken.

9:32 p.m. Motorist reporting a large amount of black screws in the travel lanes on Sunderland Road near Fosters Road. Officer located a very large amount of roofing nails in road. Road will need to be shut down until MCFD arrives to help clean up. Nails swept to side of road. Message left for DPW to pick up on Monday.

Montague Community Television News

Roots Fest, Sports Report

By MICHAEL SMITH

Check out one of our latest videos from the Northern Roots 2020 Traditional Music Festival from Brattleboro, Vermont. Accomplished musicians Nathan Gourley and Joey Abarta perform traditional Irish folk songs. They put on a great show that you are welcome to see for yourself at montaguetv.org.

All the latest town and school-related meetings are also available for you at montaguetv.org.

Right now, you can click our “Latest Videos” tab to see the most recent select-

board meetings for Montague and Gill, the Gill-Montague Regional School District’s latest school committee meeting, and the newest episode of the Franklin County Varsity Sports Report.

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

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JOEL PAXTON ILLUSTRATION

T-RUMP by denis f. bordeaux

MY OLD RUNNING MATE JEFF EPSTEIN GETS ARRESTED AND I TAKE A BUNCH OF FLAK FOR THAT.

I BECAME GOOD BUDS WITH VLADIMIR AND LIL KIMMIE, AND I GOT CHASTISED FOR THAT.

MY CRONIES, MICHAEL COHEN, PAUL MANAFORT, ROGER STONE, AND MORE ARE IN OR GOING TO JAIL, SO I GET GRIEF ABOUT THAT.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO START ASSOCIATING WITH SOMEWHAT MORE SAVORY CHARACTERS, YOUR TULBOOSNESS.

HERE HE IS, THE MAN WHO BROKE BASEBALLS CARDINAL RULE AND LIED ABOUT IT FOR DECADES, MY KINDA GUY, PETE ROSE.

Cool Cats on the Ave by Sygette

Watcha got?

Dead mouse.

Killed it yourself?

Yup.

Are you gonna eat it?

Nope, present for the human.

Kiss-ass.

OVER THE HILL by Carolyn Clark

Mrs. McDougle died, Harry. A lot of our generation seem to be popping off.

You know, it's a little like cooking popcorn. Only a few pops when we're young.

Then as you get into your 80's more and more until the pops are going crazy.

That made me hungry, Cupcake. I'll fix us both a bowl.

GLIMPSES FROM THE OFFICE by ANNABEL LEVINE

when the font gets GROOVY

THREE DEGREES OF WARMING by JANICE ROWAN

We have to stop burning fossil fuel!

Sure man, but can we wait until after the concert?

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A Midsummer Night's Dream On A Leap Day Weekend

GREENFIELD – Over the past four months, seventeen local artists and actors from Northampton all the way up to Turners Falls have been working together to produce Shakespeare's comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at 10 Forward in Greenfield.

Much like the rude mechanicals of *Midsummer*, the cast is composed of an eclectic array of actors ranging from longtime community theater veterans to first-time performers.

Directed by Madden Aleia with production design by Isa Reisner, the play is the first put on at 10 Forward. The production runs this Friday, February 28 and Saturday, February 29 at 8 p.m., with a 1 p.m. matinee on Sunday, March 1.

Tickets are \$10, and are available at the door. There will be live music and faerie-themed drinks at the bar. 10 Forward, formerly known as the Root Cellar, is located at 10 Fiske Avenue in Greenfield, under Mesa Verde.



Titania (Beverly Ketch), falling in love with Bottom (Laurie McNamara).

WEST ALONG from page B1

Not even a glimpse. This season is enough to drive you crazy.

In spite of my misgivings, the first redwings showed up in the yard by February 10, also a few weeks ahead. And now, this Sunday morning the first grackle, all alone, arrived two weeks early. He swells up his feathers and spreads his tail in releasing his creaking croak that passes for a mating call. It sounds more like a squeaky wheelbarrow. Nobody hears him except for me and some nearby jays. There are no lady grackles in the neighborhood yet, and the blue jays look on bemused. Good luck with that, they seem to convey to the lonely optimist. The east-rising sun behind them projects their shadows down onto the porch where I sit trying to capture the effect of this fleeting moment of their brief pause in their morning's business high up in the towering bare maple.

So this Sunday morning, I'll have

to leave aside my cold-weather musings, and think about the ephemeral peace of this day of the week. For years now, no longer do church bells chime out from the village steeples, just lingering in my mind's memory. Instead there's the lovely piano solo of Beethoven's *Piano Trio Op. 1, No. 1*, the ivories tinkling on the stereo back in the living room. That liquid melody barely reaches me out here in the pale, cold sunlight. I'll have to stop fretting and let the peace of a February Sunday into my thoughts.

There's the jays' blue yodel, the red-wings' oak-ka-lee. The cardinals all over the neighborhood keep repeating their cheery springtime cheer-up call from the tree-tops.

Somebody's got spring fever out here, but it isn't me. How can it be spring fever, when it isn't really spring?

But I have to give in, it might as well be... spring.



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UNEARTHING from page B1

are the fourth generation of their families to live in Buckland. Muriel moved here when she met her husband sometime in the 1960s and has been here ever since. As we toured the collections, they both began to rattle off street names where every Greek Revival, Gothic, and English style homestead and Victorian barn are located around town.

“In Buckland, a whole house can be an archive, not just what lived or lives inside of it,” said Polly. She was able to recall the exact years they were built, the generational backlog of family names who have lived in them and their friends and neighbors who reside in them today.

The Historical Society also includes the Wilder Homestead, a 1775 salt-box style homestead with five fireplaces and a 1779 English-style barn. This estate remained in the Wilder family until it was deeded in the 1970s to the historical society. The first Wilder, Gardner Wilder, was one of the first settlers of Buckland in 1771.

The Society prides itself on being a living history archive: objects don’t sit underneath glass collecting dust only to be coveted all the more for their preciousness. “If something can be used to educate us, we will use it,” says Muriel.

Personal items, paper ephemera, household and farm equipment line the walls of the collection at the Center School, and can be held – with due trust – by visitors. A 1910 National brand vacuum cleaner, early washing machine clothes wringers, butter churners, and a turn-of-the-century bicycle are not just for the eyes, but available for those who want to make their own hands-on examinations.

Memory feels more physical than



emotional here. “We want to show how people lived, and hopefully people feel it by participating in the educational programs we offer and from our weaving, silversmithing, cross-stitching, farming and harvesting, cooking and cider press activities,” explain the two caretakers.

They are renewing lost and found artifacts by using them for their intended purpose in various workshops, thus permitting a re-

covery of technologies that have become obsolete, under-documented, or seemingly disappeared.

The Buckland Historical Society is located on 32 Upper Street, Buckland, MA. The Wilder Homestead is located on 129, Route 112, Buckland. Both are open to the public from May through October, from 2 to 4 p.m. and by appointment.



Turners Falls Athletic Club Annual Membership Drive

The Turners Falls Athletic Club (TFAC) is again in the midst of its Annual Sponsorship / Membership Drive.

This begins the 86th Year since the club was organized in 1934. Club members support the charitable giving that the Club sponsors each year through its Scholarship Trust Fund, which was established many years ago.

Each year, through the efforts of some 125 members, second-semester college scholarships are offered to seniors of both the Turners Falls High School and the Franklin County Tech School.

Since 1974 the TFAC has awarded over \$98,000 in scholarships to over 140 deserving students.

Along with the College Schol-

arships, the Trust Fund is able to make donations to support various youth sports activities, including: Babe Ruth Baseball; Newt Guilbault Little League; American Legion Post 81 Baseball; the YMCA Summer Youth Program; Valley Storm Girls Softball; the Franklin County Spring 5K; Montague Park & Recreation’s Summer Youth Program, and others.

Applications for the 2020 Scholarships will soon be available at both schools’ guidance offices, and must be turned into the guidance office by April 10, 2020.

If you are interested in becoming a member or want to support the TFAC, contact tfacinc@gmail.com or mail to TFAC, PO Box 11, Turners Falls, MA 01376.

Critical Need for CASA Volunteers to Help Children

HADLEY – The Franklin/Hampshire Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program, run by Friends of Children, needs volunteers more than ever to provide a consistent advocacy voice to help change a child’s story.

Friends of Children has advocated for children in the foster care system for 30 years, and has served many struggling through difficult times in their lives. CASA is its flagship volunteer program in Hampshire and Franklin counties.

Volunteers are trained and supported as they advocate for children and youth, from birth to age 18, involved in the Juvenile Court system, many of whom have been abused and neglected.

Judges appoint CASA/GAL volunteers to advocate for children’s best interests and stay with each case until it is closed. Volunteers work with legal and child welfare professionals, educators, and service providers to ensure that judges have all the information they need to make

the most well-informed decisions.

“Best-interest advocacy is driven by the guiding principle that children grow and develop best with their family of origin, if that can be safely achieved. Most of the children we work with are in foster care, but some are with their family of origin. Most children who leave foster care do so to return to their family,” said CASA Director Debi Belkin.

Volunteers are asked to make an 18-24 month commitment to the program, pass background checks, and attend a 24-hour training. Once a CASA, there is ongoing professional supervision as well as peer support and topical training opportunities.

No special experience is required to be a CASA and volunteers reportedly come from a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. Interested potential volunteers can visit the Friends of Children website at www.friendsofchildreninc.org/volunteer-form or call (413) 586-0011. Training is scheduled to begin in March.



Above: “Horse Shoe Brand” clothes wringers from the late 1800s and early 1900s. Top right: A metal framed bicycle from the turn of the 20th century. Right: A large-scale shared town photo album filled with photographs of Buckland landscapes, and both public and private ceremonies.

Polly and Muriel hold up a “crazy quilt” made by local residents in the late 1800s. Victorian quilting jargon used the term “crazy” because it meant a kind of “splintering off into small pieces.” These quilts were far from being produced carelessly, they were executed and designed deliberately before sewn together with various stitch techniques. Flora, family initials, and other small motifs are embroidered within the silk fabric quilt-scape.

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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
Turners Falls, MA 01376
or to: poetry@montaguereporter.org

February Poetry Page

Alone

When I am alone with my thoughts, I see clearly
My toils and travails, set aside, will await
Focus shifts to my measured footfalls
The steady cadence of my lifeblood my rhythm
Careful placement of my hands, deft and gentle
To not disturb the order and sanctity of these places
That have stood this way for eons
Their cloaks of moss and ferns, foliage and stone
Their soft mist and fog, the cleansing of rain and snow
Their order unknown to my simple ilk
Our ephemeral existence insignificant in its design
I am alone yet feel for a fleeting moment
That I am integral in this tapestry
The meaning of my being no longer important
The moment is what matters most

- R.M. Garcia
Erving

Spring

I think fate
Is a way of reconciling with
The luck you feel
The blessings of
Surroundings and those you were lucky to know

I think fate is

What happens

When

You are your truest self
A full feeling
Drunk with love and — wet faced-crying — now, come to.

and the immense experience and surprise of caring
Of asking
In the simple gestures of

I have never felt so full so exploding of tears and laughter
... a true tragedy within its fullness.

I am so lucky
I am so blessed

We are all such
Sitting stewing thinking

When separate orbits crash
In love
In celebration

In the quiet moments
And the loud ones too
When you're sleeping
And when I'm sleeping

Looking down
On our own universe
Of our own small creation

This is it and this is all that was

- Imogene Pruitt-Spence
Brighton, MA

With Gratitude to Auden and in Memory of Bliss

Stop the clocks. Cut off the telephone.
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone.
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum,
Bring out the ashes, let the mourners come.

Let airplanes circle moaning overhead,
Scribbling on the sky this message: Wood Bliss is dead.
Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves;
Let the traffic cops wear black cotton gloves.

He was our North, our South, our East, our West,
Our working week, and our Sunday rest,
Our moon, our night, our talk, our song;
We thought Woody would live longer: we were wrong.

The stars are not wanted now; put out everyone;
Pack up the moon and dismantle the sun;
Pour away the ocean and sweep up the wood;
Nothing on earth will ever match Woody's good.

- Richard Andersen
Montague Center

One day, suddenly

One day, suddenly
while you are combing your hair in silence
or while you put on a sock
you will think of a gesture of mine
and you will find yourself smiling thinking about me.
One day, suddenly
pedaling fast under the first drops
of a warm September rain
you will smell a scent coming to your nose
and awaken a memory of ladles and pans
and you will see me in front of the fire, for a moment.

One day, suddenly
you will do something that I did too
just the same way I did it
and you will be very surprised
because you would never have thought
to be able to look so much like me.

One day, suddenly
you will look at the backs of your hands
and with the thumb and forefinger
you will pinch your skin, lifting it
and you will count the time it takes to lie down
thinking about when you did it to my hands

One day, suddenly
you will find yourself tired, embracing a son
you will apologize for the times I cried
already knowing that you have all been forgiven.

And I'll miss you from hurting
But I will be with you in every gesture
or in the movement of the leaves
in the rustle of a cat in the garden
or in the footsteps of a robin in the snow
as only the eternal presence of a mother can.

- Carolina Turrone
Cervia, Italy
Translated by Fabio Mercati

Contributors' Notes


Poet and performance artist **Carolina Turrone** was born in Bologna and lives in Cervia, Italy. She is a poet who does not like to talk about herself. All anyone needs to know about her is contained in her poetry. Art historian and artist Fabio Mercati lives and works in Tuscany. In 2003 he obtained a tourist guide license for Florence and the province. Since 2015 he has worked at the University of Siena.

Richard Andersen has been contributing articles to the Montague Reporter since its inception. “Stop the Clocks,” shamelessly cribbed from Auden, is his first poem for the Poetry Page. This poem was written for the memorial service for his friend Woody Bliss. Woody, a longtime resident of Montague, was known here and far beyond for being one of the most selfless individuals ever to grace our planet. Genuinely committed to improving the human condition, he never met anyone whose life he didn’t make better in some significant way. (W.H. Auden is one of the great and most prolific writers of the twentieth century. His poem “Stop the Clocks” enjoyed universal appreciation when it was given pride of place in the British film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*.)

Imogene Pruitt-Spence most recently translated *Misfortunes of the Immortals* (Paris & Toronto, Alyscamps-Carrefour Press, 2019), the 1922 collaboration by French poet Paul Eluard and German artist Max Ernst. Imogene, who is also a visual artist, recently had a one-woman show at the Press Room Gallery in Somerville. She grew up mostly in Greenfield. She was a youth winner of the Poet’s Seat Poetry Contest while a student at PVPA.

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

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27

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

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Reception for *The Art of Rodney Madison*. 6 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Opening night. \$. 8 p.m.

Majestic Saloon, Northampton: *Home Despot, Mal Devisa, Emily Ritz*. \$. 8 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Andrew DiRuzza*. 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Artspace, Greenfield: *Jam Session*. Kevin Dee leads monthly session, all ages and skill levels welcome. Suggested donation. \$. 12 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Comedy with *Amanda Cohen*. In the Perch. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Straight Sex, Moxie, Raspberry Jam. \$. 8 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Lush Honey*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

FlywheelArts, Easthampton: *Perennial, He Was An Artist She Was A Carpenter, Bridge of Flowers, and When the Sun Sets*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Epsilon Spires, Brattleboro: *La Creation Mondiale, Starbirthed*. Psych. \$. 7 p.m.

Shutesbury Athletic Club, Shutesbury: *Misbehavin' Speak-easy* fundraiser for Athletic Club roof. With *Betsy Scofield* of *Free Range*; karaoke. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Oakland Stroke, Shawn Callighan's Ego Trippers*. In the Perch. \$. 7:30 p.m.

St. James Church, Greenfield: *Dance Spree*. Freestyle boogie:

no shoes, no alcohol, no rules. \$. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. \$. 8 p.m.

King Street Manor, Northampton: *Gloyd, Willie Lane / Wednesday Knudsen Duo, Travis LaPlante*. \$. 8 p.m.

Stone Church, Brattleboro: *Jane Lee Hooker, Social Medication*. Blues. \$. 8 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Wendell Reggae Fest Launch Party with *Simon White & Rhythm Inc., Dave Noonan's Green Island, Burnie T, Roosta, and I Anbassa*. \$. 8:30 p.m.

13th Floor Lounge, Florence: *Void Swallower, Dropweapon, Advent Varic, Diva Karr*. \$. 9 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bridge of Flowers, Hung Trucker, Freezer Skunk*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

10 Forward, Greenfield: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. \$. 1 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: Bread and Puppet Theater Presents *Diagonal Life: Theory and Praxis*. New show examining humanity's current diagonal condition -- on the verge of collapse, yet always capable of up-rising. \$. 3:30 p.m.

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

Belltower Records, North Adams: *Rambutan, Bulle, Underwear, Jefferson Pitcher*. \$. 6 p.m.

Gateway City Arts, Holyoke: *Betsayda Machado*. Afro-Venezuelan party music. \$. 6 p.m.

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

MONDAY, MARCH 2

Hope & Olive, Greenfield: *Soup and Games Night* benefit for *Looky Here*. 5 p.m.

120 Birge, Brattleboro: *The Cradle, aaa, Death Spiral, Trone*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

Rendezvous, Turners Falls: *Bingo*. 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

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

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

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

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Sweetness the Point of Song, Bonnie Kane / Tracey Lisk Duo; Androo Wang / Salvadore McNamara Duo*. \$. 8 p.m.

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

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Valley Voices Story Slam*. \$. 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.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *La Creation Mondiale* (France), *id m theft able, Otto Benson*. \$. 8 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *Pamela Means Jazz Project*. In the Wheelhouse. 7 p.m.

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Four Rivers Charter School Drama Club presents *Head Over Heels*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hutghi's at the Nook, Westfield: *75 Dollar Bill, Sunburned Hand of the Man, Weeping Bong Band*. \$. 7 p.m.

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

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Nemesisister, PussyVision, A Tension, Feminine Aggression*. \$. 8 p.m.

Flywheel Arts, Easthampton: *Hot Dirt, Shake the Baby..., Landowner*. \$. 8 p.m.

Cold Spring Hollow, Belcher-town: *X Harlow, Phemale, Total Smoke, Dooley/Winans duo*, more. \$. 8 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Shakedown*. Grateful Dead tribute band. \$. 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Shea Theater, Turners Falls: Four Rivers Charter School Drama Club presents *Head Over Heels*. \$. 2 p.m.

Pushkin Gallery, Greenfield: *Michael Nix*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *International Women's Day Showdown*. Arm wrestling. Benefit for free English classes at Lupine-wood. \$. 7 p.m.

Iron Horse, Northampton: *Loud-on Wainwright III*. \$. 7 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Painted Faces, Slasher Risk, Donkey No No*. \$. 8 p.m.

Flywheel Arts, Easthampton: *Control Top, Weeping Icon*. Punx. \$. 8 p.m.

Pearl Street, Northampton: *Big D and the Kids Table, Crash the Owl Party, V as in Victor*. Boston third-wave ska legends. 8 p.m.

North Village Smokehouse, Millers Falls: *Danny & Heath*. 9 p.m.

Between the Uprights, Turners Falls: Dance Party with *DJ Drew*. 9:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Looky Here, Greenfield: *Ian C. Bouras, P/u/s/h, Brian Dickens*. \$. 7 p.m.

Hawks & Reed, Greenfield: *The Soul Rebels, Tem Blessed*. \$. 7:30 p.m.

10 Forward, Greenfield: *Leila Bordreuil/Jake Meginsky duo, Vic Rawlings, Matt Krefting*. \$. 8 p.m.

Academy of Music, Northampton: The Jayhawks. \$. 8 p.m.

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

CALL FOR ART

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.



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THURSDAY 2/27 8:30P
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FRIDAY 2/28 9:30P
Bluegrass and Beyond

SATURDAY 2/29 9:30P
Bridge of Flowers, Hung Trucker

SUNDAY 3/1
11A **Jazz Brunch w/ John Lentz**
9P **Karaoke**

MONDAY 3/2 8P
Bingo

WEDNESDAY 3/4 9P
Dead Night w/ Owsley's Owls

THURSDAY 3/5 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*.

Art space Gallery, Greenfield: *Photographs by Al Norman*. Two collections of photos, one documenting various protests and political rallies, the other looking at nature's symmetry and our collective humanity. Through March 13.

Barnes Gallery, Leverett Crafts & Arts: *Louise Minks*. Paintings by Minks in the Barnes and Hall galleries, through March 21.

Brattleboro Museum & Art Center: *Ask the River*. Elizabeth Billings, Evie Lovett, and Andrea Wasserman have created a community art exhibit on the theme of the Connecticut River. Postcard writing forms an interactive component. Discussion about the river with artists, historians, and conservators, February 27, 7 p.m. Through March 7.

DVAA Gallery, Northfield: *My Little Town*, member exhibit, in tandem with solo exhibit *Paintings by Bev Phelps*. Through March 8.

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.

Greenfield Gallery, Greenfield: *Something Old, Something New, Nothing Borrowed & A Taste of Blue*. Photographs of jazz greats by Bobby Davis. Through April 18. Reception with *G Notes Jazz Trio* Friday, February 28 at 6 p.m.

Leverett Library: *Unlocking the Past: A Public Domain Exhibit*. A traveling exhibit from the UMass Libraries, celebrating the 2019 release of a large number of

copyrighted items from 1923 into the public domain. UMass-Amherst copyright and information policy librarian Laura Quilter will give a talk about copyright and art on Thursday, February 27, 6 p.m. A reception will follow the talk.

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.

Nina's Nook, Turners Falls: *Triple SSS 2020: Sensual, Sexual, Smut*. Group show of erotic art from 30+ artists, including sculpture, photography, poetry, prints, and more. Through March 21.

Salmon Falls Gallery, Shelburne Falls: *Marilyn Andrews: Works in Clay*. Retrospective exhibit of this artist's work, who died in 2019, includes over 75 pieces which each use the human figure. Through April 26, with a reception on Saturday, April 18 at 2 p.m. featuring music by Forest Avenue.

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

Shelburne Arts Coop, Shelburne Falls: *Mud Season*, a group show putting a positive spin on this challenging time of the year. Paintings, ceramics, leather, paper cuts, jewelry, wood and ornaments by member artists. Through March 30, with a reception on February 29 at 3 p.m.

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 MOLLY MOON MOONEY

TURNERS FALLS – Now that it is late February, we’ve crossed the threshold of the Celtic holiday Imbolc, which celebrates the returning of the light. The days are just barely getting perceptively longer, but we are indeed having more and more light.

It is this last stretch of weeks before there is any hint of spring that can be the hardest part of the year for me. I’ve found a big mug of herbal tea to be just the thing for getting me through any grey, chilly day or night. For anyone else who may be feeling the drudgery of February into March, I’ve decided to share a bunch of tips for making your own herbal tea blends to brighten and warm up your day, or make your night extra cozy.

Since there are not many herbs growing this time of year, it is a great time to use dried herbs. I dry a lot of herbs during the growing season to save for use in teas, and quality dried herbs can be found locally. For the highest quality, you can order directly from local herb farms such as Sawmill Herb Farm in Florence and Foxtrot Farm in Shelburne Falls. (Foxtrot mostly sells in larger quantities.) Other great places to get dried herbs are the Bower Studio in Amherst and most co-ops, including Green Fields and River Valley.

There are a few things to look for when buying dried herbs. Is the color still vibrant? Does it retain its fragrance? It’s also good if the herb part is as whole as possible. For example, choose whole flower heads or mostly intact leaves over fine shreds of herb.

Bulk herbs are usually sold per ounce or parts of an ounce. Most dried herbs are very light in weight, and even one ounce can be a

large amount, so start small until you know how much you’ll use so your herbs are not sitting around for a long time.

Dried herbs can keep potent for one to two years, depending on how well they are stored. It is important to store them out of direct sunlight. Although I wish I could have all my beautiful jars of dried herbs on display, I keep them in cabinets or hang fabric in front of them to keep the light off of them.

While we are talking about plant parts, the best to use for teas are leaves, petals or flower heads, and stems. Other parts, like seeds, berries, or roots, can also be used, but they need a little simmer to bring out their full flavor and properties. This is not a strict rule, however. For example, I often use rosehips (berry) and oat tops (seeds) in teas without simmering.

Now, the fun part – blending! There are many ways to decide what to put in a tea blend, and sometimes they overlap. Sometimes I make a tea to help with an ailment and think less about its flavor profile, choosing herbs based on their medicinal properties. Other times I simply want to make something really tasty for myself or guests, and think about the flavors and aromas of the herbs and how they will work together.

And still other times I put together herbs in a more energetic or intuitive way. Say I am feeling a little down or anxious – I’ll choose herbs whose energetic properties are heart-soothing, calming and/or uplifting, or add flowers just for their pretty color. This has a bit to do with my herbal knowledge, but also much to do with how certain plants make me feel, so this is a great practice for anyone to get more in touch with the subtler aspects of herbal medicine. When I have a friend over and they take me up

on my offer of tea, I often ask them how they are feeling or how they want to feel, and then I absolutely love making us up a blend based on their response.

Although I can go all out and make a 10-ingredient herbal tea blend, I often stick to simple teas of one to four herbs. A few of my favorites include:

- Lemon balm with a pinch of rose petals
- Tulsi, lemon balm, linden, and rose
- Lemongrass leaves, straight up!
- Nettle, mint, and tulsi
- Raspberry leaves and rosehips

One thing to keep in mind is that certain herbs are great for tea, but can become bitter if over-steeped. Sage and chamomile are the first that come to mind. They are both excellent for tea, but if adding them to a blend with other herbs, add them at the last few minutes of steeping before straining to avoid bitterness. (Unless you’re into bitter – then have at it!)

Once you have chosen your herbs, steep them in hot, but not boiling, water for 10 to 15 minutes or more. Herbal teas need to steep for a lot longer than black or green teas to bring out their flavors and properties.

Since I am talking about loose tea blends, not tea bags, you’ll need a tea strainer to place in your mug before pouring. You can get these anywhere you buy herbs, and at grocery stores and kitchen gadget stores. I personally feel the best way to steep teas is loose in a pot or heat-safe jar (like a mason canning jar), so they can float around and fully merge with the water. But using a tea ball or steeping them in the strainer in your mug works too!

It’s also best to cover the tea with a lid or saucer while it steeps to keep in the essen-



MOONEY PHOTO

An herbal tea blend steeping in a mason jar: good cure for the winter blues.

tial oils of the plants and get that good hit of yummy smells once you’re ready to sip! If I want to steep a particular tea for extra long, I’ll wrap a dish towel around the jar to insulate it and keep it hot.

I have so much fun making tea blends, and I hope this gets you excited to make your own. Share with us your favorites on the Great Falls Apple Corps Instagram or Facebook page! I hope your herbal teas keep you warm and happy and help pass these end of winter days a little easier.

For more information on the Great Falls Apple Corps, visit us on social media, or email greatfallsapplecorps@gmail.com. Our next meeting is Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the Unity Park Fieldhouse. See you there!

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